



FINAL EVALUATION

Phase IV of Lobi Mokolo Ya Sika

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A team of international consultants and
national research assistants



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Acronyms

| | |
|----------------|--|
| CGA | Common Ground Approach |
| CNP | Comité National de Pilotage/National Steering Committee |
| CRP | Cellule Réforme de la Police |
| DfID | Department for International Development |
| DRC | Democratic Republic of Congo |
| FARDC | Forces Armées de la République Démocratique du Congo |
| FGD | Focus Group Discussion |
| IHL | International humanitarian law |
| ISSSS | International Security and Stabilisation Support Strategy |
| KII | Key Informant Interview |
| LMYS | Lobi Mokolo ya Sika |
| M&E | Monitoring and Evaluation |
| MONUSCO | United Nations Organisation Stabilisation Mission in the DRC |
| PM | Police Militaire/Military Police |
| PNC | Police National du Congo |
| RRSSJ | Security and Justice Sector Reform Network |
| SCIFA | Service de Communication et d'Information des Forces Armées |
| SECAS | Service d'Éducation Civique, Patriotique et d'Action Sociale |
| Search | Search for Common Ground |
| SGBV | Sexual and Gender Based Violence |
| SSR | Security Sector Reform |
| SSU | Stabilisation Support Unit |
| ToR | Terms of Reference |
| UK | United Kingdom |

Executive Summary

Search for Common Ground (Search) is a non-governmental organisation (NGO) operating in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) since 2001. Search has a mission to transform the ways in which individuals, organisations and governments handle conflict, moving away from confrontational approaches and looking together for “common ground”. Search has been acting in the security sector reform (SSR) domain in the DRC since 2006 via different iterations of its Lobi Mokolo Ya Sika (LMYS) programme.

The fourth phase of Lobi Mokolo ya Sika has been implemented with the support of the United Kingdom (UK)’s Department for International Development (DfID) over the period 2014 - 2017. The programme was proposed to be aligned with the International Security and Stabilisation Support Strategy (ISSSS/I4S) and M&E framework at the inception of its fourth phase in 2014, and its logical framework adapted to include relevant ISSSS indicators in 2016. In 2017 a cost extension agreement was signed between Search and DfID, extending the project to May 2018.

The overall objective of this fourth phase of LMYS has been to **“Strengthen mutual trust and confidence between civilians and security forces”**.

This document is the result of the final evaluation of the fourth phase of the LMYS programme, commissioned by Search, conducted by a team of external consultants. **The evaluation had four key objectives:**

- Evaluate the project’s impact in the targeted intervention zones;
- Determine if the intervention’s methods, assumptions and risks are true and adaptable to the context in the intervention zones and other potential zones;
- Understand if and to what extent the targeted groups have benefited from the intervention;
- Understand to what extent the programme has been integrated into local, provincial and national structures.

In addition to reporting on the programme’s outcome indicators and the relevant research questions indicated in the evaluation’s Terms of Reference, the consultants were also asked to report on ISSSS indicators integrated into the programme’s log-frame, in stabilisation priority sites. A secondary study was therefore conducted in these priority sites utilising tools provided by the Stabilisation Support Unit (SSU), in addition to the primary evaluation tools.

Table 1: Overview of Data Collection Sites

| Province | LMYS Site | LMYS and ISSSS priority site | Comment |
|------------|-------------------------------|------------------------------|---------|
| Kinshasa | Kinshasa | | |
| North Kivu | Goma; Masisi centre; Rutshuru | Kitshanga | |

| | | | |
|------------|--------------------------|-------------------|---|
| South Kivu | Bukavu; Walungu; Luvungi | Minova | |
| Ituri | Bunia | Kasenyi; Mambassa | A fourth site: Mahagi, was initially planned in the preparatory phase of the evaluation that was dropped due to time limitations. |

Methodology

The final evaluation of this fourth phase of “Lobi Mokolo ya Sika” adopted a mixed methods approach, combining qualitative and quantitative methods, engaging with multiple groups of beneficiaries, including: civilians, military personnel and police as well as other key stakeholders on national, provincial and local levels. The combination of qualitative and quantitative methods permitted a closer understanding of the *degree* and *nature* of change in civil-security relations engendered over the course of Phase IV of LMYS across implementation zones, importantly, as defined and experienced by communities targeted by the programme. Data collection was conducted in the programme’s four implementation provinces: Kinshasa, North Kivu, South Kivu, and Ituri. Tools were developed based on those used in the baseline and midterm evaluations and, to the degree possible, data-collection sites were selected based on those sites surveyed in the baseline and midterm evaluations, and where activities were still ongoing at the time of the project’s fourth phase. The methodology, including tools and sites, was validated by Search DRC during the inception phase of the evaluation.

The evaluation was led by a team of international consultants, and data collection was conducted by a team of local researchers. This report has been drafted by the team of consultants, thanks to the data collected by the local teams, with support and inputs from Search’s DRC country office and regional Institutional Learning Team.

Limitations

The final evaluation encountered some constraints and limitations during the preparatory, field, analysis and write-up phases:

- **The final evaluation is not a perfect duplication of the baseline and midterm studies previously conducted, thus limiting conclusions we can draw when comparing data across the different studies.** The final evaluation was not conducted in all the same sites nor with the same individual respondents from the baseline and/or midterm study. Certain sites surveyed during the baseline were dropped during the implementation of the programme, due to strategic, accessibility and/or security related reasons. As mentioned earlier, the final evaluation methodology is nevertheless based closely on that of the baseline and midterm. The sample size was determined to be proportional to that of the baseline. Sites for the final evaluation were selected based on those surveyed in both the baseline and midterm, where activities continued to be underway and depending on the current security and accessibility of the different sites. Quantitative and qualitative tools were developed based on the tools used in the baseline study and reviewed for use in the context of the final evaluation.

- **Related to time constraints, one less data collection site could be reached in Ituri which may have an impact on analysis and the conclusions drawn about this province.** Data was collected in three sites in Ituri, compared to four in the other two provinces of North Kivu and South Kivu. The fourth site in Ituri: *Mahagi*, was dropped during the field-phase due to unforeseeable delays encountered by the team in the previous two sites of Kasenyi and Mambasa. The team reported challenges in accessing PNC respondents in particular, leading to more time spent in the two other sites than initially planned. Time limitations would not permit extending the field period for the Ituri team and as a result Mahagi was excluded from the data-collection sites. The team made every effort to complete the maximum of tools possible in the two preceding sites. Analysis comparing Ituri to other provinces still remains valid though Ituri specific reflections may not include the socio-political specificities of Mahagi.

Principal Conclusions

- 1) **Perceptions of security forces have generally improved.** In the baseline, 69%¹ of the population sampled reported that they believed the FARDC contributed to security in their communities, compared to 88% at the endline. Perceptions toward PNC were generally more positive as well, with 86% of the population sampled during the endline reporting believing that the PNC contributed to security in their communities, compared to 74% at the baseline. The findings did not indicate any significant variation among civilian women and men in this regard. Overall, the evaluation indicated that LMYS activities had contributed to these improved perceptions, with particular mention of increased opportunities for collaboration as well as the *cleaning of the image* of public security institutions. Qualitative findings revealed additional nuance to these generally positive perceptions and how factors – such as the length of time a unit is deployed or stationed in a community, access to the protective services of security forces and the effectiveness of their response, as well as the degree and persistence of abuses by security forces in a zone – can contribute to the changeable nature of civilian perceptions of and relationships with security personnel.²
- 2) **An increase in knowledge and awareness** among security forces was perceptible, notably in terms of their roles and responsibilities, as **defined** and **measured** by the programme’s logical framework. It remains to be seen whether or not increases in this type of knowledge among members of the security forces contribute in the medium and long-term to a security sector that is better trained and equipped to respond to the needs of their target populations. Challenges remain with translating increased knowledge into behaviour change and institutionalising training and acquired knowledge. **The evaluation further highlighted factors that constrain the uptake of knowledge from training, including but not limited to, a lack of/insufficient resources, including salary payments and transport.**³

¹ Figures in this report have been rounded up to the nearest whole figure ensure ease of communication and understanding of the study’s statistical observations.

² Other research corroborates that a host of factors shape civilian perceptions of security personnel, including whether their practices are seen to be licit or illicit; whether they live up to civilians’ expectations in relation to public and les public service provision; and other than military social identities (like ethnicity); see Judith Verweijen, *The Ambiguity of Militarization. The complex interaction between the Congolese armed forces and civilians in the Kivu provinces, eastern DR Congo* (Utrecht University, Faculty of Humanities), pp. 129-132.

³ Barriers to the uptake of knowledge among armed personnel, in particular of International Humanitarian Law, have also been examined by the ICRC, Frésard JJ (2004) *The Roots of Behaviour in War. A Survey of the Literature*. Geneva: International

- 3) **Data from the evaluation pointed to encouraging signs of the institutionalisation of norms related to accountability within the security forces.** The majority of both FARDC and PNC respondents reported that they would denounce an abuse or violation committed by a colleague (member of the security forces). The majority of both PNC and FARDC respondents also believed that if a member of the security forces committed an abuse, he or she would face investigation. Civilian perceptions of accountability within the security forces were more lukewarm, with 32% of civilians believing that a member of the security forces would always face investigation in cases of abuses. Civilian perceptions of accountability within the security forces in cases of rape were somewhat higher however, with 35% believing that a member of FARDC who had committed rape would always face investigation and notably 41% of civilians believing that a member of PNC who had committed rape would always face investigation. Challenges remain in terms of encouraging accountability in civil-military relations however, abuses persist and effective implementation of judicial decisions is still lacking. Fear of reprisals and other factors also continue to limit reporting of abuses by civilians, as well as by members of the security forces themselves.
- 4) Focus groups and interviews in particular point to the **importance of the media tools of the programme in improving mutual knowledge and awareness of roles and responsibilities between security forces and civilians.** The evaluation additionally highlighted that while there were no training activities geared toward civilians *per se*, mediated activities, like radio emissions and mobile cinema projections provided important opportunities for learning about mutual roles and responsibilities as well as rights and procedures. Based on improved knowledge from radio programmes in particular participants reported that they felt better able to hold members of the security forces accountable. Mediated activities were also reported to provide important points of reference for 'good' and 'bad' behaviour embodied by national security forces and individual personnel. Qualitative findings indicated however that **women largely did not access radio programmes, due to a number of factors including: that radios were seen to be the property of men and that women were occupied in the fields or by household responsibilities during the times the emissions aired.**
- 5) Activities promoting constructive dialogue and accountability like Community Scorecards and the Town Hall meetings reportedly **provided important and rare opportunities for civilians and members of the security forces to raise complaints and collaborate.** The Town Hall meetings in particular created opportunities for target groups to meet and exchange on issues pertinent to collective security while the community scorecards supported accountability by permitting civilians to raise concerns related to the security forces and vice versa. **However, there are still questions around who is able to access and benefit from these spaces.** In particular, access appeared limited for women and populations living in the more rural peripheries of LMYS target zones. Some representatives of security forces also noted that there tended to be a disproportionate focus on their shortcomings, without addressing the contribution of civilians to insecurity. Nevertheless, both the community scorecards and town hall meetings specifically were seen to improve relations by providing constructive opportunities for conflict-resolution and encouraging protective behaviour by the security forces, rather than focusing on disciplining conduct (as emphasised in traditional efforts to fight impunity).

Committee of the Red Cross; Daniel Muñoz Rojas, *The Roots of Behaviour in War. Understanding and Preventing IHL Violations.* This literature highlights a distinction between knowledge, attitudes, and behavior explaining why mere knowledge of IHL does not translate automatically into behavior change.

- 6) **LMYS' solidarity activities contributed to reinforcing relations among civilians and members of the security forces, but these civil-military relations remain fragile and susceptible to changes in security and political dynamics.** Solidarity activities, including: football matches, *salongo* (communal work), reportedly broke down stereotypes and mutually-entrenched barriers of fear and suspicion, largely by creating opportunities for informal communication and collaboration. A number of participants spoke to how the solidarity activities had served to reinforce individual level relationships between civilians and members of the security forces in their communities.
- 7) **While efforts to institutionalise the approach and strengthen the durability of LMYS outcomes have continued, notably during the Cost Extension Phase, there remain limitations to this institutionalisation and the durability of gains related to the programme.** While Search has been involved in revising the FARDC training curricula, thereby ensuring the integration of key themes related to LMYS and members of the security forces affirm that tools provided by Search are still put to use in sensitisations and more, neither training nor sensitisation have been implemented **systematically**, contributing to ensuring that the LMYS outcomes have not been **systemically** felt by programme participants. The systematic implementation of such activities is hindered by de facto decentralised functioning of the army related to an organisational culture developed over time and the difficult infrastructural and contextual environment within which it operates. Rotations of units and the redeployment of troops was one of the key factors potentially limiting durability and highlighting the need for continued efforts in the institutionalisation of the Common Ground Approach (CGA). Respondents across target groups spoke to the importance of individual unit commanders and the roles they may play in either promoting or constraining good civil-military relations. Civilian and civil-society respondents in particular highlighted how unit rotations might contribute to perceptions and experiences of insecurity in their communities.⁴ Newly deployed unit commanders were at times resistant to LMYS activities, contributing to mismanagement of income-generating activities in particular.
- 8) The evaluation demonstrated that more positive perceptions of security forces and relations among civilians and these same forces did not translate into **similarly high or consistent levels of mutual trust. Trust, as the key element of the LMYS Theory of Change remains elusive in the context of security sector reform work. The evaluation suggested that improvements in trust remain time-bound, geographically limited and bound to specific units.** Furthermore, the evaluation additionally indicated that there was a cycle in the building and destabilising of trust among civilians and security forces, wherein, troops at arrival were perceived as contributing to insecurity. Findings suggested, however, that civilian populations held a certain level of understanding of the factors still limiting the will and capacity of security forces to adjust their behaviours and perceptions toward civilians, including lack of salaries and poor living conditions.
- 9) As a result, **the evaluation highlights the important value of LMYS activities in promoting opportunities for building more collaborative relationships between individual civilians and national security personnel, and even between the unit-community level in the implementation zones.** As evidenced below and in wider reporting on the security situation in eastern DRC, this

⁴ Other research on the FARDC has also highlighted the negative effects of rapid rotations on civil-military relations, see Verweijen, *The Ambiguity of Militarization*, p.208; p.233, p. 245. Furthermore, an evaluation of Oxfam's Civilian Protection Committee's found the same: "although there have periodically been some advocacy wins on illegal charges at checkpoints, these have rapidly been overturned as new economically motivated commanders arrived. In Uvira territory (...) frequent changes of FARDC deployment have similarly made it difficult to achieve lasting improvements in conduct", see Duncan Green (2015), 'Community Protection Committees in Democratic Republic of the Congo', Oxfam International, p.9.

has not translated into a complete cessation of hostilities between civilians and security force, nor of harassment, abuses, and violations by security forces against civilian populations. This would require resolving the wider security situation as well as institutional barriers to change within the national security forces. Nevertheless, and these challenges notwithstanding, changes at the individual and unit level inspired and/supported by LMYS activities should not be discounted. **Although fragile and bound by limiting factors, these relationships between security forces and local populations may help offset the worst of the former's behaviour towards the latter.** Building on this to secure more widespread and lasting civil-security trust will require sustained political and institutional will from FARDC and PNC leadership to improve the living conditions of national security forces and to ensure accountability for abuses.

10) The evaluation identified important steps towards integrating a gender perspective throughout LMYS activities and towards the achievement of the Theory of Change, but more could be done to ensure women's access to LMYS tools and activities. In particular, Search developed a strong LMYS Gender Strategy, providing clear guidance for key stakeholders on promoting women's participation (civilian, military and police) across target zones, ensuring women's needs are accounted for across activities, ensuring gender is integrated in the durability of the programme, as well as in Search's internal management structures. **In practice, the evaluation findings pointed to some strong evidence of civilian women's participation in LMYS activities across implementation zones, although this was overall shy of the 30% target stipulated in the Strategy.** Evidence of participation of female security personnel was more limited, in part due to the fact that the presence female personnel in the target sites is low. The content of LMYS activities was found to reflect women's and girls' experiences in eastern DRC in important ways, notably in its media output. However, women were found to have more restricted access to the LMYS media content, in large due to restricted access to the radio within the household. Finally, the LMYS Gender Strategy importantly provided the basis for the development of the FARDC gender strategy, demonstrating important value in ensuring the durability of gender-related as well as overall LMYS outcomes.

Recommendations

This section outlines key recommendations emerging from the findings of the final evaluation for the consideration of Search and other key stakeholders in the development of future phases of the LMYS programme.

Search for Common Ground

Concerning overall design

- **Continue investing in solidarity activities, as these provided concrete opportunities for relationship and trust building.** The evaluation highlighted in particular how these opportunities served to destabilise long-held preconceptions of civilians vis a vis the security forces and vice versa. To help promote their sustainability, Search and implementation partners should ensure that the income generating activities designed to support them have established a clear management strategy within target zones. Strengthened monitoring of these activities is further recommended to ensure their continued good management.
- **Similarly, the evaluation highlighted how democratic dialogue activities including the Town Hall meetings (TEP) and Community Scorecards (CS) served to promote accountability (through**

civilian oversight) and created opportunities to raise issues of collective security and potentially impact the quality of protective services. Continued support to these activities will be crucial in future iterations of the LMYS programme. The evaluation highlighted that there remain questions about *who has access to these spaces* and *under what circumstances*. Furthermore, if the same messages are repeatedly passed to the same audiences, namely community leaders and other key actors, generally male community leaders, opportunities to strengthen relations between the military and more vulnerable groups of civilians are lost. **More concerted effort should be made to ensure that these activities reach marginalised groups including women and members of remote communities. For example,** one potential strategy to encourage women's physical and active participation might be to **organise women-only CS and TEP in target communities, ensuring that their security concerns are represented and addressed on an equal footing to those raised in the mixed, community spaces.**

Concerning relevance

- While recognising the limits of Search to communicate with armed groups and potential impacts on trust built between the organisation and the security forces, Search should consider including non-state armed groups and inter-communal conflict as a key priority within future efforts in collective security and democratic dialogue. The evaluation highlighted that civilian rapport with armed groups was a key (potentially limiting) factor in the building of mutual trust among civilians the security forces. Similarly, the presence and activism of armed groups was repeatedly noted as having an impact on perceptions of security. If there is no possibility within the scope of LMYS to adapt to this strategic priority, Search could seek opportunities for collaboration with actors like Geneva Call for example, among others, including highly embedded local organisations, who work and dialogue with non-state armed groups in order to reinforce the relevance and overall quality of LMYS activities.

Concerning efficiency

- In order to strengthen monitoring and evaluation processes and thereby leverage M&E for improved programme and product quality, Search may consider **investing in strengthening M&E processes, with a particular focus on reinforcing the capacity of local actors conducting monitoring including the security forces themselves, various local committees and local NGO partners.** Statistical as well as qualitative data from these actors may serve to harness learning from the programme as well as capture change related to specific objectives. **In addition to reinforcing partners' capacities in monitoring, the programme should have clear and simplified reporting procedures in order to ensure that information is appropriately communicated to the relevant actors.**
- Furthermore, for future iterations of the LMYS programme, **Search should consider investing in a longitudinal evaluation process, able to capture changes in impact over time.** Specifically, it would also be important to consider at the outset of future phases of LMYS the selection of control sites, in order to permit an empirically sound impact evaluation at the end of the programme.
- **To systematically encourage the participation of women in LMYS activities, consider including an indicator targeting at least 30% female participation across beneficiary groups.** This should be considered in the organisation of activities (timing, location, etc), in the dialogue, as well as in solutions agreed-upon. Where this is not possible or not reached, implementing partners should be asked to provide an explanation as part of their monitoring activities.

Concerning effectiveness

- Recalling that length of time in the community and duration of unit rotation were potentially contributing or contributing factors to building mutual trust, the evaluation suggested that there may be a certain threshold of time beyond which trust retransitions into threat in the medium to longer-term. This further affirms one of the principal conclusions of this study, that institutional-level barriers to change may limit potential gains related to LMYS in terms of building relationships above mutual trust among civilians and security forces. **Search may consider supporting the security forces in developing and implementing standard operating procedures that support the implementation of positive norms disseminated via training and sensitisation activities.** Standard rotation and deployment policies (*like standardised durations for rotations and systematic and timely training for newly deployed units*) in conjunction with civilian oversight via the community score card activities and Town Hall meetings may serve to mitigate potential risks linked to unit rotation and deployment.
- **To strengthen program effectiveness, Search may reinforce synergy with other key actors notably the security forces themselves and the actions these actors might have initiated, catalysed by the LMYS programme.** The evaluation highlighted that access to services and the quality of response provided by the security forces was a key determining factor of trust for civilian populations. Importantly, phone numbers of relevant FARDC and PNC authorities were shared during Town Hall meetings implemented within the framework of LMYS. Participants in the study emphasised how the sharing of these phone numbers served to reinforce population's access to protective services, contributed to improved communication and collaboration and thereby contributed to strengthening civil-military relations in communities. **Search should consider ways in which this sharing of contact information could be integrated in future iterations of LMYS and replicated in a more systematic manner across the targeted zones.**
- The evaluation highlighted the critical role of unit commanders and superior officers in general in the security forces, **both regarding** brokering relationships between the security forces and civilians, who reportedly noted that they had more trust in superior officers rather than their subordinates, **as well as in terms of** promoting or hindering the implementation of lessons learned from training and sensitisation activities and in general, shaping their units' interactions with civilian populations. **Search may consider a strategic adjustment in the LMYS programme, placing additional emphasis on these unit-level commanders in the targeted zones, their sensitisation and engagement in the programme.**

Concerning impact

- The evaluation highlighted the critical need to reinforce the "mutual" aspect of the democratic dialogue and media activities of the programme in particular. Security forces interviewed in the course of the study shared frustrations that these activities seemed to focus heavily on the roles and responsibilities of the security forces and less so, those civic responsibilities and duties of civilian populations. This may have presented a barrier to behaviour change linked to these activities. **Search may continue efforts to jointly produce sensitisation materials and media tools including radio emissions. Search may also reinforce technical accompaniment and monitoring of dialogue activities like the Town Halls via the local security committees and local NGO partners in order to ensure that these discuss 'mutual responsibilities' including those of civilians as well in communities.**

Concerning durability

- **Continue efforts to strengthen the institutionalisation of the Common Ground Approach, via continued support to the SECAS in the development and finalization of this training curricula.**

Search may continue conducting advocacy with the SECAS and provide technical support as needed for the finalization of the modules. In future phases of LMYS and in Search's broader SSR and stabilisation efforts, it will be important to further develop the partnership with EU Progress (in coordination with the SECAS) in support of facilitating training and capacity building efforts based on the revised curricula.

- **Unit rotation was highlighted as a key limiting factor to the durability of LMYS outcomes and the institutionalisation of gains from the programme. This challenge could however be harnessed as an opportunity to ensure the wide reach of sensitisation content, if training and sensitisation activities could be systematically aligned with the rotations.** As mentioned previously, efforts to strengthen the infrastructure of the security forces including the development and implementation of standard operating procedures will be key to addressing potential barriers to change hindering the achievement of LMYS' Theory of Change. The systematisation of training activities within the security forces, with particular attention paid to ensuring that newly deployed units receive timely training and are integrated into key activities, notably mechanisms for dialogue and collective security like the Town Hall meetings and local security committees will be key to reinforcing the durability of LMYS outcomes.
- **In order to build upon key strategic advancements realised in LMYS, including the development of a gender strategy by the FARDC based on the LMYS gender strategy, Search may continue supporting the validation of this strategy and accompany its implementation via technical and limited financial support.** While the development of a gender strategy by the FARDC was a key achievement of the LMYS programme, the strategy had not yet been validated at the time of the evaluation. Continued advocacy and technical accompaniment for the validation of this crucial document will be important in future phases of LMYS. Bearing in mind funding limitations, Search may consider limited support to the implementation of key engagements from the FARDC gender strategy. Search, under the guidance of the Ministry of Defense and SECAS should furthermore engage in systematic monitoring of the implementation of the gender strategy in order to measure progress and changes linked to the activities.
- **Also related to the gender sensitivity of the LMYS programme and Search's future SSR work,** it will be important for Search and its partners to invest in more applied research related to gender and SSR, women's participation in the security forces and potential impacts on military-civilian relations, including between women. This coupled with stronger gender-sensitive monitoring of the implementation of activities may serve to unpack complexities surrounding obstacles limiting women's participation in LMYS related activities so that the programme might be better able to respond and reinforce gender parity in these activities. On the basis of this final evaluation and a pursuant gender analysis, gender-sensitive indicators (or markers) may be developed and integrated into the regular M&E activities of the programme.

Security Forces

- Complementing the recommendation to Search to couple work in improving civil-military relations with institutional support to the normalised functioning of the security forces, the Etat Major and Police Commissioner should maintain leadership and provide strategic guidance to provincial level leadership in this regard.
- FARDC and PNC leadership might continue promoting wide-reaching participation of personnel in their ranks in community dialogue and solidarity activities. This would help promote civil-security relationships and collaboration towards addressing collective security issues in target zones.
- FARDC and PNC leadership may also wish to promote practices of engaging with the population through radio broadcasts and participation in democratic dialogue activities. This makes their

presence known to the community and was well perceived by participants in the evaluation. Relatedly, such actors may consider continuing to provide a *numéro vert* (or hotline) for civilians. Such practical measures increased a sense of accessibility of the security forces when needed, contributing positively towards building a sense of trust.

DfID

- Continuing to invest in promoting opportunities for civil-security collaboration and relationship-building through democratic dialogue and solidarity activities, while remaining sensitive to the conditions under which trust is built and destabilised in implementation zones.
- Furthermore, given that the evaluation highlighted how different institutional obstacles within the security forces, notably resource constraints, presented barriers to change related to LMYS activities, **DfID may consider the value of multi-sectoral approaches in achieving UK foreign policy objectives related to security sector support in the DRC.** Crucially, given that DfID is also a leading contributor to the Stabilisation Coherence Fund, the findings of this evaluation might lend to further reflection on the value of broader stabilisation efforts integrating work on civil-military relations vs more limited, targeted funding.
- In order to capitalise on gender-related gains from the implementation of this phase of LMYS, DfID and other financial partners to SSR in the DRC should consider supporting efforts related to the *mise en vigueur* and implementation of this strategic tool. DfID may additionally consider investing in targeted research into gender and SSR in order to determine more clearly barriers to women's effective participation in the security forces as well in security-related decision-making processes. This research could then inform future advocacy efforts and help target future programming with partners in order to deepen the gender sensitivity of SSR work.

Minister of Defense and other political actors

- The evaluation highlighted the persistence of institutional obstacles, entrenched norms and (resource) constraints limit and undermine gains related to improved civil-military relations. It will be important for the Ministry of Defense and other relevant political actors to maintain and strengthen its commitment to institutional reform, ensuring adequate support and cooperation with partners and addressing obstacles hindering the implementation of activities and/or the dissemination of norms. The development and strategic implementation of standard operating procedures on all levels may play a key role in these processes.
- To help mitigate the effects of unit rotation on destabilising civil-military relations, in particular, the national and provincial level military command may consider institutionalising democratic dialogue activities, making Community Scorecard and Town Hall meetings with civilian populations mandatory as soon as units rotate into new deployment zones.
- The Ministry of Defense and other political actors should furthermore validate and uphold the FARDC Gender Strategy as a key best practice within the armed forces. The Ministry and other key political actors, together with military leadership should furthermore uphold the *actes d'engagement* that were produced related to LMYS activities. In particular these political actors should ensure that sufficient political will and technical financial resources are invested in ensuring the implementation of these strategic tools in practice.

Project Background

Search for Common Ground has been participating in security sector reform (SSR) since 2006, with the aim of changing attitudes and behaviour of police and military personnel when it comes to protecting civilian populations, working with leaders and influencers at the national, provincial and community levels.

In this context and with the support of the UK Department for International Development (DfID), Search has been implementing Phase IV of its **Lobi Mokolo ya Sika - Tomorrow is Another Day** programme during the period 2014 - 2017.

This fourth phase of LMYS has the overall objective of: **“Strengthen mutual trust and confidence between civilians and security forces”**.

This overall objective is supported by one specific outcome: **“Popular civilian perceptions of security forces are improved.”**

The project has furthermore two key expected results or outputs contributing to the achievement of its overall objective, notably:

R1: Increase knowledge and awareness on the part of the Congolese security forces and civilian population regarding their roles, rights and responsibilities towards one another.

R2: Strengthen accountability, cooperation and communication between civilians and state security personnel around current reforms and key achievements.

LMYS is furthermore based on the following theory of change:

If the Congolese security forces and the civilian population are aware of and knowledgeable about their roles, rights and responsibilities towards one another, *and* if they are able to communicate and interact in a more open, transparent and constructive way, *then* behaviour, relations and trust between them will improve.

The project was implemented in four key provinces: **Kinshasa, Ituri, North Kivu and South Kivu.**

Alignment with the ISSSS strategy

At the outset, LMYS was intended to coordinate and align with the International Stabilization Support Strategy (ISSSS/I4S) and accompanying framework for aligned projects. The programme was proposed to be in alignment with three key pillars in the strategy: Democratic Dialogue, Security and SGBV. In

December 2016, the programme was determined to be aligned and an agreement signed among MONUSCO, DfID and Search related to this.

LMYS was aligned within ISSSS under the following criteria:

- **Criterion 1:** On the basis of a gender-sensitive conflict analysis, the project targets the priority conflict or conflict dynamics identified in the priority stabilization areas (and in the SPS / SPSP).
 - Sub-criterion 1.2: The project contributes to the security of women, girls, boys and men in their communities.
- **Criterion 2:** The actors of the conflict are at the centre of the transformation process of the priority conflict dynamics identified in the stabilization zone.
- **Criterion 3:** The project strengthens collaboration between the state, customary authorities and populations in transforming the priority dynamics or dynamics of identified conflicts in the stabilization zone.
- **Criterion 4:** The project strengthens the participation of women in the transformation of one or more conflict dynamics identified in the area, addressing the structural and socio-cultural factors that impede it.

The following M&E tools were then made available to Search for use in the programme:

1. DC-16: KAP survey for FARDC members
2. DC-14.1: KAP survey for PNC officers
3. DC-15A: Survey for Committee members
4. DC-27: Checklist for Local Action Plans

These tools were administered for the first time during the final evaluation. A second data-collection was conducted during the final evaluation to report on aligned ISSSS indicators in ISSSS priority sites.

Cost-Extension Phase

The project was extended for a period of one year, ending on May 31st 2018, following a cost-extension agreement signed with DfID in 2017. The strategies and activities proposed in the cost extension phase were based on the key findings of the mid-term evaluation and the alignment of the project with the ISSSS strategy. While the log-frame remained by and large the same and the project kept its overall objective and Theory of Change, three strategic adjustments were planned to be made during this extension period:

1. Institutionalisation of sensitisation and educational approaches;
2. Enhanced focus of accountability and collaboration work in areas of greatest need;
3. Focus on consultations around sustainability and exit strategy.

The cost extension phase of the project sought furthermore to build upon the gains of the project as measured/described in the midterm, including a **“significant increase in the levels of awareness and knowledge within the Congolese security forces and civilians about their roles, rights and mutual responsibilities”** and increased collaboration and **“accountability between security providers and civilians.”**⁵ It was additionally planned that Search would switch its focus to more geographically peripheral areas in order to strengthen the coverage of its activities. The gender responsiveness of the programme was also to be strengthened during the cost-extension phase, with a focus on two key elements:

1. Women’s roles and opportunities within the security forces and
2. Women and girls’ participation in activities engaging civil society.

The cost extension phase of the project sought furthermore to build upon the gains of the project as measured/described in the midterm, including a **“significant increase in the levels of awareness and knowledge”**.

As will be discussed throughout the Results section of the report, the evaluation pointed toward encouraging signs that Search had made advances in achieving the objectives of the cost-extension period, notably via the institutionalisation of its sensitisation approaches and strengthening opportunities for collaboration and accountability. The Common Ground Approach and related themes have been successfully integrated into FARDC training curricula produced by the SECAS and the local security committees targeted by the programme have also benefited from accompaniment and have produced local security plans for their communities. Solidarity activities and dialogue mechanisms like the Community Scorecards and Town Hall meetings also continued reinforcing communication and collaboration among civilians and security forces.

LMYS activities were, however, not yet implemented regularly or systematically, with some respondents commenting that community-level activities in particular were generally organised in an ad-hoc or reactionary manner. Similarly, national-level actors within the FARDC commented that it would be critical to systematise Search’s training approach as a means of preventing human rights violations and other abuses, rather than implementing activities only in areas that had been flagged as problematic. (KII, FARDC, Kinshasa). The evaluation highlighted additionally that at the close of the cost extension period, there was still a persistent need to reinforce the accessibility of LMYS activities (notably solidarity and accountability focused activities) for marginalised groups, including women and residents from remote communities.

⁵ Search for Common Ground (2017), Lobi Mokolo ya Sika Phase IV: Cost Extension Request, pp. 4, 5.

Background and Context

LMYS and SSR in DRC

Security Sector Reform has been an important aspiration and focus of development and stabilisation programming in DRC since the end of the Congo wars in 2003. The key objective of external actors engaged in SSR has long been to build a Congolese security sector that is **able to defend the national territory and its population**, that is **accountable to civilians and civilian authorities**, and that **upholds the rule of law and human rights**. Initial approaches to SSR in DRC, largely prior to external support, centred on integrating former rebel groups into the military with the aim of creating a unified security sector.⁶ For a multitude of reasons, these policies were largely unsuccessful and, as shown below, their effects still reverberate in the eastern region of the country. Since then, externally-supported SSR initiatives and programming in DRC have traditionally fallen into five broad categories, each focusing on a different set of challenges facing the Congolese security forces:

- strengthening unit effectiveness through ‘train-and-equip’ programmes;
- institutional reform, including action on pay, military education, administration and strategic planning;
- improving social and living conditions, including by building barracks, and investing in agricultural programmes;
- improving civil-military relations and accountability for human rights abuses, in particular by reinforcing military justice and human rights trainings; and
- building structures for civilian accountability and oversight as part of an effort to democratise the security sector.⁷

Despite these efforts, it is clear that challenges to building an effective and accountable security sector in DRC persist as human rights violations and other abuses continue to be reported. For instance, of the 1,135 violations documented by MONUSCO in July and August 2018 throughout the country, 59% were reportedly perpetrated by State agents.⁸

Against this backdrop, the Search for Common Ground approach to SSR in DRC emphasises dialogue and collaboration between civilians and security forces. It does so at the subnational and local levels to reinforce the credibility, effectiveness, and accountability of Congolese security forces in their mission to protect populations in zones affected by conflict in the short and medium term. Building on the results of the previous three phases of Lobi Mokolo ya Sika, this most recent iteration of LMYS, Phase IV, had the dual objectives of improving the knowledge and awareness of Congolese security forces and civilians as to their mutual rights and responsibilities on the one hand, and to strengthen communication, accountability, and cooperation between them on the other. These objectives were operationalised through different strategies. These included the establishment and support of committees in target communities, within FARDC and PNC units, and at the provincial level, as well as through a number of activities, including solidarity and reconciliation activities which brought together civilians and security actors in their communities; training and sensitisation for security actors via committees embedded within the security forces, as well as activities seeking to reinforce civilian oversight and promote accountability of security actors towards local populations, notably Community Scorecards (*Bulletins de Scores*) and

⁶ For clarity, it is important to note that ‘mixage’ refers to the absorption of the CNDP in FARDC and ‘brassage’ refers to the “integration of fighters on an individual basis” (Verweijen 2015, p. 83).

⁷ SFCG (2017), SFCG-DRC: SSR Technical Strategy Document (unpublished), p. 11.; Stearns, Verweijen and Eriksson Baaz (2013), ‘The national army and armed groups in the eastern Congo’, London” Rift Valley Institute, pp. 78-821.

⁸ UNSG (2018), *United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo: Report of the Secretary-General*, 1 October 2018, S/2018/882, p. 6.

Town Hall meetings (*Tribunaux d'Expression Populaire*). This phase also included mediatised sensitisation efforts, including radio messaging and television programmes, comic strips, and mobile cinema screenings, representing a core added-value of Search's approach to SSR in the eastern provinces of DRC. These activities shared the overall objective of creating opportunities for improved relationships, behaviours, and norms in civil-security relations that are able to resist pressure from elite networks and changing dynamics in a shifting political and security landscape. Crucially, they do so by humanising soldiers, police, and civilians and introducing incentives and rewards in terms of status and reputation for champions of change within the security forces. Furthermore, they create structures of positive feedback in the effective protections of civilians.⁹

Recent research on civil-military relations in eastern DRC has pointed to multiple factors that can influence the behaviour of military units (regiments, battalions, and campaigns) towards civilians in the zones within which they are deployed.¹⁰ The four principal factors that pertain to the army, other than the deployment zones, include: 1) the military objectives of the unit; 2) the length of time the unit is deployed in the same zone; 3) the nature and quality of command and control, including willingness *and* ability to control troops; and 4) perceptions of and discourses surrounding civilians, notably if they are perceived as adversaries or not. Factors external to the unit and that relate to the zone in which they are deployed include: 1) the geography of the zone, in particular how isolated/enclaved it is; 2) the presence and strength of counterweights to the army, for example, close associations with armed groups or the presidential majority or other affiliations; 3) the socio-economic context, including the type of and access to sources of livelihoods and income; 4) civilian perceptions of and discourses surrounding the army; 5) the levels of demand by civilians of the "protective services" of the army, including to settle disagreements or to protect the community from sources of insecurity; and 6) the presence of competing security actors in the zone.¹¹ These are important to consider in the context of this evaluation, in analysing changes related to the programme's objectives. As shown throughout the report, the findings presented below point to the influence of these variables on the nature of civil-security relations (FARDC and PNC), and therefore, on the potential outcomes of the programme in the target zones.

Context

Security in DRC remains elusive. Decades of protracted armed conflict and persistent instability in the east of the country in particular have strained relations between national security forces and civilian populations. To many, military fatigues have come to be perceived as a source of threat, the "uniform of blood."¹² As in any conflict-affected setting, this has contributed to lingering civil-security distance and distrust. In effect, across the eastern region, FARDC and PNC personnel are often balancing their position as protectors versus that of arms of a predatory State. **Despite this, the findings of this final evaluation of Lobi Mokolo ya Sika indicate significant and encouraging improvement in relations between and perceptions of civil-security relations across implementation zones, with some noteworthy degrees of variation and nuance discussed in the body of the report.**

In the recent tense pre-electoral period, anti-government protests were reportedly met with a repressive response from State security forces, particularly in urban areas, highlighting the strained politico-security

⁹ Search for Common Ground (2018), *Security Sector Reform in DRC: 10 years of analysis and recommendations for ways forward*.

¹⁰ Verweijen, J. (2015), *The Ambiguity of Militarization. The complex interaction between the Congolese armed forces and civilians in the Kivu provinces, eastern DR Congo* (Utrecht University, Faculty of Humanities).

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² CLS Focus Group, Minova, October 2018.

situation and of civil-security relations in the country.¹³ With the exception of Kinshasa and perhaps the provincial capitals, such protests and attendant response did not occur in the areas targeted by the programme. Yet, the east of the country remains characterised by persistent and shifting instability, resulting from ongoing violence at the hands of myriad actors, including armed groups, unidentified armed actors, and some individual police and military personnel. In addition, populations are increasingly exposed to kidnappings for ransom in transport corridors, and Ebola outbreaks in the heavily conflict-affected regions of Beni in North Kivu and Kasenyi in Ituri.

Several changes were noted at the level of various FARDC and PNC units during the implementation of the different phases of LMYS and between the end of the fourth Phase and the time of the data collection. Such changes included *the rotation of certain units, changes in the commanders of units, the departure of certain committee members, and the loss of some equipment, notably relating to the media and communication component of LMYS.* Risks related to these changes have been mitigated throughout the implementation of the programme via Search's approach of collaborating with national and provincial level structures, notably the *Comités Nationaux de Pilotage, SECAS,* and the *Comités de Coordination Provinciaux.* Search also switched focus during the cost-extension phase of the LMYS programme to work more closely with local security committees (CLS) as an effort to reinforce durability and contribute to ensuring that outcomes related to relations among security forces and civilians are able to withstand changes in dynamics and trends as well as institutional and political shifts. Changes on the local levels, in terms of rotating units, departure of committee members and redeployment of commanders, however, may have had an impact on the durability of outcomes in communities as well as in the evaluation of certain activities.

In South Kivu, the security situation has been characterised by varying degrees of insecurity across its territories. The last year has seen an increase in kidnappings (notably in the Ruzizi Plain); armed robberies (notably in Walungu territory); as well as clashes between armed groups over areas of control, in some cases with the involvement of FARDC, notably in Fizi and Kalehe.¹⁴ The situation in Uvira, Fizi, and Shabunda remained particularly volatile in recent months due to the emergence of new armed groups, shifting alliances between groups, and FARDC unit redeployment.¹⁵ Livestock theft and attendant violence remains prevalent in the Ruzizi Plain in Uvira territory, related to intercommunal and land conflicts, with varying levels of engagement and response by FARDC units deployed in the area. As highlighted below, security issues of particular concern reported by respondents in this study included kidnappings (Luvungi); banditry and armed robberies across all three sites, and intercommunal conflicts.

In North Kivu, the security situation remains fragile in several territories. Beni remains the deadliest territory in the Kivu provinces, accounting for a third of murders committed in the provinces since the beginning of 2018, due to ongoing attacks generally ascribed to Allied Democratic Forces (ADF), but probably committed by a range of different armed factions.¹⁶ While significant clashes took place between FARDC and ADF, some continue to suspect FARDC complicity in violence targeting local populations.¹⁷ Violence has continued in the region in parallel to the intensifying Ebola outbreak, which continues to

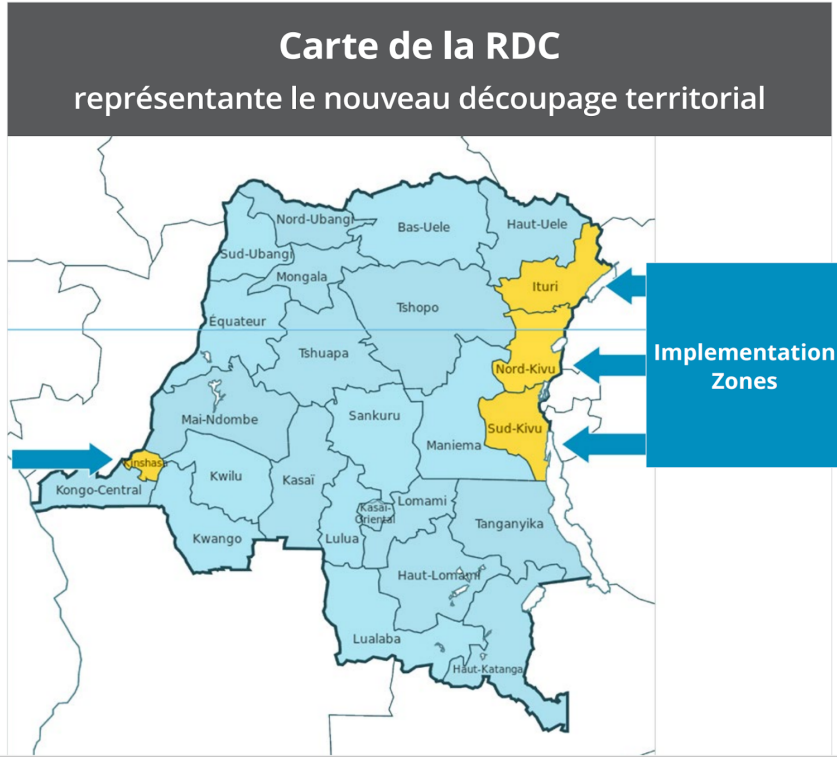
¹³ It is important to note that the data collection for the evaluation was conducted during the pre-electoral period and, therefore, cannot speak to the potential impact of the elections, and the role of State security forces therein, while ballots were cast and counted, not in their aftermath.

¹⁴ Kivu Security Tracker, August 2018.

¹⁵ Kivu Security Tracker, August 2018; UNSG (2018), *Report of the Secretary-General: United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo*, 1 October 2018, S/2018/882, p. 5.

¹⁶ Kivu Security Tracker, August 2018, p. 1; see Congo Research Group, 'Mass killings in Beni Territory,' 18 September 2017.

¹⁷ Congo Research Group, 'Mass killings'.



limit the humanitarian response against the virus.¹⁸ Also in the Grand Nord,¹⁹ Butembo is marked by ongoing banditry and an increase in murders of civilians has been reported yet, the links to armed groups are unclear.²⁰ In the Petit Nord, where this evaluation is geographically focused, the security situation remains tense.²¹

As reflected in the data collected in this evaluation, kidnappings for ransom have reportedly intensified, particularly in Rutshuru and represent “the most serious threat to human security” in the zone.²² Masisi remains fragile due to ongoing

intercommunal violence, internal fighting between armed groups and rival factions, compounded by clashes with FARDC and the deployment of a new unit.²³

The security situation in **Ituri** was marred by resurgence of violence in the province in 2018, notably in Djugu and Irumu, resulting from inter-communal conflict as well as attacks by Forces de Résistance Patriotique de l’Ituri (FRPI) against civilians and FARDC.²⁴ Dozens of civilians have been killed as a result of renewed violence in the province, while tens of thousands have been displaced, internally as well as across the border to Uganda.²⁵ While the overall security situation has remained relatively stable in Bunia and Kasenyi (Sud Irumu), they are now at the epicentre of the response, hosting IDP camps and informal settlements, and are home to the increasing efforts to contain the Ebola outbreak in the region.²⁶

¹⁸ Although Beni is a target zone for LMYS, it was not included in the sample for the evaluation due to security concerns and attendant resource limitations.
¹⁹ ‘Grand Nord’ and ‘Petit Nord’ refer to the two administrative regions of North Kivu, with the former grouping the territories of Beni and Lubero, and the latter grouping the territories of Nyiragongo Masisi, Rutshuru, and Walikale.
²⁰ Kivu Security Tracker, August 2018, p. 1.
²¹ Search for Common Ground (2016), Tomorrow is a New Day – Lobi Mokolo ya Sika Phase IV: Mid-Term Evaluation, p. 11.
²² Kivu Security Tracker, August 2018, p. 2.
²³ Kivu Security Tracker, August 2018, p. 2; UNSG (2018), *Report of the Secretary-General: United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo*, 1 October 2018, S/2018/882, p. 5.
²⁴ UNSG (2018), *Report of the Secretary-General: United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo*, 1 October 2018, S/2018/882, pp. 3-4.
²⁵ IRIN, “Ituri Province, DRC - a forgotten conflict erupts in northeastern DRC,” 4 April 2018.
²⁶ WHO, “Ebola virus disease - Democratic Republic of the Congo,” 4 October 2018.

Methodology

Objectives

The final evaluation has four main objectives, as listed in the terms of reference:

1. Assess the impact of the project in the original target areas and new areas of implementation;
2. Determine whether the intervention method, assumptions and risks are true and adaptable to the changing context in the intervention areas and potentially in other jurisdictions;
3. Understand if and to what extent the targeted groups have benefited from the programme;
4. Understand the extent to which programme benefits have been integrated into local, provincial and national structures.

Evaluation Questions

In order to respond to the above-mentioned objectives, the evaluation focused on the following lines of enquiry:

Contextual analysis and review of the literature

1. What has changed in terms of the security and political context and in terms of relations and behaviour between law enforcement and the public during the project?

Overall quality of programme design

1. What was the quality of the logical framework design and did it clearly show how the activities would achieve results and impact?
2. How has sustainability been incorporated into the design, i.e. is there a phasing out strategy? Has integration of cross-cutting and intersectional issues been taken into account (gender, human rights and governance, donor coordination and others)?
3. Has the process of planning, implementation, risk analysis and monitoring been integrated into the programme from start to finish?
4. How have the strengths and weaknesses of these processes affected the quality of the programme?
5. How has the project design established coordination, management and financial structures to encourage understanding of the design by partners and ensure local ownership and strengthen institutions?
6. How can this aspect be improved in the future?
7. How has the programme adapted in the new areas of intervention?

Relevance

1. Are the theory of change, the overall goal, the specific objectives, the results clear and logical? And have they responded to clearly identified needs?
2. To what extent has the programme demonstrated an ability to adapt the design to remain relevant?
3. Has the programme continued to meet the needs of the target groups during the implementation period?

Efficiency

1. Have the activities been completed on time? Why or why not?
2. How has Search worked with its partners and supported partners in complying with contractual procedures and transparency to facilitate the implementation of the programme?
3. How has the programme used key monitoring, management and budgeting tools to 1) ensure that implementation has evolved as planned (and has been rectified if it has not been implemented?) and 2) understanding and responding to positive and negative impacts to maximize opportunities and reduce risks?
4. How has the project coordinated with other similar interventions to encourage synergy and avoid duplication?

Effectiveness

1. To what extent have the objectives of the project been achieved?
2. How has product quality contributed to the achievement of specific objectives?
3. Do all intended target groups have access to project results?
4. How did the project approach gender mainstreaming in the programme, and how is the gender issue represented in the objectives achieved?

Impact

1. To what extent has the programme achieved its theory of change? Have external factors compromised or contributed positively to the achievement of the theory of change?
2. What were the results (at the level of changes in practices and institutions) expected and unexpected (positive and negative) of the programme?
3. To what extent has the programme actively contributed to the promotion of human rights?

Sustainability

1. What is the level of ownership of the programme by the target groups and is it likely to continue after the end of external assistance?
2. To what extent is the project integrated with local and institutional structures?

3. What level of political support is provided and the degree of interaction between the programme and the political level?
4. Do the policy changes and priorities of government actors affect the sustainability of the programme and how can it adapt to long-term support needs?
5. What is the level of ownership of the project's gender strategy by local populations and targeted stakeholders?

Research Team

The evaluation was carried out by a team of four international consultants, including:

1. Team Leader/Programme and M&E Specialist
2. Lead Research Specialist
3. Quantitative Research Specialist/Statistician
4. SSR Expert

The international team combines issue-specific expertise, in-country field experience and thematic experience in conducting research, designing monitoring and evaluating programmes, that contributed to the development of an empirically sound, ethically driven and programmatically relevant methodology for this final evaluation.

The data collection was conducted by a team of 21 research assistants and 3 local supervisors, organised in sub-teams of 8 persons per province. Research assistants were recruited via the international consultants' networks; the database of research assistants of Search and recommendations from the programme's *Chefs de mise en oeuvre*. Experience in the SSR domain, with the programme and in data-collection were among the top recruitment priorities for research assistants. Gender equity was also a careful consideration in the selection of the research assistants with each sub-team of 8 individuals having 3 women each. The research assistants and supervisors were trained by the Research Lead and the Team Leader at the start of the field phase over a period of three days, upon which a final team was then selected. While a pilot was initially planned in the team's inception report, due to accessibility and logistics reasons, the team preferred to 'pilot' the tools and practice the tablets in the training setting, using role-play and scenario-based methods. The data collection was supervised in the provinces by the supervisors with oversight from Goma by the Team Leader and support by the Research Lead from the UK.

Literature and Document Review

The team of consultants reviewed documents provided by Search for use in developing the methodology and in order to apprise themselves of all existing data for use in the final evaluation. Documents reviewed included:

1. The project's aligned log-frame
2. The baseline and mid-term evaluation reports
3. The Cost Extension Narrative document

4. The project’s gender strategy
5. Search SSR Communication strategy
6. Activity Reports

In addition to project documentation, the team conducted a literature review, analysing current trends and dynamics and academic publications related to the key themes of the project, notably perceptions toward and relationships among security forces and civilians, and security-related trends and dynamics. The literature review was key to providing a response to the evaluative question included in the Terms of Reference of the evaluation: *“What has changed in terms of the security and political context and in terms of relations and behaviour between law enforcement and the public during the project?”*

This literature review was included in the Inception Report and is also in annex to this Final Report.

Mixed Methods

The final evaluation utilised a mixed methodology, combining qualitative and quantitative methods and information as part of a participatory and inclusive approach to the data-collection. The surveys, interviews and focus groups were conducted in the four implementation provinces of the project in the following sites. Sites were selected at random and validated together with members of the SSR programme team based on activities, security and accessibility.

Table 2: Overview of Data Collection Sites

| Province | LMYS Site | LMYS and ISSSS priority site | Comment |
|------------|-------------------------------|------------------------------|--|
| Kinshasa | Kinshasa | | |
| North Kivu | Goma; Masisi centre; Rutshuru | Kitshanga | |
| South Kivu | Bukavu; Walungu; Luvungi | Minova | |
| Ituri | Bunia | Kasenyi; Mambassa | A fourth site: Mahagi, was initially planned in the preparatory phase of the evaluation that was dropped due to time and budget limitations. |

Quantitative Methodology

The population was determined to be **2,550,000 civilians, 2,500 FARDC personnel and 60,480 PNC personnel**, based on information available in the LMYS Mid-Term Report on the programme participants. The margin of error of the data collected in the final evaluation is **2.2%** estimated with a **95% confidence interval**.²⁷

The questionnaires were developed according to target respondents and as such three quantitative surveys were administered:

1. An individual questionnaire for civilian populations
2. An individual questionnaire for FARDC personnel
3. An individual questionnaire for PNC personnel

Qualitative Methodology

Qualitative information and tools complemented the quantitative findings. In particular, the qualitative tools sought to elucidate the *degree* and *nature* of change, if any, in civil-security relations perceived by beneficiaries over the course of Phase IV of LMYS, importantly, as defined in their own words. These also enabled insights into individual, contextual, and structural barriers to consistent and sustained change towards mutually trusting and collaborative civil-security relations. As such, in addition to providing 'human stories' behind the numbers, focus group discussions and interviews permitted a deeper understanding of people's perceptions, ideas, beliefs and experiences, underpinning the quantitative findings related to community dynamics and trends.

Focus group guides tailored to groups of respondents were developed in the preparatory phase of the evaluation, and reviewed and practiced during the training of the research assistants for applicability and understanding. **Guides were developed for the following groups of respondents:**

1. Civilian beneficiaries (male)
2. Civilian beneficiaries (female)
3. PNC personnel (male)
4. PNC personnel (female)
5. FARDC personnel (male)
6. FARDC personnel (female)
7. Base Committee members (FARDC and PNC)
8. Local Security Committee members

²⁷ The generally accepted margin of error is 5%. The sample size for the final evaluation was determined as it was so as to be proportional to that of the baseline sample, resulting in a margin of error of 2.2%. This, in effect, renders the sample estimates more precise than would 5% margin of error.

Gender homogeneous focus groups were conducted for the most part, except with the Local Security Councils some of which included female respondents. Focus groups were limited to 7 - 10 persons maximum and were conducted by a minimum of two research assistants, one focused on facilitation and the second on note-taking. Where focus groups were conducted with members of the security forces, special care was taken with regard to the ranks of participants in order to mitigate risks of bias in responses and promote a safe space for discussion wherein participants would not feel pressured to change or adapt their responses in the presence of members of their hierarchical structures.

In cases where respondents were not available to participate in focus-group discussions, the focus group guides doubled as interview guides for use in semi-structured interviews. Semi-structured interview guides were additionally developed for key stakeholders including: implementing partners, technical partners, governmental stakeholders and other actors. Interviews with these key stakeholders provided further insights into the implementation of the project, challenges encountered and lessons learned and into results related to overall programme quality and efficiency.

Table 3: Overview of Qualitative Sampling

| Province | Nb. of Interviews | Nb. of Focus Groups | Nb of persons reached |
|------------|-------------------|---------------------|-----------------------|
| Kinshasa | 8 | N/A | 14 |
| Ituri | 2 | 15 | 107 |
| North Kivu | 3 | 16 | 119 |
| South Kivu | 7 | 17 | 125 |

Respondent Profiles

The evaluation sought to engage with a diverse group of respondents from the various target groups of the programme. Respondents' demographic profiles are included in Annex D of this report. The following tables provide a breakdown of the participants in the evaluation by sex and target group for the quantitative and qualitative components alike, in each province.

Table 4: Overview of Respondents in Qualitative Beneficiary Sample

| Province | Civilian | | FARDC | | PNC | | CLS | |
|------------|-------------------------|----------------------------|-------------------------|----------------------------|-------------------------|----------------------------|-------------------------|----------------------------|
| | Total # in target group | % of women in target group | Total # in target group | % of women in target group | Total # in target group | % of women in target group | Total # in target group | % of women in target group |
| Ituri | 35 | 40% | 29 | 3.4% | 22 | 0 | 14 | 21% |
| South Kivu | 50 | 42% | 31 | 0 | 22 | 4.5% | 21 | 4.7% |
| North Kivu | 42 | 50% | 29 | 24% | 22 | 0 | 21 | 4.7% |

Table 5: Overview of Respondents in Quantitative Sample:

| Province | Civilian | | FARDC | | PNC | |
|------------|-------------------------|----------------------------|-------------------------|----------------------------|-------------------------|----------------------------|
| | Total # in target group | % of women in target group | Total # in target group | % of women in target group | Total # in target group | % of women in target group |
| Ituri | 150 | 42% | 86 | 0% | 94 | 2.1% |
| South Kivu | 279 | 42% | 180 | 1.7% | 141 | 7.8% |
| North Kivu | 276 | 39% | 194 | 1.6% | 178 | 4.5% |

Presentation of Results

This evaluation draws from the baseline and mid-term evaluation reports and other relevant programme documentation, as well as data collected from the programme's target participant groups. The report is structured according to the Terms of Reference for the evaluation, providing for a coherent analysis of LMYS' overall quality, relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, impact and sustainability at the close of its fourth phase. The key evaluative questions are addressed individually as well as considered collectively throughout the writing of the entirety of this report.

Each sub-section within this Presentation of Results provides an overview of the qualitative and quantitative data on key indicators of LMYS' success as outlined in the logical framework and discussed in the baseline and midterm. Where findings are particularly noteworthy, the report discusses the implications for Search and other key stakeholders, on programmatic and strategic levels. The report places an emphasis on understanding the different conditions under which the programme's Theory of Change can be achieved, that is, the development of mutual trust and confidence among civilians and members of the security forces.

While the findings of this report provide for interesting and critical reflection on the programme and its implementation, it is important to remind end-users that attributing impact to a given intervention in the context of the DRC, and particularly in the context of security sector reform work is extremely challenging. While tracking progress along domains of change related to the security sector is certainly possible, attributing this progress to specific actors or interventions can prove challenging. As mentioned in the LMYS midterm evaluation report *"The developing situation, the internal work done by the FARDC and the PNC, and the cumulative efforts of various security sector reform actors have, naturally, influenced these changes, which remain dynamic in the long-term."* This continues to hold true at the final evaluation stage.

That being said, the results of the evaluation point generally toward a positive increase in knowledge of the security forces and perceptions of civilians toward security forces linked to the programme's activities. Respondents were overall positive to various LMYS activities, with particular emphasis on the importance of the solidarity activities in strengthening local ties among the different target groups. **The evaluation further determined that trust exists between civilians and security actors within limits** and, crucially, that LMYS activities have tangibly contributed towards promoting mutual civil-security trust. This report highlights additionally constraining and promoting factors for trust in this context as well as attempts to explain markers of trust based on data from programme participants.

This report therefore aims to provide insight into the achievement of the programme outcomes while encouraging strategic reflection by Search and LMYS partners on various levels on issues like "mutual trust", "fear in civil-military relations", "mutual responsibilities", and other key issues related to, as well as assumptions underpinning, the programme's Theory of Change.

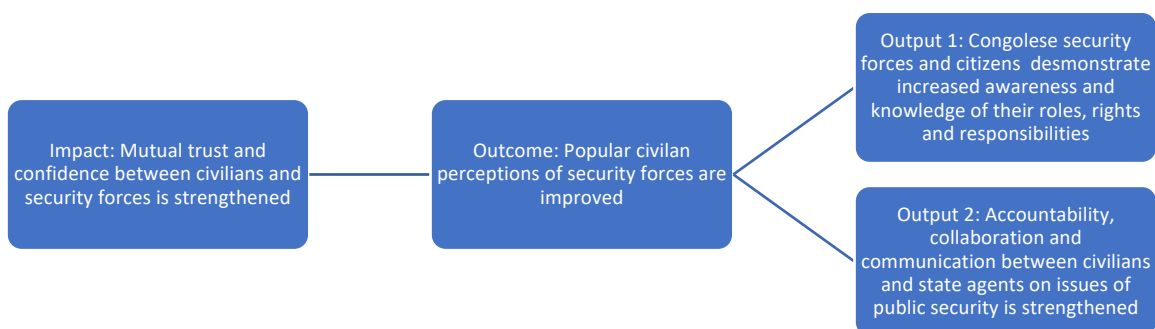
Overall Quality of Programme Design

This section discusses the overall quality of the design of the LMYS logical framework and accompanying activities and indicators. The section additionally briefly considers cross-cutting issues like planning and monitoring, sustainability and coordination with partners, as well as the integration of human rights and gender into the programme.

Logical Framework Design

The LMYS logical framework was reviewed progressively over the course of the implementation of the programme, in an effort to respond to changing priorities, alignment with ISSSS criteria, and remain relevant to the realities across the three targeted provinces for implementation. The log-frame version at the time of the evaluation, dated 31 March 2018, validated by DfID also integrated ISSSS indicators. These aligned ISSSS indicators were evaluated and data provided to the Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) cell within the Stabilisation Support Unit of MONUSCO in the course of this evaluation.

Figure 1: Impact, Outcome and Expected Outputs according to LMYS logical framework dated 31 March 2018



Key stakeholders interviewed highlighted that the activities proposed in the LMYS programme contributed to the achievement of the programme's overall objectives. PNC and FARDC actors on the national level, lauded the solidarity activities in particular, including *community fields* and *football games* as having contributed significantly to the achievement of the outcome "Popular civilian perceptions of security forces are improved". One national level FARDC actor interviewed stated that with the solidarity activities "*now the population saw them (the military) as human*" (FARDC, KII, Kinshasa).

Activities such as the Town Hall meetings and Community Scorecards also reportedly contributed to reinforcing collaboration among civilian populations and the security forces. **In particular, these activities created important and otherwise relatively rare opportunities for constructive collaboration between civilian populations and Congolese security forces.**

Both FARDC and PNC actors interviewed alike spoke additionally to the critical importance of the training and sensitization activities within LMYS.

“Search’s methodology in this programme has been very captivating for us, particularly the media tools and components. The simplicity of the methods and the language has helped everyday people understand easily the key messages. Solidarity activities between military members and civilians, like meals that we prepare together are very symbolic. Military members serve the civilians and vice versa. These activities have helped clean the image of our civil institutions. Now everyday people see us more as humans.”

FARDC, KII, Kinshasa

While the evaluation indicated that the activities proposed by the LMYS programme were clear, logical and contributed to the achievement of the programme’s expected outcomes, a potential issue was noted in terms of whether all of the indicators appropriately measure the work of the activities of the programme. For example, indicators such as **% of the population stating that they have experienced soldiers' wives demanding first access at water points in the last twelve months**, included in the logical framework are intended to serve as proxy-indicators for measuring changes in perceptions and trust toward military wives – yet the programme had no specific activities that would necessarily yield direct impact on this issue in communities. The aptness of this indicator to capture changes in trust among civilian populations and security forces is also limited.

Similarly, the LMYS log-frame includes an indicator related to roadblocks, that is: **% of the population stating that they have encountered army roadblocks in the last twelve months**. This is intended to capture civilian experiences of the security forces in comparison to the training received by these security forces. Yet this might not appropriately measure impact related to the activities implemented by LMYS which did not necessarily target root causes and/or other entrenched institutional challenges and norms within the security forces behind the persistence of roadblocks.

Sustainability and other cross-cutting issues

As will be discussed more in detail later in the report, the evaluation suggested that LMYS activities have continued to varying degrees in certain locations but in an ad hoc manner. The evaluation indicated additionally that a formalised exit strategy has not yet been developed, or if one had been, it has not yet appropriately disseminated to different programme participants, the majority of whom could not confirm that they were aware of an existing phasing-out strategy for the programme.

Despite the lack of clarity around an existing exit-strategy per se, **during the cost extension phase, Search placed particular emphasis on reinforcing the durability of LMYS outcomes via a strategic switch to focus more on the work of the local security committees vs direct support to mechanisms within the security forces**. These local security committees, created due to governmental decree and playing a critical role in the DRC government’s efforts in decentralisation and stabilisation, are not tied to the programme and the switch represented a more durable manner of continuing LMYS related activities in communities.

Additionally, during the course of the implementation of LMYS, Search has maintained a close partnership with the SECAS. During the cost-extension phase Search collaborated with EU PROGRESS and the FARDC in order to support the institutionalisation of the Common Ground Approach in FARDC training curricula. This work on institutionalisation has taken the form of Search experts revising training modules and

materials designed by the FARDC to ensure the integration of the Common Ground Approach (CGA) and key themes surrounding human rights, gender and civil-military relations. To this end, Search successfully ensured the integration of modules touching on these themes in the training curriculum and supported EU-PROGRESS in conducting a pilot training based on the new curriculum, which took place in Kisangani. SECAS had reportedly not yet finalised the training curriculum by the end of the project and so other key activities geared toward the institutionalisation of sensitisation and educational approaches were postponed.²⁸

Notably, while the cost extension sought to strengthen collaboration in geographically peripheral areas in an effort to reinforce durability, the evaluation found limited evidence of this having been achieved. In fact, the concentration of activities in town centres at the exclusion of the peripheries was among the limitations most consistently highlighted across respondent groups and across target zones.²⁹ Crucially, this limited possibilities for interactions and their potential for trust and relationship building to populations in the centre.

Cross-cutting issues like gender, human rights and Do No Harm have by and large been integrated in the programme, with some limitations. Sexual and gender-based violence prevention has been a key theme in Search's training/sensitisation content and mediated activities. Importantly, a Gender Strategy was also developed by Search which provided the basis for the development of an FARDC Gender Strategy, as discussed more in detail later on in this report. However, while some activities took place targeting increasing women's participation in activities and mechanisms like the local security committees, the effective and systematic implementation of this strategy remains largely limited.³⁰ Search programme staff identified as a weakness in the overall design of the programme, that the baseline study did not provide much gender specific insight and the logical framework at the outset was not gender sensitive. Search programme staff additionally suggested that weak gender-responsive budgeting in the planning of the programme's financial and human resources also limited LMYS gender-related activities to advocacy. Little to no budget was reportedly available for the implementation of gender-specific actions resulting from advocacy. Furthermore, while it is clear that the prevention of sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) figured highly in LMYS as it was designed, other gender related issues, touching on women's meaningful participation in peacebuilding processes and women's participation in security forces and security governance were not adequately addressed by the programme.

While FARDC national level respondents in particular spoke to changing attitudes toward PMF: *Personnel Militaire Feminin*, insisting that the term itself was on its way to becoming obsolete as female military personnel should be considered the same as male (FARDC, KII, Kinshasa) – interviews with Search programme staff highlighted that women's participation in the military remained weak and that those who were already members of the security forces suffered greatly due to poor working conditions, discrimination and sexual abuse. The evaluation reached limited numbers of female members of the security forces due to their minimal presence in data-collection sites and so these issues were not able to be discussed in a targeted manner with female military personnel.

²⁸ SFCG LMYS 8th Interim Report.

²⁹ Further limits to the inclusiveness of LMYS democratic dialogue activities in particular were noted in the February 2018 monitoring report conducted by Search. In addition to the geographical limitations noted in the main text, the monitoring report also underscored further constraints to participation, including that the BS and TEP were at times conducted in French and that the participation by representatives from the security forces was often weak, limiting the potential for a) inclusive and representative dialogue and b) for collective and collaborative decision-making and responses to security concerns raised in the sessions.

³⁰ Annex B discusses Search's Gender Strategy in more detail.

“The female military personnel would tell us “My body belongs to the State just like my weapon”.”

KII Search programme staff

Search programme staff shared nevertheless that LMYS undertook efforts to respond to these challenges facing women in the armed forces. Feedback from female military personnel reportedly figured highly in the FARDC Gender Strategy that was developed drawing from the LMYS Gender Strategy. Workshops were also conducted with female military personnel, recommendations from which were then included in *actes d’engagement* which were to be signed by relevant members of PNC and FARDC hierarchy and made publicly available as an accountability measure. These *actes d’engagement* included recommendations from female personnel related to infrastructure in camps (notably separate toilets for men and women); child care and other issues. This valuable best practice demonstrates the programme’s responsiveness to gendered needs, as well as a sign of buy-in from the security forces, however the evaluation is limited in its capacity to determine if the *actes d’engagement* were later endorsed or implemented. Programme staff highlighted furthermore that actions from these *actes d’engagement* were not financed by LMYS and so it was unclear if and to what extent they might have been implemented.

Search staff also shared that particular advances were made in terms of integrating gender in the local security committees. Search programme staff reported that due to advocacy conducted with the local security committees and the provincial focal points of the Ministry of Interior, the participation of women in these local security governance mechanisms had increased and the security plans produced by each committee integrated gender-specific questions notably questions related to ‘*maisons de tolerance*’ or brothels in communities and potential risks for violence faced by women. While the evaluation was able to speak to 5 female members of local security committees, it is unclear what this participation of women in these fora amounts to, i.e. if their participation is meaningful and to what extent the local security plans and gendered points within them respond to the real needs of women and girls and/or if they are implemented.

As mentioned earlier, one major success of the LMYS Programme was that its Gender Strategy gave inspiration to and formed the basis for the development of a Gender Strategy within the FARDC. National level FARDC actors interviewed during the final evaluation lauded this development that took place as a result of the LMYS programme. The final step of validating the strategy had not taken place after the close of the project in May 2018. These military actors highlighted additionally that they had conducted advocacy for the nomination of unit-level gender focal points within each unit as well as for the creation of a mechanism specific to the coordination of gender-related issues.³¹ They recommended that in future phases of LMYS, reinforcing gender-integration should be a key strategic priority, notably via a wider distribution of the gender strategy, with a particular focus not only on sexual and gender-based violence prevention but also on addressing gender-discrimination and promoting the *meaningful* participation of women within their units. the security forces.³²

³¹ The evaluation is limited in its capacity to determine if these actions have been implemented and/or to what degree.

³² As discussed later on this report, increased participation of women in security forces might not necessarily serve to strengthen military-civilian relations or relations specifically between women and the security forces. It would be key for Search and other actors to engage in targeted research surrounding gender and SSR, notably women’s participation in security forces and how this might impact upon civil-military relations in order to guide future advocacy efforts.

Importantly, these actors spoke to the fact that though women already participate in security forces, their participation is limited to specific roles with limited authority. Search programme staff also affirmed that one of the key issues limiting women's participation in the security forces and also in security governance mechanisms in their communities was related to women's '*level of (educational) instruction*'. Given that some activities, notably those related to dialogue, accountability and solidarity, were additionally not yet fully accessed by some members of communities, including women and populations living in more remote areas of target zones, this limiting factor to women's participation is crucial. In future reflections on strengthening the programme's ability to reach all target groups of the population.

Key informants spoke additionally to the importance of Search trainings and sensitisations in promoting human rights and the respect of these among security forces. The content of the sensitisation and training tools of course focus largely on matters related to human rights and the roles of the security forces in the protection of civilians. Questions related to sexual and gender-based violence, denunciation and appropriate response to crimes figure highly in LMYS' media components as well. In interviews with national-level FARDC actors, it was highlighted that the FARDC had made remarkable advances in the fight against impunity and the prevention of sexual violence committed within its ranks. While no statistics were available from these actors, the UN SG report on Conflict Related Sexual Violence for 2018 documented nevertheless an increase in the number of conflict related sexual violence incidents attributed to both FARDC and the PNC between 2016 and 2017.³³ The report goes on however to explain that "despite recent developments of concern, the overall number of incidents of conflict-related sexual violence by elements of the State security apparatus has declined since 2013, following concerted efforts by the authorities."³⁴

Finally, the programme coordinated with various partners to support the durability of its activities and its outcomes on the local levels. NGO partners like Justice Plus and Alpha Ujuvi in particular, played important roles in ensuring the monitoring and evaluation of activities as well as in facilitating reporting and fund-disbursement to local committees for the implementation of activities. Members of the security forces expressed frustration however that this choice of a financial management structure left them feeling dependent and unempowered. As discussed later in the report in the section on Sustainability, programme participants also highlighted challenges related to this, highlighting that the implementation of activities was dependent on Search's financing.

³³ UN SG Report on Conflict Related Sexual Violence 2017. Available [here](#).

³⁴ UNSG (2018), *2017 Report of the Secretary General on conflict-related sexual violence*, 23 March 2018, p. 12.

Relevance

This section outlines the relevance of the LMYS Theory of Change and the programme's ability to adapt to its shifting implementation context and in the needs of its beneficiaries. The section discusses generally the Theory of Change before giving details on LMYS activities and their specific relevance to their needs as reported during the evaluation.

Theory of Change

The Theory of Change identifies **knowledge and awareness of rights and responsibilities**, on the one hand, and the **opportunities to communicate and interact in an open, transparent, and constructive way**, on the other, as the key mechanisms through which to achieve civil-security relations defined by mutual trust and collaboration. **The key assumptions underpinning the ToC and the programme, therefore, are that, prior to programme implementation:**

1. Congolese security forces and local populations were insufficiently aware of their mutual rights and responsibilities;
2. Congolese security forces and civilians had insufficient opportunities to engage in an open, transparent, and constructive way;
3. Therefore, that increasing knowledge and awareness of mutual rights and responsibilities *and* creating and institutionalising opportunities for civilians and security forces to interact will translate into behaviour change that, in turn, will promote mutual trust and collaboration.

***If** Congolese security forces and civilians gained knowledge and awareness about their roles, rights and mutual responsibilities and **if** they are able to communicate and interact in a more open, transparent and constructive manner, **then**, the behaviour, relationships and trust between them will improve.*

LMYS Theory of Change

The evaluation findings suggested that the assumptions underpinning the LMYS Theory of Change were true and relevant to the context in which the programme was then implemented. Security forces and civilian populations alike lauded in particular opportunities that brought civilians and the security forces together in the spirit of encouraging reconciliation, solidarity and accountability.

"The population has accused us of not contributing to their well-being. That's why the most important objective for us (with LMYS) is to change the image of the police and to engage in real reform within our ranks. Training – we already do. Equipment – our technical partners do that. But our image and our transformation need to be done – that was the role of Search and this programme."

PNC KII respondent, Kinshasa

The Theory of Change is limited however in its final assumption, linking increased knowledge to behaviour change and relationships of mutual trust. While increased knowledge and mutual understanding are key and **can** be achieved via increased opportunities for exchange and collaboration, there exist myriad other

obstacles and barriers that may hinder the translation of knowledge into actual, consistent and sustained behaviour change – at an individual, collective, and institutional level – and still more that impact the development of relationships of trust among civilians and security forces that are outside the scope of the Theory of Change and indeed the programme as it was designed. These factors are discussed in the Literature Review as well as the Impact and Effectiveness sections of this report.

Though insecurity led to a reduction of activities in certain territories (e.g. South Irumu), LMYS has demonstrated its adaptability to responding to the demands of a complex security situation as well as competing donor and partner requirements. LMYS activities have been adjusted over the course of the period in order to respond to donor priorities, adapt to alignment within ISSSS, as well as cope with budget and programme challenges and limitations. Search programme staff highlighted how the team had leveraged synergies with other related projects internally in order to mitigate the impacts of risks related to external change.

Collaboration with local NGO partners and their focal points in the targeted project locations has also facilitated the continued implementation of activities, including in zones with limited access due to security and logistics reasons. These partners were charged with accompanying the different *comités de proximité*, monitoring the implementation of activities, receiving reports and facilitating funds disbursements to these actors. This decentralisation coupled with close collaboration with provincial and local representatives within the security forces contributed to the embeddedness of the programme in the areas in which it was implemented.

Importantly, LMYS dialogue tools have also been used to address current conflicts, allegations and strengthen confidence and collaboration among civilians and security forces. The nature of these activities, notably the Community scorecards and Town Hall meetings, reinforce the adaptability of the programme, as the themes raised and discussed emanate from current issues in the community. For example, in South Kivu, in response to local dynamics including repeated incursions by Burundian armed groups, Search organised Community scorecard and Town Hall activities in order to address accusations that youth from the Barundi tribe in the Ruzizi plains were involved in these armed incursions.³⁵ Similarly, in Walungu, one civil society actor interviewed highlighted how the Community scorecards helped shed a light on the issue of how women were being mistreated at PNC and FARDC roadblocks. Similarly, the CLS in Kasenyi, highlighted that their activities addressed and curbed recourse to popular justice in the community and helped put an end to roadblocks staged by armed bandits. Overall, the application of the LMYS dialogue tools to a diversity of security concerns underscores their adaptability to addressing priority issues, as defined by local stakeholders at any given time.

Cost Extension Phase

During the cost-extension phase, while the programme’s Theory of Change remained unchanged the same, specific changes to the approach were proposed, based on the findings of the mid-term evaluation. These proposed adjustments were as follows:

Specific Objective 1

- Institutionalising the LMYS curriculum within the PNC and FARDC instructional centres;

³⁵ Search-FY 2017 Interim Report_December to June 2017.

- Support to more durable awareness raising and training strategies;
- Accent on strengthening the collaboration between the communication units of the PNC and FARDC and the community in general and community radio in particular;
- Shift in media productions towards highlighting concrete examples of collaboration and enabling various media outlets to be able to produce their own programs along these lines;
- Strengthened collaboration and accountability measures in targeted geographically peripheral areas

Specific Objective 2

- Harness joint solidarity activities towards the locations most in need;
- Ensure local security action plans in remote *chefferies*;
- Piloting new tools to catalyse accountability including a sharpened focus on gender sensitivity

The evaluation findings affirmed the relevance and the value of these changes and adjustments, while underscoring the need to reinforce change-management practices within Search, in order to ensure that partners are informed, equipped and prepared to manage strategic changes.

Members of the PNC *Cellule de Réforme* interviewed in Kinshasa, commented that a key challenge with the previous approach of LMYS, was related to the durability of the implantation of new committees, which reportedly ceased to exist after external support was ended within the framework of the programme. This further affirms the strategic switch to work more closely with the local security committees rather than the creation and implantation of new committees. This switch also demonstrated the programme's alignment with relevant priorities, as the local security committees form key components of the ISSSS implementation action plans and DRC's political priorities related to decentralisation. Local security committees are additionally charged with developing local security action plans that respond to the specific needs of their communities. Search programme staff reportedly conducted advocacy with these committees to ensure that these plans were gender-sensitive and responded to the needs of women and girls in their communities.

The representative of the FARDC communication cell, the (SCIFA) shared his particular appreciation for Search's renewed focus on collaborating with the unit particularly during the cost-extension phase. The SCIFA highlighted the importance of the equipment that had been doted to the cellule in empowering them to fulfil their mandate as the communication branch of the armed forces.

While the programme has demonstrated its adaptability on a larger-scale, it was noted that the programme was limited in its capacity to integrate recommendations from different programme participants due to the 'rigidity of project design'.³⁶ Bearing in mind that the programme team has collected recommendations through various programme participants in the course of regular monitoring, the following sub-section highlights non-exhaustively some key perspectives from different programme participants on LMYS activities.

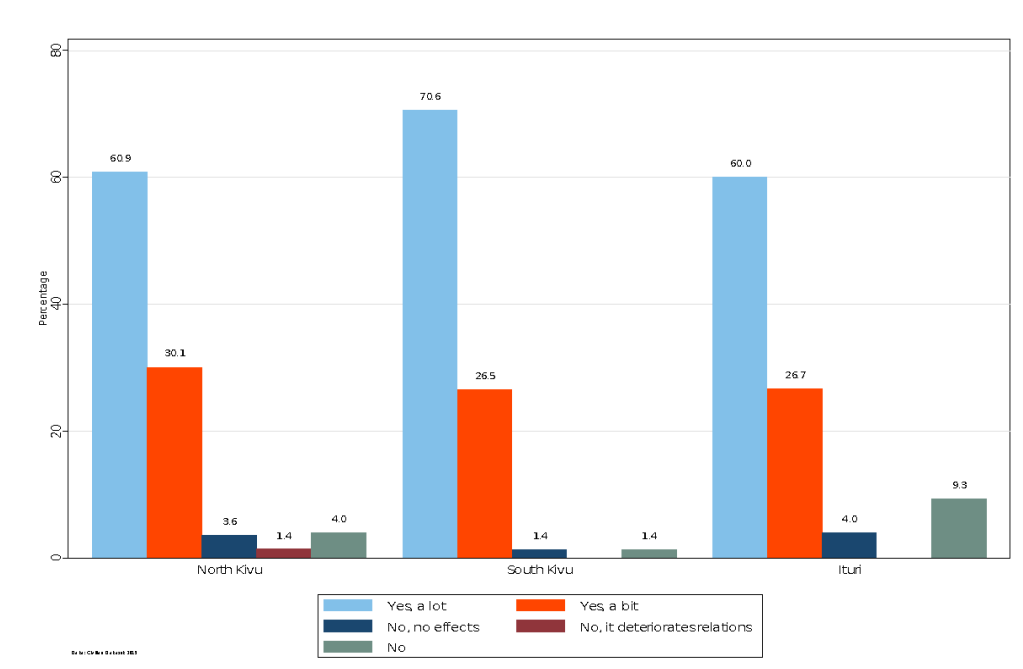
³⁶ Search LMYS 8th Interim Report.

Perspectives of the Target Groups

In broad terms, key stakeholders affirmed that though this was not necessarily sustained throughout the programme, they had participated to some degree in the development of the overall programme, thereby contributing to ensuring that the programme’s activities responded to the priorities of its target participants. National-level actors within the FARDC and PNC interviewed, affirmed that the *Comités Nationaux de Pilotage* had been implicated in the strategic orientation of the programme.

The majority of civilian respondents felt that LMYS solidarity activities contributed to reinforcing collaboration between themselves and members of the military and police.

Figure 2: Civilian perspectives on whether LMYS solidarity activities contributed to favouring collaboration between civilians and members of the military



Reflections from focus groups and interviews with various actors further affirmed the relevance of solidarity activities.

“Nowadays I receive phone calls from civilians; not civilians like big leaders, civilians without important roles in their community to signal that there is a problem. This is because we were able to exchange our contact details during the solidarity activities and town hall meetings (tribunes d’expression populaire)”

FARDC Commander, Mambasa

Importantly, and as was echoed across intervention sites, solidarity activities provided an opportunity to reduce the entrenched mutual fear and distrust between target groups while permitting relationships to develop between them. Solidarity activities such as *salongo* (collective work) and football matches

reportedly offer chances to build relationships between civilians and national security personnel on a human level, **beyond the defining characteristics of FARDC and PNC uniforms**. Highlighting some of their potential in this regard, in Kasenyi one PNC focus group participant proudly shared that he met his now wife during one of the LMYS supported football matches. Across focus groups, particularly with civilian men, respondents shared that they now would have a drink or food with security force personnel in an informal capacity, demonstrating improved relationships among them in their communities.

“My wife who I live with now, we met during a football match organised with civilians in Bunia. I had the chance to approach her to ask for her phone number and her address. She was surprised to see that I had studied and that I had ideas, to the point that we got married.”

PNC, Mambasa

43% of civilian respondents had participated in a Town Hall meeting, with the majority of those respondents having participated reporting feeling that they contributed to improving security in their communities (55% in North Kivu, 51% in South Kivu and 61% in Ituri).

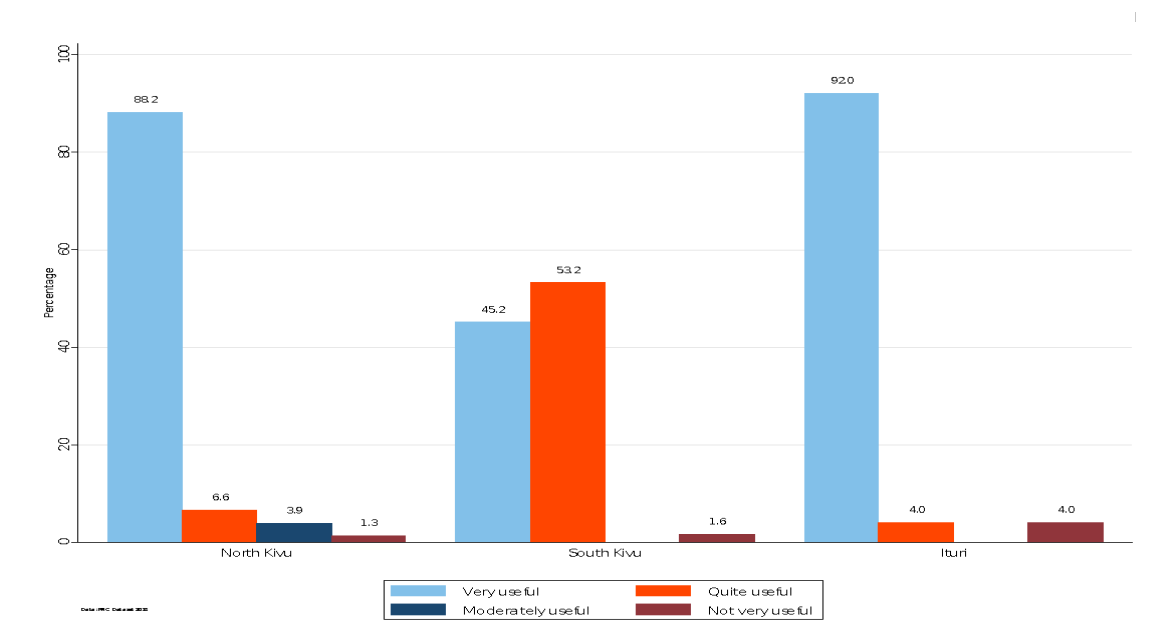
Women’s participation in the Town Hall meetings was generally lower than men’s, but across provinces reached 40% overall, which is positive (47.6% of the overall civilian male population sampled had participated in a Town Hall). It is worth noting, however, that participants in the female civilian focus groups in Minova and Mambasa, had not heard of either the community scorecards or the Town Hall meetings. Nevertheless, for civilians who participated, including women, there was a sense that these activities permitted dialogue, exchange on matters of collective security, and for some, having the chance to understand the military action plans in the face of security concerns provided some reassurance as well (Civilian women, Rutshuru).

43% of the PNC sampled in North Kivu, 44% in South Kivu and 69% in Ituri reported that they had participated in Community scorecard activities. Among those members of the PNC surveyed who had participated in the community score card activities, **88% and 92% of participants in North Kivu and Ituri respectively responded that they improved security in their communities.** In South Kivu, responses were slightly more measured, with a majority of PNC respondents affirming that the community score card activities were ‘quite useful’ in their communities. It is not clear across target zones what factors account for this disparity, however, one PNC respondent in Minova explained that from his perspective “the role of the town hall meetings is to shine a singularly negative light on the police” (PNC interview, Minova). The importance of focusing on ‘*mutual roles and responsibilities*’ in sensitisation and dialogue activities within the framework of LMYS is discussed further later on in this report.

The vast majority of PNC participants found that Town Hall meetings addressed the needs of women and girls in their communities (99% in North Kivu, 99% in South Kivu and 96% in Ituri). Similarly, for members of the FARDC, 92% of respondents in North Kivu, 96% in South Kivu and 98% in Ituri reported that these activities sufficiently addressed the needs of women and girls in their communities. Responses from civilians were slightly more measured with 57% of individuals in North Kivu, 75% in South Kivu and 75% in Ituri reporting that the activities addressed sufficiently the needs of women and girls in their communities. According to respondents, among the issues discussed in Town Hall meetings included sexual and gender-based violence (in the community and conflict-related), the impacts of kidnappings on women, and the insecurity facing women travelling to and working in the fields. However, as mentioned above and discussed later in this report, women did not always have full access to these dialogue mechanisms.

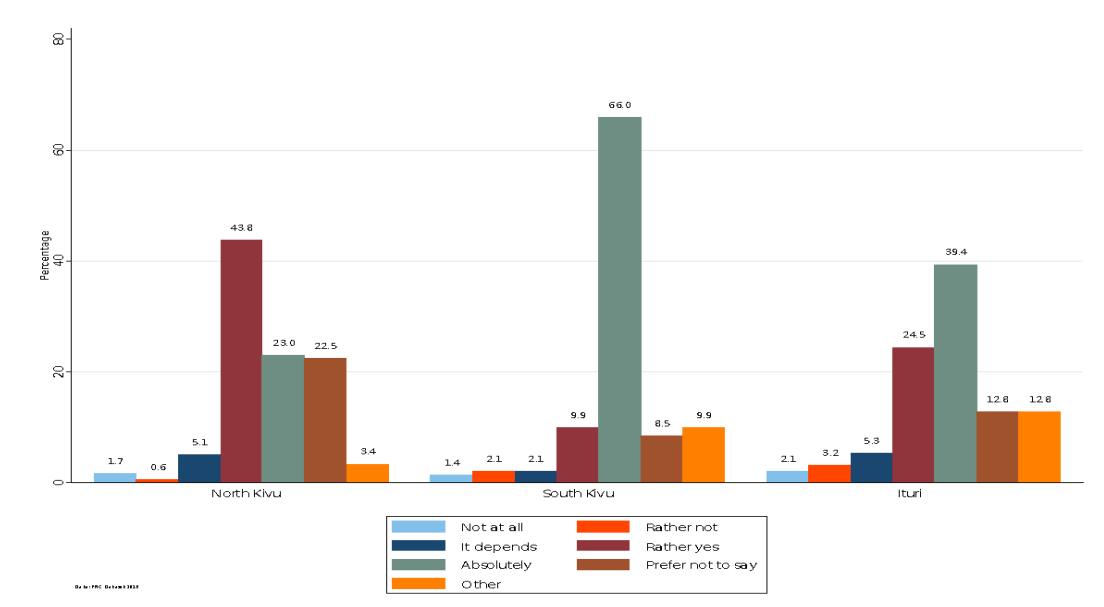
Members of the FARDC hierarchy explained that **one of the key strengths of the LMYS programme was Search’s approach of developing its training modules and selecting training themes together with the security forces, which served to contribute to their relevance and appropriateness to the needs of the security forces themselves.** FARDC officers interviewed at the national level spoke at length about how this was a unique added-value of Search’s approach to training and capacity reinforcement. The officers interviewed additionally spoke to the fact that the sensitisation tools were simple, clear and in appropriate language, therefore promoting an understanding of the key messages by members of the security forces. **In LMYS’ target provinces, the greater part of FARDC members surveyed reported having integrated the training they had received in their daily work practices.**

Figure 3: Perceptions of members of the FARDC on if they had integrated information shared during training/sensitisation activities



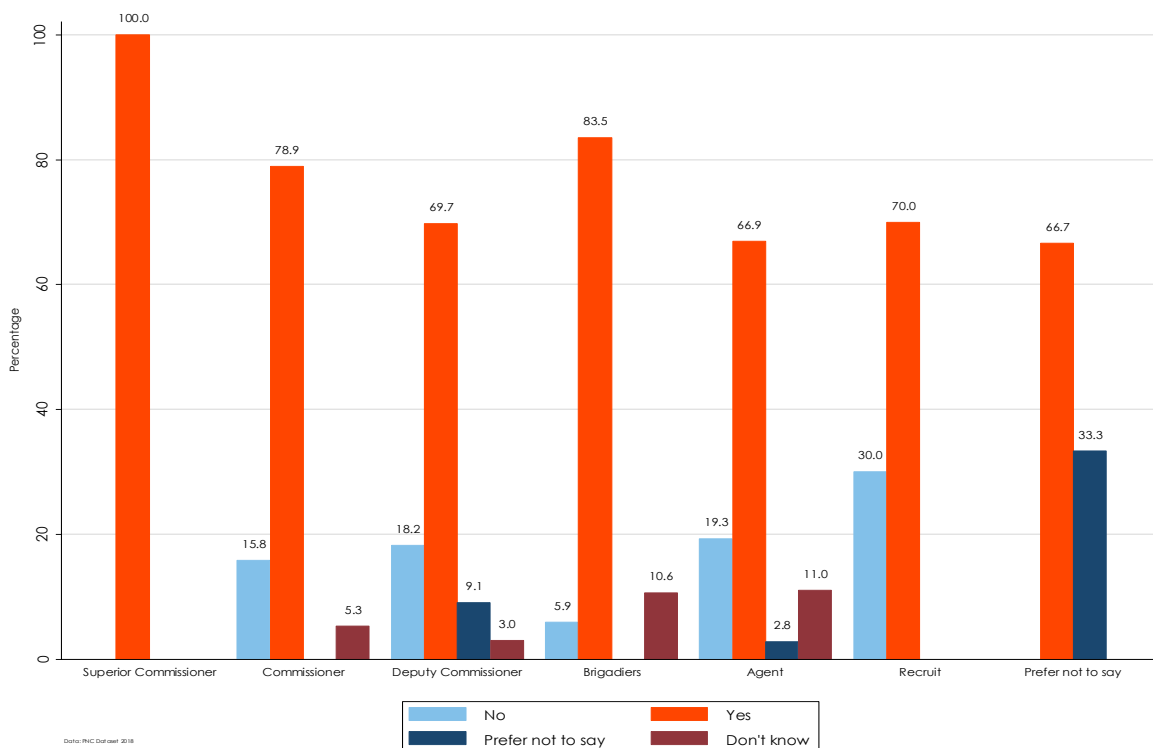
Members of the PNC sampled affirmed similarly for the most part that they had integrated the training they had received into their work practices, as displayed in the graph below. When those who responded that they had not integrated in the training were asked why, no responses were given.

Figure 4: Breakdown by province of police members' perceived integration of training principles



The majority of PNC respondents surveyed highlighted additionally that their behaviour towards survivors of SGBV had changed due to the training/sensitisation they had participated in, as part of the LMYS programme.

Figure 5: Breakdown of PNC participants reporting treating SGBV survivors differently since participating in a Base Committee training/sensitisation activity by rank



However, when asked why PNC members thought that the CdB training and sensitisation activities (related to SGBV) had **not** resulted in individual behaviour change towards more effective responses to SGBV, the majority of respondents noted a **lack/insufficient amount of training** as the primary reason, closely followed by **challenges in transmitting the dossiers of victims**.³⁷ In South Kivu, 50% of respondents cited “lack/insufficient training” and another 50% similarly cited a lack of capacity, as to why the sensitisation activities had not yet translated into behaviour change. Since respondents could choose multiple options in the survey, the third most selected option for South Kivu respondents was “a lack of support from their commanders.” The majority of respondents in Ituri selected a “lack of capacity” and in North Kivu “challenges in transmitting dossiers” as the main limitation in implementing takeaways from training and sensitisation.

Focus Groups and interviews with members of the various target groups pointed to additional challenges that might hinder the integration of training principles into the everyday practices of the security forces, for example, the **non-payment of salaries** and **poor living/work conditions**. Members of the security forces themselves spoke, unsurprisingly, to the **lack of sufficient equipment and resources** that would permit them to adapt and integrate lessons from trainings, particularly in peripheral zones outside of the town centres. In focus groups, respondents from the security forces notably and persistently highlighted challenges relating to the lack of transport and/or fuel to limiting the fulfilment of their duties.³⁸

These challenges to changing police practices to align with the training were beyond the scope of LMYS as it was designed, yet, as is discussed later in this report, the effectiveness of response and access to services is a key factor in trust-building between civilians the security forces. While opportunities to address external structural challenges associated with the justice/legal system in the context of this current phase of LMYS were limited,³⁹ it is nonetheless clear that **experiences and perceptions of civilians with regard to the justice system and the fight against impunity play a role in their perceptions of and relations with the security forces**. Limitations and obstacles to access to justice for myriad factors external to this programme, contribute to setting the stage for perceptions of and interactions with security forces. For instance, fears of reprisal attacks – reinforced by the all too ubiquitous experiences of accused perpetrators being released from the justice system after having been reported – can impact upon, and indeed limit, civilian willingness to interact with the military judicial institutions. **While providing training and sensitisation to national security personnel are an important and relevant step towards promoting more responsive and accountable security forces, these cannot address the institutional obstacles and entrenched institutional norms impeding the functioning of the security and justice sectors**. While it is understood that support to different sectors related to that of SSR, including but not limited to, access to justice, did not figure among the priorities of this phase of LMYS, it might be important for programme architects and managers to consider the pertinence of mitigating the potential impact of these factors on the relevance and effectiveness of LMYS. This may be accomplished via partnerships and synergy with other actors, including consortium efforts.

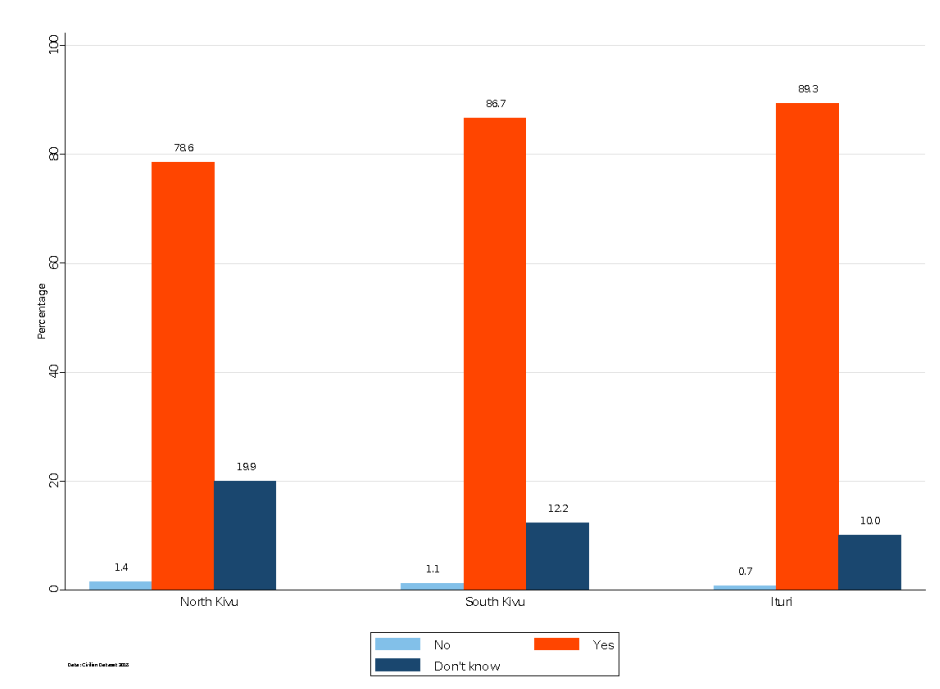
³⁷ No further data was available as to the type of training still needed. Institutional challenges faced by the security forces are discussed throughout the report.

³⁸ In addition to these material factors, which are often highlighted in self-reporting, research on the behavior of combatants in war suggests that obstacles for the translation of knowledge imparted during training into behavior also lie in informal norms, group pressure, the strength of norm enforcement mechanisms (punishment and rewards) and the strength of command chains. See Fiona Terry and Brian McQuinn (2018), *The Roots of Restraint in War*. Geneva: ICRC and Wood, E. J. (2018). Rape as a practice of war: Toward a typology of political violence. *Politics & Society*, 46(4), 513–537.

³⁹ As alluded to above and as further explained below, unlike previous iterations of the programme, LMYS - Phase IV did not work directly with or provide support to the military judicial system.

Media activities as a core component of the LMYS programme maintained the widest reach across target zones. 74% of women and 87% of men in the civilian population sampled had listened to a Centre Lokolé emission. 100% of female and 86% of male members of the military and 71% female police officers and 89% of male police officers sampled had also listened to a radio or television emission.

Figure 6: Breakdown by province of civilian perceptions related to if Search radio/TV emissions reflected realities in their communities



The vast majority of civilians in the three implementation provinces (78.6% in North Kivu, 86.7% in South Kivu and 89.3% in Ituri) stated that the sketches and storylines **reflected the realities in their communities**. The same respondents felt that the episodes represented the particular situation for women in their communities well, with 89% overall of individuals surveyed in North Kivu, 98% in South Kivu and 98% in Ituri reporting this. **Quantitative and qualitative findings indicated however that fewer women had access to the media activities, notably radio emissions.** Greater emphasis was placed on this disparity and greater insights were revealed in the focus groups than came through the survey results. In the survey, 74% of civilian women responded that they had listened to a Search broadcast (*émission*), which is high and only 13% less than the proportion of men sampled. **In focus groups with civilian women and men, as well as with base committees, however, participants revealed that women and girls by and large did not listen to the programmes.** Indeed, across focus groups in the target zones, it was almost ubiquitously stated that women generally do not have

“Educated women, women who are often at home have heard the episodes, but it’s difficult for women who go to fields. Most women have a hard time following the episodes because of the time they’re on, given that they are on when women are going to or coming back from the field, or when they’re preparing food.”

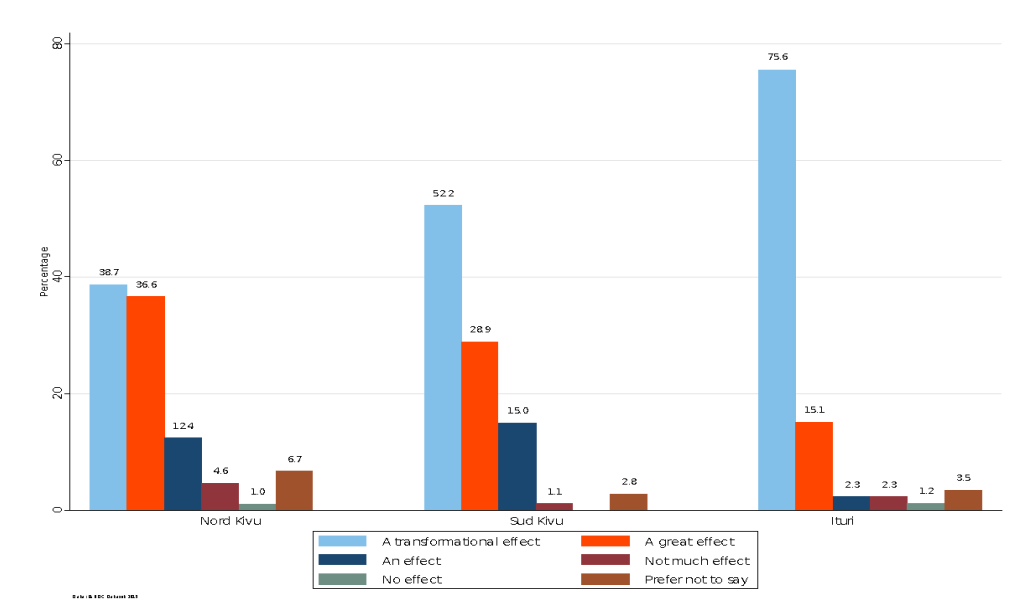
Civilian women, Kitshanga

access to the LMYS media content, certainly not to the same extent as men do.⁴⁰ According to respondents, this was due to two principal reasons. The first is that radios reportedly belong to men in the house and who therefore decide what is played. In addition, the second reason reported across respondent groups was that women’s livelihood and household duties restricted their access to the radio in general and, therefore, to the LMYS emissions. As reflected in the above quote, these gender-based constraints particularly impacted upon women of lower socio-economic status who are most likely to benefit from the content of the material. Relatedly, to increase the reach of the programme’s media activities, participants recommended that the LMYS radio sketches be broadcast at different times during the day, through more localised radio channels, and in a wider array of local languages.

Echoing findings among the civilian population, responses were similarly positive with regards to the programme’s radio and TV content. The majority of PNC respondents across the provinces felt that the episodes reflected the realities in their communities (96% of PNC surveyed in North Kivu, 99% of the same group in South Kivu and 99% in Ituri). The same applied to the FARDC respondents: a majority across the provinces (98% in North Kivu, 98% in South Kivu and 99% in Ituri) agreed that Search emissions reflected realities in their deployment zones.

When members of the FARDC were asked if they perceived Search’s media programmes to have had an impact on the behaviour of the security forces toward civilians, responses varied significantly across provinces. Nevertheless, the majority of the FARDC members sampled agreed that the radio and TV productions of Centre Lokolé had a positive effect, to varying degrees, on the behaviour of security forces toward civilians.

Figure 7: FARDC perspectives on the impact of the radio and TV productions of Centre Lokolé on the behaviour of security forces toward civilians.



⁴⁰ It is likely that the phrasing of the question contributed to the high positive response rate and, in turn, the disparity in the results from the survey and responses in the focus groups. In particular, the question did not specify a timeframe, meaning that positive responses could have been referring to an LMYS programme over the course of its four phases. Moreover, given the length of the civilian survey, the question on media was asked broadly and did not break down the different media activities and fora in the questionnaire. As a result, it is possible that female respondents may have attended a mobile cinema or heard a programme at some point but still have proportionally less access to the radio in their household than men.

50% of those FARDC survey respondents in North Kivu who answered that the emissions did not have any effect on the behaviour of the forces stated that **“the messages of the emissions were against the orders of the commanders of their regiments.”** While no further data was available in terms of how precisely the messages contradicted hierarchical orders, this highlights the significant role of unit commanders and hierarchy as a factor influencing the nature of security sector behaviour towards and interactions with local populations.⁴¹

Previous research on civil-military relations in the DRC has demonstrated the crucial role of individual commanders (in particular at sector, regiment, battalion, platoon, and company level) in shaping military behaviour towards civilians.⁴² In particular, command practices in the domain of the control, supervision and socialization of troops have been found to have important consequences for civilian-military interaction. Some commanders make much more efforts to be well aware of and steer their subordinates’ practices than others. For example, commanders trying to ensure the good behavior of their troops generally elaborate strict, but fair mechanisms of rewards and punishment. In part due to the limited spatial reach of the military justice system, punishing soldiers in isolated rural areas for minor offenses remains largely in the hands of commanders.⁴³ Research has shown that, crucially, commanders intent on reducing ill behavior by their troops, generally take comprehensive preventive measures, for example ensuring that troop movements during rotations are well organized, communicating regularly with lower-level commanders, systematically visiting units in the field, and imposing strict and frequent reporting obligations on lower-level commanders. Such commanders also invest significant efforts in education and other forms of socializing troops. Other commanders, by contrast, allow their troops to live dispersed in town, which prevents controlling their activities, exercise overall loose control over their troops, fail to educate them, do not often visit lower-level troops in remote locations, and do not adequately discipline elements acting contrary to norms or orders.⁴⁴

Drawing back to the LMYS programme context, it is evident that unit commanders are critical key stakeholders to continue sensitisation and engagement with. As discussed later in the report, trust is still limited to specific/individual units rather than arriving at institutional-level. Thus, as these members of the security forces hold positions of authority and may be able to maintain control and influence over the behaviour of their troops, they are even more crucial to strengthening unit-level trust. They may also prove crucial to the practical systematisation of training on the Common Ground Approach in future iterations of the LMYS programme, bringing their training with them to new deployments.

Members of the local security committees and PNC expressed frustration at the message disseminated that all police services are free, or that it was interpreted that way by civilian populations. With a sarcastic tone, one PNC Colonel stated that *“la police n’est pas un service philanthropique, ce n’est pas la Caritas”* (Minova, Colonel PNC, interview). This quote highlights the resource constraints discussed earlier that may limit the security forces, the PNC in particular from providing services to its target populations, thus impacting civilians’ perceptions of the police. While some services, in particular services for survivors of

⁴¹ The role of commanders and hierarchy in shaping behavior towards civilians is highlighted by a host of studies, see e.g. Wood EJ (2009) Armed groups and sexual violence: When is wartime rape rare? *Politics & Society* 37(1): 131–161; Terry & McQuinn, ‘The Roots of Restraint’; In relation to the FARDC, see Verweijen, ‘Ambiguity of Militarization’ pp. 300-301.

⁴² Steven van Damme and Judith Verweijen (2012) *In Search of an Army. How the FARDC can Improve Civilians’ Safety*. Unpublished document for Oxfam International; Verweijen, J. 2015. *The Ambiguity of Militarization. The complex interaction between the Congolese armed forces and civilians in the Kivu provinces, eastern DR Congo* (Utrecht University, Faculty of Humanities)

⁴³ Maria Eriksson Baaz and Judith Verweijen (2013). *“La mère des armées n’est pas encore morte”. Des pratiques de justice (in)formelle dans les Forces armées de la République démocratique du Congo*, *Politique Africaine* N° 129: 49–72

⁴⁴ Verweijen, *Ambiguity of Militarization*, pp. 300-301.

sexual and gender-based violence are intended to be free or low-cost, the PNC as an institution does not have the resources needed in order to uphold this responsibility, being unable to cover transport costs for example. This presents another significant limiting factor in the translation of increased knowledge into behaviour change by members of the PNC, that was readily acknowledged as well by members of the civilian population.

“There are times when the security forces are alerted to an incident but they have a lot of difficulties to respond. They sometimes arrive late due to the poor logistics conditions (they face). No vehicles for example. The roads are also problematic.”

CLS, Kitshanga

Overall, the evaluation affirmed the relevance of the ToC and offered clear evidence of its outcomes across the communities targeted by the programme, while underscoring its constraints. In particular, in the context of strained civil-security relations in the target communities, opportunities for increasing knowledge about mutual rights, roles and responsibilities *combined with* opportunities for open, transparent, and constructive interactions *can* promote more trusting relationships between target beneficiaries. The assumptions underpinning the ToC, therefore, hold.

As also evidenced by the evaluation, however, the approach espoused by the LMYS ToC alone is not sufficient to achieving systematic and sustained mutual trust across target groups. There are myriad factors affecting the translation of knowledge into behaviour change as well as the development of durable institutional-level trust, that are not considered by the programme’s assumptions. These factors include but are not limited to questions of institutional capacity, notably in terms of limited resources and entrenched norms related to the history of limited resources, poor pay and working conditions for the security forces. Given these nuances then, it can be determined that while LMYS was relevant to the needs of the population and its assumptions surrounding mutual knowledge and understanding and relationships of trust are sound, **the evaluation suggested that efforts to promote civil-security mutual trust could be reinforced via strengthened engagement on the unit-level and in particular with unit commanders as champions for the Common Ground Approach. The evaluation further suggested that work in building civil-military relations based on trust should continue alongside more traditional, government-led, Security Sector Reform strategies, specifically addressing institutional reform related to resources and payments for security forces and ensuring effective justice for violations perpetrated against civilian populations.**

Efficiency

This section gives an overview of the level of achievement of planned activities and the efficiency of processes of the supporting the programme's implementation.

Implementation of Activities

The following table gives an overview of planned activities in LMYS Phase IV and the level of completion of each activity before and after the cost-extension phase ending May 2018.

| Activity | Nb. planned before CE | Nb. achieved | % achieved before CE | Nb. planned for CE phase | Nb. achieved | % achieved at the end of CE | Comment |
|---|-----------------------|--------------|----------------------|--------------------------|--------------|-----------------------------|---|
| Revitalization of 22 existing FARDC committees and 4 oversight committees | 26 | 26 | 100 | - | - | - | Activity not included in Cost Extension phase |
| Establishment of new FARDC committees | 15 | 15 | 100 | - | - | - | Activity not included in Cost Extension phase |
| Training and capacity reinforcement for FARDC/PNC committees | 41 | 47 | 115 | - | - | - | Activity not included in Cost Extension phase |
| FARDC awareness raising sessions | 1180 | 2066 | 171 | - | - | - | Activity not included in Cost Extension phase |
| PNC awareness raising sessions | 840 | 1435 | 171 | - | - | - | Activity not included in Cost Extension phase |
| Workshops for proximity police | 16 | 12 | 75 | - | - | - | Activity suspended due to security restrictions |

| | | | | | | | |
|---|------------|---------|-----|--------|--------|-----|---|
| Mass media Vrai Djo campaign targeting security forces and civil society regarding the question of SGBV | 9 (video) | 11 | 122 | - | - | - | Activity not included in Cost Extension phase |
| | 16 (audio) | 16 | 100 | - | - | - | Activity not included in Cost Extension phase |
| SMS marketing campaign | 150,000 | 115,000 | 77 | - | - | - | Activity not included in Cost Extension phase |
| LMYS comic books produced | 150,000 | 99,727 | 66 | - | - | - | Activity not included in Cost Extension phase |
| Printing of accountability manual | | | | 15,000 | 15,000 | 100 | Printing has been completed and distribution continued during the CE phase. |
| Production and diffusion of radio version of Ndakisa | 70 | 70 | 100 | 24 | 24 | 100 | |
| 500 small group screenings of Weapon of War films | 500 | 131 | 26 | - | - | - | Activity was suspended as a result of security restrictions. |
| 500 public screenings of televised Ndakisa series | 500 | - | - | - | - | - | Activity was suspended as a result of security restrictions. |
| Joint mobile cinema screenings of Ndakisa series | - | - | - | 160 | 134 | 84 | LMYS focused on large public screenings rather than targeting smaller groups. Less screenings were conducted but the overall reach of the activity (nb. of persons participating) was higher than initially expected. |

| | | | | | | | |
|--|-----|-----|-----|----|----|-----|---|
| PNC and FARDC radio co-productions | 100 | 104 | 104 | 20 | 44 | 220 | Achieved |
| Workshops for the committees supporting military justice | 4 | 7 | 175 | - | - | - | Activity not included in Cost Extension phase |
| Implementation of a legal library | 4 | 4 | 100 | 15 | 12 | 80 | Legal library open days were organized with the aim to engage with a larger number of individuals. Less open days were organized than planned but the overall reach of the activity was higher than initially expected. |
| National conference bringing together CAJM/CPAJM and human rights groups | 4 | 2 | 50 | - | - | - | Activity not included in Cost Extension phase |
| Justice Sector Exchange workshops | 4 | 4 | 100 | - | - | - | Activity not included in Cost Extension phase |
| Mobile Court radio documentaries | 36 | 36 | 100 | - | - | - | Activity not included in Cost Extension phase |
| Provision of equipment for 12 CLS | 12 | 12 | 100 | 24 | 24 | 100 | Achieved |
| Training of the CLS | 24 | 19 | 79 | 24 | 25 | 104 | Achieved |
| Territorial and provincial roundtable discussions | | | | 6 | 3 | 50 | 1 activity per zone was implemented rather than 2 for programmatic and budget reasons. |

| | | | | | | | |
|--|-----|-----|-----|-----|----|-----|---|
| Scorecard events | 100 | 101 | 101 | 54 | 59 | 109 | Achieved |
| Town Hall meetings (TEP) | 300 | 161 | 54 | 105 | 91 | 84 | The total number of TEPs had to be reduced in order to accommodate for a higher activity cost than initially planned |
| Support to the implementation of local security plans | | | | 8 | 10 | 125 | Achieved |
| Duels des Jeunes Democrates (DJD) | 60 | 67 | 112 | 24 | 20 | 83 | The total number of outputs had to be reduced in order to accommodate for a higher activity cost than initially planned |
| SSR communication trainings | 24 | 5 | 21 | - | - | - | Activity not included in Cost Extension phase |
| Solidarity activities | 170 | 178 | 105 | 75 | 70 | 93 | Rather than focusing purely on solidarity activities, LMYS implemented two income generating activities per province that also promoted solidarity and demonstrated the programme's adaptability to the target populations' various needs |
| Reward ceremonies recognizing FARDC/PNC best practices | 50 | 78 | 156 | - | - | - | Activity not included in Cost Extension phase |
| Battalion/units awards | 50 | 11 | 22 | - | - | - | Activity not included in Cost Extension phase |

| | |
|---|--------------------------|
| ■ | Target surpassed |
| ■ | Target achieved |
| ■ | Target still in progress |

Partnerships

The implementation of LMYS was supported by a strong coordination structure with civilian, military and police actors. The evaluators understood that *Comités Nationaux de Pilotage* led strategic oversight from Kinshasa, with *Comités de Coordination Provinciaux* providing provincial level oversight to the activities of the security forces. Various other *Comités de Proximité* including the *Comités de Base* and *Comités Locaux de Sécurité* functioned on the local levels, supporting the implementation of activities, implanted in the programme target sites, where there was a conglomeration of units and cadres deployed.

The evaluation indicated that Search had formalised partnerships with key national level actors, notably the Ministry of Defence and the Police Commissioner, supporting the implementation of the programme. The *Comités Nationaux de Pilotage* within the security forces were intended to serve as key mechanisms for strategic guidance of the programme and managing partnerships among Search, the security forces themselves and relevant NGO/civil society partners. National level stakeholders within the PNC in particular expressed frustrations with planning related to these committees, highlighting that from their point of view, meetings were often ad-hoc or did not take place on schedule.

PNC hierarchy members lauded that they had been closely involved in the development of media tools, notably the *Ndakisa* drama, throughout different phases of its production. The same actors expressed that their participation in initial consultations and negotiations notwithstanding, their contributions on the themes and objectives of the programme were not substantively taken into consideration in the implementation of the programme. FARDC hierarchy members similarly feared that they had not been sufficiently consulted in the development, implementation and monitoring of the activities.

Members of the security forces on the national level stressed particular concern over the transition between 2016 – 2017 and changes in donor priorities that impacted LMYS direct support to the security forces.⁴⁵ In keeping with the objective of strengthening the durability of UK funded SSR work, the programme adjusted its strategic approach to focus more on matters of collective security on local levels, with support to the Local Security Committees. National level partners within the security forces were concerned that the decision had been taken and then implemented by Search in a manner they perceived as lacking transparency and sufficient dialogue with the different stakeholders.

The programme additionally engaged with NGO partners in the provinces and with their local focal points in order to ensure the supervision of activities implemented by the security forces, responsible for the transfer of funds to the different committees and the oversight of the implementation of their work-plans.

- *Justice Plus*: Ituri and South Kivu⁴⁶
- *Collectif Alpha Ujivi*: North Kivu
- *RRSSJ*: Kinshasa

⁴⁵ To understand these perceptions, it is important to note that security personnel often read externally driven reform efforts through the lens of the colonial past, seeing them as marked by paternalism while highlighting a lack of donor accountability. See: Baaz, Maria Eriksson, and Maria Stern. "Being reformed: Subjectification and security sector reform in the Congolese armed forces." *Journal of Intervention and Statebuilding* 11.2 (2017): 207-224.

⁴⁶ The partnership with ADDROSOMIL, the NGO initially in charge of the implementation of activities in South Kivu was ended at the beginning of the extension phase of the project.

These and others including media partners, did not report having received particular capacity reinforcement specific to compliance or management in the course of the partnership with Search. One NGO partner in particular expressed frustration over the management of the partnership, highlighting challenges with compliance, ineligible expenses and delays in the treatment of funds requests.

One media partner interviewed highlighted however in particular his appreciation for the capacity building they had received from Search for their technicians, animators and journalists as well as technical support and accompaniment for the reorganisation of their radio programmes.

“Our radio does not benefit from financial assistance from the programme but rather in terms of materials. The emissions made available to the radio can be re-diffused and also help us to develop more emissions locally.”

Radio partner, KII, Bunia

Monitoring and Reporting

Based on information from various key informant interviews and consultations with members of the Search programme team, the consultants understood that LMYS utilised M&E tools such as regular activity/progress reports from the CdBs as well as monthly narrative progress reports submitted by NGO partners to Search. These tools provided Search with the means necessary to monitor the evolution of activities as well as to harness feedback from programme participants.

Search additionally capitalised upon its existing local partnerships and supported local monitoring conducted by mixed civilian-military or police mechanisms, civil society actors and by committees including the CPAJM and later the CLS or local security committees. The CPAJM reportedly had difficulties in the effective monitoring of human rights violations and the systematic reporting of these to the programme team. Looking forward, it will be crucial to ensure that the local security committees receive capacity reinforcement and technical accompaniment in monitoring. Data on human rights violations in areas targeted by the programme will further strengthen its capacity to measure change not only based on perceptions related to LMYS.

Importantly, Search’s Design Monitoring and Evaluation (DM&E) team also ensured continuous monitoring of project activities via data collection and monitoring visits in the field. While quantitative data was collated by a Database Manager, an M&E Assistant was responsible for conducting field visits. The four *Chefs de Mise en Oeuvre* together with the Project Manager and the DM&E team led the learning process in order to promote the programme’s ability to respond to feedback from the field.⁴⁷ Partners interviewed in the course of the final evaluation expressed frustration that they had shared recommendations that had not been taken into consideration in the programme. It was commented in the LMYS 8th Interim Report that the programme was limited in its capacity to integrate recommendations from programme participants. The evaluation additionally highlighted a challenge with regard to ensuring the appropriate management of the joint income generating activities implemented in targeted areas. This points to a need for more regular and detailed monitoring conducted by Search and its local counterparts.

⁴⁷ Excerpted from Search LMYS 8th Interim Report.

Members of the PNC Comité de Pilotage highlighted additionally that there were significant challenges related to reporting from the CdBs, or circulating these reports among members of the PNC hierarchy. Committee members expressed frustration that they had not received these regular reports from the CdBs and that this was in contradiction to the functioning of their hierarchical structure. These actors stated additionally that in order to address this challenge, a monitoring mission was conducted by members of the national committee, in the different provinces in 2016. The evaluators were unable to access a copy of this report however it might be worth reflecting on how the programme can capitalise on regular supervision conducted by the security forces for programmatic monitoring and evaluation purposes as well.

Synergy and coordination

LMYS was implemented as part of Search's broader and historical work in security sector domain, and in synergy with external as well as internal projects. Internally, the project was implemented in synergy with the *Les Bâtisseurs* and *Maji ya Amani* projects.⁴⁸ *Les Bâtisseurs*, financed by the Foreign Commonwealth Office (FCO) focused on reducing the risk of election-related violence by promoting constructive dialogue between security forces and politically active youth. *Maji ya Amani* aimed to contribute to reducing conflict and increasing stability in the Ruzizi Plains by addressing conflict drivers like access to water, land and farming.

Externally, Search has provided in-kind support to EU Progress in order to promote the institutionalisation of the Common Ground Approach in FARDC training curricula. Search has additionally coordinated with various stabilisation initiatives supported by the Stabilisation Trust Fund and the MONUSCO Stabilisation Support Unit. Search participated to a limited extent in workshops led by SSU for stabilisation partners and other actors to exchange lessons learned, it was reported that this participation was not regular and could be improved.

As part of the alignment, Search will now provide valuable data to MONUSCO's SSU unit, in order to report progress along ISSSS indicators integrated into its logical framework. This data will be collated with those supplied by other aligned partners and will provide important insights to stabilisation actors and country partners involved in peacebuilding in the DRC. As mentioned earlier in this report, data on I4S indicators was not collected during the program's implementation, presenting a missed opportunity for strengthened impact evaluation and potential advocacy.

⁴⁸ Search LMYS 8th Interim Report

Effectiveness

This section discusses the programme's achievement of its specific outcomes, notably those of improved perceptions of security forces and of the security situation in the targeted provinces.

The following table gives an overview of the achievement of the objectives of the LMYS programme, as measured by the outcome and output level indicators in its log-frame:

| Indicator | Baseline | Midline | Target | Endline | Comment/ Observation |
|---|---|---|---|---|--------------------------|
| Outcome: Popular civilian perception of security forces are improved | | | | | |
| OC1.1 % of population in priority areas perceiving that FARDC contributes to security in the province | Global: 69% NK: 79% SK: 68% Ituri: 59% | Global: 80% NK: 89% SK: 75% Ituri: 77% | Global: 87% NK: 95% SK: 88% Ituri: 79% | Global: 88% NK: 81% SK: 93% Ituri: 92% | 99% of target achieved. |
| OC: 1.2 % of population in priority areas perceiving that the FARDC acts with the aim of protecting the population and guaranteeing their safety | Global: 67% NK: 76% SK: 70% Ituri: 54% | Global: 88% NK: 91% SK: 87% Ituri: 85% | Global: 87% NK: 95% SK: 90% Ituri: 74% | Global: 88% NK: 81% SK: 93% Ituri: 92% | 101% of target achieved. |

| | | | | | |
|--|--|--|--|--|---|
| <p>OC: 1.3</p> <p>Percentage of population in priority areas perceiving that PNC contributes to security in the province</p> | <p>Global: 74%</p> <p>NK: 80%</p> <p>SK: 77%</p> <p>Ituri: 66%</p> | <p>Global: 81%</p> <p>NK: 85%</p> <p>SK: 83%</p> <p>Ituri: 77%</p> | <p>Global: 92%</p> <p>NK: 95%</p> <p>SK: 95%</p> <p>Ituri: 86%</p> | <p>Global: 86%</p> <p>NK: 74%</p> <p>SK: 94%</p> <p>Ituri: 92%</p> | <p>91% of target achieved. Noting in particular the disparity in the North Kivu province it is important to consider the security context in this province, particular in the areas sampled during the evaluation, e.g. Rutshuru where kidnappings have raised sentiments of insecurity and strained relations among civilians and security forces.</p> |
| <p>OC: 1.4</p> <p>% of population in priority areas perceiving that the PNC acts with the aim of protecting the population and guaranteeing their safety</p> | <p>Global: 72%</p> <p>NK: 75%</p> <p>SK: 77%</p> <p>Ituri: 63%</p> | <p>Global: 83%</p> <p>NK: 84%</p> <p>SK: 89%</p> <p>Ituri: 77%</p> | <p>Global: 92%</p> <p>NK: 95%</p> <p>SK: 95%</p> <p>Ituri: 83%</p> | <p>Global: 86%</p> <p>NK: 74%</p> <p>SK: 94%</p> <p>Ituri: 92%</p> | <p>93% of target achieved. Noting in particular the disparity in the North Kivu province it is important to consider the security context in this province, particular in the areas sampled during the evaluation, e.g. Rutshuru where kidnappings have raised sentiments of insecurity and strained relations among civilians and security forces.</p> |
| <p>OC: 1.5</p> <p>% of population in priority areas who perceive that the security situation has improved in the preceding six months</p> | <p>Global: 41%</p> <p>NK: 49%</p> <p>SK: 33%</p> <p>Ituri: 42%</p> | <p>Global: 70%</p> <p>NK: 67%</p> <p>SK: 76%</p> <p>Ituri: 68%</p> | <p>Global: 71%</p> <p>NK: 79%</p> <p>SK: 63%</p> <p>Ituri: 72%</p> | <p>Global: 76%</p> <p>NK: 70%</p> <p>SK: 78%</p> <p>Ituri: 83%</p> | <p>137% of target achieved.</p> |

| | | | | | |
|---|--|--|--|---|--|
| <p>OC: 1.6</p> <p>% of the population in priority areas that believes it will be safer in six months time</p> | <p>Global: 21%</p> <p>NK: 39%</p> <p>SK: 11%</p> <p>Ituri: 14%</p> | <p>Global: 44%</p> <p>NK: 48%</p> <p>SK: 59%</p> <p>Ituri: 25%</p> | <p>Global: 51%</p> <p>NK: 69%</p> <p>SK: 41%</p> <p>Ituri: 44%</p> | <p>--</p> | <p>Qualitative Findings:</p> <p>Focus group responses on perceptions of security in the future were generally positive with some significant concerns raised around elections and the potential for ensuing political mobilisation and election-related violence.</p> |
| <p>Output 1: Congolese security forces and citizens demonstrate increased awareness and knowledge of their roles, rights, and mutual responsibilities</p> | | | | | |
| <p>OP 1.2: (I4S Indicator)</p> <p>% of FARDC correctly answering selected questions relating to International Humanitarian Law/Human Rights specifically relating to protection of women/SGB.</p> | <p>Penalty for rape (correct): 58%</p> | <p>N/A</p> | <p>77.7%</p> | <p>Penalty for Rape (Correct): 68%</p> | <p>18% of target achieved</p> <p>[Average taken across all 4 indicators, calculated by the proportion of those who selected the correct response category]</p> |
| <p>OP 1.4: % of PNC correctly answering selected questions relating to International Humanitarian Law/Human</p> | <p>Penalty for rape (correct): 62%</p> | <p>NA</p> | <p>82%</p> | <p>Penalty for Rape (Correct): 66%</p> | <p>80.5% of target achieved</p> <p>[Average taken across all 4 indicators, calculated by the proportion of those who selected the correct response category]</p> |

| | | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|---|--|
| Rights specifically relating to protection of women/SGB V. | | | | | |
| OP 1.6: % of civilians who have voluntarily been to a local police station and indicate they have been received courteously | Global: 50% North Kivu: 49% Ituri: 36% South Kivu: 65% | Global: 82% North Kivu: 87% Ituri: 76% South Kivu: 83% | Global: 86% North Kivu: 89% Ituri: 76% South Kivu: 95% | Global: 80% North Kivu: 75% Ituri: 85% South Kivu: 81% | 89% of target achieved. |
| Output 2: Accountability, collaboration and communication between civilians and state agents on issues of public security is strengthened. | | | | | |
| OP 2.1: % of the members of the PNC Committees who can cite at least 2 concrete ways to effectively respond to SGBV | - | - | 95% | - | Qualitative findings: Focus groups with PNC Committees indicated that responding to SGBV is among the key and frequent activities of the police Unfortunately, this question was not asked systematically across focus groups with PNC base committees |
| OP 2.7: % of CLS members able to correctly answer selected | - | 100% | 100% | -- | Quantitative data on this indicator was not collected. |

| | | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|
| questions on police laws and on basic principles of PNC-civil relations | | | | | |
| OP 2.8: % of the members of the PNC Committees and Comités Locaux de Securite reporting concrete examples of collaboration | - | 70% | 85% | - | Qualitative findings: All Committees who participated in the evaluation reported concrete examples of collaboration. Examples predominantly centred on the organisation of LMYS supported activities, such as “bulletins de score;” “tribunes d’expression populaire;” football matches, and <i>salongo</i> (collective community work). Examples of collaboration not centering on LMYS activities were reported in focus groups on an <i>ad hoc</i> and smaller scale basis. Notably, these included reports of mixed patrols in target communities. |
| OP 2.9: % of the population stating that they would find it acceptable for a family member to marry a FARDC soldier | Global: 40% North Kivu: 38% Ituri: 49% South Kivu: 33% | Global: 61% North Kivu: 60% Ituri: 55% South Kivu: 69% | Global: 70% North Kivu: 68% Ituri: 79% South Kivu: 63% | Global: 38% North Kivu: 39% Ituri: 48% South Kivu: 32% | 54% of target achieved. Noting the significant difference between the final evaluation data and that of the midline, it is unclear what might amount to the statistical difference. The final evaluation findings are conservative than those of the midterm but are more in line with those findings of the baseline. Qualitative data indicated a mix in responses to this question. |

| | | | | | |
|--|-------------|---|---|---|--|
| | | | | | With the exception of Ituri, reactions were generally negative across sites with concerns raised around associations of soldiers with a lack of stability and income, and promiscuity (and STIs). Some distinctions were made by respondents on the basis of military grade, i.e. that it was more acceptable for their daughter to marry an officer of a higher rank who is more likely to have an income than a low or no ranking officer who may “not even have anywhere to sleep” (Luvungi, civilian women). |
| OP 2.10: % of the population stating that they think relations between civilians and FARDC are fairly good and very good | Global: 46% | Global: 37 % NK: 46% Ituri: 28% SK: 37% | Global: 50% NK: 50% Ituri: 50% SK: 50% | Global: 61% NK: 57% Ituri: 73% SK: 58% | The target for this indicator has been achieved and surpassed by 11%. It is worth noting the significant positive change in perceptions in the Ituri province where Search programme staff reported high-levels of buy-in from the local FARDC authorities and support for the project. |
| OP 2.11: % of the population stating that they have encountered army roadblocks in the last | Global: 27% | Global: 55 % NK: 44% SK: 56% Ituri: 6.2% | Global: 22% NK: 22% SK: 22% Ituri: 22% | Global: 67% NK: 67% SK: 55% Ituri: 79% | 45% off target in reducing the number of persons stating they have encountered an army roadblock. The final evaluation limited the question to a “6 month” not “12 month” period given the likelihood of respondents having more accurate memories of the past 6 |

| | | | | | |
|--|-------------|--|---|---|---|
| twelve months | | | | | months vs the past year. It is worth noting that roadblocks form integral parts of patronage networks within the FARDC. The report discusses how this among other factors might limit the uptake of norms disseminated via training and sensitisation activities. |
| OP 2.12: % of the population stating that they have experienced soldiers' wives demanding first access at water points in the last twelve months | Global: 35% | Global: 37% North Kivu: 43% South Kivu: 41% Ituri:27% | Global: 25% North Kivu: 25% South Kivu: 25% Ituri: 25% | Global: 30% North Kivu: 25% South Kivu: 36% Ituri: 28% | 5% off target. |

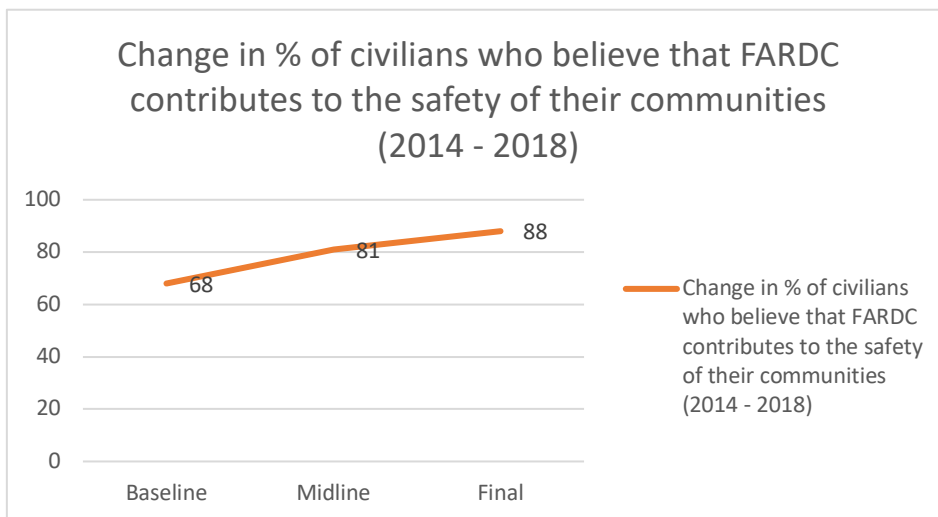
Recalling the section on Overall Quality of the design of the programme, it is important to consider progress on these indicators while bearing in mind that certain indicators may not have been appropriate for measuring change related to the programme. Indicators like OP2.11 and OP2.12 for example, on roadblocks and queues for fetching water serve as proxy indicators to capture changes in relationships of trust and improved collaboration between civilian populations and security forces yet the programme’s activities only very limitedly targeted these issues.

The below sections discuss findings related to key indicators measuring progress on the LMYS expected Outcome: **Popular civilian perceptions of the security forces are improved.**

Perceptions of the population toward FARDC (OC 1.1 and OC 1.2)

Figure 8: Percentage change in population who believe that the FARDC contribute to the safety of their province (2014 – 2018)

As depicted in Figure 8, quantitative data collected in the different evaluations of the LMYS programme indicated significant positive developments in popular perceptions



toward the FARDC as a security actor in the targeted provinces (from 68% at the baseline to 88% at the endline). On the provincial level it is notable that **while the change in North Kivu was minimal (from 79% in the baseline to 81% in the endline), popular perceptions of FARDC in South Kivu and Ituri had improved significantly at the time of the endline.** In South Kivu, 93% of respondents reported seeing the FARDC as contributing to security in their province, compared to 68% in the baseline. This increase is even more notable in Ituri, with 92% of individuals perceiving FARDC as contributing to security, compared to the initial baseline value of 54%. Similarly, positive developments were noted during the midterm in Ituri, where Search teams observed that high levels of involvement on the part of the local FARDC and SECAS in that province had contributed to the positive results. More tepid responses on popular perceptions of FARDC in North Kivu could potentially be linked to persistent violent conflict in the province, entailing clashes between armed groups and the security forces. The province has also been the staging ground for multiple military operations and has seen massive population displacement as well as the return of demobilised non-state armed actors that may all contribute to civilian perceptions toward the FARDC.⁴⁹

The greater part of civilian respondents across the three targeted provinces said that relationships among civilians and members of the military in their provinces varied from **very good, somewhat good, to average.** In Ituri specifically, both civilian and FARDC perceptions of the quality of their relationships were relatively high, with 45% of civilians and 71% of FARDC members saying that relations among the two groups were **very good.**

“With these solidarity activities, people (civilians) saw us as humans.”

FARDC, KII respondent, Kinshasa

In key informant interviews, both military and civilian respondents reinforced the idea that the *activités de rapprochement* implemented in the context of the LMYS programme played a great role in strengthening military-civilian relationships. Military respondents stressed the importance of doing

⁴⁹ See e.g. UNSG (2018), *Report of the Secretary-General: United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo*, 1 October 2018, S/2018/882, and Kivu Security Tracker, Monthly Reports.

shared activities among civilians and members of the military, and the role of these activities like cooking together, serving each other and sharing a meal for example in ‘*cleaning the images of these public institutions*’ and in passing the message onto civilian populations that they value and respect human rights (KII, FARDC, Kinshasa).

“It was thanks to a solidarity activity that I had the chance to have my first drink with a colonel and I realized that he had studied and that he was actually cool”.

Civilian man, Kasenyi

88% of the overall civilian population sampled reported perceiving FARDC as contributing to security in their regions. **12%** of the same sample reported having a high level of trust in the FARDC. The majority of civilians reported having trust in the FARDC with only **20% reporting having low and/or no trust in the FARDC.**

Across the three provinces, **perceptions toward the FARDC varied only minimally across gender lines** with 86.6% of female respondents reporting perceiving FARDC as contributing to security in their region and 89.1% of male responses reporting the same. **Similarly, minimal variation across gender was seen in terms of trust levels in the FARDC, with the greater part of both male and female respondents reporting having some level trust in the armed forces.**

While survey data indicated minimal variation across gender in terms of perceptions of the FARDC, the voices of the members of the sampled populations offer some more insight, particularly in terms of the development of mutual trust:

“Although in my view, civilian women and men trust soldiers in my deployment zone, this can’t be at the same level. Wars have succeeded each other in our country with particular consequences on women and have meant that civilians, and especially women, have a bad perception of men in uniform. While the army is trying to address this, I have to acknowledge that it’s a process. And, from the perspective of women in the zone, I see that the trust is there but not at the same level as men. This is perceptible in the proximity towards soldiers and in the recourse to the services of the army: more men come relative to women. In the community, more men wander around with soldiers than women. All of this shows that they don’t have the same level of trust.”

FARDC Major, Luvungi

While civilians generally reported trusting male and female members of the FARDC and PNC the same, several interview respondents explained that women would be less likely to approach female military personnel. Some reasons suggested included that men often occupied positions of authority and were therefore more likely to be approached in case of alert or need for services or that women did not feel comfortable reporting to other women. There was some further complexity around women and their rapport with armed forces emerging in the focus group data. In focus groups, it was noted that civilian women had less interaction with FARDC personnel for a host of reasons, primarily fear and social stigma surrounding women perceived to be associated with armed forces.⁵⁰ Interestingly, however, some

⁵⁰ For stigma’s related to spouses of FARDC soldiers, see Eriksson Baaz, M. and Verweijen, J. 2016. *Fighting Behind the Frontlines: Army Wives in the Eastern DRC*, Central Africa Report No.5 (Pretoria: Institute for Security Studies).

respondents in focus groups noted that widows, sex workers, and women who work in drinking establishments are an important source of information for the security forces (e.g. Luvungi, FARDC Base Committee; Kitshanga PNC Base Committee). Respondents in Luvungi further explained that while women who are married and travel to their fields in the hills also have significant information about armed group activity, this is filtered through their husbands (Luvungi, FARDC Base Committee). This further suggests that married civilian women may have fewer opportunities for, or inclination towards, interacting with national security forces even when they have relevant security information, preferring that those interactions be conducted via their partner. On the other hand, women who are not 'tied to' a husband may be more likely to interact directly with security personnel.

This raises a host of questions with clear programmatic implications to be further explored as Search continues to develop its gender strategy, including related to strengthening collaboration and communication between civilians and the security forces. Given women's roles in information sharing, it is important that more strategic emphasis is placed on ensuring women's participation in Town Hall Meetings as well as their meaningful participation and contribution to Local Security Committees. This would serve greatly to improve product quality and ensure that LMYS outcomes are accessed by all intended target groups (notably, women). It is furthermore critical for programme architects to consider potential unforeseen impacts related to this, women being perceived as information bearers may put them at heightened risk or increased protection relative to both national security forces, as well as armed groups active in the zones, depending on the security and political dynamics and alliances at any given time.

While more people reported viewing the FARDC as a security actor, the majority of respondents still report receiving information on security predominantly from local administrative and customary authorities and other actors in their communities, rather than the FARDC. **In the province of North Kivu, very few people see the FARDC as providing them with information on security, noting rather other civilians, local authorities and 'themselves' as the primary sources of information on security.** This is in line with a generalised reality of rural communities in eastern DRC, where these interlocutors, namely local authorities and other leaders, often function as mediators and brokers of civil-military communications as well as relations.⁵¹ The choice of who to approach for security-related information is also largely dependent on the particular security needs/situation of the individual in question. For instance, local populations may choose not to involve security forces in cases of kidnappings for a host of reasons, in Rutshuru, focus group participants expressed frustration that these (kidnappings) were taking place close to FARDC positions but without any intervention (Rutshuru, civilian women). The tendency to approach the security forces seems to diminish where the latter are seen not to act upon provided information. For instance, some respondents stated that *"security forces ignore the requests of populations under the pretext that the populations are collaborating with the bandits because they are their sons"* (Kitshanga, civilian men). Conversely, in Luvungi, civilian men in particular noted that, at present, they tend to prefer not to report inter-communal conflicts to the army to avoid creating conflicts with them. Thus, highlighting entrenched sentiments of fear, in anticipating a potentially militarily aggressive response by security forces. These fears may deter local populations from wanting to access the 'protective' services of the army in their *milieu*.

⁵¹ The role of local civilian authorities in regulating and brokering civilian-military interaction is also highlighted in Verweijen, *The Ambiguity of Militarization*, pp, 168-173. Such authorities similarly broker relations between armed groups and populations, see, Kasper Hoffmann, 'Myths set in motion: The moral economy of Mai-Mai governance', Ana Arjona, Nelson Kasfir, and Zachariah Mampilly (eds), *Rebel governance in civil war* (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2015), pp. pp.158–179.

The FARDC is still recognised as the principal guarantor of safety and security to whom the population turns to in incidents of insecurity. Generally, across the provinces, the majority of respondents reported that they would turn to the FARDC in the case of an approaching armed group, this was particularly noteworthy in Ituri where close to 80% of respondents reported that they would turn to the FARDC. In North Kivu, however, this was significantly lower, with only 43% of civilian respondents reporting that they would turn to the FARDC if they learned of an armed group approaching.

Couching this numerical data in the local contexts of these particular provinces of implementation, it is important to consider the external socio-political factors that may impact upon and complicate whether or not people turn to the FARDC units deployed in their regions in the case of an approaching armed group. In addition to the general variables that may influence civil-military relationships, as described throughout this report, for example the length of time a unit is deployed in their communities, the specific security situation in North Kivu in particular may shed some additional light on understanding the results of this indicator. North Kivu has been the theatre for military operations for a number of years now, entailing clashes between armed groups and FARDC, some of which have resulted in significant loss of civilian life, pillaging and other violations committed by members of the security forces. Additionally, there are a multitude of protection actors present in the zones targeted during the data-collection, with at least two of the sites having significant UN peacekeeping and humanitarian presence. This contributes perhaps to North Kivu being the zone with more diverse responses and the most respondents citing MONUSCO as who they would contact in the case of an approaching armed group.

The question of how to react in the face of an approaching armed group is in itself rife with nuance, as people and communities' relations with armed groups in the DRC vary significantly according to the nature, aims, and *provenance* of the armed group in question. For example, in North Kivu, where homegrown armed groups continue to splinter and regenerate and armed-group leaders may be seen as protectors themselves, it would be a logical assumption that population members would not always seek to turn to FARDC for protection from armed groups.⁵² This also applies to cases of inter-communal violence, particularly in instances where the army is seen as partial or where clashes with the security forces are anticipated, which might be seen as a factor contributing to worsening security.⁵³

Looking at the perspectives of security forces, we see that collaboration and information-sharing is seen as a key marker of trust from the side of local populations. As mentioned previously, civilian willingness to collaborate with the security forces depends heavily on the nature of the issue at hand, the abuse in question, the general state of civilian-military relations in the areas, the presence of other protectors, etc. Focus group discussions and interviews revealed additional

“Soldiers trust civilians once they provide us with information and after verification, we note that the information is true and reliable”

FARDC, Walungu

⁵² See also Carla Suarez, “Living between two lions”: Civilian protection strategies during armed violence in the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo’, *Journal of Peacebuilding and Development* 12, 3 (2017), pp. 54–67.

⁵³ On the army being seen as partial, see Maria Eriksson Baaz and Judith Verweijen, J. 2013. “The volatility of a half-cooked bouillabaisse. Rebel-military integration and conflict dynamics in eastern DRC”, *African Affairs* 112(449): 563–582

factors about why, when and under what circumstances civilians might not collaborate with the FARDC, **despite the general finding of increased positive popular perceptions**. It was commonly stated in FARDC focus groups that civilians may prefer not to turn to the armed forces to address security incidents perpetrated by bandits or armed groups because they may involve *'the children of the village'* and fear the repercussions that may fall on them and/or their loyalties may align more closely with the latter. As we consider the effectiveness of the interventions, then, it is worthwhile to consider that FARDC

"If civilians hide this information from us on this question [kidnappings], it's because once they give the ransom requested for the liberation of the person kidnapped, the abductors intimidate them by telling them that if they give information to the army, they will come back and seek revenge against their whole family and will kill them all. But also, there is the fact that the majority are their children and they do not want to report them."

FARDC Major, Luvungi

perceptions toward civilians are importantly shaped by the latter's interaction with armed groups and how this might impact the building of mutual trust.⁵⁴ Programme implementers and strategic actors might therefore consider deepening LMYS' conflict sensitive programmatic approach to democratic dialogue across eastern DRC. Varying relationships among civilians and armed groups did not figure in the sampling criteria of the evaluation and as such it is limited in its analysis and its understandings of the relationships among these three target groups.

Perceptions of the population toward PNC (OC 1.3 and OC 1.4)

Overall, local perceptions of the police were largely positive with **86% of the population sampled perceiving the PNC as contributing to security in the targeted provinces**. This represents a change of + 11.1% compared to the baseline and a change of + 4% compared to values collected during the mid-term.

Despite the quantitative data pointing to a global increase in perceptions of the PNC as contributing to security in the targeted regions, it is worth noting that there was a slight **decrease** in North Kivu, where at the time of the baseline 80% of people believed that the PNC contributed to security in their province. However, at the endline, only 74% of people held the same belief. Focus groups with local security committees and base committees indicated that civil-police relations had improved in recent years, focus group discussions with local population however, demonstrated a decrease, reinforcing the quantitative findings. In many respects, this trend may not be surprising: **perceptions of security are the lowest in North Kivu relative to Ituri and South Kivu, contributing to a heightened sense that the PNC is not effectively fulfilling its role as a security actor protecting local populations**.

Similar to civilian trust levels toward members of the FARDC: around 80% of civilian respondents across the three provinces, expressed trust (to some degree) towards the police in their community. Only 17% of the population sampled reporting having little to no trust in the PNC.

According to the qualitative data, the key factors perceived to limit mutually trusting and collaborative civil-police relations include:

⁵⁴ See also, Verweijen, 'Ambiguity of Militarization,' p. 306.

- 1) the recruitment pool of PNC officers in the community, i.e. if they were recruited from within the community and/or as formerly associated with an armed group in the area (associated with lower levels of trust);
- 2) the levels of demand for protective services of the police as well as *access thereto*, and the *effectiveness of the response* if reached;
- 3) the presence of competing sources of security in the zone, including the army; and, echoing above vis-a-vis the FARDC, the rank and position of PNC personnel.

Across the three provinces, perceptions toward the PNC varied minimally across gender lines with 84% of female respondents reportedly perceiving PNC as contributing to security in their region and 87% of male responses reporting the same. However, perceptions of female police personnel expressed during focus group discussions varied. These generally ranged from statements to the effect that ‘sex/gender’ do not make any difference in civil-police relations, to perceptions that the presence of female personnel can promote trust and collaborative civil-PNC relations, especially for women who may be more likely to trust other women. Across sites, both of these ideas were more likely to be expressed by men, both civilian and police. Perceptions of female police personnel expressed by women tended to be more complicated, with some noting that women in the PNC can have what were frequently described by focus group participants as ‘superiority complexes’ vis-à-vis other women and, even men. As demonstrated in this illustrative quote below, such perceptions tended to be especially pronounced where the presence of female security personnel was limited. These notions were reflected in similar discussions pertaining to female military personnel.⁵⁵

“There were some but not many, we civilian women are not in good relations with female police officers because they are too arrogant towards us and even towards civilian men. We don’t really trust them, especially those that haven’t studied.”

Civilian women, Walungu

While increasing the presence of women in the security forces is important for a host of reasons, these findings indicate that doing so should not be expected to in and of itself automatically lead to improved and more trusting civil-police relations in eastern DRC, including for women.

Across the provinces, less than 15% of both men and women sampled during the final evaluation reported the PNC as their source for information about security matters in their communities. In general, civilians preferred accessing information on security from administrative and customary authorities, other civilians in the community, religious authorities and ‘themselves’. As mentioned previously, however, this is likely due to the fact that these local actors function as mediators in communication between civilians and security forces, including the PNC.

The police were the second most selected option in terms of who individuals surveyed would turn to in case of an approaching armed group. Perceptions related to this did not vary significantly across gender, with between 20 to 30% of both men and women selecting the PNC as who they would turn to in case of

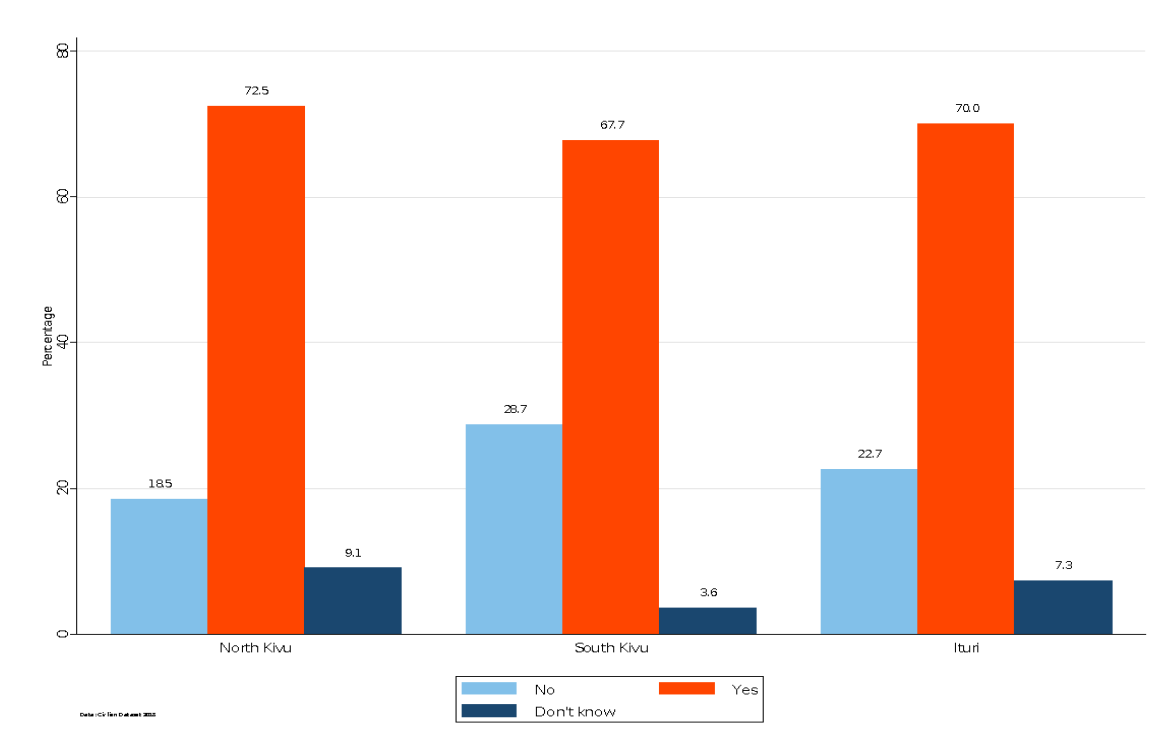
⁵⁵ Similar findings in relation to civilian perceptions of female army personnel (PMF) are articulated by Verweijen, ‘Ambiguity of Militarization’ (p.110) “Due to their bad reputation, PMF are generally distrusted by civilian women, who feel an unbridgeable distance to them. Some stated that this distance is felt even stronger precisely because they are all women, creating the false expectation that PMF should somehow be closer to them than male soldiers. In the words of the mentioned human rights activist from Butembo: ‘This should be an occasion for us, women, to contact the armed forces, but remarkably, it’s the opposite. They are even meaner than the male soldiers. Other women shared this analysis, saying they found it very difficult to approach PMF, and that they were afraid for them.’”

an armed group approaching. The PNC was additionally reported during the survey as the main source of recourse in the case of incidents with civilians like for example in the case of a civilian stealing.

While perceptions in the institution of the PNC as a security actor might have improved broadly, **from 74% in the baseline to 86% in the endline**, individual experiences with PNC members still play a critical role in perceptions and building relationships based on trust.

Of the 48% of the population sampled who said they had been voluntarily to a police station in the past 6 months, 80% of these said they had been received courteously. Yet, there remain persistent obstacles to changing quotidian practices that may impact perceptions and feelings of trust or mistrust toward the PNC. In particular, respondents reported having to continue to pay informal fees for the police’s services (73 % in North Kivu, 68% in South Kivu and 70% in Ituri). This engrained practice appears difficult to change, not least as many security personnel consider being entitled to such contributions to compensate for low salaries and low budgets for operational costs.⁵⁶ Institutional, mostly resource-related constraints to the uptake of norms, within the security forces are discussed throughout this report.

Figure 9: Requests for payment of “Makolo ya l’état” when civilians call upon the police (disaggregated by province)



⁵⁶ See also Michel Thill, Josaphat Musamba and Robert Njangala, ‘Kukufa mu gratuite. To die for nothing, making a living in Bukavu’s police. 12 December 2017, <https://www.kpsrl.org/blog/kukufa-mu-gratuite-to-die-for-nothing-making-a-living-in-bukavus-police>.

Popular perceptions of the changing security situation

“As soon as we are living without being sure of waking up the next day, how can we trust in this [security] force?”

Civilian man, Luvungi

Overall, 65% of the population sampled, reported feeling very secure or secure in their communities compared to the baseline where 58% of the population felt generally secure in their communities. Importantly for LMYS, perceptions of security vary from provincial capital to territory, and participants across target zones highlighted that the coverage of activities was still viewed as insufficient, or largely lacking, in peripheral areas.

“This is why the centre breathes easier than the peripheries where the sensitisations by partners haven’t arrived”

Civil society, Walungu

Qualitative data suggested that though civil-military relations had room for improvement, **the creation of opportunities for meeting and discussion between civilians and members of the security forces in the LMYS programme, contributed to encouraging freer exchange and dialogue on security issues as well as the sharing of information which, in turn, contributed to improving perceptions of local security.**

“In the Town Hall meetings, the population suggested installing a suggestion box, where all the concerns could be addressed to the authorities. There was also a telephone number that was shared during the meeting where you could call to make an alert in case of a situation of insecurity.”

Civilian man, Masisi

“There has been a negative change caused by the rupture of Search’s activities because before where we worked together as civilians, police, and soldiers, there was reconciliation. But because of this rupture, we are experiencing torture, harassment by our law enforcement officers”.

Civil society KII, Minvova

Similarly, while the quantitative data suggest that the FARDC was considered generally as contributing to security in communities, in some instances, newly deployed units, particularly those not having yet participated in LMYS activities, contributed to increasing and strengthening perceptions of insecurity in communities. Relevant to LMYS this points to a key factor that may limit trust-building that is durable and

institutionalised: the movement and redeployment of troops. LMYS programme architects and implementers might further consider how the redeployment of units could be integrated into a strategy for institutionalizing the Common Ground Approach, ensuring that new unit leadership and cadres are systematically trained and integrated into related LMYS programme activities in order to ensure buy-in and build upon gains in trust-building in targeted areas.

“There is always a need for another reconciliation project that will speak more to civil-military relations, because given the movement of security agents during this operational period increases the need for capacity building because security agents are displaced in another area and others who are not trained will arrive here, and here is the crux of insecurity in our villages”.

Civilian woman, Luvungi

Bearing all this in mind, the LMYS Midterm evaluation highlighted that while perceptions of security are a “progress indicator for the programme’s specific outcome, its contribution to these changes is difficult to measure, and that, conversely, changes in the situation itself linked to external factors have an impact (whether positive or negative) on the implementation of the programme.”⁵⁷ While it is difficult then to establish a causal link between the implementation of the project and perceptions of security, it is undeniable that the project’s activities are embedded in these contexts and existing perceptions and dynamics may influence the *degree* and *extent* of the programme’s impact as well as vice versa.

As the programme did not however, necessarily seek to address underlying causes of insecurity, changes in perceptions of security do not necessarily capture programme impact or effectiveness. At best, changes in this indicator at the end of the programme, permit us to reflect on the potential connection, should there be any, between perceptions of security and perceptions, attitudes and practices of trust among civilians and members of the security forces.

Product quality and effectiveness

The evaluation affirmed the quality of products related to the LMYS programme, including but not limited to: radio emissions, TV productions, joint productions, sensitisations, mobile-cinema projections, Town Hall meetings, community scorecard activities and solidarity activities like football matches, *Salongo* and community fields. While civilians and members of the security forces alike appreciated the content and methodology of the different activities, there were concerns raised about their management in some instances, for example in Kitshanga where the management of jointly run mills was an issue of concern. (FGD, CLS Kitshanga). Qualitative data highlighted some important testimonials from programme participants demonstrating how activities had resulted in changes linked to the programme’s two specific objectives:

- 1) Congolese security forces and citizens demonstrate increased awareness and knowledge of their rights, roles and responsibilities, and
- 2) Accountability, collaboration and communication between civilians and state agents on issues of public security is strengthened.

In terms of LMYS’ media component, radio emissions in particular were lauded by programme participants as having practically served to increase their knowledge and awareness about mutual roles and responsibilities. In Masisi for example, civilian men highlighted the value of joint co-productions between the PNC and FARDC that were diffused locally on the procedures to follow to introduce a

⁵⁷ SFCG (2016), *Tomorrow is a New Day – Lobi Mokolo Ya Sika – Phase IV: Mid-Term Evaluation*, p. 26...§..§

complaint into the judicial system in reinforcing the knowledge of civilians about their rights and how to access services. The same men also credited these local emissions with increasing civilians' knowledge about their rights in case of arrest, "Now no police officer can arrest a civilian without him asking for his *ordre de mission* or the arrest warrant." Women in Kitshanga similarly affirmed that the radio emissions have helped them understand "the real roles of the police in each situation. We have also understood now the limits of the police and how we can seek recourse when our rights are violated by the police." (FGD, Civilian women, Kitshanga). Anecdotes such as these abound, in terms of how LMYS radio emissions served to increase individual knowledge levels about various themes including mutual roles and responsibilities with the security forces, SGBV and conflict-resolution.

The content of sensitisation materials produced by Search in the context of LMYS have represented a key value of the programme, as discussed throughout this report. Multiple programme participants, civilian military and police on local, provincial and national levels affirmed that sensitisation of troops continues during the '*jours de parade*'. As mentioned previously, national level FARDC actors in particular complimented the design of the tools and modules, highlighting the simple and accessible language and innovative and engaging design that supported learning by participants in sensitisation activities. National level actors additionally highlighted that Search's approach of developing and selecting sensitisation themes in close collaboration with the security forces added to their quality and potential for impact.

The evaluation highlighted nevertheless that there were limiting factors to the extent to which takeaways from sensitisations were put into practice by members of the security forces. These limiting factors have been discussed throughout this report and are in general related to entrenched institutional norms and resource-constraints.

"The colleagues have highlighted that (bad) working conditions and the insufficient logistical means...contribute to some police officers not implementing what they have learned after sensitisation".

CLS, Minvova

Solidarity activities implemented within the framework of LMYS were additionally credited with serving to reinforce relations between civilians and members of the security forces by actors within the security forces as well as civilians themselves. These activities, as has been discussed in previous sections of this report, served to help destabilize entrenched perceptions, dispel fears and provided important and rare opportunities for exchange and communication. In North Kivu for example, qualitative data revealed instances wherein football matches within the framework of LMYS served to strengthen communication and relations between security forces and youth who had been previously perceived as supporting non-state armed groups or other actors. (Civilian men, Masisi; Civilian women, Kitshanga)

"Nowadays relations between civilians and the security forces have improved relative to previous times. The solidarity activities have facilitated this collaboration. Before, one was trying to flee the other. Civilian populations had more trust in armed groups that have an ethnic dimension than in the security forces. A reluctance was observed in the security forces who said: 'we can't help you destroy the militia while they are your children'." After some effort, the local populations understood that they have only one army that is the FARDC and the police that is the PNC."

FARDC Major, Luvungi

The Town Hall meetings were highlighted as having been a key added value of the LMYS programme, thereby affirming the importance of democratic dialogue in SSR processes. The Town Halls reportedly provided important opportunities for exchange on security issues pertinent to members of the community, raising and addressing complaints and other concerns (including related to holding members of the security forces accountable), as well as for reinforcing communication between security forces and civilians. The evaluation highlighted how the Town Halls and Community Scorecards were being utilised in communities to raise sensitive issues of collective security, including the resolution of conflicts between civilians and security forces, the security of certain roads and fields and treatment at roadblocks.

“The (Town Hall) meeting is a very good democratic exercise. Where the authority and those he/she administrates present what they like and what they don’t like. For example, there was a case where two young boys of the same family were killed. The population thought it was an abuse committed by the police. A horrible crisis of trust ensued but it was necessary to organize a Town Hall to break this. The police made commitments that reassured the population and now trust has begun to progressively be reestablished between us.

Civil Society representative, Walungu

Impact

This section gives insight into the impact of the LMYS programme as pertains to the development of trust. The section discusses additionally how trust might be defined in the context of civil-military relations based on the findings of the evaluation and what external contributing and limiting factors might impact arriving at ‘mutual trust’.

One of the primary assumptions of achieving impact in the context of LMYS is that there exists a link between perceptions and the building of mutual trust. The findings presented above have shown a clear improvement in perceptions of the security forces in target zones and that this is reflected in higher levels of civilian trust towards them, FARDC and PNC. The findings of the final evaluation also illuminated insights into understandings of trust at the local level, as well as a complex set of factors and variables that contribute to mutual trust building that can contribute to and limit the achievement of the Theory of Change. These are important to keep in mind when reflecting on the impact of LMYS.

Defining Trust

The qualitative data usefully shed light on notions of ‘trust’ in the context of civil-military relations, as defined by local populations and FARDC participants. These findings illuminated *markers* of trust, as well as factors that promote and constrain ‘mutual trust’ at the granular level. Importantly, these enable us to better understand the potential and limits of LMYS Phase IV in this respect, and the potential durability of its outcomes. Among the key markers of civilian trust towards FARDC included:

1) Collaborating in Promoting Security

For many respondents, trust is closely associated with collaboration, primarily in contributing to the security of the zone. Both FARDC and local populations noted the importance of being willing, and able, to respond effectively to security threats or violence in the community. For example, a participant in the civilian women’s focus group in Mambasa explained that **“trust is when we are close and collaborate**

with soldiers; civilians trust soldiers when they help them [civilians] maintain security in their zone” (Mambasa, Civilian women). As evidenced above, many credited the activities of LMYS as providing opportunities to begin to break down barriers of fear between civilians and Congolese security forces.

2) Information-sharing and Reporting

In turn, for FARDC specifically, the key marker or signal of collaboration – and of trust – towards civilians was information-sharing, that is, when local populations provide verifiable security-related information to the army or when they report members of armed groups or bandits active in the community. Across focus groups with FARDC, respondents would often respond that for them: *“soldiers trust civilians once they provide us with information and after verification, we note that the information is true and reliable.”* (Walungu, FARDC). **As shown further below, from the perspective of FARDC, the failure and reluctance of local populations to share information is the greatest barrier to civil-military trust in the target zones.** Given that it is often suspected that civilians who are reluctant to provide information collaborate with armed groups, these findings also point to the relevance of taking relations between civilians and armed groups into consideration, when assessing the state of civil-security relations.

3) Embeddedness and Peaceful Cohabitation in Community

Another key marker or indicator, of a degree of trust between local populations and security personnel relates to the degree to which FARDC personnel are embedded within and co-exist with the community, or their deployment zone. In response to the question about what trust means for them in the context of civil-military relations, participants across respondent groups and across sites highlighted examples of the ways they perceived FARDC personnel as being part of the community. A key indicator of the LMYS log-frame intended to capture this was civilian perceptions of the acceptability of their child marrying a soldier or a police officer. The qualitative data indicated that this represented one key marker of success among several others pointing to humanised relationships. Other noteworthy examples included sharing a ***meal or a beer; renting houses and selling items on credit; celebrating their children’s birthdays together; joining the local football teams; and attending funerals to join in marking the death of a soldier, or a civilian.*** A more exceptional, but equally noteworthy example was given by civilian men in Kasenyi who noted that some soldiers had even joined parent teacher committees in their children’s schools, marking a recent development in military-civilian relations (Kasenyi, civilian men).

Factors Enabling and Constraining Civil-Military Trust and Collaboration

With these important markers in mind, focus group respondents, both civilians and from the security forces, often stated that while there was some trust, it was ‘not 100%.’ In Walungu, a civil society respondent described civil-military relations as *“hot and cold,”* or changeable (Walungu, civil society).

Similarly, an FARDC respondent in Walungu described civil-military relations in the town as follows:

“Like a farmer who raises a cat and guinea-pigs in the same cage. Because they live together, you will meet guinea-pigs who touch the cat’s nose. Don’t ask yourself why, it might be difficult to know. It’s because they live together that they became acquainted. In reality, however, the cat is eating other guinea-pigs elsewhere, but with those with which he lives, he plays with them but does not eat them”.

FARDC, Walungu

Pertinently, this depiction indicates that from this FARDC soldier's perspective, **building a rapport between Congolese security forces and local populations may not lead to completely mutually trusting civil-military relations, but it may help offset the worst of the former's predatory behaviour towards the latter.** Focus group data, in particular, highlighted the role of the following factors as enabling and constraining civil-military trust and collaboration in the short, intermediate, and longer term:

1) Length of time in the Community and Unit Rotation

The length of time an FARDC unit is deployed in a community is a key factor in influencing trust and collaboration in civil-military relations as noted in focus groups. **This is not surprising given that relationships build over time.** Further demonstrating the precarious character of civil-military relations in the target zones, some respondents noted that, conversely, if a unit stays in a zone too long, they can become too comfortable and begin to threaten the population. Respondents from Minova explained that: *"when soldiers stay here a long time, they think they are at home, and begin to dominate and threaten the population"* (Minova, civilian women).⁵⁸ **Pertinently for understanding the outcomes of LMYS, this suggests that there may be a certain threshold of time beyond which trust retransitions into threat in the medium to longer-term.** Discerning a clearer sense of the tipping point and contextual variables contributing thereto would offer some significant insight with evident implications for understanding the potential outcomes and durability of the programme and/or its future iterations. **To generate such insights would require a closer and more consistent monitoring of the programme throughout its implementation.**

Despite this, it was also clear that the rupture caused to civil-military relations when a unit rotates can be detrimental the relationships built, and to the sense of security of the population. Focus group respondents across the provinces shared examples of FARDC unit rotations and the fears that emerge as a result. For example, in Masisi, civilian men noted that *"today the situation has already deteriorated again with these new units. As they arrived these soldiers shot bullets into the air and the population dispersed thinking that it was a new incursion by an armed group"* (Masisi, civilian men). Similar concerns were shared across all sites. While this factor is beyond the scope and control of LMYS, it is equally clear that it has implications for reinforcing the adaptability of LMYS, understanding the outcomes of the programme, as well as their potential durability in target zones.

2) Access to Security Forces and Effectiveness of Response

As previously noted in this report, collaboration on security matters is an important marker of trust for both local populations and security forces. In a first instance, such collaboration requires access and channels of communication between civilians and national security personnel. In focus groups, respondents stated that in some circumstances they turn to security forces, including the army, when confronted with a security concern. Such communication was facilitated in sites where unit commanders either shared their phone number or established a *'numéro vert'* for civilians to call. Such numbers (established spontaneously on an ad-hoc basis by individual commanders) were reportedly shared during LMYS supported townhall meetings, further demonstrating their value in creating opportunities for and channels of communication (e.g. Rutshuru, civilian men; Kitshanga, CdB FARDC; Masisi, CLS). Relatedly,

⁵⁸ See also Verweijen, 2015, p. 295. "Troops that stay for a long time in the same environment do not only intensify interaction with civilians, the nature of that interaction shifts as well. As protection ties grow, military staff become susceptible to manipulation by civilians trying to capitalize upon their contacts in the military for furthering their own projects. This commonly takes the form of appealing to the FARDC to intervene in the processing of all sorts of local and private disputes, score settling and influence peddling."

focus group participants in Mambasa spoke in very positive terms about an FARDC commander there for regularly going on the radio to address the community and his brigade about peace and cohesion in the community. In the words of civilian women in Mambasa: *“this gives us an assurance of security”* (Mambasa, civilian women).⁵⁹ While it is unclear if this is directly attributable to LMYS activities, it highlights a general tendency toward improved communication among civilians and the security forces in one of the programme’s targeted zones.

Access to the protective services of security forces and improved communication alone are not sufficient, however. According to the qualitative data, building and sustaining a relationship of trust subsequently becomes dependent on an effective response by the security forces, and without *quid pro quo* expectations or impositions on the local population (e.g. Luvungi, FARDC). For example, civilian women in Walungu stated that *“they don’t protect us because when they do, they do it with impositions, for example, among them are our tenants and sometimes they refuse to pay their rent”* (Walungu, civilian women).⁶⁰

Finally, it is also important to note that access to the security forces is not equal across *tranches* of local communities. As further demonstrated in the indicator findings above, this is also reflected in differential levels of participation in the activities of the programme, notably including those promoting democratic dialogue. This has implications on perceptions of security and trust towards security forces. A civilian respondent in Minova stated that *“there isn’t trust between us and security forces and if there is [trust] it’s only a little bit for a member of civil society, a youth leader, but not the whole population”* (Minova, civilian men). Furthermore, returning to the hotline mentioned above, civilian women in the focus group in Kitshanga, for example, were not aware it existed, highlighting its absence as a challenge (Kitshanga, civilian women). It is unclear based on the data collected why the women participating in this focus group were not aware of its existence.

3) Mutual Suspicion of Complicity and Collaboration

Data collected for this evaluation, quantitative and qualitative, points to clear evidence of improved civil-military relations in the target zones since the baseline evaluation. It is important to keep in mind, however, that these advances take place against a long-standing backdrop of entrenched mutual distrust, grounded in and fuelled by suspicions of complicity and collaboration with armed groups active in the areas surrounding the target zones.⁶¹ This distrust was expressed by local populations and security forces across provinces. In focus groups with civilians, some expressed suspicions of FARDC complicity with armed groups, and this concern was also raised to the army in one of the *Tribunes d’expression populaire* (Kitshanga, civilian women). Others noted that it is *“difficult to give the real profile of perpetrators given that FARDC collaborate with certain armed groups active in the region”* (Masisi, civilian men). Conversely, from the perspective of FARDC, the suspicion of civilian complicity with armed groups and bandits in their

⁵⁹ It is unclear whether this strategy was inspired by LMYS engagement, however, it is one to note for good practice in the promotion of civil-military relations. Indeed, the importance of facilitating communication and information provision through enabling phone contact and speaking on the radio was also found by Steven Van Damme and Judith Verweijen (2012) *In Search of an Army. How the FARDC can Improve Civilians’ Safety*. Unpublished document, prepared for Oxfam International

⁶⁰ The annual Oxfam protection surveys similarly highlight how taxation and extortion can undermine perceptions of and trust in the security forces, see ‘We are entirely exploitable. The lack of protection for civilians in eastern DRC’ (Oxfam International, 2011)

⁶¹ Cf. Verweijen, ‘Ambiguity of Militarization’, p.110 “in zones with armed groups, the FARDC tends to be highly distrustful towards the population, commonly assuming that in principle anyone is a collaborator until the contrary has been proved. This leads military staff to depict civilians as treacherous and hypocritical, believing that they pretend to collaborate in your face, but help armed groups behind your back. In the words of an adjutant deployed in an area of Fizi that is home to several Mai Mai groups: ‘Armed groups, that is the population. Today it is a civilian, tomorrow it is an enemy [leo iko raia, kesho iko adui]’

zones of operation was identified as the greatest barrier to trusting local populations. To cite one example that is broadly representative of FARDC responses across sites, the FARDC Base Committee in Mambasa explained that civilians are generally still reserved when it comes to reporting violence or abuses, noting that *“one should not forget that it is their children who are often implicated in violations, if not they themselves”* (Mambasa, CdB FARDC).

4) Persistence of abuses and harassment by security forces

While the majority of civilians surveyed in the evaluation stated that they perceive security forces as contributing to the security of their community and indicated some increase in levels of trust towards them, the findings also point to the persistence of abuses and harassment by the security forces against civilians as hindering levels of trust towards security forces.⁶² Indeed, looking at indicator OP 2.11 – civilian encounters with army roadblocks – 67% of respondents stated that they had encountered an army roadblock in the last 6 months, over a third of whom (34%) respondents that they faced intimidation, threats, and violence. Focus groups provided further examples of the persistent abuses and harassment by security forces. In Walungu, for instance, civilian women stated that *“civilians can have complete trust in the armed forces: during the day we have good soldier neighbours but at night they transform into robbers”* (Walungu, civilian women). Across sites and provinces, civilian respondents shared incident upon incident of harassment and, in some instances, of violations at the hands of soldiers. Giving an illustrative example, a respondent in Rutshuru recounted: *“my brother was coming back from the field and was stopped by an FARDC soldier from this new unit and simply because he was wearing green rubber boots he was stopped. The soldier told him that civilians are not allowed to wear these kinds of boots and he was freed after paying more than \$10”* (Rutshuru, civilian women). In Masisi, civilian men recounted that a young boy was recently shot by a soldier for refusing to carry his belongings (Masisi, civilian men). Incidents like these abounded across focus groups and combined with a perpetual sense that security forces *“possess a weapon and can use it at any moment, even against us”* (Walungu, civilian men).

Respondents expressed various reasons and levels of understanding for the persistence of abuses by security forces, which point in particular to ongoing structural and institutional challenges to securing mutually trusting and collaborative civil-military relations. Respondents in security forces, particularly members of base committees and more senior level officers, tended to frame these as isolated cases committed by ‘bad apples.’ The phrase often repeated in focus groups and interviews was *“les brebis galleuses ne manquent jamais,”* to mean that ‘bad apples’ are never lacking. Emphasising individual security personnel responsibility for persistent abuses and harassment in this way signals a degree of distancing of institutional responsibility on the part of security force leadership and a failure to acknowledge their damaging effect on the image of security forces in the deployment zones. Some civilian respondents also framed such abuses as ‘isolated incidents’ but at a much lesser frequency (e.g. Minova, civil society interview). Instead, local populations were more likely to point to a wider array of factors, such as the low (or non-) payment of salaries and the poor living conditions of the Congolese armed forces; varying levels of training and education of soldiers; and recruitment processes. For instance, as succinctly observed by civilian

“Nowadays we no longer have the tendency to generalize the bad behavior of a soldier. We no longer use the term ‘wale wa soda’, instead we use ‘ule soda’, meaning that we no longer say ‘those soldiers’, but ‘that soldier’ when a soldier commits an abuse”.

Civilian man, Kasenyi

⁶² See also Hannah Cooper (2014) In the Balance. Searching for Protection in Eastern DRC. Oxfam Briefing Paper 179. London: Oxfam International.

women in Walungu: “we know that our police officers and soldiers have very low wages, and some aren’t paid at all, and that creates poor behaviour among them” (Walungu, civilian women). As a result, some civilians noted a clear disjuncture between their perceptions of and relations with officers of a higher grade, where there is generally greater trust and collaboration, and their subalterns, with whom everyday interactions are more commonplace and with whom it is a “whole other story” (Walungu civilian women; Minova, civilian men).

Accountability

Efforts to promote accountability for injustice and violations by State forces, including sexual violence, have played a key role in security sector reform programming. Securing justice for victims of violations and enforcing discipline within FARDC and PNC are seen as an important tool in the SSR ‘toolkit’ towards building mutually trusting and accountable civil-security relations.

“Before, there was no collaboration, there was a fear: the soldiers were fearful of the population and the population likewise were fearful. But today, a collaboration is perceptible.”

Civilian woman, Kitshanga

More recent strategies for promoting accountability within the security forces have turned towards democratic dialogue mechanisms. This shift from seeing accountability as fighting impunity towards seeing accountability as civilian oversight is reflected in the transition between LMYS Phase III and Phase IV, which included supporting activities such as Community scorecard activities and Townhall meetings in target zones. While the fight against impunity was previously a priority of the LMYS programme, and an indicator on abuses committed by the security forces was included in the log-frame, members of the programme team explained that this aspect of the programme was dropped since access to justice implied a zero-sum game – as the judicial process typically ends with a ‘winner’ and ‘loser’ - and was therefore inherently incongruent with the common ground approach. Despite this strategic adjustment, accountability and perceptions of accountability (via civilian oversight mechanisms) remain a key means of measuring success in the programme. Indeed, given the importance of both of these accountability paradigms in the evolution of Lobi Mokolo ya Sika in eastern DRC, this final evaluation measures outcomes relating to both. As is evidenced below, fighting impunity and promoting democratic dialogue are considered valuable strategies for instilling a sense of trust between local populations and security forces by both parties, but in distinct ways.⁶³ Across focus groups conducted during the final evaluation, effective justice and discipline were generally and reportedly seen to be correlated with higher perceptions of trust towards security forces. Democratic dialogue, reinforced through solidarity activities, provides opportunities for collaboration, **by breaking down entrenched barriers of fear and building the foundations for collective security.**

Fighting impunity via more traditional means was a key component of LMYS Phase III. Access to justice, particularly access to justice in cases of abuse committed by members of the security forces, can be a key contributing factor to building mutual trust between civilian populations and security forces. As aptly noted by a respondent in Walungu:

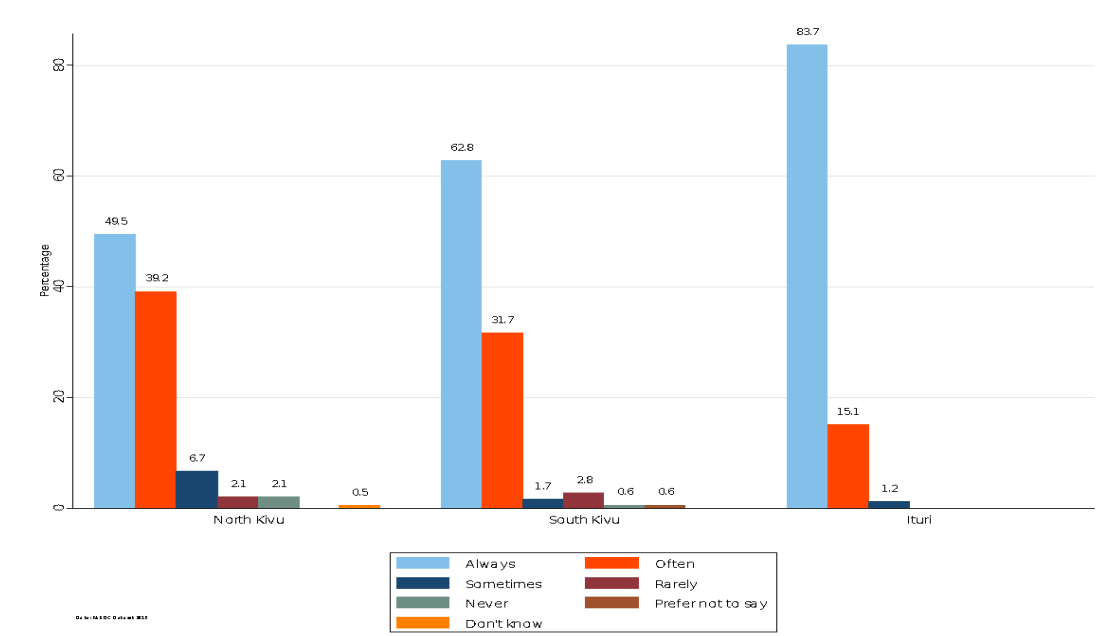
⁶³ See also Maria Eriksson Baaz and Judith Verweijen, 2013. “‘La mère des armées n’est pas encore morte’. Des pratiques de justice (in)formelle dans les Forces armées de la République démocratique du Congo”, *Politique Africaine* N° 129: 49–72.

“Trust is reinforced everytime civilians give us information that a soldier has committed an abuse against civilians and is submitted to exemplary punishment. When civilians realise that the soldier has really been punished, their trust towards us grows.”

FARDC, Walungu

Reports of accountability and perceptions of disciplinary action within the security forces were relatively high with the majority of FARDC respondents surveyed in South Kivu and Ituri claiming that when a soldier commits an act of violence s/he will always be subject to an investigation (see Fig. 10). In North Kivu responses were more tepid in this respect, nevertheless the majority of FARDC respondents surveyed across the three provinces – 89% – stated that a soldier will “always” or “often” be subject to an investigation if s/he commits an act of violence.

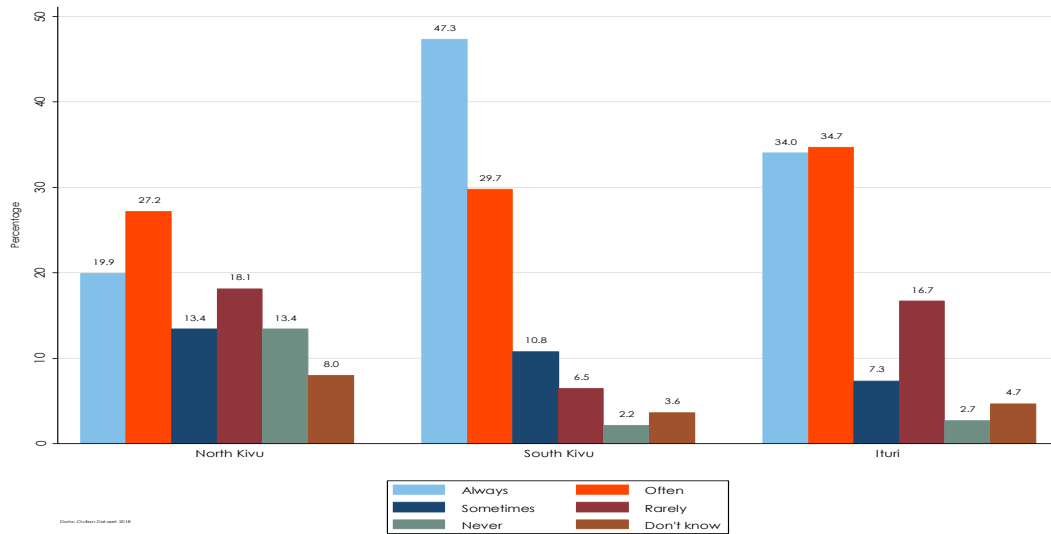
Figure 10: Perceptions of FARDC related to discipline and accountability for abuses committed by FARDC members



It is important to note, however, that these figures represent self-reporting on the part of FARDC respondents. **Civilian perceptions of accountability and discipline within the army were significantly lower.** Only 35% of civilian respondents across all three provinces believed that when a member of the FARDC committed rape, that the soldier would ‘always’ face investigation. 30% believed that a member of the FARDC would always face investigation if he or she had committed another form of abuse.

More encouragingly, 63% of civilian respondents across the three provinces believed that a member of the PNC would face ‘always’ face investigation if he or she had committed rape, 34% believed that the same in cases of other forms of violence committed against civilians.

Figure 11: Perceptions of civilians related to if a member of the PNC would face investigation in the case of violence committed against civilians



The vast majority of PNC respondents stated additionally that if another PNC agent or officer committed an act of violence or an abuse, they would report it. This reflects an encouraging institutionalisation of norms of accountability and respect for human rights through military justice or disciplinary measures within the security forces in eastern DRC, even if judicial accountability for abuses against civilians is not always delivered in practice.

While positive norms surrounding accountability and respect for human rights are being diffused widely within the security forces thanks to LMYS activities, their effects in terms of changed individual or institutional practices by security forces are not systematically felt by civilian populations, who continue to report abuses and a general failure to hold those responsible to account. These challenges related to accountability continue to constrain the development of relationships built on mutual trust between civilians and the security forces.

Institutional Change

Bearing in mind factors promoting and constraining trust-building discussed above, the evaluation findings indicate that LMYS has contributed to some institutional-level change within the security forces.

The evaluation highlighted that while there were particularly positive advances in the institutionalisation of the Common Ground Approach within the security forces, notably via revised training curricula and the continued use of LMYS related sensitisation tools and material, training and sensitisation were not yet systematised throughout the institutions. Notably, challenges related to newly deployed units arriving in communities but not receiving training in a timely manner were highlighted by respondents as a potentially constraining factor to developing mutual trust.

As mentioned previously, the LMYS Gender Strategy formed the basis for the development of a Gender Strategy within the FARDC. Continued advocacy is needed to promote buy-in for this strategy by leaders

and other key actors within the security forces. Future LMYS phases should include this strategy as a key strategic priority area, in order to ensure that the tool and respective engagements are put into practice.

A few factors have been noted as having potentially limited impact related to LMYS outcomes

- A volatile political situation including uncertainty around the electoral calendar, which has undermined some progress and blocked channels of communication between civilians and security forces
- Frequent turnover and rotation of FARDC units and in the highest leadership of the FARDC in the targeted zones
- Continued violence and growing insecurity in eastern DRC which has resulted in some cases in the suspension of activities⁶⁴

Overall, this analysis indicates that LMYS activities have gone a significant way to promoting, and to some degree, achieving its Theory of Change in the target zones. This is perhaps most promisingly captured by the finding that across the target provinces approximately 80% of civilian respondent expressed some level of trust towards the Congolese security forces. Yet, the insights into the parameters of trust discussed here indicate that the nature of this trust among civilians and security forces remains fragile and that the building of relationships grounded in mutual trust is linked to myriad other institutional and social factors that are not addressed within the scope of the LMYS programme as it was designed. These are discussed throughout this report and may include but are not limited to, resource-constraints within the institution of the security forces; limited progress in terms of accountability and the fight against impunity, particularly for abuses committed by security forces against civilians and relationships among civilians, security forces and non-state armed actors/groups in any given targeted zone.

Sustainability

Search programme managers and leadership have sought to ensure political buy-in for the implementation of LMYS, signing cooperation accords with the Ministry of Defence and the Police Commissioner on the national level.

These national level security actors were included in the strategic development of the programme via the Comité National de Pilotage within the FARDC and the Cellule de Réforme de la Police (CRP) within the PNC. Members of these committees reported that they had been involved in developing the programme to some degree, during its inception and in its early implementation, though some expressed frustrations that this implication had seemingly decreased over the course of the programme's implementation.

In order to mitigate potential risks to the programme, posed by political shifts and institutional changes on the national level, the programme placed an emphasis on cooperation with intermediary bodies within the structure of the security forces, notably the *Comités de Coopération Provinciaux*, the SECAS and provincial level representatives of the PNC and the FARDC.

Ensuring the sustainability of the programme's activities and outcomes across target groups was a key focus of Phase IV and the ensuing cost extension period (CE). This centred on promoting ownership of the programme by target groups; institutionalisation of Common Ground Approach within the training curricula of security forces; strengthening the programme's reach in peripheral areas; and a switch to more durable measures of strengthening civil-military relations, for example via redirecting focus toward

⁶⁴ Search LMYS 8th Interim Report.

working with local security committees as a core component of the programme. These local security committees play important functions in civil-military relations, including receiving (from civilians) and communicating complaints or alerts to the security forces and facilitating opportunities for exchange over issues of collective security. As mentioned previously, these committees are national/local structures and not tied to LMYS implementation, serving to reinforce the durability of activities conducted in coordination with them.

According to programme documents, during the cost extension period, Search also continued supporting the SECAS in revising and providing technical accompaniment for the development and finalisation of the FARDC training curricula. Key themes including human rights, sexual and gender-based violence and the Common Ground Approach have been integrated into the training material. Search also supported EU Progress in the facilitation of a pilot training on the revised module. The evaluation pointed furthermore to some promising evidence of institutionalisation of sensitisation and educational approaches within the security forces. Respondents from the security forces noted that LMYS educational material was included and diffused in the military and police parades. This sentiment was echoed by members of the security forces on the national level who affirmed that sensitisations continued to institutionalisation, take place during the *jours de parade*.

There are also indications that norms of accountability are being institutionalised among the security forces, with respondents reporting that those committing abuses are generally investigated and that cases of abuse are often reported to the hierarchy. Participants in the evaluation additionally reported that key protagonist characters from media sketches have come to represent new points of reference, or symbols, embodying 'positive' and 'negative' behaviour by national security personnel, both within local populations and the security forces. The most commonly referenced characters by respondents were *Nkadisa* and *Commandant Janvier*. The example from the FARDC focus group in Minova below was common across sites and across target groups:

"In our unit, there are soldiers who we started to call 'Commandant Janvier' because their behaviour is the same as that of 'Commandant Janvier' who gives very bad orders. And, when we see that a commander incited his subaltern towards harm for his own personal gain, we immediately call him this name of 'Comman Janvier', in his absence of course. We have two 'Commandant Janvier' here."

FARDC, Minova

In addition to shifting popular discourse in this way, data collected pointed to some concrete ways in which the LMYS media activities offer educational tools on the rights of civilians. In this respect, the qualitative data in particular pointed to examples of incidents wherein individuals were able to challenge the behaviour of a PNC or FARDC agent as a result of information acquired from Search activities.

"If you find yourself in front of a police officer who wants to harass you, if you are informed, you can remind him of the content of Search's shows or episodes that you have seen and then he will leave you alone. These videos have changed the behavior of police officers in the zone."

Civilian men, Rutshuru

While recognising the significance of examples like these across target zones, it is important to note two further points highlighted in the focus group data. The first is that among civilian participants there was a persistent sense that national security forces would still continue to abuse their power and the ignorance

of populations as to their rights when they could. The onus therefore still falls on individual civilians to challenge – or ‘remind’ – police and army personnel of their rights and their appropriate mandated behaviour when confronted with an incident involving the FARDC or the PNC. Given the documented pervasiveness of arbitrary arrests, summary killings, and reprisal attacks in eastern DRC, especially on the part of some elements of FARDC, the responsibility falls on civilians to do so at significant risk to their wellbeing, and indeed, potentially to their lives. This is indicative of ongoing challenges to systematically integrating the outcomes of LMYS across national security forces, including in the units stationed and deployed in the programme’s target zones.

In addition, for some participants, there was a sense that not enough of a focus was placed on the *mutual* responsibilities component – specifically relating to civilians – in the media and democratic dialogue activities. While some understood one of the core aims of LMYS as overcoming perceptions that security forces are the “robbers” and the civilians always the “saints”, some saw this balanced approach undermined in practice. Indeed, participants in the security forces underscored that, from their perspective, the emphasis in

LMYS activities was too heavily on the negative behaviour of the PNC and FARDC, crucially, with too little emphasis on the civic duties and responsibilities of local civilian populations. As a result, given the context of mutual distrust, this was seen by

“In these activities we recognize the misdeeds of police but for the civilian population, nothing is reproached. The programme emphasises a lot the rights of civilians who stay silent on their civic responsibilities. It insists on what makes an ideal police officers, but an ideal citizen we don’t even talk about.”

Colonel PNC, Minova

some to undermine the potential durability of the Theory of Change.

Overall, however, it is clear that LMYS activities have contributed to shifting discourses and some practices in civil-security relations in target zones. Ensuring that such changes in norms and behaviours become a consistent, systematic, and durable feature of quotidian civil-security practices requires local institutional support and ownership. Yet, **the degree of ownership at a local institutional level within target zones remains less evident**. This is most clearly demonstrated both by the significance of concerns expressed around **unit rotation** and **shifting political context** in the wake of the expected elections, and, indeed, by the fact that **many LMYS supported activities seem to have all but come to a halt** since the end of the programme. As highlighted above, these first two factors represent significant variables in potentially limiting the outcomes of the programme and their durability.⁶⁵ This final evaluation did not find evidence of a smooth transition and integration of new units on arrival into a new deployment zone. To the contrary, as highlighted above, evidence generally pointed to fragile adjustment periods. Some participants spoke to the perceived and experienced risks of insecurity related to newly deployed units in their communities. Some examples were recorded of activities continuing during transitions, such as football matches and CLS(P) meetings, but these were reportedly infrequent and *ad hoc*. Indeed, recommendations the most frequently expressed centred on requesting that Search continue its support of solidarity activities and sensitisation for a longer period to help ensure their sustainability. In this respect, participants did not signal any knowledge of an exit strategy to ensure the durability of the

⁶⁵ Other SSR interventions also found rotations of staff as potentially limiting sustainability. An evaluation of the EUSEC programme concluded for instance that: “the sustainability of results is negatively affected by mutations of military staff to other military regions, especially when for example administrative and financial staff members that have been trained and accompanied by EUSEC are appointed to other functions (loss of expertise).” Channel Research (2011) Joint Evaluation of Conflict Prevention and Peace-building in the Democratic Republic of Congo. Volume 2. Annexes to the Synthesis Rapport. Revised version 17 June 2011. Ohain: Channel Research, p. 238.

programme. This was echoed in responses from key informants who reported not being aware of any existing exit strategy related to the programme.

Overall, evidence collected in the evaluation indicated that the **durability of programmatic outcomes would rely on the individual motivation and will of individuals working within institutional structures rather than programmatic activities being embedded within existing institutional structures**. In addition, target groups did not appear confident that any improvements in civil-security relations would be able to withstand shifts in the political and security landscapes.

Unsurprisingly, **lack of resources was a frequently and consistently cited as a challenge to ensuring the durability of the programme's outcomes**. Across sites, this challenge was reported to most significantly limit the reach and, as a result, the potential sustainability of the programme.⁶⁶ Notably, participants highlighted that this meant that activities tended to be concentrated in the centre of target communities, limiting their reach to peripheral areas where they were most needed. Although LMYS introduced income generating activities through its solidarity activities – including communal fields and windmills – where these are operational, they were reported to be poorly managed and generating insufficient income to sustain the requisite revenue in the zones targeted. This pointed to potential weaknesses with the monitoring of these activities and also reflected a general lack of clarity expressed by respondents as to **where the responsibility lies for ensuring the continuation of activities formerly supported by LMYS and the provision of necessary resources**. As a State mandated mechanism, unlike the base committees, the CLS were somewhat of an exception to this, although similar concerns around resources were expressed. As a result, meetings, including Town Hall discussions, were reported to be infrequent, *ad hoc*, and seen to be necessary only as a reactionary measure when an issue were to arise.

Before concluding, this section **considers the uptake and sustainability of the LMYS Gender Strategy (2014-2018)** in the target zones. As previously noted, the programme's

"It's Search who organizes the activity, we don't have budgets to organize them. If we did, we would organize it regularly when a serious problem is posed".

CLS, Kasenyi

Gender Strategy was comprehensive and ambitious, centring on four pillars: 1) increasing the participation of women in the programme's activities; 2) ensuring programme activities are inclusive of the gender-specific needs and experiences (including in terms of their location, their time, and the language in which they are held); 3) integrated in the durability of the programme; 4) and in the internal management of the programme. **The evaluation pointed to some promising trends in the integration of the gender strategy across programmatic activities, for instance, in promoting women's active participation in the solidarity and democratic dialogue activities, representing women's experiences of insecurity and armed conflict in the programme's activities and ensuring that local security plans are gender sensitive and respond to gendered issues of collective security**. As discussed at greater length in Annex B on Gender and LMYS, the evaluation generally found that civilian women's and girls' needs and experiences, and of sexual and gender-based violence specifically, were incorporated in media activities, notably in the widely viewed story of Ndakisa television series and Lobi Mokolo ya Sika radio drama. Women's active participation in the LMYS activities, including the Community scorecards and Town Hall meetings, however, remained relatively weak. As noted above, in two focus groups with civilian women – Minova and Mambasa – participants had not heard of these activities, let alone participated in one.

⁶⁶ Lack of resources has also been identified as a key obstacle to the sustainability of SSR interventions, see the Channel report evaluation, e.g. p. 269, p.325.

In terms of the durability of the gender dimensions of the programme at this endline stage and looking forward, therefore, it is clear that **challenges remain in ensuring consistent and systemic uptake of gender sensitivity and inclusivity in SSR and democratic dialogue efforts**. Respondents were evidently aware that civilian women should be included as participants in democratic dialogue and civilian oversight, although the nature and extent of women's contribution was not necessarily clear across sites. Closer and more consistent monitoring should be conducted throughout programme implementation to assess women's participation and better understand contextual barriers thereto so as to ensure their voices are heard and their concerns met. **This must continue to include, but not be limited to, sexual and gender-based violence**. The findings presented above indicated that closer attention should be paid to *which* women are participating in these mechanisms to ensure that efforts to promote democratic dialogue, including as part of SSR efforts, are intersectionally inclusive and do not perpetuate other exclusionary divisions in conflict-affected communities, whether these be based on socio-economic status, ethnicity, or disability. Such an approach might help ensure that the benefits of the programme are shared across the community in the immediate and longer-term.

Importantly, key informants within the FARDC hierarchy reported that a gender strategy had been developed for the armed forces, based on the LMYS gender strategy. National level actors also affirmed that advocacy had and continued to take place for the nomination of gender focal points within provincial coordination mechanisms in order to oversee the implementation of gender-related engagements, pointing to positive advances in ensuring the sustainability of gender-related outcomes linked to LMYS activities. This strategy had reportedly not yet been formally adopted at the time of the evaluation and the study was limited in its capacity to identify its level of implementation as yet.

Focus groups with security forces and civilians signalled a variation in levels of engagement with and commitment to gender sensitivity across zones and units. These varied from statements supportive of addressing gender dimensions of SSR, including integrating female personnel, on the more committed end of the spectrum to more resistant expressions. For instance, one senior FARDC Officer and member of a CLS in South Kivu stated that questions around gender and women's participation did not belong to security institutions. As a whole, however, the qualitative data collected encouragingly indicated that the latter, more resistance stance, was the exception rather than the rule. Most respondents tended to be relatively ambivalent in their support for women in the security forces, particularly in zones where few female personnel are deployed or stationed, while responses from local populations were mixed. Interestingly, civilian men tended to be supportive of the value of female security personnel and highlighting their virtues relative to their male counterparts, such as being more "generous" and being less "brutal" than male security personnel (Civilian men, Mambasa; Civilian men, Masisi). Civilian women, in quite significant contrast, tended to view female military and police personnel with caution and at times greater suspicion than their male counterparts. Based on their experiences and observations, civilian women in Mambasa stated that, "the female soldier has the same behaviour as civilian men, trust isn't at all 100%. In addition, female military personnel are arrogant towards us civilian women, for example when we ask them for a service, they get their backs up" (Civilian women, Mambasa). This highlights a need to better understand civil-security relations *between women* in the promotion of gender-responsive SSR, further affirming the importance of going beyond an 'add women and stir' approach to SSR in general,⁶⁷ in this case, within the framework of LMYS in eastern DRC.

⁶⁷ See e.g, Eriksson Baaz, M. & Utas, M. (2012), "Beyond 'Gender and Stir': Reflections on gender and SSR in the aftermath of African conflicts," Policy Dialogue No. 9, The Nordic Africa Institute, p. 6.

Conclusion

This evaluation report demonstrates the ways in which Lobi Mokolo ya Sika has achieved its Theory of Change, noting considerable and encouraging advances in the knowledge and awareness of mutual rights and responsibilities among civilians and security forces. The evaluation furthermore affirmed the important relevance and value of the LMYS Theory of Change, with programme participants placing particular emphasis on how opportunities for democratic dialogue and solidarity-building activities reinforced communication, collaboration and accountability. Interestingly, while solidarity activities in particular were limited in their capacity to secure lasting mutual 'trust' per se, the evaluation findings highlighted their impact on diminishing predatory behaviour of security forces toward civilians within target zones. The importance of this should not be discounted, particularly in the fragile landscape of eastern DRC.

The evaluation additionally illuminated obstacles and limits to the achievements of the LMYS Theory of Change and other factors with the potential to constrain impact linked to the programme. These factors notably included institutional level obstacles within the security forces to translating increased knowledge into behaviour change and to systematising training and sensitisation. Resource constraints, in addition to entrenched norms and ways of working have been noted by this evaluation and other research as a key obstacle and barrier to change in security sector reform programming. The LMYS evaluation highlighted how resource constraints limit in particular security forces' capacities to provide protective services and conversely the importance of appropriate response by the security forces during times or incidents of insecurity in shaping perceptions of trust held by civilian populations. Crucially then for Search, DfID and other actors, the study highlighted the importance of multi-faceted approaches to SSR, coupling institutional reform with efforts to promote civil-security relations.

Several best practices and lessons learned were identified from the LMYS programme, with the potential for strengthening future SSR programming including:

- the importance of democratic dialogue and solidarity initiatives in facilitating improved communication and collaboration among civilians and security forces (notably the Town Hall meetings, Community scorecards, and solidarity activities);
- the value and reach of media across beneficiary groups in changing civil-security narratives, challenging stereotypes, and conveying knowledge about civil-security rights and responsibilities;
- the potential of the local security committees in facilitating information sharing, better collaboration among civilians and security forces and in supporting mutual trust in civil-military relations at a local level;
- the identification of women's needs within the security forces and the integration of these while supporting the implementation of recommendations

Though the evaluation highlighted that the majority of the population reported having some level of trust in the security forces, it should be noted that these sentiments of trust have not yet translated into systematic and consistent institutional level trust vis a vis the PNC and FARDC. Importantly, trust was tied to units and individuals rather than institutions, highlighting on the one hand its fragility, and the critical role of unit commanders in promoting or undermining positive civil-military relations, on the other. As discussed in the report, a range of factors influence and determine 'mutual trust' including the length of unit duration and effectiveness of response for protective and security services. These illustrate the importance of institutional support to and within the PNC and FARDC to target specific areas of reform, drawing lessons learned from the LMYS programme on markers of trust.

Given the real challenges in securing funding for SSR programmes, the variety of institutional barriers to change and the particular capacities and authority required, the importance of synergy and coordinated efforts in security sector reform is one key takeaway from the LMYS final evaluation process. It is not feasible nor desirable for Search to undertake all the recommendations drawing from this study and the experience of implementing LMYS. The most effective SSR efforts can only be government-led, supported by various technical and financial partners and implemented by durable and capable institutions and local mechanisms. A multi-sector approach to SSR and/or the aggregation of results from complementary initiatives may serve to advance the achievement of SSR related objectives and engagements.

Overall, through its Common Ground Approach and its innovative and participatory tools for promoting sensitisation, accountability, and improved civil-security relations, Lobi Mokolo ya Sika stands out in the SSR policy and programmatic landscape in DRC. LMYS has served an important role in destabilising norms and breaking social barriers among civilians and security forces. Importantly, it has done so by contributing to creating opportunities to develop mutually trusting civil-security relations in its target zones. While this evaluation was limited by timing and methodological constraints, further and more applied research will be crucial in determining real impact resulting from improved mutually trusting relations among civilians and the security forces.

Ultimately, this study has demonstrated the complexity of the work of trust-building among civilians and security forces. Trust, particularly in the volatile context of eastern DRC, must continually be earned. Looking forward, the post-election period in the DRC provides SSR and stabilisation actors with renewed impetus to continue and intensify efforts in strengthening civil-security relations, building upon the foundations laid by LMYS in support of a security sector that is knowledgeable, equipped and able to implement its mandate to protect.

Recommendations

This section outlines recommendations emerging from the findings of the final evaluation for the consideration of Search and other key stakeholders in the development of future phases of the LMYS programme.

Search for Common Ground

Concerning overall design

- **Continue investing in solidarity activities, as these provided concrete opportunities for relationship and trust building.** The evaluation highlighted in particular how these opportunities served to destabilise long-held preconceptions of civilians vis a vis the security forces and vice versa. To help promote their sustainability, Search and implementation partners should ensure that the income generating activities designed to support them have established a clear management strategy within target zones. Strengthened monitoring of these activities is further recommended to ensure their continued good management.
- **Similarly, the evaluation highlighted how democratic dialogue activities including the Town Hall meetings and Community Scorecards served to promote accountability and created opportunities to raise issues of collective security and potentially impact the quality of protective services. Continued support to these activities will be crucial in future iterations of the LMYS programme.** The evaluation highlighted that there remain questions about *who has access to these spaces* and *under what circumstances*. Furthermore, if the same messages are repeatedly passed to the same audiences, namely community leaders and other key actors, generally male community leaders, opportunities to strengthen relations between the military and more vulnerable groups of civilians are lost. **More concerted effort should be made to ensure that these activities reach marginalised groups including women and members of remote communities. For example,** one potential strategy to encourage women's physical and active participation might be to **organise women-only BS and TEP in target communities, ensuring that their security concerns are represented and addressed on an equal footing to those raised in the mixed, community spaces.**

Concerning relevance

- While recognising the limits of Search to communicate with armed groups and potential impacts on trust built between the organisation and the security forces, Search should consider including non-state armed groups and inter-communal conflict as a key priority within future efforts in collective security and democratic dialogue. The evaluation highlighted that civilian rapport with armed groups was a key (potentially limiting) factor in the building of mutual trust among civilians the security forces, similarly, the presence and activism of armed groups was repeatedly noted as having an impact on perceptions of security. If there is no possibility within the scope of LMYS to adapt to this strategic priority, Search could seek opportunities for collaboration with actors like Geneva Call for example, among others, including highly embedded local organisations, who work and dialogue with non-state armed groups in order to reinforce the relevance and overall quality of LMYS activities.

Concerning efficiency

- In order to strengthen monitoring and evaluation processes and thereby leverage M&E for improved programme and product quality, Search may consider **investing in strengthening M&E processes, with a particular focus on reinforcing the capacity of local actors conducting monitoring including the security forces themselves, various local committees and local NGO partners.** Statistical as well as qualitative data from these actors may serve to harness learning from the programme as well as capture change related to specific objectives. **In addition to reinforcing partners' capacities in monitoring, the programme should have clear and simplified reporting procedures in order to ensure that information is appropriately communicated to the relevant actors.**
- Furthermore, for future iterations of the LMYS programme, **Search should consider investing in a longitudinal evaluation process, able to capture changes in impact over time.** Specifically, it would also be important to consider at the outset of future phases of LMYS the selection of control sites, in order to permit an empirically sound impact evaluation at the end of the programme.
- **To systematically encourage the participation of women in LMYS activities, consider including an indicator targeting at least 30% female participation across beneficiary groups.** This should include in the organisation of activities (timing, location, etc), in the dialogue, as well as in solutions agreed-upon. Where this is not possible or not reached, implementing partners should be asked to provide an explanation as part of their monitoring activities.

Concerning effectiveness

- Recalling that length of time in the community and duration of unit rotation were potentially contributing or contributing factors to building mutual trust, the evaluation suggested that there may be a certain threshold of time beyond which trust retransitions into threat in the medium to longer-term. This further affirms one of the principal conclusions of this study, that institutional-level barriers to change may limit potential gains related to LMYS in terms of building relationships above mutual trust among civilians and security forces. **Search may consider supporting the security forces in developing and implementing standard operating procedures that support the implementation of positive norms disseminated via training and sensitisation activities.** Standard rotation and deployment policies (*like standardised durations for rotations and systematic and timely training for newly deployed units*) in conjunction with civilian oversight via the community score card activities and Town Hall meetings may serve to mitigate potential risks linked to unit rotation and deployment.
- **To strengthen program effectiveness, Search may reinforce synergy with other key actors notably the security forces themselves and the actions these actors might have initiative, catalysed by the LMYS programme.** The evaluation highlighted that access to services and the quality of response provided by the security of forces was a key determining factor of trust for civilian populations. Importantly, phone numbers of relevant FARDC and PNC authorities were shared during Town Hall meetings implemented within the framework of LMYS. Participants in the study emphasised how the sharing of these phone numbers served to reinforce population's access to protective services, contributed to improved communication and collaboration and thereby contributed to strengthening civil-military relations in communities. **Search should consider ways in which this sharing of contact information could be integrated in future iterations of LMYS and replicated in a more systematic manner across the targeted zones.**
- The evaluation highlighted the critical role of unit commanders and superior officers in general in the security forces, **both regarding** brokering relationships between the security forces and civilians, who reportedly noted that they had more trust in superior officers rather than their

subordinates, *as well as in terms of* promoting or hindering the implementation of lessons learned from training and sensitisation activities and in general, shaping their units' interactions with civilian populations. **Search may consider a strategic adjustment in the LMYS programme, placing additional emphasis on these unit-level commanders in the targeted zones, their sensitisation and engagement in the programme.**

Concerning impact

- The evaluation highlighted the critical need to reinforce the “mutual” aspect of the democratic dialogue and media activities of the programme in particular. Security forces interviewed in the course of the study shared frustrations that these activities seemed to focus heavily on the roles and responsibilities of the security forces and less so, those civic responsibilities and duties of civilian populations. This may have presented a barrier to behaviour change linked to these activities. **Search may continue efforts to jointly produce sensitisation materials and media tools including radio emissions. Search may also reinforce technical accompaniment and monitoring of dialogue activities like the Town Halls via the local security committees and local NGO partners in order to ensure that these discuss ‘mutual responsibilities’ including those of civilians as well in communities.**

Concerning durability

- **Continue efforts to strengthen the institutionalisation of the Common Ground Approach**, via continued support to the SECAS in the development and finalization of this training curricula. Search may continue conducting advocacy with the SECAS and provide technical support as needed for the finalization of the modules. In future phases of LMYS and in Search’s broader SSR and stabilisation efforts, it will be important to further develop the partnership with EU Progress (in coordination with the SECAS) in support of facilitating training and capacity building efforts based on the revised curricula.
- **Unit rotation was highlighted as a key limiting factor to the durability of LMYS outcomes and the institutionalisation of gains from the programme. This challenge could however be harnessed as an opportunity to ensure the wide reach of sensitisation content, if training and sensitisation activities could be systematically aligned with the rotations.** As mentioned previously, efforts to strengthen the infrastructure of the security forces including the development and implementation of standard operating procedures will be key to addressing potential barriers to change hindering the achievement of LMYS’ Theory of Change. The systematisation of training activities within the security forces, with particular attention paid to ensuring that newly deployed units receive timely training and are integrated into key activities, notably mechanisms for dialogue and collective security like the Town Hall meetings and local security committees will be key to reinforcing the durability of LMYS outcomes.
- **In order to build upon key strategic advancements realised in LMYS, including the development of a gender strategy by the FARDC based on the LMYS gender strategy, Search may continue supporting the validation of this strategy and accompany its implementation via technical and limited financial support.** While the development of a gender strategy by the FARDC was a key achievement of the LMYS programme, the strategy had not yet been validated at the time of the evaluation. Continued advocacy and technical accompaniment for the validation of this crucial document will be important in future phases of LMYS. Bearing in mind funding limitations, Search may consider limited support to the implementation of key engagements from the FARDC gender strategy. Search, under the guidance of the Ministry of Defense and SECAS should furthermore engage in systematic monitoring of the implementation of the gender strategy in order to measure progress and changes linked to the activities.

- **Also related to the gender sensitivity of the LMYS programme and Search’s future SSR work**, it will be important for Search and its partners to invest in more applied research related to gender and SSR, women’s participation in the security forces and potential impacts on military-civilian relations, including between women. This coupled with stronger gender-sensitive monitoring of the implementation of activities may serve to unpack complexities surrounding obstacles limiting women’s participation in LMYS related activities so that the programme might be better able to respond and reinforce gender parity in these activities. On the basis of this final evaluation and a pursuant gender analysis, gender-sensitive indicators (or markers) may be developed and integrated into the regular M&E activities of the programme.

Security Forces

- Complementing the recommendation to Search to couple work in improving civil-military relations with institutional support to the normalised functioning of the security forces, the Etat Major and Police Commissioner should maintain leadership and provide strategic guidance to provincial level leadership in this regard.
- FARDC and PNC leadership should continue to promote wide-reaching participation of personnel in their ranks in community dialogue and solidarity activities. This would help promote civil-security relationships and collaboration in their deployment zones.
- FARDC and PNC leadership should continue practices of engaging with the population through radio broadcasts and participation in democratic dialogue activities. This makes their presence known to the community and was well perceived by participants in the evaluation. Relatedly, such actors may consider continuing to provide a *numéro vert* (or hotline) for civilians. This too increased a sense of accessibility of the security forces when needed, contributing positively towards building a sense of trust.

DfID

- The evaluation revealed insights into promoting and constraining factors to trust and markers of trust among civilian populations and the security forces. DfID and other donors providing technical and financial support to SSR in the DRC, aiming to strengthen civil-military relations based on trust should consider drawing lessons learned from the LMYS programme. Notably, this might include continuing to invest in promoting opportunities for civil-security collaboration and relationship-building through democratic dialogue and solidarity activities, while remaining sensitive to the conditions under which trust is built and destabilised in implementation zones.
- Furthermore, given that the evaluation highlighted how different institutional obstacles within the security forces, notably resource constraints, presented barriers to change related to LMYS activities, **DfID may consider the value of multi-sectoral approaches in achieving UK foreign policy objectives related to security sector support in the DRC.** Crucially, given that DfID is also a leading contributor to the Stabilisation Coherence Fund, the findings of this evaluation might lend to further reflection on the value of broader stabilization efforts integrating work on civil-military relations vs more limited, targeted funding.
- In order to capitalise on gender-related gains from the implementation of this phase of LMYS, DfID and other financial partners to SSR in the DRC should consider supporting efforts related to the *mise en vigueur* and implementation of this strategic tool. DfID may additionally consider investing in targeted research into gender and SSR in order to determine more clearly barriers to women’s effective participation in the security forces as well in security-related decision-making

processes. This research could then inform future advocacy efforts and help target future programming with partners in order to deepen the gender sensitivity of SSR work thereby going past *add women and stir* approaches to gender integration.

Minister of Defense and other political actors

- The evaluation highlighted the persistence of institutional obstacles, entrenched norms and (resource) constraints limit and undermine gains related to improved civil-military relations. It will be important for the Ministry of Defense and other relevant political actors to maintain and strengthen its commitment to institutional reform, ensuring adequate support and cooperation with partners and addressing obstacles hindering the implementation of activities and/or the dissemination of norms. The development and strategic implementation of standard operating procedures on all levels may play a key role in these processes.
- To help mitigate the effects of unit rotation on destabilising civil-military relations, in particular, the national and provincial level military command may consider institutionalising democratic dialogue activities, making Community Scorecard and Town Hall meetings with civilian populations mandatory as soon as units rotate into new deployment zones.
- The Ministry of Defense and other political actors should furthermore validate and uphold the FARDC Gender Strategy as a key best practice within the armed forces. The Ministry and other key political actors, together with military leadership should furthermore uphold the *actes d'engagement* that were produced related to LMYS activities. In particular these political actors should ensure that sufficient political will and technical financial resources are invested in ensuring the implementation of these strategic tools in practice.

Annexes

- A. Note on LMYS and SSR in DRC
- B. Note on LMYS and Gender
- C. Breakdown of media responses
- D. Profiles of individuals surveyed
 - 1. Military
 - 2. Police
 - 3. Civilians
- E. Inception Report
- F. Final Evaluation Tools
- G. Terms of Reference for the evaluation