



# **Good Practices in Nonviolent, Unarmed, Civilian to Civilian Protection**

Documentation of the Workshop in Nairobi,  
12-14 November, 2018

Christine Schweitzer



## **Abstract**

This report summarizes the discussions, issues and findings of the Workshop with the title “Good Practices in Nonviolent, Unarmed, Civilian to Civilian Protection” that Nonviolent Peaceforce organized in Nairobi/Kenya between the 12th and 14th of November, 2018. It convened Unarmed Civilian Protection (UCP) practitioners, field partners, beneficiaries and academics from or working in sub-Saharan Africa, namely: South Sudan, Kenya, Uganda, Burundi, Rwanda and Nigeria, to reflect on their work.

Nonviolent Peaceforce

Documentation of Workshop on Good Practices in Nonviolent, Unarmed, Civilian to Civilian Protection; 12-14 November 2018 in Nairobi

Author: Christine Schweitzer

Photos: Christine Schweitzer

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# Executive Summary

Unarmed Civilian Protection (UCP) 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.

This paper is the documentation of a workshop that took place in Nairobi/Kenya from 12-14 November 2018. It convened Unarmed Civilian Protection (UCP) practitioners, field partners, beneficiaries and academics from or working in sub-Saharan Africa, namely: South Sudan, Kenya, Uganda, Burundi, Rwanda, Ghana and Nigeria, to reflect on their work. This was the third of a total of six planned regional workshops, the first having taken place in Manila/Philippines in December 2017 and the second in Beirut in June 2018.<sup>1</sup> The workshops follow on from stage one of a good practices process initiated by Nonviolent Peaceforce, a case studies research project which was concluded in 2016. The findings were published in the book “Wielding Nonviolence in the Midst of Violence” (2016), edited by Ellen Furnari.<sup>2</sup>

## 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. About half of the participants were interviewed by the facilitators 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 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 a variety of issues and themes. The character of the discussions was quite different from those in Manila and Beirut, mainly because the work of Nonviolent Peaceforce in South Sudan dominated the majority of the small groups. Also adding to this context was that NP and Defend Defenders were the only two organizations focusing solely on UCP – the other participating groups and networks (the West Africa Network for Peacebuilding - WANEP) are engaged in peacebuilding work in general and see prevention of violence or protection of people as only one part of their work. There are fewer known applications of UCP in sub-Saharan Africa than in Asia or the Middle East.

The workshop participants formulated a number of lessons and good practices which can be read in the appendix (6.1). Perhaps outstanding among them and repeated in more than one of the working groups were:

- Identification of community capacities is an essential aspect of UCP work. There are always existing capacities in any community. Ongoing community engagement is essential

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<sup>1</sup> Their documentations can be found here: <http://www.nonviolentpeaceforce.org/what-we-do/about-3/new-report-good-practices2>

<sup>2</sup> Available from <https://tinyurl.com/purchaseUCPbook>

for UCP to get information on local values and local practices for protection. These capacities can be supported, enhanced and used to protect the communities facing protection risks. Local experts can also be identified in the process and be trained as facilitators to advance UCP work in the communities. At the same time this helps to increase communities' resilience as well as strategies for self-protection and the sustainability of the work.

- There are different levels of conflicts in many countries, and they are often related because of the different layers of identity people have: Conflicts within a family, between families in a community, conflicts between clans and/or communities of the same ethnic group, conflicts between farmers and cattle herders, and conflicts between armed actors identifying with different ethnic groups (like Nuer and Dinka in South Sudan). In some countries, religious identities (e.g. Christian vs. Muslim) also play an important role. And politicians exploit these identities/ethnicities to fight their political opponents, and manipulate communities for personal economic gain. A “small” conflict can easily escalate to massive fighting between large groups, and therefore UCP as it is practiced in sub-Saharan Africa, may need to deal with all the layers.
- UCP starts best from the grassroots: Mini-dialogues and conflict resolution within the community, from family to family, clan to clan, and only then from community to community, has proven to be a good practice.
- Multi-level engagement ('protection advocacy') and inclusivity are required to build a safety net, involving local leadership and armed actors from all sides of the conflict.
- Identification of moderate actors (tracking of intermarriages, people in mixed villages), moderate clans that are not identifying with a side in the conflict), and looking for capacities and people who can be change makers (role models) within the communities, is the most promising approach to ethnic and religious conflict. When you find moderates from all sides who are willing to talk to each other and to cooperate, they in turn will influence others to follow suit. Since they are often threatened by radicals, the role of UCP here can be to protect them so that they can do their work.
- All the principles of UCP (nonviolence, nonpartisanship/neutrality, primacy of local actors/local leadership, independence, Do No Harm) are interconnected and cannot be used in isolation.

## Challenges

Outstanding themes were:

- It is sometimes difficult to stay true to all the principles considered by NP as core principles for its UCP work. Sometimes, a principle (most often, it seems, those relating to nonviolence and independence) is compromised to achieve what is considered a higher good. One example would be to accept armed escorts in order to reach communities in need, which compromises both a strict understanding of nonviolence and being independent of other organizations.
- Another point raised in several groups was the complex nature of the relationship between the different agencies working in the field. It was emphasized that coordination and cooperation are important but different mandates and Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) are sometimes a challenge and barrier to closer cooperation. This is not only true for the relationship between national and international agencies but also for

that between different international agencies. A special issue discussed was that military peacekeepers have many more limitations than unarmed civilian protectors: Participants attributed it mostly to the SOPs and the bureaucracy of the UN peacekeeping mission.

- Traditional values (marginalization of women and acceptance of domestic violence, identification of being male with being a fighter) can be obstacles for UCP, and UCP practitioners need to balance the respect for local culture and the principle of primacy of local actors, on the one hand, with the objective to prevent violence and suffering, on the other.

## Acronyms

EWER = Early Warning Early Response

GBV = Gender-based violence

HRD = Human Rights Defenders

HR = Human Resource

Ibid = see the full quotation above

IDP = Internally Displaced Person

IFGK = Institute for Peace Work and  
Nonviolent Conflict Transformation

INGO = International Non-governmental  
Organization

LGBTQI+ = Lesbian, Gay, Bi-, Transsexual,  
Queer, Intersex and others

NP = Nonviolent Peaceforce

NV = Nonviolence

PA = Protective Accompaniment

PoC = Protection of Civilians Sites where  
civilians seek protection and refuge at  
existing United Nations bases when  
fighting starts.

SALW = Small and Light Weapons

(S)ONAD = (Sudanese) Organization for  
Nonviolence and Development

SOP = Standard Operating Procedures

SPLM/A = Sudan People's Liberation Army

SPLM/A-IO = Sudan People's Liberation  
Movement or Army in Opposition, the  
umbrella of fighters supporting former  
Vice President Riek Machar

SSCC = South Sudan Council of Churches

UCP = Unarmed Civilian Protection /  
Peacekeeping

UN = United Nations

UNDP = United Nations Development  
Programme

UNDSS = United Nations Department for  
Safety and Security

UNHCR = United Nations High Commission  
for Refugees

UNICEF = United Nations Children Fund

UNSC = UN Security Council

WANEP = West Africa Network for  
Peacebuilding

WIPNET = Women in Peacebuilding Network  
(part of WANEP)

WFZ = Weapon-Free Zone

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# 1. Introduction



## 1. Introduction

This was the third of an intended series of six workshops conducted to gather and discuss good practices and challenges in protective accompaniment / Unarmed Civilian Protection – meaning, simply said, civilians protecting other civilians against violence, nonviolently.

The workshop took place outside of Nairobi/Kenya from 12-14 November 2018, convening about 40 Unarmed Civilian Protection (UCP) practitioners, field partners, beneficiaries from countries of sub-Saharan Africa to reflect on case studies and learn from one another. It was one step in a four-stage good practices process initiated by the INGO Nonviolent Peaceforce to improve and expand UCP, and to influence policy for protecting civilians, preventing violence, supporting local initiatives and sustaining peace. These four stages are:

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”, edited by Ellen Furnari, who also conducted two of the field studies (completed May 2016).
2. Convene six facilitated consultation groups convened on a regional basis and 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. The first such workshop took place in December 2017 in Manila, the second in June 2018 in Beirut.<sup>3</sup>
3. Assemble the first UCP Good Practices conference gathering 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 as well as improve upon existing practice. 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.

The workshop in Nairobi had 39 participants from 6 different countries, namely: South Sudan, Kenya, Uganda, Burundi, Rwanda, Ghana and Nigeria. They came from at least seven different organizations, international, national and local (see the list under 6.4). In addition, there were three supporters of NP from the U.S., several staff and board members of NP and academics and researchers from Europe and North America. The vast majority of participants (25) came from NP. Most of them are working in South Sudan (19), 6 of them being national staff. NP operates various projects in South Sudan; in the workshop the focus of reporting was on the work with

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<sup>3</sup> The documentations can be found here: <http://www.nonviolentpeaceforce.org/what-we-do/about-3/new-report-good-practices2>

communities facing direct threats, while other parts of NP's work – child protection for example – rarely came up.<sup>4</sup>

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. About half of the participants were interviewed by the co-facilitators of the workshop, Berit Bliesemann de Guevara and Fatuma Ibrahim, before the workshop took place, to get their input on the agenda and most pressing topics to address.

The workshop started with an introductory plenary where participants were 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 (see 6.1). This was followed with a “World Café” on principles of accompaniment/UCP – a method where participants move from table to table to discuss certain points.

Then the participants broke into the first of five rounds of working groups which stretched over the next 2.5 days. These groups received a list of questions to discuss based on the pre-workshop interviews, and the facilitators decided whether to go through them all or pick only some of them. Each session of working groups was followed by a plenary with a report back from each group and then a discussion on good practices and challenges identified. (See the workshop agenda under 6.3.)

On the third day, there was a 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 good practices they thought were the most important, and mark all those they may not agree with or felt warranted more discussion. Four topics were then chosen to be discussed in more depth in small groups, before the workshop closed with short reports from these groups and some farewell messages by the hosts. These were topics that either were considered very important or had not come up sufficiently in earlier working groups. However, as to findings of these additional groups, there was quite considerable overlap with what earlier groups had stated as important practices and challenges.

This documentation seeks to strike a balance between a documentation of what took place and summarizing/drawing conclusions. Similar to the earlier two documentations, chapters 2-4 roughly follow the course of the workshop, with a few exceptions in order to make for easier reading. The report has the following structure: It begins with those working groups and panels that could be summarized under the headline “2. Outlining the Framework of Protection of Civilians in sub-Saharan Africa”. These are followed by summaries of those working groups that dealt with “3. Tactics of Protection”, and “4. 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 “5. Conclusions”. In section 6.1, the most important good practices and in 6.2, challenges of UCP work in sub-Saharan Africa have been summarized. The other appendices (6.3-6.6) include the agenda, a list of participating groups, and two plenary presentations given by Fatuma Ibrahim and Casey Barrs.

The sub-Saharan Africa workshop was prepared by Berit Bliesemann de Guevara who had already facilitated the first two workshops, and NP board member Fatuma Ibrahim. Jan Passion organized logistics and Jane Wanjiru coordinated work on the ground. They were supported by board, partners and staff members of Nonviolent Peaceforce –Tiffany Easthom and Mel Duncan in particular. Berit Bliesemann de Guevara and Fatuma Ibrahim facilitated the plenaries. Ellen Furnari, the editor and co-researcher of “Wielding Nonviolence”, read and worked with the author on the report of the workshop. Last but not least, the workshop and its documentation would not

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<sup>4</sup> <https://www.nonviolentpeaceforce.org/program-locations/south-sudan>

have been possible without the many participants who took over roles of facilitation and note taking during the break-out groups.

The rapporteur thanks Ellen Furnari for commenting and editing the report, and Berit Bliesemann de Guevara, Mel Duncan, and Fatuma Ibrahim for their comments and revisions!

Nonviolent Peaceforce also thanks the Institute for Intergroup Understanding, Lucy Stroock, Bruce and Ruth Hawkins, and Cynda Collins Arsenault whose donations made the workshop possible.

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



## 2. Outlining the Framework of UCP in Sub-Saharan Africa



## 2.1 Principles of UCP

### The Tables<sup>5</sup>

To start the workshop off, an initial set of conversations, World Café style<sup>6</sup>, reviewed basic principles of nonviolent civilian protection and discussed how these are expressed in good practices in different contexts and by different organizations. These differences included different approaches to nonpartisanship, the differences between international and national or local organizations, and any thoughts about how these differences are particular to a broadly sub-Saharan African and specifically local context. The tables were:

Table 1: Nonviolence

Table 2: Nonpartisanship/neutrality

Table 3: Primacy of local actors/local leadership

Table 4: Independence

Table 5: Do No Harm

Table 6: Other basic principles

### Nonviolence

For some participants, nonviolence was a very basic personal principle, going far beyond being a guiding principle for their UCP work. A “principle of doing and being”, one participant put it, another called it “speaking the truth”. As ingredients of nonviolence, people at the table included: 1., greet people, 2., say “I am sorry”, and 3., “show gratitude”. Further it was emphasized that people have to realize that they have a choice, another option than violence, and that nonviolence means to increase the connectors and decrease the dividers. It was generally agreed that the active practice of nonviolence is critical, and rejecting violence is not enough.

At the same time it became clear that this principle is a challenge given cultural norms that are rather patriarchal and closely associate being male with fighting. “If a man don’t (sic) have a scar on his head he is seen as a woman”, a participant from South Sudan stated. Another said: “You have to lose before you win, and you have to go through name calling. But eventually you will win people’s heart”.

It was also pointed out that politicians tend to fall back on violence in order to win elections, and that men who are not able to pay a dowry may seek to find the necessary assets (cattle) through criminal activities.

How did people acquire knowledge about nonviolence? It seems that many learned for the first time about nonviolence in trainings they attended. There were significant references to elements of strategic nonviolent approaches, for example the ‘consent theory’ of Gene Sharp (power depends on consent of those ruled). But there were also references to elements that usually come with the approach of principled nonviolence, like active listening or the term “transformation of violence”. The distinction between strategic and principled nonviolence that play a rather big role in Western debates among protagonists of nonviolence, seemed of little importance nor considered to be contradictory. However, this is an impression based on the

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<sup>5</sup> The World Café tables were facilitated by the following participants who also took notes: Fatuma Ibrahim, Tiffany Easthom, Marna Anderson, Mel Duncan and Christine Schweitzer.

<sup>6</sup> There were six tables, one for each topic, and the participants rotated every 15 minutes from one to the next.



World Café table and would require more in-depth interviews to be stated as a fact.

As fields of practice where NV plays a role, the following points – far beyond UCP – were listed:

- In their own organization or network where conflicts are resolved using instruments of nonviolent conflict resolution learned in trainings;
- Educating children, in schools and in Peace Clubs;
- Bringing conflict parties to dialogue;
- Intervening in gender-based violence / domestic violence;
- Turning the Tide Campaign in Congo;
- Approaching people to turn in their guns;
- Returning of IDPs/refugees.

Some good practices regarding nonviolence were mentioned:

- Indirectly engage soldiers by engaging their wives.
- When someone is armed but claims to be nonviolent, this can be an opening for a dialogue on violence and nonviolence.
- When facing a violent situation as a third party, first observe, and then try to slow things down so people can come up with other options.
- It is important to get people who are fighting to talk. If they don't want to talk, go to their community and/or the leaders.
- It is important to have constant engagement and consultations. The role of UCP can be to provide room for people to talk openly, so that fear dissipates.
- Get nonviolence into the education system and teach it to children, design interventions that are appropriate to children.

Challenges in regard to nonviolence:

- How can people be approached who have arms?
- It is hard to practice nonviolence while violence is easy, or 'turning the other cheek' when there is state violence against a peaceful demonstration.
- Need to target youth – boys tend to violence, girls are hard to reach
- The impact of nonviolence is often invisible. There is a need to help people reflect on the change that has taken place.
- How to link nonviolence and human rights work? One suggestion at the table was to take the Universal Declaration of Human Rights as the basis, and work for it with nonviolent means.
- Reconciliation and nonviolence are challenging when taking revenge is considered the primary way of restoring justice. An interesting remark was made on the role of forgiveness: On the one hand, it is key to nonviolence because it stops the cycle of revenge, but it is not a precondition for nonviolence.
- External forces sabotaging nonviolence.
- Not using violence as a disciplinary tool.
- "Do our projects promote NV when we are funded by actors involved in the conflict?"  
As possible methods to deal with this dilemma, the table mentioned: Engage with the donors, tolerate violence but then start a conversation, and formulate principles regarding funding.

Last but not least, this table (as some of the others) remarked on the interrelatedness of principles, for example between nonviolence and the principle of doing no harm. And the need

for careful analysis which was first mentioned here, came up in many of the working groups.

### Nonpartisanship / Neutrality

The table stated that both principles are held by most humanitarian organizations. But their meaning differs for some. Also the term non-interference was suggested.<sup>7</sup>

Everybody agreed that not heeding the principle(s) of nonpartisanship and/or neutrality would compromise the work in the field. It was understood as meaning:

- Not taking sides with political parties or political issues.
- Not taking sides with issues in communities.
- Giving assistance to all those in need without discriminating between them.

Some considered nonpartisanship and neutrality to be different terms while others used them interchangeably. Others still used both but in different contexts, for example when explaining their position to outsiders they rather use the term neutrality because it is more familiar, or because armed actors would not accept anything else. Also for dealing with the high political level, as WANEP does with ECOWAS, being neutral is essential, it was reported.

Others said that they consider themselves nonpartisan but not neutral, because they work for human rights, justice, against GBV, focus on civilian protection etc. This understanding of nonpartisanship means not to be affiliated with the positions of any side or group identity (government, party, religion, tradition, gender, race, religion) or discriminate against any of them (principle of non-discrimination). Another person, referring to elections, said: “We are partisan to the process of having free and fair elections, not to their outcome. But what we observe, we make public.”

The following good practices were identified:

- Trust and confidence-building are decisive. There was an example given for traditional juridical mechanisms in Rwanda where, in cases of conflict or crimes in the community, nine judges are chosen by the community who are considered to be the most neutral. Then the offenders can choose two of them for their hearing in the community.
- Interventions need to be balanced. For example advise aid agencies that they should distribute to all civilians, not only to one group.
- Working together on a common goal in spite of differences is a good example for putting nonpartisanship into practice.
- Formulate criteria for humanitarian aid, and then simply see that all criteria are met. If they are, you help, no matter who the person/group in need is.
- Symbols are important, for examples colors. They often have political meanings of which the UCP organization needs to be aware.
- Regarding press statements, one organization has the policy to separate the organization and the individual: They do not prevent people from making statements to the press but they have to say they do it as individuals, and are not speaking for the organization.

Several challenges were named:

- Neutrality is a big challenge because the individuals and organizations stand for values, rights and visions, and some groups may feel they are part of the conflict. (In the case of election monitoring in Burundi, some people left the initiative because they felt they

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<sup>7</sup> It was mentioned that this is a term which is somewhat tainted because the Chinese state and companies use it in Africa to describe their policy.

could not maintain their nonpartisanship.)

- Second, it is a challenge because individuals have their own bias. (One person said: “Our feelings may be partisan, it is our actions that must not be partisan.”)
- Accompaniment of different groups. When one group sees the UCP organization accompanying the other, then the UCP organization quickly is accused of taking sides because it is seen helping the other group.
- It is also a challenge when a question is asked such as why the UN and all humanitarian agencies have their offices in Juba (the seat of the government) and not in rebel areas. (NP counters that question with the reply that they are not accountable for the UN and ARE working on both sides).
- For local people, nonpartisanship is a difficult concept because of their group identity.
- Sometimes the humanitarian principle to help sets in and takes predominance over other principles– “help first, ask questions later.”
- Sometimes challenging factors are hard for organizations to address. For example, NP was accused for being partisan in the Caucasus for not having a Russian speaker on its international board.

There was a discussion of how nonpartisanship relates to independence, two principles that seem to be closely related: How we decide to do things refers to independence.

As to the relationship to other principles, one participant called nonpartisanship and neutrality together with the principle of independence the “golden three”. The question was raised what the relationship to independence was or if they were the same. One answer was that independence comes in when implementation starts, but that was not pursued in the discussion.

As other principles, ‘non-discrimination’ and the humanitarian principle to help were mentioned. And last but not least, it was stated that these principles are context-specific in how they are interpreted or put into practice. Even within South Sudan they differ from context to context.

## Independence

The table agreed on a working definition of independence for this session, distinguishing it from nonpartisanship by considering independence as HOW to operate in accordance with nonpartisanship. Operational independence in this sense means maintaining autonomy from the political, economic and military agendas of stakeholders. The table considered this to be an important principle, since maintaining independence can contribute to trust-building and credibility.

The issue of perception matters: An organization may feel it is acting independently but stakeholders may perceive otherwise. “We judge ourselves by our actions and others by how we perceive them”, it was said.

A pragmatic approach to this principle was also advocated at the table, allowing for compromises if the principle of independence came into conflict with goals or principles rated higher, for example getting aid to people in need who can only be reached if accompanied by armed actors. And it was also emphasized that independence does not mean acting alone, and does not preclude the need for coordination, collaboration and building partnerships.

Some good practices were identified:

- Allowing the organization to be seen as sharing information and letting authorities know what it is doing, but not seeking permission, can be an expression of balanced communication.

- Developing a common understanding of independence is important, as is training and coaching for staff on this subject.
- Ensuring balanced teams in regard to ethnicity and gender is also part of independence.
- Education of all stakeholders and to be patient and firm were also listed as good practices.

There were many challenges identified:

- It is difficult to maintain independence when engaging in promoting peace processes, because conflict parties may try to pull the third party to their side.
- There is a tension between building allies and holding independence.
- It can be challenging to maintain independence in the humanitarian architecture, particularly when working in places like refugee camps and the PoCs.
- Similar to what was said at the table on nonpartisanship, identity politics can pose a challenge for national staff to remain independent – i.e. in electoral cycles when tribal affiliations are highly stressed.
- The danger of being instrumentalized as an UCP organization for political, economic or military purposes is a risk that is shared by local communities who have built their capacity in protection and peace work.
- At times UCP organizations need to compromise on principles including independence – for example if they choose to move with a convoy that has armed actors in order to access a location where the need outstrips the negative impact of moving with armed actors.
- The industrialization of aid – when the aid industry is the only source of livelihood opportunity it often means that those in power need/want to control it and this makes maintaining independence difficult.
- Organizations may be unaware of compromising their independence, for example when they are unaware of the deals being made both inside the country and with the regional and international influencers.
- Global contraction of space for civil society is compromising independence.
- Certain types of funding can bring limitations to independence, for example if the donors put strict conditions on their funding.

Also this table found that all principles are interconnected and cannot be used in isolation. “When we need to compromise we must consider the relative importance of each principle”, was noted by the notetaker for this table. And in such cases mitigating measures are needed to reduce potential damage.

### Primacy of Local Actors/ Local Leadership<sup>8</sup>

The table agreed that engagement of local actors and local leadership underpins all UCP work as most of the UCP strategies are centered on local communities who are supported or facilitated to protect themselves.

A number of good practices were identified:

- Deliberate consultation with local actors to get their experiences, values and protection needs and valuing the contributions from all levels of the communities, are imperative in implementing UCP methodologies. This engagement and participation of local actors in UCP allows communities to be at the center of their own protection.

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<sup>8</sup> This section has mostly been copied from the edited notes by Fatuma Ibrahim.

- Identification of community capacities is another important aspect of UCP emphasizing the primacy of local actors and local leadership in the implementation of UCP strategies. There are always existing capacities in communities that have been affected by conflict or those facing various types of protection risks. Therefore, these capacities can be harnessed and used to provide protection to the communities facing protection risks. Local experts can also be identified in the process and be trained as facilitators to advance UCP work in the communities. At the same time this helps in building on communities' resilience as well as strategies for self-protection.
- There is no ready-made template in UCP work that can be brought to the community – each community identified for UCP work has to be consulted and engaged to get information on local values and local practices for protection. One example is trainings on UCP - communities are consulted and engaged in the adaptation and contextualization of trainings. So any training on UCP will take into account the values and the experiences of local actors.
- Engaging/consulting and encouraging local communities' participation in UCP and the bottom-up approach helps to foster ownership of the protection work by communities. This is also very helpful when it comes to beneficiary selection.
- Respect of local leadership facilitates goodwill and helps in entry to the communities where UCP strategies can be implemented with communities being fully on board once they see acceptance by local leaders. It is worth noting that respecting leadership and local authorities is important but it is equally important to be aware of any hidden interest/blurred lines.
- Strategies for holding local leadership to account include working with a wide range of local actors in addition to local leadership. In some cases UCP practitioners have had to find effective strategies for working with traditional leaders who are working for/with the political elites who create confusion in the communities, which may in turn cause further protection risks.
- Creating an environment which fosters participation of all sections of the community is very important in UCP work. This starts with actor mapping, which helps to identify and reach all sections of the community including youth, women, men, children, elderly and so forth. The mapping also allows for the identification of people who are likely to support UCP strategies and those who may not be welcoming. This in turn allows the development of strategies to reach and work with these different groups within the community.
- Meaningful community participation and the grassroots approach is time consuming but once achieved the work picks up and communities become more responsible for their own protection.
- Feedback to communities and taking feedback from communities are another demonstration of the primacy of local actors/local leadership. This mutuality is especially true in humanitarian settings where many actors work in communities and some do not provide information to communities about why certain projects are not implemented after assessments.

Some challenges in regard to the primacy of local actors were also identified:

- Local leadership may confine the ownership to members of their families and close relatives, leaving others out. Organizations can mitigate this through the creation of an environment that encourages participation by all sectors of the community.
- Traditional leadership structures can be a barrier to community participation especially with regards to women's participation – again the same approach of community participation especially through actors mapping is used to mitigate this particular

challenge.

- Sometimes it is very difficult to identify local actors who really need protection. Conducting detailed assessments and using local experts can help mitigate this challenge.
- Balancing primacy of local leadership when they are part of the problem. In this case more focus is put on grassroots actors and much less on the leadership by using strategies that promote participation from many sectors of the communities/local actors.
- Donor conditions that don't allow for engaging with armed local actors are a challenge. This can be mitigated through dialogue with donors to enhance the understanding of UCP approaches and to demonstrate why sometimes it is necessary to work with armed actors to secure the protection of communities, and that activities like ceasefire monitoring are only possible if there is an engagement with armed local actors.

### Do No Harm

Several examples were exchanged on cases where doing harm was observed – e.g. food distribution by an organization that ignored the warnings about an expected attack by armed forces. When the attack happened, several people died and the food was taken. Another example was distribution of cash by a donor for girls' education. The cash was distributed hastily because the donor wanted the agency to distribute the cash in one month. So they ended up giving money to people not even going to school, and some people who wanted to go to school didn't get any. The consequence was conflicts in the community.

The table considered 'Do no harm' to be an important principle, but related it mostly to the distribution of material aid by other agencies. There was comparatively little about transferring the principle to UCP work. A few challenges, however, were addressed:

- Personal behavior of people living in a community (respecting cultural norms etc.) may harm the picture people have of the organization.
- Conflict between team members may affect the work and perception of the organization.
- The danger of triggering retaliation against those the organization works with.
- Creating a false sense of security is a danger.
- Aid agencies that do not pay attention to warnings or do not really care about doing no harm create problems for UCP work.

As the examples exchanged showed, this principle is very much related to the primacy of local actors. Careful consultation with them, independent context analysis and an inclusive approach to communities are three good practices required in order to avoid doing harm.

### Other Basic Principles

This table listed a number of different additional points. They mostly refer to the work of Nonviolent Peaceforce. Some of them can easily be generalized, others depend on the specific mandate of NP or may also be considered organizational policies rather than principles (e.g. non-provision of material aid).

- Responsibility and accountability to protect in an environment of shrinking space for civil society humanitarian action.
- Duty of care for staff (national staff: security, insurance, pension, retirement).
- Not paying bribes nor ransom.
- Gender equity and equality.

- Non-provision of material aid.
- Acceptance.
- Collaboration / partnership / coordination: avoid duplication, competition, territorial coverage, fill the missing gaps.

The table on nonviolence had added to that:

- Non-discrimination when choosing whom to help.
- Humanitarian principle to help.

Challenges regarding some principles, or questioning these principles:

- Confidentiality vs transparency: If an organization reports through the UN, then the government asks about the sources for that UN report. The challenge is how to ensure safety and security of the informants.
- Duty of care for staff and self-care for field staff: how to deal with stress and trauma, lack of common rules between organizations, or even within one organization?
- Nonreligious affiliation vs. inter-faith orientation: instrumentalization of religious leaders.
- Ethics and professionalism vs. volunteering and good will.
- Beneficiary driven protection: passive recipient vs active actors.<sup>9</sup>
- Global human rights - how to define a response?
- Child protection: How can we be sure to make the best decision for the child?
- Professionalism: How to move from a good-will approach to having good professional ethics?
- Collaboration as a core principle: How to work together in partnership to avoid duplication. Sometimes there is competition between organizations. How to avoid this – for example split up territories. Try to mitigate competition through better coordination.

## Conclusions

In summarizing these tables on principles it must be remembered that this workshop was rather heavily dominated by Nonviolent Peaceforce. Therefore it is not surprising that there was less dissent on the principles than in the earlier two workshops. There were more challenges regarding the principle of nonviolence than in the other two workshops.. The question about the relationship between nonpartisanship and independence was once more raised, this time with the suggested solution to consider independence as the principle that addresses the operationalization of nonpartisanship. Though there was a number of national staff of NP as well as representatives from organizations from other African countries present, the principle of nonpartisanship was not questioned to the degree it was in Manila and Beirut. The only mention was one case where election monitors left an organization because they realized they were biased, and the general statement that the principle was challenging for national staff. The question remains if there is indeed a strong commitment to that principle by all or if there was a certain hesitancy to raise doubts or problems with the principle in the presence of the highest leadership of the employing organization.

In the plenary discussion after the World Cafe it was noted that principles are guides for decision-making especially in difficult situations. It was also admitted that sometimes principles are being compromised because they may conflict with each other. Saving lives – the humanitarian

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<sup>9</sup> This referred to NP's approach of supporting villagers in developing their own protection strategies rather than relying on international presence for protection (alone).

imperative – was clearly given priority over any of the other principles, in the examples discussed. It was also stated that when principles are compromised, the consequences must be mitigated. An implicit hierarchy of principles perhaps needs to be explored in future workshops. The choice of principles to be compromised probably is not random nor were absolute boundary lines being drawn. The question is if the organizations involved (e.g. NP) are aware of this and if it is made an issue in trainings or at staff deliberations.

Also the question was raised if there should be a Code of Ethics for UCP organizations or interventions. Perhaps that could be a question to discuss in future workshops of the series.



## 2.2 UCP Protection Strategies of Deterrence of Violence and Encouragement of Respect for Civilian Safety and Well-being

### Questions to Discuss<sup>10</sup>

What is good practice in deciding who to protect, and who, if anyone, to exclude?

From whom and what/what kinds of violence, especially when different cycles and levels of violence interlink (e.g. violence at family and community level)?

What are the sources of leverage for deterring violence and/or encouraging respect for civilian safety in different types of conflict?

What are specific challenges (e.g. unclear/weak chains of command, ...)?

Be as specific as possible: With which conflict parties do you seek to have direct contact, and with which not? What are the criteria that help you decide to focus on deterrence or encouragement, or both? What do you communicate with the parties?

### Discussion

The working group focused on case studies from a PoC site in South Sudan that emphasize the importance of relationships. The first case was a standoff between the Bol Nuer and the Mayom Nuer living in Juba PoC3: There was intense tension between the two communities. It started with the punishment of a thief, which led to the beating of an old man that in turn escalated to community fighting. Both parties of the conflict were angered by the situation. There were bladed weapons, pieces of wood with nails, chains and spears, allegedly even a gun. The standoff lasted almost a week and the conflict got politicized by accusations that the government took sides. NP was invited to respond by leaders in the PoC and Bol leadership from outside the camp. NP worked for 6-7 days, trying to open space for negotiation, but it ended nevertheless with fighting between the two parties.

The second case happened in Juba, too. Two tribes in the same community fought with each other because of some miscommunication. The conflict came to a point where one of the tribes, Bari, thought of poisoning the animals of the Mundaris who used to come to their farms. When NP intervened, it looked for leaders with influence from both sides. But the highest leaders of the communities already had a longstanding disagreement with each other. Therefore, NP looked for an alternative and found middle level leaders who were willing to negotiate with the conflicting communities. Finally NP ended up conducting an UCP training with both communities in separate venues and at different times. After the training the participants realized the need to sit down and settle the situation. NP thereby had created a safe space for them to negotiate and dialogue. The community came up with a viable agreement and they are now living in peace together.

### Good Practices

- It is important to set up an alarm system (early warning-early response) in communities which involves them and makes them accountable. In the process all the leaders and youth should be included in the EWER, thereby creating an alarm mechanism that

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<sup>10</sup> The “questions to discuss” were given to the facilitators and participants with the agenda of the workshop.

The working group A1 was facilitated by Tandiwe Ngwenya. Sources: Notes of Group A1, taken by Zandro Escat; notes of plenary after Groups A, taken by Christine Schweitzer.

provides early information from leader to leader to understand any movement and to avoid miscommunication.

- Training of youth is important to stop a cycle of revenge killings.
- Building local capacity for dialogue and mediations in general is a good practice.
- To understand the context, a context analysis and an actor mapping are necessary. This requires 'cultural fluency' to grasp the cultural factors.
- It is important to identify positive change makers, or "peace champions" – a group or person who can become a catalyst for change.
- To invest in building local capacities (e.g. through training) is another good practice in this context.
- To establish safe spaces is important: This is a space where conflicting communities will feel safe and comfortable to discuss their differences and which gives them an opportunity to find alternative solution to their conflicts.
- Multi-level engagement ('protection advocacy') and inclusivity are required to build a safety net.
- As to how to go about this, mini-dialogues within the community, from family to family, clan to clan, before going from community to community has proven to be a good practice.
- Building local agreements (when there are small conflicts) is meaningful: Sometimes a small conflict grows big, but UCP teams can take parts of the conflict to deal with, for example, conflicts between families.

## Challenges

- Cooptation by political elites can be a challenge: Politicians suddenly engage and pick up topics, but this is not always useful. How to avoid conflicts getting politicized and being hijacked by political elites?
- Parties spoiling a process are always a challenge. It is necessary to understand what the messages and the philosophy are. Spoilers often have strong connections politically and even to the UN.
- Movement restrictions and communication issues: Access sometimes is difficult, when for example there is ongoing heavy fighting. Also access may be different for national and international staff.
- Humanitarian staffing issues: Capacity building and burn-out are challenges, as is staff who want to be heroes.
- "Inevitable violence": other issues come up during peace processes. There is a cyclical nature of violence in South Sudan.
- Over-reliance on elites is a danger that must be avoided.
- Hierarchies and flexible structures: If command structures in conflict parties are lose and many people make decisions, the UCP organization faces multiple actors, and it is difficult to influence them all. But this can also be of advantage in other situations.
- Changes in power: In South Sudan Commissioners, ministers etc. change quickly, and relationships need to be built anew.
- A danger for a UCP organization is to try to do everything at once, trying to be too big in scope. It is better to slice issues into pieces and deal with them one by one.
- UCP organizations are often very comfortable to work with peace actors but not so much

with armed actors. There is sometimes a lack of engagement and targeting of spoilers.

- Learning to step back to understand the situation may become a challenge.
- Understanding the UCP organization's threshold in terms of safety and security can be a challenge.

## Conclusions

The discussion of this working group was quite different than ran quite differently from the groups with similar titles in Manila and Beirut. In both of those discussions the latter two, the approaches or strategies of deterrence and encouragement were distinguished, and it was agreed that both "work" and are contextual. In this workshop, the focus rested solely on relationship-building and explored how this is being done in the context of South Sudan. If there was any element of 'deterrence' playing a role in the two examples discussed, it was not made explicit, although some of the stories and inputs during the workshop clearly indicate that deterrence is present as a factor: For example it was said in some groups that having internationals with a team increases the safety for the local/national staff, and that there were places where national staff could not go alone.

The discussion and the good practices identified clearly showed the need of building relationships with leaders at different levels as well as with 'normal' members of the community, how trainings with communities can become instruments of conflict resolution, how fragile conflict settlement processes happen in contexts of (local) power politics, and the danger of politicians high-jacking local peace processes. The good practices and challenges listed by this group have come up repeatedly in other working groups and in the table on the principle of the primacy of local actors.

## 2.3 The Role of Gender in Accompaniment and UCP Work in the Region

### Questions to Discuss<sup>11</sup>

What is the relationship between gender-based violence (GBV), domestic/community violence and larger cycles of violence in the region/specific countries?

What are good practices in addressing GBV?

How do GBV and gender rights fall into the wider UCP framework, and how does it have to be complemented with other strategies to be effective?

How does the gender of staff impact the effectiveness of UCP/accompaniment?

When and how, if at all, should local gender norms be challenged?

How does UCP address women's rights, if at all?

How do organizations deal with discrimination against, or harassment of, specific genders or sexual orientations (e.g. LGBTQ+)?

### Discussion

The group started by discussing the issue of LGBTQI+ and the concept of transgender. It was requested by participants in the discussion that UCP organizations should agree that people have the right to define their gender, and that this understanding should be built into UCP practice. It was suggested that teams could on purpose include a transgender person among them. However, LGBTQI+ people face a lot of discrimination in sub-Saharan Africa (and criminal persecution in some countries), and the concept of a third gender or a continuum of genders is seen as basically a foreign concept that is rejected by most people. Therefore, it is not easy for UCP organizations (or for NGOs generally) to raise this issue and to protect gay, lesbian or transgender people. It must also not be assumed that everyone in the UCP organization shares the concepts of transgender and the positive attitude towards gays and lesbians.

It is different regarding the issue of the role of women: In many organizations in the continent there is a high degree of awareness of the need to empower women. WANEP has a gender policy that also applies to its staff recruitment. In Ghana and Togo, women played a central role in HIV awareness campaigns. Also the famous case of the Liberian Women in White<sup>12</sup> was mentioned.

In regard to gender and UCP, the following aspects were touched upon:

- UCP has proven to be able to protect women they are being targeted (for example when collecting firewood outside the PoCs).
- Women can act as mediators and peacemakers in their communities. Here, UCP can play a role by supporting women through trainings, involving them in EWER systems and through the WPTs.
- The Women Peacekeeping Teams created by NP in South Sudan are very active in their communities, thereby building stronger roles for women. In some cases, men have started to join them. Partly this happened because there were joint trainings on security

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<sup>11</sup> The "questions to discuss" were given to the facilitators and participants with the agenda of the workshop.

The working group A 2 was facilitated by Rosemary Kabaiki. Sources: Notes of Group A2, taken by Suzanne Ross; notes of plenary after Groups A, taken by Christine Schweitzer.

<sup>12</sup> This refers to the Women of Liberia Mass Action for Peace campaign which pressured men to pursue peace in order to end the civil war in Liberia in 2003. These women were always dressed in white, hence the reference to the Liberian Women in White.

in the communities, after which the WPTs were formed. In one case, the men later left again because they expected to be paid for their work in the WPT, while the women were volunteers. In the workshop in Nairobi, there were different opinions about this development. On the hand, it was argued that the WPTs were strengthened, gained more credibility and were more legitimized in their communities if men joined them. On the other hand, it was argued that this was exactly what was not intended – men being needed to legitimize what women do.

- For raising issues of gender based violence (GBV) in the communities, the cooperation of both women and men is needed.
- EWER systems function better when men and women are involved. WIPNET (the women network of WANEP) created a EWER system covering Cote d'Ivoire, Niger, Ghana, Sierra Leone and Togo.
- In protective accompaniment, as noted in a later working group on PA (see 3.1), gender plays a role as well in who to choose as accompaniers. Sometimes men are the better choice – especially if the person to be protected is male and women are marginalized in the society in question. In such a setting having a female accompanier may be less effective or not acceptable. On the other hand, it is often socially more acceptable to have women accompany women.

### Good Practices

- It is a guiding principle that a female victim of GBV is interviewed by a female staff for confidentiality and comfort.
- Accompaniment is not gender-neutral. Often it is better to have men protect men, women protect women.
- When it comes to EWER and rumor control, the information-gathering should include women in the communities.
- Introducing the women trained as WPT to the leaders of their community helps make their role more official.
- Work with elder women (the “mamas”) who can bring their voice to different platforms.
- Elder women can engage the perpetrators more easily and may be more listened to and respected, as well as with less risk than younger men or women.
- Involving men in gender/women issues: Creating mixed teams, including males as Women Protection Officers or those responsible for gender issues in the organization is one way to prevent that certain issues are considered “women issues” only.
- Young men are expected to be fighters and join armed groups. Those who refuse to do so are quickly called “cowards” and “women”. The role of UCP can be to strengthen and protect these youth. Here the WPTs play an important role in South Sudan.
- Including men in the work against GBV helped NP to be more effective. In the South Sudan context some women find gender-based violence as normal. When WPT speak against it, even the women don't trust them. But men who are role models and who work against GBV can help convince the women.

## Challenges

- Rights-based organizations using UCP face the challenge that culture impacts on what is acceptable, e.g. regarding female roles or transgender identities.
- To be culturally sensitive when promoting gender issues because otherwise people will consider you a spoiler of tradition and that will weaken your position.
- It is a challenge to define what gender equality is.
- Do UCP organizations respect gender issues in practice, not just give lip service?<sup>13</sup>
- Expectations of payments by men for work women do as unpaid volunteers.
- Are we not reinforcing the traditional values when men are invited to validate what the women are doing?
- Religion may be a handicap for gender equality because some pastors preach that women must submit to their husband and not for example be economically independent.

## Conclusions

As in the other workshops, the challenges regarding addressing gender issues in highly patriarchal contexts were raised. It is a balancing act between encouraging change and respecting local culture. The main difference to the experiences in the Middle East is that in the sub-Saharan African context groups, in particular NP, have managed to address GBV in spite of the taboos and even the acceptance of that kind of violence by women themselves. It was pointed out in Nairobi that it is difficult to separate political violence and GBV. A single incident can lead to macro-level violence, and there is conflict-related sexual violence. Therefore, it was said, prevention of GBV is key. For NP, the main, though not only tool to do so is the Women Peacekeeping Teams.

Another difference is that there are, in spite of the generally patriarchal culture, already well-established organizations and projects mainstreaming the empowerment of women in several countries, and women who are playing an important role in civil society or the political sphere. The mainstreaming has moved forward to a degree that both men and women acknowledge the importance of gender issues. As to LGBTQI+, however, people who do not fit into the dichotomy of heterosexual men and women are marginalized, threatened, and also human rights and UCP organizations find it difficult to address these issues.

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<sup>13</sup> This refers to sensitivity to gender issues, promoting women as peacemakers etc.

## 2.4 UCP and the Role of Identity in Violence and Protection

### Questions to Discuss<sup>14</sup>

What is the relationship between personal identity and violence in Sub-Saharan Africa (e.g. tribal, ethnic, clan, religious identities, questions of autochthony)?

What are positive effects of strong community identities on protection work?

What are challenges to UCP when dealing with faith-based violence or religious violence triggers? And how can UCP connect with the spiritual world of communities?

How do protected people relate to these identity questions?

How are questions of identity linked to questions of livelihood?

How do these identities have to be taken into account in UCP/accompaniment work?

### Discussion

The working group focused its discussion on ethnic identities as dividers in African countries. Small conflicts, between two individuals or even only two kids from different families, can easily lead to armed conflict between clans and then ethnic entities. This observation has not only been made regarding South Sudan but also other countries like Rwanda or the DR Congo where more than 400 ethnic groups live, and rebel groups are organized according to ethnicity. However, there are also armed conflicts within ethnic groups – different clans fighting each other, or within one clan, different families.

These observations however must not be understood as meaning that conflict is “natural” or unavoidable. First, old grievances, some going back to colonial times, play a role. And secondly and probably most importantly, such divisions are being exploited by politicians and all those who have ambitions to become leaders, both at local and at national levels. The violence after the elections in Kenya in 2007/8 is a good example where the two candidates for the presidency each mobilized their followers on an ethnic basis. It was also remarked that high-level politicians often stay linked to each other while their followers on the ground are killing each other.

Another important influence is the media. In many countries – Rwanda 1994 being the most famous example – media are used to incite people to violence.

What possibilities are there to counter such conflict causes? In South Sudan (and certainly other countries as well) there are moderate sub-clans both among the Nuer and the Dinka, the two peoples who are the key conflict parties. Moderate clans cooperate with each other, even up to the degree of being accused of siding with “the enemy”. One example was given where economic cooperation (sale of fish caught by Nuer youth and sold to Dinka) serves to diffuse conflict. And there are also individuals who are moderates, and numerous cases of intermarriages and areas where Dinka and Nuer are living together peacefully. UCP actors are aware that they need to identify such moderate actors who have risen above tribal identity, and seek to encourage them.

Women can play an important role in linking clans and ethnic groups, as the NP WPTs have proven. This was also confirmed for other countries – an example of women doing so given from Northern Mali. It wasn’t explicitly said in the working group, but one reason women may be good at linking is probably is that women in many societies have to marry outside their own clan –

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<sup>14</sup> The “questions to discuss” were given to the facilitators and participants with the agenda of the workshop.

The working group was facilitated by Florington Aservaatham. Sources: Notes of Group B1, taken by Christine Schweitzer; notes of plenary after Groups B, taken by Christine Schweitzer.

termed 'exogamy' in social anthropology. Thereby they automatically link groups.

In South Sudan, more than 15 civil society organizations with members from different ethnic groups have come together. They call themselves the "New Tribe", seeking to further living together in mixed communities, and eliminate ethnic violence.

Participants in the group had somewhat different ideas about how to overcome ethnic conflict. Some wished for a national or even African identity to replace ethnic identities. Others warned that suppression of identification with ethnic groups is dangerous. For Rwanda, one participant called it a "time bomb" that people in Rwanda today "are not allowed to celebrate their identity" but have to call themselves Rwandan.

The group then turned to interreligious conflict which is an important factor in some countries, for example Nigeria. There are also different initiatives to counter such conflict: In Nigeria there is a network of religious and traditional peacemakers. In Kenya there was a conference on interreligious dialogue. They set up an EWER system so that when they see the youth mobilizing, they come together and say "this conflict is not religiously motivated because we are the religious leaders."

Generally, there is a need for early warning and early action. One participant from Guinea gave a warning about potential violence. In Guinea there are tensions between Mandingo and Fulani. Since independence the Mandingo have been in power. Fulani say that they also have to rule the country, and there are strong tensions between ethnic groups. In 2020 there will be elections, and the proposal was made that UCP actors should engage in Guinea.

### Good Practices

- One good practice is the promotion of good stereotypes and the identification of connectors between the groups to diffuse violence in the community. For example, if an ethnic group is known to be hospitable, this could be such a connector.
- Bad and negative stereotypes need to be addressed as well (like "all Muslim are Boko Haram").
- Identification of moderate actors (tracking of intermarriages, people in mixed villages), and looking for capacities and people who can be change makers (role models) within the communities, is a proven approach.
- The UCP organizations themselves can set role models by balancing the identities of their teams so that they demonstrate that people can work together.
- Another good practice is to delink real grievances from their religious / identity justification through:
  - religious-based interaction,
  - protecting the religious/ethnic leaders who promote religious/inter-group dialogue.
- Setting up early warning systems like those that have been set up in Kenya works well: In Kenya an NGO mobilized civic education reporters after the election, and gave them mobile phones to quickly spread alarms.
- Working with media to encourage them not to spread hatred is important.



## Challenges

- Negative stereotypes of tribes are very strong sometimes. Generalizations of tribe/ethnicity leads to target killing, abductions and other sorts of violence.
- Easy access to weapons by civilians leads to conflicts becoming deadly very quickly.
- UCP organizations and NGOs often focus their attention at grassroots, but then violence happens again at a higher level.
- Moderate actors face resistance by communities who label them traitors.
- The use of ethnicity as a mobilization factor is a challenge in it itself because people, especially those with little education, tend to follow their politicians blindly.
- Almost all ethnicities have their own identity based militia or armed group to protect their own society.
- Media are used in a negative way to propagate competitive ethnic identity.

## Conclusions

To generalize, the most promising approach to ethnic and religious conflict seems to be to identify moderates from all sides who are willing to talk to each other and to cooperate, influencing others to follow suit. Since they are often threatened by radicals, the role of UCP here can be to protect them so that they can do their work.

## 2.5 Cooperation Between UCP, the UN and Other (Armed and Unarmed) Peacekeeping and Peacebuilding Actors in the Field

### Questions to Discuss<sup>15</sup>

What are the benefits and challenges of international and national/local UCP organizations working with other (armed and unarmed) protection actors (e.g. UN mission which include mandate of protection of civilians, other UCP organizations, aid organizations, peacebuilding agencies etc.)?

Specifically: How does networking with other actors take place?

When or under what circumstances is cooperation beneficial or necessary? What are the potential setbacks of cooperation? How to deal with power imbalances between different organizations?

What is the relationship between UCP and peacebuilding? How can merging the two work in practice?

How to work in an environment where people have an overwhelming need for food and basic goods when UCP organizations do not offer material aid?

### Discussion

In the discussion of this working group, a number of interesting comparisons as well as observations on different strengths and weaknesses of the different actors were compared. The discussion focused mostly on South Sudan where there are three main categories of international actors: the UN military peacekeeping mission UNMISS, aid agencies (both INGOs and UN) and NP as the largest UCP actor.

NP sees its role as being the INGO that opens access to aid agencies, being usually the first in remote or recently conflict affected locations. It then shares the information and the needs with humanitarian agencies in coordination meetings in Juba. Other agencies (ideally<sup>16</sup>) then take care of the material needs of the communities, while NP focuses on protection.

As to relationships with political actors of the country (local leadership and national government), it was said that it was important to stay in constant communication with them so that they approve of what the INGO is doing. This means being in contact with leaders from all sides, depending on who is ruling in which part of the country.

The working group then turned to the question of how UCP relates to issues of prevention and the wider field of peacebuilding. Again, as with humanitarian aid, the approach by UCP actors is to see their work as complementary to that of other organizations.

A third topic was a comparison between UCP and armed peacekeepers in South Sudan. Participants expressed their view that there were a few things which armed peacekeepers were better equipped to deal with than unarmed – namely to enforce disarmament. Where they try to achieve other objectives by use of force – for example making refugees resettle elsewhere – this often does not work out as expected. And although their mandate requires UNMISS to intervene

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<sup>15</sup> The “questions to discuss” were given to the facilitators and participants with the agenda of the workshop.

The working group was facilitated by Mel Duncan. Sources: Notes of Group A3, taken by Christine Schweitzer; notes of plenary after Groups A, taken by Christine Schweitzer

<sup>16</sup> There were remarks in the workshop in Nairobi that the passing on to other (I)NGOs does not always work and that there is an issue with communities who did not receive needed services.

when there is fighting, it often does not happen. Participants blamed this on the bureaucratic character of a military operation – soldiers need to ask their superiors, these need to ask back at the HQ back home in often far-away third countries. By the time a decision is made, it is often too late. In addition, their SOPs on security are sometimes crippling – for example in the case of the firewood patrols (women leaving PoCs to collect firewood being attacked by armed men), UN offered accompaniment but was not allowed to leave the main roads – but the attacks on women happened off those roads. Therefore NP stepped in to supplement the activities by UNMISS.

### Good Practices

- Partnership between the different agencies is a good practice. Joint or coordinated activities allow the community to see humanitarian agencies as one.
- Facilitation between agencies and peacebuilding groups is very useful - assisting each other in filling the gaps, and coordinating resources and activities.
- Providing protection with arms contradicts the message of peace in the perception of the community. If unarmed people come it is a better fit with humanitarian principles and with the principle of Do No Harm.
- UCP actors have a different, more accurate perception of local communities, and put focus on specific conditions in interactions with other agencies.
- Consider the locals to be the experts on the context and conditions where you are working and wanting to work.
- Actors should rely on the community and the leadership on the ground to implement their activities.
- Government and NGOs: UCP actors rely on civilians to know who is who in a community. So they can use their knowledge to know to whom to talk first or last.
- Proactive engagement and ability to respond to possible escalation are important.

### Challenges

- Partners come with negative, preconceived perceptions of communities which limit relationship and access.
- The UN and its agencies are able to deliver humanitarian material aid which becomes a challenge for those who cannot offer this kind of help.
- Military peacekeepers do not have such heavy reliance on communities as UCP actors do. That leaves gaps in understanding of the local situation, the interests of various local actors and the fears and threats that communities face. This in turn can lead to the deterioration of relations between military peacekeepers and communities.
- UN peacekeepers have very restricted mandates and strict security regulations for their own staff. They do little proactive engagement with communities. They are perceived as considering their safety to be their first priority although they tell communities that civilian safety comes first.
- At times of potential conflict, peacekeepers tend to resort to force to implement their version of peace or protection. This also endangers civilian UCP practitioners.
- Aid agencies have their own record with communities. They are often perceived as being rich (vehicles etc.) but not sharing. And they are seen as collaborating with authorities, thereby sacrificing the principle of nonpartisanship. This leads to a lack of trust from the community. They fear that NGOs bring more harm than good.

- INGOs and partners coming in with preconceived ideas of peacebuilding which may not fit the needs of the communities.
- INGOs come and conduct need assessments. But very often they never come back to deliver. This has a negative impact on other INGOs that come later.
- INGOs cannot enforce disarmament.

### Conclusions

In the discussion, two things stood out to the rapporteur: One was the role of NP as the UCP actor on the ground in South Sudan. They are often the first to arrive in remote locations or locations recently affected by fighting, and then open access to other agencies. These other agencies then provide the material aid needed while NP continues engagement only in the role of providing protection / training communities in self-protection.

The other was the negative description of the abilities of the armed peacekeepers on the ground. The mainstream thinking about armed versus unarmed peacekeeping is that armed peacekeeping is so much stronger because it can enforce its mandate – intervene and stop fighting, protect threatened people by force, etc. It seems the reality is that they often cannot meet these expectations. Participants attributed this mostly to the SOPs of the military and the bureaucracy of the UN peacekeeping mission and its command structure which requires local commanders to check back with their national HQs before acting.

As to cooperation between the various actors in general, cooperation and coordination were highlighted. But there is also the danger of doing harm if, for example, expectations are raised but then not met. This is also a risk in the referral-policy of NP because it seems that NP does not always succeed in finding an agency willing and able to meet the material or health needs of a community in need.

## 2.6 UCP/Accompaniment, Elections and Governance in Sub-Saharan Africa

### Questions to Discuss<sup>17</sup>

How are elections, forms of governance, and cycles of violence linked in different countries in Sub-Saharan Africa?

How do weak services and government structures affect UCP work? What are the links between politicians, armed groups and grassroots communities? How do chains of command work?

What is the current or potential role of UCP/accompaniment around elections? Is election monitoring UCP or does that stretch the UCP remit too far? Which role do or can local organizations play in this?

### Discussion

The group discussed the situation in different African countries. Elections are a major cause for conflict on the continent. Politicians try to use tribal or religious identity to advance political ideas or to secure an office (with the associated income) for themselves. Between elections, politicians then try to maintain the status quo. In some countries, there are widely shared views that only certain ethnic groups should rule the country and others should be excluded. And in addition, it is generally a cultural norm not to challenge people in authority.

Violence characterizes pre- and post-election periods. This mostly involves armed forces from state and militias as well as youth gangs. It is important to understand that inciting violence is a tactic purposefully used by politicians. Interests of foreign powers also contribute to violence. Minorities (ethnic, LGBTQI+ etc.) are always at risk once there is violence. And the political opposition will use violence to strengthen their power at the negotiation table to achieve power-sharing.

A consequence of the conflicts is that people lose trust in elections. One participant said: “When current political rulers are not afraid of voters, it means they know a way to trick election results (burning/replacing ballots).”

Examples of violence prevention around elections were given from Kenya and Burundi. In Kenya NGOs undertook civic education with different ethnic groups that had a record of violence in previous elections. Similarly, in Burundi young people were addressed calling them to stay nonviolent.

The issue of elections is currently of high importance because in a number of countries elections will be held between 2019 and 2021 (see the presentation by Fatuma Ibrahim in the appendix 6.5).

The group distinguished different types of violence:

- Pre- election: between political parties, paid youth groups;
- During elections : threatening monitors’ safety and security (attacks on ballots or voting posts);

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<sup>17</sup> The “questions to discuss” were given to the facilitators and participants with the agenda of the workshop.

The working group D3 was facilitated by Alessandro Rossi. Sources: Notes of Group D3, taken by Claire Finas; notes of plenary after Groups A, taken by Christine Schweitzer.

- Post-election: political parties will take action against those who did not support them; losers will take action to be included at the negotiation table with the winners to gain seats and influence.

Participants identified various entry points to make election periods less violent<sup>18</sup>:

- Civic education: for communities and political representatives.
- Advocacy and lobbying for space and participation of everyone, including opposition groups.
- Training for monitors: ethical conduct, personal safety skills.

Civic engagement:

- Reforming the electoral process: constitution of body (having the right people on the election board or commission).
- “Massive” civic education: to fight ignorance: many people have either voted once or never.
- Information sharing: central desk to manage info and data about potential and current violence, and to share/disseminate them. (In Kenya this was done through WhatsApp.)

Also in this group questions were asked regarding the limitations of UCP: Is election monitoring UCP, or is the role of UCP to train monitors and other stakeholders, including the political parties, in prevention of violence around the elections, including the protection of monitors? People tended to the second interpretation. General civic education, it was said, would more likely be left to partner organizations.

### Good Practices

The distinction between peacebuilding in general and UCP has been added by the rapporteur and was not made by the group itself.

a) From a broader peacebuilding angle:

- Being proactive is important.
- Need to do a lot of training for those who are managing elections and those who participate. It is often taken for granted that those who administer elections have all necessary skills but that may not be always the case.
- There is a need to train people to not just follow politicians but to actually understand the importance of elections and to make good decisions. Also police, army and militias should have such training.

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<sup>18</sup> These points seem to be similar to what a researcher in Gothenburg, *Jean-Bosco Habyarimana*, has been finding in his research for his PhD thesis (which is forthcoming). He distinguishes three types of engagement regarding the prevention of recurrent violence in Kenya: 1. Alignment through multi-cultural events; sharing of food; community dialogue; working together on a development project which helped parties overcome distrust; brought parties in line by helping them identify a common purpose. 2. Coordination by mobilizing trust-based relationships; bringing strong and weak ties in contact; negotiating and managing roles and conduct of parties which convinced potential perpetrators to abandon plans to commit violence; stopped the likelihood of violence between protesters & the police. And 3. prayers, talks, songs, peace caravans, etc., to change attitude about elections: e.g.: Violent means not helpful; elections come and go; winners & losers stay sharing their poverty & insecurity. That created meanings, produced relations and realities about the world. Helped to normalize elections: “not a win-or-die event”; “no need to kill or die for elections”; etc. (Quoted after a Powerpoint presentation by Habyarimana made available by Berit Bliesemann De Guevara.)

- Target hot spots and train civil education reporters – use WhatsApp to report.
- Train youth from opposite sides together.
- Hotlines – develop App to call for help.
- Support civil society in forming independent election commissions.
- Engage regional bodies on election issues and when there is a threat of violence.
- Coordinate international monitoring missions.
- Train election monitors on what their role is.
- Provide civic engagement and education as entry points.
- Mainstream civic education in nonviolence.
- Positive messaging by media is important to reduce rumors and prevent violence.
- Empower people to participate and not lose hope.
- Early warning is essential.
- Advocate and lobby for civic space.
- Engage high level stakeholders.

#### b) UCP in particular

- Being proactive is generally important, as is being on the ground, in country, early. Track and record pre-election violence, because that will predict where greater post-election violence occurs. Scenario building on what could happen and proper planning are good practices.
- Very useful to facilitate interaction between the armed parties, so that misperceptions are removed.
- Protect those who are politically vulnerable.
- Train election monitors on their personal security and safety. In some cases provide protection to election monitors.
- Adapt to different forms of violence: state, gangs, spontaneous, communal.

#### Challenges

- Elections are seen as opportunities to loot public resources: For some people, becoming politicians is the only way to survive and so they fight for positions.
- Proactive approaches are missing. Most international monitors only come when elections are at the door.
- Attacks on clerics, journalists, election monitors are a threat.
- Lack of fairness and credibility of election processes are challenges.
- Allocation of limited resources for elections is a challenge.
- Reactive approaches to elections are less effective than proactive approaches.
- There is often limited capacity to plan, organize and manage electoral processes.
- There is often limited civic awareness and engagement.
- International influence, e.g. support for one candidate, can contribute to conflict.

#### Conclusions

UCP tactics definitely have a useful role around election periods in African countries in order to

contain or prevent violence that so often accompanies these elections. Again, there is a thin line between general civic engagement and a more particular role of UCP. If NP or other UCP organizations become more active in this field, it might mean shorter-term missions, not necessarily a multi-year long presence. Still it would be necessary to be in the place long enough for proactive work before the elections as well as staying on long enough afterwards to watch for potential post-election conflict afterwards.



# 3. Tactics of Protection



### 3.1 Protective Accompaniment of Individuals in Sub-Saharan Africa

#### Questions to Discuss<sup>19</sup>

What are the good practices and the challenges involved in protective accompaniment?

Who is being protected through accompaniment (e.g., human rights defenders, former child soldiers, vulnerable people, displaced people etc.), from what/whom? Under which circumstances do people become vulnerable/in need of accompaniment?

What is universal and what is specific about accompaniment work in Sub-Saharan Africa?

Which strategies work and which do not work, in which context, and why?

#### Discussion

The working group had members from various backgrounds and organizations, though South Sudan and the work of NP was at the center of the discussion. Protective Accompaniment (PA) is one of the classic tools of UCP. The group defined it as protecting those who are directly threatened by harm, be it individuals or communities. There is quite a spectrum of accompaniment. The “classical” PA is with Human Rights Defenders (HRDs) who are at risk for the work they are doing. But PA is also a tool in community protection work. In South Sudan, NP accompanies persons experiencing intracommunity threats, not only to protect individuals but also because NP sees that there is a link to broader violence. Several examples were shared, including that of a young man threatened because his father was accused of having killed someone. NP managed to get him out of the community in time to a safe place, and learned afterwards that the death of the young man had been planned and was imminent

PA with individuals is considered to be amongst the most time-consuming and also the riskiest work UCP actors can do. Threats – overt or covert - often<sup>20</sup> -come from within the power structure. The targets are often people who struggle for rights, so those in power feel threatened. That may put the accompanying organization at risk – up to the point of risking its continued stay in the field. For that reason, it was emphasized, organizations must be ready to refuse to do PA if the risk is deemed too high.

Even when a PA is agreed, it is important to manage expectations. It is necessary that both sides – the UCP organization and the person accompanied – understand and agree on the commitment and what the UCP organization can and cannot do. Ending/Exit strategies are also needed. This may be through referral or if the threat diminishes.

The group emphasized the primacy of the protected: it is very easy to fall into the trap of making decisions for the person the organization seeks to protect. The primacy of decision-making must remain with the person even if the accompaniers do not agree with choices s/he makes, though in the worst case that may mean that the accompaniment has to be ended.

Another working group (D 2 on infrastructural challenges) added to the topic of protective accompaniment that sometimes PA is limited to certain events or occasions – for example taking

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<sup>19</sup> The “questions to discuss” were given to the facilitators and participants with the agenda of the workshop.

The working group B 2 was facilitated by Tiffany Easthom. Sources: Notes of Group B2, taken by Yasmin Maydhane; notes of plenary after Groups B, taken by Christine Schweitzer.

<sup>20</sup> In an interview conducted between Berit Bliesemann de Guevara and a representative of PBI in Kenya before the conference, (who was unable to attend at the last minute), the representative told her that in Kenya the HRDs that PBI works with often face threats that come rather from within communities, for example in slums in Nairobi.

someone to a hospital and guarding them there while they get treatment because the hospital may be in the territory of an 'enemy' group.

### Good Practices

The group listed good practices and challenges regarding PA, sorting them into various categories:

- Preparations for PA: What is needed are 1. safe space, allies, communication plans, criteria for accompaniment and safety planning.
- Categories for information gathering and analysis: who are the person(s), the threat, the lines of influence, and network options.
- Network building is important, namely with/to allies, share risks, diffuse attention, and use different strengths.
- Examples of categories of people to be contacted: diplomats, government, airports, military, religious communities, health care.
- Relationships play an important role in PA: pre-existing relationships, awareness raising, who you can turn to, and what the influence lines are.
- Deciding cases requires clearly defined mandates and definitions, contingency guidelines for decision-making in emergencies and consideration of impact on the broader context.
- Communication includes data security, a list of who is involved and of what is shared.
- Primacy of person(s) protected requires: To avoid the temptation to make decisions on their behalf, remember the centrality of the person accompanied and to suspend own opinions.

### Challenges

- PA is some of the highest risk work UCP organizations can do.
- Risks relate to:
  - staff security (especially to national staff)
  - access
  - reputation
  - continuity
- The sustainability of the PA can become a challenge of its own, especially regarding the planning of the eventual exit and assessment of changing risks. The impact on teams – psychological, emotional, arising from intimate nature of work and acute tensions between confidentiality and transparency must not be underestimated.
- There are risks to the trust that has been built up, both internally and externally.
- It is a challenge to be prepared to say no to a request for accompaniment. Not all such requests can be taken up, either because of resource limitations of the UCP organization or because the case has features that make the organization hesitant of taking it up.<sup>21</sup>
- Expectations management is another challenge. This relates to:
  - clear and regular communications.

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<sup>21</sup> This again may be different things, from the risk to be considered no longer non-partisan to the threat level and character of the threat being of such a nature that protective accompaniment might not work or be suitable.

- economic implications for the person under threat – usually her/his livelihood is interrupted and unless the person can draw on savings or family support, there may be expectations of the UCP organization to provide support.
- exit strategies: Length of time, capacity to continue the PA.

### Conclusions

The discussion in the Nairobi workshop focused on accompaniment in the situation in South Sudan, in a setting that is different from the “classical” PA with HRDs who are threatened for their human rights work. However, the lessons and the challenges described are very much the same as PA with HRDs. For UCP organizations that do not have a sole focus on PA (like NP), perhaps some challenges are greater than for organizations that specialize in PA. For that reason, it is regrettable that Peace Brigades International, who work in Kenya, were, for a combination of unlucky circumstances, not able to attend this workshop. It would have been interesting to compare their experiences with those of NP in South Sudan.

## 3.2 UCP and Local Mediation and Negotiation in the Context Of Sub-Saharan Africa

### Questions to Discuss<sup>22</sup>

- In what contexts do UCP staff engage in some local forms of (formal or informal) mediation or negotiation?
- How are people trained to do these tasks?
- In what contexts, or for what reasons, do these kinds of practices occur?
- What supports being effective and what undermines effectiveness?
- What kinds of relationships are built? How are issues of trust addressed?
- Does it matter whether it is an international, national or local organization engaging in this?

### Discussion

The group began its discussion with a case study provided by NP (see to the right). NP learned of this conflict in 2009, and started by empowering mediators from the community. NP coached and mentored them for a long time. This approach was recommended as best practice in regard to local mediation: considering mediation as a long-term process and working with local mediators.

In another area, NP linked mediation efforts with humanitarian efforts: NP trained community members and nurtured a culture of locally led mediation initiatives. Simultaneously vaccination of cattle took place; the vaccination being a dividend which was provided by another INGO on the condition that no cattle raiding occurred. The same could be done in partnership with other humanitarian agencies, it was said, for the distribution of seeds and tools etc.

In another case, NP made use of the South Sudan Council of Churches (SSCC) to mediate in a conflict which involved several parties and issues simultaneously because the SSCC was the one institution with access to all sides.

A fourth example was a case when Ugandan business people living in South Sudan were attacked by local people incited by the local authorities. The background was both money the leaders of the community wanted from the business people and hatred against Uganda for its involvement in the South Sudanese civil war which had just started. NP took the people who were chased by gangs of youth into their hut and contacted the Commissioner responsible for the area, asking

### The Case Study

Amongst cattle keeping tribes in South Sudan, there is a history of revenge killing, cattle raids and abductions. Often the grievances of the conflicting parties are so entwined that it is impossible to identify one specific demand, position or interest. Both sides blame the other while excusing violence committed by their side as justified. In one community, a peace dialogue was set up between elders. Generally, traditional leaders and elders have a lot of control over youth, who are usually the ones deployed or involved in these intercommunal (and intracommunal) conflicts. To further complicate matters, the broader political conflict has displaced several thousand people from their homes and they have sought refuge in areas controlled by their traditional enemies. At the peace dialogue, youth from the southern community (IDP community) attacked and youth from the northern community (host community) retaliated. In the end, ten people from both sides were killed and more than 20 injured. IDPs from the southern community remain in northern lands, but are now at increased risk of revenge attacks from members of the northern community. Both communities have asked NP to help mediate the conflict and provide some measure of confidence to proceed.

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<sup>22</sup> The “questions to discuss” were given to the facilitators and participants with the agenda of the workshop.

The working group B3 was facilitated by Chica Onah. Sources: Notes of Group B3, taken by Niklas van Doorne; notes of plenary after Groups B, taken by Christine Schweitzer.

him to tell the local authorities to stop the attacks. Finally the Ugandans were evacuated by air transport. This case was told to illustrate the need to consider regional issues when dealing with conflicts.

However, it was noted that while analysis and understanding of the various factors playing a role in the conflict are important, there can also be too much context: e.g. going back to early colonial times can be distracting given the large amount of resulting information and the challenge to then feed this into a more constructive process. It is very important to stay focused and to distill the most important current issues rather than to awaken old grievances.

Participants in the working group criticized mediation efforts by large agencies. They noted that these agencies may actually weaken the efforts for mediation and undermine locally rooted actors because they automatically tend to assume the role of lead agency in mediation efforts. But they are operating on short-term deadlines and offer financial incentives for participants in mediation processes rather than guiding genuine processes aimed at reconciliation and trauma healing. There was one example given where a mediation organized by such an agency ended in a gun fight due to poor preparation.

Generally it was emphasized that the role of UCP actors is to strengthen the grassroots and through that to enable the community to hold others accountable. There is limited scope for mediations – UCP actors cannot solve the history of the conflict. But dealing with and solving immediate conflict issues gives space to work on deeper and historical conflicts.

The group formulated two recommendations: First, to provide and disseminate information / policy briefs that reflect local dynamics to high-level actors engaged in mediation effort. And second, the necessity to think about strategies to address big private companies as a cause of conflict.

### Good Practices

The following is a transcript of the written report of the group.

What?

- Early interventions at micro-level are required.
- It is important to be proactive and prepared rather than reactive.
- When there are local conflicts involving foreign nationals, any regional factors / interests behind conflicts need to be investigated.
- One should separate intent (e.g. raiding cattle) from impact (e.g. deaths).
- It is important to slow things down to give space for mediation.
- Mediation is best done not in isolation but often coupled with (other practices) e.g. interpositioning etc.
- Link local mediation with livelihood benefits, for example the vaccination of animals

Who?

- A complimentary approach is recommended. The situation will inform who will be the better mediator/ has better access, international or national staff of (I)NGO or local mediators.
- It is good practice to enable grassroots actors to influence leaders in the community. This can be done by bringing together actors who influence change.
- It is better to empower / train mediators in the community than to attempt mediation oneself.
- Women should be trained and used as mediators.

- There is a need to transfer experience, for example to advise international organizations and agencies in order to help them to avoid mistakes.

How?

- Mediation must be seen as a process, not as one high-level event.
- Keep mediation at lowest level.
- Keep mediation process open, without deadlines.
- Participants not carrying weapons should be a condition for mediation and negotiation meetings.
- Realize that small steps may be fine, not just big agreements.
- Diplomatic behavior: Ability to remain calm and consistent; don't get provoked.
- Provide safe space for meetings.
- Listening is the main strength of mediation.
- Trauma healing happens through recognition of grievances.
- There is limited scope for mediations – UCP actors cannot solve the history of the conflict. But dealing with and solving immediate conflict issues gives space to work on deeper and historical conflicts.

Partnerships are important, for example:

- Use religious leaders from different sides to bring communities together.

### Challenges

- The way large agencies conduct themselves, can become a challenge.
- Intergovernmental institutions can undermine the process.
- How to deal with big intergovernmental institutions that have resources.
- Bringing people together without focus does not work.
- Spoilers are always a challenge.
- Elites and private sector are difficult to handle, especially since local issues often have links to the wider political structure.
- Multinationals can be “smart spoilers” meaning that they can ruin a mediation process while seemingly aiding it, for example because of fixation on fast results rather than allowing a process to go along at its own speed.
- Armed parties during the mediation are a danger.
- Rumors must be dealt with.
- Preconceptions about the conflict or conflict parties may be a hindrance.
- Trauma influences mediation processes negatively.
- To move into agreements before all complaints are heard and listened to, and before people take responsibility is a mistake.
- Local conflicts that involve foreign nationals / regional interests are a challenge.
- Leaders are vulnerable: When they come together they become targets.
- Multiple issues involving multiple groups are difficult to handle.
- There is a mediation industry that sometimes could do more harm than good
- To what extent can we talk about political dynamics at mediation processes?

- Historical precedents are used to justify current conflicts.

### Conclusions

UCP actors often need to engage in mediation at the local level. However, the preferable way to do this is to work with mediators from the local community who may have been identified and trained by the UCP organization if they weren't already in place before. Processes to settle conflicts are sometimes made more complicated by various other actors like large agencies that also engage in mediation efforts. Sometimes they do more harm than good, as they may t do this without proper preparation or long-term commitment.



### 3.3 UCP/Accompaniment With Displaced People

#### Questions to Discuss<sup>23</sup>

What are the specific challenges and good practices of UCP/accompaniment with displaced people (refugees, IDPs; in camps, cities and rural communities)?

Who is being protected from what and how?

How does the relationship between displaced and 'local' people pose particular issues for accompaniment/UCP? What are good practices and challenges in the cooperation between UCP and humanitarian aid agencies in protecting displaced people?

How can UCP organizations help communities strategically plan and prepare for displacement?

#### Discussion

The group discussed examples and various problems that are common when working with refugees and people displaced in their own country. In South Sudan, one of the problems is military people seeking haven in the PoCs, often also bring their weapons. This is a challenge to the UCP organization that may be accused, e.g. by the government of protecting and working with people who are not civilians but criminals.

Another challenge of the PoCs is that the camps are open, and criminals and armed fighters can move in and out without being checked. They are often the ones committing crimes in the PoCs.

The constant waves of displacements lead to a lack of sustainability of any work in the PoCs because of the ongoing and repeated displacements. NP tries to make sure it strengthens the communities' abilities to self-protect, especially as they may be displaced again. However, the best practice NP has done, according to a participant in the working group, is to have mobile teams that allow flexible interventions, using a window of opportunity in moments of calm to access displaced populations and also ensuring that hard to reach populations are served.

UCP is difficult in an area like South Sudan with displaced populations because of lack of access and many IDPs being outside formal camps. Sometimes there are no other agencies NP can refer IDPs to for aid. And UCP in this context is also cost-intensive, because the lack of proper infrastructure (roads, risk of mines and ambushes) means that sometimes flying is the only option.

Further lack of infrastructure, i.e. clinics, in the areas where there are IDPs creates more problems. In one case, the NP team had to take a severely injured man through front lines to a hospital in town, and to mount protective presence in the hospital because the man belonged to the "enemy" ethnic group.

NP in South Sudan is putting a focus on working with local communities, setting up EWER systems so that people can protect themselves or at least know what to do if flight becomes necessary.

The relationship between displaced people and the host community is often difficult. This is an observation of almost global validity. In order to deal with these issues, it was noted that it is important to avoid doing harm while taking care of humanitarian needs. For example never give food or medical care only to the IDPs but always include the local community in the benefits. UCP organizations here should advise the aid agencies and build capacities in the communities. Local

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<sup>23</sup> The "questions to discuss" were given to the facilitators and participants with the agenda of the workshop.

The working group C2 was facilitated by Niklas van Doorne Sources: Notes of Group C2, taken by Tandiwe Ngwenya; notes of plenary after Groups C, taken by Christine Schweitzer.

mediation between host and displaced communities can help to deal with grievances and problems. And the NP WPT are very helpful. They have, for example, conducted protective presence at wells and markets etc.

### Good Practices

The following categorization was made by the reporter of this group to the plenary that took place afterwards.

#### *Strategies*

- Relationship-building on a daily basis is important, since relations have first to be established and then maintained, otherwise they are lost again.
- It is necessary to try to verify the civilian status of people seeking protection.
- Continuous, consistent exposure of IDPs to UCP actors, methods and theories is important.
- The creation of Weapon-Free Zones, and mounting patrols, protective presence and monitoring these zones are useful strategies to prevent violence.
- Trainings and dialogues with IDPs and local communities is important.
- Listening is a good practice and can help with trauma healing.
- Psychological first aid, counselling, reminders about accessing services and what to do are important.
- Re-exposure to nonviolence can shift mindsets and behaviors.
- A follow up after security incidents is needed for the sake of communication and transparency.
- UCP actors should be present at hotspot areas (e.g. water points) to prevent violence.
- Advocating for IDP representation in community leadership structures is a good practice.
- Focusing on EWER with communities at risk of displacement, and ensure their participation as UCP actors is important.
- Consulting communities before humanitarians 'descend on a place' is important in order do no harm.
- There is sometimes a need to mediate tensions between (I)NGOs and IDPs, and between host community and IDPs.
- UCP actors should ensure that other partners are giving clear and tangible information.
- Advocating for "take away" rations rather than something that is a pull factor for armed actors is a good practice.<sup>24</sup>
- When conflict happens, support efforts for reparation and restoration of relationships as a primary tenet.
- To slow things down in situations of emergency displacement is useful.
- EWER systems are essential, as are concrete material preparations for displacements (where to go to, what to take, how to make sure that families meet each other again since they might not be together when an attack happens
- If EWER is a difficult topic to discuss because people for example do not wish to consider the possibility of an armed attack, approach EWER strategies through the lens of

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<sup>24</sup> In South Sudan, stores of humanitarian aid have drawn such actors who then raided them. Therefore it was recommended to rather parcel aid up so that people can take it with them.

preventing family separation.

- Mobile protection teams and semi-static missions for hard-to reach areas are good practice for UCP because they can use a window of opportunity in moments of calm to access displaced populations and also ensuring that hard to reach populations are served
- Partnerships and accompaniments matter a lot in areas with no infrastructure.
- Protective accompaniments are a tool that has to be used in circumstances of multiple displacements.

#### *Identity as UCP*

- Be careful as UCP actors not to take on the role of all security, rather highlight issues of community-safety.
- Division of labor: UCP actors are taking care of security inside the POCs; UN soldiers should make sure no one enters with weapons.
- Utilize community connections to identify spoilers and those doing criminal activities or joining armed groups.
- Repair local infrastructures rather than build dependency.

#### Challenges

- Security
- Loose perimeters in POC sites lead to internal insecurity.
- Breakdown of protective structures often leads to increased criminality.
- Harassment by military and state structures of humanitarian organization is a challenge.
- Active fighters or politicians among the IDPs pose a problem.
- There is a lack of distinction between civilians and combatants.
- When there are violations of weapon-free zones – under whose jurisdiction does it come?
- The humanitarian urgency to “do something” can become a challenge of its own.
- Lack of infrastructure.
- Structures can be biased (for example a wounded person being under threat at a hospital).
- Physical access is challenging (swamps, bush etc.) which may lead to a lack of humanitarian services.
- Trauma, disrupted livelihoods and lack of hope are challenges for IDPs and therefore also for UCP.
- There is a lack of mechanisms taking care of justice and accountability.
- Proliferation of small arms and light weapons (SALW) is a challenge.
- Revenge culture among some groups is a problem.
- Lack of accountability of humanitarian actors and UNMISS actors is a challenge.
- A lack of infrastructure for many IDPs in towns or informal camps poses a problem.
- Coordination and relationships among many (I)NGOs and other agencies, government, etc. is challenging.
- Accusations that UCP organizations “support rebels” are common.
- Factions within security organizations are a challenge.

## Conclusions

UCP can play a very important role dealing with IDPs and refugees. In South Sudan, which was the focus of this working group, this mostly refers to three scenarios: First, working with local communities to prepare and secure evacuation/flight if it becomes necessary. EWER systems here are essential, as are concrete material preparations for displacements (where to go to, what to take, how to make sure that families meet each other again since they might not be together when an attack happens).

The second is work in IDP camps (the PoCs) where there are multiple security challenges (including GBV, child rights' violations) and internal conflicts.

And third, working with IDPs who are outside such formal infrastructures, be it in towns or just somewhere in the bush. Typical conflicts are *inter alia* between IDPs who may belong to different factions, outcomes of criminal activities, conflicts between IDPs and host communities and conflicts between IDPs and authorities.

### 3.4 UCP and the Role of Youth in the Sub-Saharan African Context

#### Questions to Discuss<sup>25</sup>

How are different forms of violent socialisation of youth, cycles of violence and UCP work linked in Sub-Saharan Africa?

Does UCP work differently with youth? If so, why/how?

Do or should UCP/accompaniment in the region include youth, e.g. through specific programs?

*If time allows:* What are the specific challenges of doing accompaniment/UCP with former child soldiers?

#### Discussion

In the group participants from several African countries discussed rather broadly the role of youth in their communities and what kind of approaches have been developed to work with youth. It was observed that youth is a category that is rather flexible. Not only the upper age varies a lot – in South Sudan people up to 45 (!) may be considered youth, but various factors may make people excluded from the category, for example being a mother.

Young people are affected in various ways by conflict. Young men are the first target to be recruited by armed militias. So partly the category “youth” overlaps with the category of “armed actors”. When they return to their communities or visit them, they often do not know how to relate to civilians anymore. In refugee camps (but also in other communities), youth gangs quickly form – especially if there is the issue of unemployment. These gangs often engage in criminal activities. Girls and young women often marry and have children while still being minors. They are no longer considered youth by local standards, and are not easy to reach with programs designed for youth. In consequence, work with youth beyond primary school level is often work with male youth only. Another problem mentioned were youth in prison who are almost invisible.

Peace organizations in different countries have developed various programs with young people. More indirect approaches seen from a conflict lens are vocational trainings, activities in schools (e.g. peace clubs) or leisure time activities – sports in particular. Often these approaches seek to address children and youth from different faiths and ethnic groups simultaneously, and thereby reduce tensions or prejudices. In one country, a local NGO started by building relationship with youth in the armed groups and turned them into “peace ambassadors”.

Other organizations have tried to work with youth directly on conflict. One engaged youth that were active in armed militia through sports but then convinced them to commit themselves to small arms control. They started then telling people to leave their arms at home when in town. Another organization worked with youth on conflict issues and then gave them the opportunity to create theatre plays and/or film videos on peace issues. This was found a good tool also to address wider community issues – GBV and other topics that would have been hard to raise in normal discussions. Leadership trainings are another tool that has been used in several countries. NP realized that in the PoCs militia members came because of the services (food, medical aid etc.) offered there. This gave NP access to those youth.

Several practitioners mentioned that it is important to ‘speak the language’ of the youth in

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<sup>25</sup> The “questions to discuss” were given to the facilitators and participants with the agenda of the workshop.

The working group C3 was facilitated by Yasmin Maydhane. Sources: Notes of Group C3, taken by Marna Anderson; notes of plenary after Groups C, taken by Christine Schweitzer.

order to be accepted. Also strategies or messages that appeal to the youth need to be developed. Some organizations made use of celebrities in this context.

Another aspect of work with youth is to win the support of the other parts of the community, including the elders, for what the young people are doing and how they are approaching things. It is necessary to challenge the narratives about youth, and that can only be done by tackling the generational gaps in the communities. Here it is important to distinguish between how they see themselves and how others see them, and not to forget: Youth may also be divided, and they have their own hierarchies.

### Good Practices

The distinction between peacebuilding in general and UCP has been added by the rapporteur and was not made by the group itself.

a) From a broader peacebuilding angle:

- Trainings of various kinds: Vocational trainings have proven very useful, as have leadership trainings.
- Economic empowerment of youth has been found to be important, for example providing equipment to start small businesses, because poverty and unemployment are big problems and contribute to violence.
- Sports stand out as an activity/offer to which youth respond positively.
- Some organizations successfully used arts (theatre, video productions), to help youth express their issues and to communicate with the wider community.
- Youth clubs in schools or outside schools that include kids and youth from various ethnicities and religion have been found to be a useful tool in some countries.
- Giving youth particular roles or titles – like that of “Peace Ambassadors” - has proven to encourage youth to become and stay active on peace issues.
- Engagement with young mothers (and fathers) is important because at least the women otherwise fall out of the category of “youth”. This requires community engagement
- Generally, it was said, acting like a youth ensures that you get their attention and interest. Hence one has to act, dress and use the same language as local youth.
- It is necessary to provide space for youth to state what they care about.

b) UCP in particular

- NP has had good experiences with building relationship with youth on a very low key level, just meeting and talking with them. NP also used sports (soccer) as a tool for building a relationship with youth.
- NP has had good experiences with UCP and GBV trainings combined with visioning exercises, asking youth how they envision themselves to be in five years’ time.

### Challenges

- To find access to youth, speaking their language and finding their interest, is a challenge. There was also the question: Do you really have to be youth, look and speak like youth to be accepted by youth?
- Develop more UCP tools that “work” with youth.
- Armed groups and recruitment of young people: The armed groups are offering the youth things that NGOs find hard to do, even if the NGO is able to offer financial incentives

(which NP, for example, does not do). “We’re not giving them enough and not what they perceive they need”, it was said.

- A particular challenge is the protection of former armed fighters, and helping them remember/relearn how to relate to the community without arms or violence.
- Youth who are armed cannot be protected the same way as civilians, but there is a lack of tools for their protection.
- To overcome perceptions of the generational gap, and preformed pictures of “youth” is a challenge.
- Resistance to peace and nonviolent means is an issue when dealing with youth.
- The need to manage expectations can become a challenge (not only, but also when working with youth).
- It is hard to counter ideological or religious-based stances or divides.
- Sustainability and continuity of the activities that keep youth together and to mitigate violence, is important.
- It was stated, referring to South Sudan, that one of the challenges working with youth is that they are so fast in taking action and want outcomes immediately. “We need to let them know that it’s going to take a long time.”
- There is a need for incentives to get youth to attend trainings.

## Conclusions

The importance of working with youth – of both/all genders – is very high, and this is certainly not only true for sub-Saharan Africa. The question however is: What tactics fall under UCP, what is broader peacebuilding? The UCP practitioners have a very clear line they can draw between themselves and aid providers. But the same does not seem to be the case between UCP and what above has been called broader peacebuilding tactics. Offering vocational training or micro credits to set up businesses, work in youth clubs, organizing sports and other activities are very important peacebuilding tools. There are at least two strategies or assumptions behind them: One is to give youth an occupation and thereby a future which empowers them to resist being recruited to armed factions or criminal gangs or dropping out of society as addicts etc. The other is what has been called ‘multi-ethnic or multi-communal social work’. This refers to a multitude of activities typical for social work conducted with the implicit function of bringing people together across ethnic or other perceived lines of conflict. This, it is assumed, creates a neutral space or protected area in which people, independent of their ethnic or religious identities, come and do things together, such as attending a computer course or playing football. Rather than making ‘the conflict’ the issue to meet about, the activities are used to reflect on group processes and one’s own behavior, and thereby deal with the conflict indirectly.<sup>26</sup>

Anything that reduces conflict of course also contributes to preventing violence. However, there is in the eyes of the rapporteur a risk that UCP disappears as a category of its own when all peacebuilding tactics are assumed to be also UCP tactics. Certain other kinds of work with youth, in particular preventing recruitment or reducing youth violence are however certainly part of UCP. This topic will be taken up again in the conclusions at the end of the report.

Another issue here may be to have in mind that youth fall into several categories. Many activities

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<sup>26</sup> Kurschat, Reuben (1998) *Scham und Schuld in interkollektiven Konflikten. Ueberlegungen zu einer ‘multiethnischen Sozialarbeit’ im Nachkriegsbosnien*. Studienschriften des Friedenskreises Halle e.V. Bd 1, Halle/Saale

discussed in the workshop seem to target boys more than girls, not-working youth more than working ones etc. This is probably also worth exploring.



### 3.5 Strategic Exit: Laying Groundwork for the Self-protection of Local Counterparts and Communities

#### Questions to Discuss<sup>27</sup>

Does a UCP organization have an obligation to help a) the counterparts it has worked with and b) the communities it has worked with brace for being alone amid violence after their exit? If yes, then what might that look like?

How do local counterparts and communities protect themselves alone amid violence?

“Early warning–Early response” is one oft-cited strategy of civilian self-protection. What does EWER look like? Is there more to civilian self-protection than EWER? If yes, what?

If “training” is one way to support civilian self-protection, then who holds the knowledge essential to civilian self-protection?

How can efforts at civilian self-protection be sustained and replicated?

How can UCP organizations that have withdrawn continue to help local counterparts and communities long distance?

#### Discussion

The group met after the plenary presentation by Casey Barrs which is documented under 6.6.

The group did not primarily discuss general exiting (ending a program) by UCP organizations; rather they focused on community self-protection mechanisms and evacuation of UCP organizations. NP explained that it considers it to be its core mission to strengthen communities to self-protect. Self-protection mechanisms need to be intentional and planned ahead– putting one’s head in the sand does not help community members but increases the risk they face. NP first goes into a community to learn what they have in place and does risk mapping, including as many stakeholders and people as possible. Most communities have such mechanisms in place. Several examples from other geographic areas (Philippines, Myanmar, Sri Lanka) were given to illustrate this. Special attention when planning evacuation needs to be given to vulnerable people, for example children and elderly people.

In the risk mapping, first the different types of risks are listed. Then questions like these are asked: “What did you do during the last displacement?”, “Which way do you go?”, “In which season?”, “What direction will this threat probably come from?” Then people start to determine: “when threat comes from location x, we run to location y.” “How long would people be able to survive before help comes?” “If there is emergency evacuation, children may be at school. So what should the children do? Where should they go to, whom to shelter with?” “Make sure that you show these places to your children.” Other elements are preparing a flight bag and make sure that all that is needed is in it.

Setting up EWER systems, NP in South Sudan makes sure that people participate in it out of self-interest and the wish to help their family or community. NP does not pay fees or travel stipends because this might change the motivation, and be a risk if at one point there was no more money,

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<sup>27</sup> The “questions to discuss” were given to the facilitators and participants with the agenda of the workshop.

The working group D1 was facilitated by Casey Barrs. Sources: Notes of Group D1, taken by Christine Schweitzer; notes of plenary after Groups D, taken by Christine Schweitzer.

and people then stopped doing the work. Many other agencies, Barrs reported, pay such stipends, and also NP sometimes meets with expectations of that kind.<sup>28</sup>

A special example of an EWER system came from Somalia. There an EWER was set up in the 1960s, based on women family heads. The President of that time assumed that the women would be in charge of property because it was assumed that the men in crisis would leave and fight because they have several wives and would protect their animals rather than looking after their family. Since then, women keep the ownership titles for land, property and kids. Even the sharia accepts that it is women's responsibility to reconstruct. One woman will hold all the papers for the whole community. Any armed actor will know that that woman was chosen to hold all papers. So she becomes untouchable, also because the armed fighters themselves have their papers with the women. After return, the women will give over the deeds to them so they can restart. But many women have returned to the community without men, and so have to do the rebuilding. It seems that there is no conflict between the women.

A special challenge is if the methods of self-protection by communities are harmful to the community itself. There was an example given from Myanmar where communities give up not only money but young boys and girls to rebels, and use land mines to protect themselves – when they flee, the mines put the community members as much at risk as the armed groups. In such cases, UCP actors may try to carefully suggest alternatives to what the communities have been doing so far to protect themselves. In the discussion on Casey Barr's presentation in the morning, also the issue of village guards and vigilante groups was raised. They usually are created in response to a threat, but often overstep their mandate and become a threat by themselves.

When UCP staff have to evacuate, it creates another challenge. Sometimes the UCP organization loses the trust of the local community if it leaves. To rebuild that trust later on is not easy.

A special topic raised in the working group was the relationship of national/local and international staff in NP. National staff, since they often come from the communities where NP works, are primary implementers of UCP and potential guarantors of sustainability beyond an eventual withdrawal of the international organization. The challenges here are that national staff are more at risk than internationals. They may be targeted for what they do (intentional killings), and are blamed if expectations are disappointed (for example if there are no material services given).

In case of armed attacks on the community expats always get evacuated if at all possible. For national staff things are more difficult even if an agency is willing to evacuate them as well, which is often the case with NP. The reason is that national staff have their families to look after. This not only brings logistical challenges (there were cases when the family was so large they could not all be evacuated by air transport), but national staff often refuse to be evacuated. Therefore, NP analyzes the situation with national staff beforehand and makes plans with them. This may also mean sending the families abroad in an emergency, and leave some cash reserves with national staff for emergencies.

Some national staff, however, felt that they have a special burden because they are expected to ensure the safety of international staff, and yet international staff do not consider the safety and security of national staff to the same degree. There is certainly a relationship of mutual protection because national staff said that they need internationals to go with them to some places, because internationals were less likely to be attacked.

### Good Practices

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<sup>28</sup> It is a different case with the WPT that are sometimes working almost fulltime. Here, according to NP, material benefits, for example mobile or satellite phones, may be given to them.

- Mutual strength in international and national staff should be recognized, and to ensure exchange of ideas and resources between national and international staff is good practice.
- There must be intentionality in organizational planning (e.g. evacuation plans for locals and internationals).
- Do not overlook but facilitate communities learning from one another. One community is learning from others how to protect themselves.
- Organizations facilitating conversation between team members post evacuation is important.
- Another good practice is to build on a community's history of safety planning for evacuation/displacement (EWER).
- Communication of evacuation plans and strategies is essential.
- It is good practice not to pay stipends for participants in EWER systems because that changes the motivation to participate in them.
- Timely preparation for displacing from a location is needed.

### Challenges

- Continuous displacements disrupt self-protection systems, reduce reliance on them, cause fatigue and tiredness, and disrupt coordination.
- Insecurity at times makes it challenging to lay groundwork for assisting communities with self-protection.
- In times of attack /imminent risk of attack UCP organizations leave. But that breaks the trust, and at times horrible things happen to communities. When the organization is back, it is accused by communities of neglect, so the UCP actors have to work hard to undo the damage and rebuild the trust.
- A challenge is the lack of essential kits for a quick run bag, e.g. water purifying tablets, mosquito nets and medicine etc. NP asks other agencies to provide such things but often this does not happen and the community is disappointed.
- Thefts and robbery can undo such material preparations.
- Evacuation of national staff is challenging due to the huge families and also the responsibility to protect families.
- National staff feels responsible for the security of the internationals without experiencing full reciprocity in all cases.
- Sometimes the methods of self-protection by groups and their local defense strategies can be harmful to the community itself.
- Demands for sitting allowances or money at trainings happen at times, especially where other organizations are giving stipends to training participants.
- Oftentimes organizations do not exit, because of insecurity but rather because of a lack of funding.

### Conclusions

In the earlier workshops in Manila and Beirut the discussion around exit focused on UCP actors ending their work in a place or a country, and what to leave behind. Self-protection mechanisms were discussed more in the context of what could happen when there was no more protection by the INGO. In this workshop the focus was on emergency evacuations in South Sudan as they

happen in the context of the ongoing war where communities are often displaced more than once. So preparation for self-protection and EWER systems became a central part of all UCP work in South Sudan. Probably the central lessons are that conscious and early preparation for such emergencies is necessary, building whenever possible on preexisting mechanisms the communities have used but helping to elaborate and improve them. This work focuses on civilian protection not through prevention of violence and conflict but by responding to it by getting civilians out of harms' way.

## 3.6 Relationship-Building

### Questions to Discuss<sup>29</sup>

This was one of the groups in the round where participants chose topics that were considered to be important but had not been discussed sufficiently before.

### Discussion

The group started by stating that relationship-building is something all organizations are doing. A number of stories were shared.

In WANEP, the strategy is to engage with key stakeholders – both civil society and state institutions - through first identifying institutions with challenges, and building their capacity. One good example is the engagement with the National Peace Council in Ghana. That is a state institution in charge of bringing peace in Ghana. During 2016 elections, WANEP created a partnership with them before the elections through capacity-building. So, when it was close to election time, WANEP already had relations with them. It then created a group in charge of response, called the Election Response Group, formed from representatives of each regional peace council, and a representative from the Ministry of Interior. They had regular meetings, and WANEP provided them with weekly reports. After that they became more proactive. Whenever WANEP now wants to engage with them, it has no problem to going to them. A similar approach was taken in Mali, Cote d'Ivoire and other countries.

In South Sudan, NP started by engaging local authorities – governor and commissioner. The team shared with them what they planned, and asked about security. Then it started to invite block leaders, police, line ministries, chiefs and aid agencies in biweekly meetings. In these meetings, all issues of concern are raised. NP then could do follow-ups with participants (such as with police in cases of criminal activities that were reported). This approach helped when the relocation program of children from region to region was started. Getting authorization from authorities then was easy.

Relationship-building generally is also important for linking between the different tracks and levels of leadership (grassroots, middle and top), between civil society and state institutions and between local community and the capital.

### Good Practices

- One strategy to build relationships is to start with capacity building offered to key stakeholders.
- Election monitoring provides an opportunity to build relationships with important actors in many countries.
- Organizing regular meetings to which all stakeholders are invited and discussing community issues lays the ground for specific interventions by UCP actors.
- Usually it is necessary to start by talking to those in authority when entering a new community, and then broaden the range of stakeholders in order to include them all.
- Building personal relationships through social occasions - parties to invite stakeholders including Commissioners etc.; just dropping by to say 'hello' whenever passing a

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<sup>29</sup> The working group E2 was facilitated by Caca Carrell Mangno. Sources: Notes of Group E2, taken by Christine Schweitzer; notes of plenary after Groups E, taken by Christine Schweitzer.

community, giving condolences when somebody has died etc. - helps to build sustainable relationships.

- When protective space for anyone shrinks for reasons of identity, those who retain privilege have a responsibility to step in and try to broaden that space.
- Each incident requires a holistic approach engaging various methods and collaborating with a variety of other actors.
- Sharing reports with authorities and other stakeholders gives an organization visibility.
- Having relationships with everyone is very important because you never know who may be a leader in the future.
- To reach national leaders, making use of persons who are respected throughout the country without being high level leaders themselves, can help to get introduced.
- Being present in a community every day helps enormously with building relationships.
- Learning at least a little of the local language helps with building relationships.
- Diversity (gender, religion, ethnic and national background) in teams is important to build relationships across dividing-lines within and between communities, because teams thereby demonstrate nonpartisanship and set a model for peaceful collaboration and enhances understanding and creativity.
- To mitigate the effect of staff turnover, one of the good practices is to refer to former staff and build new relationships based on these former connections.
- A positive relationship with international military forces on the ground as peacekeepers (like UNMISS in South Sudan) is important and helpful because of their logistical capacities that can be tapped.

### Challenges

- Quick changes in leadership functions are a challenge if there is no positive relationship that was built beforehand.
- Change of team members (staff turnover) of the UCP organizations is a challenge because relationships need to be rebuilt.
- A challenge for INGOs is to build good relationships without offering material aid which is usually expected.
- For internationals it may be a challenge to recognize immediately the ethnic identity of a person which may be necessary for some communications (especially when trying to use the local language).

### Conclusions

Relationship-building is an ongoing activity and in many ways the basis for all other UCP work. There are different strategies how to do this but they all have in common that it is important to be aware of local (and regional and national) power structures in order not to ignore someone's authority which otherwise could quickly lead to conflicts and non-acceptance. For international NGOs, staff turnover is probably the biggest challenge here because it prevents relationships from becoming stable and ongoing.

### **3.7 Local Community Relations: Learning From Local Practices, Strengthening of Local Practices, Local Community Empowerment**

#### Questions to Discuss<sup>30</sup>

This was one of the groups in the round where participants chose topics that were considered to be important but had not been discussed sufficiently before.

#### Discussion

The discussion focused on supporting local communities in developing strategies for self-protection. Again South Sudan and the work of NP was the focus of the discussion. The discussion was similar to that of the world café table on Primacy of Local Actors, the group on “Strategic Exit” (see 3.5) and “Relationship-Building” (see 3.6). NP described how they approach communities – first doing an assessment to find out what are the problems or threats and the existing capacities and practices of self-protection. It then offers training in order to prepare for emergencies, for example preparing evacuation in case of an attack rather than running away without any equipment. The WPTs are an example for NP’s work in communities - building a local structure, training, helping to identify their rights to be protected and not violated and how they can manage situations of violence and self-protect from harm.

NP is able to do so because the teams live in the communities, and carefully build relationships with the leadership in the community even before deploying. Trust-building is an ongoing process and requires constant engagement. NP is different from other INGOs because staff lives in or close to the communities, and because it takes the priorities the communities set for their security (and the security of their cattle) seriously.

Different target groups in communities need to be approached with different means. For example, one team member explained that he is building trust with youth (of both genders) by playing volleyball with them almost every day (see also 2.4). Also inviting youth to trainings is a good strategy because they feel proud to be invited.

The process to choose which community to work in is complex. Often national staff come with first recommendations. Sometimes recommendations come up in (I)NGO meetings where NGOs working in a certain area exchange their experiences. Also word of mouth works – when people hear of trainings in neighboring communities, they may come and ask for the same.

The concept of the trainings is to teach attendees who then will share their knowledge with the rest of the community, because not everyone can be trained. It is not a training of trainers but a training for local multipliers. They are not paid for their work but do it as volunteers.

The question was raised how to measure the impact of such protection activities. One possibility is to look at what happened during previous attacks and previous displacements and compare it to the next time after the planning and training. For example, earlier people sometimes only ran with their cattle, not even food or the kids or the old people (see also 3.3). Also sometimes NP hears directly or indirectly from communities that they value the work NP does.

#### Good Practices

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<sup>30</sup> The working group E 3 was facilitated by Rungano Bakasa. Sources: Notes of Group E 3, taken by Tiffany Easthom; notes of plenary after Groups E, taken by Christine Schweitzer

- To enhance community security, it is good practice to work with and through the local community and help it to set up its own safety and security structures.
- The starting point should be the identification of the existing structures and practices. Mapping of communities in regard to threats and existing practices is a good method to start with.
- Before mapping (e.g. capacity and vulnerability assessment) can start, the UCP actor needs to meet as many local actors as possible and explain what it suggests to do. Trust needs to be developed because security issues are sensitive issues.
- National staff may be the best to come first to a community because they may find it easier to build initial trust.
- Capacity recognition comes before capacity building.
- A meeting of all NGOs working in an area is useful to identify the gaps which an UCP actor could fill.
- In order to build community relations, consistency, sustained engagement and long term work are needed.
- While well trained in the principles, methods and procedures, local teams should be encouraged to innovate to respond to dynamic situations.<sup>31</sup>
- When working with groups (for example youth) it may be good practice to identify some influential leaders of that group and win their trust. They then would influence the other members. The same mechanism applies to trainings of community members.
- Living with the communities – with diverse teams, see 3.6 - is good practice because that brings staff closer to the community members which in turn enhances trust.

### Challenges

- The expectation to be paid for participation in trainings is a challenge.

### Conclusions

The discussion of that group confirms the findings from the two other working groups dealing with similar issues. Long-term engagement leads to trust and sustainable relationships, training of multipliers as the main instrument to support the community's capacity-building around protection in case of armed attacks, and work with special target groups (youth, women etc.) helps to deal with other kinds of violence and threats that come from the inside of the community – like GBV for example.

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<sup>31</sup> This point came from another working group (C1) but has added here because it fits here better.



# 4. Managing UCP Projects



## 4.1 Scaling Up UCP – Lessons From NP South Sudan

### Questions to Discuss<sup>32</sup>

What has scaling up meant in the specific context of NP South Sudan? (E.g., has it been an expansion of grassroots projects or also a scaling up in terms of inclusions of national political leaders etc.?)

What are the complexities that have come along with scaling up? Which difficulties have arisen, what has worked and what has not?

How much of the success of the South Sudanese experience in scaling up was down to specific persons, and what can be replicated as good practice through procedures? Which role did timing play in scaling up?

Can the South Sudan experience be replicated elsewhere, under which conditions, and how?

### Discussion

NP believes that the South Sudan project is the largest-scale sustained UCP operation by an INGO/NGO that was ever undertaken. How did NP manage to grow to its current size (close to 200 field staff), and what obstacles would have to be overcome to grow more?

The work in South Sudan developed in several steps. The history shows how growth happened from a combination of external factors (crisis), smart responses by NP and willingness of donors to respond to the emergencies developing:

- NP came following an invitation by (S)ONAD in 2009, to prevent violence around elections and the following referendum which led to independence. NP established a field team in one State, Western Equatoria (Mundri). One governmental donor gave 1 million Euros for this first phase, because he knew NP from before.
- In 2011, two more teams were opened, one in Juba and one at another place in Western Equatoria. Issues of GBV and child protection were added to the portfolio.
- Due to violence in the Republic of Sudan, 200,000 people fled to South Sudan. NP started working in the area where they stayed.
- In 2012, there was a major massacre in Jonglei State. NP went there with UN representatives only a few days after the massacre. NP raised 1 million USD over night because it was an emergency response. NP started three more teams there.
- The fourth scale-up happened after the civil war started at the end of 2013. NP doubled in size between January and September 2014, with more teams in more locations and a mobile team. NP at that time became an implementing partner for UNICEF and UNHCR which made NP visible in a way that was unique: NP was in the communities where no other INGOs were able/willing to go. Also the cooperation with UNMISS got stronger in the last years.<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>32</sup> The “questions to discuss” were given to the facilitators and participants with the agenda of the workshop.

The working group C1 was facilitated by Mel Duncan. Sources: Notes of Group C1, taken by Christine Schweitzer; notes of plenary after Groups C, taken by Christine Schweitzer.

<sup>33</sup> A much more detailed description of the history of the project can be found in Furnari, Ellen (2016): ,5. Unarmed Civilian Protection in South Sudan: Emerging Good Practices in the Midst Of Civil War’, in: Furnari, Ellen (ed.) (2016) *Wielding Nonviolence in the Face of Violence.*, Hrsg. Institut für Friedensarbeit und Gewaltfreie Konfliktaustragung, Norderstedt:BoD, pp 175-234. The history starts on page 181.

Internally NP undertook strong capacity building that allowed the expansion, and it made use of advisors who helped NP grow.

Currently NP works with about 2,000 women in the country, and 65 civil society organizations that benefit from its work. There is an HRD network, a peacebuilding group, and a number of humanitarian agencies with which NP collaborates from time to time.

The group discussed the question why NP only works in countries where there is already armed conflict. Why not start projects that focus on prevention? While it was agreed that this would be preferable, the challenge that has not yet been overcome is finding the necessary funds. NP, like most (I)NGOs, depends on project grants by donors who have their own priorities.

### Good Practices

- Linking up advocacy with field work is necessary to find the financial and political support needed for larger-scale missions.
- To be opportunistic to some degree in terms of responding to funding that opens up is helpful as long as one stays true to oneself.
- Strong support from the HQ of the organization and administrative capacity facilitate growth.
- Others know they can turn to NP for help facilitating safe visits which strengthens the perception of the organization as being useful and needed.
- Being the only ones there (esp. in remote areas that other agencies shunned) is helpful.
- NP is a front line organization that establishes a presence to respond to needs. It then draws other NGOs and UN to the areas. It is seen as “forward-facing” and “risk taking”, being often the first in, the last out.
- Being proactive to respond to humanitarian crises is important.
- Conducting independent assessment in advance is necessary.
- Having built up the capacity (financial and organization-wise) to build and expand would be a good practice.
- Being known to donors and considered to be trustworthy is important.
- Having key relationships in place is important.
- Take opportunities to spread UCP methodology to others actors.
- UCP practitioners with deep experience are needed, as is good staff development.
- Tying UCP to specific themes is a good strategy, for example to child protection, women, IDPs.
- Ability to work with difficult authorities is important.
- Looking for good partnerships is important.

### Challenges

- Human Resource and other organizational issues, given the bureaucratic impediments in South Sudan (work permits, taxation issues etc.), are a challenge.
- Sustaining international presence is also a challenge because of the hard working conditions. It is not easy to find enough good people.
- Especially for international staff, the work in South Sudan is difficult (trauma, Malaria etc.). NP can only offer limited services, so that leads to stress.

- It is difficult to find sufficient qualified and resilient staff in larger numbers.
- Losing trained staff to other agencies because they pay more is an ongoing challenge.
- Growth requires an adequate management infrastructure. This can be a challenge because donors usually prefer to fund field work only, not what they call “overheads”.
- Also given the ongoing conflict (macro and communal), there is less static presence of communities. People are on the move, so NP cannot build up sustainable projects.
- Funding for prevention is difficult, because donors often look for military responses first.
- Challenges to secure funding lead to slow growth.
- Volatile contexts and working with mobile communities are challenges.
- No aid delivery when people are in need is a challenge.
- Difficult logistics and infrastructure are a challenge.
- Rent-seeking behavior, especially from the side of authorities, makes UCP harder.
- Transferring UCP tools is risky because practitioners from other NGOs might not have the necessary training and thereby not fully understand their proper use..
- Insufficiently experienced staff due to rapid scaling-up can happen if staff is hired that is not properly trained, due to pressure to get staff to the field.
- Relationship-building takes time.

## Conclusions

UNMISS has up to 17,000 troops, including 4,000 for the Regional Protection Force, plus 2,101 police personnel, including individual police officers, formed police units and 78 corrections officers<sup>34</sup>. When NP considers itself having the largest UCP mission ever with less than 200 staff in South Sudan, the comparison of these figures speaks for itself. In the discussion of the working group it became clear that there are two obstacles to growth from the side of an INGO: Funding and personnel resources. Both are made available by states and international organizations for their military on a level that is very hard for civil society organizations to match though there are organizations like Médecins sans Frontières that have more than 40,000 people in more than 70 countries in the field in total.<sup>35</sup> This shows that there is potential for much growth also for INGOs. It would go beyond the scope of this report to list and assess all factors that would have to be considered. However, from the discussion in Nairobi it became clear: The need for UCP is enormous. Participants from various African countries more or less openly asked NP why it did not deploy in their countries.

What was not clear in the discussion: What would NP (or others) consider an ideal size of an operation if there were no financial or staff-induced limits? It was mentioned that NP would like to cover all regions in South Sudan but there were no figures mentioned regarding what that might mean staff and budget-wise.

And a third point that needs consideration: Time is needed to build up efficient UCP work – relationship building is central for UCP and that cannot happen overnight. How does this match ideas of quick growth or large deployments?

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<sup>34</sup> <https://unmiss.unmissions.org/facts-and-figures> [26.12.2018]

<sup>35</sup> <https://www.msf.org/international-activity-report-2017/2017-figures> [26.12.2018]

## 4.2 Infrastructural Challenges for Accompaniment and UCP in Sub-Saharan Africa

### Questions to Discuss<sup>36</sup>

What are the specific challenges for UCP/accompaniment posed by lack of roads, mobile networks and other crucial physical infrastructure in some rural areas?

What challenges arise with regard to different levels of literacy and education?

What are good practices in adapting UCP/accompaniment work and procedures to such challenges?

### Discussion

The group listed a number of challenges and good practices that have to do with infrastructural issues. Generally, there were five categories of issues listed:

- Challenges that have to do with mobility (bad roads etc.).
- Issues around digital communication.
- Protection of sensitive information and of those who give that information.
- Infrastructural issues around protective accompaniment.
- Issues that have to do with NGO legislation and that often restrict the work.

### Good Practices

#### *Digital communication*

- There is a need to increase digital security knowledge and to be aware of simple techniques like changing passwords often or using encryption, going online only for short periods of time and then sending messages prepared beforehand.

#### *Information protection*

- Having internal and external reports is a means to protect information and not to become a target for sanctions by authorities.
- Sometimes, using non-electronic means of information is safer – for example runners taking messages from place to place. Even drum signals still work in some parts of South Sudan.
- Children are sometimes a good source of information and should not be overlooked. But they should not be put in positions of risk just to gather information.
- Encourage traditional ways of information sharing that do not rely on literacy. (For example, a map can be drawn in the sand and quickly erased afterwards, or people can show you places in a walk).

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<sup>36</sup> The “questions to discuss” were given to the facilitators and participants with the agenda of the workshop.

The working group D2 was facilitated by Michael Sodipo. Sources: Notes of Group D2, summarized from the tape by Christine Schweitzer; notes of plenary after Groups D, taken by Christine Schweitzer

### *Protective Accompaniment*

- It is necessary to be aware of limitations of transparency.
- Allow the victims of violence to decide whether to be interviewed and where, the role of the UP actor here is to ensure that the victim is aware of the potential risks related to the venue selected by the victim. (For example, if someone suggest to be interviewed in the market, point out the possibility of other people overhearing what is said.)
- Inform local community about the presence of UCP workers and what they are doing.

### *Other good practices*

- Building upon low profile actors and letting other voices speak up first about human rights violations or other problems is a good strategy. When criticism of these violations comes from different sides, it is less easy to silence those who criticize.

## Challenges

### *Mobility*

- Inability to access physical locations is a challenge.
- Not exploring local knowledge is a mistake.

### *Information protection*

- Lack of confidence and transparency are challenges. One cannot just go and ask local communities what their safe escape routes are because one would be suspected to be a spy.
- Intimidation from armed groups to UCP workers is a challenge.
- There is a lack of safe venues for programs, conversations and discussion.
- There are some people in communities where all information comes together. However, if they are identified by the opposite groups, they are very much at risk and need protection.
- Interference of social media to incite tension or misconception of UCP work is a challenge.
- Attacks on communication infrastructures by armed groups, such as blowing up masts, are challenges.

### *Protective accompaniment*

- Abuse because people are being accompanied can happen.
- Safe places can come under attack.
- Lack of safe places for accompaniment are a problem, and may be under observation by the police (for example Western country embassies).
- Lack of knowledge of armed groups on UCP is a problem.

### *NGO legislation*

- Lack of freedom of expression is a problem in many countries.
- Cumbersome legislation restricting NGOs is a challenge.
- Communication companies controlled by the state are a problem because communication can be tapped.

## Conclusions

Most of the good practices and challenges seem to be of a rather general nature and not at all limited to countries like South Sudan although the lack of physical infrastructure (good roads etc.) certainly add to the infrastructural challenges. But protecting digital and other information, safe places etc. are issues to be found anywhere.

## 4.3 Staff Care and Staff Welfare

### Questions to Discuss<sup>37</sup>

This was one of the groups in the round where participants chose topics that were considered to be important but that had not been discussed sufficiently before.

### Discussion

Generally, it was stated that since UCP work happens in stressful situations, a lot of attention needs to be given to staff welfare (e.g. taking breaks to prevent burn-out), trauma prevention, counselling etc. Defend Defenders therefore has made it mandatory for staff to meet with counselors at least twice a year. Also the afternoon of the last Friday of every month is dedicated to art therapy, yoga, play, sing, dance, laugh, etc. which was found to be very helpful strategies. Most of the discussion was about NP and its practices. While it was said that there is awareness of staff welfare, there were some structural and resource-induced challenging issues mentioned. Also, there is a need to recognize differences in gender (women tend to be the ones on which “more is dumped”), and between national and international staff in this regard – international staff finding it easier to take breaks or seek support than national staff. In the plenary debate after the working group, one person pointed out that a reason for that is concern for the job. The experience with many employers is that when you ask for your rights, your job is at risk. As a mitigating strategy, it was suggested to organize as staff and start collective action when going to higher levels in the hierarchy to address grievances.

### Good Practices

- To take care of oneself and other staff must be part of induction training.
- Managers should receive training on the duty of care for staff.
- There should be a resilience check in the hiring process.
- Team leaders or other staff can set a role model by creating space for self-care (respect of working hours and week-ends).
- Hiring an internal counsellor as well as an external service to provide for counselling is good practice.
- Organizations should appoint internal focal points.
- Making check-ins mandatory would help to remove the stigma around needing psychological help.
- Giving a month salary as emergency cash is helpful for emergencies.
- Monthly all staff rejuvenation practices such as art, yoga, etc that are mandatory build resiliency and team connections.

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<sup>37</sup> The working group E 1 was facilitated by Berit Bliesemann de Guevara. Sources: Notes of Group E1, taken by Jan Passion; notes of plenary after Groups E, taken by Christine Schweitzer.



## Challenges

- It is a challenge to identify one's need for assistance and to acknowledge when you do not know when and how to say "no".
- There is an unhealthy culture of "toughness".
- There is fear to lose the job when admitting "weakness".
- There are not enough financial resources for aid, or there is guilt accessing these resources.
- There is a need for culturally competent individuals, and for people trained in staff welfare.
- Another barrier to getting assistance is the distance in remote areas, and the lack of communication to reach distant aid providers.
- There is a need to find mental health people who have good awareness of the context that UCP people are working in – not everyone has that.
- Organizational staff resource management is a challenge if it is higher management that is also dealing with staff welfare. It may increase the hesitation to approach the person responsible for staff welfare if she or he is at the same time the line supervisor.
- There is a difference between staff welfare and counselling that is not always acknowledged.
- There is a lack of empowerment of welfare staff, and a lack of prioritization of what is needed for staff.
- Staff welfare issues may increase when scaling up.

## Conclusions

Staff welfare could be considered a condition for good UCP work – people who are burnt out or traumatized can hardly meet the expectations of the hard work that is done in this field. They either leave or become dysfunctional, thereby adding to the stress and problems of the whole team. Therefore, it would seem to be essential that all organizations take care of their staff and make all services that may be necessary available. However, there may be a lack of resources, failure by management to understand the importance and last not least resistance from the side of staff itself to invest enough in this field. Since staff welfare is often paid out of overheads, the hesitancy of donors to give such overheads in their grants contributes to the problem. Good practices in this area are probably already known – the issue is more the will and resources to implement them.

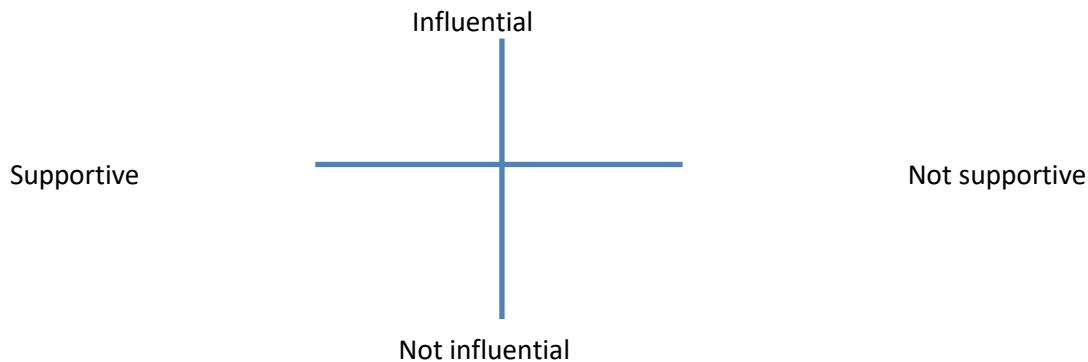
## 4.4 Ongoing Process of Actor Mapping and Process Analysis

### Questions to Discuss<sup>38</sup>

This was one of the groups in the round where participants chose topics that were considered to be important but had not been discussed sufficiently before.

### Discussion

The group started by looking at an example for an actor mapping:



The aim is to identify: Who will be our allies? And who are those who oppose us? Actor mapping has to be context (issue) specific, e.g. GBV, safe passage for IDPs etc. In a next step, the analysis can include stakeholders, e.g. police etc.

The mapping then is used to plan protection, because it is necessary to identify allies, for example to create a safe way for civilians to pass through armed groups. Therefore, actors who are supportive and influential and who can help can be identified. For example: “You want to engage the government, but it is not friendly. But we may know an influential and friendly woman who we can approach to connect us to government.”

Actors in the field of “not influential and not supportive” should be watched to see what they do because they could be mobilized. They could shift to become allies. Similarly those in the influential and not supportive category might shift.

Mapping is not a one-time exercise but should be ongoing. It is necessary to spend time in a community to discover who the true leaders are, and not just who has titles. They can be asked who else has influence (snowballing – you find more and more people). Such people could be connectors. Typical connectors are journalists, traders, women (for example the lady in the shop where the Commissioner is eating every day).

A method of context analysis is an incident tracker that is updated on a daily/weekly basis. It helps to target where to place UCP staff.

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<sup>38</sup> The working group E4 was facilitated by Rosemary Kabaki. Sources: Notes of Group E4, taken by Mel Duncan; notes of plenary after Groups E, taken by Christine Schweitzer.

## Good Practices

- Ongoing actor mapping is needed.
- Analysis is not enough, staff must have influential allies.
- National staff is key to mapping, because they know what is going on.
- The purpose of mapping is to find entry points into systems.
- There is a need to take time and listen and support local people in creating the strategies, and to always be out and talk with the communities.
- Regular meetings with the community to review what has happened is useful for analysis.
- Local people trust an organization because they see it advocating for them, e.g. advocating that someone can pass during curfew times.
- Recognize that women have influence on local key actors because they may meet them every day in some function.
- Call on friends and relatives and influencers.
- Write daily reports on activities.
- Maintaining an incident tracker updated on a daily/weekly basis helps to target where to place UCP staff. It contains the location, time, incident details such as victim and perpetrator.

## Challenges

- When working with partners, it is important to know the mandate of each organization, and to have an agreement about what to do in emergencies. This does not always happen.

## Conclusions

Actor mapping is a well-developed and very useful tool because it is not an academic instrument but one which everyone can easily learn and use. As an ongoing activity it helps a lot when planning UCP activities in different fields, from GBV through village mediation to safe routes for IDPs.

## 5. Conclusions



## 5.1 Plenary on Good Practice

After the fourth round of working groups, there was a plenary, similarly to the ones in Manila and Beirut but this time it was scheduled before participants chose a few more topics for a last round of working groups. The plenary 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. Black and bold are those that were ranked high in all three workshops, in red letters are those where many doubts, or the need for further clarification, were expressed in a workshop. For comparison, in the right columns are the results of the earlier two workshops.

### List of Good Practices as Summarized by Participants

<b>Nairobi Workshop</b>			<b>Beirut Workshop</b>			<b>Manila Workshop</b>		
<b>Relationship building</b>	15	0	<b>Relationship building</b>	10	1	<b>Primacy of local groups</b>	15	4
Empowering communities	13	2	Well-trained teams	9	0	<b>Multi-level relationship-building:</b>	14	--
Identify and strengthen local coping mechanisms	11	2	Primacy of local actors	8	1	Capacity enhancement for all – local actors and all of us	9	--
<b>Context analysis</b>	10	1	<b>Be proactive in our monitoring and evaluation and learning</b>	8	0	<b>Ongoing context analysis</b>	7	1
Active learning of existing local practices of self-protection	7	0	Learning from local communities / experiences of others	8	0	Co-Creation (instead of implementation)	5	1
Continuous process of actor mapping specific to interventions (//1)	7	0	Analysis	4	1	Seeking the humanity in the other	5	--
<b>Staff security</b>	6	5	<b>Non-partisanship</b>	3	5	Creativity	3	1
Being proactive	6	1	Self-care and mandatory breaks	3	2	<b>Adhere to principles</b>	2	6
Trauma healing	6	1	Focus on prevention	3	2	Flexibility	2	3

Youth engagement which is gender sensitive	6	1	Adaptability	3	0	Trust-building	2	1
Community engagement / participation	4	0	Outcomes oriented approach	2	3	Good listening	2	--
Develop strategies to link UCP tracks	4	0	Donor education	2	3	Adaptability	1	1
Self care	2	9	Sharing diversity	2	2	Innovation	1	1
Openness to scaling up	2	8	Having hope	2	1	Sustainability	1	1
Shuttle diplomacy	2	7	Planning strategic engagements	2	1	Acceptance (in the community)	1	--
Institutional learning and memory	2	5	Forming local peace committees	2	0	Interdependency of protection work	1	--
Regional approaches to security	2	5	Commitment	2	0	Different role of local, national and international in different phases	1	--
Youth economic empowerment	2	4	Empathy:	2	0	Team work	1	--
Deep community work	2	3	Solidarity	2	0	Concrete action	-	2
Focus on positive change makers (2/3)	2	3	Ongoing training	2		Remember the greater vision you are part of	-	--
Bringing men and women to further common goals in terms of gender	2	2	Protecting all life	1	5	Persistence to nonviolence	-	--
Cooperation between the stakeholders	2	1	Disaggregation of threats	1	1	Constant learning	-	1
Listening	2	0	Networks and local relations	1	1	Unity	-	--
Digital security	1	14	Sharing	1	0			
Inclusivity	1	5	Diversity in our teams	1	0			

Healing and rebuilding communities	1	3	Credible interrupters:	1	0
Referral pathways	1	2	Maximizing different roles and skills	1	
Using coalition power for protection)	1	2	Relevance of UCP wheel	0	5
Do no harm	0	2	De-escalation	0	3
Dialogue	0	1	Relationships of all stakeholders and unexpected actors:	0	2
Managing expectations / transparency	0	1	Ongoing reflection and sharing:	0	0
Interrupting cycles of violence	0	0	Beauty of faces and stories I listened to	0	0
Willing to work in challenging setting	0	0	Sharing successes and challenges with broader community		3

Figure 1 Comparison of highlighted good practices from Nairobi, Beirut and Manila.

Blue: most important

Red column: doubts/ needs more nuances

Red script: Those in red that were listed often as needing more discussion or points people had doubts about.

To note: If putting together “Identify and strengthen local coping mechanisms” and “Active learning of existing local practices of self-protection” which are rather similar, then these are with 18 votes the highest rated points of all. They are followed by “Context analysis” (10 blue, 1 red) and “actor mapping” (7 blue), which together also got 17 votes.



Figure 2: The Wall Paper with the Summary of Good Practices)

## The UCP Wheel

At the beginning of the workshop, participants had been asked to mark on the picture of the “UCP wheel” – a graphic outlining different areas of work and methods – those fields they were practicing and those they wished to know/learn more about. The pattern of the dots showed a rather uniform distribution, more than in the two earlier workshops. Training, confidence-building and early warning- early response were the three areas which were marked as being familiar: everybody knows about them, with training displaying no red dots at all. Certain areas where people want to learn more about, were interpositioning, ceasefire monitoring, multi-track dialogue, protective presence and rumor control. These markings are a good reflection of the foci NP has in its work in South Sudan.

As to the wheel being an adequate representation of the work of UCP, in the discussion it was remarked that three areas were missing:

Empowerment of civil society to influence peace processes / negotiations;

Mainstreaming UCP in international interventions in conflict areas;

Media mainstreaming in UCP (e.g. countering hostile propaganda and hate speech).

Red meant: “That is what we are doing”

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

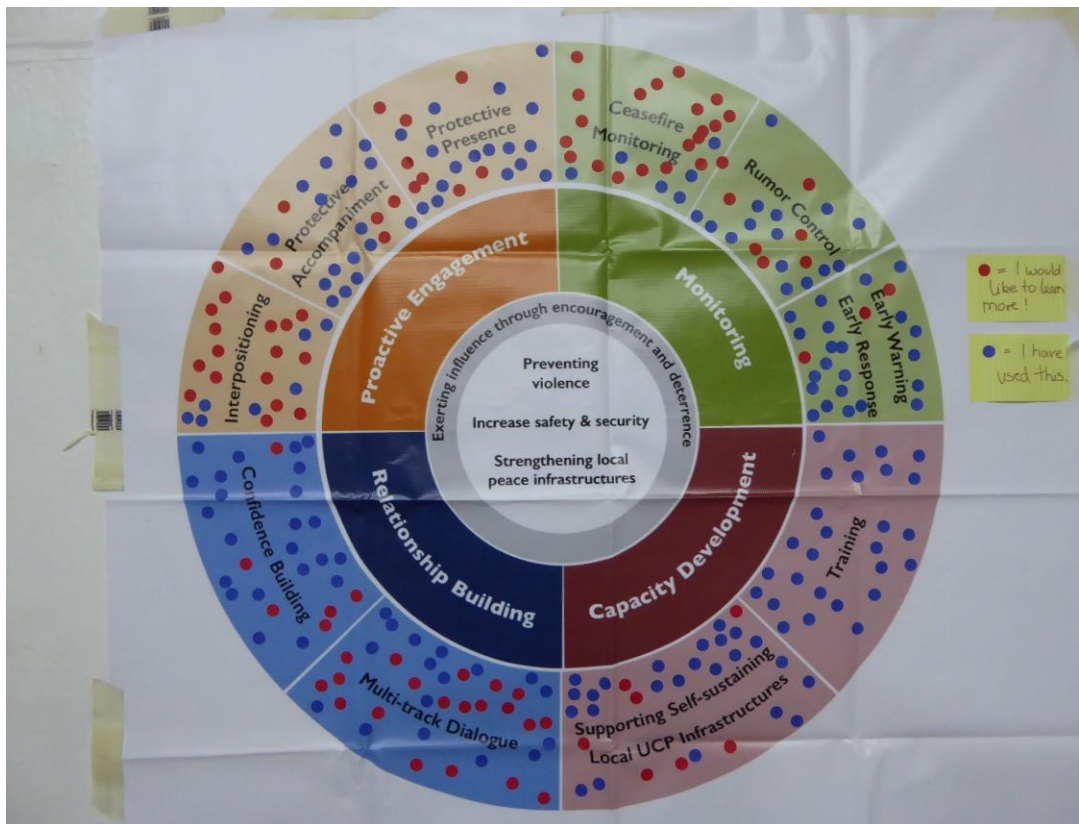


Figure 3 UCP Wheel with markings



## 5.2 Summary and Conclusions

### Good Practices and Challenges

The findings of this workshop have been heavily influenced by the practice of NP in South Sudan, though experiences from other INGOs and networks working in other countries came in at many points, in particular in the groups on youth, elections, gender and staff welfare. However, unlike the other workshops, the findings here cannot really be considered to be results of a comparison of practices in one geographic region. The organizers of the workshop cannot be blamed for this – UCP is far less developed as an approach of its own in sub-Saharan Africa than it is in the regions that the earlier two workshops focused on. The validation of what was suggested as good practices came therefore more from the other participants comparing what was suggested by NP to the situations in their countries and – this was made quite explicit at times – asking themselves the question, “would this work in my country?” More than once requests were made to NP to start working in other African countries, both in situations of civil war and in a preventive capacity in places where violence (for example around upcoming elections) threatens.

The participants of the workshop formulated a number of lessons and good practices which can be read in the appendix (1). Perhaps outstanding among them and repeated in more than one of the working groups were:

- Identification of community capacities is an essential aspect of UCP work. There are always existing capacities in communities. Each community identified for UCP work has to be consulted and engaged to get information on local values and local practices for protection. These capacities can be harnessed and used to provide protection to the communities facing protection risks. Local experts can also be identified in the process and be trained as facilitators to advance UCP work in the communities. At the same time this helps in building on communities’ resilience as well as strategies for self-protection. Ultimately it is more sustainable, as trained residents will mostly stay in the communities, long after an INGO has left.
- There are different levels of conflict in many countries, and they are all related because of the different layers of identity people have: Conflicts within a family, between families in a community, conflicts between clans and/or communities of the same ethnic group, conflicts between armed actors identifying with different ethnic groups (like Nuer and Dinka in South Sudan). In some countries, religious identities (e.g. Christian vs. Muslim) also play an important role. And politicians mobilize using these ethnicities/identities to fight their political opponents. A “small” conflict can easily escalate to massive fighting between large groups, and therefore UCP is considered to have to deal with all the layers.
- UCP starts best from the grassroots: Mini-dialogues and conflict resolution within the community, from family to family, clan to clan, only then from community to community has proven to be a good practice.
- Multi-level engagement (‘protection advocacy’) and inclusivity are required to build a safety net, involving local leadership, higher level national and even international leaders/organizations, and armed actors from all sides of the conflict.
- Identification of moderate actors (tracking of intermarriages, people living in mixed villages, moderate clans that are not identifying with a side in the conflict), and looking for capacities and people who can be change makers (role models) within the communities, is the most promising approach to ethnic and religious conflict. When you find moderates from all sides who are willing to talk to each other and to cooperate, they in turn will

influence others to follow suit. Since they are often threatened by radicals, the role of UCP here can be to protect them so that they can do their work.

As in Manila and Beirut, many challenges were named and discussed as well. Outstanding themes were:

- It is sometimes difficult to stay true to all the principles that NP names as core principles for its UCP work. Sometimes, a principle (most often, it seems, those relating to nonviolence and independence) is compromised to achieve what is considered a higher good. One example would be to accept armed escorts in order to reach communities in need, which compromises both a strict understanding of nonviolence and being independent of other organizations.
- Another point raised in several groups was the complex nature of the relationship between the different agencies working in the field. It was emphasized that coordination and cooperation are important but different mandates and SOPs are sometimes a challenge and barrier to closer cooperation. This is not only true for the relationship between national and international agencies but also for that between different international agencies. A special issue discussed was the limitations military peacekeepers have compared to the unarmed ones: Participants attributed it mostly to the SOPs of the military and the bureaucracy of the UN peacekeeping mission and its command structure with the need of local commanders having to check back with their national HQs before acting so that they often do not respond in a timely manner to threats.
- Traditional values (marginalization of women and acceptance of domestic violence, identification of being male with being a fighter) can be obstacles for UCP.

### Comparison to Earlier Workshops and Studies

The focus on NP also allows a direct comparison with the findings of Ellen Furnari in her study on South Sudan. She had finished her field work at the beginning of 2015. Some of her findings on good practices are identical to the ones here, for example regarding the principles of UCP, links of different types of violence and the primacy of local actors, relationship to authorities, EWER, IDPs. In addition, her study focused on organizational questions (program development, culture of the organization, team relationships, security etc.) which did not play much of a role in Nairobi. Therefore, it could probably be best said that the two studies complement each other in some regards. For example, the workshop in Nairobi went into more detail regarding HOW things are being done, such as how good relationships to communities are being built. And it also looked in more detail at what role work with particular target groups plays and what challenges come with working with some of these groups. The rapporteur did not find contradictions to Furnari's study. Interesting differences especially to the good practice workshop on UCP in Beirut that focused on the Middle East came up in two regards: Dealing with gender-based violence and work with IDPs. As to gender-based violence, organizations in sub-Saharan-Africa seem, as mentioned earlier, far less hesitant to raise GBV that occurs in family contexts than organizations in the Middle East are. In both areas, it is sensitive. At first glance, the assumptions may be that in the sub-Saharan Africa context either the danger of such "private" conflicts to escalate to larger-scale violence is higher, or the taboo is a little less. However, the rapporteur rather tends to believe that at least part of the explanation lies in the identity of the UCP actors: In the Middle East, the international (foreign) component of the actors was rather high. In Sub-Saharan Africa, local people (Women Peacekeeping Teams or local NGOs) are much more in the lead of UCP activities. And they may have better access and find more acceptance to deal with such issues.

On IDPs, in Beirut the discussion identified three types of activities:

- Preventing displacement through rumor control, approaching fighters to move away, and other supportive measures.
- Protective accompaniment or presence to directly prevent violence, be it from external forces or among the IDPs/refugees themselves, and in various situations, from fleeing through living in camps to returning home.
- Peacebuilding activities, empowerment, capacity-building etc. with refugees/IDPs to lessen tensions and to strengthen people's capacity, and reconstruction activities where people came from.

This is very similar to what has been said on the situation in sub-Saharan Africa though in Beirut the discussion focused perhaps a bit more on return of IDPs and refugees and how to prepare them for that. This latter being an issue which will come up in South Sudan in the future but seemed not to play a big role at the moment.

### What is UCP and How Does it Relate to the Wider Peace Strategies?

This question was touched upon in the two earlier workshops but came up with more urgency in Nairobi. UCP has been defined here in line with Nonviolent Peaceforce's definition as "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". The general peace strategies - peacebuilding, peacekeeping and peacemaking<sup>39</sup> - as they were first defined by Johan Galtung<sup>40</sup> are seen as three approaches to peace that must complement each other. In the working group on youth, several approaches to working with this target group were shared that can hardly be considered UCP in a stricter sense – for example offering vocational training or micro credits to set up businesses, work in youth clubs or organizing sports and other activities. The following is a comparison of UCP with five different fields of related or overlapping work. First, anything that reduces conflict of course also contributes to the prevention of violence, so much, if not all of **peacebuilding** has an element of UCP. And vice versa, UCP can definitely contribute to peacebuilding as researchers on UCP have been demonstrating.<sup>41</sup> Effective peacebuilding requires civilian safety. However, there is in the eyes of the rapporteur a risk that UCP disappears as a category of its own when all peacebuilding tactics are assumed to be also

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<sup>39</sup> Peacemaking: the search for a negotiated resolution of the perceived conflicts of interests between the parties. (Ryan, Stephen (1995) 2nd edn.: Ethnic Conflict and International Relations. Aldershot: Dartmouth Publishing Company Ltd, pp. 106).

Peacekeeping: "control the actors so that they at least stop destroying things, others, and themselves." (Galtung, Johan (1996): Galtung, Johan (1996) Peace by Peaceful Means. Peace and Conflict, Development and Civilization. London: Sage Publications, pp. 103

Peacebuilding: „addresses structural issues and relationships between the conflict parties or that otherwise seek to reverse the destructive processes of conflict and war.“ (Schweitzer, Christine (2010): Strategies of Intervention in Protracted Violent Conflicts by Civil Society Actors. The Example of Interventions in the Violent Conflicts in the Area of Former Yugoslavia, 1990 – 2002. Vehrte: Soziopublishing, pp. 44)

<sup>40</sup> 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

<sup>41</sup> Furnari, Ellen (2015): Securing Space for local peacebuilding: the role of national and international civilian peacekeepers. In *Peacebuilding*, Vol 3, issues 3 2015.,

<https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/21647259.2015.1040628>

UCP tactics. The line between peacebuilding and UCP gets more and more diffuse the more UCP stops being identified with the macro strategy of peacekeeping (dealing with the aspect of violence in a conflict).

Secondly, the question came up again in a second working group, that on elections and election monitoring. Is **election monitoring** UCP, or is the role of UCP to train monitors and other stakeholders, including the political parties, in prevention of violence around the elections? Or is UCP only the protection of civilian election monitors when threatened with violence? Participants of the group tended to the second interpretation. General civic education, it was said, would rather be left to partner organizations.

The third field is material aid. A very clear dividing line is made by NP in South Sudan between UCP and the delivery of **material aid** (food, medical aid etc.). Humanitarian aid is not a peace strategy per se but conflict-sensitive aid meets the widely acknowledged principle of Do No Harm, and clearly has an overlap with peacebuilding. And NP is at times involved in protecting aid delivery and increasing the conflict sensitivity of aid delivery programs. Regarding the delivery of material aid directly, NP sticks to its policy of not offering such services but referring people in need to other agencies. However – is this really a policy held by all UCP actors? So far, nothing contrary has been mentioned in the workshops,<sup>42</sup> but there definitely are such organizations – for example in the Western Balkans some such examples could have been found in the 1990s.<sup>43</sup>

A fourth field where overlaps between categories of peace strategies can be found will probably come up in the next workshop, that on UCP/accompaniment in Latin and Middle America: The relationship between UCP and **human rights work**. Without wishing to preempt the findings of that workshop, it can be assumed that an answer that some of the organizations will give is the classic PBI formula: Protective Accompaniment opens space so that the HRDs can do their work safely and securely.

The fifth field, the relationship between nonpartisan UCP and **solidarity work**, was explored in the Beirut workshop. There, two types of UCP work were distinguished: Protection work by organizations that consider themselves nonpartisan to the conflict issues and focusing on violence from any side, and organizations that come into a territory to support a political struggle through protecting its activists. This latter approach did not play a role in Nairobi.

Of course, the question can be raised why these distinctions matter at all. The issue is not raised to say that one approach is better than the other. Perhaps the basic question is if there is a need for organizations focusing on UCP – as NP, PBI and others do – or if the final objective could and should be to mainstream protection in all activities by agencies working in conflict areas. This is what many of them are already doing. If there is a need for specialists – and so far many speak in favor of that – then a distinction between UCP and other areas of intervention in and dealing with conflicts is needed.

### Questions and Recommendations for Future Workshops

There were at least four general questions and suggestions regarding UCP work identified:

1. UCP as a proactive engagement before a conflict has escalated to violence. There are a number of countries in the continent where national elections are upcoming in the next two

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<sup>42</sup> Though Furnari, 2016, found organizations in Mindanao, Philippines who understood humanitarian aid to be part of their civilian protection work. See p. 150

<sup>43</sup> See Schweitzer, Christine (2010) *Strategies of Intervention in Protracted Violent Conflicts by Civil Society Actors. The Example of Interventions in the Violent Conflicts in the Area of Former Yugoslavia, 1990 – 2002*. Vehrte: Soziopublishing. (Dissertation) [Online] at <http://www.ifgk.de/fileadmin/ifgk/forschung/CSchweitzerThesisYU-final.pdf> [29.12.2018]

years, and many of them are fraught with the potential of interethnic or factional fighting. NGO representatives from different countries expressed a need for UCP organizations to get involved in a preventive capacity. The challenge is how UCP actors can mobilize the capacities to meet these needs.

2. The second challenge has been raised before in the earlier workshops: UCP and armed actors. In the region here, it is often not easy to distinguish between armed actors other than the national army and other civilians because fighters may stay in IDP locations, or youth organize to protect their village in which they live with weapons. To what degree does the firm distinction “civilians” vs. “armed fighters” work under such circumstances, and SHOULD it even be applied? Or should the concept of protection be widened to encompass everybody, not just civilians?
3. Scaling up a UCP mission was illustrated by the reality of NP’s experience in South Sudan. It was less a planned effort than responses to arising needs plus opportunities in the form of new funding lines by donors and requests by international agencies. Still, though NPSS considers itself to be the largest sustained UCP operation ever, comparing the barely 200 staff NP has with the numbers of UNMISS (19,000 staff) or worldwide operating humanitarian agencies like MSF (40,000 staff), it becomes clear that there is potential for much growth. This potential is primarily limited by lack of funding and lack of organizational capacity (trained staff, infrastructure, etc.), and the link between these two.

What was not clear from the discussion: What would NP (or others) consider an ideal size of an operation if there were no financial or staff-induced limits? It was mentioned that NP would like to cover all regions in South Sudan but there were no figures mentioned of what that might mean staff and budget-wise.

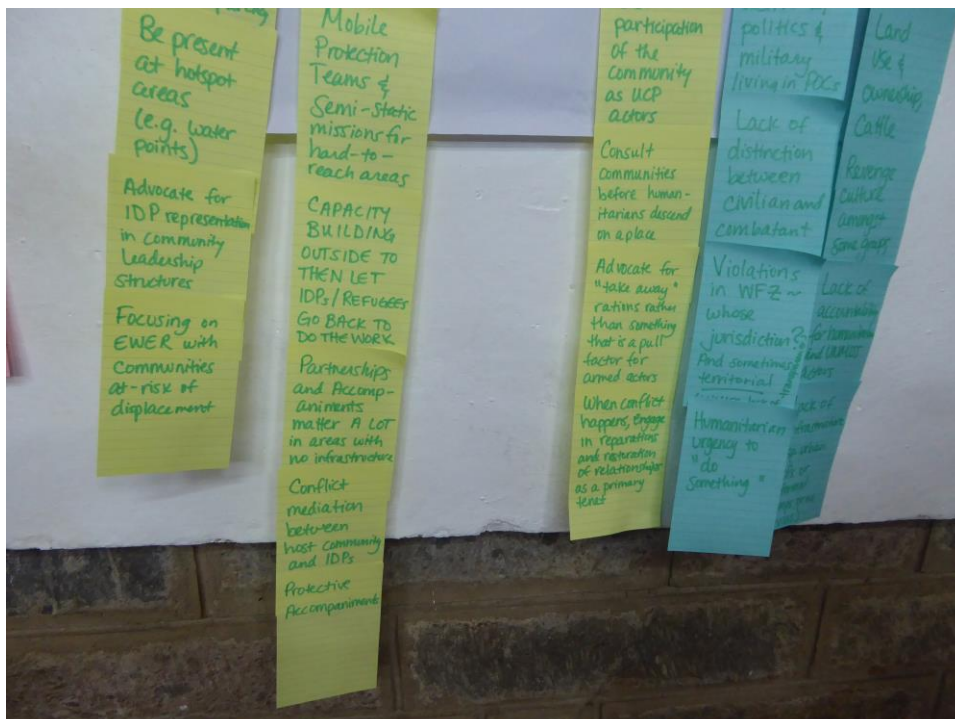
And a third point that needs consideration: Time is needed to build up efficient UCP work – relationship building is central for UCP and that cannot happen overnight. How does this matches ideas of quick growth or large deployments?

4. Following up from the discussion of principles, the suggestion was made to develop a basic Code of Conduct for UCP organizations or interventions.<sup>44</sup> Perhaps that could be a question to discuss in future workshops of the series.

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<sup>44</sup> Perhaps it is worth checking out the Code that International Alert created twenty years ago for conflict transformation work. See <https://www.international-alert.org/sites/default/files/library/Code%20of%20Conduct.pdf>. NP in its early years drafted a Code of Conduct but it seems not to be used anymore – at least it is not on NP’s website.

## 6. Documentation



## 6.1 Summary of Good Practices

### Outlining the Framework of UCP

#### Use of Principles

Generally, the discussion on the principles went beyond what is UCP practice in its strict meaning of the word, due to the fact that there were representatives of organizations present that have an interest in UCP but do not focus on it alone.

#### Nonviolence

- Indirectly engage soldiers by engaging their wives.
- When someone is armed but claims to be nonviolent, this can be an opening for a dialogue on violence and nonviolence.
- When facing a violent situation as a third party, first observe, and then try to slow things down so people can come up with other options.
- It is important to get people who are fighting to talk. If they don't want to talk, go to their community and/or the leaders.
- It is important to have constant engagement and consultations. The role of UCP can be to provide room for people to talk openly, so that fear dissipates.
- Get nonviolence into the education system and teach it to children, design interventions that are appropriate to children.

#### Nonpartisanship / Neutrality

- Trust and confidence-building are decisive. There was an example given for traditional juridical mechanisms in Rwanda where, in cases of conflict or crimes in the community, nine judges are chosen by the community who are considered to be the most neutral. Then the offenders can choose two of them for their hearing in the community.
- Interventions need to be balanced. For example advise aid agencies that they should distribute to all civilians, not only to one group.
- Working together on a common goal in spite of differences is a good example for putting nonpartisanship into practice.
- Formulate criteria for humanitarian aid, and then simply see that all criteria are met. If they are, you help, no matter who the person/group in need is.
- Symbols are important, for examples colors. They often have political meanings of which the UCP organization needs to be aware.
- Regarding press statements, one organization has the policy to separate the organization and the individual: They do not prevent people from making statements to the press but they have to say they do it as individuals, and are not speaking for the organization.

#### Independence

- Allowing the organization to be seen as sharing information and letting authorities know what it is doing, but not seeking permission, can be an expression of balanced communication.
- Developing a common understanding of independence is important, as is training and coaching for staff on this subject.
- Ensuring balanced teams in regard to ethnicity and gender is also part of independence.
- Education of all stakeholders and to be patient and firm were also listed as good practices.

#### Primacy of local actors / local leadership

- Deliberate consultation with local actors to get their experiences, values and protection needs and valuing the contributions from all levels of the communities, are imperative in implementing UCP methodologies. This engagement and participation of local actors in UCP allows communities to be at the center of their own protection.
- Identification of community capacities is another important aspect of UCP emphasizing the primacy of local actors and local leadership in the implementation of UCP strategies. There are always existing capacities in communities that have been affected by conflict or those facing various types of protection risks. Therefore, these capacities can be harnessed and used to provide protection to the communities facing protection risks. Local experts can also be identified in the process and be trained as facilitators to advance UCP work in the communities. At the same time this helps in building on communities' resilience as well as strategies for self-protection.
- There is no ready-made template in UCP work that can be brought to the community – each community identified for UCP work has to be consulted and engaged to get information on local values and local practices for protection. One example is trainings on UCP - communities are consulted and engaged in the adaptation and contextualization of trainings. So any training on UCP will take into account the values and the experiences of local actors.
- Engaging/consulting and encouraging local communities' participation in UCP and the bottom-up approach helps to foster ownership of the protection work by communities. This is also very helpful when it comes to beneficiary selection.
- Respect of local leadership facilitates goodwill and helps in entry to the communities where UCP strategies can be implemented with communities being fully on board once they see acceptance by local leaders. It is worth noting that respecting leadership and local authorities is important but it is equally important to be aware of any hidden interest/blurred lines.
- Strategies for holding local leadership to account include working with a wide range of local actors in addition to local leadership. In some cases UCP practitioners have had to find effective strategies for working with traditional leaders who are working for/with the political elites who create confusion in the communities, which may in turn cause further protection risks.
- Creating an environment which fosters participation of all sections of the community is very important in UCP work. This starts with actor mapping, which helps to identify and reach all sections of the community including youth, women, men, children, elderly and so forth. The mapping also allows for the identification of people who are likely to support UCP strategies and those who may not be welcoming. This in turn allows the development of strategies to reach and work with these different groups within the community.
- Meaningful community participation and the grassroots approach is time consuming but once achieved the work picks up and communities become more responsible for their own protection.
- Feedback to communities and taking feedback from communities are another demonstration of the primacy of local actors/local leadership. This mutuality is especially true in humanitarian settings where many actors work in communities and some do not provide information to communities about why certain projects are not implemented after assessments.

#### Do no harm

- Careful consultation with local actors, independent context analysis and an inclusive approach to communities are three good practices to avoid doing harm.



## Other principles

The following points were listed as “principles” but in fact are probably more good practices:

- Duty of care for staff (national staff: security, insurance, pension, retirement);
- Not paying bribes nor ransom;
- Gender equity and equality;
- Collaboration / partnership / coordination: avoid duplication, competition, territorial coverage, fill the missing gaps.
- Non-discrimination when choosing whom to help.

### Deterrence and Encouragement

- It is important to set up an alarm system (early warning-early response) in communities which involves them and makes them accountable. In the process all the leaders and youth should be included in the EWER, thereby creating an alarm mechanism that provides early information from leader to leader to understand any movement and to avoid miscommunication.
- Training of youth is important to stop a cycle of revenge killings.
- Building local capacity for dialogue and mediations in general is a good practice.
- To understand the context, a context analysis and an actor mapping are necessary. This requires ‘cultural fluency’ to grasp the cultural factors.
- It is important to identify positive change makers, or “peace champions” – a group or person who can become a catalyst for change.
- To invest in building local capacities (e.g. through training) is another good practice in this context.
- To establish safe spaces is important: This is a space where conflicting communities will feel safe and comfortable to discuss their differences and which gives them an opportunity to find alternative solution to their conflicts.
- Multi-level engagement (‘protection advocacy’) and inclusivity are required to build a safety net.
- As to how to go about this, mini-dialogues within the community, from family to family, clan to clan, before going from community to community has proven to be a good practice.
- Building local agreements (when there are small conflicts) is meaningful: Sometimes a small conflict grows big, but UCP teams can take parts of the conflict to deal with, for example, conflicts between families.

### UCP and the Role of Gender

- It is a guiding principle that a female victim of GBV is interviewed by a female staff for confidentiality and comfort.
- Accompaniment is not gender-neutral. Often it is better to have men protect men, women protect women.
- When it comes to EWER and rumor control, the information-gathering should include women in the communities.
- Introducing the women trained as WPT to the leaders of their community helps make their role more official.
- Work with elder women (the “mamas”) who can bring their voice to different platforms.

- Elder women can engage the perpetrators more easily and may be more listened to and respected, as well as with less risk than younger men or women.
- Involving men in gender/women issues: Creating mixed teams, including males as Women Protection Officers or those responsible for gender issues in the organization is one way to prevent that certain issues are considered “women issues” only.
- Young men are expected to be fighters and join armed groups. Those who refuse to do so are quickly called “cowards” and “women”. The role of UCP can be to strengthen and protect these youth. Here the WPTs play an important role in South Sudan.
- Including men in the work against GBV helped NP to be more effective. In the South Sudan context some women find gender-based violence as normal. When WPT speak against it, even the women don’t trust them. But men who are role models and who work against GBV can help convince the women.

### *UCP and the Role of Identity*

- One good practice is the promotion of good stereotypes and the identification of connectors between the groups to diffuse violence in the community. For example, if an ethnic group is known to be hospitable, this could be such a connector.
- Bad and negative stereotypes need to be addressed as well (like “all Muslim are Boko Haram”).
- Identification of moderate actors (tracking of intermarriages, people in mixed villages), and looking for capacities and people who can be change makers (role models) within the communities, is a proven approach.
- The UCP organizations themselves can set role models by balancing the identities of their teams so that they demonstrate that people can work together.
- Another good practice is to delink real grievances from their religious / identity justification through:
  - religious-based interaction,
  - protecting the religious/ethnic leaders who promote religious/inter-group dialogue.
- Setting up early warning systems like those that have been set up in Kenya works well: In Kenya an NGO mobilized civic education reporters after the election, and gave them mobile phones to quickly spread alarms.
- Working with media to encourage them not to spread hatred is important.

### *Cooperation Between UCP and Other Actors in the Field*

- Partnership between the different agencies is a good practice. Joint or coordinated activities allow the community to see humanitarian agencies as one.
- Facilitation between agencies and peacebuilding groups is very useful - assisting each other in filling the gaps, and coordinating resources and activities.
- Providing protection with arms contradicts the message of peace in the perception of the community. If unarmed people come it is a better fit with humanitarian principles and with the principle of Do No Harm.
- UCP actors have a different, more accurate perception of local communities, and put focus on specific conditions in interactions with other agencies.
- Consider the locals to be the experts on the context and conditions where you are working and wanting to work.
- Actors should rely on the community and the leadership on the ground to implement their activities.

- Government and NGOs: UCP actors rely on civilians to know who is who in a community. So they can use their knowledge to know to whom to talk first or last.
- Proactive engagement and ability to respond to possible escalation are important.

### UCP, Elections and Governance

The distinction between peacebuilding in general and UCP has been added by the rapporteur and was not made by the group itself.

#### a) From a broader peacebuilding angle:

- Being proactive is important.
- Need to do a lot of training for those who are managing elections and those who participate. It is often taken for granted that those who administer elections have all necessary skills but that may not be always the case.
- There is a need to train people to not just follow politicians but to actually understand the importance of elections and to make good decisions. Also police, army and militias should have such training.
- Target hot spots and train civil education reporters – use WhatsApp to report.
- Train youth from opposite sides together.
- Hotlines – develop App to call for help.
- Support civil society in forming independent election commissions.
- Engage regional bodies on election issues and when there is a threat of violence.
- Coordinate international monitoring missions.
- Train election monitors on what their role is.
- Provide civic engagement and education as entry points.
- Mainstream civic education in nonviolence.
- Positive messaging by media is important to reduce rumors and prevent violence.
- Empower people to participate and not lose hope.
- Early warning is essential.
- Advocate and lobby for civic space.
- Engage high level stakeholders.

#### b) UCP in particular

- Being proactive is generally important, as is being on the ground, in country, early. Track and record pre-election violence, because that will predict where greater post-election violence occurs. Scenario building on what could happen and proper planning are good practices.
- Very useful to facilitate interaction between the armed parties, so that misperceptions are removed.
- Protect those who are politically vulnerable.
- Train election monitors on their personal security and safety. In some cases provide protection to election monitors.
- Adapt to different forms of violence: state, gangs, spontaneous, communal.

## Tactics of Protection

### Protective Accompaniment of Individuals

- Preparations for PA: What is needed are 1. safe space, allies, communication plans, criteria for accompaniment and safety planning.
- Categories for information gathering and analysis: who are the person(s), the threat, the lines of influence, and network options.
- Network building is important, namely with/to allies, share risks, diffuse attention, and use different strengths.
- Examples of categories of people to be contacted: diplomats, government, airports, military, religious communities, health care.
- Relationships play an important role in PA: pre-existing relationships, awareness raising, who you can turn to, and what the influence lines are.
- Deciding cases requires clearly defined mandates and definitions, contingency guidelines for decision-making in emergencies and consideration of impact on the broader context.
- Communication includes data security, a list of who is involved and of what is shared.
- Primacy of person(s) protected requires: To avoid the temptation to make decisions on their behalf, remember the centrality of the person accompanied and to suspend own opinions.

### UCP and Local Mediation and Negotiation

What?

- Early interventions at micro-level are required.
- It is important to be proactive and prepared rather than reactive.
- When there are local conflicts involving foreign nationals, any regional factors / interests behind conflicts need to be investigated.
- One should separate intent (e.g. raiding cattle) from impact (e.g. deaths).
- It is important to slow things down to give space for mediation.
- Mediation is best done not in isolation but often coupled with (other practices) e.g. interpositioning etc.
- Link local mediation with livelihood benefits, for example the vaccination of animals

Who?

- A complimentary approach is recommended. The situation will inform who will be the better mediator/ has better access, international or national staff of (I)NGO or local mediators.
- It is good practice to enable grassroots actors to influence leaders in the community. This can be done by bringing together actors who influence change.
- It is better to empower / train mediators in the community than to attempt mediation oneself.
- Women should be trained and used as mediators.
- There is a need to transfer experience, for example to advise international organizations and agencies in order to help them to avoid mistakes.

How?

- Mediation must be seen as a process, not as one high-level event.

- Keep mediation at lowest level.
- Keep mediation process open, without deadlines.
- Participants not carrying weapons should be a condition for mediation and negotiation meetings.
- Realize that small steps may be fine, not just big agreements.
- Diplomatic behavior: Ability to remain calm and consistent; don't get provoked.
- Provide safe space for meetings.
- Listening is the main strength of mediation.
- Trauma healing happens through recognition of grievances.
- There is limited scope for mediations – UCP actors cannot solve the history of the conflict. But dealing with and solving immediate conflict issues gives space to work on deeper and historical conflicts.

Partnerships are important, for example:

- Use religious leaders from different sides to bring communities together.

### UCP with IDPs

#### *Strategies*

- Relationship-building on a daily basis is important, since relations have first to be established and then maintained, otherwise they are lost again.
- It is necessary to try to verify the civilian status of people seeking protection.
- Continuous, consistent exposure of IDPs to UCP actors, methods and theories is important.
- The creation of Weapon-Free Zones, and mounting patrols, protective presence and monitoring these zones are useful strategies to prevent violence.
- Trainings and dialogues with IDPs and local communities is important.
- Listening is a good practice and can help with trauma healing.
- Psychological first aid, counselling, reminders about accessing services and what to do are important.
- Re-exposure to nonviolence can shift mindsets and behaviors.
- A follow up after security incidents is needed for the sake of communication and transparency.
- UCP actors should be present at hotspot areas (e.g. water points) to prevent violence.
- Advocating for IDP representation in community leadership structures is a good practice.
- Focusing on EWER with communities at risk of displacement, and ensure their participation as UCP actors is important.
- Consulting communities before humanitarians 'descend on a place' is important in order do no harm.
- There is sometimes a need to mediate tensions between (I)NGOs and IDPs, and between host community and IDPs.
- UCP actors should ensure that other partners are giving clear and tangible information.
- Advocating for "take away" rations rather than something that is a pull factor for armed

actors is a good practice.<sup>45</sup>

- When conflict happens, support efforts for reparation and restoration of relationships as a primary tenet.
- To slow things down in situations of emergency displacement is useful.
- EWER systems are essential, as are concrete material preparations for displacements (where to go to, what to take, how to make sure that families meet each other again since they might not be together when an attack happens)
- If EWER is a difficult topic to discuss because people for example do not wish to consider the possibility of an armed attack, approach EWER strategies through the lens of preventing family separation.
- Mobile protection teams and semi-static missions for hard-to reach areas are good practice for UCP because they can use a window of opportunity in moments of calm to access displaced populations and also ensuring that hard to reach populations are served
- Partnerships and accompaniments matter a lot in areas with no infrastructure.
- Protective accompaniments are a tool that has to be used in circumstances of multiple displacements.

#### *Identity as UCP*

- Be careful as UCP actors not to take on the role of all security, rather highlight issues of community-safety.
- Division of labor: UCP actors are taking care of security inside the POCs; UN soldiers should make sure no one enters with weapons.
- Utilize community connections to identify spoilers and those doing criminal activities or joining armed groups.
- Repair local infrastructures rather than build dependency.

#### *UCP and the Role of Youth*

a) From a broader peacebuilding angle:

- Trainings of various kinds: Vocational trainings have proven very useful, as have leadership trainings.
- Economic empowerment of youth has been found to be important, for example providing equipment to start small businesses, because poverty and unemployment are big problems and contribute to violence.
- Sports stand out as an activity/offer to which youth respond positively.
- Some organizations successfully used arts (theatre, video productions), to help youth express their issues and to communicate with the wider community.
- Youth clubs in schools or outside schools that include kids and youth from various ethnicities and religion have been found to be a useful tool in some countries.
- Giving youth particular roles or titles – like that of “Peace Ambassadors” - has proven to encourage youth to become and stay active on peace issues.
- Engagement with young mothers (and fathers) is important because at least the women otherwise fall out of the category of “youth”. This requires community engagement.
- Generally, it was said, acting like a youth ensures that you get their attention and interest.

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<sup>45</sup> In South Sudan, stores of humanitarian aid have drawn such actors who then raided them. Therefore it was recommended to rather parcel aid up so that people can take it with them.

Hence one has to act, dress and use the same language as local youth.

- It is necessary to provide space for youth to state what they care about.

b) UCP in particular

- NP has had good experiences with building relationship with youth on a very low key level, just meeting and talking with them. NP also used sports (soccer) as a tool for building a relationship with youth.
- NP has had good experiences with UCP and GBV trainings combined with visioning exercises, asking youth how they envision themselves to be in five years' time.

Strategic exit: self-protection of Local Communities

- Mutual strength in international and national staff should be recognized, and to ensure exchange of ideas and resources between national and international staff is good practice.
- There must be intentionality in organizational planning (e.g. evacuation plans for locals and internationals).
- Do not overlook but facilitate communities learning from one another. One community is learning from others how to protect themselves.
- Organizations facilitating conversation between team members post evacuation is important.
- Another good practice is to build on a community's history of safety planning for evacuation/displacement (EWER).
- Communication of evacuation plans and strategies is essential.
- It is good practice not to pay stipends for participants in EWER systems because that changes the motivation to participate in them.
- Timely preparation for displacing from a location is needed.

Relationship-building<sup>46</sup>

- To enhance community security, it is good practice to work with and through the local community and help it to set up its own safety and security structures.
- The starting point should be the identification of the existing structures and practices. Mapping of communities in regard to threats and existing practices is a good method to start with.
- Before mapping (e.g. capacity and vulnerability assessment) can start, the UCP actor needs to meet as many local actors as possible and explain what it suggests to do. Trust needs to be developed because security issues are sensitive issues.
- National staff may be the best to come first to a community because they may find it easier to build initial trust.
- Capacity recognition comes before capacity building.
- A meeting of all NGOs working in an area is useful to identify the gaps which an UCP actor could fill.
- In order to build community relations, consistency, sustained engagement and long term work are needed.
- While well trained in the principles, methods and procedures, local teams should be encouraged to innovate to respond to dynamic situations.<sup>47</sup>

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<sup>46</sup> This includes the good practices and lessons learned listed in 3.6 and 3.7.

<sup>47</sup> This point came from another working group (C1) but has added here because it fits here better.

- When working with groups (for example youth) it may be good practice to identify some influential leaders of that group and win their trust. They then would influence the other members. The same mechanism applies to trainings of community members.
- Living with the communities – with diverse teams, see 3.6 - is good practice because that brings staff closer to the community members which in turn enhances trust.
- One strategy to build relationships is to start with capacity building offered to key stakeholders.
- Election monitoring provides an opportunity to build relationships with important actors in many countries.
- Organizing regular meetings to which all stakeholders are invited and discussing community issues lays the ground for specific interventions by UCP actors.
- Usually it is necessary to start by talking to those in authority when entering a new community, and then broaden the range of stakeholders in order to include them all.
- Building personal relationships through social occasions - parties to invite stakeholders including Commissioners etc.; just dropping by to say 'hello' whenever passing a community, giving condolences when somebody has died etc. - helps to build sustainable relationships.
- When protective space for anyone shrinks for reasons of identity, those who retain privilege have a responsibility to step in and try to broaden that space.
- Each incident requires a holistic approach engaging various methods and collaborating with a variety of other actors.
- Sharing reports with authorities and other stakeholders gives an organization visibility.
- Having relationships with everyone is very important because you never know who may be a leader in the future.
- To reach national leaders, making use of persons who are respected throughout the country without being high level leaders themselves, can help to get introduced.
- Being present in a community every day helps enormously with building relationships.
- Learning at least a little of the local language helps with building relationships.
- Diversity (gender, religion, ethnic and national background) in teams is important to build relationships across dividing-lines within and between communities, because teams thereby demonstrate nonpartisanship and set a model for peaceful collaboration and enhances understanding and creativity.
- To mitigate the effect of staff turnover, one of the good practices is to refer to former staff and build new relationships based on these former connections.
- A positive relationship with international military forces on the ground as peacekeepers (like UNMISS in South Sudan) is important and helpful because of their logistical capacities that can be tapped.

### Managing UCP Projects

#### Scaling Up UCP

- Linking up advocacy with field work is necessary to find the financial and political support needed for larger-scale missions.
- To be opportunistic to some degree in terms of responding to funding that opens up is helpful as long as one stays true to oneself.



- Strong support from the HQ of the organization and administrative capacity facilitate growth.
- Others know they can turn to NP for help facilitating safe visits which strengthens the perception of the organization as being useful and needed.
- Being the only ones there (esp. in remote areas that other agencies shunned) is helpful.
- NP is a front line organization that establishes a presence to respond to needs. It then draws other NGOs and UN to the areas. It is seen as “forward-facing” and “risk taking”, being often the first in, the last out.
- Being proactive to respond to humanitarian crises is important.
- Conducting independent assessment in advance is necessary.
- Having built up the capacity (financial and organization-wise) to build and expand would be a good practice.
- Being known to donors and considered to be trustworthy is important.
- Having key relationships in place is important.
- Take opportunities to spread UCP methodology to others actors.
- UCP practitioners with deep experience are needed, as is good staff development.
- Tying UCP to specific themes is a good strategy, for example to child protection, women, IDPs.
- Ability to work with difficult authorities is important.
- Looking for good partnerships is important.

#### Ending of Projects<sup>48</sup>

- Timely preparation for exiting from a location is needed.

#### Dealing with Infrastructural Issues

##### *Digital communication*

- There is a need to increase digital security knowledge and to be aware of simple techniques like changing passwords often or using encryption, going online only for short periods of time and then sending messages prepared beforehand.

##### *Information protection*

- Having internal and external reports is a means to protect information and not to become a target for sanctions by authorities.
- Sometimes, using non-electronic means of information is safer – for example runners taking messages from place to place. Even drum signals still work in some parts of South Sudan.
- Children are sometimes a good source of information and should not be overlooked. But they should not be put in positions of risk just to gather information.
- Encourage traditional ways of information sharing that do not rely on literacy. (For example, a map can be drawn in the sand and quickly erased afterwards, or people can show you places in a walk).

##### *Protective Accompaniment*

- It is necessary to be aware of limitations of transparency.

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<sup>48</sup> This does not only contain the findings of the group work described under 4.3, but also a couple of points extracted from good practices and challenges in section 3.5 as a separate topic.

- Allow the victims of violence to decide whether to be interviewed and where, the role of the UP actor here is to ensure that the victim is aware of the potential risks related to the venue selected by the victim. (For example, if someone suggest to be interviewed in the market, point out the possibility of other people overhearing what is said.)
- Inform local community about the presence of UCP workers and what they are doing.

#### *Other good practices*

- Building upon low profile actors and letting other voices speak up first about human rights violations or other problems is a good strategy. When criticism of these violations comes from different sides, it is less easy to silence those who criticize.

#### Staff Care and Staff Welfare<sup>49</sup>

- To take care of oneself and other staff must be part of induction training.
- Managers should receive training on the duty of care for staff.
- There should be a resilience check in the hiring process.
- Team leaders or other staff can set a role model by creating space for self-care (respect of working hours and week-ends).
- Hiring an internal counsellor as well as an external service to provide for counselling is good practice.
- Organizations should appoint internal focal points.
- Making check-ins mandatory would help to remove the stigma around needing psychological help.
- Giving a month salary as emergency cash is helpful for emergencies.
- Monthly all staff rejuvenation practices such as art, yoga, etc that are mandatory build resiliency and team connections.

#### Ongoing Analysis

- Ongoing actor mapping is needed.
- Analysis is not enough, staff must have influential allies.
- National staff is key to mapping, because they know what is going on.
- The purpose of mapping is to find entry points into systems.
- There is a need to take time and listen and support local people in creating the strategies, and to always be out and talk with the communities.
- Regular meetings with the community to review what has happened is useful for analysis.
- Local people trust an organization because they see it advocating for them, e.g. advocating that someone can pass during curfew times.
- Recognize that women have influence on local key actors because they may meet them every day in some function.
- Call on friends and relatives and influencers.
- Write daily reports on activities.
- Maintaining an incident tracker updated on a daily/weekly basis helps to target where to place UCP staff. It contains the location, time, incident details such as victim and perpetrator.

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<sup>49</sup> Extracted from good practices and challenges in section 3.5 as a separate topic.



## 6.2 Summary of Challenges

### Outlining the Framework of UCP

#### Use of Principles

##### Nonviolence

- How can people be approached who have arms?
- It is hard to practice nonviolence while violence is easy, or ‘turning the other cheek’ when there is state violence against a peaceful demonstration.
- Need to target youth – boys tend to violence, girls are hard to reach
- The impact of nonviolence is often invisible. There is a need to help people reflect on the change that has taken place.
- How to link nonviolence and human rights work? One suggestion at the table was to take the Universal Declaration of Human Rights as the basis, and work for it with nonviolent means.
- Reconciliation and nonviolence are challenging when taking revenge is considered the primary way of restoring justice. An interesting remark was made on the role of forgiveness: On the one hand, it is key to nonviolence because it stops the cycle of revenge, but it is not a precondition for nonviolence.
- External forces sabotaging nonviolence.
- Not using violence as a disciplinary tool.
- “Do our projects promote NV when we are funded by actors involved in the conflict?” As possible methods to deal with this dilemma, the table mentioned: Engage with the donors, tolerate violence but then start a conversation, and formulate principles regarding funding.

##### Nonpartisanship

- Neutrality is a big challenge because the individuals and organizations stand for values, rights and visions, and some groups may feel they are part of the conflict. (In the case of election monitoring in Burundi, some people left the initiative because they felt they could not maintain their nonpartisanship.)
- Second, it is a challenge because individuals have their own bias. (One person said: “Our feelings may be partisan, it is our actions that must not be partisan.”)
- Accompaniment of different groups. When one group sees the UCP organization accompanying the other, then the UCP organization quickly is accused of taking sides because it is seen helping the other group.
- It is also a challenge when a question is asked such as why the UN and all humanitarian agencies have their offices in Juba (the seat of the government) and not in rebel areas. (NP counters that question with the reply that they are not accountable for the UN and ARE working on both sides).
- For local people, nonpartisanship is a difficult concept because of their group identity.
- Sometimes the humanitarian principle to help sets in and takes predominance over other principles– “help first, ask questions later.”
- Sometimes challenging factors are hard for organizations to address. For example, NP was accused for being partisan in the Caucasus for not having a Russian speaker on its international board.

##### Independence

- It is difficult to maintain independence when engaging in promoting peace processes, because conflict parties may try to pull the third party to their side.
- There is a tension between building allies and holding independence.
- It can be challenging to maintain independence in the humanitarian architecture, particularly when working in places like refugee camps and the PoCs.
- Similar to what was said at the table on nonpartisanship, identity politics can pose a challenge for national staff to remain independent – i.e. in electoral cycles when tribal affiliations are highly stressed.
- The danger of being instrumentalized as an UCP organization for political, economic or military purposes is a risk that is shared by local communities who have built their capacity in protection and peace work.
- At times UCP organizations need to compromise on principles including independence – for example if they choose to move with a convoy that has armed actors in order to access a location where the need outstrips the negative impact of moving with armed actors.
- The industrialization of aid – when the aid industry is the only source of livelihood opportunity it often means that those in power need/want to control it and this makes maintaining independence difficult.
- Organizations may be unaware of compromising their independence, for example when they are unaware of the deals being made both inside the country and with the regional and international influencers.
- Global contraction of space for civil society is compromising independence.
- Certain types of funding can bring limitations to independence, for example if the donors put strict conditions on their funding.

#### Primacy of local actors/ local leadership

- Local leadership may confine the ownership to members of their families and close relatives, leaving others out. Organizations can mitigate this through the creation of an environment that encourages participation by all sectors of the community.
- Traditional leadership structures can be a barrier to community participation especially with regards to women’s participation – again the same approach of community participation especially through actors mapping is used to mitigate this particular challenge.
- Sometimes it is very difficult to identify local actors who really need protection. Conducting detailed assessments and using local experts can help mitigate this challenge.
- Balancing primacy of local leadership when they are part of the problem. In this case more focus is put on grassroots actors and much less on the leadership by using strategies that promote participation from many sectors of the communities/local actors.
- Donor conditions that don’t allow for engaging with armed local actors are a challenge. This can be mitigated through dialogue with donors to enhance the understanding of UCP approaches and to demonstrate why sometimes it is necessary to work with armed actors to secure the protection of communities, and that activities like ceasefire monitoring are only possible if there is an engagement with armed local actors.

#### Do no harm

- Personal behavior of people living in a community (respecting cultural norms etc.) may harm the picture people have of the organization.
- Conflict between team members may affect the work and perception of the organization.

- The danger of triggering retaliation against those the organization works with.
- Creating a false sense of security is a danger.
- Aid agencies that do not pay attention to warnings or do not really care about doing no harm create problems for UCP work.

#### Other basic principles

- Confidentiality vs transparency: If an organization reports through the UN, then the government asks about the sources for that UN report. The challenge is how to ensure safety and security of the informants.
- Duty of care for staff and self-care for field staff: how to deal with stress and trauma, lack of common rules between organizations, or even within one organization?
- Nonreligious affiliation vs. inter-faith orientation: instrumentalization of religious leaders.
- Ethics and professionalism vs. volunteering and good will.
- Beneficiary driven protection: passive recipient vs. active actors.<sup>50</sup>
- Global human rights - how to define a response?
- Child protection: How can we be sure to make the best decision for the child?
- Professionalism: How to move from a good-will approach to having good professional ethics?
- Collaboration as a core principle: How to work together in partnership to avoid duplication. Sometimes there is competition between organizations. How to avoid this – for example split up territories. Try to mitigate competition through better coordination.

#### Deterrence and Encouragement

- Cooptation by political elites can be a challenge: Politicians suddenly engage and pick up topics, but this is not always useful. How to avoid conflicts getting politicized and being hijacked by political elites?
- Parties spoiling a process are always a challenge. It is necessary to understand what the messages and the philosophy are. Spoilers often have strong connections politically and even to the UN.
- Movement restrictions and communication issues: Access sometimes is difficult, when for example there is ongoing heavy fighting. Also access may be different for national and international staff.
- Humanitarian staffing issues: Capacity building and burn-out are challenges, as is staff who want to be heroes.
- “Inevitable violence”: other issues come up during peace processes. There is a cyclical nature of violence in South Sudan.
- Over-reliance on elites is a danger that must be avoided.
- Hierarchies and flexible structures: If command structures in conflict parties are loose and many people make decisions, the UCP organization faces multiple actors, and it is difficult to influence them all. But this can also be of advantage in other situations.
- Changes in power: In South Sudan Commissioners, ministers etc. change quickly, and relationships need to be built anew.
- A danger for a UCP organization is to try to do everything at once, trying to be too big in

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<sup>50</sup> This referred to NP’s approach of supporting villagers in developing their own protection strategies rather than relying on international presence for protection (alone).

scope. It is better to slice issues into pieces and deal with them one by one.

- UCP organizations are often very comfortable to work with peace actors but not so much with armed actors. There is sometimes a lack of engagement and targeting of spoilers.
- Learning to step back to understand the situation may become a challenge.
- Understanding the UCP organization's threshold in terms of safety and security can be a challenge.

### UCP and the Role of Gender

- Rights-based organizations using UCP face the challenge that culture impacts on what is acceptable, e.g. regarding female roles or transgender identities.
- To be culturally sensitive when promoting gender issues because otherwise people will consider you a spoiler of tradition and that will weaken your position.
- It is a challenge to define what gender equality is.
- Expectations of payments by men for work women do as unpaid volunteers.
- Are we not reinforcing the traditional values when men are invited to validate what the women are doing?
- Religion may be a handicap for gender equality because some pastors preach that women must submit to their husband and not for example be economically independent. Rights-based organizations using UCP face the challenge that culture impacts on what is acceptable, e.g. regarding female roles or transgender identities.
- To be culturally sensitive when promoting gender issues because otherwise people will consider you a spoiler of tradition and that will weaken your position.
- It is a challenge to define what gender equality is.
- Do UCP organizations respect gender issues in practice, not just give lip service?<sup>51</sup>
- Expectations of payments by men for work women do as unpaid volunteers.
- Are we not reinforcing the traditional values when men are invited to validate what the women are doing?
- Religion may be a handicap for gender equality because some pastors preach that women must submit to their husband and not for example be economically independent.

### UCP and the Role of Identity

- Negative stereotypes of tribes are very strong sometimes. Generalizations of tribe/ethnicity leads to target killing, abductions and other sorts of violence.
- Easy access to weapons by civilians leads to conflicts becoming deadly very quickly.
- UCP organizations and NGOs often focus their attention at grassroots, but then violence happens again at a higher level.
- Moderate actors face resistance by communities who label them traitors.
- The use of ethnicity as a mobilization factor is a challenge in it itself because people, especially those with little education, tend to follow their politicians blindly.
- Almost all ethnicities have their own identity based militia or armed group to protect their own society.
- Media are used in a negative way to propagate competitive ethnic identity.

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<sup>51</sup> This refers to sensitivity to gender issues, promoting women as peacemakers etc.

### Cooperation Between UCP and Other Actors in the Field

- Partners come with negative, preconceived perceptions of communities which limit relationship and access.
- The UN and its agencies are able to deliver humanitarian material aid which becomes a challenge for those who cannot offer this kind of help.
- Military peacekeepers do not have such heavy reliance on communities as UCP actors do. That leaves gaps in understanding of the local situation, the interests of various local actors and the fears and threats that communities face. This in turn can lead to the deterioration of relations between military peacekeepers and communities.
- UN peacekeepers have very restricted mandates and strict security regulations for their own staff. They do little proactive engagement with communities. They are perceived as considering their safety to be their first priority although they tell communities that civilian safety comes first.
- At times of potential conflict, peacekeepers tend to resort to force to implement their version of peace or protection. This also endangers civilian UCP practitioners.
- Aid agencies have their own record with communities. They are often perceived as being rich (vehicles etc.) but not sharing. And they are seen as collaborating with authorities, thereby sacrificing the principle of nonpartisanship. This leads to a lack of trust from the community. They fear that NGOs bring more harm than good.
- INGOs and partners coming in with preconceived ideas of peacebuilding which may not fit the needs of the communities.
- INGOs come and conduct need assessments. But very often they never come back to deliver. This has a negative impact on other INGOs that come later.
- INGOs cannot enforce disarmament.

### UCP, Elections and Governance

- Elections are seen as opportunities to loot public resources: For some people, becoming politicians is the only way to survive and so they fight for positions.
- Proactive approaches are missing. Most international monitors only come when elections are at the door.
- Attacks on clerics, journalists, election monitors are a threat.
- Lack of fairness and credibility of election processes are challenges.
- Allocation of limited resources for elections is a challenge.
- Reactive approaches to elections are less effective than proactive approaches.
- There is often limited capacity to plan, organize and manage electoral processes.
- There is often limited civic awareness and engagement.
- International influence, e.g. support for one candidate, can contribute to conflict.

### Tactics of Protection

#### Protective Accompaniment of Individuals

- PA is some of the highest risk work UCP organizations can do.
- Risks relate to:
  - staff security (especially to national staff)
  - access



- reputation
- continuity
- The sustainability of the PA can become a challenge of its own, especially regarding the planning of the eventual exit and assessment of changing risks. The impact on teams – psychological, emotional, arising from intimate nature of work and acute tensions between confidentiality and transparency must not be underestimated.
- There are risks to the trust that has been built up, both internally and externally.
- It is a challenge to be prepared to say no to a request for accompaniment. Not all such requests can be taken up, either because of resource limitations of the UCP organization or because the case has features that make the organization hesitant of taking it up.<sup>52</sup>.
- Expectations management is another challenge. This relates to:
  - clear and regular communications.
  - economic implications for the person under threat – usually her/his livelihood is interrupted and unless the person can draw on savings or family support, there may be expectations of the UCP organization to provide support.
  - exit strategies: Length of time, capacity to continue the PA.

#### UCP and Local Mediation and Negotiation

- The way large agencies conduct themselves, can become a challenge.
- Intergovernmental institutions can undermine the process.
- How to deal with big intergovernmental institutions that have resources.
- Bringing people together without focus does not work.
- Spoilers are always a challenge.
- Elites and private sector are difficult to handle, especially since local issues often have links to the wider political structure.
- Multinationals can be “smart spoilers” meaning that they can ruin a mediation process while seemingly aiding it, for example because of fixation on fast results rather than allowing a process to go along at its own speed.
- Armed parties during the mediation are a danger.
- Rumors must be dealt with.
- Preconceptions about the conflict or conflict parties may be a hindrance.
- Trauma influences mediation processes negatively.
- To move into agreements before all complaints are heard and listened to, and before people take responsibility is a mistake.
- Local conflicts that involve foreign nationals / regional interests are a challenge.
- Leaders are vulnerable: When they come together they become targets.
- Multiple issues involving multiple groups are difficult to handle.
- There is a mediation industry that sometimes could do more harm than good
- To what extent can we talk about political dynamics at mediation processes?
- Historical precedents are used to justify current conflicts.

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<sup>52</sup> This again may be different things, from the risk to be considered no longer non-partisan to the threat level and character of the threat being of such a nature that protective accompaniment might not work or be suitable.

### UCP with IDPs

- Security
- Loose perimeters in POC sites lead to internal insecurity.
- Breakdown of protective structures often leads to increased criminality.
- Harassment by military and state structures of humanitarian organization is a challenge.
- Active fighters or politicians among the IDPs pose a problem.
- There is a lack of distinction between civilians and combatants.
- When there are violations of weapon-free zones – under whose jurisdiction does it come?
- The humanitarian urgency to “do something” can become a challenge of its own.
- Lack of infrastructure.
- Structures can be biased (for example a wounded person being under threat at a hospital).
- Physical access is challenging (swamps, bush etc.) which may lead to a lack of humanitarian services.
- Trauma, disrupted livelihoods and lack of hope are challenges for IDPs and therefore also for UCP.
- There is a lack of mechanisms taking care of justice and accountability.
- Proliferation of small arms and light weapons (SALW) is a challenge.
- Revenge culture among some groups is a problem.
- Lack of accountability of humanitarian actors and UNMISS actors is a challenge.
- A lack of infrastructure for many IDPs in towns or informal camps poses a problem.
- Coordination and relationships among many (!)NGOs and other agencies, government, etc. is challenging.
- Accusations that UCP organizations “support rebels” are common.
- Factions within security organizations are a challenge.

### UCP and the Role of Youth

- To find access to youth, speaking their language and finding their interest, is a challenge. There was also the question: Do you really have to be youth, look and speak like youth to be accepted by youth?
- Develop more UCP tools that “work” with youth.
- Armed groups and recruitment of young people: The armed groups are offering the youth things that NGOs find hard to do, even if the NGO is able to offer financial incentives (which NP, for example, does not do). “We’re not giving them enough and not what they perceive they need”, it was said.
- A particular challenge is the protection of former armed fighters, and helping them remember/relearn how to relate to the community without arms or violence.
- Youth who are armed cannot be protected the same way as civilians, but there is a lack of tools for their protection.
- To overcome perceptions of the generational gap, and preformed pictures of “youth” is a challenge.
- Resistance to peace and nonviolent means is an issue when dealing with youth.
- The need to manage expectations can become a challenge (not only, but also when working with youth).

- It is hard to counter ideological or religious-based stances or divides.
- Sustainability and continuity of the activities that keep youth together and to mitigate violence, is important.
- It was stated, referring to South Sudan, that one of the challenges working with youth is that they are so fast in taking action and want outcomes immediately. “We need to let them know that it’s going to take a long time.”
- There is a need for incentives to get youth to attend trainings.

#### Self-protection of Local Communities

- Continuous displacements disrupt self-protection systems, reduce reliance on them, cause fatigue and tiredness, and disrupt coordination.
- Insecurity at times makes it challenging to lay groundwork for assisting communities with self-protection.
- In times of attack /imminent risk of attack UCP organizations leave. But that breaks the trust, and at times horrible things happen to communities. When the organization is back, it is accused by communities of neglect, so the UCP actors have to work hard to undo the damage and rebuild the trust.
- A challenge is the lack of essential kits for a quick run bag, e.g. water purifying tablets, mosquito nets and medicine etc. NP asks other agencies to provide such things but often this does not happen and the community is disappointed.
- Thefts and robbery can undo such material preparations.
- Evacuation of national staff is challenging due to the huge families and also the responsibility to protect families.
- National staff feels responsible for the security of the internationals without experiencing full reciprocity in all cases.
- Sometimes the methods of self-protection by groups and their local defense strategies can be harmful to the community itself.
- Demands for sitting allowances or money at trainings happen at times, especially where other organizations are giving stipends to training participants.
- Oftentimes organizations do not exit, because of insecurity but rather because of a lack of funding.

#### Relationship-building<sup>53</sup>

- Quick changes in leadership functions are a challenge if there is no positive relationship that was built beforehand.
- Change of team members (staff turnover) of the UCP organizations is a challenge because relationships need to be rebuilt.
- A challenge for INGOs is to build good relationships without offering material aid which is usually expected.
- The expectation to be paid for participation in trainings is a challenge.
- For internationals it may be a challenge to recognize immediately the ethnic identity of a person which may be necessary for some communications (especially when trying to use the local language).

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<sup>53</sup> This includes the challenges listed in 3.5 and 3.6.

## Managing UCP Projects

### Scaling Up UCP

- Human Resource and other organizational issues, given the bureaucratic impediments in South Sudan (work permits, taxation issues etc.), are a challenge.
- Sustaining international presence is also a challenge because of the hard working conditions. It is not easy to find enough good people.
- Especially for international staff, the work in South Sudan is difficult (trauma, Malaria etc.). NP can only offer limited services, so that leads to stress.
- It is difficult to find sufficient qualified and resilient staff in larger numbers.
- Losing trained staff to other agencies because they pay more is an ongoing challenge.
- Growth requires an adequate management infrastructure. This can be a challenge because donors usually prefer to fund field work only, not what they call “overheads”.
- Also given the ongoing conflict (macro and communal), there is less static presence of communities. People are on the move, so NP cannot build up sustainable projects.
- Funding for prevention is difficult, because donors often look for military responses first.
- Challenges to secure funding lead to slow growth.
- Volatile contexts and working with mobile communities are challenges.
- No aid delivery when people are in need is a challenge.
- Difficult logistics and infrastructure are a challenge.
- Rent-seeking behavior, especially from the side of authorities, makes UCP harder.
- Transferring UCP tools is risky because practitioners from other NGOs might not have the necessary training and thereby not fully understand their proper use..
- Insufficiently experienced staff due to rapid scaling-up can happen if staff is hired that is not properly trained, due to pressure to get staff to the field.
- Relationship-building takes time.

### Ending Projects<sup>54</sup>

- Oftentimes organizations do not exit not because of insecurity but because of a lack of funding.

### Dealing with Infrastructural Issues

#### *Mobility*

- Inability to access physical locations is a challenge.
- Not exploring local knowledge is a mistake.

#### *Information protection*

- Lack of confidence and transparency are challenges. One cannot just go and ask local communities what their safe escape routes are because one would be suspected to be a spy.
- Intimidation from armed groups to UCP workers is a challenge.
- There is a lack of safe venues for programs, conversations and discussion.
- There are some people in communities where all information comes together. However, if they are identified by the opposite groups, they are very much at risk and need

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<sup>54</sup> Extracted from good practices and challenges in section 3.4 as a separate topic.

protection.

- Interference of social media to incite tension or misconception of UCP work is a challenge.
- Attacks on communication infrastructures by armed groups, such as blowing up masts, are challenges.

#### *Protective accompaniment*

- Abuse because people are being accompanied can happen.
- Safe places can come under attack.
- Lack of safe places for accompaniment are a problem, and may be under observation by the police (for example Western country embassies).
- Lack of knowledge of armed groups on UCP is a problem.

#### *NGO legislation*

- Lack of freedom of expression is a problem in many countries.
- Cumbersome legislation restricting NGOs is a challenge.
- Communication companies controlled by the state are a problem because communication can be tapped.

#### *Staff Care and Staff Welfare*<sup>55</sup>

- It is a challenge to identify one's need for assistance and to acknowledge when you do not know when and how to say "no".
- There is an unhealthy culture of "toughness".
- There is fear to lose the job when admitting "weakness".
- There are not enough financial resources for aid, or there is guilt accessing these resources.
- There is a need for culturally competent individuals, and for people trained in staff welfare.
- Another barrier to getting assistance is the distance in remote areas, and the lack of communication to reach distant aid providers.
- There is a need to find mental health people who have good awareness of the context that UCP people are working in – not everyone has that.
- Organizational staff resource management is a challenge if it is higher management that is also dealing with staff welfare. It may increase the hesitation to approach the person responsible for staff welfare if she or he is at the same time the line supervisor.
- There is a difference between staff welfare and counselling that is not always acknowledged.
- There is a lack of empowerment of welfare staff, and a lack of prioritization of what is needed for staff.
- Staff welfare issues may increase when scaling up.

#### *Ongoing Analysis*

- When working with partners, it is important to know the mandate of each organization, and to have an agreement about what to do in emergencies. This does not always happen.

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<sup>55</sup> Extracted from good practices and challenges in section 3.4 as a separate topic.



### 6.3 Agenda as carried out- Workshop on Good Practices in Nonviolent, Unarmed, Civilian to Civilian Protection, 12-14 November 2018, Nairobi

Monday, 12th November 2018, Day One

<b>Time</b>	<b>Activity</b>
8:30	Welcome Plenary and Introductions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Welcomes from Nonviolent Peaceforce;</li> <li>- Introductions of participants;</li> <li>- Introduction of the programme;</li> <li>- Guidelines for/information about the workshop</li> </ul>
10:30	Break
11:00	Placing ourselves on a diagram of civilian protection and clarifying our expectations for the workshop
11:15	<b>World Cafe</b> NONVIOLENCE  NONPARTISANSHIP / NEUTRALITY  PRIMACY OF LOCAL ACTORS /LOCAL LEADERSHIP  INDEPENDENCE  DO NO HARM  OTHER BASIC PRINCIPLES
12:45	Lunch at venue
13:45	Review of the roles of small group moderators and notetakers – all who are doing this please gather in the meeting room
14:00	Energizer
14:15	Results of ‘world café’ on basic principles and general discussion; selection of small groups for period A
15:00	<b>Small group period A</b> 1 UCP protection strategies of deterrence of violence and encouragement of respect for civilian safety and well-being ( <i>incl. a case study</i> )  2 The role of gender in accompaniment and UCP work in the region  3 Cooperation between UCP, the UN and other (armed and unarmed) peacekeeping and peacebuilding actors in the field
16:30	Break

17-18:00 Plenary – brief reports from small groups and discussion; feedback on day 1

18:30 Dinner at venue

### Tuesday, 13th November, Day Two

Time	Activity
9:00	Plenary – Ice breaker exercise and check in. Selection of small groups for period B.
9.30	<b>Working Groups B</b> 1 UCP and the role of identity in violence and protection 2 Protective accompaniment of individuals in Sub-Saharan Africa 3 UCP and local mediation and negotiation in the context of Sub-Saharan Africa <i>(incl. a case study)</i>
11:00	Break
11.30	Plenary – brief reports from small groups and discussion
12.30	The current political situation in the region, presentation and Q&A, Fatuma Ibrahim
1300	Lunch at venue
14:00	Plenary gathering - Ice breaker exercise and selection of small groups for period C.
14:30	<b>Small group period C</b> 1 Scaling up UCP – lessons from NP South Sudan 2. UCP/accompaniment with displaced people <i>(incl. a case study)</i> 3 UCP and the role of youth in the Sub-Saharan African context
16:00	Break
16:30 – 17:30	Plenary – reports from small groups and discussion; feedback on day 2
18:30	Dinner at venue

### Wednesday, 14th November, Day Three

Time	Activity
9:00	Plenary – Ice breaker exercise and check in.
9:20	Communities’ self-protection – presentation by Casey Barrs and Q&A Selection of small groups for period D



10:00	<p><b>Small Group period D</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Strategic exit: Laying groundwork for the self-protection of local counterparts and communities</li> <li>2. Infrastructural challenges for accompaniment and UCP in Sub-Saharan Africa</li> <li>3. UCP/accompaniment, elections and governance in Sub-Saharan Africa</li> </ol>
11.30	Break
12.00	<p>Plenary – brief reports from small groups and discussion</p> <p>Ask participants to think about their one most important good practice over lunch</p> <p>Announcements: transportation, photos and videos</p>
13–14:00	Lunch
14:00	<p>Plenary – Good practices in accompaniment/UCP in Africa – key points - flashlight and dot exercise</p> <p>Determining the four small groups</p>
15:00	<p><b>Small group period E</b></p> <p>‘Was makes UCP good practices work and different from other approaches/groups?’</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1 Staff Security</li> <li>2 Relationship Building</li> <li>3 Local community relations: learning from local practices, strengthening of local practices, local community empowerment</li> <li>4 Ongoing process of actor mapping and process analysis.</li> </ol>
16:15	Break
16:45	Plenary – brief reports from small groups and final discussion: was makes UCP good practices special/different
17:45	Workshop evaluation; thanks
18:00	End of plenary
19:00	Farewell Dinner

## 6.4 Attendees - Good Practices in Accompaniment and UCP – Nairobi, November 2018

Name	Organization(s)	Country	Country (countries) they work/ have worked in with a UCP organization
Marna Anderson	NP	USA	n/a
Florington Aseervatham	NP South Sudan Country Director, earlier NP Sri Lanka	Sri Lanka	South Sudan, Sri Lanka
Rungano Bakasa	NP South Sudan	Zimbabwe	South Sudan
Casey Barrs	Center for Civilians in Harms Way	U.S.	n/a
Berit Bliesemann DeGuevara	Aberystwyth University	Germany	
David Bucura	Friends Peace Teams	Rwanda	Rwanda
Mel Duncan	NP	USA	
Tiffany Easthom	NP, PBI	Canada	Indonesia, Sri Lanka, South Sudan, Lebanon
Zandro Escat	NP South Sudan, earlier NP Philippines	Philippines	South Sudan, Philippines
Claire Finas	NP Programme Director	France	n/a
Fatuma Ibrahim	NP Board	Kenya	n/a
Moses John	ONAD	South Sudan	South Sudan
Rosemary Kabaki	NP Georgia and Myanmar	Kenya	Georgia, Myanmar
Elija Kengen	NP South Sudan	South Sudan	South Sudan
Grace Lodo Bakster	NP South Sudan	South Sudan	South Sudan
Caca Carrel Mangno	NP South Sudan	Philippines	South Sudan
Yasmin Maydhane	NP South Sudan	Somalia / UK	South Sudan
Rufus Moiseemah	NP South Sudan	Liberia	South Sudan
Karis Moses	Defend Defenders	Uganda	Uganda
Tandiwe Ngwenya	NP South Sudan	Zimbabwe	South Sudan
Parfaite Ntahuba	Quaker Minister	Burundi	Burundi
Mary Nyachot	NP South Sudan (WPT)	South Sudan	South Sudan
Yauanness Riek Nyarek	NP South Sudan	South Sudan	South Sudan
Angelina Nyakhor. C. Machar	NP South Sudan	South Sudan	South Sudan
Sarah Nyathieng Lony Machar	NP South Sudan	South Sudan	South Sudan
Chica Onah	NP South Sudan, NP Sri Lanka, UNMISS	Nigeria	South Sudan, Sri Lanka
Oloo Otieno	NP South Sudan (earlier NP Sri Lanka and Philippines)	Kenya	South Sudan

Jan Passion	NP	USA	Sri Lanka
Keith Ross	NP Supporter	USA	n/a
Suzanne Ross	NP Supporter	USA	n/a
Alessandro Rossi	NP Board, Network for Religious & Traditional Peacemakers	Italy	n/a
Ansoumane Souare Samassi	WANEP	Guinea	Ghana/ West Africa
Christine Schweitzer	NP, IFGK, BSV	Germany	n/a
Laura Snyder	NP South Sudan	USA	South Sudan
Michael Sodipo	Peace Direct - N. Nigeria	Nigeria	Nigeria
Kenneth Solberg	NP Supporter	USA	n/a
Niklas Van Doorne	NP South Sudan	Germany	South Sudan
Jane Wanjiru	NP South Sudan, earlier NP Sri Lanka	Kenya	Sri Lanka, South Sudan
Edmund Yakani	NP South Sudan beneficiary	South Sudan	South Sudan

## 6.5 The Current Political Situation in the Region by Fatuma Ibrahim

The presentation will focus on Governance broadly and will narrow down to three other elements of the political situation:

- Elections/electoral processes
- Constitutions
- Rule of law

### Governance:

Sub-Saharan Africa's track record of governance since independence is, at best, mixed. Despite the moderate socio-economic and political progress made since independence, only a few countries have improved their performance relative to those in other parts of the world, and these are mostly recent developments confined to some of the smallest countries on the continent.

Since 2007 Mo Ibrahim (the Sudanese –British billionaire businessman and philanthropist) has been recognizing African heads of state with the Mo Ibrahim Prize for Achievement in African Leadership, an honorarium that pays \$5 million. Winners have included Joaquim Chissano, Mozambique; Festus Mogae, Botswana; Pedro Pires, Cabo Verde; and Hifikepunye Pohamba, Namibia. They were recognized for delivering security, health, education and economic development to their constituents and democratically transferring power to their successors

The Mo Ibrahim Foundation's 2014 Ibrahim Index of African Governance assesses the quality of governance in African countries. It was compiled by combining more than 100 variables from more than 30 independent African and global sources.

The Ibrahim Index of African Governance assesses progress under four main categories: safety and rule of law; participation and human rights; sustainable economic opportunity; and human development. Data covers a range of governance elements from infrastructure and freedom of expression, to sanitation and property rights.

In the 2014 report on African governance, 39 countries improved over the past five years and 13 deteriorated for overall governance, according to the Foundation. The countries where things got worse include Egypt, Libya, Guinea-Bissau, CAR, Mali, Benin, Eritrea, Mozambique, Tanzania, Burkina Faso, Madagascar, Gambia and Burundi. Cameroun can now be added to this list.

Below we've listed the highest-ranking countries: Mo Ibrahim's 16 top-ranking African countries for good governance.

- |                           |                 |
|---------------------------|-----------------|
| 16. Malawi                | 8. Tunisia      |
| 15. Tanzania              | 7. Ghana        |
| 14. Morocco               | 6. Namibia      |
| 13. Zambia                | 5. Seychelles   |
| 12. Sao-Tome and Principe | 4. South Africa |
| 11. Rwanda                | 3. Botswana     |
| 10. Lesotho               | 2. Cape Verde   |
| 9. Senegal                | 1. Mauritius    |

Of the 52 countries on the African governance index, the bottom-ranking three are Somalia, No. 52; CAR No. 51; and Eritrea, No. 50. We can add more countries to this list such as DRC, South

Sudan,

At the same time the World Atlas (a website which has had an online presence since 1994 is driven by a team of committed writers, as well as a small editorial and web development team based in different parts of the globe) has created a list of the best and worst governed countries in the world (2018).

On the list of the 25 worst governed countries in the world 14 of them are from Sub-Saharan Africa: Chad, DRC, Liberia, Angola, Nigeria, Cote d'Ivoire, Togo, Cameroun, Zimbabwe, Central African Republic, Sudan, Guinea, South Sudan and Republic of Congo.

They are a myriad of governance challenges for Sub-Saharan Africa, here are a few of the main challenges (adopted from various sources):

**Corruption:** which is becoming endemic to the way of life in much of Africa. It has permeated all life facets from simple things like access to medical care, schools and jobs, to the grand scale of it all like award of contracts and use of public resources. The effect has been great inequalities both in access of services from government offices as well as opportunities for investment with many local and foreign firms discouraged and forced to close business. Misappropriation of public funds and biased awarding of tenders compromises on the quality service available to the members of the public.

**Insecurity:** Insecurity is rampant across Africa hindering progress at national and regional levels. From the urban crime to terrorist groups like Al-Shaabab and Boko-Haram to civil wars in South Sudan and political instability in Somalia, the examples are unending. The insecurities affect all factors of production, cause massive displacement of people, loss of investments, lives and also scare away direct foreign investment.

The insecurity goes in hand with the proliferation of small arms and light weapons which are abundant in many Sub-Saharan African countries and small arms especially pistols are often used in robberies.

Regional conflicts also contribute to governance challenges in the countries in the particular region for example the Boko Haram insurgency affects Nigeria, Chad, Cameroun and Niger. In East Africa the Lords resistance movement affected Uganda, South Sudan and DRC, Sudan and Chad.

**Unemployment:** The whole world may be facing a surge of unemployment especially among the youth but the case for Africa is more precarious. This is because governments do not sufficiently invest in youths. As the labor force increases, there is a huge disconnect between the older generation in majority of the policy and decision making organs and the ever expanding youth population. From the education to employment opportunities and entrepreneurship plans and assistance, the governments face challenges on how best to mitigate for what has been described as a time bomb. This in turn contributes to lower family incomes with many dependents, crime due to joblessness and a host of other social issues

According to Global Peace Index,

the most peaceful countries in Africa are Mauritius, Botswana, Sierra Leone, Zambia, Ghana, Madagascar, Malawi, Namibia, Tanzania, Senegal.

The most fragile country in Africa, according to the index, is South Sudan, followed by Somalia, Central African Republic, Sudan, Democratic Republic of Congo, Chad, Guinea, Nigeria, Zimbabwe and Ethiopia.

Constitutions and Constitutional processes

Most African countries did not have a constitutional history before colonialism. As a result, African constitutions were heavily influenced by the former colonizers in the 1960s, the US or the Soviet Union during the Cold War and, more recently, by the requirements of the international (donor) community. The African Charter on Human and People's rights creates room for typical African elements, in order to give the legal system more legitimacy for Africans.

All African countries have a written constitution, but a culture of constitutionalism is often missing, i.e. a practice in which heads of state voluntarily leave office after an electoral defeat or completion of their constitutional terms, and where citizenship prevails over ethnicity. Authoritarian leaders are often able to change the Constitution in order to stay in power. In many countries the army is an important political actor.

Presidential term limits have also been a common feature of African constitutions – but constitutional amendments have almost exclusively extended presidential term limits. Since the 1990s, at least 30 presidents in sub-Saharan African nations have tried to extend their regimes by tweaking constitutional term limits.

Between 2005 and 2015, presidents in Senegal, Burkina Faso, Republic of Congo Republic, DR Congo, Uganda and Rwanda attempted to extend their terms in office through constitutional or other legal amendments.

#### **Citizens want term limits — even if governments don't.**

Governments backed up these constitutional changes with force on several occasions, along with human rights abuses. In Congo, the January 2014 demonstrations followed President Joseph Kabila's attempt to modify the electoral laws and to stay in power beyond the two terms outlined in the country's constitution.

But some countries are fighting this trend, using the very same weapons – constitutional referendums. In 2015, citizens of the Central African Republic overwhelmingly backed a constitutional referendum aimed at ending nearly three years of political instability. Cote d'Ivoire, Senegal, Burundi have also had constitutional referendums.

These referendums are good for democratic consolidation, the process by which new democracies establish strong foundations to prevent a slide back to autocratic rule. They are also crucial for good governance, long-term stability and rule of law.

#### Rule of law

The rule of law provides the framework for transparent, responsive and accountable institutions which strengthen people's trust and confidence, and by doing so, promote peaceful societies as well as sustainable development.

Effective rule of law reduces corruption, combats poverty and disease, and protects people from injustices large and small. It is the foundation for communities of peace, opportunity, and equity – underpinning development, accountable government, and respect for fundamental rights.

There is apparently stronger commitment by most **Sub-Saharan African** states to respecting the **rule of law** in their constitutions and through the signing and ratifying of international and regional instruments imposing this obligation, there is a steady decline in the respect for the **rule of law**.

## World Justice Project – Rule of Law index 2018

Sub-Saharan Africa's top performer is Ghana, supplanting South Africa from 2016 and taking 43rd place globally. Burkina Faso and Kenya saw the biggest improvement in rank among the 18 countries indexed in the region, climbing 9 and 5 spots respectively in the global rankings. Madagascar experienced the biggest decline in rank, dropping eight spots. Overall, the region showed the most improvements in Absence of Corruption, with four countries experiencing upward trends in this factor and none showing downward trends

Global ranking out of 113 countries:

Cameroun 109,	Nigeria 97
Ethiopia 107,	Kenya 95,
Zimbabwe 108,	Liberia 94
Uganda 104,	Sierra Leone 93.

Constitutionalism is a sharp instrument for ensuring the maintenance of respect for the rule of law. And, it is further submitted, constitutionalism is only attainable to a marked degree in states where there exists an independent and impartial judiciary, that is, a judiciary that is independent from the pressures of the executive, legislature and private persons and institutions; a judiciary that is fearless to apply the law in all cases, even where the government is an opposing party.

## Elections and Electoral processes

(this section is adapted from: The Maendeleo Policy Forum was launched in 2015. Convened by the UNDP Regional Service for Africa, the Maendeleo Policy Forum is one of the organization's contributions to the search for workable solutions to new and persistent problems of developmental transformation and effectiveness in Africa).

Africa has made great strides in recent years towards building democracy, enhancing the rule of law, consolidating good governance, improving human security and promoting and protecting human rights. Since the early 1990s, majority of African countries have undergone momentous transitions from one-party, military or autocratic rule to multiparty democratic systems based on majority rule and popular participation. At the very heart of these democratic transitions has been the holding of periodic, multiparty elections.

Elections held in a number of countries in Sub-Saharan Africa in 2016 and 2017 (Republic of Benin; Burkina Faso; Cape Verde; Chad; Comoros; Republic of Congo; Djibouti; Equatorial Guinea; Niger; Rwanda; Uganda; São Tomé & Príncipe; South Africa, Zambia, Gabon; Ghana; Seychelles; Somalia and The Gambia) show is that the democratic culture of voting is gradually becoming entrenched in African politics. However, questions regarding the creditability of elections and the quality democratic governance on the African continent still remain.

Some few challenges:

Ruling parties and incumbent leaders in many countries continue to demonstrate despotic tendencies by their unwillingness to leave office at the end of their terms. Several countries have removed term limits for presidents. As pointed out earlier Uganda dropped presidential term limit in 2005 to allow President Museveni to rule as long as he wants. Chad also removed presidential term limits in 2004. This has allowed Chadian president to remain in power with little or no chance of leaving office through electoral polls. In 2010, Djibouti amended its constitution removing presidential term limits. In Niger in 2011, the army staged a coup against President Mamadou Tandja because he tried to remove presidential term limit to allow him contest for a third term and remain in power. In 2015 in the Republic of Congo a referendum was used to remove presidential term limit as well as age limits for presidents.

Lack of tolerance for opposition parties is a serious challenge that African democracies face. Pre-election and post-election periods in Uganda's February 2016 elections were marred by incessant arrests and intimidation of opposition candidates. More worrisome was the breaking up of opposition political gatherings and denial of access to state media. The shutting down of social media platforms to restrict opposition's access to the outside world was also reported. Despite widespread allegations of ballot rigging and voter intimidation, the 2016 Ugandan elections were declared free and fair! Chad is another case where intolerance of opposition parties is rampant. Opposition parties in Chadian general elections rejected electoral results on the ground of massive ballot rigging and widespread voter intimidation.

Weak electoral management boards as well as inefficient security sector are blamed for electoral frauds and violence. For example, in 2015 in the Republic Congo calls by the independent electoral body to delay the polls due to logistic problems were largely ignored. In an ideal democratic setting the integrity and independence of the electoral body would have been respected and its advice to postpone the elections heeded. Thus, weak political institutions hinder the maturity of democracy on the African continent.

Political instability is a serious challenge hindering the enthronement of sustainable democracy in Africa south of the Sahara. The youngest state in Africa, South Sudan is currently involved in a civil war. Although elections have taken place in the Central African Republic (CAR), the country is far from being stable. As a result of this the general elections in 2015 was marred by violence and electoral frauds. The elections were severely delayed to allow for the stability of the country. Similarly, in Niger, although the military kept their promise of organizing elections after the overthrow of Niger's government, the polls were marred by violent protests. The February 2016 elections saw the winner Mahamadou Issoufou receiving 92 per cent of the votes in an election contested by 20 political parties. It was clear that the military supported the winner as they ignored allegations of vote-rigging and intimidation made by the opposition. Low voter turnout for the elections was attributed to opposition calls for boycott and threat of violent attacks. Arrest and detention of the main opposition leader on charges of child trafficking was widely reported. Besides state orchestrated intimidation, the weakness of the electoral management board was clearly evident as it was unable to ensure free and fair election. Logistical problems such as lack of voter registration cards, and national identity documents, poor location of voting stations, shortage of voting materials and extension of voting by a day contributed to ineffective running of the elections.

Funding of elections in Africa is another challenge. Many African countries depend on western donors to fund general elections. Often people complain about external interference or meddling in African elections by both states and international and regional bodies. But the bitter truth is that 'he who pays the piper dictates the tune'. This problem becomes complicated with poor infrastructural development. Thus, besides human conducts, poor infrastructural development contributes to poor or inefficient electoral management. This in turn limits people's participation in the electoral processes. Poor funding manifests in the area of acquisition of modern technologies that enhance efficiency in the management of elections. These technologies are absent in several African countries holding general elections. As a result, votes are manually counted and results take days to be released. Africa



Lessons learnt : Foresight Africa viewpoint – Elections in Africa in 2018: Lessons from Kenya's 2017 electoral experiences

List of Countries in Sub-Saharan Africa that will have elections within the next four years:

Burkina Faso	2020	Kenya	2022
Benin	2020	Malawi	2019
Botswana	2019	Mozambique	2019
Burundi	2020	Nigeria	2019
Cameroun	2018	Senegal	2019
Cape Verde	2021	Somalia	2019
CAR	2020	South Africa	2019
Chad	2021	Tanzania	2020
DRC	2018??	Uganda	2021
Ethiopia	2022	Zambia	2021
Ghana	2020		

Conclusion

The top-ranking countries for good governance on Mo Ibrahim Foundation Index are also the countries which are listed by the Global Peace Index as being the most peaceful (many of them happen to be the small Africa countries such Botswana, Lesotho, Rwanda, Mauritius etc.). While 14 countries out of the 25 worst governed countries listed by the World Atlas are from Sub-Saharan Africa- and most of these also feature on the Global Peace Index as the least peaceful countries in Africa.

## 6.6 Unarmed Civilian Protection (UCP) and the Question of Preparing for Worst-Case Scenarios

Presentation by Casey Barrs

1. Thank you to Nonviolent Peaceforce for your kind invitation to have me address this regional workshop. My name is Casey Barrs and I am Director of the newly-established Center for Civilians in Harm's Way, or CCHW. For many years I've focused on how civilians protect themselves from armed violence—and ways that outside agencies can and do support these local efforts.
2. Though my focus has been on the aid community, I've met, spoken and corresponded with UCP staff for years. And I've read hundreds of pages of UCP documents. From all of that I must say I am very, very impressed with the bravery and ingenuity of the work you do. So, thank you.

### PREMISE

3. Mel, your remark that we must “provoke each other in exploring dimensions of civilian protection,” set the stage nicely. My talk now is about a rare but tragic subject. I've entitled it “Unarmed Civilian Protection and the Question of Preparing for Worst-Case Scenarios.”
4. Sooner or later, here or there, UCP programs will collapse due to violence. It's happened before and will happen again. Maybe not your programs, but UCP programs somewhere, someday, will.
5. Programs might collapse because they're accidentally caught in the path and crossfire of violence. Or, they may be deliberately targeted by spoilers. I am talking about: thug nationalists, brute dictators, criminal syndicates, and extremists; and about zero-sum ideologues, fundamentalists, or fanatics who're not inclined to compromise or to care public image.
6. Think of the Khmer Rouge, Lord's Resistance Army, Interharme, Islamic State, Janjaweed, Boko Haram, Arkan's Tigers, D'Aubuisson's death squads. And think of child soldiers doped up on drugs, or even ordinary civilians whipped up into frenzies of fear or hate—and kill other ordinary civilians.
7. In the scenarios I'm talking about, violent actors and events will not be influenced or interrupted; not by anything on the UCP “wheel” of interventions, and not by any higher power. That is the scenario this morning: violence will not be stopped, violence is coming, UCP expatriates are pulling out, OK?
8. Please raise your hand if you think: a. The communities where you work are ready for this today? {Editorial note: None in the 40+ audience raised their hands.}  
b. The UCP national staff are ready for this today? {Editorial note: About half a dozen raised their hands.}
9. One NP report<sup>56</sup> noted that parties to a conflict “*need to at least tolerate civilian peacekeepers. If an armed group refuses to build some kind of acceptance of UCP presence and continues to threaten harm, then there is little that UCP peacekeepers can do. If there is no clear avenue to pressure the armed group to change position on this, a project will not begin or will withdraw from that area.* Staff security is a high priority. [Emphasis added.]

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<sup>56</sup> Furnari, Julian and Schweitzer, *Unarmed Civilian Peacekeeping: Effectively Protecting Civilians Without Threat of Force*, Discussion Paper, Bund für Soziale Vertidigung, No. 52, September 2016; p. 15.

## OBLIGATION?

10. The questions become: What does that emergency withdrawal look like? I ask this question on *two* levels. First, what obligation do we (internationals) have for our national staff? This is a “Duty of Care” kind of question. Second, what obligation do we and national staff have to the communities? This is a “Do no harm” kind of question.

11. Obviously, everyone wants to help national staff and communities stay safe. But it’s complicated... UCP builds trust with all parties—especially national staff and communities. It reassures them with our presence. It inspires and spurs their confidence to *engage* with *violent* actors and *violent* events. That’s real trust. These trusting relationships are at the heart of UCP.

12. Now, with this trust does there not also come a higher obligation to help prepare these national staff and communities for the possibility of violent collapse and having to face danger alone? And—doesn’t this concern become even more urgent if they’re at risk partly because they attempted UCP work?

13. Consider this statement from another UCP report:

“We’ve learned that unarmed civilians can... play a major role in building confidence and stabilizing the situation, because they encourage civilians and civil society organizations to be more proactive, to be more daring, to actually work on the peacemaking and peacebuilding activities that otherwise they’re afraid to do.” [Emphasis added.]<sup>57</sup>

14. Is it possible this level of encouragement could “tip the scales” of local decision-making? Could it lead to an “opportunity cost” in which national staff and communities choose to focus more time and effort on UCP activity rather than steps for self-preservation?

11. Lastly, a question for everyone here: Is there an obligation to safeguard the reputation of this young “field of practice” we call unarmed civilian peacekeeping or UCP? A deadly event could harm not only national staff and communities—which is bad enough—but also the whole enterprise. We do not want UCP to become unfairly defined by a worst-case event. There will always be sceptics of this work and they can use a tragedy to confirm their skepticism.

12. Note this has happened in other fields. Peacekeeping has been badly tarnished by its failures to protect, and the aid community has been traumatized at times by being bystanders to tragedy.

13. Perhaps the ethical risks implied by all these questions could be reduced by making our “exits” as strategic as possible. Of course, a strategic exit is not just an ethical matter, but a tactical one as well.

## STRATEGIC EXIT

14. Tiffany once moderated a meeting at which, according to the minutes, someone said exiting is a topic that “most project staff and organizations fear. Debates about exits can become very emotional, with staff feeling that they’ve deserted their partners or that they’ve not done enough... most exits have been riddled with doubts and bad conscience.” [Emphasis added.]<sup>58</sup>

15. So, what more can be done? The Center for Civilians in Harm’s Way argues that a truly “strategic” exit will address two basic things: local counterpart security and community (or civilian) self-protection.

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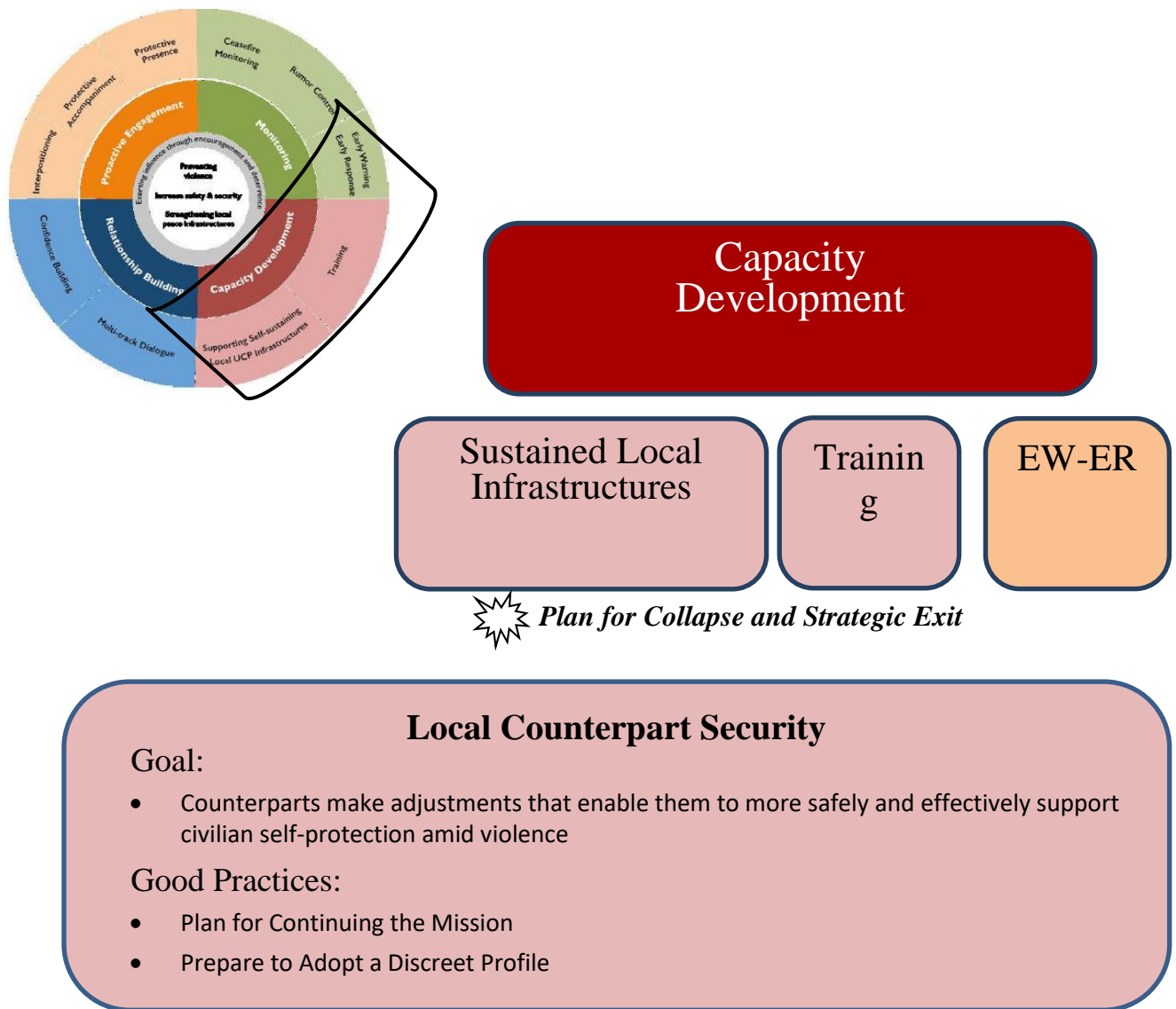
<sup>57</sup> Carrière, et al., ed. by Christine Schweitzer, *Civilian Peacekeeping: A Barely Tapped Resource*, Institute for Peace Work and Nonviolent Conflict Transformation in cooperation with Nonviolent Peaceforce, Belm: Sozio-Publ., 2010 (IFGK-Arbeitspapier 23); p. 31.

<sup>58</sup> Christine Schweitzer, *Good Practices in Nonviolent, Unarmed, Civilian to Civilian Protection*, Documentation of the Workshop in Manila, 7-9 December 2017; p. 50.

16. Look at UCP’s “Wheel” of activities. The subject of strategic exits would seem to fall under ‘Capacity Development’ of local infrastructures, and to some extent also under Early Warning / Early Response.

17. For now, I will stay away from details and cite what could be considered some general good practices.

Figure 1: Support local capacity to survive alone amid violence



## Local Community Protection

### Goal

- Civilians are better prepared to survive alone amid violence

### Good Practices:

- Foster Self-Reliance from the Beginning
- Focus on Protection Messaging
- Support Three-Dimensional Protection
- Emphasize Scalability and Portability

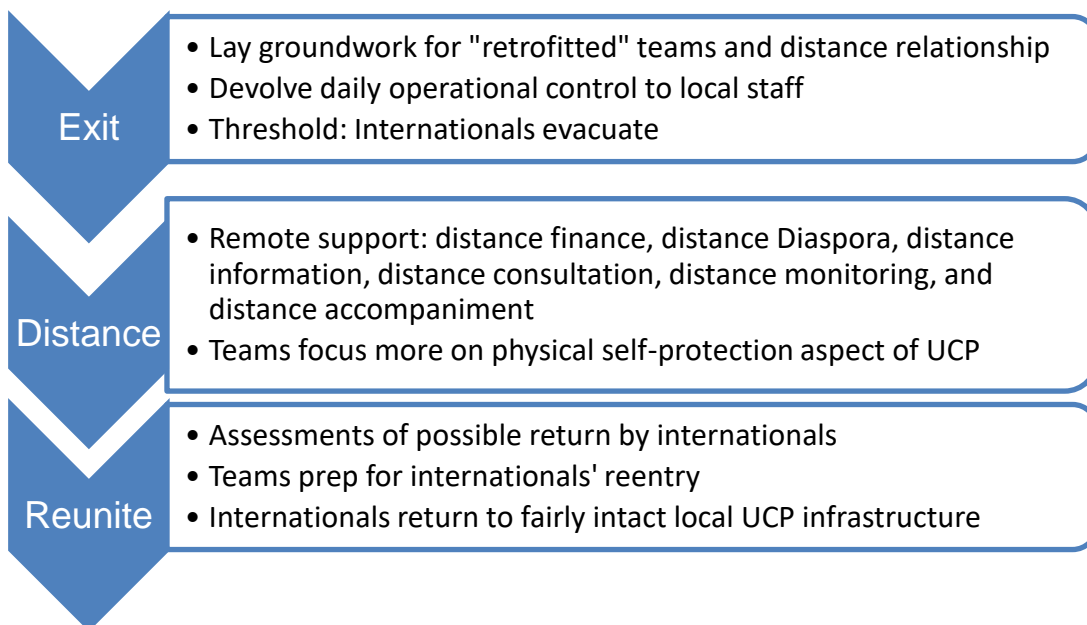
## COUNTERPART SECURITY

### Some Possible Good Practices

### Plan for Continuing the Mission

18. The word “exit” is too narrow: it sounds like a snapshot of just one activity—expatriates leaving (whether hibernating, repositioning, or evacuating). By contrast, a strategic exit may involve *pre*-planning for *post*-exit work. That is, the mission might continue despite the shock of an expatriate exit.

19. When possible, strategic departures can involve making an exit, taking a detour, and then finding the on-ramp to return. Perhaps they are best thought of as “strategic detours.”



20. Under this good practice, an organization lays the groundwork for "retrofitted" local teams and for a distance relationship with them. "Retrofit" means changing teams' *profile* and *practices* so they can operate alone more safely and effectively. (More on that in a minute.) And "distance relationship" means remote support from the mother organization and expatriates who have been pushed out.

21. This requires a well-paced devolution of daily operational control down to national staff so that there is less disruption to operations if expatriates are ultimately forced out. Then there may come the breaking point: an agreed-upon threshold when expatriates leave.

22. Now **if** the UCP organization and its national staff have agreed that locals will try to continue their work while expatriates are gone, then two important things can happen during the "Distance" phase. a. The first is *remote support*: distance-finance, distance-Diaspora, distance-information & consultation, distance-monitoring, and distance-accompaniment. These are sometimes possible with smart use globalized finance and telecoms and are described in other CCHW documents.

b. The second is that national staff now focus more on the *physical self-protection* aspect of UCP. If violence is approaching the doorstep, then the teams must adjust—or risk losing relevance to the communities in harm's way.

c. This doesn't mean abandoning other parts of the UCP Wheel-like relationship building and monitoring—but the teams do now give more priority to supporting civilian *self-preservation*.

**Distance:**

a. The first is remote support: distance-finance, distance-Diaspora, distance-information & consultation, distance-monitoring, and distance-accompaniment. These are sometimes possible with smart use globalized finance and telecoms and are described in other CCHW documents.

b. The second is that national staff now focus more on the physical self-protection aspect of UCP. If violence is approaching the doorstep, then the teams must adjust—or risk losing relevance to the communities in harm's way.

c. This doesn't mean abandoning other parts of the UCP Wheel-like relationship building and monitoring—but the teams do now give more priority to supporting civilian self-preservation.

**Reunite:**

23. As experience with remote support elsewhere shows, the Distance phase might last weeks, months, or even years. Then the last stage of this strategic detour is to reunite.

a. Jointly assess and prepare for expatriates' re-entry.

b. UCP expatriates return to comparatively intact local UCP infrastructure.

24. Unlike other returning foreign entities who may have made a less strategic departure and now need to completely rebuild relationships, trust, staff, infrastructure, and situational awareness, UCP might be able to hit the ground running.

25. Altogether, a strategic detour like this offers a fairly remarkable and rare level of mission continuity. But perhaps it could become a UCP trademark?

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Prepare to Adopt a Discreet Profile</b></p>
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26. A second good practice related to national staff and their security could be to help them adopt a more discreet profile for continuing the work. This is what I was referring to when I spoke of "retrofitting" the teams.

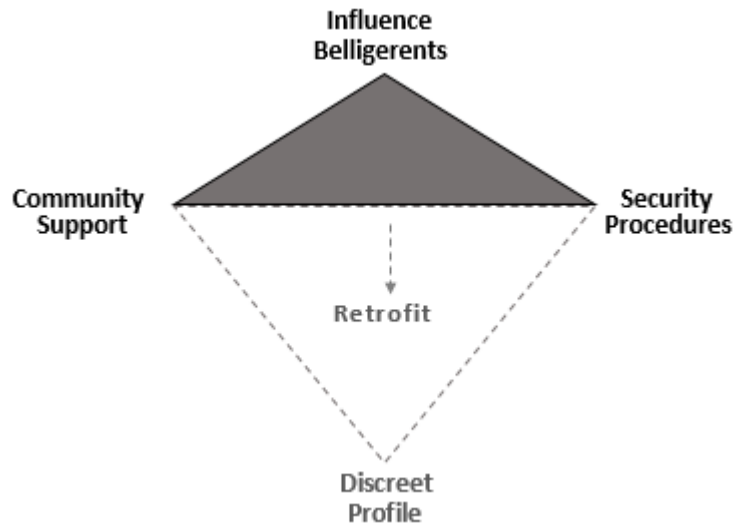
27. A “discreet profile” is less public, less noticeable, less transparent—or at least selectively transparent. Adopting this kind of profile would challenge not just our operational practices—but our principles too.

### Principles



Transparency vs. Discretion

### Practices



#### **Principles:**

28. The first diagram suggests there may be competing principles at stake that would need to be balanced. On one hand, UCP values transparency and openness with all stakeholders. The logic is that transparency builds trust, and that trust builds cooperation and thus security. That’s often true—under more *permissive* conditions.

29. But on the other hand, if conditions worsen, then being more visible may mean being more easily targeted. This clashes with our competing concern for staff security.

30. As conditions worsen, something about the security regimen needs to change. If a security envelope built around “openness” hasn’t proven good enough to keep expatriates from evacuating, then it should not be considered good enough for the locals who are left behind either.

#### **Practices:**

31. For comparison, when civil society or nonviolent resistance movements or human rights defenders are targeted, there comes a point at which they make adjustments. Frequently they become more discreet or even go underground.

32. In aid world, local aid providers facing violence often experiment with “low-profile” programming—and there are numerous examples in which international aid agencies tactfully supported these changes.

33. Low-profile practices include changes to an organization’s “architecture” and to its “procedures.”

34. Now in normal times, UCP’s architecture and its procedures are typically above ground and transparent. Our security envelope rests upon “community support,” “influencing belligerents,” and normal “security procedures.” It’s a sort of “security triangle.”

35. But if danger is proving unstoppable, then we should seriously consider changing the architecture of our operations to something more discreet and confidential. This might involve:

- a. Downgrading identity, downsizing infrastructure or “footprint,” dispersing resources & staff, and delegating work (to other players better-suited).
- b. In the aid world, when local providers “deconstruct” in this way, some refer to it as “dissolving into society.” Such measures are described in other CCHW documents.

36. Beyond changes to architecture, we might be well-advised to also consider changes to operational procedures like:

- a. Information management, communications, safe movement, safe sites, and threat response.
- b. The aim would be to put each of these onto a more realistic “conflict footing.”

37. All these changes I’m talking about will put teams into a more discreet profile. As suggested in the second diagram above, the security *triangle* is retrofitted into a security *diamond*.

## COMMUNITY (CIVILIAN) SELF-PROTECTION

Some Possible Good Practices

<b>Foster Self-Reliance from the Beginning</b>
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38. The other obligation to be addressed in a strategic exit is support of community (civilian) self-protection.

39. The first good practice we would suggest in this regard is to foster community self-reliance from the start. UCP works in dangerous, unpredictable places. If someday, violence proves unstoppable, then civilians *will* need to be totally self-reliant. Again, there will be no resolution of the violence and no rescue from it—so the strategies that we promote need to reflect that reality.

40. Now, test the example of Early Warning / Early Response or EWER. One way to know if an EWER system is built on local self-reliance is by looking at **who** it’s wired to, and **what** function it’s plugged into.

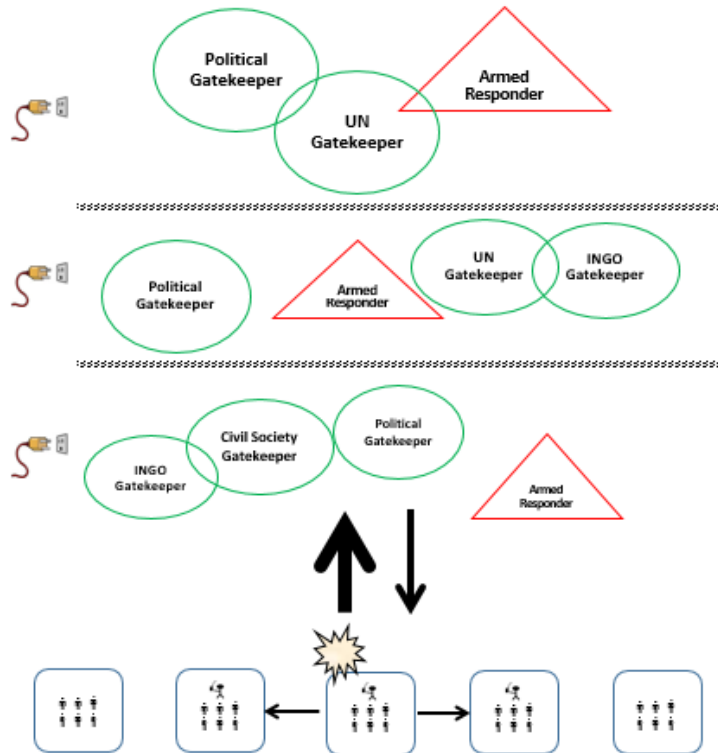
41. The diagram below indicates that some warning systems, are wired up and out to non-residents. They are plugged into mechanisms run by third parties—various “gatekeepers” and “responders”—parties who are supposed to either prevent violence—or forcibly stop it.

42. In these cases, the community role is limited to “tripwire function.” They trigger an alarm to outside parties who are intended to influence or interdict the violence.

43. The diagram below shows warning go from community up through layers of (local, provincial, and higher) gatekeepers and responders.

- a. Gatekeepers: might be political jurisdictions, civil society, or foreign NGOs who are tasked to verify rumors, de-conflict a situation, or apply last-minute pressure.
- b. Responders: might be local police on up military or even peacekeepers.





44. To be clear, it is a good idea to send an external alarm. And yet external response has had a poor track record in many conflicts. There is always the risk that gatekeepers become *choke* points; that they feel proprietary ownership over the process and *extract* more information from a populace than they provide. This can divert and delay vital information from getting to civilians who could act.

45. Warning that is “stove piped” vertically might not generate a response for days, weeks, or longer. But warning that flows locally laterally, can trigger response in just hours or minutes. (That is the very purpose of threat response drills.)

46. From a UCP perspective, the more layers of gatekeepers and responders involved, then the further away we move from our principles like “the primacy of local actors” and “community-to-community” methods.

47. For these reasons, communities should prepare for at least a *provisional* period (days, weeks, or longer?) of total *self*-reliance.

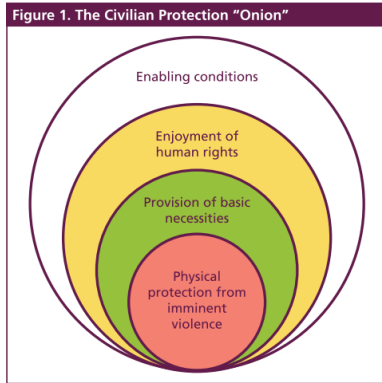
**Focus on Protection Messaging**

48. Civilian self-protection must rest on strong and actionable information. In this regard, a good practice would be to help communities establish messaging systems that prepare people for physical violence.

49. In the diagram below there is a figure with four rings, and the red innermost circle reads, “Physical protection from imminent violence.” Some sceptics will say UCP, aid agencies, and other unarmed groups don’t belong here. They’d say only the guys with guns can do “real” protection from imminent violence.

50. True, when guns or machetes start killing we don’t “provide” protection, we don’t “do”

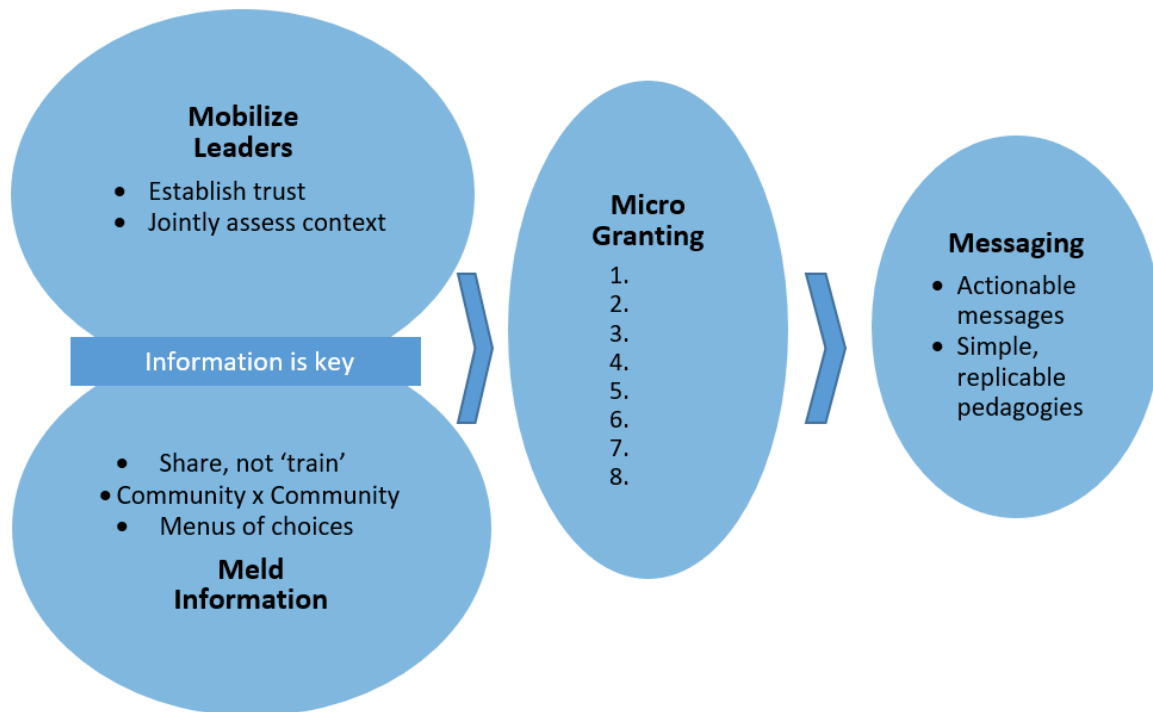
protection, we don't actually "shield" people from the bullets and the blades. As Mel has said, UCP staff "are not there to stop a bullet...that only works once."<sup>59</sup>



Paul D. Williams, *Enhancing Civilian Protection in Peace Operations: Insights from Africa, Research Paper No. 1*, Africa Center for Strategic Studies, National Defense University Press, Washington, D.C., September 2010; p. 16.

51. But, we don't need to be present at the point of contact with violence in order to help shape "physical" protection. We can have already helped shape it weeks and months ahead of time.

52. Support for physical self-protection doesn't need to be a mystery. We already have the skill sets for it. The fundamental "pieces and moving parts" of self-protection are to mobilize leaders and communities and help *spread* life-critical information—and we've done these basic types of activities before.



<sup>59</sup> Louis Hoglund, "Putting Nonviolent Boots on the Ground," *Pelican Rapids Press*, January 16, 2013; p. 7.

## **Messaging:**

53. Messaging systems can protect people from physical violence. If you're alone without a gun in your hands, then perhaps "90%" of self-protection will consist of having timely, actionable *information* in your hands. Information is the most portable of all forms of protection and the most far-reaching.

54. Recall the CCHW handout you received containing case examples from the Nuba Mountains: local teams in South Kordofan reached up to 400,000 civilians with protection messaging at a cost of less than \$60,000.

55. Also consider Disaster Risk Reduction efforts and landmine awareness campaigns: they have helped brace millions with protective messaging. The same basic logic (indeed some of the same methods) applies to situations of violence. Please think it this way: *survival has a deadly learning curve*.

56. The messaging of information saves lives. Here are some examples:

- a. How can we build an information-gathering network?
- b. How do we protect our communications?
- c. Who in that armed group can we trust? Or bribe? Or cut deals with?
- d. How do we protect our activists?
- e. What should be our *first* reaction when we hear aircraft? Or artillery? Or sniper fire?
- f. What does an IED look like? What's a potential ambush site look like? How do we avoid encirclement?
- g. How do we travel off road at night? How can we determine the safest route?
- h. Where will our family regroup if we're separated?
- i. Which black markets dealers and smugglers can we trust?
- j. Where are the best places for foraging food and supplies?
- k. How do we preserve food?
- l. How can I protect my remittances from disruption?
- m. How can we do our farming without being detected?
- n. How do I make this water safe to drink?
- o. How can we produce our own supply of fuel and electricity?
- p. How can we fit all we need for a mobile health clinic onto the back of a donkey or camel?
- q. What messages of psychological comfort will keep our people from giving up hope? Or from giving in to recruitment narratives by violent groups?

57. There are hundreds more such questions. And the answers, in their totality, save millions of lives.

58. Life-saving knowledge, experience, and expertise come from many sources. Information must be collected and blended. That's what is meant by "meld information" in the diagram above. The more options the better. Sometimes, desperate people feel they have no choice but to pick up a gun. But with more options can come more alternatives to taking up arms.

## **Community as laboratory:**

59. We hesitate to use the word "training" which makes it sound like we hold all the knowledge. Certainly, outsiders can share fresh information (facts, news, expertise, experience) and locals can act on whatever parts of it they choose. But a bigger role might be for us to facilitate the exchange of existing information, so locals can consider context-tested and time-tested options. Much of the existing information about survival comes from average

communities:

- a. First, the communities we work in might have life-saving knowledge.
- b. Or instead their *neighboring* communities, may have it. (Remember that facts, news, expertise, experience are not spread evenly across a population.)
- c. Or, and this important, communities that have faced violence in *other* countries, conflicts, and cultures may have already learned vital lessons—and perhaps we can facilitate spreading such hard-earned knowledge.

60. From Sevastopol to Stalingrad to Sarajevo to Syria's besieged cities today, the tricks of survival have been reinvented again and again, instead of shared. The same is true of rural villages from Guatemala to Burma. These community-to-community aspects of protection are largely overlooked in today's protection schemes.

Micro-granting:

61. Injecting even small amounts of cash into communities may give some agencies pause, particularly if they aren't too familiar with such practices. But micro-granting and cash transfers have been widely used, even in violent and remote-control situations. Agencies and donors alike increasingly seem to be adopting these practices.

62. Micro-grants can spur action on protection messages. They might be dispersed in the form of stipends for facilitators or wardens. (This was the primary expense in the very cost-effective Nuba Mountain pilots.) Or they might help to locals launch a variety of preparedness activities. Consider what could happen by helping "prime the pump" with small monies for:

- a. Families arranging "asset protection plans"
- b. Communities preparing "risk reduction plans" and "EWER systems"
- c. Local groups employing youth in "*public service actions*" to tamp down recruitment into violence
- d. Local aid providers revamping with "*retrofitted delivery operations*"
- e. Wardens spreading "*inter-community protection messaging plans*"
- f. Local media and journalists amplifying "*protection messaging*"
- g. Entrepreneurs starting "*substitute infrastructure initiatives*"
- h. Small businesses arranging "*continuity plans*"

63. Micro-grants can be calibrated to be small enough not to commodify the core UCP message of self-help and yet large enough to seed ingenious local ideas for self-preservation.

## Support Three-Dimensional Protection

64. Seeing protection as "three-dimensional" helps us recognize more opportunities for supporting it. Full-spectrum protection has length, width, and depth.

### **Length**

65. Self-protection is often a phased process. It can begin long before the "escape" stage. Displacement is not always reactive. It can be proactive. It can be planned self-displacement—indeed, it often is.

66. There are hundreds of preparatory, graduated, and reversible steps that can get family units and economic assets (possessions) onto a "conflict footing."

67. We all can imagine steps taken in response to warning of imminent threat, but it seems we're less familiar with steps taken in response to warning of intermediate threat weeks or months earlier. Simply-speaking, Intermediate danger is in the neighborhood—and imminent danger is on

the doorstep.

68. Here are just a few examples:

### Intermediate

- Relocate elderly & disabled
- Strip & transfer some family assets
- Heighten information gathering
- Implement safe site measures
- All exercise situational awareness (tailored for targeted groups)
- Family & community contingency plans
- Tighten networks of affinity
- Cache money & supplies
- Retrofit service providers
- Arrange contingencies with outside parties
- Conserve & cushion assets
- Alter patterns of residence & movement (family split up, night residence, commuting, etc.)
- Alter methods of livelihood
- Strip & transfer some public assets

### Imminent

- Threat confirmed?
- Wire alarm 'vertically'
- Wire alarm 'horizontally'
- Act on prearranged responses (Hide in place? Or get grab bags and go, rally points? Etc.)
- Delay, decoy, or divert any hostile threat
- Exercise safe movement and rehearsed threat response
- Subsequently:
- Reassert prevention efforts when feasible

69. Once we appreciate that civilians sometimes sequence their responses, then we realize that warning needs to correspond to this elongated timeframe—that warning needs to pick up on earlier, more intermediate signs of threat so civilians can react accordingly. Too often, locals and expatriates alike fail to be proactive enough and their resulting responses are needlessly belated and ad hoc.

### Width

70. Self-preservation is about far more than the direct effects of violence to civilians' physical safety. Indeed, if we focus only on safety, then we are adopting a very *narrow view* of protection. More fateful to civilians are the indirect impacts posed by violence to their life critical sustenance and services. Together, these form the three braided threats facing protection.



71. As this graph indicates, the second two are the biggest killers—sometimes responsible for 80-90% of civilian deaths—especially as time goes on, as markets and services collapse, and as peoples’ resilience weakens. This is particularly true of typical multiyear conflicts in lesser developed countries.

72. These braided threats facing protection are wide and “indivisible.”

73. Unfortunately, most discussions of protection focus on the safety “silo”. We tend assume that life-critical sustenance and services are taken care of by other people in other silos. But in the worst-case scenarios, neither parties to the conflict nor third parties are willing and able to take care of these matters, and indeed may be exacerbating them.

74. All too often solutions are up to the affected parties themselves—the civilians. Fortunately, they often display an adaptive, expansive genius for survival. As but an example provided in this CCHW document [*How to Save Aleppo?*], Syrians can, and to a remarkable extent already do, deal with the wide-ranging threats facing them.

### Depth

75. Safety is about much more than watch groups, warnings, grab bags, and hiding places. So too, life-critical sustenance and services are about much more than stockpiling food, water, and medicines.

76. This CCHW document [*Preliminary Inventory: How Civilians Survive Violence Alone*] cites some 450 civilian tactics grouped under the broad strategies of safety, sustenance, and services. That is, each strategic grouping is deep with tactical examples, most of which outsiders give little thought to. This is an area ripe for messaging.

77. Obviously, any protective choices made in a given conflict setting are very context-specific. The key word there is *choice*. The majority (four out of five? nine out of 10?) of choices cited in an inventory or menu of tactical options may prove inappropriate—and locals will simply say, “No thank you.” But the fifth one or the tenth one might be adopted and save many lives.

78. Seeing the depth of activities that civilians in harm’s way elsewhere have taken will, at the very least, stimulate local ingenuity. The same can be said of outside parties like UCP groups: the more we appreciate the bottomless ingenuity of local action, then the more we can help locals explore the possibilities in each new crisis setting.

79. To a degree, NP teams *already do* talk with communities about their tactical options if and when they face armed violence alone. But anecdotal debriefing of team members about this seems to suggest that these discussions could have even more tactical depth across the braided threats to protection.

## **Preliminary Inventory of How Civilians Survive Violence Alone** (Within each general strategy below are dozens of specific tactics)

Physical Safety	Life-Critical Sustenance	Life-Critical Services
Accommodation	Conserve and Cushion Assets	Low Profile Aid
Avoidance	Adapt and Expand Assets	Community Substitute Action
Affinity Groups	Strip and Transfer Assets	
Armed Groups		

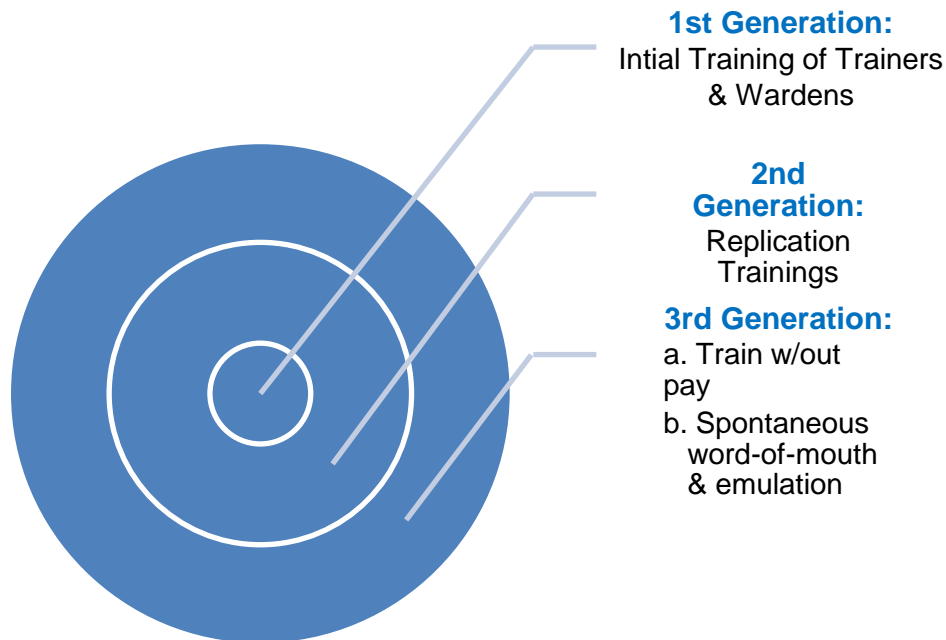
## Stress Scalability and Transferability

### Maximize coverage:

80. Any meaningful effort to help locals survive alone amid violence absolutely must prioritize scalability. It is what donors want and, more importantly, what civilians deserve. I use the word “scalable” in the sense of “replication” by civilians themselves.

81. The Nuba Mountain case examples show the exponential spread of protection messaging. Local teams reached up to 400,000 civilians with protection messaging at a cost of less than \$60,000. As the figure below notes, replication in the following ways:

- a. 1st generation formation of teams who were trained to be trainers.
- b. 2nd generation replication of teams and trainers.
- c. 3rd generation by trainers continuing to work (volunteering) even after their stipends ran out, and by spontaneous word-of-mouth and emulation.



82. Beyond using these multipliers, UCP teams might want to:

- a. Copy the pedagogies of mass-messaging used by Disaster Risk Reduction and landmine awareness campaigns. These include non-formal approaches to inform and mobilize non-literate populations.

- b. Arrange “go-and-see” visits or “come-and-tell” testimonials that provide locals first-hand insights.
- c. Amplify messages with radio and social media (in appropriate times and ways).
- d. Establish warden networks to anchor and sustain any protective work UCP has been able to spread.

**Minimize chokepoints:**

83. In the bid to spread and scale up protective messaging we also need to avoid the all-too-common practices which have the opposite, stifling effect. There are unintended traps by which we “bottle up” actionable information instead of dispersing and “democratizing” it. Too often we:

- a. Use exclusionary, stove piped processes which are largely led by nonlocal gatekeepers.
- b. Use “professional cadres” who, at the behest of donors, use analytic and reporting requirements so prohibitively difficult that they basically shut out local participation. That is, we privilege outside “expert” knowledge over local knowledge.
- c. Steer protection resources toward institutions instead of individuals. This is a fateful decision: individuals, who are nested within resilient social groups, might long outlive institutions like formal NGOs that may collapse on first contact with violence. Once collapsed, their resources and knowledge are no longer available to anyone.

84. Lessons spurned. Agencies sometimes deliberately downplay lessons learned about protection. This is particularly the case after they’ve taken nonconsensual, nontransparent steps vis-à-vis abusive powers that, even if successful, go against orthodoxy. Even though there is ample grey literature on many respected aid organizations conducting stealthy acts and interventions to save lives over the years, we look at them as extraordinary and temporary measures. Work under the radar does not fit our self-image because we are in the business of self-evident good. These actions, often led by field personnel, are treated as exceptions to the rule. And yet, exceptional methods must be systematized somewhere if they are ever to be done more professionally. To date, they are driven by specific crises, not by general doctrine. Our self-image is profound—and perhaps more important, it seems, than the historical record.

85. Methods hidden. Another reason lessons get stifled is that civilians themselves often guard their methods. They may hesitate to reveal how they survived if their actions might be deemed illicit or immoral by others. Or perhaps they will not mention tactics that reveal them to possess hidden resources: this could expose them to jealousy, solicitations, extortion, or theft. So too, they might not reveal these assets if talking to foreigners from whom they hope to obtain more resources. Finally, methods may be jealously guarded if they might be needed again. This all tells us that there is usually more to civilian self-protection than we realize. And it challenges us to be more sophisticated when discussing methods of survival with civilians.

**Prioritize transferability:**

86. Too much that is called self-protection is, as noted, ultimately reliant on nonlocal rescuers. Too much that is called community-based protection is run in a camp and reflects its unique conditions. Examples of the latter include well-lit latrines; child-friendly spaces; perimeter barriers; escorts outside camp; and the provision of firewood and support for livelihood, both of which limit need for risky travel outside the camp. That list comprises most of what is called protection.

87. But what happens when people feel compelled to leave those camps? They often do, whether because the camps have become dangerously militarized, crime-ridden, or simply unlivable due to health threats, cut rations (often a host political decision) and other reasons. Whether pushed by those concerns or pulled by the premature promise that is safe to go home, many leave camps only to encounter fresh violence. And they find that the previous rescue-based, camp-based, or



program-based safety net no longer exists. This is why the most valuable “protections” will be messaging and mobilization that they can carry with them wherever they go and adapt to whatever they face. Such “transferability” helps ensure that protective action will, as it always should, be context-specific.

88. It’s time to wrap this talk up but let me just repeat the obvious: sooner or later, here or there, UCP programs will collapse due to violence. It’s happened before and will happen again. There are about forty of you here and I noticed that when I asked how many of you thought local communities were ready for a collapse in which UCP expatriates had to evacuate, none of you put your hands. And when asked who thought local counterparts were ready, about half a dozen of you raised your hands. This seems consistent with the assertion quoted earlier that, “most exits have been riddled with doubts and bad conscience.”

89. Obviously, a worst-case scenario not only for the fate of counterparts and communities—but also for the future of UCP. I hope this talk has been constructively provocative, and you find the six good practices noted here helpful.

- a. Plan for continuing the mission
- b. Prepare to adopt a discreet profile
- c. Foster self-reliance from the start
- d. Focus on protection messaging
- e. Support three-dimensional protection
- f. Stress scalability and transferability

90. The CCHW stands ready to assist when UCP groups attempt capacity development intended to help sustain local infrastructures threatened by violence that may prove unstoppable.

Again, thank you very much.