

BASELINE STUDY

Second Military Workshop on the Implementation of the EWIPA Political Declaration

***Existing approaches, emerging practice,
and key resources for states***

April 2026

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INTRODUCTION

This baseline study provides an overview of how endorsing states are approaching implementation of the *Political Declaration on Strengthening the Protection of Civilians from the Humanitarian Consequences Arising from the Use of Explosive Weapons in Populated Areas (EWIPA)*¹, with a particular focus on military policy and practice. It takes stock of emerging approaches, identifies practical measures being developed or adopted by armed forces, and highlights areas where further focussed discussion and support could contribute to reducing civilian harm from use of explosive weapons in populated areas.

The study focuses specifically on aspects of military policy and practice relevant to the Declaration's implementation, including doctrine, policy, operational guidance, the planning and conduct of military operations, and training and education within armed forces. Across these areas, it seeks to represent how commitments are being translated into practice, and where gaps, challenges, or opportunities for further development remain and that could benefit from further discussion and support.

In addition to providing an overview of current approaches being undertaken by some endorsing states, this paper is intended to serve as a practical resource for states to use the Declaration as a tool to improve the protection of civilians through national policies and practice. This paper maps existing resource documents, national policy (where available), and highlights emerging operational areas of focus, providing examples that can help to support further national implementation efforts and identify thematic work streams around which activities and resources can be organised.

The paper has been developed by Article 36 and Airwars to support and inform the Second Military Workshop on the Implementation of the EWIPA Political Declaration, organised by Austria and the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs (UNODA), at the Palais des Nations in Geneva, Switzerland, from 23 to 24 April 2026.

at the Palais des Nations in Geneva, Switzerland, from 23 to 24 April 2026. The workshop brings together military representatives from endorsing states, alongside other relevant stakeholders and practitioners, to take stock of progress, identify operational areas of implementation, and explore practical steps that can support

¹ *Political Declaration on Strengthening the Protection of Civilians from the Humanitarian Consequences Arising from the Use of Explosive Weapons in Populated Areas*, adopted in Dublin, 18 November 2022. Available at: EWIPA Political Declaration official website, www.ewipa.org.

the Declaration's humanitarian objectives. It aims to strengthen military contributions to national implementation processes, promote shared operational understanding, and facilitate continued dialogue on how to reduce civilian harm in practice among different stakeholders.

The Political Declaration is relevant to all states, including those not currently engaged in armed conflict. Its implementation supports the development of policies and practices governing the use of force in any context, including where armed forces may be deployed externally, and contributes to broader efforts to strengthen the protection of civilians. Developing relevant policies, guidance, and operational practices in advance is therefore an important element of responsible preparedness, helping to ensure that risks to civilians are understood and addressed before operations occur.

By highlighting existing approaches and lessons learned, and areas requiring further attention, it is intended to facilitate informed exchange among participants and to support the identification of concrete steps. In doing so, it contributes to the broader objective of translating the Declaration's commitments into effective policy, guidance, and operational practice within armed forces.

METHODOLOGY

This study draws on a range of sources, including survey responses provided by endorsing states on their implementation of the Declaration, publicly available policy and doctrinal documents, insights shared through workshops and presentations, and consultations with practitioners.

The analysis aims to describe current policy and practice, where available, and emerging trends. The study is subject to limitations, including the availability and level of detail of publicly accessible information, and the extent of voluntary reporting by states.²

RELATIONSHIP WITH THE POLITICAL DECLARATION

The Political Declaration provides a framework for strengthening the protection of civilians by supporting the translation of international humanitarian law (IHL) into

² The study draws in part on data from the *2025 State Survey on the Implementation of the Political Declaration*, conducted by the Explosive Weapons Monitor, which compiles self-reported information from endorsing states on policy developments, operational practices, and implementation challenges. It also draws on the accompanying analytical report, *An Assessment of Implementation of the Political Declaration*, which synthesises survey findings and identifies emerging trends and patterns across states. Available at: www.explosiveweaponsmonitor.org

concrete policies and practices specific to the use of explosive weapons in populated areas in order to help avoid civilian harm. While IHL establishes fundamental rules, the Declaration encourages states to address the particular risks associated with explosive weapons in populated environments through more explicit guidance and operational measures.

From a military perspective, implementation primarily concerns how these commitments are reflected in existing structures, processes, and decision-making. This includes the development of doctrine and operational guidance; the incorporation of civilian harm considerations into planning and the conduct of operations; and the assessment of outcomes, including learning from civilian harm.

These functions are interconnected - from guidance and planning through to the conduct of operations and operational learning. Effective implementation depends on ensuring that considerations relating to civilian harm - including the risks associated with the use of explosive weapons in populated areas - are consistently integrated across this cycle, rather than addressed at a single stage or in isolation.

In this sense, the Declaration does not introduce entirely new military functions, rather it reinforces the need to apply existing ones more systematically and with greater attention to the specific challenges posed by operations in populated areas.

The table below provides an overview of the specific commitments most relevant to armed forces.

OPERATIONAL COMMITMENTS IN THE 2022 POLITICAL DECLARATION ON EWIPA

3.1 *Implement, and, where necessary, review, develop or improve national policy and practice with regard to the protection of civilians during armed conflict involving the use of explosive weapons in populated areas.*

3.2 *Ensure comprehensive training of our armed forces on the application of International Humanitarian Law and on the policies and good practices to be applied during the conduct of hostilities in populated areas to protect civilians and civilian objects.*

3.3 *Ensure that our armed forces adopt and implement a range of policies and practices to help avoid civilian harm, including by restricting or refraining as appropriate from the use of explosive weapons in populated areas, when their use may be expected to cause harm to civilians or civilian objects.*

3.4 *Ensure that our armed forces, including in their policies and practices, take into account the direct and indirect effects on civilians and civilian objects which can reasonably be foreseen in the planning of military operations and the execution of*

attacks in populated areas, and conduct damage assessments, to the degree feasible, and identify lessons learned.

3.5 *Ensure the marking, clearance, and removal or destruction of explosive remnants of war as soon as feasible after the end of active hostilities in accordance with our obligations under applicable international law, and support the provision of risk education.*

3.6 *Facilitate the dissemination and understanding of International Humanitarian Law and promote its respect and implementation by all parties to armed conflict, including by non-State armed groups.*

4.1 *Strengthen international cooperation and assistance among armed forces, and other relevant stakeholders, including in the context of partnered military operations, with respect to exchanges of technical and tactical expertise, and humanitarian impact assessments, in order to develop good policies and practices to enhance the protection of civilians, particularly with regard to the use of explosive weapons in populated areas.*

4.2 *Collect, share, and make publicly available disaggregated data on the direct and indirect effects on civilians and civilian objects of military operations involving the use of explosive weapons in populated areas, where feasible and appropriate.*

4.3 *Facilitate the work of the United Nations, the ICRC and relevant civil society organisations collecting data on the impact on civilians of military operations involving the use of explosive weapons in populated areas, as appropriate.*

PRACTICAL CHALLENGES AND NEEDS IDENTIFIED BY STATES

State reporting and consultations highlight a number of common challenges in translating the Political Declaration into concrete military policy and practice.

- A key challenge is the need, expressed by states, for **practical implementation guidance**. Many states are still working to interpret how the Declaration's commitments should be reflected in doctrine, targeting processes, and operational decision-making, particularly in relation to concepts such as 'wide-area effects' and 'reverberating impacts'.
- Closely linked to this is the **issue of terminology**. Some states note that the language of the Declaration is not always readily aligned with military terminology or frameworks, requiring translation into clear, actionable concepts that can be applied by armed forces in practice.

- States also emphasise the **importance of peer-to-peer exchange**, particularly military-to-military engagement, as a means of sharing lessons learned and identifying practical approaches to implementation. There is strong support for inclusive exchanges that also involve international organisations and civil society, helping to bring together operational and humanitarian perspectives.
- Another cited challenge is **internal coordination and awareness**. While many states have designated focal points, often within ministries of foreign affairs, engagement from defence ministries and armed forces remains limited in some cases. Strengthening whole-of-government coordination is essential to bridging the gap between political commitments and operational change
- Finally, states highlight the **importance of doctrine, training, and operational tools**, as well as the value of documenting and sharing national policies and practices. These are seen as critical to embedding the Declaration's commitments in practice and supporting peer learning across states.

THE CURRENT STATE OF IMPLEMENTATION AMONG ENDORSING STATES

Implementation of the Political Declaration is **underway across many endorsing states**, with important early progress made in raising awareness domestically, establishing focal points, and initiating national coordination processes. These steps represent a valuable foundation for advancing implementation.

At the same time, **progress remains at an early stage in many contexts**. Engagement has often been led by ministries of foreign affairs, and further involvement of ministries of defence and armed forces will be important to support the translation of commitments into military policy and practice. Strengthening whole-of-government coordination can help bridge this gap.

In several cases, **implementation is being approached through existing international humanitarian law (IHL) frameworks and protection of civilians' policies**. These provide an important basis but occasionally can be used as a justification for a 'business as usual' approach, and states should be encouraged to build on them to more explicitly reflect the specific focus of the Declaration, particularly in relation to the use of explosive weapons in populated areas.

Some states have begun to develop more specific measures, including clear policies to limit the use of explosive weapons with wide-area effects in populated

areas and efforts to strengthen civilian harm tracking. These practices are not yet widespread, and further development of operational guidance, data systems, and shared approaches will be important.

Overall, while institutional foundations are increasingly in place, real progress will only be made once the Declaration's commitments are translated into concrete, EWIPA-specific policy and practice. This includes strengthening military engagement, enhancing data collection and learning, and developing practical measures that support the Declaration's objective of reducing civilian harm.

KEY AREAS OF OPERATIONAL PRACTICE

Building on the functions and processes outlined above, three key operational areas of practice emerge as central to advancing implementation. These areas reflect both the commitments of the Declaration and patterns identified in state reporting and consultations, and will structure the analysis and discussion in the following section.

The first concerns **understanding the civilian environment**, including strengthening the identification and analysis of civilian populations, infrastructure, and protected sites in advance of operations.

The second relates to **assessing the effects of weapons including area effects**, in particular improving understanding of how explosive weapons function including from blast and fragmentation effects as well as how these effects interact with populated areas, and how this should inform operational decisions, policies, and restrictions on use.

The third focuses on **civilian harm tracking and operational learning**, including the systematic collection and analysis of data on civilian harm, and the use of this information to adapt policy, practice, and decision-making over time.

Together, these areas provide a practical framework for examining how the Declaration's commitments can be translated into concrete measures within military systems and processes.

THEME 1

UNDERSTANDING THE CIVILIAN ENVIRONMENT

PURPOSE

Understanding the ways in which civilians live amidst conflict is a vital element to mitigate harm from explosive weapons in populated areas. Without understanding civilians' interaction with infrastructure or their patterns of activity, military operations are more likely to rely on incomplete or misinterpreted information, increasing the probability of misidentification, flawed proportionality assessments, and unintended harm. By systematically analysing the civilian environment, planners and operators can adapt tactics, timing, weapon selection, and intelligence requirements to reduce exposure to civilians, thereby improving both operational effectiveness and compliance with legal and ethical obligations.

The civilian environment refers to all civilian aspects of a theatre of operation, including "the civilian population and the personnel, organisations, resources, infrastructure, essential services, and systems on which civilian life depends".³ While different factors should be considered in different environments, the following should be evaluated:

- *Population density and movement patterns*
- *Time-based variations in civilian presence*
- *Location of critical infrastructure and protected objects*

³ U.S. Department of Defense, *Civilian Harm Mitigation and Response Action Plan (CHMR-AP)*, August 2022. Available at: <https://media.defense.gov/2022/Aug/25/2003064740/-1/-1/1/CIVILIAN-HARM-MITIGATION-AND-RESPONSE-ACTION-PLAN.PDF>

- *Civilian use of buildings and dual-use facilities*

Uncertainty in these factors can significantly affect the reliability of assessments. Where civilian presence or infrastructure interdependencies are not well understood, this should be explicitly reflected in risk calculations.

Some of the most high-profile civilian harm incidents of the last decade have resulted from a poor understanding of the civilian environment. Poor understanding of the civilian environment exacerbates - and is in turn itself emphasised by - confirmation bias, as those preparing targets misinterpret normal civilian behaviour as hostile. The August 2021 US airstrike against a family home in Kabul, for instance, which killed 10 civilians, including seven civilians, appears to have been based partly on the transfer of a computer bag, and the loading of vessels (later thought to have contained water) into a white car - normal civilian activities, which were seen to echo behaviours by suicide terrorists in a previous attack. The June 2015 Dutch airstrike against an ISIS munitions factory in Hawija, Iraq, which killed over 80 civilians, was based on an assumption that the risk to civilians would be low based partly on a mistaken assumption that the munitions factory was placed in a purely industrial part of the city, removed from the residential part of the city - a distinction that did not apply in Iraq at the time, where these areas were often mixed. Finally, initial evidence on the February 2026 US airstrike against the Minab school in Iran, in which it is suggested that 175 people were killed, mostly children, suggests outdated maps were used of the site, which did not show that a school now occupied part of the site, which had been split up by partition walls. Such gaps in operational planning are susceptible to the increasing speed and scale of warfare, particularly as AI-supported systems are increasingly integrated into military operations.

The EWIPA Declaration recognises the harm, both direct and reverberating, that can be inflicted on civilians when their everyday environments, which are not designed to protect against the effects of armed conflict, are not fully understood, emphasising: “[w]hen critical civilian infrastructure, such as energy, food, water and sanitation systems, are damaged or destroyed the provision of basic needs and essential services, such as healthcare and education are disrupted. Section 1.4 of the Declaration states that: “[t]hese services are often interconnected and, as a result, damage to one component or service can negatively affect services elsewhere, causing harm to civilians that can extend far beyond a weapon’s impact area”.. Effective assessment enables armed forces to “take into account the direct and indirect effects on civilians and civilian objects which can reasonably be foreseen in the planning of military operations and the execution of attacks in populated areas” (commitment 3.4).

KEY COMPONENTS OF PLANNING WITH THE CIVILIAN ENVIRONMENT IN MIND

- *Processes should ensure that information on the presence, value, and function of civilian objects - including critical infrastructure essential to the population - is integrated into targeting decisions, with input from subject-matter experts such as engineers and urban planners, to avoid or mitigate civilian harm during both planned and dynamic attacks*
- *Require that information be requested from multiple sources - not only military intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance (ISR) and include civilian experts (for example engineers on building composition and subsurface utilities) and water, sanitation, and contamination specialists to support assessment of weapons' likely effects.*
- *Ensure that information on infrastructure and civilian risk is available and updated throughout operations, not only during planning, to improve targeting decisions and weapon selection, while recognising potential burdens on Commanders and their staff.*
- *Integrate subject-matter experts (engineers, urban planners, infrastructure specialists, medical/public-health and humanitarian advisers) and consult local authorities, community representatives and civil-society actors where practicable, to:*
 - *Map critical infrastructure (power plants, utilities, subterranean conduits);*
 - *Assess structural vulnerability and likely weapons effects;*
 - *And estimate consequences for civilians from service disruption.*
- *Maintain and regularly update No-Strike List (NSL), no-strike zones, and restricted-target categories covering essential civilian infrastructure (e.g. water, power, sanitation, hospitals, schools, markets, residential areas, and cultural or religious sites). Ensure dissemination to subordinate commanders, cross-checking with targeting lists. Require higher-level authorisation for any removal or modification.*
- *Ensure that assessments of potential reverberating and cumulative effects inform determinations of which civilian objects and infrastructure are granted protected status and included on the NSL.*

RELEVANT ACTORS WITHIN ARMED FORCES

- **Commanders:** *identify the protection of civilians as a priority for the mission, embed a culture that prioritises protection of civilians and accountability.*
- **Civilian harm cells:** *specialised groups set up to mitigate, track, investigate, respond to, and learn from civilian harm. These units should support operational efforts to understand civilian environments, and to understand which gaps in understanding are leading to civilian harm. Where such cells do not exist, central teams looking at human security, the protection of civilians, civilian harm mitigation, or other related activities could take on this task; however, in this process it is vital that the team in question is adequately trained and resourced.*
- **Legal advisers:** *ensure compliance with international and national law, including commitments to take every feasible measure to avoid civilian harm.*
- **Intelligence / J2 personnel:** *gather information on the civilian environment pre-strike to ensure precautions taken will be effective, and post-strike to understand the impact of military operations on said environment.*
- **CIMIC / J9 personnel:** *assess extent of civilian presence and nature of infrastructure, and can help build a better understanding of civilian harm after an airstrike.*
- **Targeting cells:** *integrate intelligence, operational, and legal inputs to prevent harm pre-strike. Conduct initial assessment of the impact of a weapon, including by reporting on obvious immediate civilian harm.*
- **Training institutions:** *have the ability to gather lessons on how to build robust understandings of civilian environments.*

OPERATIONAL IMPLICATIONS

Understanding the civilian environment should directly inform planning and targeting decisions by shaping how operations are designed, timed, and executed. This includes identifying patterns of civilian presence, the location and function of critical infrastructure, and how civilians interact with their surroundings, in order to reduce the risk of misidentification, flawed proportionality assessments, and unintended harm. It should guide intelligence requirements, the integration of multiple information sources and subject-matter expertise, and the development and maintenance of tools such as no-strike lists and protected-object categories. In complex and dynamic environments, this understanding must be continuously updated and extend beyond the target to consider infrastructure interdependencies, population vulnerability, and likely civilian responses to attack. Where information is incomplete or uncertain, this should be explicitly reflected in risk assessments and decision-making. In this way, a systematic understanding of the civilian environment

becomes a core operational enabler, supporting more informed, precautionary, and context-sensitive use of force in line with EWIPA commitments.

EXAMPLES OF GOOD PRACTICE

A number of states have begun to take steps to strengthen how the civilian environment is understood and integrated into military planning and operations, although approaches vary in scope and level of operationalisation.

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Malawi

Malawi provides a clear example of integrating these considerations into military training. Its doctrine includes training on battlefield environment assessment and operations in built-up areas (FIBUA), requiring commanders to assess how the built environment influences weapon effects and the potential for harm to civilians and civilian objects, including from indirect and reverberating effects.⁴

Morocco

Morocco has incorporated civilian considerations into operational planning processes, including through civil-military coordination mechanisms and pre-operational assessments. These include analysis of population density and the proximity of critical civilian infrastructure such as hospitals, schools, and essential services, supporting more informed decision-making in populated environments.⁵

Ireland

Ireland is developing analytical approaches to strengthen understanding of the civilian environment, including tools to assess first-, second-, and third-order effects of military actions on civilians and infrastructure. This aims to improve operational awareness and ensure that both direct and reverberating effects are more systematically reflected in planning and targeting processes. This

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⁵ Morocco, response to the 2025 State Survey on the Implementation of the Political Declaration on Strengthening the Protection of Civilians from the Humanitarian Consequences Arising from the Use of Explosive Weapons in Populated Areas, Explosive Weapons Monitor, 2025.

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work is complemented by ongoing engagement in international workshops and exchanges.⁶

⁶ Ireland, response to the 2025 State Survey on the Implementation of the Political Declaration on Strengthening the Protection of Civilians from the Humanitarian Consequences Arising from the Use of Explosive Weapons in Populated Areas, Explosive Weapons Monitor, 2025.

THEME 2 ASSESSING THE EFFECTS OF EXPLOSIVE WEAPONS

PURPOSE

Assessing the effects of explosive weapons is central to operational planning and targeting. It enables armed forces to anticipate how a weapon will perform, including for the intended delivery of effects on a target, and to understand other potential effects around the intended aim point in order to evaluate risks to civilians and civilian objects. This is particularly important if attacks are being considered against targets located in a populated area, given the likely presence of civilians and civilian objects, and the risks this presents.

Under the EWIPA Political Declaration, armed forces are expected to take into account the direct effects - blast, fragmentation, heat - and indirect effects, including damage to infrastructure, disruption to essential services and other secondary and tertiary effects that can reasonably be foreseen in the planning and conduct of an operation.

The overall impact of explosive weapon use is significantly shaped by the environment in which that use is conducted. In an urban environment, the presence of buildings made from different construction materials (which can also channel blast waves), the presence of civilians, and the risk of knock-on effects from damage to infrastructure are difficult to make the full effects of an attack very challenging to predict. As a result, effects assessments should be understood as estimates subject to uncertainty, and this uncertainty should inform more cautious and considered decision-making.

Key considerations concern the weapon's explosive power (blast and fragmentation radius), its level of accuracy, and the number of munitions used. This is recognised in the preamble of the Declaration which notes that "the risks increase" in relation to these, amongst other factors (section 1.2).

Effective assessment supports informed choices on whether, when, and how force should be used — including when to restrict or refrain from the use of explosive weapons in populated areas in order to help avoid civilian harm (commitment 3.3).

KEY COMPONENTS OF WEAPONS EFFECTS ASSESSMENT

1. Weapon effects

Explosive weapons produce blast and fragmentation over an area. The scale and area of these effects depend on:

- *Explosive yield and munition size;*
- *Accuracy of delivery system;*
- *Number of munitions used (single strike versus multiple rounds);*
- *Cumulative or overlapping effects from multiple strikes;*
- *Delivery method (air-delivered, artillery, rocket, mortar).*

Weapons that impact a wide area - due to a large blast radius, inaccuracy, or multiple munitions - present a foreseeable and increased risk of civilian harm when used in populated areas. Operational experience shows that civilian harm strongly correlates with these characteristics. Effects assessment should therefore treat weapon choice and configuration as a key determinant of risk.

Existing tools such as collateral damage estimation methodologies support such assessments, but in built up areas where effects are less predictable, they may underestimate the risk of civilian harm.

2. Effects in urban and populated areas

As noted above, urban environments can both amplify the effects of explosive weapons and significantly reduce capacity to accurately predict those effects. Key factors include:

- *Blast reflection and channelling between buildings;*
- *Structural collapse and damage to adjacent structures;*
- *Altered fragmentation patterns due to terrain and infrastructure, building materials create secondary fragmentation (e.g. glass).*
- *Increased likelihood of secondary explosions, fires, and hazardous debris or rubble;*
- *Increased likelihood of affecting civilian resources (e.g. schools, hospitals) or networked infrastructure (see below).*

3. Indirect and reverberating effects

These dynamics mean that the effects of a strike often extend beyond the intended target area. In addition, damage to interconnected infrastructure can generate reverberating effects, including:

- *Disruption to water and sanitation systems and to electricity supply;*
- *Loss of healthcare services;*
- *Impacts on food supply and shelter;*
- *Displacement of civilian populations.*

In many cases, these reverberating effects represent the largest and most extensive component of civilian harm, extending well beyond the immediate strike. Effects assessment should therefore incorporate analysis of indirect and unintended effects, not just estimation of direct effects against and within the target area.

RELEVANT ACTORS WITHIN ARMED FORCES

Assessing the effects of explosive weapons requires inputs from multiple functions within armed forces, combining operational, technical, and analytical expertise. Key actors might include:

- **Commanders:** *provide direction and make decisions based on assessments of expected effects, including the level of risk to civilians and civilian objects, and determine whether and how force should be applied.*
- **Legal advisers:** *support decision-making by ensuring that assessments of expected effects are reflected in the application of IHL principles, including proportionality and precautions in attack;*
- **Intelligence / J2 personnel:** *provide information on targets and the surrounding environment, including infrastructure, population presence, and contextual factors that influence how weapon effects may be exerted;*
- **Targeting cells:** *integrate intelligence, operational considerations, and legal advice to assess likely effects and translate these into decisions on weapon choice, timing, and method of attack;*
- **Weapons and effects analysts (weaponeers):** *play a central role in assessing blast, fragmentation, and damage, including through tools such as collateral damage estimation methodologies, while recognising the limitations and uncertainty of these models in urban environments.*

- **Civil-military cooperation (CIMIC/J9):** *assess extent of civilian presence, assess nature of infrastructure and give clear indication of extent of likely harm resulting from different types of attack*
- **Civilian harm mitigation or assessment cells:** *support analysis of both anticipated and actual effects, including by collecting and analysing data on results of strike on civilians and infrastructure, support risk analysis and post-strike learning and feeding lessons back into planning and targeting processes.*

OPERATIONAL IMPLICATIONS

Effects assessment should directly inform targeting decisions, including whether and how an attack is conducted, the extent to which effects can be contained within the target area, and the risks posed to civilians and civilian objects. It should guide the selection of weapons and tactics, including the use of lower-yield or more precise munitions where appropriate, adjustments to delivery method and timing, and the avoidance of weapons with wide area effects in populated areas. In complex environments, assessment must extend beyond the target to consider the broader civilian context, including infrastructure interdependencies, population vulnerability, and likely indirect effects. Where expected effects are difficult to predict, likely to extend beyond the target area, or risk causing significant civilian harm, this should weigh heavily in decision-making, including consideration of alternative approaches or refraining from the use of explosive weapons. In this way, effects assessment becomes a central operational tool for integrating civilian protection into planning and execution, supporting more precautionary, effects-based decision-making in line with EWIPA commitments.

EXAMPLES OF GOOD PRACTICE

A number of states have taken steps to strengthen how the effects of explosive weapons are assessed and integrated into operational decision-making, including through technical modelling, data collection, training, and operational restrictions.

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Portugal

Portugal contributes to European defence cooperation projects focused on modelling the effects of explosive weapons in urban environments. In particular, its involvement in the *Automated Modelling, Identification and Damage Assessment of Urban Terrain (AMIDA-UT)* project aims to develop 3D modelling systems for

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analysing urban terrain and damage, supporting improved understanding of how explosive effects interact with the built environment.⁷

Germany

Germany collects and analyses data on the effects of military operations from a range of sources, including computer-based modelling, weapons testing, and operational deployments. This data is used to inform operational planning and implementation and to support efforts to reduce collateral damage. Germany also highlights the importance of research and international collaboration, including to improve understanding of reverberating effects and strengthen data-driven approaches to reducing civilian harm.⁸

Japan

Japan uses data on the effects of explosive weapons, including information derived from weapons development and acquisition processes as well as past operational experience, to inform military education and training. This data is integrated into training at multiple levels, including officer training and staff colleges, contributing to operational understanding of weapon effects and supporting decision-making. Legal advisers are also involved in operational planning, ensuring that assessments of expected effects are reflected in decisions on the use of force.⁹

The Netherlands

The Netherlands has introduced a range of measures related to weapon selection and configuration in populated areas, including the use of precision-guided munitions, adjustments to fuzes

⁷ Portugal, response to the 2025 State Survey on the Implementation of the Political Declaration on Strengthening the Protection of Civilians from the Humanitarian Consequences Arising from the Use of Explosive Weapons in Populated Areas, Explosive Weapons Monitor, 2025.

⁸ Germany, response to the 2025 State Survey on the Implementation of the Political Declaration on Strengthening the Protection of Civilians from the Humanitarian Consequences Arising from the Use of Explosive Weapons in Populated Areas, Explosive Weapons Monitor, 2025.

⁹ Japan, response to the 2025 State Survey on the Implementation of the Political Declaration on Strengthening the Protection of Civilians from the Humanitarian Consequences Arising from the Use of Explosive Weapons in Populated Areas, Explosive Weapons Monitor, 2025.

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and payloads, and a policy of no longer using unguided aerial bombs. These measures are applied within targeting and operational processes that take into account the potential effects of weapons and the associated risk of civilian harm.¹⁰

¹⁰ Netherlands, response to the 2025 State Survey on the Implementation of the Political Declaration on Strengthening the Protection of Civilians from the Humanitarian Consequences Arising from the Use of Explosive Weapons in Populated Areas, Explosive Weapons Monitor, 2025.

THEME 3 CIVILIAN HARM TRACKING

PURPOSE

It is impossible to effectively mitigate harm to civilians from explosive weapons - and to respond to harm that has already occurred - without tracking and understanding the harm in ongoing and past military operations. Yet only a few states in the world have elements of civilian harm tracking systems in place, and no state proactively and consistently tracks allegations of harm across all of its theatres of operation.

At present, many states rely on third-party actors and independent monitors to report allegations of harm from their own military actions. Many others do not have teams in place to review such evidence; this is often based on the premise that their military operations do not cause harm to civilians. Yet this is impossible to know while refusing to engage with evidence to the contrary.

TABLE: WHAT IS CIVILIAN HARM TRACKING? ¹¹

Civilian harm tracking is a specific military function referring to armed actors' ability to systematically gather data, assess, and analyse a range of negative effects on civilians caused directly or indirectly by its operations. It can refer to a wide set of tools that states use to better track and understand the harm from their own operations, including establishing teams specifically focused on tracking civilian harm, reviewing open-source material on allegations of harm, receiving and processing allegations of harm through reporting mechanisms, and more.

The purposes of civilian harm tracking are manifold; beyond the legal and moral obligations to understand the impact of military action, effectively tracking harm to civilians allows for agile adaptations in military operation where needed to decrease harm, while providing further insight on a military's operations / impact. Effectively tracking harm to civilians, and assessing the findings, are the foundations for all other civilian harm mitigation efforts.

The states that have endorsed the EWIPA declaration acknowledged this challenge in endorsing the declaration in November 2022. In section 1.8, in particular, states reaffirm their commitments to civilian harm tracking, stating: "[w]e recognise the importance of efforts to record and track civilian casualties, and the use of all practicable measures to ensure appropriate data collection. This includes, where feasible, data disaggregated by sex and age. When possible, this data should be shared and made publicly available. Improved data on civilian harm would help to inform policies designed to avoid, and in any event minimise, civilian harm; aid efforts to investigate harm to civilians; support efforts to determine or establish accountability, and enhance lessons learned processes in armed forces."

Beyond this, the declaration goes on to say in commitment 3.4 that states should "take into account the direct and indirect effects on civilians and civilian objects which can reasonably be foreseen in the planning of military operations and the execution of attacks in populated areas, and conduct damage assessments, to the degree feasible, and identify lessons learned." And finally, commitment 4.2, endorsing states commit to: "[c]ollect, share, and make publicly available disaggregated data on the direct and indirect effects on civilians and civilian objects of military operations involving the use of explosive weapons in populated areas, where feasible and appropriate."

¹¹ Airwars & Article 36, *Implementation Toolkit on Strengthening the Protection of Civilians from the Humanitarian Consequences of Explosive Weapons in Populated Areas (EWIPA)*, 2025

While no state has to date built a methodologically consistent civilian harm tracking approach and applied it in all military operations, several have done some work to build towards this, with several important good practices and lessons emerging particularly in the last decade. At present, the United States and the Netherlands have some elements of civilian harm tracking built into their national approaches to military operations.

KEY COMPONENTS OF CIVILIAN HARM TRACKING¹²

- *Armed forces have the capabilities, resources, personnel, and systems needed to systematically collect and analyse allegations of harm to civilians including deaths, injuries, and infrastructure damage.*
- *In tracking allegations of civilian harm, third party reports are reviewed, including those presented by international and national NGOs, international and local media, local communities, and in reports submitted through reporting portals.*
- *The data collected on civilian harm includes the names of those injured, their age, sex, and disability, where feasible.*
- *Data collected includes weapon type, quantity, delivery method, and location of use.*
- *The tracking mechanism is effectively designed to produce meaningful analysis and insights that are used by military leaders to iteratively review tactics or procedures and to promote institutional and operational learning.*
- *Data on civilian harm allegations is shared with the UN, ICRC, and civil society, and made publicly available when feasible.*
- *Civilian harm tracking feeds into a formal approach to investigating and responding to civilian harm. If more information is needed, best practices are followed, for instance by conducting witness interviews and site visits, conditions permitting; publishing summaries/findings where feasible; and protecting the privacy and security of those providing information.*
- *Those responsible for the civilian harm tracking mechanisms have reliable access to accurate information and sufficiently detailed records about military operations (e.g., troop movements, airstrikes, incident reports). Incidents and analyses are archived and easily retrievable years later.*

¹² Airwars & Article 36, *Implementation Toolkit on Strengthening the Protection of Civilians from the Humanitarian Consequences of Explosive Weapons in Populated Areas (EWIPA)*, 2025

RELEVANT ACTORS WITHIN ARMED FORCES

While the exact function and number of staff required for civilian harm tracking will differ across national context to account for different needs, budgets, and intensity of warfare, states should seek to have support for civilian harm tracking across the following functions:

- **Civilian harm cells:** *specialised groups set up to track, investigate, respond to, and learn from civilian harm. Where such cells do not exist, central teams looking at human security, the protection of civilians, civilian harm mitigation, or other related activities could be assigned the task of civilian harm tracking; however, in this process it is vital that the team in question is adequately trained and resourced. The person or team responsible for this should review both individual allegations of harm as well as patterns of preventable harm that are emerging.*
- **Commanders:** *provide the incentive to track and understand civilian harm, particularly through the commander's intent, as well as guidance on how to do this.*
- **Legal advisers:** *ensure compliance with international and national law, including commitments to understand civilian harm from military operations and provide guidance on taking all possible precautions in future attacks by understanding the impact of those that have already occurred.*
- **Intelligence / J2 personnel:** *gather information on the civilian environment pre-strike to ensure precautions taken will be effective, and post-strike to understand the impact of military operations.*
- **CIMIC / J9 personnel:** *assess extent of civilian presence and nature of infrastructure, and can help build a better understanding of civilian harm after an airstrike.*
- **Targeting cells:** *integrate intelligence, operational, and legal inputs to prevent harm pre-strike. Conduct initial assessment of the impact of a weapon, including by reporting on obvious immediate civilian harm.*
- **Training institutions:** *have the ability to gather lessons on civilian harm tracking and embed good practices in training and education.*

OPERATIONAL IMPLICATIONS

Civilian harm tracking should directly inform operational planning and decision-making by ensuring that armed forces systematically understand the real-world impact of their actions on civilians. This includes establishing mechanisms to collect, verify, and analyse information from both internal reporting and external sources, including third-party allegations, in order to identify patterns of harm, assess the

effectiveness of mitigation measures, and adapt tactics, techniques, and procedures accordingly. Tracking systems should capture both direct and reverberating effects, link harm to specific weapons and operational choices, and feed into investigations, accountability processes, and lessons learned. Where data is incomplete or not actively sought, this creates a significant gap in understanding and increases the risk of repeated harm. When effectively implemented, civilian harm tracking becomes a core operational feedback mechanism, enabling continuous learning and supporting more informed, responsive, and precautionary use of force in line with EWIPA commitments.

EXAMPLES OF GOOD PRACTICE

States have taken different approaches to establishing systems for tracking and analysing civilian harm, ranging from comprehensive institutional frameworks to the adaptation of existing data systems.

ILLUSTRATIVE EXAMPLES

The United States

The United States has developed one of the most comprehensive institutional frameworks for civilian harm tracking through the Civilian Harm Mitigation and Response Action Plan (CHMR-AP) and DoD Instruction 3000.17. These establish dedicated assessment cells, investigation processes, and mechanisms for integrating civilian harm data into policy, training, and operations. While implementation has varied across theatres, this framework provides a structured model for systematic data collection, analysis, and operational learning.

Recent developments indicate changes in the application and resourcing of these approaches, alongside reported increases in civilian harm in certain contexts. These shifts highlight both the challenges of sustaining institutional commitments over time and the importance of translating policy frameworks into consistent practice. At the same time, the measures developed between 2022 and 2024 offer important lessons for other states

ILLUSTRATIVE EXAMPLES

seeking to establish or strengthen civilian harm tracking systems.¹³

The Netherlands

The Netherlands is developing a comprehensive approach to civilian harm tracking and mitigation, including investigation of civilian harm allegations and the establishment of a centralised database linking weapon deployments, incidents, and post-strike assessments. This is complemented by public reporting and engagement with external monitoring organisations, supporting transparency, accountability, and institutional learning.¹⁴

New Zealand

New Zealand has established formal procedures for civilian harm tracking through Defence Force Order 35, which sets out requirements for reporting, investigating, and responding to civilian harm. This includes centralised storage of civilian harm data, mechanisms for monitoring and identifying lessons learned, and annual public reporting on incidents and responses, reinforcing accountability and continuous improvement.¹⁵

Bosnia and Herzegovina

Bosnia and Herzegovina maintains a national database on mine and explosive remnants of war (ERW) incidents through its Mine Action Centre (BHMIC), which records casualties, explosive types, locations, and impacts on infrastructure and livelihoods. This system is complemented by operational data shared by the armed forces and collaboration with international partners. While primarily focused on legacy contamination, it provides a foundation for broader civilian harm

¹³ United States of America, analysis based on the *Civilian Protection Monitor (CPM)*, which assesses policy developments and operational practices relating to civilian harm mitigation and tracking, including the Civilian Harm Mitigation and Response Action Plan (CHMR-AP) and subsequent implementation trends, 2025.

¹⁴ Netherlands, analysis based on the *Civilian Protection Monitor (CPM)*, including assessment of national approaches to investigating civilian harm allegations, development of data systems, and efforts to strengthen transparency and institutional learning, 2025

¹⁵ New Zealand, response to the *2025 State Survey on the Implementation of the Political Declaration on Strengthening the Protection of Civilians from the Humanitarian Consequences Arising from the Use of Explosive Weapons in Populated Areas*, Explosive Weapons Monitor, 2025.

ILLUSTRATIVE EXAMPLES

tracking and is being considered for expansion to capture wider direct and indirect effects of explosive weapons.¹⁶

¹⁶ Bosnia and Herzegovina, response to the *2025 State Survey on the Implementation of the Political Declaration on Strengthening the Protection of Civilians from the Humanitarian Consequences Arising from the Use of Explosive Weapons in Populated Areas*, Explosive Weapons Monitor, 2025.

CROSS-CUTTING IMPLEMENTATION MECHANISMS

Implementation of the Declaration relies on a range of tools, systems, and processes across both government and military structures. These provide the practical means through which commitments are translated into policy, operational guidance, and operational practice.

This includes national policy frameworks, military doctrine and operational guidance, and technical and analytical tools such as targeting procedures, weapons-effects data, civilian harm tracking systems, and information on civilian environments. Together, these mechanisms support how armed forces understand civilian risk, assess the effects of weapons, and learn from operational outcomes.

Their effectiveness depends not only on their design, but on how they are integrated across the operational cycle - ensuring that information on civilian environments, weapon effects, and observed civilian harm informs planning, conduct, and review.

TOOLS AND INFORMATION SYSTEMS

Implementation draws on a wide range of tools and documentation that already exist within government and military systems, from national policy frameworks and strategic direction to doctrine, operational guidance, technical data, targeting tools, and post-strike review processes.

At the highest level, **government policy** including protection of civilians' policies, implementation plans, and ministerial guidance, can set strategic direction and expectations, including on restrictions, transparency, and civilian harm tracking.

Within armed forces, this is translated into **doctrine, operational policy, rules of engagement, targeting directives, and standard operating procedures**, which shape how decisions on the use of force, including explosive weapons, are made and how civilian risk is assessed and mitigated.

A central component is **technical information on weapons effects**. Armed forces require reliable data on the characteristics and expected effects of their weapons, including blast and fragmentation, accuracy, dispersion, fusing, and likely impacts. This information, drawn from procurement, testing, and training, often includes distance-based risk measures such as minimum safe distance and hazard radii, and provides the basis for adapting weapon choice and tactics to reduce civilian harm.

These tools align closely with the three operational areas identified in this study. Systems supporting understanding of the civilian environment include intelligence preparation, infrastructure mapping, and no-strike lists. Tools for assessing weapons effects include weapons data, technical testing and analysis, and legal reviews. Collateral damage estimation methodologies draw on this information to assess risk to civilians, but do not in themselves determine the full range of effects and may be limited in complex urban environments. Civilian harm tracking and learning rely on casualty recording, databases, reporting systems, and post-strike assessments.

More advanced modelling tools may also be used to assess blast effects and infrastructure vulnerability, which can complement fundamental technical knowledge of weapons effects. Effective implementation depends on how these tools are connected - ensuring that policy, guidance, technical knowledge, and observed harm inform a continuous cycle of planning, execution, and learning.

TRAINING AND PROFESSIONAL MILITARY EDUCATION

Training and professional military education are critical for translating policy and guidance into practice. They shape how personnel understand civilian risk, apply legal and policy frameworks, and make decisions in populated environments.

At a foundational level, basic training and legal instruction introduce international humanitarian law and should include understanding of the risks associated with explosive weapons, including blast, fragmentation, and potential reverberating effects, as well as broader understandings of conducting military operations in the civilian environment.

At the operational level, pre-deployment training and mission preparation apply these principles in realistic and operationally specific contexts, including urban environments. Scenario-based exercises and simulations help personnel assess civilian presence, consider weapon effects, and apply mitigation measures under operational conditions.

Specialist training - including targeting, intelligence, fires, weaponeering, and legal adviser training - is particularly important. These are the settings in which personnel learn to apply weapons-effects data, use estimation tools, and understand how the civilian environment, weapon effects, and operational decisions interact.

Urban warfare training further supports this by exposing personnel to the complexities of operating in built-up areas, including infrastructure vulnerability and indirect effects, and how tactical choices can reduce civilian harm.

At a more senior level, staff colleges and professional military education support strategic understanding, doctrine development, and reflection on operational experience, including lessons from civilian harm tracking and external analysis.

Across all levels, training also supports operational learning and adaptation, ensuring that lessons on civilian environments, weapons effects, and patterns of harm are fed back into future practice.

CROSS-CUTTING CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

Survey responses and consultations highlight a number of common challenges alongside emerging opportunities. A central issue is the gap between political endorsement of the Declaration and its translation into concrete military policy and practice. In many cases, implementation remains focused on awareness-raising, coordination, and reliance on existing IHL frameworks, with more limited development of EWIPA-specific measures.

Challenges also arise in internal coordination, particularly in ensuring sustained engagement from ministries of defence and armed forces. The central role of foreign ministries in the development of the Declaration can make it more difficult to translate commitments into changes in doctrine and operational practice, underscoring the need to express its provisions in military concepts and procedures.

At the same time, there are clear opportunities to build on existing frameworks. Many armed forces already have relevant policies and systems, and strengthening their alignment with the Declaration offers a practical pathway forward. There is also growing interest in peer-to-peer exchange, particularly military-to-military engagement.

Finally, states highlight the importance of strengthening data collection, transparency, and learning systems, as well as improving understanding of weapon effects and civilian environments - key areas for advancing implementation.

ISSUES FOR FURTHER DISCUSSION

The analysis above raises a number of key questions for the workshop, particularly in relation to advancing implementation in practice.

A first set of questions concerns **translation into military practice**: how can commitments be reflected in doctrine, targeting processes, and operational decision-making, and what guidance or tools are needed?

A second area relates to **understanding and managing risk**: how can armed forces strengthen assessment of civilian environments and weapon effects, including reverberating impacts?

A third issue concerns **civilian harm tracking and learning**: what systems are needed to ensure data is systematically collected, analysed, and used to inform practice, and how can transparency be strengthened?

Finally, the workshop may consider **institutional questions**, including how to strengthen defence engagement, improve whole-of-government approaches, and support peer-to-peer exchange.

These questions are intended to support practical discussion on moving towards more consistent and operationally embedded implementation.

ANNEX A

ILLUSTRATIVE EXAMPLES OF IMPLEMENTATION

This table provides a simplified overview of selected types of implementation measures reported by states, organised thematically across key areas of policy, practice, and institutional development.

The examples included are drawn from survey responses and related analysis. They are intended to illustrate the range of approaches being taken, rather than to represent comprehensive coverage or examples of best practice.

Institutional coordination and national frameworks

Austria – The Ministry of Defence has adopted an implementation plan with dedicated workstreams and a working group, alongside development of broader protection of civilians and EWIPA-specific policy frameworks.

Switzerland – Responsibilities for implementation are formally allocated across ministries and the armed forces, supported by established interdepartmental coordination mechanisms.

Belgium – Focal points are designated at strategic, legal and operational levels within the armed forces, meeting regularly to support implementation and coordination.

Doctrine and policy review, operational guidance (including restrictions)

Switzerland – EWIPA considerations are integrated into doctrine and the legally binding weapons review process, alongside policy direction emphasising avoidance of civilian harm and restrictions on the use of explosive weapons in populated areas.

Netherlands – A comprehensive review has led to updated doctrine and operational guidance, including measures to limit the use of certain explosive weapons, such as discontinuing unguided aerial bombs and adapting fuzes and payloads to reduce wide-area effects.

Austria – A dedicated EWIPA policy is under development to complement broader protection of civilians policy and guide planning, targeting and operations.

Ireland – Targeting doctrine is being updated to incorporate assessment of first-, second- and third-order effects, informing decisions on weapon choice and operational approach.

Training integration

Malawi – Military doctrine includes training on battlefield environment assessment and fighting in built-up areas (FIBUA), requiring commanders to assess how the built environment influences weapon effects and civilian harm.

Switzerland – EWIPA is integrated across officer education, legal adviser training and artillery schools, including urban warfare scenarios.

Belgium – Mandatory training includes protection of civilians and collateral damage estimation, with additional targeting-related training for operational personnel.

Understanding the civilian environment

Morocco – Operational planning incorporates civilian considerations through pre-operational assessments, including analysis of population density and proximity of critical infrastructure, supported by civil-military coordination mechanisms.

Netherlands – Targeting processes integrate detailed analysis of the civilian environment, including intelligence, no-strike lists and continuous target validation.

Ireland – Analytical tools are being developed to improve understanding of direct and reverberating effects on civilians and infrastructure, supported by international exchanges.

Assessing weapons effects

Germany – Data from modelling, weapons testing and operational use are collected and analysed to inform planning and reduce collateral damage, supported by international research collaboration.

Japan – Data from weapons development, acquisition and operational experience are integrated into training and planning, with legal advisers ensuring that expected effects inform decisions on the use of force.

Finland – Detailed operational and technical data on weapons use are collected and used to assess risks to civilians and inform decision-making.

Austria and Portugal – Participation in the AMIDA-UT project supports development of 3D modelling tools to analyse explosive effects in urban environments.

Civilian harm tracking and learning mechanisms

United States – The CHMR-AP and DoD Instruction 3000.17 establish assessment cells, investigation processes and institutional mechanisms for integrating civilian harm data into policy, training and operations.

Netherlands – A civilian harm tracking framework includes investigation of allegations, a centralised database linking weapon use and incidents, and public reporting mechanisms.

New Zealand – Defence Force Order 35 establishes procedures for reporting, investigating and responding to civilian harm, including centralised data storage and annual reporting.

Bosnia and Herzegovina – A national database tracks casualties and impacts of explosive remnants of war, providing a foundation for broader civilian harm monitoring

ANNEX B ANNOTATED LIST OF KEY RESOURCES FOR MILITARY IMPLEMENTATION

This annex provides an overview of selected guidance, policy frameworks, and analytical resources relevant to the implementation of the Political Declaration on Strengthening the Protection of Civilians from the Humanitarian Consequences of Explosive Weapons in Populated Areas (EWIPA), with a particular focus on materials supporting implementation by armed forces.

The resources include operational guidance, technical references, and practice-oriented exchanges. They also include outputs from military workshops and practitioner exchanges, which play an important role in translating the Declaration's commitments into operational practice. The list is illustrative and not exhaustive.

IMPLEMENTATION GUIDANCE AND TOOLKITS

Article 36 and Airwars (2025)

Operationalising the Political Declaration on Civilian Harm from Explosive Weapons in Populated Areas: A Toolkit for States and Armed Forces

- Available at: [https://article36.org/wp-](https://article36.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/11/Military_Toolkit_A36_Airwars.pdf)

[content/uploads/2025/11/Military_Toolkit_A36_Airwars.pdf](https://article36.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/11/Military_Toolkit_A36_Airwars.pdf)

- Provides detailed, practice-oriented guidance on integrating EWIPA commitments across military policy, targeting, civilian harm tracking, and operational learning.

United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs (2023)

Aide-Memoire on the Political Declaration on EWIPA

- Available at:

https://cms.ewipa.org/uploads/UNODA_Aide_Memoire_Political_Declaration_on_EWI_PA_b1a361a8fa.pdf

- A concise reference summarising the Declaration's commitments and key considerations for implementation.

International Network on Explosive Weapons (2024)

Implementation Framework for the Political Declaration on EWIPA

- Available at: <https://www.inew.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/02/Implementation-Framework.pdf>

- Sets out structured implementation actions across policy, operations, data, and victim assistance.

MILITARY POLICY AND OPERATIONAL FRAMEWORKS

United States Department of Defense (2022)

Civilian Harm Mitigation and Response Action Plan (CHMR-AP).

- Available at: <https://media.defense.gov/2022/Aug/25/2003064740/-1/-1/1/CIVILIAN-HARM-MITIGATION-AND-RESPONSE-ACTION-PLAN.PDF>

- Establishes institutional structures and processes for civilian harm mitigation, including tracking, investigation, and integration into operations and training.

NATO

Protection of Civilians Allied Command Operations Handbook (Mons: Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe, 2021)

- Available at: <https://shape.nato.int/news-archive/2021/the-protection-of-civilians-allied-command-operations-handbook>

- Provides operational guidance for integrating protection of civilians into planning, targeting, and execution.

Center for Civilians in Conflict (2022)

Civilian Harm Mitigation and Response: A Practitioner's Guide

- Available at: <https://civiliansinconflict.org/publications/research/civilian-harm-mitigation-response/>

- Offers practical guidance for armed forces on mitigating civilian harm across the operational cycle.

Center for Civilians in Conflict (2022)

Urban Warfare: A Civilian Harm Mitigation Primer

- Available at: <https://civiliansinconflict.org/publications/research/urban-warfare->

[primer/](#)

- Highlights operational challenges in urban environments and approaches to reducing civilian harm.

TECHNICAL AND ANALYTICAL RESOURCES

Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (2022)

Explosive Weapon Effects

- Available at: <https://www.gichd.org/publications-resources/publications/explosive-weapon-effects/>
- Provides technical analysis of blast, fragmentation, and other weapon effects relevant to operational planning.

United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (2024)

Understanding Civilian Harm from the Indirect or Reverberating Effects of the Use of Explosive Weapons in Populated Areas

- Available at: <https://unidir.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/10/UNIDIR-Explosive-Weapons-Monitor-Understanding-civilian-harm-from-the-indirect-or-reverberating-effects-of-the-use-of-EWIPA.pdf>
- Provides analysis of reverberating effects on infrastructure and services.

United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (2024)

Leveraging Data to Reduce Civilian Harm During Military Operations in Populated Areas

- Available at: <https://unidir.org/publication/leveraging-data-to-reduce-civilian-harm-during-military-operations-in-populated-areas-practical-data-driven-steps-to-implement-the-political-declaration-on-explosive-weapons-in-populated-areas/>
- Outlines practical approaches to data-driven operational learning.

Airwars (various)

Civilian Harm and Casualty Recording Methodologies

- Available at: <https://airwars.org>
- Supports data collection, verification, and analysis of civilian harm.

OPERATIONAL AND HUMANITARIAN GUIDANCE

International Committee of the Red Cross (2022)

Explosive Weapons with Wide Area Effects: A Deadly Choice in Populated Areas

- Available at: https://www.icrc.org/sites/default/files/document_new/file_list/ewipa_explosive_weapons_with_wide_area_effect_final.pdf

- Highlights the humanitarian risks associated with wide-area effects of explosive weapons and outlines considerations for reducing civilian harm in populated areas.

International Committee of the Red Cross (2023)

Expert Meeting Report on Indirect Effects on Essential Services

- Available at: <http://shop.icrc.org/icrc-expert-meeting-preventing-and-mitigating-the-indirect-effects-on-essential-services-from-the-use-of-explosive-weapons-in-populated-areas-3-5-and-9-october-2023-pdf-en.html>
- Provides expert analysis on how damage to infrastructure from explosive weapons affects essential services such as healthcare, water, and energy, and outlines considerations for mitigating these reverberating effects in military operations.

United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (2022)

Compilation of Military Policy and Practice to Reduce the Humanitarian Impact of Explosive Weapons

- Available at: <https://www.unocha.org/publications/report/world/compilation-military-policy-and-practice-reducing-humanitarian-impact-use-explosive>
- Compiles examples of military policies and operational practices from states, illustrating approaches to reducing civilian harm and supporting the implementation of EWIPA commitments.

Humanity & Inclusion (2022–2025)

Research and operational guidance on explosive ordnance risk education (EORE), healthcare impacts, humanitarian access considerations, and vulnerable populations.

- Available at: https://www.hi.org/sn_uploads/document/HI-Summary-Report-Implementing-the-Humanitarian-Commitments-of-the-EWIPA-Political-Declaration-2025.pdf
- Provides analysis of how explosive weapons affect humanitarian access, access to healthcare, essential services, and at-risk groups, supporting integration of these considerations into operational planning.

WORKSHOPS AND PRACTICE ORIENTED MILITARY EXCHANGES

Airwars and Article 36 (2023)

Report on a Military Workshop on the Use of Explosive Weapons in Populated Areas

- Available at: <https://article36.org/updates/report-on-a-military-workshop-on-the-use-of-explosive-weapons-in-populated-areas/>
- Summarises discussions among military practitioners on operational challenges and approaches to reducing civilian harm, including targeting practices,

understanding weapons effects, and integrating civilian protection into planning and operations.

Article 36 and Airwars (2024–2025)

Military workshop series on EWIPA implementation

- Available at:

<https://ewipa.org/calendar/Article36+Airwars%20military%20workshop>

- A series of practitioner-focused workshops supported by background policy papers, facilitating exchange between militaries on operationalisation of EWIPA commitments, including civilian environment analysis, weapons effects, and civilian harm tracking.

EWIPA Process (2024)

Workshop summaries on military implementation of the Declaration

- Available at: https://cms.ewipa.org/uploads/Wokshop_summaries_83f81bf691.pdf

- Provides consolidated insights from multiple workshops, highlighting common challenges, needs, and emerging practices.

Vienna Military Workshop on EWIPA (2024)

Workshop Report

- Available at:

https://cms.ewipa.org/uploads/Vienna_Military_Workshop_on_EWIPA_Workshop_Report_496dd35045.pdf

- Captures discussions on translating commitments into operational policy and practice, including challenges, lessons learned, and approaches to integrating EWIPA commitments into policy, planning, and operations.

