



# **NP South Sudan**

**Civilian Protection at the  
Outbreak of Civil War**

**2013 - 2014**



# Our Mission

To develop, implement and promote unarmed civilian protection as an effective approach for reducing violence and for protecting civilians affected by violent conflict.

# Our Vision

A world in which large-scale unarmed civilian is a recognized and viable approach for preventing, addressing, and mitigating the impact of violent conflicts on civilians.

As our contribution to this world, our vision for Nonviolent Peaceforce is that it be widely recognised as one of the leaders in the field of UCP, well-known for its effectiveness, and respected for the breadth of its impact.

# Guiding Principles

**Nonviolence:** We believe nonviolence to be the strongest possible force for change towards peaceful settlement of conflicts.

**Non-partisanship:** We do not take sides nor advocate for partisan positions in any conflict. Instead, we are guided by the sum of international laws and norms, including International Humanitarian Law, Refugee Law, Human Rights Law, and relevant UN Resolutions.

**Primacy of local actors:** We facilitate and create safer spaces for local actors to work out their own solutions to their problems.

**Civilian-to-civilian:** Our work is carried out by civilians for civilians, and is grounded in communities affected by violent conflict.

# TABLE *of* CONTENTS

## Acronyms

CFS	Child Friendly Space
CPC	Child Protection Committee
CVA	Capacities and Vulnerability Assessment
FGD	Focus Group Discussions
GBV	Gender Based Violence
KII	Key Informant Interviews
IDP	Internally Displaced Person
INGO	International Non-Governmental Organization
IPO	International Protection officer
IRNA	Initial Rapid Response Assessments
NPSS	Nonviolent Peaceforce South Sudan
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NPO	National Protection Officer
PoC	Protection of Civilians
RRC	Relief and Rehabilitation Commission
SGBV	Sexual Gender Based Violence
SRSG	Special Representative of the Secretary-General
UNMISS	United Nation Mission of South Sudan
UCP	Unarmed Civilian Peacekeeping
WPT	Women Peacekeeping Team

**Published by**  
Nonviolent Peaceforce South Sudan  
Block A, Munuki,  
Juba, South Sudan

[southsudan@nonviolentpeaceforce.org](mailto:southsudan@nonviolentpeaceforce.org)

[www.nonviolentpeaceforce.org](http://www.nonviolentpeaceforce.org)

<b>09</b>	<b>Message from the Country Director</b>
<b>10</b>	<b>Overview</b>
<b>12</b>	<b>About NP South Sudan</b>
<b>14</b>	<b>NP South Sudan Impact: 2014</b>
<b>18</b>	<b>Direct Protection</b>
<b>20</b>	<b>Protection Mainstreaming</b>
<b>24</b>	<b>Child Protection</b>
<b>28</b>	<b>Mobile Response</b>
<b>30</b>	<b>Women Participation and Protection</b>
<b>32</b>	<b>Logistics</b>
<b>36</b>	<b>Community Feedback</b>
<b>40</b>	<b>Some words from our staff</b>
<b>54</b>	<b>Thank You</b>



## Message from NP South Sudan Country Director

On behalf of the entire Nonviolent Peaceforce team in South Sudan, I would like to thank you for your interest in learning about the situation in the country and the work that NP has been doing to improve the safety and security of civilians affected by the sudden escalation of violence that has characterized the last year, since the outbreak of civil war in December 2013.

As you will read, it has been a year full of both heartbreak and hope somehow in equal measure. While the story of war is so often summarized in statistics and broad analysis, by living with communities across the country we have had the privilege to know countless individuals who each have their own story, their own experience of pain, suffering, fear and loss. The individual lives who, one at a time, make up the true reality of war. We have also been witness to extraordinary acts of kindness and courage, where people despite differences in identities and with the smallest of resources are protecting and supporting each other.

Our team in South Sudan feels like a family. We have a shared sense of identity and purpose, and together we are using our training and experiences to help as many people as possible feel safer and more secure, even in the most difficult of circumstances. The NP South Sudan family consists of more than 150 people and is fanned out across the country in 11 teams. Our South Sudanese NP colleagues have been extraordinary ambassadors for peace both living the war as citizens of this country while actively living their commitment to nonviolence. Our international colleagues have come from more than 20 countries around the world to offer their capacities as unarmed civilian protectors.

As we write this, the war is yet ongoing and tragically shows little sign of abating. It is only the South Sudanese can bring an end to this war and build the country they want. Our job will continue to be implementing the strongest unarmed civilian protection programming possible to contribute to making things safer and more dignified for the communities in which we serve.

**Tiffany Easthom**

Nonviolent Peaceforce South Sudan  
Country Director

# Overview

Following decades of devastating civil war with Sudan, South Sudan finally gained independence in 2011, becoming the world's youngest nation. While the new country faced innumerable challenges from the outset, with South Sudan also becoming one of the least developed countries, the vast majority of South Sudanese were elated to finally attain their long-sought autonomy. South Sudan, they felt, was a land of hope and opportunity. Little more than two years later, however, yet another civil war broke out in South Sudan- this time between South Sudanese themselves..

On December 15th, 2013, rising tensions within the ruling SPLM party erupted in Juba, South Sudan's capitol. Days of heavy fighting in the city left thousands dead, tens of thousands displaced, and entire neighborhoods razed to the ground. The conflict rapidly spread through the country. The level and brutality of targeted violence against civilians has been extraordinary. Even the most vulnerable sections of society- including children, the disabled and elderly- have been abducted, tortured, raped and killed. Two million civilians- or 1/4 of the entire South Sudanese population- have fled their homes as a result of insecurity over the course of the year.

Tensions between host communities and internally displaced persons (IDPs) have progressively escalated, and inter-communal conflicts over limited resources have increased as the influx of IDPs continues. Livelihood opportunities and access to basic services have been severely reduced. Borders have

closed, markets have been destroyed, and trade-routes have closed. Farmers cannot cultivate due to insecurity and lack of tools and cattle herders cannot move to their grazing grounds, resulting in South Sudan becoming the most food insecure country in the world in 2014.

Even in the few areas of the country that have not been directly affected by the civil war there has even been a rapid escalation in violence. The proliferation of small arms in combination with the deterioration of rule of law has led to an increase in inter-clan conflict and crime in such areas as Lakes State, where over 1000 civilians were killed in 2014.

The conflict in South Sudan has now entered its second year and the prospects for peace in the immediate future remain bleak. The Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD)<sup>1</sup> supported peace process, while an admirable initiative at its outset, has yet to produce tangible results.

Despite the immense heartbreak that has affected South Sudanese from all ethnicities, tribes and clans, many continue to not only hope- but to work towards a peaceful future. While the war rages on at the national level, communities at the local level are quietly and tirelessly working across fault lines to re-establish localized security, resist the impetus to be drawn further into the conflict and continue to recognize each other's common humanity. Tragedy is apparent on a daily basis, but so too is the resilience of a people who continue to not only survive against incredible odds, but also rebuild both their homes and their will to create a stable and peaceful country so that their children will one day know the true meaning of peace.



# About NP

# South Sudan

Founded in 2002, Nonviolent Peaceforce is an INGO that recruits, trains and deploys unarmed civilians to reduce violence and protect civilians in conflict-affected areas.

Using the Unarmed Civilian Protection (UCP) methodology, NP provides direct protection for civilians, influences conflict actors to use alternatives to violence, and builds the capacity of local communities to increase their own safety and security. The UCP methodology has a demonstrated track record of effectively reducing violence

against civilians all over the world<sup>2</sup>, and has been utilized by NP with consistent success for over eleven years.

Unarmed Civilian Protection practitioners (UCPs) live and work in communities, allowing them to engage with civilians at the grassroots level for extended periods of time. In order to deter imminent threats of violence, they provide, protective presence, accompaniment and patrolling for civilians at risk of violence. They work to resolve the localized causes of violent conflicts through

such activities as facilitating dialogue, conducting shuttle diplomacy and conducting rumor control to de-escalate tensions. Lastly, they work with local communities to establish sustainable protection mechanisms so that violent conflict is less likely to re-occur in the future. This includes facilitating the development, training and coaching of community protection teams, including women's peacekeeping teams; establishing early warning/early response systems; and building the capacity of local security actors to protect communities.

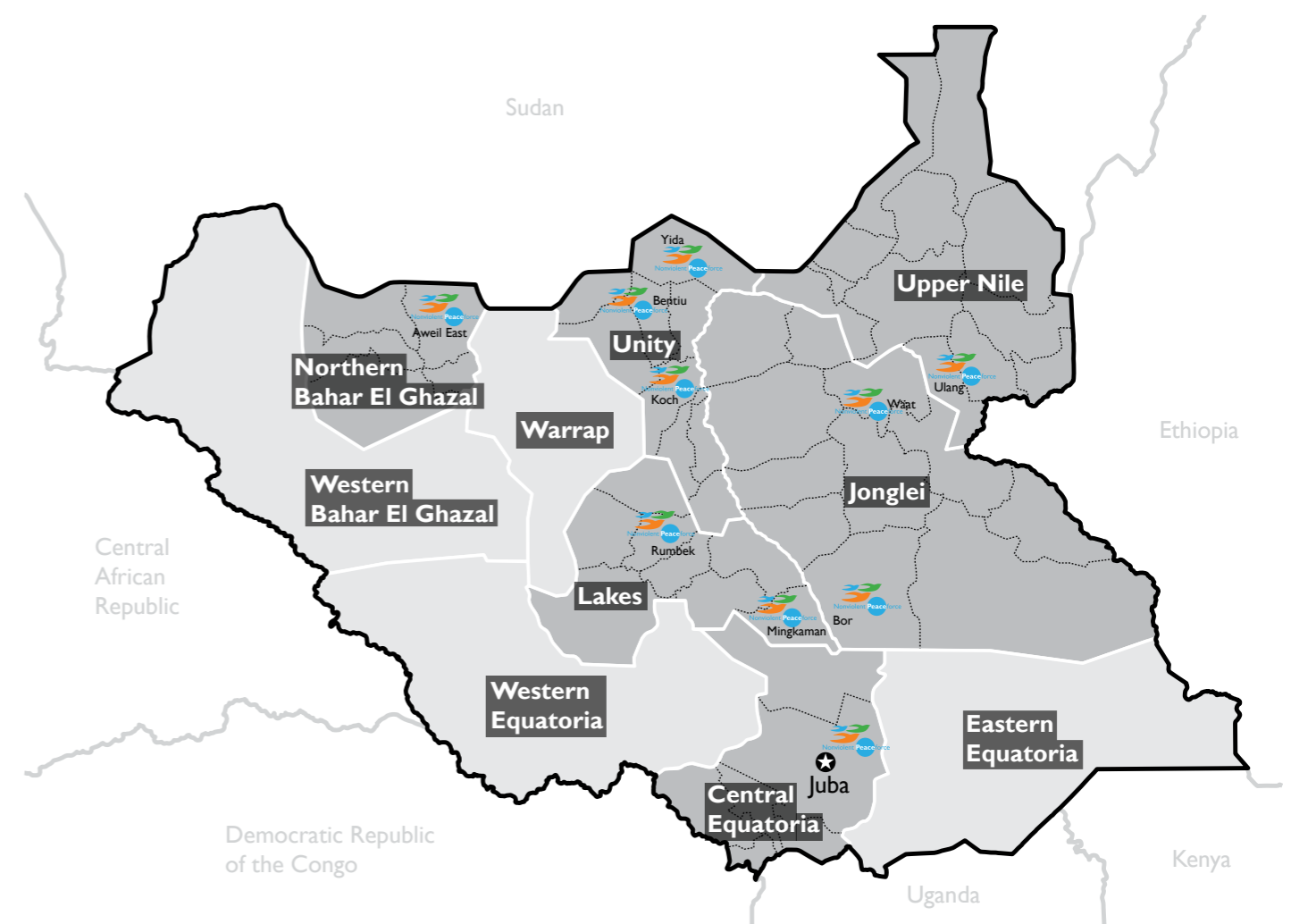
UCP methods and applications are dynamic, reinforcing and complementing each other. They are utilized and adapted to the specific context and needs of the targeted population.

UCP has pragmatic and economic advantages

as well. It is cost-effective and can be operationalized relatively quickly. UCP is applicable at all stages of conflict, from preventing escalation at the outset to sustaining peace agreements during later stages.

## NP in South Sudan

NP has been operating in South Sudan since 2010 and currently has eleven field teams operating throughout the country. In order to best support conflict-affected communities in South Sudan, NP has developed thematic programming that includes direct protection from imminent violence, women's participation and protection, child protection, civic engagement, protection in displacement and protection mainstreaming.



<sup>2</sup> Mahony, L. (2004). "Side by Side: Protecting and encouraging threatened activists with unarmed international accompaniment." Minneapolis: New Tactics in Human Rights.

# NP South Sudan's Impact: 2014

To effectively respond to the outbreak of conflict and the associated humanitarian emergency, NP had to quickly adapt to the new reality on the ground. NP was one of the few INGOs that did not evacuate from South Sudan when the civil war began, and one of the first organizations to become operational in the new emergency context.





Having already acquired significant protection emergency response experience in South Sudan, NP was able to quickly adapt its programming and strategically position its teams to provide protection for civilians who were at most imminent risk of violence. Within a few weeks of the outbreak of the war, NP had field teams set up in four of the most concentrated displacement sites in the country. As the war spread throughout the country, NP expanded its presence to reach newly conflict-affected populations, eventually becoming the largest protection agency in the country.

Entering the second year of the conflict, NP is continuing to adapt its programming in a constantly shifting context. Although the situation in the country remains dire and civilians are continuing to experience violence in their daily lives, the operating environment has become more predictable with humanitarian infrastructure is now in place. In addition to its continuing emergency response work, NP is now also implementing protracted crisis response and prevention interventions.





# Direct Protection

- Extracted 33 civilians while massacres were being carried out, and accompanied them to the UN Protection of Civilians site (PoC).
- Provided protective presence to 5 women and 9 children during a large-scale attack on a displacement site, including successfully negotiating with gunmen to refrain from shooting them on three separate occasions
- Conducted intensive protective patrols in areas where civilians are highly vulnerable to attacks, enhancing the security of more than 10,000 people.

NP's field teams in the Juba, Bentiu and Bor PoCs have been able to reduce the high the level of SGBV, abductions and attacks on civilians outside the PoCs through a combination of initiatives, including accompaniment for those most at risk, patrols in vulnerable areas, and coordinating the participation of other protection actors such as UN Peacekeepers. NP has also provided direct protection for IDPs traveling between PoC sites, with teams coordinating across the country in or-



der ensure that civilians can safely relocate.

Teams have also consistently carried out direct protection within the PoCs, where severe overcrowding, clan conflict and political divides lead to frequent violent fights and even mob killings. Due to NP's high community acceptance, NP staff have been able to intervene in fights before they spread throughout the PoC, prevent revenge attacks.

In Mingkaman, Lakes State, one of the largest displacement sites in the country, NP accompanied local leaders and provided safe space for dialogue after conflict broke out, culminating in an overall resolution to the conflict, and associated incidents of violence having been eliminated.



# Protection Mainstream

- Facilitated safe access to basic services for an estimated 75,000 IDPs who risked being attacked, raped or harassed in order to receive aid.
- On multiple occasions, humanitarian partners have said that distributions would have been impossible to carry out without NP's protection support.
- Provided protective accompaniment for IDPs who had to travel through insecure areas to access basic services and humanitarian aid.

Protection mainstreaming centers around ensuring that humanitarian aid is delivered in a manner that promotes the safety and dignity of civilians, and does not harm their security.

Within the context of the current humanitarian crisis in South Sudan and the associated large scale humanitarian response, NP's coordination and collaboration with other humanitarians has significantly increased. Within such a highly vol-

atile context, the actions of any actor- including humanitarian organizations- may have protection implications. NP has been able to utilize its unique expertise to enhance other humanitarian actors mainstreaming of protection concerns in their work.

NP's protection mainstreaming programming focused on three key areas in 2014:

## ▶ Enhancing protection at registrations or food distributions, from planning through implementation and follow-up.

In complex political crises where tensions are high distributions can quickly become chaotic, overcrowded and potentially dangerous to both the population in need of relief and humanitarian staff. Especially since the outbreak of the conflict, with large populations in desperate need of basic services, there have been a myriad of protection issues at humanitarian operations in South Sudan-including frequent physical fights, vulnerable persons being injured or collapsing after standing in line for hours in hot temperatures, and even riots. NP has been able to mitigate such violence and protection concerns by assisting in the planning, implementation and follow up of distributions.

### Planning

Prior to distributions, NP works local government, leaders and humanitarian agencies to ensure that the community is fully sensitized on the process (timing, location, and procedures) and the rationale behind it prior to the distribution. Providing regular messages and soliciting feedback from beneficiaries about the process has been highly effective in maintaining order and calm, and thereby mitigating any potential conflict. NP as

### Implementation

During distributions, NP provides such as by contributing to crowd control, meaningful access for persons with specific needs, or community messaging.

NP also work with local government, leaders and humanitarian agencies to establish an approach for protecting and expediting vulnerable individuals, which may include a separate line for vulnerable individuals to enter the distribution site, or a mobile team to distribute food to individuals who are ill or have mobility issues preventing them from leaving their homes. Other measures to support vulnerables including providing water and erecting plastic sheets for shade, especially for sick and elderly individuals and pregnant and lactating mothers.

### Follow-up

Civilians have also experienced violence when traveling to and from distributions. In order to minimize such incidents, NP worked with material aid providers to identify the safest possible location for distributions. When necessary, NP accompanied civilians to and from distributions so that they could safely access aid.

**Informing humanitarian partners' understanding of the conflict context, protection risks civilians are facing, and communities' security concerns.**

NP carried out information sharing and advocacy at multiple levels of humanitarian coordination to improve protection practices, enhance contextual understanding of the conflict and promote conflict-sensitive programming among humanitarian partners.

**Promoting & facilitating engagement and communication between humanitarian partners and key community stakeholders.**

Because NP has such strong relationships with community leaders and members, and also has links with humanitarian actors, NP facilitates direct contact and communication with the two parties. These activities enhance communities' access to the services available, improves humanitarian organizations' ability to reach the most vulnerable populations and ensures that communities' concerns about aid provision can be better addressed.





# Child Protection

- Provided protection for 31,160 children in conflict-affected areas, including 2,083 separated and unaccompanied children.
- Provided safe space for 12,210 displaced boys and girls in PoC sites by establishing and operating Child Friendly Spaces the PoCs.
- Accompanied over 250 separated and unaccompanied to reunify them with their families.
- Provided emergency case management services to 2,812 vulnerable children such as child soldiers, GBV survivors and neglected children
- Formed 30 local Child Protection Committees that raise awareness and respond to child protection concerns in their community.
- Supported thousands of adults to better protect children by carrying out child protection trainings and forming 30 local Child Protection Committees that raise awareness and respond to child protection concerns in their community.

A year of conflict has left its marks on the first generation of children growing up in an independent nation. Child recruitment is rampant. Desperate to help both their families and themselves, many children are easily enticed into taking up arms in exchange for the promise of food and a salary. Others are recruited by force or through coercion. Additionally, 7,000 children have been separated from their families while fleeing from the violence. Such children are at heightened risk of abuse and exploitation.

On a larger level, the war has destroyed the social fabric of communities, leaving children without families, schools and other structures that were meant to ensure their safe and healthy upbringing.

NP's child protection programme aims to prevent children from becoming victims of these threats and to support children, families and communities that have suffered from child rights violations.

In 2014, NP concentrated on providing protection for the children who were most acutely affected by the civil war. This included establishing and run-

ning child friendly spaces CFSs in displacement settings. CFS not only provide physical protection from violence for conflict-affected children, they also provide a forum for children to have some semblance of normalcy with structured recreational activities, early childhood development sessions and psychosocial support. NP also expanded its family tracing and reunification (FTR) services in order to either reunite them with their families, or identify alternative care arrangements if necessary.

NP also worked to enhance the sustainability of local child protection systems in Yida, a refugee camp that NP has been working in since 2011. NP has been working intensively with local child protection committees in Yida, since 2012, and the committees have progressively become more effective and independent in addressing child protection concerns in their community. NP worked to solidify these structures in 2014 so that they can sustain themselves without outside support.





## Mobile Response:

South Sudan is a vast country whose severely limited physical infrastructure renders approximately half the country inaccessible by road, for up to half of the year. In the early months of war, hundreds of thousands of people fled, many into “the bush” for safety putting themselves beyond the fighting but also beyond humanitarian support. To this end, the humanitarian community agreed to establish mobile response teams in all sectors

in an effort to efficiently be able to access populations in hard to reach areas, to learn what their needs were and to provide life saving support. As the largest protection NGO in South Sudan, NP quickly established a Mobile Response Protection team in response to the outbreak of civil war.

The NP mobile team conducts missions throughout the country in order to:

- Address sudden protection concerns including rape, harassment, and forcible recruitment of civilians;
- Provide protection mainstreaming support at emergency food and nonfood item distributions, which are especially prone to protection problems.
- Carry out protection assessments in remote areas, produce and distribute assessment reports, and carry out advocacy in order to initiate a collective humanitarian response.
- Identify capacities that may help inform and strengthen further humanitarian intervention. In 2014, the mobile team carried out 24 missions, and more specifically,
  - Provided protection mainstreaming support at eight distributions (including distributions that lasted over two weeks).
  - Conducted a conflict early warning/early response workshop in an area at imminent risk of attack.
  - Carried out 23 protection assessments, and carried out associated advocacy that resulted in tens of thousands of civilians receiving life-saving services.
  - Provided support to 7 static field teams when they required additional support to address urgent protection needs.





# Womens Participation and Protection



- Reduced the incidence of SGBV and harassment to zero in some locations during protective accompaniment activities.
- Facilitated the formation and operationalization of 13 Women's Peacekeeping Teams, thereby enhancing the capacity of 287 South Sudanese women to take leadership roles in promoting their communities' peace and security.
- Accompanied women at a high risk of sexual violence when they collect water, gather firewood and access market places.

The prevalence and brutality of sexual and gender based violence (SGBV) in South Sudan has skyrocketed since the outbreak of civil war in December 2013. Following her October 2014 visit to South Sudan, Special Representative of the Secretary-General (SRSG) on Sexual Violence in Conflict Zainab Bangura reported that sexual violence in South Sudan was the worst she had seen worldwide. According to the South Sudan GBV sub cluster, "rape is occurring every day around the country, with reports coming in that armed actors from all sides of the conflict are raping women and girls both during active battles and in the lulls in-between, both in rural and urban settings."<sup>3</sup>

## Deterrence of Imminent SGBV Risks

Due to the urgency of the situation women are facing throughout South Sudan, NP consistently provided direct protection for women facing immediate risk of violence. These protection activities are specifically tailored for the vulnerabilities women are experiencing, but have included accompaniment,

patrolling, protective presence, and 'cordoning' safe areas for firewood collection. NP also coordinated response services for survivors of SGBV throughout 2014 to ensure women we meet have the best access to services possible given the circumstances while we focus on prevention and protection from violence.

## Women's Peacekeeping Teams

Women who are active participants in peace and security in their communities are less likely to experience SGBV. In keeping with NP's commitment to strengthen local and sustainable peace capacities, it has placed significant emphasis on its Women's Peacekeeping Teams (WPT) programme. NP forms, trains, and provides intensive follow-up support to WPTs to sustainably reduce SGBV. WPTs work with women in their communities to identify the risks associated with SGBV (e.g. locations/times where women are particularly vulnerable) and establish mitigation measures, including through coordination with security actors; additionally, WPTs coordinate with government and traditional authorities to accountability for perpetrators of SGBV.



<sup>3</sup> South Sudan GBV Subcluster, "Between a Rock and a Hard Place: Why we need to invest in GBV in food crisis? The Link between Food Security and Conflict Related Violence in South Sudan" May 2014





# Logistics

In the humanitarian world, logistics is the processes and systems that mobilizes resources and knowledge to help provide aid to the affected population by a crisis. Responding to violent conflicts is characterized by uncertainty and complexity, which require extensive resource management in order for the organization to address and implement better responses. NP's logistics team support all the teams around South Sudan through acquiring and delivering requested supplies and services to where they are needed, whilst ensuring best value for money.

In this South Sudan crisis context, NP's logistic team ensures efficient and effective delivery. Keeping logistic operating at high performance requires that a variety of relationships between external and internal stakeholders for efficient and effective coordination and eliminating redundancy. Logistics in South Sudan are particularly challenging due to limited local infrastructure, influx in the weak economy and demands to be true to the value for money.

# Future Plans

Entering the second year of the conflict, NP is continuing to adapt its programming to the context. Although the situation in the country remains dire, it has become more predictable and humanitarian infrastructure is now in place allowing programming to shift from emergency response to a combination of protracted crisis response and prevention interventions. Every NP field team is able to engage in both emergency direct protection and strengthening local peace capacities, and is able to quickly shift focuses when the context changes.



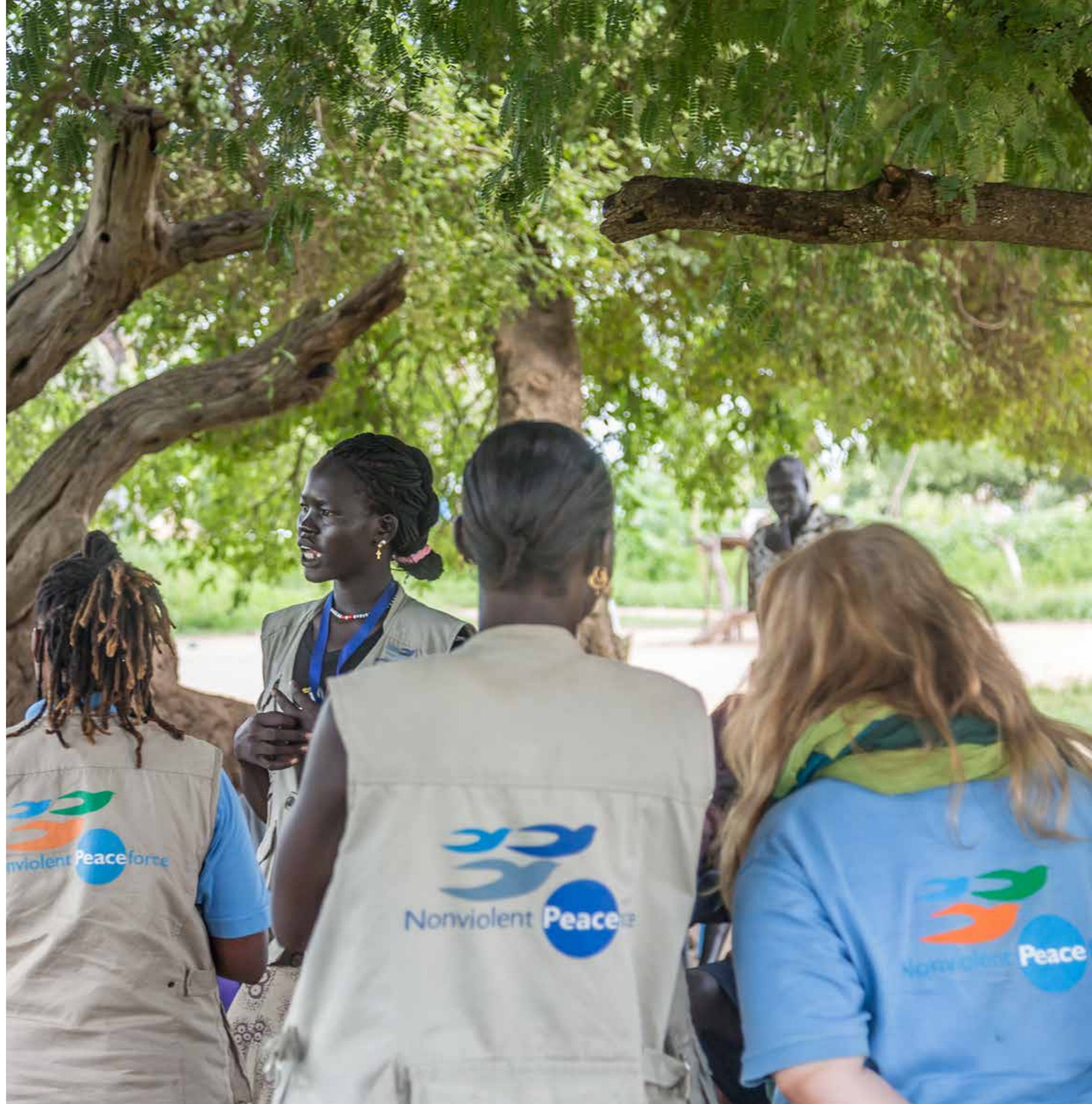
# Community Feedback



- *“NP is a very important organization. Because they have seen and spoken of our problems, other organizations came to help us”- community leader*
- *“We could not have done the distribution without the support of NP” –humanitarian partner*
- *“It is God who sent NP to visit us today and we hope that the presence of the Bishop here will chase away the devil of war and we shall live peacefully again”, cattle camp leader.*
- *“Dinka Malual and Misseriya ladies are now one as WPT”. –after an NP-established WPT facilitated the resolution of a local conflict*
- *“I was beaten and almost killed. I wanted revenge but NP’s training has made me change my mind. I have forgiven them and I am willing to make peace with them”.*
- *“The formation of WPTs have boosted the confidence of women to believe women can also have peaceful solutions and can also be consulted”,*
- *“Now that you are here the sweet names couples used to call each other long time ago like the mother of my son or the father of my daughter will come back,” by a Chief during the SGBV Emergency Response Training*
- *“The recognition and impact of the WPT amazing. They are being recognized very well in the community. ....many people are now even preferring to bring their conflicts to the WPT for resolution ” –Community member*
- *“I really do appreciate NP’s tireless effort to bring peace among our communities in lakes state” –Government Official*
- *“NP took the lead in addressing the conflict: they volunteerer to go to contested grazing areas to prevent an escalation in violence . For them, it is vital to take such an initiative as the next two weeks will be very crucial!”-Paramount hief*
- *“NP has stopped the bloodshed between us” youth group involved in clan conflict.*
- *“It is such a wonderful opportunity to see women brought together and taught how to participate in community protection. Women understand that it does not necessarily mean cowardice to give concessions for the sake of peace. It is also not cowardice to love living without problems. Yet youth here are praised for brutal and senseless actions. Let us now move from culture of violence to the new culture of nonviolence.”*



# Some Words from Our Staff



## Interview with Florington Aseervatham



Florington Aseervatham is no stranger to Nonviolent Peaceforce, having spent over 6 years working with various NP offices in Sri Lanka and South Sudan, holding various positions. He joined NP South Sudan in February 2011 and currently holds the position of Deputy Country Director, overseeing logistics, human resources, and operations.

Florington's job demands that he is operational at all hours of the day and simultaneously achieving results. Florington credits his success to the ability to apply what he has learned and to adjust to the sometimes unpredictable world South Sudan:

### 1. How did NP develop an understanding of the context during the outbreak of the

### violence?

One of my main objectives following the outbreak of conflict was to establish a strategy to respond to the current context of the violent conflict that erupted. We as NP wanted to make sure we are responding efficient and effectively safely provide protection for the civilians affect by the conflict.

My second objective was to provide moral and physical support to our staff who are committed to providing a safe environment for IDPs. From cooking to setting up tents to procurement, I did whatever that was necessary to have the staff operating by any means.

During December and early January NP worked mostly in the PoCs in Juba. During those times, the Juba streets were deserted due to the insecurity, as the population didn't feel safe to move around. At times we would be the only vehicle driving through the streets of Juba, and we had a 6pm curfew.

Shortly thereafter, we began to dispatch teams to other violence-affected areas like Bentiu, Bor and Mingkaman.

### 2. What was the first stage of NP's response?

The first stage was accurately gathering information on the affect population in the PoC to identify the injured, children who have died, separated and unaccompanied children, the effects on the women and children of due to inter-clan fighting. We also established night patrolling and provided protective presence throughout the PoC.

### 3. How many hours did you work a week?

Honestly, I love what I do and I enjoy being proactive to get things done. I worked from morning until I headed off to sleep.

### 4. What was most challenging for you during that time?

Security was the main issue. , Criminality increased and most of the international community left the country when the conflict erupted. At night there were gunshots so we had to be extra careful at time.

The PoCs were a new context in South Sudan and we had to adapt to our programming to fit the needs to the IDPs in this new environment. In the beginning it wasn't easy so we had to be creative in planning and implementation to deal with the challenges in acquiring the knowledge to protect civilian in a PoC.

### 5. Did you want to be evacuated at any point?

At that point we were short on staff. If I didn't think I was suitable for the situation I wouldn't have come. I was telling the staff that if any one has concerns they we can evacuated immediately. In this line of work you have to be self confident that you can operate in situations like these.

### 6. What lessons have you learned from that time?

Our work during the outbreak of the civil war taught us a lot of things:

- The importance of high tolerance, flexibility and adaptability. You have to be "On" 24 hours/7 days a week. There's no 9 to 5 work here.
- We needed to have back-up communication

systems because both the phone and the internet networks went down, which made communicating extremely difficult.

### 7. What are your personal perspective or feelings on how NP operates to support communities?

I think for the last 5 years NPSS work has been recognized and accepted by the communities throughout South Sudan.

Given the context of South Sudan there is a lot or room for a non-partisan agency to play a big role in providing more services to the vulnerable communities.

### 8. Is there any message you would like to share with everyone??

Considering that fact that NP is a leading protection agency in South Sudan, I would like to take this opportunity to thank all our donors for their funding and support. Without your compassionate support we work would have no impact.

I would also like to thank and show my appreciation to our NP staff and volunteers throughout South Sudan. Their commitment, enthusiasm and dedication during and after the crisis has been wonderful. We sincerely appreciate your outstanding creative work by providing civilian protection. We have all noticed the enthusiasm and extra hours you put in.

I am very happy now that we have a communication officer in our country office to enable NP communicate the wonderful work we do to the world. We have spent most of our time implementing our programmes and now I see the need to showcase our work. This will also enable us to show our gratitude to our donors and supports.

## Interview with Jane Wambui Wanjiru



**Jane Wambui Wanjiru** is currently working for NP South Sudan as a Womens Participation and Protection Technical advisor. Jane has been working for NP for over 6 years and her jury with NP started in Sir Lanka and came to South Sudan in February 2012. She has held many positions throughout her career with NP holding mixtures of roles. Jane is the lady in the middle wearing a blue polo shirt.

### 1. Where you in the country during the outbreak of violence in 2013?

I went for my annual on the 14th December.

### 2. When did you come back?

I was supposed to return on 9th of January 2014 but due to the situation our senior management team though it was better to wait for a bit before coming back; therefore I came back on January 17th.

When i came, I was based here in Juba; Tiffany was taking care of a young girl in an Cambodian Clinic in a neighborhood called Tong Ping. The girl was between 7 and 8 years from Bor in Jonglei State. She suffered from a gunshot wound on her leg and the wound wasn't treated properly so she was evacuated to Juba for urgent treatment. While the team was working on tracing down her family, Tiffany (NPSS Country Director) was by the girl's side everyday in the clinic. NPSS was very short on staff during this tough time and Tiffany was playing the role of NPO, IPO, CD and driver operating from the clinic.

Once I arrived I came to support Tiffany at the clinic as she was exhausted by that time because the young girl needed a lot of attention and support. During my time with her we were able to trace down a relative of hers. The relative being a man, felt that it was too much for me. We couldn't understand why they couldn't help and support but yet we couldn't give up. Then UNMISS human rights and catholic nuns started visiting support us and giving care.

### 3. How dose NP develop an understanding of the context they are working in?

Through communities, leaders, local partners, authorities, and government officials. We build relationship with all the communities given in a certain area so that we can get to know the context so that we can come up with creative ways on how to address the issues. After we build trust that gives us

a way to ask deeper questions to the community to get to the root of the issues.

Our national staffs are the first to hear and gather information. Its very important for International staff to be humble and listen, put aside our expertise and just to listen. Then you bring your expertise and ask how I can help and support. We work closely with various UN agencies to fund us to conduct trainings in the community. We also have joint field visits with various UN agencies.

### 4. How many hours did you work a week during that time?

Different situations require different working hours.

Normal working hours which are 9 to 5.

Emergency working hours can us to be working through the evening.

Emergency Emergency mode requires us to work through the night and in field sites movement is restricted due to the insecurity and this when we ask for support from local authorities to help.

### 5. What are some of the challenges that you face in South Sudan?

Being accepted by the community. Some NGOs offer sitting allowances to encourage community members to attend meetings and we as NP do not offer a sitting allowance to trainings and meetings. This causes issues, as we have to explain that we are not a material aid agency but we work together with the community to find sustainable solutions to issues regarding civilian protection. Also the communities often have many requests that we do not provide.

### 6. Did you want to leave South Sudan at any point?

Honestly no never. I never felt that I am tired or fed up. I feel at home in NP, and its a whole package for me, we are holistic, we don't give things but we find sustainable solutions to help the community with civilian protection.

### 7. What lessons have you learned from your time here in South Sudan?

Listening, Listening and not judging. Listening with an open mind, respecting everyone even if a woman doesn't have education, status or class but by showing her respect you make her feel acknowledged and valued. Key members of the community are the chiefs and leaders they are the way in to the community accepting us.

**"Every right is accompanied by a responsibility."** In every community there are things that are working and things are not working. We come to empower on what's working and change with the approval and guidance of the community what's not working, because they are not happy with it.

### 8. What are your personal perspective or feelings on how NP operates to support communities?

I am happy with what we do, i am totally happy in how we carry ourselves and support communities

### 9. Is there any message you would like to share with everyone (NP community, donors ect.) ?

UCP works!

Everybody or every community needs it. I can also contribute to my won safety and my neighbor.

It's something that's really needed.

## Interview with **Ajanth David**



Ajanth is NP's Safety and Security Manager in South Sudan; he is the person you contact whenever there is an emergency.

Ajanth is no stranger to Nonviolent Peaceforce, having spent over 4 years working with NP in Sri Lanka, the Philippines, and South Sudan, holding a mixture of roles. He initially came to South Sudan in April 2011 and currently holds the position of Safety and Security Manager.

Ajanth's role also requires that he is operational at all hours of the day to address security concerns

### **1. Could you describe to me your role in the organization?**

I ensure the safety and security of all NP staff, properties and assets. I put in place and adapt good security practices to enable NP staff conduct their operations in a safe and professional manner.

### **2. What does this role mean to you?**

Unlike many INGO Security Managers, I don't have a military background. I started working for NP as a National Protection Officer in Sri Lanka and progressed from there to become a Team Leader, and finally to senior Safety and Security Manager. Since I have been working in various positions and locations in NP, I have frequently had to assess new situations and making decisions on how to safely and effectively implement our civilian protection programming within the context. It is this experience that allows me to find solutions so that we can safely implement our programming.

### **3. What field site do you work in?**

I work in all our NP field sites, including our NP Juba office. Two-thirds of my time is spent in field sites, creating and adapting security plans and supporting team leaders to implement them. My support also includes supporting the NP team with programmatic operations by sharing and learning through implementing projects.

### **4. How long have you been working with**

### **NP South Sudan?**

I worked for NP in South Sudan initially from April 2011 until July 2013. I then went to NP's Philippines project for a short period, and returned to South Sudan on March 2014.

### **5. So you were around to see the aftermath of December 2013 outbreak of violence?**

I had been here before and during the independence of South Sudan and also after the December outbreak of violence. During the initial outbreak of violence it was difficult because we didn't immediately have the staff available to cover all of the needs. Therefore I had to play many roles to enable us as NP to support and protect the vulnerable civilians. Security was a major concern during this rough time but the NP family stuck together to help and support each other.

### **6. How do you keep up to date with the ever-changing context of South Sudan?**

Mostly through keeping in touch with local contacts from the ground. Building and maintaining relationship here with local and international actors in South Sudan is key. We get information from a wide variety of sources. Most importantly our national staff play a big role from all NP field sites to share information with me as they are NP's ears and eyes of on the ground-they are the first to hear news and best positioned to verify it.

### **7. How do you adapt to working in this context?**

I grew up in Sri Lanka, which suffered from 3 decades of civil war, so all through my life I have been living in conflict zones.

### **8. Have you thought about leaving South**

### **Sudan due to insecurity?**

There have been many times in certain field sites that NP has been exposed to insecurity such as gunshot and shelling. We've had to make tough calls as to whether to evacuate or relocate the teams. Deciding whether to evacuate our team or not is a very tough call to make because our mandate is to protect civilians but the working conditions can become dangerous for us to operate in. But for me personally I have never felt the need to leave South Sudan because of the insecurity.

### **9. What are some of the challenges you face in this role?**

It's a very complicated conflict with various ethnic groups and clans involved. It is sometimes impossible to determine who is in control in which area, and sometimes areas change hands very quickly. This makes it more difficult to build and maintain relationships, which is required for our practices both in terms of security and programming.

There are times where we built relationships with an actor but then the next day the actor will move and a new actor comes in to take their place. We then have to start building a relationship from scratch.

Many of the communities in South Sudan have displaced and are scattered around the country. Carrying out needs assessments becomes a challenge when populations are moving so quickly. The presence of land mines and unexploded ordnances (bombs, shells, grenades, etc. that have not exploded when they were deployed and still pose a risk of detonation) make it hard for everyone to know safe routes. Small arms amongst civilians have increased, causing random fighting and shootings.

### **10. What lessons have you learned from your time here so far?**

An important lesson I have learned here is that we



all come from different backgrounds and environments and we should get familiar with the local practices that communities use to keep law and order. A deep understanding of local systems and cultures along with patience is very important to enhance our safety and security.

An important recommendation that was given to me was by Robert Rivers, an NP global trainer. He told me to surrender to the environment that surrounds me, not to be too set in my own ways, and to be open to learning from your environment and the people around you.

### 11. What's your personal view on how NP operates?

The type of work we do is unique, new, and most important it is working and getting results. We don't play the blame and shame game. We create a safe space between the conflicting actors to resolve their problems and issues through non-violent means because it is these actors who will have to live together during and after the conflict. Seeing the results is what keeps my satisfied working for NP.

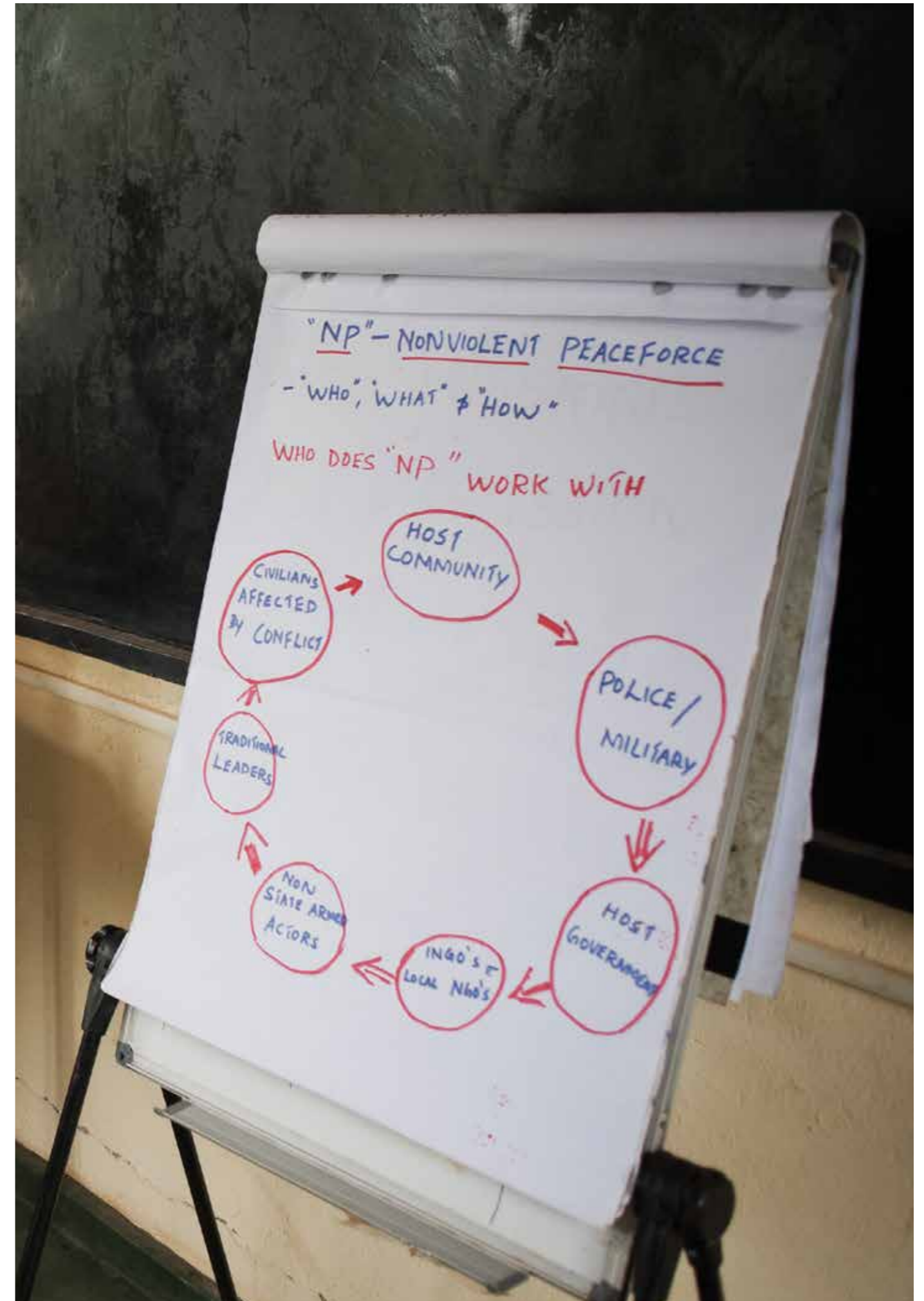
### 12. Do you have any recommendations for NP?

South Sudan has been one of our most successful country programmes for NP. I would like to see NP implementing this kind of work in all the conflict-affected areas. We just need to do more to to show the world and our donors what we have accomplished so that we can implement these types of programs in more countries.

### 13. Is there any message you would like to share with everyone (NP community, our donors ect.)?

I think that when many of us learn history about the history of conflicts and wars in school, we

mostly learn who took over whom and who did what to whom. What we fail to teach and learn is the reconciliation process. What we need to concentrate on is- how did these people that have been in conflict for a long time come together to resolve their issues using nonviolent ways to achieve peace? Those are the practices that help people move forward towards peace.



## Interview with Husham Khamis



also severe health problems through pregnancy and childbirth. By NP bringing these complications to light the community became aware and started to reduce the practice in order to provide a safe environment for their children..

- NP helped build the capacity of youths to report harmful incidents towards children to the necessary community structure within the camp.
- NP is bridging the gap between communities and NGOs within the camp to more effectively tackle the issues children and women are facing..
- NP has created a safe and friendly environment for children by responding proactively to their needs in the camp.
- NP is continually advocating on behalf of the community to ensure that they are treated with dignity and their values are respected.

As member of Yida refugee community and a National Protection Officer working for NP, I personally believe that NP's assistance is enabling our community to prosper towards peace and development. Please follow me as I express the many ways we as NP have supported the community.

- We have brought great change in the community on issues related to cultural beliefs that in the past had negative impact on children. In the community early marriages of girls between the age of 12 to 14 were common but we as NP advocated the harmful effects this brings to the community. Early marriage can cause severe problems for example psychological and emotional stress by having young girls having to play the role of a mother and

## Ajang Alaak Atem's Story



the moment in time I made the decision to invest my energy in the field of working towards peace. When I got introduced to NP, their mission and mandate aligned with my passion hence the reason I am still working for NP despite the many opportunities that come from different organizations. I feel that NP's work is unique from other organizations and is necessary to implement positive change in my community.

During the crisis of December 2013, the fighting erupted and the people were not aware what was happening. As the fighting began we ran in different directions. I was with the people that ran into the bush looking for a safe place but we encountered more problems. My children didn't have anything to eat, had nowhere to sleep and there was no means of transportation. Whilst in the bush we received information about our relatives who were killed. Many of my belongings were looted. I felt helpless as I couldn't support and protect my family. Since South Sudan's independence I did not expect that we would fight amongst ourselves.

During the fighting as I was running, I witnessed violent attacks on women and children running into the river. Throughout the conflict dead bodies were floating in the river. The river became an obstacle hindering people from escaping attacks.

A year later and I still have that fear I had during the time of the violent conflict and pray everyday that it doesn't erupt again. During many nights I wake up crying because of the flashbacks from December 2013 that keep replaying in my head. This fear still remains within me up to now.

Despite all these traumatizing incidents I am still hopeful that there will be peace in South Sudan. I hope that all the tribes of South Sudan will reunite again and we can rebuild our country.

My name is Ajang Alaak Atem. I have been an NPO working for NP in the Bor field site since 2012. I am from Twic East County in Jonglei State where in 2009 I started working with protections NGOs that primarily focus on peace. Due to the knowledge and skills, I acquired from various NGOs I realize how important peace is. I joined NP in 2012 which enabled me to increase my knowledge through different gaining conflict mitigation skills.

As a committed Christian, I believe in the Christian values that teach us about peace, which has fueled my passion to work for a peacekeeping organization. My passion first came to be through the public relations course that I studied at school that has inspired me to work for the cause of peace. That course gave me the ideology that we as people are the ones who can influence the mindset of people towards achieving peace. At

## Brining Staff Together in Bor



When the civil war broke out in South Sudan, many of our NP field teams were directly impacted. Many of our national colleagues fled in the midst of the chaotic violence and spent weeks if not months trying to reunite with their families. Some lost their homes and even worse, lost family members. Suddenly, the political instability had created terrible divisions that have caused deep trauma and broken relationships among many communities.

In some of the areas where NP works, thousands of civilians fled into the UN bases seeking protection. Our field teams have found themselves working in areas that are largely divided along ethnic lines, both inside the “protection of civilian” (PoC) sites and outside, in towns where the residents from different ethnic groups were formerly friends and neighbors. Although NP teams are comprised of national colleagues from across the

ethnic spectrum, in some areas, tensions have escalated so high that national staff members inside the PoCs have been unable to engage with other national staff members outside the PoCs due to ethnic tensions. In many cases, we have hired new colleagues over the course of the 2014 that have never had the opportunity to meet their fellow staff members across the NP teams. This division, while reflective of the insecurity, has been heartbreaking. NP is like a family, and a separated family suffers a heavy burden. In the spirit of peacebuilding, our courageous Bor team has taken a brave step to gather all of its team members under one roof. The team is made up of members who have been working with NP for several years and some who have very recently joined.

On December 22nd, the Bor Team hosted the first meeting of its Dinka national colleagues working outside the PoC and its Nuer national colleagues

working inside the PoC. The group met for over 2 hours in a tukul (A cone-shaped mud hut, usually with a straw roof) in the United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) humanitarian hub. The NPOs (National Protection Officers) introduced themselves, discussed NP’s core principles, shared common values of peace, and brainstormed programming ideas for 2015. By the end of the meeting, the NPOs exchanged contact information and took group photos to document the successful event.

By the next day, the NPOs had begun sharing news of the meeting among their families, friends, and faith groups and quickly begun planning how they could attract the wider communities including churches, women, and youth leaders in order to expand the circle of people promoting peace in Bor. Ultimately, the team determined that most people are not violent, but that there are only a small number of people who may benefit from the violence and cause instability in the community. The team has made it their priority to identify those people and work to transform them through positive social interaction and training to awaken their spirit of coexistence throughout the coming

months. Even though Bor has been plagued by destruction in 2014, the team has an inspiring vision to transform Bor into a place where peace is built from the ground up in 2015. The meeting was a remarkable step and has served to establish a spirit of unity and shared purpose within our NP family.



# Thank You for the Support

# Thank You!

On behalf of Nonviolent Peaceforce, we want to thank you for your compassionate support to help us make a great difference in the lives of various communities around South Sudan.

Since its inception, Nonviolent Peaceforce has aimed to promote, develop and implement un-armed civilian protection as a tool to reduce violence and protect civilians in situations of violent conflict to recover from crisis. The past year, amongst tragedy, we were able to advance this methodology, identifying new and effective applications to protect civilians in the most dire conditions.

In 2015, we plan to continue providing support the communities around South Sudan by providing protection support in the emergency humanitarian responses.

We hope for your continued support in the future.

## Dear Volunteers,

On behalf of Nonviolent Peaceforce, we would like to thank you for your contribution to the success of NP. Your endless dedication and support plays a very critical part in maintaining the positive message NP tirelessly advocates. You are the heart and soul of our programmes by delivering NP services through high standards.

Your generosity benefited countless others. Your support won't be forgotten.

Nonviolent Peaceforce





Nonviolent **Peaceforce**

**Nonviolent Peaceforce**

Block A  
Munuki Juba  
South Sudan

[southsudan@nonviolentpeaceforce.org](mailto:southsudan@nonviolentpeaceforce.org)

[www.nonviolentpeaceforce.org](http://www.nonviolentpeaceforce.org)