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On the Brink of Danger: Preparing civilians from Brazil to work in unstable countries

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Photo Eduarda Hamann



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On the Brink of Danger: Preparing civilians from Brazil to work in unstable countries

Eduarda Passarelli Hamann

Summary

This Strategic Note addresses a relatively new phenomenon in international relations. Since the nineties, there has been an increasing number of civilian experts who work in highly unstable contexts, once restricted to the military. Although several different countries have developed mechanisms to better train their own native citizens, in Brazil the vast majority of non-military professionals deployed in crisis-affected or post-conflict countries are trained ad hoc – if trained at all – on safety and security matters.

This Strategic Note is divided into: introduction, five sections and conclusion. It aims at better understanding the situation of the civilians from Brazil and identifying tools and opportunities to step up to the primary challenges. The first section provides an overview of the subject of civilians working in unstable contexts, highlights the primary characteristics of contemporary conflicts and identifies the risks involved. It also shows the ways some countries have organized themselves internally to deal with this new phenomenon. The second section provides a comparative analysis of training programs developed by 10 different countries, highlighting recurring aspects that could be used in the future to define the civilian training strategy for countries which only recently have started addressing this matter.

The third section examines the risky situation of Brazilian experts who have worked, or still work, in highly unstable contexts, on behalf of the federal government, with no proper training to face unsafe working conditions. This section also details the existing training programs in Brazil, at the federal government level, which aim at enhancing the performance of non-military professionals on foreign missions. It becomes clear that only one among the few existing programs – targeted at federal police officers – addresses basic safety conditions.

To fill this gap, in 2015, the federal government started to offer, through the Brazilian Peace Operations Joint Training Center (CCOPAB), a training program for civilian experts in Brazil. This course will be described in the fourth section. Lastly, the fifth section lists the key challenges to be overcome in Brazil and makes recommendations on ways to regularize the situation of civilians working in foreign missions – including unstable contexts – and to improve the civilian expert training program, which was recently added to CCOPAB's portfolio.

1. Context: civilians working in unstable settings

The 90s were a key decade for the civilian participation on missions in vulnerable countries, on behalf of governments, international bodies and civil society organizations. Until the 80s, the vast majority of civilians deployed in foreign missions worked in supporting activities, such as interpreters, drivers, cooks and so forth.

With the end of the Cold War, the 90s experienced a shift in the perceived threats that affected international security and peace. These threats demanded responses in different levels and action fronts. The contemporary conflicts have features that challenge the Humanitarian International Law. The rules that govern the behavior of the state and non-state actors are seldom clear, with little or no regulation for the use of certain weapons and ammunitions (weapons prohibited by conventions are commonly used), and conflicts often take place in urban and densely populated areas.

This type of context has demanded increasing participation of civilian experts, who play roles in several different areas of knowledge, side by side with police officers and military professionals. In the year 2000, there were 3,500 civilians deployed to UN peacekeeping operations, whereas in 2009 this number reached 6,500.¹ More recently, in the beginning of 2017, there were almost 16,000 civilians deployed to UN peacekeeping operations (including international and local personnel, and UN volunteers - UNV), the equivalent of 14% of the total number of professionals who work on the ground, under UN mandate.²

Not only did the numbers increase, but there was also a change to the quality of the roles. They were no longer restricted to supporting activities – they now started including substantial roles, more effective for sustainable peacebuilding. At the UN, this usually translates into activities related to administration, political affairs, support to electoral processes, legal assistance, children's rights, human rights, engineering, gender issues

1 Wiharta, S.; Blair, S., 2010.

2 UN, 2017.

and logistics, among others.³ An increasing number of civilians also work in unstable contexts on behalf of bilateral (governmental) agencies and for civil society organizations, generally in activities related to the development of the country, such as education, healthcare, agriculture and professional education, among others.

The very context that demands increasing participation of civilian experts is also an unfamiliar setting for the civilians. No career whatsoever did prepare them for this context. Therefore, when the independence wars in the former Yugoslavia in the beginning of the 90s made this shared responsibility reality clear (with military, police and civilian personnel), there was an initial effort from different countries and international bodies to understand the role of civilian experts and, most of all, to better prepare them for work in such volatile contexts.

In the nineties, Norway (1993) and Canada (1996) were pioneers in the development of mechanisms used to send civilians to unstable contexts, not only to fulfill their obligations in an efficient and effective way, but also to assure the minimum safety standards. In the first decade of the twenty-first century, another wave of countries started creating their own mechanisms, – Switzerland (2000), Germany (2001), United Kingdom (2004), USA (2004) and Australia (2009) – reinforcing the need to institutionalize the civilian participation in peace and international security problem-solving. More recently, in the 2010s, a potential third wave of countries is being considered, since the UN and some subject-matter experts pointed towards the importance of considering the Global South. Several reports, documents and papers on the advantage of an increasing participation of civilians from countries such as South Africa, Brazil, India and Turkey have been written, and this is still a work in progress.⁴

As countries from the Global South are analyzing ways to select, prepare and deploy civilians, it is worth examining the existing mechanisms, which have different scopes and vary in terms of their institutionalization degree. The main differences usually stem from the definition of national interest, which in turn are reflected in the priorities of the country's foreign and defense policies, and impact the available funding and human resources. Despite the differences, it is important to highlight that approximately 20 countries have some type of official mechanism to deal with the increasing demand for civilian experts in foreign missions. These mechanisms primarily aim at better preparing the civilians to work safely in unfriendly settings. The next section provides a comparative analysis on the main training programs offered by 10 countries.

³ Wiharta, S.; Blair, S., 2010; UN, 2016.

⁴ See, for example, UN, 2011; 2012; 2014; Keating, P.; Wiharta, S., 2012; De Coning, C.; Karlsrud, J.; Breidlid, I., 2013.

2. Recurring aspects of training programs for civilian experts

A comparative analysis of 10 official courses that focus on the training of civilian experts enables the identification of differences and similarities that may be useful for Brazil and other countries which are developing or improving their own mechanisms. The courses selected were developed by: Australia, Canada, Finland, France, Germany, Japan, Norway, Switzerland, United Kingdom and USA⁵. Despite the differences, the analysis shows that a fair comparison is possible in at least seven aspects: categories, format, duration, language, teaching method, costs and partnerships.

Names may vary, but the training programs for civilian expert analyzed fall into three **categories**: (i) basic or general course; (ii) advanced or specialized course; and (iii) mission-specific course. Most countries adopt the three categories simultaneously. A fourth modality was found in Japan: a non-remunerated complementary internship abroad, developed in partnership with the UN Volunteers program.⁶ The basic modules are simpler and display a low degree of complexity. They normally comprise generic concepts, such as: peace consolidation, human rights, humanitarian international law, gender, inclusive political process and humanitarian assistance, among others. The advanced modules and the mission-specific course, in turn, intend to perfect professional competencies and skills in relevant areas for working on the ground.

With respect to the **format**, all the programs offer face-to-face modules, and most of them also offer online modules. The face-to-face modules tend to be executed in a single city, or two cities at most. In Germany, for example, all courses are face-to-face, to profit from the encounter and the sharing of experiences. Norway and the United Kingdom, on the other hand, offer basic courses online, but advanced courses are face-to-face. The USA, in turn, provide blended courses for all categories; in other words, all programs have online and face-to-face modules.

Concerning **duration**, courses are usually offered once a year, with durations that may vary from five days to two weeks.⁷

With respect to the **language**, the English language is a rule in the courses that were analyzed. There is a simple explanation for that: Most missions choose English as their working language – even for experts deployed in Portuguese-speaking countries – to

5 Research by Hamann, E.; Rebelo, T., 2012.

6 Hamann, E.; Rebelo, T., 2012.

7 Hamann, E.; Rebelo, T., 2012.



Photo Eduarda Hamann

promote communication with international professionals. Exceptionally, some modules in Germany, France and Japan are taught in their respective mother tongues.⁸

The most common **teaching methods** include reading, class discussions, simulations and group activities. Simulations (or practical exercises) seem to be essential to achieve a good professional performance. Such activities aim at reproducing, in a controlled environment, situations similar to the ones they will find on the ground. This exposes professionals to complex circumstances and fast and coherent decision-making under stress, consistently with the proposed goals. Such methods also enable professionals to put into practice the concepts they read in the course material or studied in the classroom. Since the simulations are carried out face-to-face, they also promote the exchange of experiences.⁹

Costs, as a rule, are paid by the sponsoring institution – examples include the budgetary prevision of the national mechanism itself, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs or the international body for whom the civilians will work, such as the UN.¹⁰ Some modules are also carried out with the personal, financial or material support of the aforementioned partners.

⁸ Idem.

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Germany is a notable exception. It is the only country where the professional pays for all participation expenses. See: Hamann, E.; Rebelo, T., 2012.

Lastly, it is important to mention that all the courses analyzed were planned or carried out in **partnership** with governmental institutions (mainly, but not limited to, military institutions) and/or non-governmental organizations (such as universities and civil society organizations).

This simple revision of the different courses' recurring aspects helps other countries, such as Brazil, to reflect upon the minimum required for the preparation of their native citizens, altogether with their unique priorities, needs and capacities.

3. The situation of the civilian experts from Brazil

The federal government of Brazil sends civilian experts on missions in unstable countries at least since the 80s, when we find records of the first activities coordinated by the Brazilian Cooperation Agency (ABC) with Angola. Angola was facing a civil war that was to last from 1975 to 2002.¹¹ Since then, civilian experts from Brazil, also called technicians, were sent to dozens of highly volatile settings, such as: Afghanistan, North Korea, Guinea-Bissau, Haiti, Iraq, Lebanon, Liberia, Mali, Sierra Leone, Sudan, and East Timor, just to name a few.¹² Although it has been 30 years since the first ABC mission to a country at war, civilians from Brazil are still not properly prepared or, in other words, they still work on the brink of danger when deployed in unstable contexts.¹³

Three groups of civilian experts from Brazil working abroad in unstable contexts can be identified: (i) those linked to the government (usually the federal government, but also state and municipal governments); (ii) those working for (Brazilian or foreign) civil society organizations; (iii) those who are recruited and supervised by international bodies – the UN is the primary choice of Brazilians who venture along that path.

There is no consolidated data concerning the number of civilians from Brazil who work in the first two groups. At the federal government, the Brazilian cooperation for international development (in technical, electoral and humanitarian areas) is normally registered according to countries, executing institutions or projects implemented; not according to professionals deployed in each mission.¹⁴ In turn, the civil society organizations that

11 See the Brazilian Cooperation Agency's website (ABC), section about "Angola", at www.abc.gov.br/Projetos/CooperacaoSulSul/Angola.

12 ABC's official website displays a list of countries that received Brazilian technical cooperation and, therefore, civilians from Brazil on missions – at least (short term) prospective missions or for (medium and long term) project development at most. www.abc.gov.br/Projetos/pesquisa.

13 Hamann, E., 2016.

14 See, for instance, "Cooperação Sul-Sul" (South-South cooperation) at ABC's official website www.abc.gov.br/Projetos/CooperacaoSulSul.

recruit Brazilians to work abroad have their own databases, which are not necessarily open due to issues of security and privacy. The UN is, then, the institution that gathers most data on the increasing participation of civilians in their missions. However, this data is not always transparent. As previously mentioned in section 1, civilians account for 14% of the total number of professionals recruited to work for UN peacekeeping operations. Among these almost 9,000 international civilians working in all UN missions, including special political missions, there are only 26 Brazilians, which is less than 0.5% of the total number.¹⁵

Pre-deployment training for Brazilians also varies according to the group to which they are connected. The UN and some civil society organizations train their workers before they are sent to danger zones. ActionAid-Brasil, for example, requires that their workers are trained in Italy before including them in the “job-ready” database. The UN provides a one-week training as soon as their workers are on the ground – the induction training, as they call it. The federal government of Brazil, in turn, provides training programs for civilian public servants who will perform any activity abroad. However, the research showed that all courses, except for two, focus on a generic practice abroad – they are not comprehensive and do not include concepts of safety and security, as appropriate for missions in unstable countries.

Table 1 shows a compilation of the primary federal government institutions which train and/or send (non-military) federal public servants to missions abroad, regardless of being unstable countries or not.

¹⁵ Ministry of Foreign Affairs, *apud* Hamann, E., 2016.

Table 1. Federal Brazilian institutions that train and/or deploy civilians in foreign missions

Institution / responsible body	Group Managed by the Institution	Area of work when abroad	Provides training?	Provides training for unstable contexts?	Comments
Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MRE) / Rio Branco Institute (IRBr)	Diplomats only	Diplomacy and related topics	Yes	No	IRBr provides initial and further training programs for diplomats.
MRE / Training and Improvement Division	MRE employees only	Diplomacy and related topics	Yes	No	Prior to the first mission, diplomats attend a generic pre-deployment course (<i>Curso de Habilitação ao Serviço Exterior</i>). It teaches basic concepts of mental health (stress, impact on family, etc.). Safety and security issues are not included, regardless of destination.
MRE / Brazilian Cooperation Agency (ABC)	Public servants and other experts working on behalf of the Brazilian foreign policy	Technical cooperation in several areas (healthcare, agriculture, education, etc.)	For selected professionals only (in partnership with the National School of Public Administration - ENAP).	No	ABC oversees most missions engaging civilians from Brazil in unstable contexts, on behalf of the federal government. Preparation is voluntary and limited to 30–40 people per year, in partnership with ENAP.
MRE / CG-Fome (Humanitarian Cooperation and Actions against Hunger/MRE) (2003-2016) *	Public servants and other experts working on behalf of the Brazilian foreign policy	Humanitarian cooperation	Yes	No. But the employees working for CG-Fome could attend a course offered by the UN system.	The pre-deployment training is developed in partnership with Brazilian UN agencies. The primary example is the World Food Program (WFP).
Ministry of Justice / National Police Academy	Federal Police employees	Rule of Law, Police and related topics	Yes	Yes	The Academy provides face-to-face and online training courses.
Ministry of Defense/ Brazilian Peace Operations Joint Training Center (CCOPAB)	Military, police officers and civilian (experts, researchers, teachers, journalists, and university students)	Peacekeeping operations and humanitarian demining	Yes – it is a training center.	Yes	Since 2008, CCOPAB allows civilians to attend their courses. For example, they provide a specific course for journalists in conflict areas. Since 2015, it provides one civilian expert course at the end of the year.
Ministry of Planning, Budget and Management / National School of Public Administration (ENAP)	Federal Public Servants	Fields of knowledge related to Public Administration	Yes – it is a school.	No	ENAP provides a course for public servants working in international cooperation, which is divided into three modules. Safety and security issues are not included.
Superior Electoral Court (TSE)	Judges and electoral experts	Electoral cooperation	No	No	Experts are chosen by the Electoral President (based on language and other skills). Experts are responsible for their own preparation.
SENAI (National Service for Industrial Training)	Experts working with professional education	Professional education	Yes	No	Public–private partnership. Experts from SENAI set up activities abroad, coordinated by ABC, working on behalf of the Brazilian foreign policy.

* The General Coordination of Humanitarian Cooperation and Actions against Hunger (CG-Fome) was an MRE body from 2003 to 2016. Source: Hamann (2016).

Only the National Police Academy and the Brazilian Peace Operations Joint Training Center (CCOPAB) provide safety and security training. CCOPAB is the most appropriate institution to provide training for civilian experts from Brazil, following the lines of those provided by other countries. Its mission and target audience are consistent with the task. A few years ago, CCOPAB started moving in that direction. The next section will describe and analyze the course provided by CCOPAB, which is still under improvements.

4. CCOPAB's civilian expert course

CCOPAB was created in 2005 as a unit of the Brazilian army called Brazilian Peacekeeping Operations Training Center (COPAZ). In 2010, after the earthquake in Haiti, the unit was redesigned to integrate the three armed forces under the Ministry of Defense. Its mission is to support the preparation of military, police and civilian personnel from Brazil and friendly nations for peace missions and humanitarian demining missions¹⁶. In 2008, CCOPAB's training programs started accepting civilians – usually as students, but sometimes as lecturers. In the same year, CCOPAB created the first course for journalists in conflict areas, supported by the UN information center in Brazil (UNIC-Rio). Even though they are civilians and face the same lack of training, journalists are not considered “civilian experts”, as described on this Note, since they do not play roles in peacekeeping or peacebuilding on the ground, in countries undergoing a crisis or in the aftermath of conflicts.

Thus, since 2013, CCOPAB's tasks of planning and carrying out a course targeted at civilian experts have been supported by Igarapé Institute. At the time, an assessment has shown that there was (and still is) a preliminary problem concerning the Brazilian institutions that send their employees to unstable countries: they do not understand the importance of the training program.

A workshop was carried out in Brasilia, in 2014, as an effort to raise awareness about the importance of this issue. A small group of 35 public servants who worked with Brazilian cooperation, preferably with experience in unstable countries, attended the workshop. They represented more than 20 relevant institutions, such as the Brazil Presidency, the Ministries of Defense, Foreign Affairs, Economy, Planning and Integration, and key bodies for Brazilian cooperation, such as: EMBRAPA, SENAI, the Federal Police and Courts of Justice. The primary outcome of the workshop was the acknowledgement by several attendees that a basic safety and security course would be very useful for Brazilian professionals working in unstable contexts.

¹⁶ CCOPAB's mission is available in its official website: www.ccopab.eb.mil.br/pt/sobre-o-ccopab.

Hence, CCOPAB, supported by Igarapé Institute, organized a pilot course for civilian experts in Rio de Janeiro in 2015. The course was developed not only from the lessons of the previous workshop, but primarily due to the solid experience the Center gained from its courses, especially the training for journalists in conflict areas. The content and teaching methods of the training for journalists was adjusted to create a face-to-face course in Portuguese, which lasted for three and a half days. Methods included readings, class discussions and group activities, and one day was dedicated to hands-on exercises. The list of attendees included 16 Brazilian professionals, representing 14 institutions, such as: EMBRAPA, the Brazilian Intelligence Agency (ABIN), courts of justice, universities and civil society organizations. After the course, three participants informed Igarapé Institute that they would be deployed in missions in unstable contexts, more specifically to Sudan, East Timor and another unspecified site.¹⁷

In 2016, CCOPAB improved its civilian expert course, developing an enhanced and more mature version called “Preparatory Course for Civilians Working in Unstable Settings – 2016”. The course was attended by 15 participants, representing 11 institutions, such as: EMBRAPA, the Federal Police, the Military Public Prosecutor’s Office, universities and civil society organizations. The time dedicated for hands-on exercises (simulations) was increased to strengthen the knowledge acquired in the classroom.

The same aspects described in section 2 were considered during the assessment of the 2016 version of CCOPAB’s training program:

- (i) **Category:** CCOPAB’s course basically offers the general module, with some elements from the advanced module, such as the class on hostage-taking and negotiation, the practical exercises on orientation and first aid and the tear gas simulation;
- (ii) **Format:** It was designed as a face-to-face course;
- (iii) **Duration:** CCOPAB’S course lasted for four to five days, practically in line with the foreign program’s minimum length (5 days);
- (iv) **Teaching methods:** CCOPAB adopted the same teaching methods as the foreign courses assessed: readings, class discussions, simulations and group exercises;
- (v) **Costs:** Participants had to pay for their travel expenses. All the other costs were paid by CCOPAB with some support by Igarapé Institute.
- (vi) **Partnership:** CCOPAB’s course was planned and carried out in partnership with Igarapé Institute. Its implementation was strongly supported by other military units, such as the Specialized Instruction School (EsIE) of the Brazilian Army, the security forces of the Rio de Janeiro state, the Military Police and the Military Fire Department.

¹⁷ This information was shared by e-mail with Igarapé Institute representatives

2016 was a historical year for the CCOPAB's civilian expert course, for at least three reasons. Firstly, it is clear that the training criteria are already very similar to the standards found abroad. The 2016 version was longer and dedicated more time to practical individual and group exercises and exchange of experiences. Secondly, the civilian expert course was finally included in CCOPAB's institutional brochure, evidencing the commander's intention to keep the training on the Center's official calendar. Lastly, thanks to the successful 2015 pilot-course and mainly to the 2016 version, the possibility of receiving support from the Ministry of Defense was discussed, meaning not only a political partnership, but also possible funding.

For all the reasons described above, even though the course is still climbing up the learning curve, it is possible to say that CCOPAB has played an important role in this field and, its contribution – however small – has prepared dozens of Brazilian professionals who work, or will work in unstable contexts. Since these professionals are connected to key institutions, they become multipliers of the processes and procedures in their work fields, generating positive impacts on institutional strengthening and on the safety of those deployed on the ground. However, despite all the advancement, challenges persist. Such challenges will be assessed on the next section.

5. Challenges and recommendations

We must overcome at least six challenges to better prepare the Brazilian civilian experts deployed in unstable contexts.

The first one concerns our present context. It is important to highlight that Brazil is undergoing a massive financial crisis, aggravated by strong evidences of corruption and lack of confidence in some political institutions. This crisis affects all the sectors of the federal government and impacts the activities of foreign and defense policies. Therefore, financial or human resource investments from the federal government are not to be expected by the Brazilian cooperation for international development. Even though it affects the workload of civilians from Brazil in foreign missions, this cannot hamper the internal organization of a system; the development of mechanisms; or at least the development of simple tools to better deal with the civilian issue. These civilians, however in smaller numbers, are still deployed abroad, on behalf of the government, to work in missions in unstable contexts.

Secondly, it is key that we carry on with the efforts for raising awareness, at the federal government level, concerning the importance of training civilians before they are sent to missions in unstable contexts, either cooperation or UN missions. The workload is heavy, indeed, and it is not easy to send employees to a five-day course or, even worse, to send

them on foreign missions. However, the superiors are still insensitive to gains in reputation and rapport with similar foreign institutions, among others. Igarapé Institute has employed awareness-raising efforts on this matter since 2010, through the organization of events, writing of public and confidential papers and reports and the promotion of dialogs among stakeholders. This role might as well be played by other civil society organizations or even civilians who have attended CCOPAB's courses.

The MRE, in turn, has intensified its efforts to coordinate, alongside with the UN, the local outreach missions. These missions primarily target university students, with the objective of sharing knowledge about the UN and the work performed by civilians in its operations¹⁸. They work as a promotion and awareness-raising tool which may have an impact on the number of civilians working on UN missions, which falls well short of Brazil's interest and capacity.

The third challenge concerns legislation, which hampers or even prevents the allocation of civilians on foreign missions – especially if coordinated by international bodies – thus, directly impacting missions deployed in unstable contexts. The legal framework governing public servant expatriation is anachronistic. It was created in the 90s, when Brazil still received international aid and had just started deploying civilians in foreign missions. There are also gaps and contradictions in the law. For instance, in the definition of who pays for the expatriation (the government or the international body), and in the way of counting working time for retirement (whether the time abroad counts or not). This challenge could be overcome by intensifying internal coordination, especially involving the legislative power and key executive bodies, to enact a new and coherent legislation on federal public servant expatriation for foreign missions coordinated by international bodies¹⁹.

Also, regarding legislation, there is no rule that recommends that civilians from Brazil who are working on behalf of the federal government in missions in unstable countries attend the CCOPAB course before deployment. However, there are signs that the Ministry of Defense will suggest the CCOPAB's course regulation in 2017, which could help overcoming this challenge.

The fourth challenge concerns the lack of dialogue among the key bodies of the executive power throughout the four phases of civilian engagement: (i) recruiting process; (ii) preparation or training; (iii) deployment; (iv) return to the original country and body. In the specific case of missions in unstable contexts, it would be essential that the professional recruited by a body could attend CCOPAB's course beforehand, to learn basic concepts on safety and security. This could not only protect their physical and mental health, but also alleviate political risks to project implementation.

18 Figueiróa, C., 2016.

19 Figueiróa, C., 2016; Hamann, E., 2016.

For that matter, it would be interesting to create mechanisms that simplify or promote the regular dialogue between MRE and CCOPAB and between CCOPAB and ENAP, for instance. This could promote the recruited civilians' attendance on CCOPAB's pre-deployment course. Another useful recommendation for the process of deployment and dialogue is to maintain a database or roster with the Brazilian professionals who have attended CCOPAB's course. These professionals could be summoned in case of urgent demand in unstable countries. It is paramount that the relevant federal bodies understand the strategic importance of their integration: The deployed employees are federal public servants (from different origins); they would be trained by a federal body (CCOPAB) and would work abroad on behalf of the Brazilian foreign policy. The Brazilian State will only benefit from this arrangement, but it is necessary to take steps in awareness, understanding and integration.

The fifth challenge is operational and consists of overcoming the lack of information on the number of professionals deployed in unstable contexts on behalf of the federal government. This gap hampers the identification of the accurate number of Brazilians working in international missions and the number of professionals at risk for working in countries undergoing a crisis or in the aftermath of conflicts. In other words, CCOPAB does not know its demand – it could be 30 or 300 civilians per year, for instance. Then, the very design of CCOPAB's civilian expert course could be harmed, since the duration, content and number of vacancies, for instance, should be regularly adjusted according to the demand.

The last challenge to be highlighted concerns the CCOPAB's course itself. Despite recent advances, there is still room for improvement. For instance, the recruiting process for the participants happens ad hoc, with no active participation of the federal institutions, which effectively deploy civilians in missions in unstable countries. The development of a mechanism for closer dialogue with MRE (ABC) and ENAP would ease up this process. Furthermore, even though the course is carried out in Rio de Janeiro, it could soon apply methods from other courses, such as providing online contents, or even train mobile teams to work in Brasilia or in other sites, as needed. In addition, it will soon be necessary to improve the tools that favor the monitoring and assessment of CCOPAB's course, to update contents and to make it more similar to the reality on the ground. CCOPAB's experience with other courses will also be key to improve this issue.

Conclusions

At least since the 80s, Brazil has been deploying public servants with foreign missions in unstable contexts, such as wars or acute crises. After 30 years, a federal government training center, CCOPAB, finally started testing and further incorporating on its calendar a specific course for civilian experts.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs has strongly supported the engagement of civilians from Brazil in UN missions, through its Peace and Security Division (DIAZ). The MRE, through the Brazilian Cooperation Agency (ABC), has also been coordinating the deployment of public servants and other experts in technical and humanitarian cooperation missions, many times carried out in unstable countries. Therefore, it can be stated that the Brazilian foreign policy is interested in the continuity, institutionalization and even in the increase of the civilians' engagement in highly unstable contexts, with risky work conditions.

Therefore, sending pre-selected Brazilian civilians to unstable contexts should be conditioned to their participation in the CCOPAB's course, either in its present face-to-face format or in its online format still to be developed. This will only happen after raising the awareness of superiors in relevant institutions, the increase of interinstitutional dialogue and, eventually, changes in regulation. At the same time, CCOPAB's training program itself should be improved in certain aspects. In the long run, however, everything points to the increase in the number of civilians from Brazil working in unstable contexts and facing fewer risks than their compatriots did in the last 30 years.



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