



Good Practices in Nonviolent, Unarmed, Civilian to Civilian Protection

Documentation of the Workshop in Manila,
7-9 December, 2017

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Nonviolent Peaceforce

Documentation of Workshop on Good Practices in Nonviolent, Unarmed, Civilian to Civilian Protection; 7-9 December, 2017 in Manila

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Executive Summary

Forced displacement has reached a record high with more people than at any time since WW II, forced to flee from their homes in order to avoid harm and to save their own lives. The UN High Commission on Refugees reported that by mid 2016, one in 113 people in the world were displaced and in need of protection. The impact of this level of ongoing violence and destruction is international and multigenerational, spanning the spectrum from physical harm to economic costs that are in the billions. The collective global community is failing to prevent violent conflict and to adequately protect civilians who are impacted by it. At the highest level of decision making, the use of military forces continues to be the privileged choice for protection, despite the increasing evidence that suggests it is of limited effect. There is an imperative to explore, strengthen and increase additional approaches for protecting civilians.

Unarmed civilian protection (UCP)¹, sometimes also called civilian peacekeeping or protective accompaniment, is the practice of deploying specially trained unarmed civilians before, during, or after violent conflict in order to prevent or reduce violence, to provide direct physical protection to civilian populations under threat, and to strengthen or build resilient local peace infrastructures. Though the focus is on “civilians”, at least one organization active in this field of UCP, the International Committee of the Red Cross/Red Crescent, also protects soldiers in situations when they are entitled to be protected as described in International Humanitarian Law (IHL).

UCP is an emerging practice, used by at least twenty nongovernmental organizations at this time. UCP has gained recognition at the United Nations as a valuable method for protecting civilians and contributing to sustainable peace. As a relatively new practice, there is an urgent need to research and document the experiences of organizations on the ground in the last decades, in order to articulate proven, effective strategies methods.

In service of this goal, Nonviolent Peaceforce is spearheading a comprehensive global review of good practices in the field of unarmed civilian protection (UCP)². The purpose of the good practices process is to strengthen and grow the field of UCP by bringing practitioners, academics, and affected beneficiaries together to reflect on the needs, successes and failure of UCP in these areas.

This report documents the workshop: “Good Practices in Nonviolent, Unarmed, Civilian to Civilian Protection”, sponsored by the Australian International Development Fund Direct Aid Program,

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held in Manila between the 7th and 9th of December, 2017. Participants, practitioners and scholars came from the Philippines, Sri Lanka, India, Thailand, Nepal, Indonesia, Australia and Myanmar, representing various national and international organizations, among them *inter alia* Peace Brigades International, Bantay Ceasefire, Deep South Watch Thailand and Nonviolent Peaceforce. This is the first of five planned regional workshops. The workshops follow-on from stage one of the good practices process, a case studies research project which concluded in 2016. For the case studies, a team of researchers conducted an exploration of good practices for UCP in four countries/regions: South Sudan, Colombia, the Philippines (Mindanao) and Israel/Palestine. Their findings were published in the book, “Wielding Nonviolence in the Midst of Violence”³ (2016), edited by Ellen Furnari.

Methodology

The participants of the workshop were carefully chosen for their current or previous work doing civilian to civilian protection; receiving protection from such organizations; and/or their academic research and writing on the topic. Most of the participants were interviewed before the workshop took place, to get their input on the most pressing topics to address.

The workshop was carried out through a mixture of panel presentations, in-depth group work, and plenary discussions of group findings, putting specific focus on good practices, but also on potential challenges and dilemmas of UCP work.

Key Themes

The workshop looked at various issues and themes. It sought to relate Unarmed Civilian Protection (UCP) to the strategies of peacebuilding, peacekeeping and peacemaking. It discussed the various challenges local and international civil society face in regard to what often has been described as “shrinking space”. And it explored the challenges that have arisen from having to deal with violent extremist groups that challenge and often undermine peace agreements.

There were many “good practices” suggested in the various groups, and described in the documentation. Three themes were most prominent:

1. A main focus and recurrent subject of the workshop was on relationship-building with all actors in the conflicts, seeking the common humanity in all interlocutors. This was considered to be of the utmost importance with many experiences and examples shared. Limitations to such relationship-building were considered to be more imposed from the outside (e.g. government or donors) than being inherent in the nature of conflict parties.
2. The group considered a strict categorical distinction between the strategies of ‘encouragement’ and ‘deterrence’ to be faulty, because there is always an element of deterrence present even if the emphasis lies on the strategy of encouragement. It was said that “we cannot choose between deterrence and encouragement as one better than the other. We need to be strategic and contextual”.

³ <https://tinyurl.com/purchaseUCPbook>

3. Another main theme was the complex relationships between local and international actors who undertake and/or receive UCP. Many observations and thoughtful evidence were collected regarding the comparison and relationship between local and international groups – access to conflict parties, deterrent power, the partisan stance of some CSOs, knowledge of backgrounds and contexts, different standard operating procedures for security, etc. Neither of these actor groups was seen as unimportant to successful UCP work; it was rather suggested that local and international actors both play crucial roles depending on the specific context, and that they should engage in a process of "co-production" of protection.

Key Challenges

The workshop was an opportunity to further explore observations and lessons formulated in the aforementioned publication, "Wielding Nonviolence in the Midst of Violence". It turned out that perhaps more differentiation regarding some of the findings of that study is needed. This referred especially to the principles of nonviolence and primacy of local actors identified in the study (see sections 2.3 and 5.1 for further discussion), as well as to some of the challenges listed below.

In addition to the issue of principles, among the main challenges for UCP discussed were:

1. Prevention: Much of what is done in the field happens when there is already major violence, and tactics are more often reactive than proactive.
2. Nonpartisanship: a general challenge for local groups, and sometimes also for international ones.
3. Shrinking space for civil society actors in many Asian countries, for both local and international organizations.
4. The simultaneous advantages and disadvantages or limitations of being part of formal structures e.g. cease fire or other peace processes.
5. Civilian protection within the proliferation of groups utilizing violent extremism to pursue various agendas.

Strengthening UCP

One outcome of the workshop was suggestions for both subject matter focus and process suggestions to further enhance the good practices process. Participants expressed a number of ideas including:

1. Increased exchange and learning between UCP stakeholders;
2. Incorporating regional approaches in violence prevention, civilian protection strategies and response planning;
3. Sharing failures in addition to successes to improve „lessons learned“ process;
4. Move beyond project and/or program thinking with defined end dates and towards the inculcation of UCP into local, national and regional planning, similarly to natural disaster planning.
5. The application of UCP in violent conflict that falls outside of that defined by international humanitarian law;

The documentation also contains some proposals for future workshops:

1. Strategies to deal with extremist groups, criminal gangs and cases when international companies are the perpetrators.
2. The question of “horizontal conflicts” and of prevention.
3. Are international groups changing how they structure their work in order to avoid being pushed out, and what are the implications of this? Which ‘red’ lines should not be crossed in these new contexts?
4. Gender-related issues needs to be further explored.
5. Special consideration for the protection LGBTQ people needs to be further examined.
6. The contradiction of UCP organizations that claim nonviolence as their principle but rely on police force or sometimes even (legitimate) military force needs further attention.
7. Protection “from afar”, without being on the ground.

Acronyms

AFP = Armed Forces of the Philippines	JCCCH = Joint Coordination Committee on the Cessation of Hostilities (Philippines)
ARMM = Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao	JCMP = Joint Ceasefire Monitoring Post
BC = Bantay Ceasefire	LGU = Local Government Unit LMT = Local Monitoring Team
BIFF =Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Fighters	LTTE = Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam
BPT = Balkan Peace Team CB = Capacity building	MILF = Moro Islamic National Front
CBO = Community-based organization	MNLF = Moro National Liberation Front
CCCH =Coordinating Committee on the Cessation of Hostilities (Philippines)	MoD = Ministry of Defence
CE = Capacity enhancing (as alternative term for CB)	MoU = Memorandum of Understanding
CPA = Comprehensive Peace Agreement (South Sudan)	MPC =Mindanao Peoples Caucus
CPC = Civilian Protection Component of the IMT Philippines	NDF = National Democratic Front (Philippines)
CPT = Christian Peacemaker Teams	NP = Nonviolent Peaceforce
CSO = Civil Society Organization EWER = Early Warning Early Response	OIC = Organization of Islamic Conference
GCRV= Grave Childs Rights Violations	OPAPP = Office of the Presidential Adviser on the Peace Process
GoSL = Government of Sri Lanka GOSS = Government of South Sudan	PBI = Peace Brigades International
GRP = Government of the Republic of Philippines	PNP = Philippine National Police
HR = Human Rights	SLA = Sri Lankan Army
HRD = Human Rights Defenders	SLMM = Sri Lanka Monitoring Mission
HRW = Human Rights Watch	SOMA = Suspension of Military Actions
ICC = International Criminal Court	SOMO = Suspension of Military Operations
ICG = International Contact Group	SOP(s) = Standard Operation Procedure(s)
ICRC = International Committee of the Red Cross	SPLA = S. Sudan People Liberation Army
IDP = Internally Displaced Person	SPLM = S. Sudan People Liberation Movement
IGO = International Governmental Organization	TRC = Truth and Reconciliation Commission (Philippines)
IHL = International Humanitarian Law	UCP = Unarmed Civilian Protection / Peacekeeping
IMT = International Monitoring Team	UN = United Nations
INGO = International Non-governmental Organization	UNDP = United Nations Development Program
ISIS = Islamic State	UNHCR = United Nations High Commission for Refugees
	UNICEF = United Nations Children Fund
	UNMISS = United Nation Mission in South Sudan

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1. Introduction



1. Introduction

The need today for direct physical protection of civilians against armed violence has never been greater since World War II. The number of people fleeing because of war and persecution has reached more than 65 million, the largest number since UNHCR began keeping records. The global paradigm when civilians are in danger, is to send in more arms and more security forces for their protection, as Nonviolent Peaceforce (NP) Director Tiffany Easthom said at the opening of the workshop. She noted this is often counter-productive. The majority of protection needs are more effectively met by civilian engagement, as shown by a growing number of examples pointed out by NP co-founder and Advocacy Director Mel Duncan. One database identifies 41 organizations that since 1990 were or still are conducting Unarmed Civilian Protection (UCP) in 23 countries.⁴

Unarmed civilian protection (UCP), sometimes also called civilian peacekeeping or protective accompaniment, is, simply said, civilians protecting other people against violence. In the Manila workshop it was emphasized that this may also include preventing violence, strengthening local peace infrastructures or mediating settlements of conflicts, but the focus is not on stopping the conflict, but rather protecting non-combatants against its consequences. Those who are protected are usually considered “civilians” - though the workshop made it clear that this is not as clear a category as it may sound, and at least one organization, the International Committee of the Red Cross/Red Crescent, also protects soldiers in situations when they are entitled to be protected as described in International Humanitarian Law (IHL). For most NGOs practicing UCP that came together in this workshop, beneficiaries are usually rural communities in zones of armed conflict. Again – there are exceptions - UCP also takes place in urban settings and places of violent conflict below the level of armed conflict. And some organizations tend to concentrate on a particular target group, the protection of human rights defenders, journalists and other activists as long as they are not using arms in the pursuit of their aims.

The workshop took place in Manila between the 7th and 9th of December, 2017, convening Unarmed Civilian Protection (UCP) practitioners, field partners, beneficiaries and academics from South and Southeast Asia to reflect on case studies and learn from one another. It was one element in a four-stage good practices process the INGO Nonviolent Peaceforce has started in order to improve and expand UCP, and to influence policy for protecting civilians, preventing violence, supporting local initiatives and sustaining peace. The process is being carried out in four stages:

1. Conduct **case studies** in four areas of the world where UCP is being practiced: South Sudan, Colombia, the Philippines (Mindanao) and Israel/Palestine. The researchers reviewed the work of more than twenty local and international organizations, and identified and described 77 UCP good practices. Their findings were published in the book „Wielding Nonviolence in the Midst of Violence“⁵, edited by Ellen Furnari, who also conducted two of the field studies herself (completed May 2016).
2. Convene five facilitated **consultation groups** made up of UCP practitioners, field partners, beneficiaries and academics for three-day sessions to review their work, analyze findings of stage one and validate good practices and emerging themes as well as identify dilemmas or challenges raised but not answered by the cases.

⁴ See <http://selkirk.ca/mir-centre-for-peace/unarmed-civilian-peacekeeping-database>

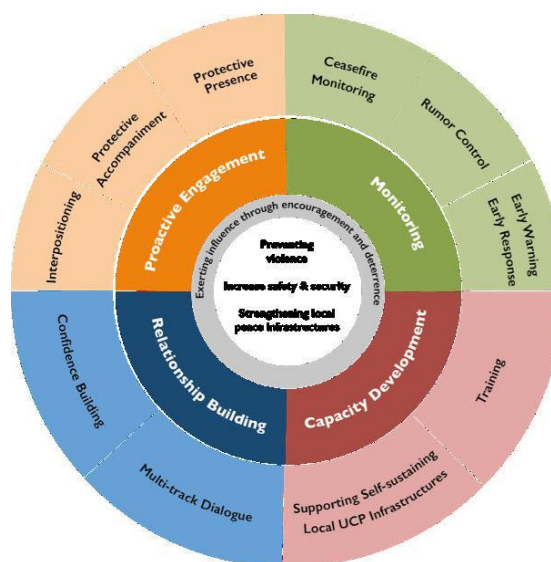
⁵ Furnari, Ellen (2016): *Wielding Nonviolence in the Midst of Violence*, Institute for Peace Work and Nonviolent Conflict Transformation, Norderstedt: book on demand.

3. Assemble the first UCP Good Practices **conference** convening practitioners, field partners, beneficiaries, policy makers and academics to discuss the findings of the case studies and consultation groups, and, validate UCP good practices that can be scaled up and replicated. Participants will define ways that these findings can be used to improve the work of current UCP organizations, scale up UCP and influence public policy. The organizations currently practicing UCP have never all met. The conference will also help to establish an international UCP network.
4. **Publish, disseminate and evaluate** findings. After the good practices are identified, analyzed and validated in stages 1-3, they will be disseminated to all of the organizations currently practicing UCP for integration into training materials. Findings will also be presented to potential new practitioners, policy makers and funders including the United Nations Department of Peacekeeping Operations, UN Department of Political Affairs, UN Friends of Protection of Civilians, regional organizations including ASEAN, the African Union and the European Union; the International Committee of the Red Cross and Red Crescent and civil society networks like the West African Network for Peace Building, the European Peacebuilding Liaison Office, the Alliance for Peacebuilding, Frontline Defenders and War Resisters International.

Participants in the Manila workshop were practitioners from Peace Brigades International (PBI)⁶, Bantay Ceasefire (Mindanao/Philippines)⁷, Nonviolent Peaceforce (NP)⁸, ICRC, human rights activists from Thailand, Indonesia and Sri Lanka and academics and researchers from India, Thailand, Indonesia, Australia, Europe and North America.⁹ PBI earlier had projects in Indonesia (West Papua, Aceh, Flores, West Timor and Jakarta) as well as in Sri Lanka, and restarted work in Indonesia in 2014. It also has a team in Nepal. NP had a project in Sri Lanka and is currently working in Myanmar and the Philippines, as well as exploring a project in Thailand. Bantay Ceasefire is a project of several civil society organizations from Mindanao, founded to monitor the ceasefires between the Philippine army and rebel groups.

The workshop started with an introductory plenary which ended with participants given the task to mark on a “wheel of UCP practices”, generated by NP, what activities they were involved in and what practices they would like to learn more about. A panel discussion about principles of UCP/accompaniment – principles including points like nonviolence and impartiality (see 2.4 and 6.5) followed.

The lunch break was seasoned with three presentations by scholars and activists from Thailand, India and Sri Lanka on the current political and conflict-related situation in South and Southeast Asia (see 6.4).



6 <https://www.peacebrigades.org/>

7 <http://www.eprpinformation.org/files/peaceprocesses/ceasefires/What-is-Bantay-Ceasefire.pdf>

8 <https://www.nonviolentpeaceforce.org>

9 See the list of participants at the end of this documentation (6.2).

After the lunch break the participants broke into the first of five rounds of working groups. The first round (A) was about sharing stories of participants personal experiences of UCP (see 6.6).

It was followed by a second round of working groups (B), each with a different topic, and introduced with a list of questions to discuss, given to the facilitators. After the working groups, participants came together again to share the results. Discussion topics were:

1. Good/effective practice when starting new projects, expanding into new areas, or other beginnings (see 4.1)
2. Good/effective accompaniment/UCP practice in the current and changing South and Southeast Asian context and shrinking space (see 2.2)
3. In practice, how does accompaniment/UCP relate to stages and programming of peace making, peacekeeping and peacebuilding? (see 2.1)

The next day followed this model: working groups on different topics – plenary, and again a new round of working groups.

The working groups C were:

1. Accompaniment/UCP strategies of deterrence and encouragement (see 3.1)
2. Early warning/early response and rumor control (see 3.2)
3. Advocacy/communication (see 3.3)

The topics for the groups D included:

1. Ceasefire monitoring (see 3.4)
2. Capacity building (see 3.5)
3. Protective accompaniment of human rights defenders and journalists (see 3.6)

Day 3 began with working groups E, the last round of working groups planned in advance. They included:

1. Staff/volunteers of local NGOs and CSOs – What is good practice in local organizations protecting other local civilians (see 3.7)
2. Managing security for staff/volunteers and those accompanied (see 4.2)
3. Sustainability and exiting (see 4.3)

After the lunch break, there was open space for new topics that were generated during the first two days. The original list included:

- UCP work outside of the context of full-fledged armed conflict?
- Why does UCP not happen in Western countries?
- UCP work in horizontal conflicts.
- Strategies to deal with shrinking space - is there more than “we can still do ...”
- Continue discussion on starting new projects (proactivity).

In the end, only two groups were formed, and the other topics included in them:

1. UCP and active nonviolence outside armed conflict (see 2.3)
2. Dealing with violent extremism (see 3.8)

The workshop ended with a final plenary where participants were asked to name good practices discussed during the workshop that they had found of particular importance. When the list had been created, everybody was asked to mark those three s/he thought were the most important, and mark all those she or he may not agree with or felt warranted more discussion. A few of these were then discussed, before the workshop was closed with some farewell messages by the hosts (see 5.1).

This documentation roughly follows the course of the workshop, but with a few exceptions in order to make for easier reading. It has the following structure: It begins with those working groups and panels that could be summarized under the headline “Outlining the Framework of Protection of Civilians in Asia”. These are followed by summaries of those working groups that dealt with “Strategies and Tactics of Protection”, and by “Good Practices in Managing UCP projects”. In a couple of places, observations from other working groups were added when they pertained to the topic of the particular group. These reports of the working groups and the panel discussion are followed by a “Summary of Good Practice and Conclusions”. In this section the report of the closing plenary can be found, followed by a summary written by the rapporteur which relates the findings of the Manila workshop to those in “Wielding Nonviolence”. The last section contains a list of good practices, observations regarding principles, contributions to strategic theory as well as challenges and suggestions; documentations of plenary discussions and talks; specific stories of participants’ experiences with UCP; as well as other materials relating to the workshop like a participants’ list.

Each subchapter of the documentation includes a summary of the discussion and challenges based on the notes taken in the working groups and the plenaries where the results of the working groups were presented, and closes with observations made by the rapporteur.

The Manila workshop was prepared by Ellen Furnari, the editor and co-researcher of “Wielding Nonviolence”, together with board and staff members of Nonviolent Peaceforce – Louisa Chan Boegli, Tiffany Easthom and Mel Duncan in particular. Unfortunately, Ellen Furnari was not able to attend the workshop, so that the major part of the facilitation was taken over by Berit Bliesemann de Guevara who thankfully was already scheduled to attend the workshop, and thus was free from her duties at Aberystwyth University.

The workshop and its documentation would also not have been possible without the many participants who took over roles of facilitation and note taking during the working groups. We thank in particular:

Andrew de Sousa (facilitation)
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Jeya Murugan (facilitation)
Louisa Chan Boegli (facilitation and notes)
Marion Girard (notes)
Mel Duncan (notes)
Michael Bluett (facilitation and notes)
Ramu Manivannan (facilitation)
Rexall Kalim (facilitation)

Ruki Fernando (notes)

Rungrawee Chalemsripinyorat (facilitation and notes)

Tiffany Easthom (facilitation)

Yul Adolfo Olaya (facilitation)

The workshop would also not have been possible without the grant by the Australian Government's International Development Fund Direct Aid Program.

And last but not least, Nonviolent Peaceforce gives its thanks to all participants who came to Manila and, through their contributions, made the workshop a very enriching event!

2. Outlining the Framework of Protection of Civilians in South and Southeast Asia



2.1 Working Group - UCP and Peacebuilding, Peacekeeping and Peacemaking

Questions to Discuss

What is good practice in relationship to the interwoven stages and concepts of peacemaking, peacekeeping and peacebuilding? How does civilian-to-civilian protection relate to programming by others in these fields, particularly peacebuilding and sustainable peace? Is UCP/ accompaniment any of these things, all of these things? What is good practice to relate to these categories as used by funders and other organizations?

Definitions proposed to the group to use in discussion:

Peacemaking aims to bring about an agreement between conflicting parties.

Peacekeeping aims to preserve the cessation of hostilities and assist in implementing agreements achieved by peacemakers. Peacekeeping efforts deliver security and support peacebuilding. Increasingly, peacekeeping efforts include the protection of civilians.

Peacebuilding aims to address the causes of conflicts and improve political processes, social services, state functions, access to justice, and economic development. It encompasses efforts to prevent conflicts from becoming violent as well as efforts to prevent relapses into violent conflict. Peacebuilding can occur in all phases of the conflict cycle.

‘Sustaining peace’ should be broadly understood as a goal and a process to build a common vision of a society, ensuring that the needs of all segments of the population are taken into account, which encompasses activities aimed at preventing the outbreak, escalation, continuation and recurrence of violent conflict, addressing root causes, assisting parties to violent conflict to end hostilities, ensuring national reconciliation and moving towards recovery, reconstruction and development, and *emphasizing* that sustaining peace is a shared task and responsibility that needs to be fulfilled by the Government and all other national stakeholders, including the important role of civil society.

Discussion¹⁰

The working group was facilitated by Tiffany Easthom and addressed: In practice, how does accompaniment/UCP relate to stages and programming of peace making, peacekeeping and peacebuilding?

The main results of the group were:

1. UCP belongs to all three elements of working for sustainable peace.
2. Moving towards peace is a continuum or a nonlinear process, UCP contributes across all categories.
3. Using a common language is essential, but it is important not to be caught in semantics. For people on the ground it does not matter what it is called. But there is a need to be careful when communicating with other IO/INGOs and the donor community. Examples of different language: In the Philippines politicians talk about countering violent extremism, in Myanmar about social cohesion, in other place about peacebuilding etc. In presenting the work, it is necessary to switch and illustrate that this work is adequate for the

¹⁰Sources: Notes of group B3, taken by Marion Girard; notes of panel after Groups B, taken by Christine Schweitzer.

particular emphasis in a given place. (For this, see also 3.3 on communication and advocacy.)

4. Peacemaking, peacekeeping and peacebuilding are often formal and high-level. UCP can make contributions through all levels, and often helps to bring the perspective and voices of people at the grassroots level into processes and also to expand the knowledge of high-level processes, at the grassroots.
5. Including UCP along the spectrum contributes to positive, sustainable peace.

Challenges

- In academia, there is the view that when moving from peacekeeping to peacebuilding, we don't need protection anymore! This is definitely, all here agreed, not true.
- What is the relationship between humanitarian aid and peacebuilding? (In the group, an example was given of an Oxfam project that started with relief but later talked about humanitarian protection.)

Conclusions

A challenge which was not discussed in the group, but which the rapporteur of the workshop in Manila would like to raise is that peacemaking, peacebuilding and peacekeeping do not necessarily have to be seen as stages. Johan Galtung who coined the terms in the 1970s¹¹ spoke of "strategies". For Galtung and those who used these terms in these meanings, peacekeeping is more than to "preserve the cessation of hostilities and assist in implementing agreements", it is the strategy that deals with the violence. The rapporteur feels that with that definition, UCP would fall mainly into the category of peacekeeping. This seems to meet with one observation in the group discussion, that peacebuilding, peacemaking and peacekeeping are a spectrum and overlap in time, rather than separated stages which different needs. Indeed, Nonviolent Peaceforce's approach to protection incorporates peacebuilding from the beginning. To be able to protect, they argue that there is the need to strengthen or build relationships across political/ethnic/religious divides.

To see UCP as something cutting through all three strategies or approaches is definitely something new and that needs more discussion in future workshops.

¹¹ Galtung, Johan (1976) ,Three approaches to peace.peacekeeping, peacemaking and peacebuilding. 'In: *Peace, War and Defence - Essays in Peace Research* Vol II. Hrsg. Galtung, Johan. Copenhagen:Christian Ejlers: 282-304

2.2 Working Group - Shrinking Space? UCP in South and Southeast Asia

Questions to Discuss

What changes are taking place in South and Southeast Asia today? How are changes in governance, kinds of violence, international relations affecting actual practice? Is the space for doing human rights work shrinking, and how does this impact protection work? How do these changes, or current context, affect good practice for both local/national groups and international groups? Are international groups changing how they structure their work in order to avoid being pushed out, and what are the implications of this? Which “red lines” should not be crossed in these new contexts? What wider effort in effective advocacy, communications or other practices would you recommend? Are you affected in your work on the ground by issues of international relations, for example by being identified with certain world powers (or having to prove that you are not related to them)?

Discussion¹²

The working group was facilitated by Ramu Manivannan and addressed: Good/effective accompaniment/UCP practice in the current and changing South and Southeast Asian context.

The main results of the group were:

1. Governance: Many countries in the region are returning to more authoritarian practices, including select repression of dissidents and violent responses to rebel groups (instead of negotiation).
2. There are new forms of shrinking space for human rights defenders, like discrediting in public, freezing funds, criminalizing Human Rights Defenders (HRDs) with trumped-up criminal charges (like drug dealing, embezzlement etc.). Also the debate on “Asian values” has been revived to discredit HRDs who refer to the human rights covenants. The charge of terrorism is used to silence opponents.
In some countries however, space also suddenly opens up, for example in Myanmar, as one participant of the working group remarked.
3. There is growing militarization of the states, and also the emergence of new armed groups.
4. Governments learn from each other – e.g. the Philippines’ military tried to learn from the Thai military.
5. Role of the international community: there is growing rejection of interference by other countries or international organizations, especially Western ones. It was also remarked that while in the 1980s, the U.S. and Europe played a crucial role in supporting autocracies, this role has now shifted to include China and Russia.
6. The group observed the phenomenon that some countries act as advocates for human rights and security of civilians in other countries while at the same time human rights are violated in their own countries. The example given was Bangladesh’s role regarding the Rohingya issue in Myanmar: Bangladesh internationally advocated for the rights of the Rohingya at the

¹² Sources: Notes of Group B 2, taken by Ruki Fernando; notes of plenary after Groups B, taken by Christine Schweitzer.

UN, though its own human rights account is questionable.

7. The group felt that there is a need for a regional platform in order to work together and support each other. Such support may include creating safe places for HRDs who need to leave their country. Some activists are now exploring the idea of shelter cities for Asian activists at risk.
8. Learning and sharing from each other, the same way state institutions of one country influence those of others (for example the Truth and Reconciliation Commission in the Philippines was a model for Aceh). A good example was the visit of CSOs from Myanmar to NP Philippines, who showed them their ceasefire monitoring work. Also “staff migration”, meaning staff moving from one project to the other, was cited as a good practice for spreading experience.

Challenges

- UCP may not be able to address some or many of these new forms of shrinking space for HRDs.
- How to systematize (and find the resources) for regional gatherings to exchange experiences?

Conclusions

The foremost good practice the group identified was the regional exchange, to facilitate projects and organizations learning from each other. Several methods were identified:

- Learning visits of one project to another;
- Regional gatherings (like this workshop);
- Local and international staff from one project / conflict setting moving to another place and/or organization and bringing their experience.

The group did not touch upon the questions: Are international groups changing how they structure their work in order to avoid being pushed out, and what are the implications of this? Which “red lines” should not be crossed in these new contexts?

2.3 Working Group - UCP and Active Nonviolence Outside of Armed Conflict

Questions to Discuss

Can UCP be effective in tension-areas outside of outright armed conflict? Why doesn't UCP happen in Western countries?

Discussion¹³

This working group was one of two that were created in the open space in the last day for topics/discussion needing attention. It was facilitated by Ramu Manivannan. The main results of the group were:

1. Some form of nonviolent action is taking place all over the world, e.g. against racism, nationalism, police violence. Violence is increasing against migrants and politicians that support them in areas where law usually functions adequately, like in Europe. In Germany politicians who supported migrants have been stabbed and people are moving out of villages because of fear. There is frequent impunity for violence against refugees.
2. Interpositioning does not happen only in armed conflict but in many other situations. An example was shared of interpositioning in India when a young girl was raped and murdered in Nirbaya and there was extreme anger. Another example are the protests at the World Social Forums.
3. UCP also happens in the global North, though more rarely: In 2016 NP had a small project in the U.S. during the conflict over the Dakota Access Pipeline. (PBI and CPT have also had projects in North America, and there were a number of projects during the Balkan wars, as further examples.) A big challenge was the dividing line between activism and UCP. "While we were there, we were not there as activists."
4. Militarization of police forces: There is a trend for heavier weapons and more military-style actions by police against protesters.
5. Trying to keep demonstrations peaceful by training and working with 'demonstration peacekeepers' is one approach found in several countries (Indonesia, U.S. were mentioned). In other cases, civil society monitors of the police do not intervene but only report and challenge rights' violations afterwards (Germany was an example).
6. Trends in political conflict: There are people's movements around the world, for example the Arab Spring, Hong Kong, Malaysia, India and South Korea.
7. Conflicts often have an international dimension. For example, activists in the U.S. support local activists in other countries against land grabbing by challenging companies that have their base in the U.S. (However, the question was asked if this was UCP, or activism.)
8. Nonviolence as an instrument or means to facilitate the process of conflict resolution. Nonviolence is universal. UCP is a toolkit for reducing violence directed at civilians that can be used in many contexts, also outside of armed conflict. We should move away from IHL as the only framework. There are many other types of violence, and horizontal conflicts can ferment larger conflict. For example, land grabbing can lead to civil war.

¹³Notes of working group F1 and notes of plenary after groups F, both taken by Christine Schweitzer.

9. There have been some groups and projects in the global North trying forms of accompaniment and interpositioning: Christian Peacemaker Teams worked at the border between Mexico and the USA¹⁴. In Germany, a nonviolent training organization (Kurve Wustrow) invited internationals to monitor protests against a nuclear waste deposit¹⁵; in several countries there are CSOs creating phone chains or other alert systems to respond to violence against refugees.

Challenges

- How and why to differentiate between activism and UCP.
- UCP and documentation/monitoring: In the West, some organizations monitor police violence (etc.) to report about it afterwards, but do not do interpositioning.

Conclusions

Some strategies belonging to UCP can be (and have been) employed also in the Global North as well as other conflicts that have not escalated to armed conflict (yet). Active “peacekeeping” at demonstrations is one example. However, the effectiveness of such initiatives was questioned by participants in the working group. Some argued that in the face of police militarization, such approaches seem to lose their effectiveness. However, this may warrant more discussion and research, including the question of whether there was relationship-building with the security forces before the actions. Is this sometimes neglected?

Another area of protection work is to protect people against (usually right-wing) violence. There are many examples of civil society organizations engaging in these mostly local initiatives. Again, the rapporteur has the impression that often these initiatives rely more on ‘in the moment’ deterrence and interpositioning than on relationship-building which was found so important in the UCP activities in the countries represented in this workshop.

This working group did not explore the questions of “protection from afar” as it has been sometimes called, and chains of international solidarity. For example, how people in other countries can impact international companies and their actions that often violate the human rights of local inhabitants. It would be good if such questions played a role in the planned workshop on Europe / North America.

Another question to explore further in coming workshops is generally the potential of UCP in dealing with horizontal conflicts that have not escalated to larger-scale violence, or where the violence is mostly or exclusively coming from the side of the state.

¹⁴<https://www.cpt.org/work/borderlands/about>

¹⁵International Eyes on Gorleben. 25.3.-29.3.2001. Gorleben International Peace Team. Wustrow

2.4 Core Principles of Protection Work

Discussion¹⁶

This chapter documents the panel discussion of the first day. Panelists from PBI, NP, ICRC and Bantay Ceasefire discussed the core principles of their work.¹⁷ Different core principles were identified, with both overlaps as well as distinctions among the organizations. Most organizations (with the exception of NP) explained that the definitions of core principles were not in place when they started their work, but that they were developed, refined and sometimes also reinterpreted over time. Some organizations that run projects in different parts of the world have distinctions from project to project as to how principles are interpreted.

Peace Brigades International (PBI) named the following principles:

- Nonviolence, being understood as a means to make peace.
- International character, defined by working almost exclusively with international volunteers who are supported by their embassies and support networks, and also are physically visible as foreigners and have a deterrent effect on potential perpetrators.
- Nonpartisanship, defined as dealing with all parties with an open mind, reporting objectively, not giving judgmental responses, voicing concerns without being accusative.
- Being non-hierarchical, defined as making decisions by consensus.

Nonviolent Peaceforce (NP) identified five principles:

- Nonviolence, understood as a transformative process bringing people together to work on security, so being more than containing violence.
- Nonpartisanship, understood with Liam Mahony as “We will be at your side in the face of injustice and suffering, but we will not take sides against those you define as enemies”.¹⁸ NP has on occasion become part of formal structures that are related to peace processes, such as leading the civilian protection component of the International Monitoring Team in Mindanao.
- Independence, which for NP means to be independent of particular ideologies, religions or government policies.
- Primacy of local actors, working with local organizations and individuals at their request and with their input.
- Civilian-to-civilian led processes, practicing and demonstrating that civilians can play a role in protection and that militaries are not the only actors in this field.

International law, in particular the distinction between combatants and civilians, was also named by NP as being important.

The **International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC)** is guided in its work primarily by the International Humanitarian Law. As basic core principles they list:

- Humanity, meaning the objective to alleviate suffering from conflict through assistance and protection, aiming at preserving the safety, security and dignity of those affected by

¹⁶Transcription of panel discussion on day 1; notes of the final plenary on good practices, taken by Christine Schweitzer.

¹⁷See also the full documentation of the panel discussion in 6.5.

¹⁸Mahony, L. & Eguren, L.E. (1997). *Unarmed bodyguards*. West Hartford, CT: Kumarian Press, p 236.

the conflict situation.

- Impartiality, meaning that no distinctions are made based on religion, nationality, “race”, status, political, religious, ideological aspects or opinions of who deserves or has the right to protection and needs assistance.
- Neutrality, meaning that ICRC talks to all sides of the conflict, never engages in any activity that may be seen as political and follows the rule of “we talk about what we do, not what we see”.
- Independence, meaning that the organization decides for itself and based on its own assessments, how to respond to needs.
- Do no harm, practice includes consulting with potential beneficiaries.

Bantay Ceasefire does not have a firm set of principles defined and set in stone. They listed in the discussion:

- We are not neutral, because we are biased towards civilians.
- We are community-based.
- We divide our reports into disputed and non-disputed facts.
- We are not ideological and we are non-confrontational, believing in the basic goodness of every person.
- We place civilians paramount.
- We have security protocols and follow them. We coordinate with all stakeholders.
- In our engagement with state and non-state actors we always try to identify common and shared interest, for example to protect children.
- We utilize existing mechanisms and structures, both formal and informal – for example, decision-makers might not be the formally elected leaders.
- We show sensibility to culture and to power dynamics.
- We are independent from the interests of the parties in the conflict.

Challenges

- Nonviolence: First, not all organizations and actors claim that they would never condone violence. Second, nonviolence seems to be a principle that can translate into various prescriptions for action – for the organizations in the Manila workshop mostly it meant dialogue and talking to and working with all sides of the conflict. And third, in some places the term may be connected to certain political (or religious) affiliations – the example given in the workshop was that in the Philippines nonviolence is identified with the party of the Social Democrats (and therefore not used or only with the adjective of “active” – “active nonviolence”.)
- The principle of being guided by local actors: Sometimes it is difficult to define who the local actor is, in particular when national NGOs and/or local communities are in conflict with each other.
- All organizations named talking to all sides and bringing people together as an important way of working - while knowing that some sides may have been the perpetrators of atrocities, accepting the basic humanity of all. How does one make the distinction between not

condoning the acts but still working with everyone?

- Independent but not nonpartisan: This is how the local organizations that were present in the workshop described themselves. They also approach all parties on equal terms and as representatives of their organizations emphasizing their independence from them, but they said they cannot claim nonpartisanship, because they are part of the struggle that is going on.
- Civilians being paramount: While all organizations describe that as a principle, only the ICRC is also committed to protecting combatants in line with the prescriptions of International Humanitarian Law.
- Evaluation of principles is needed but does not take place very often.

Further Observations on Principles

Nonviolence was also discussed in other groups.

In one of the small groups the following points were raised:

- First, it was reemphasized that in the work of Bantay Ceasefire, while not being explicitly non-violent, nonviolence actually was a core value. The activists had to believe in the goodness of people; they had to internalize that and treat them like that even if they had been perpetrators and behaved badly before.
- Sometimes, in addition to perceiving the other as enemy and stereotyping them which keeps people from entering into dialogue and relationship building, trauma and the internalized fear which comes from violent experiences have to be overcome.
- Not everyone might be “good” or “do the right thing”, there are some “monsters”. But we can't know that before. We can't decide that for them. We have to let them decide themselves, to do the right thing, find empathy and humanity.
- Empathy touches many. It works, even if people often say/have to say: “I understand, but I do have my orders”.
- Sometimes civilians can be targeted specifically because they are soft targets, but often they are just caught in the crossfire. Then it is good for the reputation of both sides to cooperate and help solve the issue. You can use that to build relationships for harder “topics”.

Discussion of principles came up again in the final plenary (see 5.1). Several points were repeated, like the issue of nonpartisanship of local initiatives. There was also some discomfort especially expressed regarding the principle of nonviolence. The term “belief system” was mentioned again, and it was pointed out that in social struggles activists may feel loyalty to armed groups even if they do not take up arms themselves. Others felt that the principles were key, and that they are a guide to decision-making, without limiting creativity as the critics thought.

Conclusions

Principles cannot be separated from the ways activities are carried out. Therefore it is not surprising that some of the principles were also listed as “good practice” in the final plenary of the workshop.

The one central element that most organizations named as their way of working was the non-

confrontational approach that seeks dialogue¹⁹ with all parties to the conflict. This was held central both by those identifying as nonpartisan or even neutral and those who said that they were independent but not impartial. Not all used the term “nonviolence” to describe that approach, but it became clear that they all held dialogue/discussion with all parties as a central principle and practice, no matter what it was called.

When comparing what was said in the Manila workshop to the study “Wielding Nonviolence in the Midst of Violence” (2016), there have been both confirmations as well as slight differences:

- The study had found that all organizations shared commitments to underlying principles of nonviolence. In Manila it became clear through the feed-back that this may need more differentiation. It was also noticeable that in the last plenary when people had to name the three most important good practices, nonviolence was not among them for any of the participants.
- Different views and approaches regarding nonpartisanship, in particular differences between local and international groups were confirmed.
- In the same way, the findings of the study in regard to independence and the primacy of local actors or local ownership have been confirmed – while these principles play a role for all organizations, they mean different things in practice.

Not explored was to what degree UCP organizations that claim nonviolence as their principle nevertheless rely on police, or sometimes even military force, to protect civilians in certain circumstances.

¹⁹The term dialogue was used in the workshop in the meaning of „talking to each other”, not in the specific meaning of ‘dialogue workshops’ etc.

3. Strategies and Tactics of Protection



3.1 Working Group- Strategies of Deterrence and Encouragement

Questions to Discuss

What is good practice in deciding who to protect, and who, if any, to exclude? And from whom and what/ what kinds of violence? And how does this relate to protection strategies – how are they to be protected? Whose knowledge and views are solicited? What does primacy of local actors and nonpartisanship mean here? What are the sources of leverage in deterrence and in encouragement? Can they be combined, and if so, what are key criteria for deciding how to do this? How do you respond when learning about human rights violations? How, if at all, are changes in the current contexts affecting changes in strategies?

Discussion²⁰

The working group was facilitated by Rexall Kalim and discussed accompaniment/UCP strategies of deterrence and encouragement, exploring the relationship between encouragement and being non-confrontational, on the one side, and deterrence, on the other.

Most participants thought that focusing on encouragement may still hold an element of deterrence. In many situations, the presence of observers alone is deterrence, no matter if intended or not. However, making an explicit threat (e.g. to report a violation internationally), or carrying out such reports openly or silently (though usually the government learns about these reports) makes a difference in how a protection agency is perceived on the ground. Also it was pointed out that you cannot work with encouragement with all individuals in security structures (thousands of soldiers and combatants). Instead, the protectors engage higher officers and rely on them to then remind the soldiers to stick to agreements. Given the system of command and obedience and its possibilities for sanctions this has a strong aspect of deterrence.

A second question discussed was the role of advocacy to achieve a change of policy. Some international organizations would prefer to see national groups doing that rather than engaging in it themselves, given the commitment to nonpartisanship.

To balance possible counter-effects of blaming and shaming, one agency made sure that they always gave feed-back to all sides involved in the conflict.

A fourth topic raised was who to accompany. It was pointed out that some HRDs who are accompanied are pursuing political agendas. Some participants felt this was problematic while others thought that this is the normal case, and that the need for protection and the legitimacy of accompaniment came from the threat to their human rights. In Indonesia this became a problem for an agency that wondered if they could accompany groups that struggled for separation from the state, when such a struggle is considered a high crime in the country. However, the group agreed in the end that being political does not exclude someone from being a civilian. The observation was made that there is a tension between breaking / adhering to national law and overarching international law. It was pointed out that while international law is important, the first obligation parties in the conflict should be reminded about is the obligation to national law.

This in turn led to a question to the UCP organizations: There is a dilemma, what do we do if

²⁰ Notes of Group C1 and notes of plenary after Groups C, both taken by Christine Schweitzer; notes from the Groups A (the stories of UCP, see also 6.5).

respecting overarching international law conflicts with and maybe even calls for breaking national law? One participant pointed out that normally it is not against a law to accompany someone, but legality must be distinguished from concerns about the repercussions the accompaniment of certain people may have on all the work the agency is doing. Sometimes it may be better to refrain from taking up a certain case.

The report of the group back to the plenary included five main points, focusing mostly on the question that was foremost in the group's discussion, namely the question who we have to protect and how can we strategize around it.

1. We all agree that civilians have to be protected no matter their political affiliation, but there is a dilemma: Governments label and criminalize some civilians. So this relates to nonpartisanship and interference.
2. It is important to create space for discussion and mutual understanding in order to provide deterrence. Your mere presence may deter someone. But earlier relationship-building activities are needed to establish understanding and contribute to greater effect.
3. We cannot choose between deterrence and encouragement as if one is better than the other. We need to be strategic and contextual. Contextual may mean for example: credibility of our organization, its capacities, its network with other actors in the field.
4. Partisanship questions can arise when we encourage parties within a conflict. The even handling of evidence and engaging dialogue with all parties can reduce the risk of being seen as partial.
5. Be creative to find entry points at the local level, to have influence there. (Because increasingly governments impose big labels which jeopardize protection attempts.) At the local level these labels may not be that influential because people can relate to each other as neighbors etc. One may not always have to work at the national level.

Challenges

- Criminalization (unwarranted) of those civilians we seek to protect.
- Accompaniers may witness atrocities and know the perpetrators. Is there a moral or legal obligation to report such crimes or serve as witness in (international or national) courts?
- How much does it matter if a state has or has not signed certain international treaties or covenants, or is withdrawing from them? Does it really matter for the work on the ground?
- Concept of civilians – don't combatants also have human rights and have a right to protection under the IHL?
- Would encouragement work in cases of criminal gangs, extremists or when international companies are the perpetrators? Most in the group thought it would.

Observations from the UCP Stories Told in the First Round of Working Groups

The stories participants shared in the first round of working groups on the first day are very much in line with what was discussed in this group (see subchapter 6.6). Most of the stories were about contacting parties to a conflict and achieving protection through this interaction. It was observed that local people sometimes have difficulty in getting a hearing with the military. A participant said, you have to support local people in using their own networks and resources to find support

or a spokesperson to go with them (influential people in the communities, NGOs, INGOs) People need to learn to look for help. And maybe the third party can start by just carrying messages and then connect the two sides directly later.

Conclusions

The focus of the approaches of the groups present in this workshop clearly is on “encouragement”, achieved through building relationships to all parties. Nevertheless, deterrence always plays a role.

One of the questions to the group had been if encouragement and deterrence can be combined, and if so, what the key criteria are for deciding how to do this. To what degree do projects rely primarily on deterrence, or to what degree do they seek to avoid threats and focus on dialogue with all sides, including the (potential) perpetrators? What are the parameters deciding which approach works best in a given situation? These questions need further exploration.

3.2 Working Group - Early Warning and Early Response and Rumor Control

Questions to Discuss

Whose responsibility is early warning? What does primacy of local actors mean here? What kinds of communication are protective in terms of early warning, early response and rumor control – why and for whom? What is good or effective practice in EWER and rumor control – what kinds of relationships are needed, whose knowledge is relied upon? How can EWER be used for deterrence of violence and for safe retreat? What are key elements of training, or working with communities, to prepare for early response?

Discussion²¹

Michael Bluett facilitated the working group which discussed: Early Warning and Early Response and Rumor Control. It started with an example from outside the workshop region. In South Sudan early warning - early response is an approach that helps villagers/stakeholders to think of options for themselves to make a safe retreat. NP gave a training to affected villagers, and after the training, the villagers were well prepared when later they had to flee: They prepared food and water and got the children together in a group so that they wouldn't be separated from their parents, and they had a safe retreat to other villages.

Another participant gave an example for rumor control from the Philippines: Once villagers thought the military was coming to attack them, while instead they were coming to take a sick person to a hospital. The EWER-system was able to clarify the intentions and thereby avoid a possible conflict.

A third example came from Sri Lanka: A military officer killed a young man; the reason for it was that both had the same girlfriend and the officer found out about his rival. This could have easily been misinterpreted as ethnic violence and escalated into something more, so through verification and information NP was able to avoid an escalation of violence.

Findings of the group were:

1. EWER is a comprehensive approach that needs to be tailored to the specific situation.
2. EWER should be built around the primacy of local actors, meaning the empowerment of communities.
3. Local knowledge is important: Local people know early warning signs; UCP can help to build a plan.
4. EWER needs to focus on all levels and all forms of violence, not only political violence, since they all have a potential to escalate.
5. EWER is easier when mechanisms are in place at the local level: In some instances, EWER is designed and resourced at a very high level and quite politicized. It takes too long to respond and is not delivered in time. EWER could be used to respond not only to the armed conflict but also for other personal conflicts such as the crime of passion. For the participation of the

²¹ Notes of group C2, taken by Rungrawee Chalernsripinyorat and by Berit Bliesemann de Guevara; notes on plenary after Groups C, taken by Christine Schweitzer.

state in the protection of civilians, it is ideal to have the state involved but it is important not to wait for state involvement.

6. EWER needs clear protocols for verification and communication, especially in the context of social media (rumors, propaganda) that could also be used as a propaganda tool by conflicting parties. Social media can amplify rumors and propaganda much more quickly than traditional media/forms of spreading information. That was seen as a serious challenge, and organizations were seen in need to keep up with technological advances by using them as well for verification.
7. EWER in a community is also a form of capacity-building.
8. Safe zones/ peace zones can be a form of EWER, but it needs work by communities to be effective. And they can be unsafe as well. The safety zone concept is sometimes not respected and may harm the civilians living in those areas. However, there are other ideas such as “the zone of peace” where villagers come up with their own ideas of civilian protection without the involvement of the armed actors such as in the case of Columbia, but with the presence of UCP workers.
9. Build in preparedness for potential conflict in the same way that early warning and preparedness for natural disaster happens.

And, build protection into disaster responses, as civilians are often vulnerable to violence after natural disasters.

Challenges

- Some challenges seem to loom around high-level systems of EWER vs. community-built systems. High-level systems are often too slow and fail when it comes to prevention.
- EWER is more difficult in cases where there is full fighting going on without any agreements between the parties being in place.
- Most examples were about people preparing themselves to flee. What about the use of EWER to **prevent** violence? How to achieve effective early responses – the warning is often there, for example in the cases of Rwanda and the Rohingyas in Myanmar.

Conclusions

Several participants indicated that they would like to learn more about EWER. It seems to be both a very adequate and very important tool of UCP.

One lesson from studies about other conflicts is that when people face the threat and prepare themselves, they may have a certain degree of success in staying out of the fighting. But it requires courage to do so.²² The experience with effective EWER systems points in the same direction. Putting a head in the sand is never a good option.

²² See also the study by Anderson, Mary B. und Wallace, Marshall (2013): *Opting Out of War. Strategies to Prevent Violent Conflict*. Boulder/London: Lynne Rienner Publishers

3.3 Working Group - Advocacy and Communication

Questions to discuss

What are good practices related to advocacy for civilian protection - public, international, behind the scenes? How can communication be protective or harmful? What can be communicated and what is held confidential? How does nonpartisanship relate to advocacy? What are the pitfalls?

How can it be harmful? What information should be kept confidential? What, if any, are effective practices of communicating blatant abuses and violations of IHL (etc.) and maintaining protective presence and security?

Discussion²³

The discussion was facilitated by Yul Adolfo Olaya and first looked at several examples from which they drew the following points:

1. Identify the messenger (and the message) in terms of credibility, trust and sustainability,
 - Taking the time and resources to distinguish what is political, and what is humanitarian. One example cited in the group was advocacy in India for Tibetan refugees where it is sometimes difficult to separate the political demand for freedom from humanitarian issues.
 - Understand the community for whom we speak.
2. Find the right message and language to communicate.
 - “Tell the same truth in different ways to different audiences”, for example use a different language when talking to police than when talking to international audiences.
 - Importance of transparency, especially in communication with governments.
 - Best advocacy is through human based close networks, person by person; today, in the time of the Internet, actual personal contact is important.
 - Best voice is the voice of beneficiaries and practitioners. If in advocacy it is not possible to get the people in person, one option is the use of pre-recorded videos.
3. Strategies depend on the message we want to share. There are two options:
 - one can go public, or
 - one can communicate confidentially.

The question is how to determine which option to use and when. It is important to use the principle of „do no harm“.
4. New technologies can increase or decrease our security, they have a double edge.
5. Differentiate advocacy for immediate and long-term responses.
6. In the field, the focus is more on communication than on advocacy, based on solid relationships achieved by proactive relationship building. There is the need to be careful about confidentiality, while keeping in mind transparency. One HRD in the group said that

²³Notes of the workshop C3, taken by Mel Duncan; notes of Plenary after Groups C, taken by Christine Schweitzer.

being public about his action was his best protection.

7. We have to manage the expectations of stakeholders.
8. The best way to advocate is to use the voice of practitioners and beneficiaries. PBI in Indonesia, for example, left it to the national groups to do advocacy. NP sometimes takes some of its field workers with them when doing advocacy with UN or governments.
9. We do not name and shame.

Another issue though not directly related to the subject that was mentioned in the group: Membership in formal structures may limit access to actors. NPP's membership in the IMT/CPC in Mindanao stops them from engaging with an extremist group that is not part of the ceasefire process (BIFF), in spite of NP's wish to communicate with everyone.

Challenges

- Distinguish what is political, and what is humanitarian, which is sometimes not easy.
- Demand for written accounting by stakeholders increases, but writing and accounting is a challenge in terms of security.
- Usually those directly affected are the best advocates.
- While openness is often the best protection, HRDs usually also use technology to protect certain information and messages (encryption, Hushmail). The group did not delve into the question of when such secrecy is helpful or when it may increase the risk.

Conclusions

In all communication, be it with stakeholders on the ground or with politicians for purposes of advocacy, it is important to find the right language – otherwise people are put off. Credibility of the message here is key which also means that the right messenger needs to be chosen. This is sometimes not the UCP organization but a local organization. However, in other cases internationals have greater access to be heard. And also in times of electronic communication: face-to-face communication is essential.

3.4 Working Group - Ceasefire Monitoring

Questions to Discuss

What are the strengths and challenges of being an informal or formal part of ceasefire monitoring systems? What is the relationship between being nonpartisan and having local people who may be partisan, doing the monitoring? How necessary is it to have international staff in the field – what are gains and losses and in what contexts? Where does the leverage come from, for informal civilian monitors? What do local people need, if anything, support, training, transportation, etc. to be able to monitor? Who is responsible for security of local monitors? Who are ‘good’ partners for doing this work?

Discussion²⁴

This group, facilitated by Huibert Oldenhuis, based its discussion mostly on the experience of NP and Bantay Ceasefire in the Philippines and of NP in Myanmar. The following points were made:

1. Local actors can be effective and are critical (better than just two parties monitoring themselves), but international presence is often an important added value.
2. This may lead to (as in the Philippines) international presence becoming accompaniment for local monitors. But sometimes there is no room for international monitors.
3. For acceptance one needs to prove oneself to be a valuable asset to ceasefire process.
4. Systematic tracking of violations and compliance is key, following up with all incidents that are reported.
5. It is also important to establish good working relationships with all the structures (systems, committees, etc.) involved in a ceasefire agreement. They are strategic relationships with people you can call and text. If people do not know who you are you cannot intervene in a fight, to stop it or to get civilians out.
6. The group discussed two models of ceasefire monitoring:
 - In the more traditional model of monitoring and reporting, monitors do not intervene and solve any issues. This is usually done by governmental organizations. However, in practice they may sometimes do more than just observing, even going beyond their mandates in some cases.
 - In the other model (like of NP) monitoring is combined with proactive presence and protection. The focus is on impacting the security of civilians.
7. There is also a difference, though the group did not fully explore this, between monitoring in situations where there is a formal agreement including civil society monitors and reporting to the formal structure that has been set up (as in the Philippines) and in places where there is none. For example in Myanmar, where CSOs nevertheless monitor the ceasefire, reporting to the armed actors themselves, but internationals are not allowed into those areas.

²⁴Notes of working group D1, taken by Christine Schweitzer

- Notes of plenary after working groups D, taken by Christine Schweitzer

8. Ceasefire processes are dynamic. See the experience of the Philippines where the circumstances of ceasefire monitoring changed several times.
9. Problems arise from the exclusion of groups that are not part of the agreement. Excluding them is a risk for monitors and the perception of nonpartisanship. It is not always possible to include them, but at least trying to find different ways of engaging with them is important, either to draw them into the ceasefire process or otherwise to address their needs.

Challenges

- Including or engaging groups that are not part of ceasefire processes (sometimes termed spoilers) – see point (8) above.
- For local monitors, nonpartisanship may be an issue. Governments may think that all civil society supports the armed groups and see them as partisan, and the monitoring groups themselves may also not view themselves as nonpartisan (see 2.2).
- UCP may play a role in the de-escalation zones in Syria. But the challenge is: When does such work allow the military to be free to move to other areas to fight there? What if such zones lead to ethnic cleansing, so that for example one ethnic group is moved to another place?
- How do we hold perpetrators responsible? In the IMT agreement in Mindanao it says the parties would do that themselves – this may sometimes be considered insufficient by the victims and may also lead them to question the value of the monitoring.

Conclusions

Ceasefire monitoring is a classical task of armed peacekeepers – the early, lightly-armed variant of the “blue helmets”. More recently unarmed governmental missions – like the Sri Lanka Monitoring Mission (SLMM) in Sri Lanka – have been deployed for the same purpose. NGOs and CSOs getting involved in peacekeeping could perhaps be seen as a third step moving ceasefire monitoring from armed to unarmed. (While at the same time peacekeeping by military forces today has moved far in the other direction, in many cases with authorization to enforce its mandate by arms, take offensive actions and in some cases being sent under UN Charter Chapter VII.) So far, ceasefire monitoring by NGOs, to the knowledge of the rapporteur, is limited to the cases discussed in this workshop. However, it would be worth exploring if comparable approaches have already or could also work in other countries or continents.

3.5 Working Group - Capacity Building

Questions to Discuss

What and whose capacities are to be built, who decides, how are decision processes inclusive or exclusive? How does capacity building relate to other forms of protection? Should an INGO or NGO wait to be asked or offer? What are most critical topics to address in capacity building – in what contexts? How does CB relate to sustainability of protection?

Discussion²⁵

This group was facilitated by Jeya Murugan. The group observed that capacity-building in the context of UCP may mean different things: Nonviolent communication skills, good-relationship building, EWER, knowledge about human rights, IHL or child rights etc., but also skills NGOs need like fundraising. For volunteers / staff of UCP organizations it may also refer to psychological issues (self-care, trauma) and to practical skills like map-reading, finance, etc.

The group summarized its work as follows:

1. It started with the question of what is meant by the term capacity building, and whether it was the right term to use. Capacity “building”, the participants felt, implies that there is no or little existing capacity that participants bring. Therefore the group suggested to instead speak of “capacity enhancing”, thereby emphasizing that it is about additional skills and knowledge.

2. WHO decides and for WHOM?
Target groups (the “whom”) are:

- local actors – NGOs, CBOs, civilians and communities (leaders) and
- government actors and militaries (communication in support of peace infrastructures, and serving at the same time for the relationship-building with these actors).

Inclusive engagement is important, identifying the most vulnerable population and peace workers is important.

Capacity Building (CB, or capacity enhancing) should take place in the form of training, psychological and other support.

The goal is always to support peace. UCP practitioners decide the mandate but ultimately, it is the recipients who decide what kind of training they want. But that does not mean that we need to wait to be asked – rather, UCP organizations should let communities know what they offer, otherwise local organizations and individuals will not even know what is possible.

However, for some UCP organizations the principle of non-interference may limit this process.

3. Sustainability of UCP work requires commitment and perseverance. One-off training is very rarely successful.

Proactivity: Capacity building (enhancing) leads to structural and behavioral change. This means, it is about long-term change /not necessarily an immediate response.

²⁵ Notes of Group D2, taken by Ayu Diasti Rahmawati; notes of plenary after Groups D, taken by Christine Schweitzer.

Another question is the sustainability of operational (i.e. in advocacy, fundraising) capacity-building/enhancement.

4. Since the capacity-building is need-based, assessment of needs has to take place prior to starting CB/CE. The content has to be adapted to the need, depending on the conflict stage, contexts, existing capacities.

CB/CE is possible to occur at every stage; however in reality it does not really fit into crisis stages when direct protection is generally more needed than CB/CE.

5. Be careful of not imposing the Western way of conflict resolution. Instead, look for communal/traditional ways to deal with conflict, and just help to revitalize and refine that.

Challenges

- Assessment of the impact of CB/CE, since it is often a long-term process.
- In Mindanao, many NGOs are doing capacity building especially on reconciliation and conflict resolution. But it was said in the workshop that people cannot really see the sustainability of the efforts. This was not further explored.
- Effort to ensure everybody is well represented. We are talking about other vulnerable groups: women, children, and sexual minorities. How do we make it more inclusive? If you have a culture that dictates what is normal and that does not allow you to include certain people, how do you ensure inclusivity in the UCP umbrella.
- Need for a comprehensive education on conflict prevention which rarely happens.

Conclusions

Capacity building is a catchword in the international community – everybody does it, because it is assumed to be closely linked to sustainability of efforts of the community or agency in question. This is true for relief agencies as well as for those focusing on dealing with conflict and also UCP organizations, although they engage in it to varying degrees. However, more effort should be made to assess effectiveness. There have been studies about capacity building or trainings on conflict resolution, reconciliation or nonviolent communication in other projects which raised questions regarding their impact on the course of the conflicts in which they took place.²⁶ UCP organizations seem better in regard to shaping their CB-programs to their particular mandate and context, and are realizing that one-time workshops or trainings are rarely sufficient. Because UCP capacity building focuses on building on what the community already has it is more accurate to refer to this method as capacity enhancing.

²⁶See studies by Thania Paffenholz and the Collaborative of Development Action.

3.6 Working Group - Protective Accompaniment

Questions to Discuss

What is emerging as good practice in protective accompaniment in the current contexts? Who is accompanied and why? Who decides? What are the criteria for starting, continuing and ending accompaniment? How do international, national and local organizations best cooperate on this work? How does the practice change, if at all, depending on who is threatening – i.e. government, non-state armed groups, extremist violence? What is the place for public advocacy in this context? How, if at all, is this changing in the current context?

Discussion²⁷

The group was facilitated by Andrew de Souza and discussed: Protective accompaniment of human rights defenders and journalists. The group considered different types of accompaniment. There are differences between accompaniment of civilians threatened by one party to a conflict, or of civilians who are at risk from both parties, or going with HRD/journalists to areas where they may be at risk (or who otherwise are threatened, like the 24/7 accompaniment PBI and other organizations provide in some countries in Latin America).

Accompaniment is carried out by locals as well as internationals. People often automatically think of Global North accompaniers but that does not reflect the reality because it both ignores local accompaniers and the growing field of South-to-South accompaniment. In the workshop and the plenary afterward, several examples were given of local NGOs or CSOs providing accompaniment. For example, in Mindanao some survivors of an army airstrike were accompanied and brought to a safe house by a local group until they managed, with the help of lawyers, to reach an agreement with the government. Also NPP consults with its local Advisory Group first, and usually leaves it to the local groups to provide accompaniment. In Sri Lanka, Ruki Fernando mentioned in his lunch talk that he had provided protection for fellow HRDs.

A case of “remote accompaniment” came from Bantay Ceasefire: A group of villagers trying to cross a river by small boats in an active combat area called Bantay Ceasefire (BC) to notify the armed insurgents (MILF) that they were civilians. BC tried to verify the information, and the MILF told BC to let the civilians know they had to move away from the river because their security could not be assured. The group moved away to safety and found another way to get to their destination.

As good practices and observations the group identified:

1. Before an accompaniment is started, the groups need to ask themselves: Do we have the capacity, physical access, political space, proper advance analysis (which group requested accompaniment, who are they), do we know the areas they are going to, etc. There needs to be a risk assessment to make sure that neither the accompanied nor the accompanier is at risk. It is important to have strong relationships and ability to communicate with whoever is the threat.
2. Uniforms, notifications of stakeholders, geographic locations, etc are important considerations prior to each accompaniment. For each case, new assessments must be done to see if standard procedure with these considerations can be followed or needs to be

²⁷Notes of Group D3, taken by Louisa Chan Boegli; notes of plenary after groups D, taken by Christine Schweitzer.

adapted to minimize risk and maximize security and safety.

3. Teams need to be strong. Attributes of individuals who do the accompaniment: commitment to nonviolence, cultural sensitivity, resilience to pressure, stress, fear; mixtures of ages, life experiences, diversity of gender, background and nationalities. Gender balance is important, considering the deterrence in some cultures when women do the interpositioning²⁸
4. What happens when people rely too much on accompaniment, or too much dependency is created? Focus on getting people to learn how to protect themselves so that they are not more vulnerable than before, if accompaniers need to leave. Also think of local staff.
5. In the changing context in Asia, space for international accompaniment is decreasing, so the importance of capacity building/enhancement of national staff is increasing.
6. What do we do with non-state actors perpetrating violence (extremists, gangsters etc.)? The group asked if and how, we might have influence on them. Sometimes outreach to such groups may create more of a risk. Protection agencies need to come up with new ways.
7. Protective accompaniment may be the main focus for some organizations, but it is only a part of UCP strategies, and a small part of the overall peace process.

Challenges

- Creation of dependency on accompaniment: Would accompaniment suppress indigenous capabilities, and resourcefulness of groups? It is important to build self-reliance from the offset.
- Working with a tourist visa: The more aspects of the 'protection wheel' we are doing, the more effective we become, the less we can do the work on tourist visas. In Myanmar, when NP started a few years ago, there were barely any rules and they could do anything they wanted. Now legal space is shrinking, and NP can barely do the protection work.
- There was an accompaniment that would not have worked under NP's umbrella, so NP organized somebody else to do it. It was outside any protocol.
- Short-term accompaniment: It may work in some places where just showing foreign faces is a deterrence, but this misses all the protection that comes from relationship-building and from having a support network.

Conclusions

Protective accompaniment is an important tool in UCP, and it is probably the best-studied approach, with Mahony and Eguren's book "Unarmed bodyguards" (1997) offering a theory of unarmed deterrence to explain how and when it works. For the groups and organizations at the Manila workshop it can be stated that they use(d) it to very varying degrees. For PBI it has been one of the main activities, though not the only one as in its earlier 'classical' projects in Latin America that initially focused on accompaniment of individuals.²⁹ For the local organizations present at the workshop and for NP accompaniment is an emergency response for a threatened person or a group of people, while the main focus lies on other more community-oriented approaches. Judging from the examples given, it may also just be a first step to get someone to safety, before other mechanisms can set in to provide sustainable protection. In Sri Lanka, for

²⁸The group probably used „interpositioning“ as synonymous for „accompaniment“ here.

²⁹In Colombia today, they also accompany whole communities, see <https://pbicolombia.org/>.

example, NP took youth who had escaped from LTTE to safe houses run by local institutions where they stayed sometimes for years and received vocational training.

3.7 Working Group - Good Practice in Local Organizations Protecting Other Local Civilians

Questions to Discuss

What does primacy of local actors and nonpartisanship mean to local and national organizations who are by definition, local? What does protection mean and accomplish in these contexts? What is good practice, from a local perspective as individuals and organizations, in working with international organizations? Who are international organizations accountable to?

Discussion³⁰

Facilitated by Berit Bliesemann de Guevara, this group was intended as an exchange among those who work on protection in local groups and organizations. The group mostly talked about the relationship between local and international groups. The results were:

1. The work of local and international organizations should be complementary. Both accompany each other, it is wrong to say 'the INGO accompanies the local' because vice versa is also true.
2. "International accompaniment" means locals and internationals working **together** to provide protection.
3. However, complementarity means different things over time and in different contexts. In some places INGOs have better access to authorities. INGOs can also lobby in their own countries and with their embassies. On the other hand, INGOs remain for relatively short periods (5-10 years is also short), and have a limited number of people (30 or 40 at maximum). (An exception may be ICRC that is present all the time, and with larger staff.) Furthermore, usually the areas that they cover are limited, and they may be prevented from accessing certain areas. Many people are excluded from protection in this way. In addition, INGOs are more dependent on funding. Yet, there are also situations where INGOs are given access where locals are not.
4. Local organizations have more room to be proactive and develop long-term strategies. They are more independent and accountable to the people (not to donors or the protocols of agreements), and can be more flexible. Example: In the Philippines NP got a call by IMT and was ordered not to proceed with a visit, but the local organization went on alone not being bound by NPPs security protocols.

Local organizations may have more local context and knowledge and have a longer-term vision.

On the other hand, the risk to be considered partisan is bigger, and in some places they may themselves be labeled as rebels or 'terrorists'.

Challenges

Other challenges of local-international relations mentioned:

³⁰Notes of Group E1, taken by Huibert Oldenhuis; notes of Plenary after Groups E, taken by Christine Schweitzer.

- As a local actor you may be seen as partial and not neutral, not only by governments but also by other actors.
- In one country, the government tends to consider all NGOs terrorist groups. That leads to INGOs shying away from them.
- International organizations are limited by protocols (e.g. regarding violent extremism). The question was asked: Can they become a bit more activist and work outside the law? (Statement in the group: "I was protected by someone on a tourist visa and he would probably never have received permission had he followed the rules of the country".)
- Competition for resources (money and staff) and decisions between local, national and international organizations. (National organizations based in the capital may also compete or seek to dominate local CSOs.) Sometimes INGOs (agencies in general, not just UCP organizations) hire the most qualified national staff that are then unavailable for the local NGOs.

Conclusions

The discussion of the group explored the different strengths and weaknesses of INGOs, on the one hand, and local NGOs, on the other. Depending on the situation, these strengths and weaknesses may not be the same everywhere. Some probably are – like the limited time commitment of INGOs or the superior knowledge of actors and situations of local NGOs. Others, like access to areas, being respected by conflict parties, ability to deter violence may vary and are dependent on other factors than the identity of the UCP organization. Nonetheless, neither of these actor groups – international or local - was seen as unimportant to successful UCP work; it was rather suggested that local and international actors can play crucial roles depending on the specific context, and that they should engage in a process of "co-production" of protection.

3.8 Working Group - Dealing with Violent Extremism

Questions to Discuss

How to deal with violent extremism (terrorism)?

In the Philippines, one of our approaches in UCP work is building trust and communication with key actors. How do we deal with extreme groups who are not easy to access without stigmatization?

Discussion³¹

This group was the second of two that were created in the open space for topics/discussion needing attention. It was joined by the majority of participants in the workshop, and facilitated by Berit Bliesemann de Guevara. The group was created because particularly in the Philippines, the emergence of new extremist Islamist groups (BIFF, Maute group in addition to Abu Sayyaf, and the affiliation of Maute and Abu Sayyaf to ISIS) has brought new challenges.

The question “would UCP work with ISIS?” is also a frequently asked question in international advocacy for UCP, the assumed answer by the interlocutors appears to be “no”.

The group came up with seven guidelines:

1. We should not buy into political language but stick to our basic terms. This relates to the issue of the term “terrorism” which is politically laden, and also implies a violent response to the group. “If you call any group terrorists, the approach is to crack down, not negotiate”, a participant said.
2. We have always talked and worked with groups labeled terrorist, and should not allow our protocols to keep us from doing it. There are some examples of UCP organizations making contact with extremist groups – the LTTE in Sri Lanka, or extremist groups in Palestine. In the Philippines, NP is forbidden to contact certain groups because it is a member of the IMT Civilian Protection Component. And the EU forbids all its grantees to have contact with those groups that are considered “terrorist”.
3. We should think about what these groups want and what we can offer them. Show them what we can offer them so that they want to work with us.
4. Focus on our work. One participant argued: ‘We have a role in decriminalizing people. It happens that groups of people are bombed into being terrorists, for example families with the same name as known terrorists (“Maute”), or belonging to the same community. There are major bombardments and civilians are being displaced for weeks or over and over again. The authorities do not see this as a problem because „these are the bad guys“. We have to speak in terms of humanity and civilian protection.’
5. Don't allow “othering” (a process of dehumanizing or excluding certain groups) – focus on our unity, and shared humanity.
6. Create spaces for these groups to be heard and recognized, because political exclusion is a key reason why people become ‘extremists’.

³¹ Notes of working group, taken by Bridgitt Sloan McMullen; notes of plenary after groups F, taken by Christine Schweitzer.

7. We should try to know them and ask who is responsible for their situation.

However, it was asked in the group if sometimes the access to these extremist groups is not only limited by labeling but also because they themselves are less interested in making contact.

Challenges

- The access to such groups is often difficult or impossible – restrictions by third parties, the groups' clandestine nature, and strong friend-foe-thinking of these groups that makes them often less interested in building relationships.
- To find shared concerns about civilian safety and protection with these armed groups.
- Security for the UCP workers – in the Philippines (and other places), there is a risk of kidnapping or violence against any outsiders and even some local people.

Conclusions

The topic of this ad hoc group is one of the main challenges of UCP work in the Philippines (and elsewhere). While the participants seemed to agree that fundamentally so called extremist groups should be approached as all other armed groups and the government(s), on practical grounds it seems to be very difficult. There is not only the unwillingness of the groups themselves and the risk of kidnapping or killing by these groups to consider, but the many restrictions posed on NGOs and particular INGOs in dealing with such groups that are labeled "terrorists". As well, there is often all-out war by the governments and their international supporters (in the Philippines, the U.S. military is actively involved) which makes access to certain regions very risky.

4. Managing UCP Projects



4.1 Working Group - Starting New Projects

Questions to discuss

What are key good practices before and in the early days of a new program or area of work? How are risks and opportunities assessed? What is the implication if initiated by a local request, or by NGO or INGO? Whose input is engaged and why, when exploring protection needs? What guides the relationships between following local leadership and organizational independence? How do local partners/beneficiaries, advisors relate to an INGO and navigate this relationship? How is the new work understood in relationship to what other protection actors and other humanitarian actors are doing (or not doing)? What are effective ways of handling host Government pressures on programming? What are effective ways of handling donor pressures, and perceptions of sources of funding? Is there anything in particular to a broadly Asian context to consider, or in your own specific cultural context?

Discussion³²

This group, facilitated by Mel Duncan, took place early in the workshop, but for the documentation, it has been shifted to this subheading of management. The group discussed that there is definitely a need for many more projects of UCP than currently exist. However, starting a new project is a complex issue. Three levels need to be distinguished:

- Opening new sites within one country, e.g. in the Philippines. NP is mostly working on the Moro conflict, but there are possibilities to open sites related to other, non-Moro conflicts in Mindanao and elsewhere.
- Starting a new project in another country in Southeast Asia, e.g. Indonesia, Thailand where there are significant needs.
- New projects at a regional level; coming up with an entity which would work on the whole of Asia, creating more closeness among Asian organizations.

The main findings of the group were:

1. Finding an opportunity to introduce UCP. Whether it can be done depends on the environment and the stakeholders. This may mean for example how you can work with other/local CSOs to make an entry and present the general idea of UCP to others.
2. Willingness to remodel UCP for each situation, but not compromise core principles. Stakeholders need to understand UCP. It is important to make realistic approaches and not to promise things you cannot deliver, as that will only disappoint people. It is important to talk to many people in making an initial assessment. It was also said that is important to not just jump in without any assessment, but also not to wait too long and miss the window of opportunity that sometimes presents itself. One way of introducing UCP may be to start with offering a few trainings to local people. This is what NP did in Southern Thailand.
3. An organization needs to be careful and not go in if it is not a good fit.
4. Define the theory of change and the goal from the beginning, and then find how to do it.

³² Notes of Group B1, taken by Berit Bliesemann de Guevara; notes of Plenary after Groups B, taken by Christine Schweitzer.

And, though this point didn't make it to the final report of the group, it was also said that an exit strategy should be defined right at the outset of planning a new project.

5. Invest in proactive strategies. UCP is currently more reactive than proactive. UCP can be useful to prevent new conflicts or a new flare-up of historically reoccurring violence.
6. Taking a regional approach to the development of new projects may make sense. For example, ASEAN has a desk for a Human Rights Component. It may make sense to develop regional ASEAN approaches and also contact them.
7. Use the cases of protection of schools and health centers: There is also a need to broaden the concept of civilian protection, where for example a new trend is/could be to work with/accompany schools and health centers; or we could incorporate civilian protection into education – education as a protective mechanism for children as civilians.
8. Be clear about what we are offering and what we do.
9. Invest in training of local people immediately. That is important as a proactive approach.

Challenges

- UCP organizations usually require an invitation in order to consider coming to a new country (principle of the primacy of local actors), but people also have to know about UCP in the first place to consider a request.
- How to handle the need to get advice from different groups without making your first contacts feel that you don't trust them?
- Finding quick and sufficient funds for new projects is often a challenge to international UCP organizations.
- Getting permission from all stakeholders (including government for work permits and visa).

Conclusions

There is a lot of experience in regard to what needs to be assessed and planned in order to start new projects. In fact, it seems to the rapporteur that the biggest challenge remains the (financial) resources and the permission by the stakeholders. Perhaps future workshops could focus more on these two questions when discussing the issue of starting new projects.

4.2 Working Group - Managing Security

Questions to discuss

What needs to be in Standard Operating Procedures (if anything) before starting and later? How is security the same or different for international staff, local staff within INGOs and local staff in NGO/CSOs? How does accompaniment/UCP relate to security (insecurity) provided by police and armed groups? Whose knowledge is included in security management and decisions? When is it appropriate, if ever, to rely on armed security? How does this impact our unarmed work? How and by whom are decisions made to evacuate companions/civilian protectors? Does being clearly visible as 'protectors' contribute to security in what sorts of conditions – are there contexts where not wearing uniform/identification is a good practice? How do you address issues of local people feeling 'too safe', of staff feeling 'too safe' or 'too inhibited'?

Discussion³³

Facilitated by Mel Duncan, this group started with discussing three levels of security protocols. They should address:

- direct physical threats,
- perceived threats,
- and although security planning is long-term, daily reviews of security threats must be carried out.

In the presence of armed militias or armed civilians we cannot assume we can always provide direct protection. It is necessary to apply all tools of UCP to respond appropriately to the protection needs, including e.g. providing space for relationship and confidence building, finding common ground, knowing what the interests are. Another strategy is designing programs which are not perceived as directly challenging armed groups.

One issue to keep in mind is local vs. international staff: Both can enhance or reduce security. Local staff knows a lot of local circumstances and culture, but can be too confident. International staff, on the other hand, may increase security (through deterrence), but in other circumstances be more at risk and endanger a mission (danger of kidnapping, violating cultural norms).

The group listed for its report to the plenary the following (additional) points:

1. Confidentiality and balancing even-handedness when dealing with armed groups is important for security.
2. Trainings for staff regarding security management are crucial prior to deployment.
3. Two levels of assessment which need to be combined:
 - day-to-day,
 - long-term plan.
4. One key strategy is relationship building. Strong community relations are essential as the community can often be counted on to keep the teams safe by providing information, warnings, and connections.
5. No compromising from the side of staff: You develop a security protocol and if you don't

³³ Notes of group E2, taken by Louisa Chan Boegli; notes of plenary after groups E, taken by Christine Schweitzer.

follow it you create problems. This is also true, a member of the working group said, for local staff who sometimes may get over-confident.

6. Focal person (security coordinator) whose rules are to be followed. However, the security coordinator does not always have the last word. An NP director stated that they would make final decisions, not the security coordinator.
7. Respect of cultural norms: Security measures need to be embedded in cultural norms. This includes relationships with local people (romantic, drinking publicly with parties to conflict or just drinking at all in a Muslim area). A study by NP Philippines showed 80% of the security problems came from behavior and relationships, 20% from physical armed incidents. Behavioral adaptations to the culture must be learned, an issue for international staff that local colleagues and staff can assist with.
8. Communication relating to security issues is improved with the use of satellite phones.
9. Don't rush!
10. Having an exit plan: This may also refer to just leaving a region (evacuation) or a place where something happens (demonstration turning violent, for example).
11. Calling, not only texting. Talking to people directly is better.
12. The importance of neutrality (equal treatment of all parties).
13. Security is a team effort.

Challenges

- Unarmed peacekeepers and military escorts – which sometimes even happens unbeknownst by teams. There are two issues: First, how it reflects on the NGO (Do no harm-principle, principle of nonviolence). And second, sometimes local people say they want armed accompaniment, and UCP should not stand in the way.
- Strict security protocols are formulated but sometimes the protocol can cause problems. For example: transparency with armed groups about your movement. Such information can do harm. An example was given of the war in Bosnia where a convoy was attacked after having provided that information.
- Even-handedness - dealing with information with a variety of groups, while at the same time maintaining confidentiality. The group had no concluding answers but had examples.

Conclusions

Ensuring security for workers in the UCP organizations is a complex issue requiring clearly defined SOPs that are based on good analysis of the situation., whether they are paid staff or volunteers, or international or from local communities. If compared with government missions (armed and unarmed and including civilian development projects by governments), UCP staff probably have much more freedom on the ground, while staff of these other missions and projects are often much more restricted in their movements. The work of UCP organizations is based on having direct contact with the population and all stakeholders, and not only in formal controlled settings, which may give them a better understanding of the situation. Their practice shows that this is possible without compromising the safety of those doing the work – perhaps “because”, not “although” they are unarmed. Their strength is the reliance on relationship-building and maintenance.

4.3 Working Group - Sustainability and Exiting

Questions to discuss

In what ways might sustainability of the work of international organizations be developed, for example when INGOs leave? Should it be? What is good practice related to exit plans, planned exits and forced exits? How can risk to people protected during the intervention be assessed and managed after? Similarly for local/national staff, how is risk assessed and managed? What is good practice related to long-term follow up? Can sustainability be built in from the beginning? What are the methods that promote sustainable peace? Which do not?

Discussion³⁴

Moderated by Tiffany Easthom, this group started with the observation that exiting is one of those themes that most project staff and organizations fear. Debates about exits can become very emotional, with staff feeling that they desert their partners or that they have not done enough.

While there have been a couple of examples of organizations (in other parts of the world than Asia) ending their work because they and their partners felt that the security situation had improved so much that they were not needed anymore³⁵, most exits have been riddled with doubts and bad conscience. The group reflected that there can never be the perfect moment for exiting, as there are always pros and cons. Therefore, the group thought about ways to deal with this dilemma:

1. First, it is important to have contingency plans, clear goals (what you want to achieve so you can decide when to exit), and a transition plan – what to do and to consider when there is an exit.
2. As to a needs analysis, there is a difference between perception of insecurity and recent events. We need to have our own analysis – sometimes people refer to violent incidents that in fact happened years ago.
3. The group agreed that it is important to integrate capacity building (enhancing) from the very beginning, not only when you start to leave, as many organizations have done.
4. Exit plans should include risk management plans for staff and partner organizations. As to the risk for national staff, it was pointed out that PBI does not take many national staff in order to minimize this risk when they exit.
5. There are planned and unplanned exits – unplanned when the security situation changes drastically, when an INGO is no longer tolerated in the country or when funding unexpectedly runs dry. (The recommendation here was for the sake of sustainability to avoid just having one donor.) Also, as part of an exit strategy, it is important to see if you can transform funding for your work to local partners continuing the work. These challenges of security risks or funding are shared by international and local/national NGOs alike.
6. Planned exits are also rarely uncontroversial. There is always more to do. One good strategy is to have a strong group of people and organizations with whom to consult, and who advise whether to stay or whether the (I)NGO is no longer needed.
7. Share good and bad examples as “lessons learned”: People should share experience about

³⁴ Notes of group E3, taken by Christine Schweitzer; notes of final plenary after groups E, taken by Christine Schweitzer.

³⁵ Examples given were PBI in Guatemala and the Balkan Peace Team in Croatia.

exits in different contexts, not be ashamed so that others can use it in their transition time.

Challenges

- It is always unclear when to exit.
- Discussing issues related to local staff and community: (I)NGOs become an economic factor for the broader community and particularly for staff. The group was not of one mind as to what obligations an organization has in this regard when leaving (aside of security issues). Should this aspect be incorporated at all, and if so, how? And is there a responsibility for the livelihood of national staff? On the one hand, there is certainly a responsibility any employer has; on the other hand, there need to be professional boundaries.
- “Leaving people behind” (staff / partner) versus staying in forever.
- In Nonviolent Peaceforce there is a discussion whether NP should transit to local organizations when leaving a field site. Founding a local successor organization with the name of NP might be a way to achieve sustainability but still allow the international NGO to move on to other places.

Conclusions

Closing a project and exiting from a country is a challenge that most INGOs face sooner or later.³⁶ Reasons for closing may be – in the ideal case – that the need has diminished. Yet, often other factors are decisive: changing circumstances making presence and work impossible (crack-down by the government, for example) or funding running dry. Exceptions are local CSOs and NGOs that may simply shift the focus of their work away from UCP but remain active. Also a few well-funded international agencies (an example was the German church-funded Bread for the World who have funded work of local NGOs in India for decades) may have the freedom to adapt their activities and strategies rather than having to consider exits. If for international UCP-INGOs a way out of the dilemma of exit vs. sustainability is the creation of a local organization, this will need more discussion in the future within NP and also with local partners. Unfortunately, the rapporteur of this workshop has not come across any responses of local partners to this idea. Would they see such a new organization as competition or as an added value? In Sri Lanka when NP left there was discussion about founding a national NP group but in the end, to the memory of the rapporteur (who authored a follow up report after NP left Sri Lanka), it turned out that there was no real will by local partners and staff to do so.

³⁶In “Wielding Nonviolence”, Ellen Furnari stated that in the case studies researched in this project, there had been no examples of exits (p 245), so that the findings of this working group may be of particular value in adding to the research already done.

5. Conclusions



5.1 Final Plenary on Good Practice

The final plenary of the workshop began with an exercise: First all participants were asked to name one good practice that they considered of particular importance. These were listed in key words on the board. Afterwards, all were asked to weigh them by marking three they thought were most important. Nobody was allowed to give points to more than three though a few felt that this was difficult for them.

Everybody was also asked at the same time to mark those named good practices which they felt deserved more discussion as they had doubts or concerns about them or they felt that more nuance was needed. There was no limit to how many of these could be marked.

This is the outcome of the exercise:

	Most important	Doubts /needs more nuance
Primacy of local groups	15	4
Multi-level relationship-building:	14	--
Capacity enhancement for all – local actors and all of us:	9	--
Ongoing context analysis::	7	1
Co-Creation (instead of implementation)	5	1
Seeking the humanity in the other:	5	--
Creativity:	3	1
Adhere to principles	2	6
Flexibility:	2	3
Trust-building:	2	1
Good listening:	2	--
Adaptability:	1	1
Innovation:	1	1
Sustainability:	1	1
Acceptance (in the community):	1	--
Interdependency of protection work:	1	--
Different role of local, national and international in different phases:	1	--
Team work:	1	--
Concrete action:	–	2
Remember the greater vision you part of	–	--
Persistence to nonviolence	–	--
Constant learning	-	1
Unity	-	--



Afterwards, the group discussed some of the points listed – the remaining time did not allow a full debate on all points:

Primacy of local actors:

- Sometimes internationals are the primary actors, for example in emergencies when people flee. "Let's get people first to safety and then talk".
- Lack of clarity who the local actors are.
- Does "local actors" also include the armed actors?
- Sometimes there are conflicts between local groups. How to decide then who represents 'local people'?
- How to handle situations when for example only men attend meetings or trainings? Do we go with the local values that exclude women? Or what to do when – a case that happened in South Sudan – women who had been kidnapped and then released thanks to efforts of the UCP organization were treated by a small group in the community as having been unfaithful to their husbands because they had been raped? Here the organization put the principle of nonviolence over that of primacy of local actors and sought to protect the women.
The same question applies to LGBTQ. They are often among the most vulnerable in violent conflict, but the local culture is hostile.
- Primacy does not mean "the only".

Adhere to principles

- "I listed nonviolence as one of the most important. But I have been active for 20 years in social justice movements. We need to have some adaptability. Principles keep changing. Sometimes we make tactics into principles, and they can have a life of their own and stop

creativity.”

- Local organizations cannot be fully nonpartisan (or neutral or impartial). Some principles can be problematic in certain situations.
- This goes also for international organizations in situations when power is very asymmetrical.
- Often we just make the least bad choice.
- The principles are key. When we are rooted in principles, it can guide us in our decision-making. The philosophy of nonviolence encourages so much creativity that it does not necessarily limit our creativity; we can develop our weekly plans with much freedom.
- Question to NP (and to PBI): Do you include evaluation of your principles as part of your activity? NP answered that it tries to do so, and that there is an evolution of principles.
- Nonviolence is a belief system, not an organizational principle, and therefore it may not be shared by everyone.
- As to nonviolence: Some people experience that it does not work, and therefore now advocate for violence.
- Principles are important, but we are already excluding big sectors of society. Can the military buy into this principle of nonviolence, or do we exclude them because they are armed? Same for armed extremists.

Why can we not just say that we are just international civil servants? Or workers?
We need to reflect on our principles and make our work more inclusive.

- The principles are defined by individual organizations; we do not have a common set of principles for the field. They are critically important for an organization. But we should avoid conflict or friction about the principles. But for the field of practice of UCP, we should collectively shape the field away from the use of violence.
- Our end goal is not nonviolence itself, but human justice. We are not the only ones who will work on that. There are many other stakeholders. These principles sometimes create a barrier – we are the only good ones, the better ones.
- In South Sudan NP is working with armed peacekeepers. Another participant: No, we are coordinating, not cooperating. We are independent. That we are nonviolent does not mean that we do not engage with others who bear arms. It is up to them to choose their means. But our choice to use nonviolence must not prevent us from working with them. Often we find in conversations that we want the same outcomes (justice, security).
- Nonviolence puts limitations on how to work with people with guns. If someone explained UCP to me and I was in a military, my main concern would be the security of my personnel.
- “Inclusivity for me is seeing the humanity in everyone, and see what I have in common with them.”
- There is a danger to feel superior because of principles. Often it is felt that people feel superior for believing in nonviolence. That is not inclusive.
- There is a tone of morality in the discussion that is unnecessary. The question is what is the more constructive way of dealing with conflict? One does not have to believe that nonviolence is morally superior.
- In NP’s hiring process, potential staff were only asked if they would accept the principle while working for NP. Not if they would never touch arms, or ever had. There are a number of former soldiers among its staff.
- This is like egg and chicken. Does something justify the end? Nonviolence does. Violence may not. Terrorist groups only talk about the goal, not the means.
- Can't nonviolence also just be a tactic?
- In the Mindanao context we engage with armed actors, our agenda is not to take our

nonviolent philosophy to change their culture. One leader said, „Do not try to pacify our troops“. This can be seen as a threat. The agenda is not conversion. People are doing UCP without knowing it.

Creativity

- Three people explained they had rated creativity very highly, because they often have to deal with the unexpected. Not everything can be planned, Whether in the case of emergencies nor in entering and building new relationships.

Closure of the workshop

The workshop ended with sincere thanks to all participants, extended by Tiffany Easthom, Mel Duncan and Ronnie Delsy.

5.2 Summary and Conclusions

The participants of the workshop formulated a number of lessons and good practices which can be found in section 6.1.

As to the 77 general good practices extracted from the field studies in “Wielding Nonviolence”, a large part of them have been implicitly or explicitly confirmed in the workshop. In this concluding section only a few overall remarks will be made:

1. A main focus and recurrent subject of the workshop was on relationship-building with all actors in the conflicts, seeking the common humanity in all interlocutors. This was considered to be of the utmost importance, and many experiences and examples were shared. Limitations to such relationship-building were considered to be more imposed from the outside (e.g. government or donors) than being inherent in the nature of conflict parties.
2. The group considered a strict categorical distinction between the strategies of ‘encouragement’ and ‘deterrence’ to be faulty, because there is always an element of deterrence present even if the emphasis lies on the strategy of encouragement. It was said that “we cannot choose between deterrence and encouragement as one better than the other. We need to be strategic and contextual”.
3. Another main theme was the complex relationships between local and international actors. Many observations and thoughtful evidence were collected regarding the comparison and relationship between local and international groups – access to conflict parties, deterrent power, knowledge of backgrounds and contexts, different SOPs etc. it became clear that there are a number of local CSOs (and even individual HRDs) who do accompaniment of threatened individuals, groups or whole communities. Local CSOs monitor ceasefires, violence before and during elections, etc. The relationship between local and international NGOs (where they are present) is complex. There is a mutual accompaniment relationship – internationals accompanying locals and vice versa, often simultaneously. “Protection” does not flow only one direction – often locals with their standing in their communities are as much protection to internationals as internationals with their status as foreigners can give to locals. This happens notwithstanding the fact that local organizations –at least in the cases discussed in Manila - are not nonpartisan in regard to the conflict issues, though they maintain their independence from the armed actors.
4. As to the framework in which UCP happens, a newer thesis put forward by some of the participants was that UCP contributes to and is valuable in peacemaking, peacekeeping and peace building rather than belonging to peacekeeping.
5. For a few observations and lessons formulated in “Wielding Nonviolence”, it turned out that more differentiation is needed:
 - As reported in 2.4, the principle of nonviolence is not as generally shared as the researchers of “Wielding Nonviolence” had assumed. Neither the ICRC nor the local groups identified fully with the concept. However, all shared being unarmed and pursuing a non-confrontational approach in their work. But not all organizations and actors would claim that they would never condone violence.

Secondly, nonviolence seems to be a principle that translates into rather varied prescriptions for action – for the organizations in the Manila workshop mostly in terms of connecting with, talking to and working with all sides of the conflict.

Thirdly, organizations have different understandings of what nonviolence means for their own organizational structure and practices.

Fourthly, in some places the term may be connected to certain political (or religious)

affiliations – the example given in the workshop was that in the Philippines nonviolence is identified with the party of the Social Democrats.

- As to the principle of primacy of local actors, the concern came up repeatedly that this principle may be too general, given the plethora of local actors in any given conflict and the need to choose the ‘right’ groups to work with. Additionally, it was pointed out that in some contexts internationals need to take the initiative to act to protect, in a sense becoming ‘primary’.
6. Another issue that was discussed repeatedly was the double-sidedness of having good relationships or a formal status with the government of the respective country where the UCP group works. On the one hand, as the examples of NP in the Philippines and Myanmar showed, such status can help enormously in carrying out protection tasks. On the other hand, these relationships often come with restrictions, for example not working with certain groups that are identified as “terrorists”, or in the case of Myanmar the need to change the approach when the government started to change its policy. Also a concern was shared that being too closely identified with the government might challenge the perception of being nonpartisan.
 7. As to the question of “what violence?”, the focus of the organizations assembled in the workshop was on political violence, but there was also evidence that especially the local groups also deal with other kinds of violence, such as feuds between clans (ridos) in Mindanao or domestic violence. It was pointed out that other kinds of violence should not be neglected, because they are equally threatening to the individuals, and often carry the risk of escalation into larger violence. The question was asked if encouragement strategies would work in cases of criminal gangs, or when international companies are the perpetrators? It was assumed that it probably would but there were no examples to base this on.
 8. The challenge of how UCP can best work when violence against civilians is perpetrated by groups labeled as “extremists”, needs further attention and development. Several groups mentioned this issue, and in the end an extra group was organized to delve deeper into the topic. The participants of the workshop agreed that the principles of UCP require treating groups labeled extremists or terrorists the same way as all other armed actors, but practically the access is often limited. For example, NP’s membership in the International Monitoring Team in Mindanao stops it from engaging with Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Fighters, in spite of NP’s wish to communicate with everyone. It was also pointed out that some of these groups may have less or no interest in connecting.

Recommendations For Future Workshops

Several questions were formulated in the workshop that may deserve more attention in the next workshops:

- Strategies to deal with extremist groups, criminal gangs and cases when international companies are the perpetrators.
- The question of how to effectively work in “horizontal conflicts.”
- How can UCP be used to prevent violent conflict?
- Are international groups changing how they structure their work in order to avoid being pushed out, and what are the implications of this? Which ‘red’ lines should not be crossed in these new contexts?
- There was almost no reflection on gender-related issues. It was mentioned in the working

group on accompaniment that it was important to have mixed teams, and persecution of LGBTQ was mentioned once or twice in a human rights context but no good practices or issues regarding gender sensitivity were identified.³⁷

- The contradiction of UCP organizations that claim nonviolence as their principle but rely on police force or sometimes even (legitimate) military force needs further attention.
- Protection “from afar” (see 2.3).
- One good practice named in “Wielding Nonviolence” was to “support nonviolent resistance movements”, and that “some CSOs might consider their work as nonviolent resistance...”. (p 273) This may need some modification: The local CSOs present in the workshop made it clear that they are not impartial in regard to the Bangsamoro struggle for self-determination, but nobody called it a nonviolent struggle.

However, the rapporteur asks herself if this should be considered a good practice for UCP at all since it seems to contradict the principle of nonpartisanship. It would be good if this was explored further.

- How does UCP relate to peacekeeping, peacemaking and peacebuilding (see 2.1)?
- Another question is in regard to “provide aid” as a good practice (p.275). In the workshop, it was mentioned that it was important that an international UCP organization not be seen as delivering aid but just accompanying those who delivered it. Also the local participants did not indicate that they considered their provision of aid as part of their UCP activities.

Last but not least, it was recommended to hand out a list of acronyms and descriptions of situations in countries that are likely to be mentioned in the workshop in advance.

³⁷ There is one international study on this subject. See study by on gender in peace teams, published by IFOR’ Women Peacemaker Program: Engendering Peace: Incorporating a Gender Perspective in Civilian Peace Teams (2010). http://www.peacewomen.org/assets/file/Resources/NGO/reconpb_engenderedpeaec_iforwpp_2010.pdf.

6. Documentation



6.1 Summary of Good Practices

Countering Shrinking Space of Civil Society

Strengthening regional support, and facilitating projects and organizations learning from each other, are measures to counter shrinking space. (2.2)

People are often being labeled in public – for example being a “Maoist” or an “extremist”. While this is difficult to counter at the national level, at local levels certain negative labels may not be that influential because people can relate to each other as neighbors, etc.. Therefore approaches on a local level may work better than at national level. (3.1)

Learning From Each Other

Strengthening regional support, and facilitating projects and organizations learning from each other, generally helps to build good practice. This may include mutual field visits, regional gatherings and networks of human right defenders (HRD) that may also serve to find safe places abroad if a HRD’s life and freedom are endangered. (2.2)

Moving staff from one UCP project to another is a good way of learning from each other. (2.2)

Develop regional ASEAN-wide approaches. (4.1)

Use of Principles

While it is important to have principles, they have to be evaluated and adapted. Evaluation and adaption of principles is going hand in hand with growing experience, changing circumstances and new challenges. (2.4)

Creativity is important because organizations often have to deal with the unexpected. Not everything can be planned, neither in the case of emergencies nor in entering and building new relationships. (5.1)

An evaluation and development of principles is important. (5.1)

When referring to principles, a tone of moral superiority should be avoided. (5.1)

Encouragement and Deterrence

Seeking interaction and building relationships with all actors in a conflict is a key strategy of UCP. (several groups)

If there is reporting on violations, make sure to give feed-back to all sides involved in the conflict. (several groups)

The physical presence of UCP staff or volunteers may deter violence, but it works better if there has been relationship-building beforehand. (3.6)

In seeking contact and communication with all armed groups, labels (like “terrorists”) should be avoided. Such labels must not be allowed to prevent communication. (3.8)

Encouragement and deterrence are not two strategies that contradict each other, rather they are a choice guided by strategy and context. (3.1)

Even if the emphasis is on encouragement, there may still be an element of deterrence. (3.1)

At least one working group stated categorically, “We do not name and shame” (3.3) – however, this may need more exploration.

Advocacy

In communications, be it in the field or in advocacy with high-level stakeholders, it is important to find the right language. This often means using varying terminology depending on the different audiences or target groups. (2.1, 3.3)

Advocacy within a country where UCP is practiced is often better done by national/local groups than by internationals. (3.1)

It is important to identify the messenger (and the message) in terms of credibility, trust and sustainability, i.e. to distinguish between political and humanitarian messages, and if short- and long-term responses are being sought. (3.3)

The best advocacy generally (in the field and at high level) is happening when there is a human-based close network. (3.3)

The best voice is the voice of practitioners and beneficiaries, because their experience lends them credibility. (3.3)

Protective Accompaniment

Protective accompaniment is carried out effectively by locals as well as internationals. Both have their strengths and weaknesses. (3.6, 3.8)

Protective accompaniment requires careful all-around analysis before beginning. (3.6)

Beneficiaries of protective accompaniment usually are under threat because they are working politically – it must not be expected that they adhere to the same set of principles (impartiality for example) as the UCP organizations. However, a line is drawn where these beneficiaries are involved in violent struggle, some organizations or projects draw the line already where the groups are involved in activities considered illegal in the country they work in – for example civil disobedience. (3.1)

Uniforms, notifications of stakeholders, information on geographic locations, etc. prior to each accompaniment are important practices. However, in some cases they may pose more security risks. Therefore, for each case, new assessments must be done to see if standard procedures can be followed, or needs to be adapted to maximize security and safety. (3.6)

Accompaniment needs strong and well-prepared teams. (3.6)

Gender balance in teams is important. (3.6)

Sometimes UCP staff or volunteers accompany aid convoys. When doing so, it may be advisable to be at the back end of a convoy so that people do not think the UCP organization is delivering aid. (3.1)

Sometimes, short-term companions from outside UCP organizations have been used successfully when the organizations, for various reasons (risk), could not undertake accompaniment; however, their effectiveness has its limitations. (3.6)

Early Warning – Early Response(EWER)

EWER is a comprehensive approach that needs to be tailored to the specific situation. (3.2)

EWER should be built around the primacy of local actors, meaning the empowerment of communities. (3.2)

Local knowledge is important: Local people know early warning signs; UCP can help to build a plan. (3.2)

EWER needs to focus on all levels and many forms of violence, not only political violence, since they all have a potential to escalate. (3.2)

EWER is easier when certain overall mechanisms are in place, for example official ceasefire monitoring is happening. For the participation of the state in the protection of civilians, it is sometimes ideal to have the state involved, but it is important not to wait for state involvement. (3.2)

EWER could be used to respond not only to the armed conflict but also for other personal conflicts such as the crime of passion. (3.2)

EWER needs clear protocols for verification and communication, esp. in the context of the use of social media (rumors, propaganda). Social media often are used as a propaganda tool by conflicting parties. (3.2)

EWER in a community is also a form of capacity-building. (3.2)

Preparedness for potential conflict should be built the same way as early warning for natural disaster (3.2)

Protection should be built into disaster response, as civilians are often vulnerable to violence after natural disasters. (3.2)

Ceasefire monitoring

Ceasefire monitoring can be done effectively by local actors but international presence is often an important added value. (3.4)

To be effective in ceasefire monitoring, it is important to achieve acceptance, be seen as nonpartisan, and to establish good working relationship with all sides. (3.4)

In ceasefire monitoring, systematic tracking of violations and compliance, following up with all incidents that are reported, are essential. (3.4)

Communications with groups that are not part of a ceasefire process must be maintained even if they are not included in the agreements. (3.4)

Capacity Building

For capacity building (or: “enhancing”) to be effective it must be a continuous effort, starting from the beginning of a project. (3.5)

Capacity building is based on the needs of the local community. The recipients decide what kind of training they want, the UCP organization communicates what it can offer. (3.5)

Capacity building uses the knowledge, skills and experience (i.e. in conflict resolution) of the local community as the basis. (3.5, 4.3)

Target groups may be local communities as well as governmental structures and the military. It is important to be inclusive in offers of capacity-building. (3.5)

Local and International UCP

The work of local and international organizations should be complementary. (3.8)

Where both internationals and nationals are involved, their relationship is a mutual one – protection does not flow in only one direction. (3.8)

Local organizations may describe themselves as independent but not nonpartisan. They are often part of the struggle (nonviolently) that is going on. (2.4, 3.8)

Both local and international groups have strengths and weaknesses: In some places INGOs have better access to authorities. In other situations, it is the locals who have better access, for example, are allowed into areas closed to internationals. INGOs also can lobby in their own countries and with their embassies. On the other hand, INGOs remain for relatively short periods (5-10 years is also short), and have a limited number of staff/volunteers (30 or 40 at maximum). Many people are excluded from protection in this way. Also INGOs are more dependent on funding.

Local organizations have more room to be proactive and develop long-term strategy. They are more independent and accountable to the people (not to donors or the protocols of agreements), and can be more flexible. They know the local context better. (3.8)

Starting new projects

Access to new places or regions to work in can be achieved through working with CSOs that are already working there, and, for example, offering a training or workshop to introduce UCP to local stakeholders. (4.1)

Stakeholders need to understand UCP. It is important to make realistic approaches and not to promise things that cannot be delivered as that will only disappoint people. (4.1)

It is important to talk to many people in making an initial assessment, but not lose a window of opportunity. (4.1)

It is important to define the theory of change and the goal from the beginning, and then find how to do it. (4.1)

An exit strategy should be defined at the outset of planning a new project (4.1)

It is important to invest in proactive strategies, and to find new approaches and tactics (for example including work in schools). (4.1)

Security

Local vs. international staff: both may enhance or reduce security. Local staff knows a lot about local circumstances and culture, but can be too confident. International staff on the other hand may increase security (through deterrence), but in other circumstances be more at risk and endanger a mission (danger of kidnapping, violation of cultural norms). (4.2)

Confidentiality and even-handedness (nonpartisanship) when dealing with armed groups are important for security. (4.2)

Trainings for staff regarding security management are crucial prior to deployment. (4.2)

Security SOPs must be followed, but they need to allow for flexibility to adapt to situations. (4.2)

Security planning needs to happen day-by-day but also needs long-term analysis and plans (for example for evacuation of staff). (4.2)

One key strategy is relationship building. Strong community relations are essential as the community can often be counted on to keep the teams safe by providing information, warnings, and connections. (4.2)

Security measures need to be embedded in and respect cultural norms. (4.2)

Communication relating to security issues is improved with the use of satellite phones. (4.2)

Have an exit plan: This may also refer to just leaving a region (evacuation) or a place where something happens (demonstration turning violent, for example). (4.2)

Calling, not only texting, is important because it is more direct and personal. (4.2)

Exit

It is important to have contingency plans, clear goals (what you want to achieve so you can decide when to do it), and a transition plan - what to do and to consider when there is an exit. (4.3)

Exit plans should include risk management plans for staff and partner organizations. (4.3)

As to a needs analysis, there is a difference between perception of insecurity and actual events. UCP organizations need to have their own, independent analysis. (4.3)

Capacity building should be built in from the beginning and not just start when an exit is close. (4.3)

Principles of UCP

Nonviolence:

First, not all organizations and actors claimed that they would never condone violence. Second, nonviolence seems to be a principle that translates into various prescriptions for action – for the organizations in the Manila workshop mostly it meant commitment to dialogue, talking to and working with all sides of the conflict. Other aspects, such as nonviolence within the organization requires flat hierarchies and consensus decision-making, was not shared by all. And third, in some places the term may be connected to certain political (or religious) affiliations – the example given in the workshop was that in the Philippines nonviolence is identified with the party of the Social Democrats (and therefore not used or only with the adjective “active” – “active nonviolence”.)

Primacy of local actors:

Sometimes it is difficult to define who the local actor is, in particular when national NGOs and/or local communities are in conflict with each other.

Talking to all sides and bringing people together is something which all organizations named as an important way of working – while knowing that some of them may have been the perpetrators of atrocities, accepting the basic humanity of all. A challenge is how to make the distinction between not condoning the acts, but still working with everyone.

Independence

Independence from directions of other organizations or governments is a principle that all organizations emphasized.

Nonpartisanship

Independent but not nonpartisan: This is how the local organizations that were present in the workshop described themselves. They also approach all parties on equal terms and as representatives of their organizations emphasize their independence from the parties of the conflict, but say that they cannot claim nonpartisanship in regard to the conflict issues, being part of the struggle that is going on.

Civilians being paramount

While all organizations describe that as a principle, only the ICRC also protects combatants in line with the prescriptions of International Humanitarian Law. This raises a question regarding the concept of civilians as being the only beneficiaries – don't combatants also have human rights and have a right to protection under the IHL? (2.4, 3.1)

Contributions to Strategic Theory

UCP belongs to all three: peacemaking, peacekeeping and peacebuilding. Moving towards peace is a continuum or a nonlinear process, UCP is useful in all these dimensions, and contributes to sustainable peace. (2.1)

UCP is a tool that can be used in contexts other than armed political violence. (2.3)

UCP is a tool that can also be used in conflicts in the Global North (though not all methodologies of UCP work there, so that adaptations of the methods are needed). (2.3)

Encouragement and deterrence are not two strategies that contradict each other, rather it is a choice guided by strategy and context. (2.3, 3.1)

Even if the emphasis is on encouragement, there may still may an element of deterrence. (3.1)

Challenges

General

Prevention of violence is a challenge for UCP in general, though specific strategies such as EWER and capacity building can be oriented toward prevention. (3.2, 3.5)

How, if at all, can UCP address new forms of shrinking space for HRDs? (2.2)

Relationship between international and local organizations

There is often competition over resources (money and staff) and decision making between local, national and international organizations. (3.7)

Nonpartisanship

A general challenge for local groups is nonpartisanship – both being nonpartisan which is often impossible, and to achieve acceptance by other actors. (3.8)

There is the need to differentiate between activism and UCP. Maintaining nonpartisanship when accompanying groups that pursue an agenda that is considered to be political, is important. (2.3)

Nonviolence

It may happen that armed accompaniment by military or police is enforced on UCP organizations. (4.2)

International Humanitarian Law

While UCP is rooted in IHL, there are tensions. How do organizations deal with the issue that companions may witness atrocities and know the perpetrators? Is there a moral or legal obligation to report such crimes or serve as witness in (international or national) courts? (3.1)

Combatants or (former) combatants are entitled to protection in certain situations (e.g. when they surrendered or are unable to continue fighting because they were wounded), however, most UCP organizations avoid dealing with them. (3.1)

EWER

It is challenging to establish EWER when there are no ceasefire agreements, and massive fighting is going on. (3.2)

High-level systems of EWER often are too slow and fail when it comes to prevention. (3.2)

Safe zones

Safe zones/peace zones are ambiguous: In some cases they increase the safety and security, in others they have been found to be counterproductive. (3.2, 3.4)

If such zones are formally agreed and declared, it may also set military free to move to other places for fighting.

Security

It is a challenge to decide when to be open and when to protect information in communications (3.3)

Violent extremist groups

Membership in formal structures, donors or national laws may limit access to actors – for example to extremist groups (3.3, 3.8)

The access to such groups is often difficult or impossible – restrictions by third parties, groups' clandestine nature and the strong friend-foe-thinking of these groups that makes them often less interested in building relationships.

It is necessary to find shared concerns about civilian safety and protection with these armed groups. (3.8, 4.2)

Security for the UCP workers is a challenge – in the Philippines (and other places), there is a risk of kidnapping or violence against any outsiders and even some local people. (3.8)

Accompaniment

There is the danger that activists start to be dependent on accompaniment. Creation of dependency on accompaniment should be avoided but it is difficult to do so. (3.6)

Starting new projects

UCP organizations usually require an invitation in order to consider coming to a new country (principle of the primacy of local actors), but people also have to know about UCP in the first place to invite. (4.1)

Organizations must be sensitive to the tension in the need to get advice from a variety of different groups without making initial contacts feel that you don't trust them? (4.1)

Finding quick and sufficient funds for new projects is often a challenge to international UCP organizations. (4.1)

Getting permission from all stakeholders (including government for work permits and visa) is often a difficulty. (4.1)

Challenges in advocacy

In academia, the frequent perspective or view is that when moving from peacekeeping to peacebuilding, there is no need for protection anymore. The experience represented in this workshop indicates this is definitely not true. (2.1)

Proposals

- Engaging in more regional meetings and exchange. (2.1)
- Developing regional ASEAN approaches. (4.1)
- Sharing good and bad examples as „lessons learned“, for example, regarding exits. (4.3)
- Developing a local organization when the international organization is leaving. (4.3)

6.2 Agenda as carried out-

Workshop on Good Practices in Nonviolent, Unarmed, Civilian to Civilian Protection 7-9 December, 2017

University Hotel, Quezon City, Manila

7 December 2017, Day One

- 9:30 Welcome Plenary and Introductions
Welcomes from Nonviolent Peaceforce
Introductions – each person briefly introduces themselves
Ground rules/agreements for the workshop
- 10:45 Break
- 11:00 Placing ourselves on a diagram of civilian protection
- 11:10 Panel and discussion on core principles
- 12:15 Lunch at hotel and
Presentations - Protection in the current Asian context
- 1:45 Plenary gathering
Ice breaker exercise and self selection of afternoon small group B
- 2:00 Small group period A
Sharing a story of a key learning moment or turning point regarding good practice
- 3:15 Break
- 3:30 Small group period B – (For description of small groups, please see below the agenda.)
choose one
1. Good/effective practice when starting new projects, expanding into new areas, or other beginnings.
 2. Good/effective accompaniment/UCP practice in the current and changing South and Southeast Asian context.
 3. In practice, how does accompaniment/UCP relate to stages and programming of peace making, peacekeeping and peacebuilding?
- 4:50 Break
- 5:00 Plenary –reports from small groups and review agenda for tomorrow.
- 6pm Dinner at hotel

8 December, 2017, Day 2

- 9:00 Plenary – Ice breaker exercise and check in. Selection of small groups for the day.
- 9:30 Small Group period C
1. Accompaniment/UCP strategies of deterrence and encouragement
 2. Early warning/early response and rumor control
 3. Advocacy/communication

11.15 Plenary –reports from small groups C
12:00 Lunch at hotel
1:30 - Plenary gathering
 Ice breaker exercise and self selection of afternoon small groups
1:45 Small Group period D
 1. Ceasefire monitoring
 2. Capacity building
 3. Protective accompaniment of human rights defenders and journalists.
4:15 Break
4:30 Plenary –reports from small groups D
6:00 Dinner at hotel

9 December, 2017, Day Three

9:00 Plenary –
 Ice breaker exercise, check in, small group selection
9:30 Small Group period E
 1. Staff/volunteers of local NGOs and CSOs only –What is good practice in local organizations protecting other local civilians.
 2. Managing security for staff/volunteers and those accompanied.
 3. Sustainability and exiting
11.15 Plenary –reports from small groups E
12:00 Lunch at hotel
1:30 Open space for topics/discussion needing attention: Groups F
 1. UCP outside armed conflict (see 2.3)
 2. Dealing with violent extremism
3:00 Break
3:15-5 Final plenary – Good practices in accompaniment/UCP in South and Southeast Asia – key points
6:30 – Dinner at near-by restaurant

6.3 Attendees -

Good Practices in Accompaniment and UCP - Manila 7-9 December 2017

Name	Organization(s)	Country	Country (countries) they work/ have worked in with a UCP organization
Guiamel Alim	Consortium of Bangsamoro Civil Society, Philippines	Philippines	Philippines
Pooja Ahluwalia	ICRC	Philippines	Philippines
Louisa Chan Boegli	NP	Switzerland	
Michael Bulett	PBI	UK	Indonesia, Nepal
Rungrawee Chalemsripinyorat	Australian National University	Thailand	Thailand
Pat Coy	PBI/Kent State University	USA	Sri Lanka
Andrew de Sousa	PBI	USA	Indonesia
Berit Bliesemann DeGuevara	Aberystwyth University	Germany	
Ronnie Delsy	NP	Indonesia	Philippines
Mel Duncan	NP	USA	
Tiffany Easthom	NP, PBI	Canada	Indonesia, Sri Lanka, South Sudan, Lebanon
Ruki Fernando	Human Rights activist	Sri Lanka	Sri Lanka
Marion Girard	NP	France	
Bente Hansen	PBI	Germany	Indonesia
Rexall Kalim	Bantay Ceasefire, NP	Philippines	Philippines
Avilesh Karn	PBI/ Nepal Monitor	Nepal	Nepal
Elaysa Enalang Latiban	NP	Philippines	Philippines
Memem (Carmen) Lauzon-Gatmaytan	NP	Philippines	Philippines, Indonesia/E. Timor
Ramu Mannivanen	University of Madras, NP	India	
Bridgitt Sloan McMullen	NP	Canada	Philippines
Jeya Murugan	NP	Sri Lanka	Philippines
Yul Adolfo Olaya	Misyon Edukasyon Inisyatiba	Philippines	Philippines
Huibert Oldenhuis	NP, PBI	Netherlands	Myanmar, South Sudan, Indonesia
Romadon Panjor	Deep South Watch Thailand	Thailand	Thailand
Jan Passion	NP	USA	Sri Lanka

Ayu Diasti Rahmawati	Univ Gadjah Madah in Indonesia	Indonesia	
Christine Schweitzer	NP, IFGK, BSV	Germany	
Preetam Sengupta	NP	India	Philippines
Izzadeen Shahabdeen	Peace/human rights activist, SLMM	Sri Lanka	Sri Lanka
Seth Villaruel	Sulong CARHRIHL	Philippines	Philippines

6.4 The Situation in South and Southeast Asia – Three Lunch Talks

Letter by Chaiwat Satha Anand to the workshop

Chaiwat Satha-Anand was born in Bangkok, Thailand in 1955. He holds a PhD in political science from University of Hawaii at Manoa, professor of political science at Thammasat University, Bangkok and director of the Thai Peace Information Centre which conducts studies and activism in relation to the Thai military and social issues. Satha-Anand is an expert on non-violence, theory as well as activism, and on Islam.

He has published numerous articles and book chapters on the military, alternative defence, religion and peace, Islam and nonviolence, and modern political philosophy. For several years he directed the International Peace Research Association's (IPRA) commission on non-violence and he serves at the Scientific Committee of the International University for Peoples' Initiative for Peace, IUPIP, in Rovereto, Italy.



มูลนิธิเพื่อการศึกษาประชาธิปไตยและการพัฒนา

อาคารคณะรัฐศาสตร์ มหาวิทยาลัยธรรมศาสตร์ ซาทรจักรินทร์ กรุงเทพฯ 10200 โทร.(662) 2216171-80 ต่อ 2314 โทรสาร (662) 2241406

Foundation for Democracy and Development Studies

Faculty of Political Science, Thammasat University, Paichan Road, Bangkok 10200, Thailand. Tel.(662) 2216171-80 ext.2314 Fax: (662) 2241406

December 5, 2017

Dear Ellen and friends,

First let me express my sincere apology for my absence from the Manila workshop due to my health problems. This letter is my way of fulfilling my promise to you that I would like to share with you some of my thoughts on the present state of conflicts in South and Southeast Asia.

It goes without saying that there are many ways to depict the current state of conflict in Asia. According to the *Global Peace Index 2017*, among the top 5 countries that have become more peaceful, and there are 93 countries improved while 68 deteriorated, two are from South and Southeast Asia: Sri Lanka and Cambodia.³⁸ Here I don't want to recount the information contain there since you could certainly read them together with how GPI arrives at their global portrait yourself.

I want instead to share with you how I have tried to make sense of conflicts, especially deadly conflicts in South and Southeast Asia. It is something like the analytical tools I have used based on my own research in recent years.

First, I found that it is helpful to categorize deadly conflicts generally found in South and Southeast Asia into three types: governance, religio-ethnic and border.³⁹ It must be emphasized that though such typology is useful, these three types of conflict are not unrelated. For example, in August this year, Hun Sen of Cambodia issued an ultimatum on August 17, backed by sending troops and armored vehicles, to pressure Laos to withdraw its troops from Northern Cambodia. My

³⁸ (<http://visionofhumanity.org/indexes/global-peace-index/>)

³⁹ See Stein Tonnesson and Elin Bjarnegard, "Why So Much Conflict in Thailand?" *Thammasat Review*, Vol.18 No. 2 (Special), 2015. pp. 132-161

businessman friend from Cambodia told me, however, that this flexing of military might against Laos-clearly border conflict- was not unrelated to Hun Sen's power consolidating process that has been going on-governance conflict. Similarly, how the Thai military deals with southern insurgency in the past decade including the recent peace talk initiative cannot be understood without taking into account how governance conflict at the national level unfolds itself.

Second, many of these South and Southeast Asian conflicts have become intractable, meaning they are persistent and destructive. There are more than 50 variables associated with the persistence of destructive conflicts: political instability and power imbalances, issues that are related to survival and dignity growing inescapably destructive relations among conflict parties, producing malignant process characterized by traumas at different levels, among others.⁴⁰ What this means is that once conflict becomes intractable, it could produce a dangerous conflict trap that imprison all parties within a web of hopelessness.

Third, my colleagues and I have found that one of the factors that has contributed significantly to the escalation of religio-ethnic conflict with deadly consequences, not only in South and Southeast Asia, but elsewhere as well, is when "sacred spaces"-namely churches, temples, mosques, synagogues, have become targeted, and monks, priests, imams, rabbis killed or wounded. Attacking sacred spaces with violence is an attack on the collective self of those who believe in them. The intractable nature of such conflict is sometimes identified by the fact that dangerous memories of violence against sacred spaces could last not only months or years, but sometimes centuries and could be revitalized under proper circumstances.⁴¹

Fourth, I am convinced that it is important to try to engage deadly conflicts with creative nonviolent actions. In fact, my colleagues and I have also found that when conflicts have been engaged with violence, their potentials for reconciliation will be diminished. Sri Lanka would be a glaring example.⁴² But when they were engaged with nonviolent actions and other peaceful initiatives, tendency for a successful reconciliation increases.⁴³

Fifth, most peace workers who engage deadly conflicts in all parts of the world would underscore the significance of contexts which normally informs the ways in which peace works could take shape. But what exactly is "the context" that one has to deal with? I have found it helpful in my works to analyze "the context" of peace works/nonviolent actions in terms of layers of power relations.⁴⁴ I would argue that in South and Southeast Asia, and perhaps elsewhere in the world, there are at least 3 layers of power relations that need to be taken into consideration: contractual power relations (generally shaped by laws and economic rules); patron-client relations (generally shaped by cultures); and communal power relations where one finds meanings inside a larger whole called "community" which could mean community of believers (ummah) or community of memories (Rohingyas as ethnic cleansing victims). In some ways, understanding these layers of

⁴⁰ See Gray, Coleman and Putnam's introduction in a special issue of *American Behavioral Scientist* Vol.50 No.11 (July 2007), pp.1414-1429

⁴¹ Chaiwat Satha-Anand, "Sacred Spaces and Accursed Conflicts: A Global Trend?" in Chaiwat Satha-Anand and Olivier Urbain (eds.) *Protecting the Sacred, Creating Peace in Asia-Pacific* (New York: Routledge, 2017), pp. 7-52.

⁴² See for example, S.I.Keethaponcalan, "Violence, Nonviolence and Ethnic Reconciliation in Sri Lanka," in Chaiwat Satha-Anand and Olivier Urbain (eds.) *The Promise of Reconciliation? Examining violent and nonviolent effects on Asian conflicts* (New York: Routledge, 2017), pp. 87-102.

⁴³ See for example, Samsu Rizal Panggabean, "Cities of Peace, Cities of Violence: the Indonesian Experience," in *Ibid.*, pp.149-170.

⁴⁴ This idea is drawn from my colleague's seminal work-Prof. Kasian Tejapeera of Thammasat University on "Modes of Power Relations in Thai Society".

power relations as contexts will contribute much to the locations and levels of engagement peace workers will have to strategically decide.

I hope these thoughts are relevant for the Manila workshop.

With peace,

Chaiwat Satha-Anand



Ruki Fernando

Ruki Fernando is a Sri Lankan human rights activist based in Colombo, Sri Lanka. He has been involved in writing, campaigning, advocacy & training on issues such as enforced disappearances, land, freedom of expression, refugees, transitional justice etc. He travels around Sri Lanka, especially in the war affected North. He has received protective accompaniment from internationals and Sri Lankans. He believes national and international campaigning was crucial in ensuring his safety and freedom when he was arrested under anti-terror legislation. He has also provided protective accompaniment and facilitated protection for persons at risk, specially activists and journalists. He has also facilitated basic security trainings for activists at risk and helped formulate organizational and personal security plans. He has lived and worked in Thailand and Philippines, spent few months each in UK and South Africa on fellowships. His writings are available at <https://rukiiii.wordpress.com>

Thank you for inviting me to spoil your lunch. I am from Sri Lanka and work primarily there. So I talk primarily from that experience, but I might add some anecdotal examples from other part of Asia and Southeast Asia I have come across.

I would like to make six points:

1. My primary reflection from my experience in Sri Lanka in last 10 years is that significant and major improvement of civilian protection comes with significant and major political change in the country. That means a change of government. Primarily, not only. In Sri Lanka we had war for about three decades. In May 2009 the war (or armed hostilities) finished. Then we had for about five years what I would call majority-elected authoritarianism. I call it such because this authoritarianism was supported by the majority of the population, electorally, socially and politically. Only when that period finished (we were able to end it through an election, and a lot of other mobilization with much activism beforehand) that the civilian protection improved. So it was only through this change that I started to go home on my own in the middle of the night, without telling anyone or having to ask anyone to come with me. So I spared a lot of people a lot of trouble and anxiety and changing their schedules on my behalf. That is the same for many others.

And it is probably the same in some of our neighboring countries, for example in the Maldives when Mohamed Nasheed came into power 2008. Before he was kicked out again, the space for people who had different beliefs and convictions, in terms of sexual orientation, religious beliefs or freedom of expression, for people who were critics of the government had increased.

From what I read about the Philippines, it was the same here when Marcos was kicked out, or when Suharto was kicked out in Indonesia. My main point is we should not underestimate major political change when it comes to improving civilian protection.

Local activists (no matter if they call themselves peace, women, human rights, development or child right activists or whatever acronym) usually become engaged in this political change. They become partisan to one candidate or one political force. Often it is not one party but a force. I also became partisan in 2014 for one political force. But I'm quite critical of that political force, which is in power now. I will come back to this in my fifth point.

2. The context of protection of civilians is either a context of war/armed conflict or of authoritarianism, dictatorship or semi-dictatorship. This is true also for the Philippines today if I may say so. Here the President feels very free to kill anyone he would like to kill. And he also feels free to announce in public that he would like to kill someone he feels he doesn't like. So he is very free.

The same in Thailand, where many regional human rights or peace building conferences are being held in nice hotels. Many people who are activists are oppressed brutally, on *lesé majesté* charges or by intelligence agencies.

The same in Cambodia where many activists are oppressed.

We are also talking about protection in post-war context and post-authoritarian regimes. We saw this in Sri Lanka in 2009, where the end of the war in 2009 did not bring safety of civilians, because post-war Sri Lanka was changing to authoritarianism and dictatorship. So being post-war does not necessarily ensure civilian protection either.

From the little interaction I have with friends in Myanmar, I believe it is also true for Myanmar. I think there is a lot of unnecessary hype optimism after some changes that happened to the military junta. This has changed quite dramatically now. The situation has changed for the bad or the worse there.

There are also other contexts where lot of protection is needed: regarding economic, social and cultural rights, land and mining issues, religious extremism.

3. There are diverse actors from whom we need protection:

Primarily it is the state in many of our countries. But then there are also armed groups who threaten the safety of civilians. Many of these armed groups have political causes like in the case of Sri Lanka; private companies who cause unsafety for civilians and activists; religious groups, and also family. I came one day earlier to meet three people from Bangladesh, the Maldives and Pakistan who are hiding in the Philippines now because they felt very unsafe in their respective countries. The girl from Pakistan had to flee because her mother and brothers threatened her. Her life is in jeopardy because of her mother and brothers. So that is also a factor.

4. An area I have focused on in the last years is that of protection of activists, now often referred to as human right defenders (HRD): Compared to most other civilians, HRDs have become a privileged species. I have benefitted from that privilege myself. I think my life was saved, I am probably alive and free physically because of significant support I got from my friends in Sri Lanka, the Philippines, Thailand, Korea and international groups - including some of the people here. I also received protection, including through UCP from NP in Sri Lanka, especially when I was travelling to war affected areas at the height of the war and authoritarianism. That is because I was an activist, and among the activists I was even more privileged because I happen to be able to communicate well in English compared to most activists in SL. So I had many friends including some journalists who had met me and I had accompanied them and helped them. And so probably they felt a little bit sorry when they saw their accompanier and the person they had a drink with, who had arranged interviews for them, who gave them logistical support, was in prison. So they felt may be more compelled to write about me than about most of the people. So compared to HRD, many civilians are unprivileged.

For HRD the amount of protection available has also increased in the last couple of decades. Next year, in 2018, will be the 20th anniversary of the UN HRD declaration. There have been multiple programs at level of national NGOs and INGOs, UN, and also by foreign governments - for example EU guidelines, Norwegian, Finnish Foreign Ministry guidelines, Swiss guidelines on HRD. There are multiple mechanisms for HRD protection. So I think it is good to consider this particularly when we talk about protection of HRDs.

5. This point is linked to first. It is a certain dilemmas I and some of my colleagues have faced in HR protection work. I used to write about HR violations. I used to name and shame people who I thought were responsible for violations. I used to publicly advocate, whether it was in Geneva or in Colombo. I used to give interviews, write articles and condemn certain parties who I thought were responsible for violations. I used to organize and join protests. Even this morning, while I was in Manila, I was helping the organizing of a protest in Colombo. In the middle of all this only, I also became involved in protection work because my friends' and my colleagues' lives were at risk. That is a bit of a different perspective than that I come from. In that context only, my life was also threatened, and I wanted to get other people's protection to protect my life. And then we have a dilemma regarding engagement with governments. There are questions of legitimacy and co-option that we have to deal with when we engage with parties we feel are responsible for violations in the present or past. At international level this legitimacy and co-option is there. Most recent example was the special sessions of the HR Council at the UN on the Rohingya crisis in Myanmar. Bangladesh was a champion for that special session. It is not easy to get such a special session. So many people, including diplomats, thought it was very positive from Bangladesh to call for such a session. But my friends in Bangladesh, bloggers, women rights defenders etc. are living in fear in Bangladesh and many have been forced to flee Bangladesh, and come to Sri Lanka and other such countries to protect their lives. One of them is in the Philippines now, and some are in other countries as well. Bangladesh was good to speak on Rohingya and about Myanmar's repression. But didn't they use this to hide the repression of their own civilians? How do we deal with this?

6. The last dilemma is the distinction between civilians and combatants. That was blurred in my experience in Sri Lanka. Combatants became civilians, civilians became combatants, in varying degrees and forms, and varying times and due to varying reasons. Most civilians' sons and daughters, most civilian's husbands and sisters and brothers are combatants. It is the same blurred line that is also there between activists, journalists, HRD on the one side and combatants on the other. This all is a dilemma that I and maybe others have to deal with.

This is what I wanted to share. Thank you.

Ramu Manivannan

Ramu Manivannan is a professor in the Department of Politics & Public Administration, University of Madras, Chennai, India. He is a founding member of the Nonviolent Peaceforce. He has founded fifteen non-formal schools for the children from tribal areas, stone quarry areas and the weavers' community before building the school for poor children in Kurumbapalayam village in Vellore district of Tamil Nadu. He is also the founder of the knowledge movement with social action called "Peoples' University". Ramu Manivannan is a teacher-social activist engaged at the grassroots with the human rights and other social movements in India/South Asia and Southeast Asia. He is a trainer in holistic education and nonviolent conflict resolution. He teaches "Traditions of Nonviolence" & "Refugee Studies" at the University of Madras, Chennai, India. He

has been working with the refugee communities from Tibet, Myanmar and Sri Lanka for over two decades in the areas of peace, education, human rights and development. He also leads inter-faith and spiritual walks in the Himalayas, India for over 25 years now.

I am happy to be here for more of one reason. The first reason is that in 2002, 15 years ago, around the same time in November- December, we were dreaming, envisioning and planning the course/path of Nonviolent Peaceforce from outside the ring. It was the founding meeting of NP that took place in New Delhi, India. We are right in the middle – we are talking from inside, about the experiences and issues, concepts and realities of such work.

I want to start the presentation with a small story: One of my students is the son of the police chief in Kabul, Afghanistan. I met him about three year ago. I asked him about the status of civilian life and the life in Afghanistan. He said, the reality is that every day the armed forces, US & NATO, that are staying miles away from the city, have to come into town to take water for bathing and drinking. And to take water for them means, nearly 30-40 lorries come into town in a convoy, 4-5 helicopters flying over the convoy of water containers for protection. He is a very young boy, in his early 20s. He said: “Professor, for drinking water alone so much force is required and such uncertainty prevails there, how can they be trusted to protect civilian lives?” This came from a person whose father is the high ranking officer in the Afghan police.

My real faith in nonviolence and civilian protection is that there is no secure armed protection. Somebody has to protect the armed protection as well. This is the real trappings of violence and our dependence on them. There has to be legitimacy, or some kind of consent from the people, and that consent does not exist in the majority of the conflict-ridden societies and polities.

In case of India, we are going through challenging and troubled times. There is a right-wing government in power, there are majoritarian ghettos, right wing identities, not only religious identities but also political and economic ideological orientation to this effect. At the same time, in many parts of the country we are witnessing that the people are fighting against the state and the political ideology of the rightwing ruling party. They are fighting for political rights, human rights issues, the women’s rights, food and religious rights of minorities which remain a concern under the present government. Then there are other significant social and economic conflicts in different parts the country.

As Human Rights Defenders or observers when we go to field to observe, to do fact-finding, we are not safe in doing it. Because when we are doing this work in one night, the next morning we are called by the police and they tell us that “your name is in the newspaper as a Maoist or as a communist. Are you the same person?” There is an increased monitoring of human rights activities by the State agencies in all of South & South East Asia countries, not only in India.

A decade ago that was not a reality, and we could fight. We always believed that India is still a democratic space, but at the same time we had to struggle for democracy. But the struggle has become more intense. It is much more challenging to fight right wing fascist communalism. India is slowly stepping into this phase. This is a very sad and emerging reality.

In Sri Lanka, I took active part in the documentation work on human rights status both during and after the brutal war that ended in May 2009, and that civil war in reality lasted as thirty years. The situation is that they kept changing the government from one to another and they talked about democracy, greater concessions and accommodation of minorities etc. But once they consolidated the power and the global attention had diverted and concern from international governments had decreased, the successive Sri Lankan governments went back on their promises and returned to same old practices of denial and repression.

This is a very consistent phenomenon of South & South-East Asian State and politics. Look at the situation of the Tamils in North and East of Sri Lanka. In the Northern province alone 75,000 hectares of land are still controlled by the military. What could be status the civil and political rights in these areas? Also the government has not taken any kind of responsibility to explain about the more than 100,000 people who are missing. The Sri Lankan government says that the missing died during the war. But the same government refuses to acknowledge the number of deaths in the war and how many people have died. This is the tragedy of Tamils in Sri Lanka.

This is about the state of democracy in our region with rising nationalism and ethnic or religious identities. In India, once you raise such issues, they question your nationality commitment to the nation. It is very difficult to be seen as patriotic and critical of the government at the same time.

We have this in case of Pakistan as well: In Pakistan the civilian government has been outspoken about the struggle against the military regime. But the history has been that the civilian government has defined the national agenda, whether it is religion or politics. And it still conceded space to the military. Now, also the religious space has been taken over by the military establishment.

This is why you witness so many armed groups in different parts of the country. In provinces like Baluchistan or in Peshawar that is bordering to Afghanistan, there is such turbulence, intense turmoil of volcanic magnitude. Civil society groups themselves are in conflict with each other. They do not know who is with the state or who is in which group, who is with the army or with state agencies.

Myanmar is a very painful story, also to me personally. I have been an advocate for the National League for Democracy for the last 25 years. I worked on the ground; I worked as an advocate in Thailand and in India. We wanted to see this change, to see that some time Aung San Suu Kyi would come to power, the same way as the global community backed her. But what happened? We wonder if this transition of the country is genuine or sham. What is disturbing is that she is not telling or not speaking enough to convince the majorities in Myanmar and the international community that there is a global trust that is increasingly weakened by the organised atrocities against the Rohingyas. She should show more responsibility. There is a huge humanitarian crisis. If the Pope comes to Myanmar and cannot speak about the Rohingyas, then there is something is seriously disturbing about the silence and unspoken words.

Finally: the Tibetan situation. I don't know if you recognize Tibet as an independent country that has been occupied, or see it as an integral part of China, but fact is that Tibetans are a nation. Historically, Tibet was an independent country. What is happening is that through gradual settlement of Han Chinese in huge numbers, a demographic change is taking place, in Lhasa, in the rural areas, in the monasteries. These changes are such that in another 20 years Tibetans may not be seen as factor in their own land anymore, including the social, cultural, religious, political and demographic sense. They may not have similar control as they have had historically. Tibetan demographic alterations hold enormous implications for future in the region.

One word about Thai democracy: Thai democracy is military reigned democracy, where even one of my teachers has to go to court tomorrow to defend himself against lesé majesté charges.

This is a very typical Asian democracy. I am a critical of Asian democracy. We talk about democracy but in practice, we are follow feudal and oppressive practices. We have two faces of democracy: very good intentions but very unrealistic practices. Is democracy a mask or real virtue? This is a genuine Asian dilemma.

Discussion

- There was for a time a trend towards democratization. It was like a landslide, started with the overthrow of Marcos in the People Power movement. Suharto followed, then the independence of East Timor. But now the trend is reversed, things are becoming increasingly less democratic.
- The changes are not only happening in Asia but globally. The power of the UN decreased because of super-powers.
- There is increasing distrust of civil society. International NGOs feel the repercussions (visa restrictions etc.), but national actors have much more serious security concerns.
- There is way we can stay out of the streets. This is the only visible place to express dissent.
- Major challenge has been to consolidate and sustain victories. South Korea is an example. Dictatorship, democratization, now a friendly government. But how to make sure that it does not slide back?
- Repression on things like gender identity increases, religious groups get more important. Also economic, social rights are important. We need safety not only in the physical sense but we need a situation where we do not have to rely on the military.
- Bangsamoro in the Philippines are still marginalized. Why does the struggle persist? Because of structural land-grabbing issues. Transnational companies contribute to these situations (like displacement).
- The UN is increasingly seen as a good institution but nothing comes out of it. I am a defender of the UN. But there is an unqualified use of veto in the Security Council. We have never challenged the veto as international civil society. We challenge the countries but not the veto.

6.5 Panel and Discussion on Core Principles

Day 1, 7.12.2017, c. 11-15-12.15 h

Participants:

Yul Olaya, Bantay Ceasefire - Philippines

Pooja Ahluwalia, Deputy Protection Coordinator - PCP and JurOp International Committee of the Red Cross – Philippines

Michael Bluett, formerly with Peace Brigades International, was a PBI field worker & manager for 5 years in Asia, then PBI international board member for 3 years to 2015 - UK

Huibert Oldenhuis, Nonviolent Peaceforce, Country Director Myanmar - Netherlands

Moderator: Dr. Christine Schweitzer, Institute for Peace Work and Nonviolent Conflict Transformation - Germany

The panel starts with an input of 5 minutes each panelist, giving a short introduction of what their organization is doing, and if they have formulated core principles that are guiding their work. This was followed up with a question by the moderator, after that there was a short period of questions and comments by the plenary followed by final short answers of the panelists.

Michael Bluett, PBI

Peace Brigades International (PBI) was founded in 1981 to undertake the task of peacekeeping, peacemaking and peacebuilding under the discipline of nonviolence. The central focus of PBI's work is that of international presence defined as one or all of the following: physical presence, physical accompaniment, public relations, networking, observing, reporting and building international support networks. So PBI does have an explicit set of principles that underlie that work. Core principles are:

- nonviolence,
- international character,
- nonpartisanship and
- being nonhierarchical.

The nonviolence is the key principle. You can see some of the others, particularly nonpartisanship and nonhierarchical, as being expressions of nonviolence.

Nonhierarchical - PBI organizes itself in a nonhierarchical way, without too many bosses, and a lot of decisions made by committees. The whole organization takes part in a consensus decision-making process which is supposed to be more of a nonviolent way of organizing ourselves as human beings.

Nonpartisanship – PBI defines nonpartisanship as „dealing with all parties with an open mind, reporting objectively, not giving judgmental responses, voicing concerns without being accusative.“

In our organization there is always a big debate about how we represent different parties to a conflict and how we position ourselves between parties of a conflict.

International character is the final principle. It is an expression of the way PBI works: PBI has currently four projects in Latin America, as well projects in Nepal and Indonesia and Kenya.

Particularly a lot of the basics of our work comes from Latin America, and that was protective accompaniment by international volunteers. Most of the int'l volunteers came from North America or Western Europe. International character was meant to be a deterrence as the internationals would be represented and supported by their embassies and support networks, and also there is a clearly a visible difference for North Americans or Europeans placing themselves in villages or communities in Latin America or in places in Asia in regard to how the state interacts with you.

Pooja Ahluwalia, ICRC

Perhaps many of you know ICRC already. ICRC has its HQ in Geneva, and is represented in more than 92 countries around the world. It is more than 150 years old and has been working on issues of protection and assistance to population affected by armed conflict in different countries. Historically, the founder of the organization was appalled to see the sufferings of people in war, including the wounded soldiers, without medical treatment. Even the basic services were not guaranteed and provided medical treatment to wounded and sick people. From there, ICRC expanded to other areas. ICRC started visiting those who were detained in relation of international conflict situations and who were given POW status. That has been a big area of work in relation to protection. And of course gradually, as conflicts have evolved, we also have been working in many non-international conflict situations.

ICRC's work is guided by the International Humanitarian Law (IHL), which is the applicable framework in conflict situations.

ICRC's humanitarian action involves different components, especially protection and assistance. We understand protection as ensuring the physical safety, mental and physical integrity and dignity of those who are affected by armed conflicts.

Of course civilians are our main concern, but also those who are granted the status of protected persons under IHL, including people who are not fighting anymore because they are wounded and sick or surrendered, and those who are detained.

ICRC looks at what are the obligations of the parties to the conflict, monitors the IHL violations, and remind the parties of their obligation and to take corrective measures. We have also been working on measures like self-protection aspects to increase the resilience of civilians.

In terms of principles of protection: ICRC's core principle is humanity. The main objective is to alleviate the suffering from the conflict through assistance and protection programs. Our action is guided by preserving the safety, security and dignity of those affected by the conflict situation.

Another core principle is impartiality. That essentially means that ICRC's humanitarian work is solely based on the humanitarian needs created by the conflict situation. We make no distinction based on race, religion, nationality, status, political, religious, ideological aspects or opinions of those who are entitled to protection and need assistance.

Another principle which is more pragmatic and operational that the organization has adopted since its inception to achieve these results are neutrality and independence.

Neutrality: ICRC does not take sides in order to gain access to those who are affected by conflict. We talk to all parties to the conflict. We would never engage in matters relating to political, religious or ideological issues. This enables the organization to gain access to those affected in order to carry out protection and assistance.

Independence: Carrying out assessment of needs and operational responses are decided by the organization autonomously. It is not guided by any party or government. It is only guided by the

needs.

Another important principle for protection is the principle of 'Do no harm.' Any action or activities undertaken is based on factor that it is in the best interest of those we seek to protect or assist, that it does not cause more vulnerabilities or harm or create more protection risks to them. This is something we constantly keep in mind while we are speaking with beneficiaries and design our protection responses. When we carry out our activities we ensure that there are no risk of reprisals from any actors that commit violations or that those we help are stigmatized because of our interaction with them. We take measures with the beneficiaries to mitigate the negative consequences. It may even include sometimes delaying a response in case the beneficiary thinks that they may be subjected to reprisals.

Finally, ICRC's method of work involve: establishing a confidential dialogue with the parties, and other stakeholders who have influence in making the change. Of course, you would not see us come out with reports. We talk about what we do but do not talk about what we see.

Yul Olaya

Bantay Ceasefire started in 2002 in response to war. There were almost a million IDPs. Civil society organizations came together to do something, and came up with concept to monitor the ceasefire by civilians.

We have worked with volunteers, and have been very active until 2014/2015. Bantay Ceasefire is an independent group. We became recognized by military and rebels and the International Monitoring Team (IMT). They asked us to be part of the Civilian Protection Component of the IMT. This we achieved through many processes and hard work: We slept with displaced families and in barangays (communities). Displaced people asked us to go with them to the fields to harvest their crops. We coordinated with rebels and military and went with them. We did not know the term accompaniment, but we did it when we were requested. Later we discovered this was called accompaniment.

Also we learned that we did investigative missions or fact-finding missions as they are called now. To summarize our achievements:

First, we believe we somehow contributed to reducing incidents of conflict.

Secondly, we engaged the state partners to be more responsive to the needs of civilians. It was our group that recognized we need more international groups to do monitoring work, and to complement by doing the things we could not do. We were able to reduce the conflict, we were able to make actors more responsive. And we were able to show to the communities that they were not just passed through by parties to conflict, but that they could play an active role.

We have not really defined our core values, but this was developed through time of practice, I can name at least ten:

1. We are not neutral, because we are biased towards civilians.
2. We are community-based.
3. We divide our reports into disputed and non-disputed facts.
4. We are not ideological and we are non-confrontational. We always make it a point that our approach is dialogical. We believe in the basic goodness of every person. Our engagement with whatever kind of person, in either side of the conflict, is to draw out this goodness in them.
5. We place the interest of the civilians as paramount.
6. We have security protocols and follow them. We coordinate with all stakeholders.

7. In our engagement with state and non-state actors we always try to identify common and shared interest, for example to protect children.

8. We utilize existing mechanisms and structures, both formal and informal – for example, decision-makers might not be the formally elected leaders.

9. We show sensibility to culture and to power dynamics. This is why Bantay Ceasefire was successful in our areas.

10. Independence is a very important value which we emphasize among our members. We have members who belong to communities that are influenced by either side of the conflict actors. But when they join the Bantay Ceasefire they pledge to stay independent. This means that decisions and actions are not influenced by any other party but solely that of the Bantay Ceasefire.

Huibert Oldenhuis

NP has same birth date as Bantay Ceasefire, 2002. Currently we have teams in Iraq, Philippines, Myanmar, South Sudan and Beirut, working on Syria.

Core for NP is the direct physical protection of people who are threatened. We try to do this through these methods in the protection circle which was put on the wall this morning. These all come down to being present on the ground and trying to stop or prevent direct physical violence.

NP's principles are

- Nonviolence
- Nonpartisanship
- Independence
- Primacy of local actors
- Civilian-to-civilian led processes.

Nonviolence: It is important for NP that nonviolence is more than not carrying weapons or not being aggressive towards actors. It is not an alternative to containing violence. We feel that nonviolence can be transformative in protecting people. So it is not security FROM the enemy, separating the threat, but security with, by working together on security, by bringing people together to work on security. It is also the building of trust, it is a transformative process, a peacebuilding process. In this sense, nonviolence goes beyond containment of violence.

Nonpartisanship: This is very similar to what was discussed before. Liam Mahony wrote: "We will stand beside the vulnerable people that need to be protected but do not take not a side against those who they define as their enemies." This expresses very appropriately the way NP looks at nonpartisanship. Remove enmity, not the enemy. We are partisan towards human rights, justice, peace. But the way this takes place is up to the local actors to decide. That is where primacy of local actors comes in:

Primacy of local actors: They are the ones that make decisions and define the strategy. They need to be able to say to us, 'we want you there'. We don't want to come into places because we think we need to be there, but we only want to be in places where local communities want our support and want our methods for protection.

Sometimes it is difficult to define who is the local actor. We follow of course the rules and regulations of the state. But sometimes state actors are involved in carrying out oppression towards vulnerable people.

Sometimes national NGOs and/or local communities are in conflict with each other. So sometimes it is difficult for NP to decide whose primacy do I need to follow. That is a challenge we are facing.

Independence: It is the liberty not to be dependent on specific ideologies, specific religions or government policies of a government that may say we should work in a certain place or something profitable for global economy development. Independence gives us freedom to follow on requests from local people who want us to be there, and we want to be able to make that decision by ourselves based on the needs of people. So independence is a very crucial part, and is also very much reinforcing the nonpartisanship NP is promoting. If we are dependent on specific policies or governments, then it is much more difficult to prove we are nonpartisan.

The last principle that I mentioned is civilian-to-civilian: It is also part of moving away from the prevalence of military actors who are often the sole actors in peace processes, and those providing protection. We say civilians have a role in peace processes and a role in protection, it does not only matter to military actors.

Sometimes we also talk of civilian immunity in war, focusing on the distinction between combatants and civilians. The reason is that increasing intrastate warfare drags civilians more and more into conflict, and that makes it important that our focus is with civilians and their immunity.

Discussion between the panelists

Christine: Thank you very much. I would like to explore a little bit more the terminology. For example I noticed that nonviolence that Ellen Furnari identified as THE principle all have in common was mentioned only by name only by two of you- NP and PBI, while you others used other terms which may indicate something comparable. Yul spoke about the basic goodness of people, and Pooja spoke about humanity and preserving dignity as basic things.

Just one question on nonviolence to all of you: To those two who did not mention nonviolence, would you agree that nonviolence is a basic principle of your work? Or do you say it is too vague, or too ambitious? And to those two who used the term: What does it mean in practice, to what you are doing? How do you relate to armed actors? Do you ever call the police, ever call the military when you see something happening?

Mike: Yul made a nice point when he said that they did not know that it was called accompaniment what they were doing. Also PBI in the 1980s did not have a list of principles and methodologies. Developing these started in tandem with experience and developing methods trying to do as little harm as possible as we went along.

For PBI, nonviolence stems from a variety of beliefs, including from faith-based belief in nonviolence (Quakers, Gandhi) and the various organizations he inspired, and pacifism generally as a secular activity or belief. In the practice in the organization - as Yul said - nonviolence is an active thing. The term has a lot of NONs-, of being negative, but we use nonviolence as a positive means to create peace. We also have peace in the name but did not name it as a principle. PBI has a mandate for making space for peace, having nonviolence as a means to make peace, for all the parties, both those causing the violence and those affected by it. And, in addition, nonviolence for us is also a personal journey when we do this work.

Huibert: On the ground, what it comes down to is to the person in the field. For example in Myanmar our partners at the beginning wanted to point out the mistakes and violations the military and armed groups were doing, in quite a confrontational way. What they then did by using nonviolence was to find out if they can build relationships with them and use these relationships in order to influence them in such a way that they stop or at least reduce the violence. This kind of seeing the humanity in the other actor worked out with staff working in Rakhine state with the Rohingya communities that were brutally oppressed. It is difficult sometimes for staff members to see the humanity in military actors and people doing

unspeakable acts. But it is still the act of nonviolence to dig into that empathy with the perpetrators in order to build that connection, and make that a trigger for transformation. It is not easy. It does not mean we have to accept the atrocities as many people think. It is not that, it is to accept the basic humanity and be able to have a relationship and thereby finding the opportunity of using our influence to reduce the violence. That is where nonviolence comes in for the people on the ground. It is not an easy thing.

Pooja: Institutionally speaking we have only been working with the principles that I mentioned. Our work is guided by humanity and humanitarian needs – that remains the core essence. We approach that through bilateral confidential dialogue, so there are some of these elements that other organizations may term as nonviolence. Our work is focused on building the dialogue and also building resilience of affected population.

One of the things ICRC does not focus on is the political/ideological reasons of conflicts. We look at what are the consequences. Another area that ICRC does not engage in directly is the peace negotiations and processes, essentially in order to maintain our neutrality. Peace processes are politically-driven processes.

Finally, would like to highlight: In a ICRC lead process with many other humanitarian and human rights organizations, based on shared experiences and commonly agreed principles, ICRC published Professional Standards for Protection Work. The publication “Professional standards for protection work” is also available online.⁴⁵ The second edition was published in 2013, and an updated version will be released next year. Available in English and French, the publication constitutes a set of minimum standards for humanitarian and human rights agencies carrying out protection work in armed conflicts and other situations of violence. This second edition takes into account changes in the environment in which protection activities are implemented, providing standards and guidelines that meet the associated challenges. These standards complement and do not intend to replace or substitute for any other sets of standards used by protection actors, such as the *Minimum Standards for Child Protection in Humanitarian Action* (2012), among others.⁴⁶

Guiamel: We work by peaceful means. Nonviolence can be a universal principle. It can mean being non-confrontational and not doing harm, keeping dialogue under all circumstances.

The difference between us and NP is that we are a local organization, and as such, we cannot claim impartiality. We accompany the peace process but as Bangsamoro who were part of the struggle.

We do this in a non-confrontational way. Often, we can tell people what internationals cannot say to them. We can never be neutral. But we have learned from engaging both parties. We assert ourselves against the rebel groups and the military. Talking about nonviolence is semantic. What is important is the approach. We do not do violent confrontations.

Some contributions from the plenary⁴⁷

Participant: In Philippines there are different organizations and groups. The word nonviolence is not acceptable because it is a term in the Philippines that is associated with the Social Democrats (as opposed to the National Democrats); there is a political context to it. It is identified with

⁴⁵<https://www.icrc.org/eng/assets/files/other/icrc-002-0999.pdf>

⁴⁶Quote from: <http://www.sphereproject.org/blog/revision-standards-for-protection-work/> [accessed 11.12.2017]

⁴⁷Only two are recorded here.

Gandhi, with pacifists, with the US way of peace. In the 1990s I was part of a group that advocated active nonviolence. The word „active“ was necessary to describe nonviolent action. So we introduced the term “active nonviolence” in the 1990s to distinguish ourselves from this context.

Participant: Terminology is a critical issue. Our context in Thailand is also the same. Nonviolence is hard to accept from a local perspective where there are many people who support the self-determination movement.

Panel for final replies

Huibert: It is a difficult question, but there are not many differences between ICRC’s neutrality and PBI’s and NP’s nonpartisanship. Even within one organization we may define it differently in different context. When NP is in Mindanao part of official monitoring structure, you could say it takes part in solution of things. In PBI that may be seen already as being partial because you become a part of the system, you are getting into the solutions. Some people within NP might respond that we are not the decision-makers but are just monitoring and reporting. Here may be a bit of difference of interpretation.

Yul: Agrees with what Huibert said. On nonviolence: We are in a context that becomes part of consciousness that says that there is necessary violence. Perhaps we therefore do not use term nonviolence. I am asking myself that question. When Gandhi did the salt march- wasn't that violence? Am just throwing that out.

Pooja: Some of these terms were adopted in order to decontextualize them from the political context. Humanity and Neutrality is central to us in order to ensure access to affected population, for example including to those who are in detention, to carry our humanitarian action.

Mike: There are certainly differences between local organizations, activism, and international accompaniers. Nonviolence does have an ideological motivation or context to it, (it states that violence is never appropriate, not based on evidence but due to a set of beliefs) and as stated it may have specific meanings in different countries and contexts. ICRC has this humanitarian focus which it preserves quite strongly, and it gives a great strength. All these ways of working are valuable and they can work together.

Christine: Thank you very much to all for your contributions!

6.6 Stories on Unarmed Civilian Protection – Accompaniment

The first round of working groups during the workshop were about sharing a story of a key learning moment or turning point regarding good practice the participants had experienced. There have been five such groups, and in each group people shared one or several stories. Some groups also took the stories to engage in discussions. Some stories were more personal – how people came to be involved in protection work.

Philippines

Bantay Ceasefire: Implicit nonviolence

I want to talk reflecting on the discussion on non-violence during the discussion. Although it is not an official term used by my organization, it is practiced and actually was practiced before NP came into the country.

Once I engaged with villagers from a destroyed Muslim village in a rebel area. So among the villagers there were a lot of people supporting the rebels or even people who were or had been combatants.

After the ceasefire the military stayed in the area and people did not want to return to their village from the evacuation camp because of it. That was 2003, and there was donor fatigue for that area and there wasn't much support in the camp, and also the displacement and the fighting had destroyed/ reduced the social structure of the village and the community. Kids were dying from diseases like diarrhoea etc. So me and a colleague went to the camps and asked the people there what to do and how to change the situation and they said: The military must go!

But the government didn't agree to that so they wanted us to intervene with the military on their behalf to make them go home. The atmosphere was very tense. The consultation was in a classroom so I took them out of the classroom into a green space and asked them how that felt and they felt better and I took that for an example of how a little change in perspective or space can change a lot.

So we asked the villagers what actually bothered them about the military presence and they complained about cultural insensitivity (military personnel bathing in the river in their underwear) and night patrols within the villages etc. So we recommended that the villagers express that to the military and the villagers didn't want that at first, but we prepared them and did role playing and they took it to the military and the military took that into consideration and drew back a little and acted accordingly. And these villagers became our first community volunteers and community based ceasefire monitors.

So for people engaging in that, we needed to tell them how the ceasefire was supposed to work and what their rights were and so on. So there was capacity building and only then could the monitoring work. It was community based but supported by NGOs and INGOs.

So we were not explicitly nonviolent, but it was actually a core value. The believing in the goodness of people; we had to internalize that and treat them like that even if they had been perpetrators before and behaved badly before.

So we learned how to still push for the goals, but nonviolently; even in language and so on. So not to be in conflict with the perpetrators, but to win them over to your side; influence them and the stakeholders around. So our NGO became seen as a peacemaker and that can be good and bad ... e.g. at some point the rebels wanted to use the suffering of the IDPs as leverage against the government and improving their situation was not wanted. But on the other hand they were

happy about the internationalization of the conflict.

So non-violence was there in every step and it even had an impact on the armed forces and their internal structure (setting up of an HR desk; conflict resolution approach etc.)

Bantay Ceasefire: preventing an incident

A fight between government forces and rebels threatened. My group decided to talk to one commander and others from the group discussed with the other. It was communication and it was making them understand the problem. And we were able to prevent that fighting. We were able to prevail upon the two sides. There was no violence. There were soldiers, and close to them were rebel groups and we thought that for a slight triggering moment, the fight could happen. What are the short and long-term ways to prevent violence and keep civilians safe? Finally, we were able to establish a zone of peace and we could bring together stakeholders and traditional leaders and said this is a safe place for this. No one should come here with arms and the military said that is not possible. We can by law. It took several weeks by saying we are preventing something from happening through continuing dialogue. We got them to sign an agreement that before coming to the area, they would consult. The community became peaceful for months and years. It took a lot of dialogue.

NP / Bantay Ceasefire, direct communication is essential

In Mindanao, UPC was quite new for me but I had experience in the peace process. First I tried to learn. It was not about preventing violence, but preventing the impact of violence to the civilians. We're not trying to stop the conflict but to protect the civilians. Key parts are monitoring, patrolling, accompaniment and early warning early response. We visit the groups, the armed groups and military, to talk with them and tell them we are monitoring them. Trust building has a key component of communication. Key to communication is understanding each other. Without these here is a space for rumor. We can contact each other to verify rumors. This is why direct communication is important, it gives us access and trust. Even if there is no incident, we need to maintain communication. Even if it is just coffee for 30 minutes, just so they see 'this NGO guy will come and cares about us.' We need them to accept us, to trust us to communicate with the other parties.

Activist-NP: monitoring and mediation

I am living in a conflict affected community. I experienced violations and being victimized by the warring parties. Now I am working with NP and I am the focal person for the CPC. What I am doing is that for more than five years, as a CPC focal, I monitor the safety and security of civilians in conflict affected communities. Then we are responsible for doing the reporting and submitting it to the secretariat of the IMT. CPC is part of the ceasefire mechanism of the GPH and MILF. Besides the reporting is the verification. We don't rely on the mass media. The very significance of our work is facilitating the community, state and non-state actors. If there is a misunderstanding, our group will do the facilitation. If there is a movement of the AFP or MILF, we have grassroots monitors and they are the ones helping us to monitor the situation in our areas. When we receive that kind of info, we talked to the AFP and MILF or to other groups and make them understand that there are civilians between who are vulnerable to violations that might happen.

In 2013, there was a situation in our municipality where there were top commanders of the MILF in that area, and it's understandable that if someone is killed from the MILF, people will start to

pack up their things for preemptive evacuation because they know there could be a commotion after that. What we did is our team based in that province went to the AFP, talked to them, talked to the MILF. We did I don't know if it was protective accompaniment but we went to the place where the MILF was killed and talked to both parties and some of the civilians went out and we stayed there the whole day until the members of the peace mechanism could be there and the situation could be calmed down. AFP and MILF knew we were there monitoring the situation. Maybe they were afraid. They knew there is a peace negotiation on the table. It was a successful story for our team because our team was the instrument to ensure the commotion won't happen. MILF their combatants cried and the AFP, both sides had reinforcements coming. We were afraid but we really proceeded to the area.

Bantay Ceasefire: impartiality in reporting

My story has something to do with impartiality in ceasefire monitoring. When we started to monitor the ceasefire agreement with the MNLF, we needed to ensure that there are local monitoring teams nominated by both parties. I was assigned to go to one area and documented violations from both sides. We needed to report the monitoring results to high-level officials, including those in the military. We decided to go to Manila for that to make a presentation. My presentation started with the violations done by the military and I was stopped mid-presentation by a military officer. They thought the report was all biased against the military, the government. But we insisted to finish the presentation so they could know that we also found the violations done by MNLF. Once we finished the officer said that it was the first time when the monitoring results were impartial. Since then, whenever monitoring reports came out, the officer would check with us and he would later become the advisor to the President and the Chief Negotiator for the case. Credibility becomes the point here. Later on, he did a serious study on peace and conflict. He is among one of the retired generals who were "brought" to the peace movement. Credibility and trying to build relationship with the other sides become important.

Bantay Ceasefire: protecting the monitors

We document both parties, not just the abuses of one side. We don't condemn them in public. We engage them and have dialogue. We let them know the complaints of the civilians. That's why we could build a relationship with them.

This also works when there are instances of the lives of monitors being threatened. We have one monitor who was doing documentation during the height of Lumad (indigenous people) killings. He is a Lumad himself. He was seen talking to the military by the left (NPA) who thought he was a spy or rebel. So he received a threat from the NPA. Someone went to his house and said he should stop documenting the cases. We contacted the panel members since we have good communication with them and told them he is one of our monitors. He's not just monitoring your violations but their violations as well. This was possible because we had good communication with both sides. There are similar cases where monitors are being threatened including from the military. Recently one received a threat. We wrote to both sides and said he is a monitor and if he is on a list, please remove him.

NP: staying independent

It is important to not just be in Manila, but in the remote areas. This can give us better measurements of the situation in the field. It can be hard to communicate with EU and authorities, because they want to know the names, times we met with people, etc. and this

information is all sensitive and confidential which can put people at risk.

In working within structures - we have a common mandate as member of the coalition in Mindanao, but we also have our own mandate. Sometimes we tell the authorities we are doing something specifically outside of the common coalition mandate to make it clear that we are independent within the coalition. Sometimes there are advantages to being part of the official apparatus, but there are also disadvantages when they limit what you can do.

For us nonpartisanship is not a polemic or discussion. Internally, even the community doesn't question us about our impartiality - they fully accept us. For example, in May there was martial law declared. We had two foreigners in the red area. Neither wanted to leave for Manila, and they got full support from NP and the community. The military didn't force us to leave because the level of trust we have, they didn't feel they needed to get us out because we would be critical of them. We keep our principles and that protects us in critical situations.

There is a way that we communicate, there is a skill to it. We do lots of visit, 360 times per year for some groups. The monitoring pattern is monitoring 600 times a year. The government now will call us, we'll be the first ones they contact. It's regular for us to be asked to bring together the military and the rebels in our office, with us sitting in the middle.

Bantay Ceasefire: relationship building

My example is also about relationship building. This can be so slow, but we persevere, it is a continual process. In 2008/9, we supported mass protests for a ceasefire, hundred thousands of people were there. That day government declared the suspension of military action, soon after also MILF. This is how war stopped. Later my work with displaced people in a camp where there was a food blockade led to a death threat to me, ordered by the chief government official of the area.

The ceasefire came and the peace process and after this at a big event I met this same official who ordered the death threat. I went to him and I hugged him, and I apologized to him for the problems we had caused him, we talked and he walked away with tears in his eyes.

Sri Lanka

PBI: Nonviolence and the destruction of property

An example from protection work in Sri Lanka: There was a group of labour activists from a free trade zone (that was illegal then) who planned a "lightening action" in Colombo, that were many small demonstrations in different places in the city. The NGO was in contact with PBI and PBI accompanied them and did their usual talking to the authorities before. But the group then started destroying property... they did not consider that violence, although PBI would have. The police became very angry and PBI's relationship with the police suffered immensely. So it matters how "non-violence" is understood.

SLMM: educate cadres to ceasefire agreements

We went to a camp where children were kept for training. It was very close to the base of the LTTE commander. When we got closer to the camp, we were stopped and denied access to the camp. My Head of Mission was very angry for the being stopped by the LTTE. He was trying to explain to them about the Ceasefire Agreement and the freedom of movement of the ceasefire

monitors. But we were in LTTE-controlled area. The LTTE guy was very angry and he started to point his gun at us. What happened was I advised them to go back because it was not safe. We ruled out the case as a violation of the ceased-fire agreement by the LTTE. What I have learned was about how we can get them to obey the agreement, especially the grass-roots level cadres of the LTTE. They have to be educated on the agreement.

NP: the least bad choice

We often try to make least bad choice. Protection of journalists after the war in Sri Lanka seemed urgent, because there were disappearances. We were asked repeatedly for protection for them. It worked and we were able to keep them safe or get them out of the way. We provided physical protection at premises of the magazine Sunday Leader when they printed, and did accompaniment of the editorial team. But it resulted for us by being kicked out of the country.

It was a calculated risk, we know we were taking risks, but in situation nobody else was doing this work, even embassies supported us.

How do we balance the risk? If we are too risk-averse, we become too benign. How do we learn how not too many risks? How can we be the most effective?

Activist: rumor control

One Muslim was killed and his body was taken to Tamil area. It created problems. Early in the morning the passersby knew that it was a Muslim's body. So the Muslims blocked the road when they heard that the Tamils were marching to their area. It was quite a tension. [...] I decided to check to the police and found out that the killing was done due to personal problem and not group hatred.

NP: mediation

In Nonviolent Peaceforce, Sri Lanka was the first place the organization worked. I was part of the team identifying the site selection and doing relationship building. We did that work for almost a year. When our teams landed in Sri Lanka, when they were ready to start the work after the training, there was one case about a fishing company. The religious identities put a division between them and there was a huge tension between them about the fishing. This was a time of Muslim facing marginalization, and much presence of military.

NP made initial steps and inroads into the community. One day the community said we can talk and representatives from Hindu and Muslim communities met. NP was invited to be middle and to listen because they were doing presence and accompaniment. They listened to the proceedings and at one point, they said the conflict is not specific to Sri Lanka. In every country people fight over resources, this is not about Hindus and Muslims. If all of us go to the same place every day, we have a problem. So let's split up the fishing grounds. They made that decision at the meeting. The lesson was that conflict resolution can work and deep listening. People themselves have it in them and we simply have to facilitate. There is another way of looking at the same thing. This was very inspiring.

NP: mediation

This is about the work I did with NP and it was a successful story. The LTTE occupied a Muslim-predominant area and there was a burial of an infant. In the next days, the LTTE destroyed the

burial ground and the Muslims were very angry. We were called the next day to observe a meeting of high-level politicians and police officers that tried to solve the problem. The meeting was for hours and no solution. I threw idea for NP to facilitate a meeting between both parties and I was asked to give a very brief introduction. I wanted to use religion as a tool to solve this issue by doing the meeting on Friday because Friday is a good day for both the Muslims and Hindus. I also said that both religions also respect dead bodies. The Tamils should let the Muslims to re-bury the dead bodies again because they were killed after all by the LTTE. Then the Muslims and Hindus trustees started to talk. They argued that there is no fence between the Muslims' burial ground and the Hindus' resettlement. Then NP proposed to build a high fence to cover the burial ground which the Muslims agreed to pay for. It was simple and successful.

Activist: local vs international UCP

My experience is as a local Sri Lankan providing protection to other Sri Lankans. We should be very careful about focusing too much on international UCP, and give more attention to local or national UCP. International UCP will be important because it will save lives so will keep it relevant, but it is always going to be very limited as it's always short-term (even if 10 years, still not decades like local UCP).

Secondly, it is limited in scope. Accompaniment is not just about physical presence, but advocacy, media work is all part of protection and the tools used by internationals are very limited.

Third, international UCP doesn't tackle the structural changes needed to improve the situation. It should be recognized more clearly that international UCP enables others to conduct their work for change, but the local work is more important. Need to emphasize the importance of national protection. Also, the local staff is facing much higher risks than local staff. We can see from NVP in Sri Lanka, for years after they left they had to periodically check on the safety of their former local staff but didn't have to worry about the international staff.

Local peacekeepers should be helped over a period of time to build the clout of international groups. When they start, they don't have name recognition and need time to establish their own name. So international groups can help them with that.

Also, with funding, it is still harder for local peacekeepers to access funds than foreign groups. Local people often have to use their own money to access remote areas, etc., while the foreigners are given more assistance for this. Local peacekeepers are often not staff but have their own occupations (priest, lawyer, etc.) Those funding UPC should not just fund NP and PBI, but the national and local groups.

Also, we need more expertise locally. In Sri Lanka, we are mostly dependent on Christian clergy and lawyers since they had social standing which could be used for protection (and it worked, these were often better deterrents than internationals). We need to raise the importance and profile of local peacekeeping and protection, without writing off the importance of international protection. Example – if I want to do something discreetly, interview a survivor etc., it is better to do it with a local person who doesn't attract as much attention as a foreigner. Recruiting locally, same as idea of getting a white person, but getting clergy as a similar deterrent. But in some cases clergy might attract the wrong attention. So we need to have both available.

NP: common humanity

When we were first starting the project in Sri Lanka, I was there and we were invited to meet with

the political leader of the LTTE. We were meeting him in the evening in this un-named place. The first of all, I was wondering why I do this because this was a man representing all violence. So I thought I could not do it. We ended up meeting him and we explained what we were doing, why we were doing it, etc. He ended up not wanting to stop talking and he shared his frustration of not being able to have children. This was a man who has been going on a limp from being shot when he was a child soldier. He was a man that simply wanted to be recognized as a human being.

NP: relationship building

Following major displacements of civilians, we went to assess and spoke to the Military Commander, he was later killed in another battle. The situation was very tense, but we spoke to him as a human being, asked about his family, his children, as we were talking about the many families and children displaced. This relationship building, developing trust meant we could work in the area to assist the civilians.

Indonesia

PBI: exiting a country

I was part of exiting Indonesia with PBI. And I had the experience that we especially in the end thought, that we could not give any protection anymore because of lack of access and “strength” of the organization. There were some small successes but mostly a lot of frustration, but when we left and did exit interviews we learned that a lot of our partners and “clients” stated that our sheer presence made them feel safer and “not forgotten” by the outside world. That was very moving for me and showed me how important even that little can be in terms of solidarity and moral support.

On the question if the pullout did harm?

I don't think in our case that it was harmful. People were as they were before we came or a bit better off: better connected, with more capacity and self assurance. But maybe it was harmful, because they rather relied on international support vs. national support/ a national strategy.

Local NGO: foreigners as a threat

In Indonesia, foreigners can be more a threat than a deterrent. At times, local NGOs are much more influential than foreigners. We have found that it is difficult to remotely accompany people, but that is what we are trying to do. We had one serious incident, with a trainee coming under threats when he was back in his community, and it was very difficult to communicate with him remotely and establish the facts. What was essential was having a network to cross-check information, to verify what was really happening. But we have found that internationals are increasingly putting people at greater risk by having a physical presence on the ground – because the Indonesian governments is less and less concerned about the human rights rhetoric from Western countries, and the Western embassies are implicit in gladly saying they are less powerful than before and can't influence events in fear of losing space to China. We are still trying to figure out how to deal with this situation as traditional UPC doesn't seem to work, and this is similar to other countries in the region, like Thailand.

PBI: field diplomacy

During an assessment prior to intervention in Indonesia, we passed a checkpoint. There were just the two of us. At the checkpoint there was a captain though usually there was nobody there. He was really hostile and did a formal assessment of all our papers. We started to talk to him about personal things. He was very educated, knew about AI and big HR reports criticizing continuously. He wanted to bring peace and help the nation. We shared then what we could do in our roles. This opened up opportunity to work there.

East Timor

Activist: people- to-people solidarity

My first actual experiment of accompaniment was when I was with International Solidarity—we call it people-to-people solidarity. I was part of a solidarity movement for East Timor when they were trying to gain their independence. What struck me was the fact that we were South to South people who experience the same struggle who can relate very well to the situation. This becomes an added element to the solidarity. It was not purely humanitarian when one party aids the other. That time, it was equal.

Tamil Nadu

Activist: monitoring

India has not opened for any international presence in conflict situations. It makes it a lot more difficult for the communities inside. A lot of it comes to human rights groups and activists. So you have to combine activism with representing the issue to national and international forums. Inside the country there are debates about nationalism and patriarchy. What is challenging in India is that when you are talking about ethnic or religious or resource conflicts, you can get branded as a communist. My experience of doing observation and presence in some tribal villages, you arrive there and spend time with families, then the tribals are living in fear, they don't want to testify. When you go to protect them, they ask how long you will stay to protect them. As soon as you reach the place, the police or administration have all the information about you. Then the villagers feel more threatened and those who are facilitating us are called by the police. So it can put them into more danger to monitor there. And we have to protect them when we take an INGO to the area. Another problem is: We rely more on taking cases to the courts, but the HR issues are so vast, there are not enough lawyers.

Nepal

PBI: criminalization of HRD

In Nepal we had a request for evacuation. We assessed the risk, how to support the person, if to move the whole family. We were encouraged by UN and so. One son was killed, the second was threatened. So we tried to get the support of embassies. UN wanted it to be done but did not want to get involved. All diplomats were scared because he was arrested several times, allegedly because of drugs. We wrote a report how HRDs were criminalized. So that they did understand what it meant when the police said he was a drug dealer.

Myanmar

NP: From international to national

In Myanmar the government first wanted internationals in the ceasefire monitoring to draw the different groups to the state's peace process. But now that violations are actually reported they get more critical and want the internationals out again.

We work there training local monitors. But often the locals try to go to talk to the military and the commanders won't even see them. So we have to support them in using their own networks and resources to find support or a spokesperson to go with them (influential people in the communities, NGOs, INGOs). People need to learn to look for help.

In Myanmar doors might be closing especially when it comes to ceasefire monitoring, it has become too sensitive. Now everyone talks about "social cohesion". So NP now picks that up and uses the government's discourse to get its agenda in. We try to find new entry points, new opportunities.

Researcher

NP took us to a meeting with monitors in Kachin state. We did follow up meetings to see how they were working. I found it fascinating because they're all volunteers, from poor background and they shared all these stories about how they talked to military, rebel groups. They had negotiated safe passage, how they had managed to get youth who had been forcibly recruited back to their communities through relationship building. They had been inventive how they had informed the military. They invited the military to a restaurant and told about the monitoring they are doing.

Rwanda

Spiritual aspects

The spiritual aspect to our work becomes important. I met a guy in Rwanda who was there during the genocide. He was not a UCP person, he was doing development work yet he ended up saving hundreds of lives without training. He was just being courageous and using his spiritual call to negotiate with the architects of the genocide to save lives.

Personal journey

I share this morning about Nicaragua in 1984. There were two groups that were sent in the first wave: one was partisan, one was non-partisan. I joined one group because they were partisan to the revolution. Years later I attended *sufi* class that taught about Rumi. She started to tell about the difference between Western-style and Eastern-style debate. I started a daydreaming where Rumi told me to enter the heart of my enemy. I wrote it in my notebook. Since that I was challenged to rethink enemy vs. friend, right vs. wrong, and what it means by unity. The next years I went to Buddhist *sangghas* and I ended up in a Buddhist monastery in France, where the monk said that we are at the time where the stake of choosing sides is too high. It also challenged me. The lesson for me was that there is something beyond than taking sides; that we have to solve problem in humanity and unity.

Personal journey

I don't have actual field experience, no key learning moment yet but have read a lot and had a course, done a field visit. A shifting point for me was meeting Tiffany, after that I started reading. I read a book by Sergei Popovich (in French) about how to bring down a dictator when you are small and not in control. While reading this, I felt like this book could give confidence to people who might be small and not have money but could be strong. It was very empowering to me, I actually started crying while reading it. I have a bit of experience in relief/humanitarian work. I'd say that UPC is civilian led, primacy of local actors is important to know the history, the situation and how the conflict was dealt with in the past. You have to know the people you want to help. It's really civilian led or else it's not possible to be sustainable. Good practice would be a thorough assessment, in-depth about the situation and the needs of the civilians. Information not just gathered on internet or in books but hours of dialogue with people. Then come up with tools. Not only for UPC, but all kind of projects.

Personal journey

I am drawn to the connection between peacekeeping and peacebuilding within myself and my family, and the connection between the locals and the internationals. When I was young, my family fought with guns and I thought that there must be a way to solve the problems other than with a gun. It was when I was three years old. Years later, I learned about Peace Brigades International and was awed by the fact that I do not have to be "someone" to defend peace. I only have to be grounded in nonviolence and I thought I wanted to be part of PBI someday. Then I got to be involved with the solidarity movement. Some of them were committed the language of violence that they knew and it was very moving. I met with Mel, did a degree on conflict transformation, and worked with NP in Sri Lanka. We did not know what we were doing at all. It was the local friends who also helped us to shape what nonviolent accompaniment is.

6.7 The Unarmed Civilian Protection Wheel

Participants were invited on the first day to mark in which field they are or have worked, in the UPC wheel developed by Nonviolent Peaceforce.

Yellow meant: "That is what we are doing"

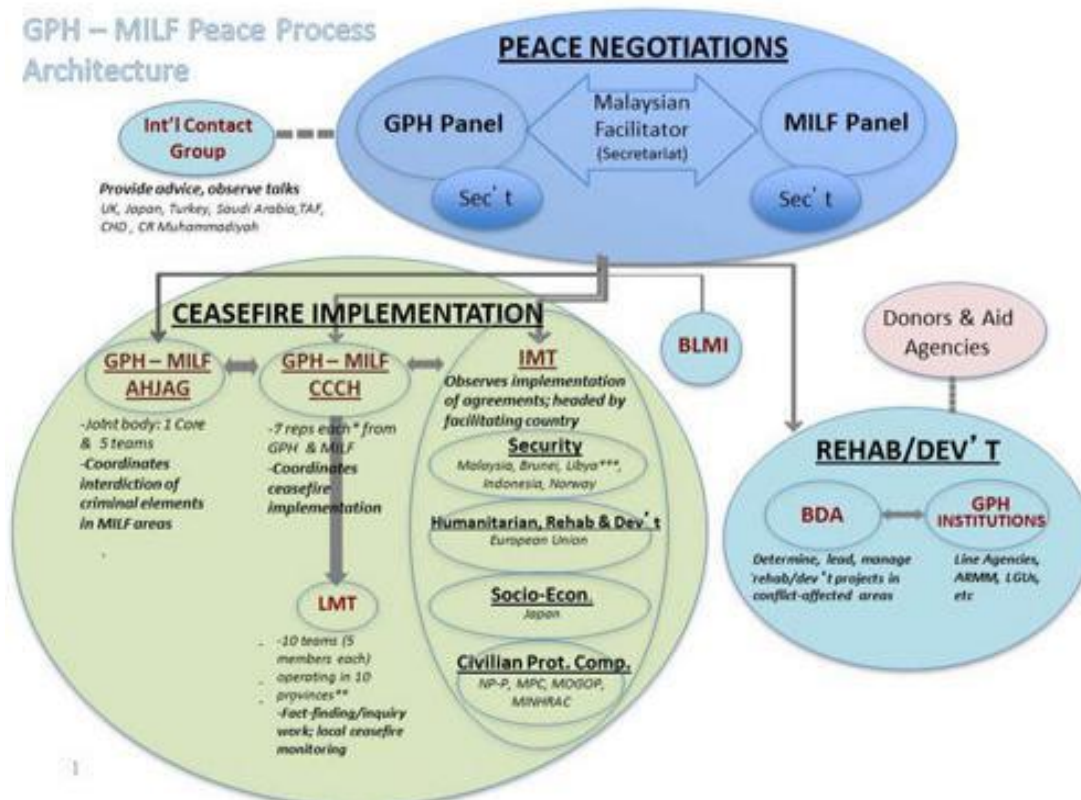
Blue meant: "I would like to learn more about it".



The workshop did not spend time to evaluate the markings. Perhaps remarkable alone is that there were some differences in regard to where people wished to learn more about – EWER and ceasefire monitoring being particularly remarkable.

6.8 Architecture of the Peace Structure on Mindanao:

This complex architecture is represented in the below diagram (produced by the [Office of the Presidential Advisor on the Peace Process](#)), but even this complexity leaves out the Organization of Islamic Cooperation which has observer status for the negotiation.



Source: <https://asiafoundation.org/2012/10/17/internationals-malaysia-and-negotiations-for-peace-in-the-philippines/>