Good Practices in Nonviolent, Unarmed, Civilian to Civilian Protection

Documentation of the Workshop in Beirut,
18 – 20 June 2018

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Executive Summary

Accompaniment or 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 Beirut/Lebanon between the 18th and 20th of June, 2018. It convened Unarmed Civilian Protection (UCP) practitioners, field partners, beneficiaries and academics from the Middle East, (or whose work concerns the Middle East) –namely: Palestine, Iraq, Syria and Lebanon - to reflect on their work. This was the second of a total of six planned regional workshops, the first having taken place in Manila/Philippines in December 2017.[1] 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. Their findings were published in the book "Wielding Nonviolence in the Midst of Violence"[2] (2016), edited by Ellen Furnari.

Methodology

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

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

Key Themes

The workshop looked at various issues and themes. The character and the way of working of the groups meeting in Beirut were quite different from those in Manila. The five perhaps most striking differences were:

1. The distinction between international and local organizations was not easy to make – there was rather a continuum between „purely international in regard to practitioners" through „international but with many local volunteers and staff", „locally based but operating with international volunteers" to „purely local without any international around". Funding for most if not all the groups came from abroad.

2. There were international nonpartisan organizations but also groups that came to the work basically as activists supporting one side in a conflict – in particular the Palestinian struggle against the occupation.

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[1] Its documentation can be found here: http://www.nonviolentpeaceforce.org/what-we-do/about-3/new-report-good-practices2

[2] https://tinyurl.com/purchaseUCPbook

3. The internationals involved in UCP were – with the exception of staff of Nonviolent Peaceforce – mostly volunteers from the USA and Europe, coming for a short-term service of a few weeks to perhaps three months, with a few people staying longer-term.

4. The level of day-to-day violence experienced is in most case higher, and in two countries included bombings from parties to whom the people on the ground have no direct access (the international forces operating in Syria and Iraq).

5. The level of acceptance of the UCP groups could be considered between at best „medium" to being basically tolerated, with the exception of the UCP groups in Palestine being welcomed by the Palestinian Authority (but not by Israel).

6. Some of the groups had a direct advocacy function expecting volunteers upon their return home to lobby their governments on foreign policy issues.

With this in mind, it may not be surprising that the motto of the workshop that became quoted again and again was „it is all context-specific". Accordingly it was not easy to identify common good practices that all groups shared. Rather, the impression arose that different practices may be „good" in the sense of „working for those who apply them in the specific context of the moment".

Having said that, there were many „good practices" suggested in the various groups, and described in the documentation. Important themes here were:

1. Analysis before, during and after a deployment, with different methodologies, including participatory ones involving the local communities and beneficiaries, was frequently emphasized, indicating that good practices are based more on process than prescription.

2. Based upon this ongoing analysis, continual adjustments to methods are critical to the ability to protect.

3. Ongoing incident mapping is required for strategic deployments. This mapping can be used as part of an early warning system. For example, one group described how they were able to evacuate a community of 2,500 people before a mortar attack began.

4. Nonpartisanship does not mean ignoring power relationships in asymmetrical conflicts.

5. UCP's leverage involves:
    a. Greater local capacity.
    b. Credible messengers for peace, especially women and youth.
    c. Ability to convene multiple parties, even those in conflict, to address local violence.
    d. Higher level attention to the area.

6. Diverse teams reinforce our nonpartisanship with adjustments being made based upon context.

7. Working with IDPs is a complex task and may mean accompaniment of potential IDPs through the whole cycle: seeking to prevent displacement, protective accompaniment during the flight, dealing with conflicts and doing peacebuilding in camps and with the host community, and support and accompaniment during an eventual return.

8. Similarly, there were many good practices collected regarding gender practices – both within teams and on the policy and implementation level with communities. For example strengthening the role of women in communities (e.g. setting examples through the work of mixed teams) without violating cultural norms or the principle of primacy of local actors.

9. As in the Manila workshop, relationship-building with actors was considered important but some organizations set boundaries, expressing that they would lose trust with their partners if they built relations with the other side in the conflict.

10. Another main theme was again the complex relationships between local and international actors who undertake and/or receive UCP. It was generally recognized that local and international UCP practitioners have different roles, and that attention to these differences, maximizes respective strengths. But it was also pointed out that international presence is not always beneficial because it can increase the risk for local actors instead of being a protection.
11. Clarity of roles is important. For example, local partners are usually better able to communicate with tribal leadership while internationals can interact with occupying troops.
12. A mixture of quantitative and qualitative analysis combined with storytelling helps provide a more holistic picture of impact.

<u>Key Challenges</u>

Many challenges were named and discussed. Outstanding were:
- Dealing with power asymmetries between conflict parties and how they impact the UCP work.
- Navigating internal conflicts within communities – power structures, gender-based violence, and friction in communities.
- Relationships to the governments in the countries in which the groups were operating.
- Trauma has become normalized and must be addressed.

Acronyms

1325= UN Security Council resolution on women, peace and security (S/RES/1325), adopted on 31 October 2000

ALNAP= Active Learning Network for Accountability and Performance

BDS = Boycott, Disinvestment and Sanctions (international campaign directed against Israel's occupation policies)

CB = Capacity building

CBO = Community-based organization

CPT = Christian Peacemaker Teams

CSO = Civil Society Organization

CVE = Countering Violent Extremism

EAPPI = Ecumenical Accompaniment Programme in Palestine and Israel

EU = European Union.

EWER = Early Warning Early Response

GBV = Gender-based violence

GCRV= Grave Childs Rights Violations

HRD = Human Rights Defenders

HR = Human Rights

HRW = Human Rights Watch

ICC = International Criminal Court

ICG = International Contact Group

ICRC = International Committee of the Red Cross

IDF = Israeli Defense Forces

IDP = Internally Displaced Person

IFGK = Institute for Peace Work and Nonviolent Conflict Transformation

IGO = International Governmental Organization

IHL = International Humanitarian Law

INGO = International Non-governmental Organization

ISIS = Islamic State

ISM = International Solidarity Movement

MoU = Memorandum of Understanding

MPT = Meta Peace Teams (USA)

MPT = Mission Preparedness Training

MPT = Muslim Peacemaker Teams (Iraq)

NP = Nonviolent Peaceforce

PA = Palestinian Authority

PBI = Peace Brigades Internationals

PMF = Popular Mobilization Forces (Iraqi state-sponsored umbrella organization composed of some 40 militias that are mainly Shia Muslim groups

PRA = Participatory Rural Appraisal

SGBV = Sexual and gender-based violence

TIPH = Temporary International Presence in Hebron

UCP = Unarmed Civilian Protection / Peacekeeping

UN = United Nations

UNDP = United Nations Development Programme

UNHCH = United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights

UNHCR = United Nations High Commission for Refugees

UNICEF = United Nations Children Fund

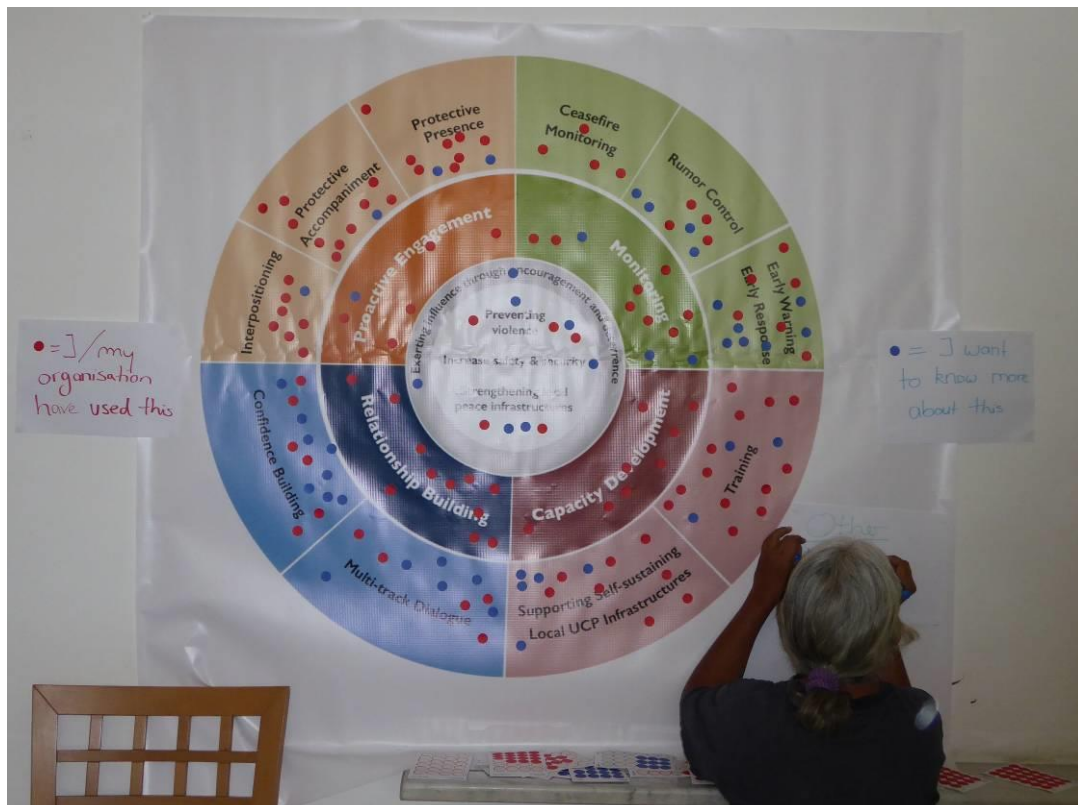UNSC = UN Security Council

WCC = World Council of Churches

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1. Introduction

1. Introduction

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

The workshop took place in Beirut/Lebanon between the 18th and 20th of June, 2018, convening Unarmed Civilian Protection (UCP) practitioners, field partners, beneficiaries and academics from the Middle East (or whose work concerns the Middle East)- namely: Palestine, Iraq, Syria and Lebanon - to reflect on case studies and learn from one another. It was one step in a four-stage good practices process the INGO Nonviolent Peaceforce has started in order to improve and expand UCP, and to influence policy for protecting civilians, preventing violence, supporting local initiatives and sustaining peace. 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"[3], edited by Ellen Furnari, who also conducted two of the field studies (completed May 2016).

2. Convene five facilitated consultation groups made up of UCP practitioners, field partners, beneficiaries and academics for three-day sessions to review their work, analyze findings of stage one and validate good practices and emerging themes as well as identify dilemmas or challenges raised but not answered by the cases. The first such workshop took place in December 2017 in Manila.[4]

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 Beirut had 32 participants from 14 different countries and 19 different organizations, international, national and local (see the list under 6.4). In addition, there was an

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

[4] Its documentation can be found here: http://www.nonviolentpeaceforce.org/what-we-do/about-3/new-report-good-practices2

activist from India who had participated in the Gulf Peace Team in 1990-91, and academics and researchers from Europe, Australia and North America. All projects invited have had a longer-term presence on the ground. In Iraq, there had been a short-term peace presence in 1990-91, the Gulf Peace Team, but this did not really enter the discussion.

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. Some of the participants were interviewed before the workshop took place, to get their input on the most pressing topics to address.

The workshop started with an introductory plenary which ended with participants given the task to mark on a "wheel of UCP practices", generated by NP, what activities they were involved in and what practices they would like to learn more about (see 6.5). 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 before beginning, 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 where the groups reported on good practices and challenges identified. (See the agenda of the workshop under 6.3.)

As in Manila, the workshop ended with a final plenary where participants were asked to name good practices discussed during the workshop that they had found of particular importance. When the list had been created, everybody was asked to mark those three good practices they thought were the most important, and mark all those they may not agree with or felt warranted more discussion. The most notable results were then discussed, before the workshop was closed with some farewell messages by the hosts.

This documentation seeks to strike a balance between a documentation of what took place and summarizing/drawing conclusions. 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 the Middle East". These are followed by summaries of those working groups that dealt with "3. Strategies and 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 the Middle East have been summarized. The appendices (6) include the agenda, a list of participating groups[5] and the UCP wheel with the markings of what participants were involved in or wanted to know more about.

Many of the workshop participants work in very volatile contexts, and security concerns regarding reporting were much higher here than in Manila. For that reason, there is no list of participants attached to this report, and some activities are left vague or at least not attached to the name of a particular group or person. There were also reports on activities that were not to be recorded at all. The draft report has been checked by three different participants for being "safe" for those whose work it reflects.

The Beirut workshop was prepared by Ellen Furnari, the editor and co-researcher of "Wielding

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[5] For security reasons, the names of the attendees are not made public.

Nonviolence", together with Berit Bliesemann de Guevara who had already facilitated the first workshop in Manila. Jan Passion organized logistics. They were supported by board, partners and staff members of Nonviolent Peaceforce – Lucy Nusseibeh from the Board, Abi Allam from the Permanent Peace Movement Lebanon, Tiffany Easthom and Mel Duncan in particular. Berit Bliesemann de Guevara and Fadi Abi Allam facilitated the plenaries. The workshop and its documentation would not have been possible without the many participants who took over roles of facilitation and note taking during the break-out groups. The rapporteur thanks Berit Bliseman de Guevara, Mel Duncan and Ellen Furnari for comments and many edits! Nonviolent Peaceforce also thanks Barbara Forester, Keith Ross and Suzanne Ross whose donations made the workshop possible. Last but not least, Nonviolent Peaceforce gives its thanks to all participants who came to Beirut and, through their contributions, made the workshop a very enriching event!

2. Outlining the Framework of UCP in the Middle East

2.1 Principles of UCP

The Tables[6]

To start the workshop off, an initial set of conversations, World Café style[7], 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 among other issues different approaches to nonpartisanship and the differences between international and national or local organizations, and any thoughts about how these differences are particular to a broadly Middle Eastern and specifically local context. One of the topics, nonpartisanship, was taken up again separately in a working group titled "Accompaniment/UCP and the principle of nonpartisanship or neutrality in the work in the Middle East".[8] The results of this working group[9] have been integrated into this chapter. The world cafe tables discussed the following core principles:

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 core basic principles

Nonviolence

The international organizations working in the area all declared nonviolence to be one of their core principles, often based on religious convictions, and at the same time to be an objective to be achieved. On the personal level, several participants emphasized that nonviolence for them was a guiding principle, "choosing to be a nonviolent person", as one participant put it. Several called nonviolence a "life style". On the question, "how are we practicing nonviolence?", four fields were mentioned: on the personal level, in the organization (through consensus decision-making[10], for example), within the community where one lives, and in through the UCP work by creating a safe environment.

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[6] The World Café tables were facilitated by the following participants who also took notes: Fadi Abi Alam, Eli McCarthy, Jonathan Pinckney, Felicity Grey, Mel Duncan and Christine Schweitzer.

[7] There were six tables, one for each topic, and the participants rotated after each 15 minutes from one to the next.

[8] It discussed the following questions: In conflicts with huge power differentials, what does or can nonpartisanship mean in day to day practice? Is it ethical, even possible? Does being nonpartisan, if done at all, increase access and effectiveness, and if so how and why? How and why does this differ for different organizations, different contexts and even different periods of work? If there is an opportunity to scale up - increase the size of accompaniment/UCP intervention, how might issues of nonpartisanship, or being partisan, affect this potential?

[9] The workshop was facilitated by Mary Hanna, and Thiago Wolfer took notes.

[10] Consensus decision-making was a core principle for some groups while other groups are organized on more hierarchical grounds, considering consensus too unpractical.

It became clear at the table and also in other discussions in Beirut that the concept of nonviolence as a philosophy or life style was originally a rather foreign concept to the Middle East. Several local groups and activists reported that they got to know nonviolence after contact with international groups – either through trainings such as those NP has been giving, or through working with international groups promoting it, especially groups like Christian Peacemaker Teams (CPT) from the United States. (This is also confirmed by other studies at least for Palestine – see Véronique Dudouet's thesis on nonviolent resistance in Palestine.[11]) The literal translation of "nonviolence" into Arab, la onf, is rarely used although before the rise of ISIS there was a network in Iraq that used this name[12], and scholars of Islam have argued convincingly that nonviolence is a concept inherent to the Qur'an[13]. However, it seemed that the activists and practitioners assembled in Beirut had come across the concept through foreign intermediaries.

On practical terms, none of the organizations, whether local nor international, condone violence, and they all work for the reduction and prevention of violence in environments characterized by extreme military violence. The importance of education to address the different challenges was emphasized and could be called a good practice

Challenges in regard to nonviolence identified were:

- Generally, working for nonviolent ways of dealing with conflict, peace education etc. in a very violent environment where taking up arms for defense is "the normal thing to do" (at least for men), is a big challenge.
- It is not easy to find donors willing to finance nonviolent projects.
- Asymmetrical violence: Is throwing stones violence, especially when the other side uses deadly weapons?
- Can our work be nonviolent if some of the groups with whom we work are violent or advocate violence?
- There is an issue about acceptance of nonviolent strategies: Nonviolence in the region is often considered harmless" by activists and not seen as an efficient tool.
- Blurred lines between violence and nonviolence: When you know that a protest will lead to the army shooting at the demonstrators – is doing the protest still nonviolent? (This was a question raised at the Do-No-Harm-Table.)

Nonpartisanship

There were different understandings as well as attitudes towards nonpartisanship. Most affirmed that nonpartisanship played a role in their work, but the understandings of what that would mean varied widely. Some spoke of it as not taking sides in regard to a particular political solution to the conflict, some understood it as not taking the side of a particular party to the conflict, others as not being against any person. And again others saw it only as the principle not to take sides in internal debates of oppressed communities. This latter attitude was particularly true for one or

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[11] Véronique Dudouet, Peacemaking and Nonviolent Resistance, doctoral thesis, Bradford 2005, 222pp

[12] This network is now defunct; googling the name leads to a business promotion website (www.laonf.net).

[13] See for example https://mpf21.wordpress.com/islamic-nonviolence/ and the study "Islam and Nonviolence" by Glenn Paige and Chaiwat Satha-Anand (1993).
Nonviolence is of course also embedded in the two other Abrahamic religions.

two organizations working in Palestine. Later in this report their approach will be called the "activist approach" though this was not a term used in Beirut.

Some of the participants also affirmed a proactive element of this principle such as being explicitly for human rights, international law, protecting all life, or seeking communication with all parties, i.e. inclusive relationships.

In the later working group on this topic organizations discussed a distinction between nonpartisanship and neutrality in different ways. One organization sees neutrality as something different because the organization is not neutral in relation to human rights abuses, violence and injustice. Nonpartisanship means, it was argued, that you don't take side in a conflict because in order to protect civilians and influence the behavior of potential perpetrators you need to build relationships. One other organization prefers to call it impartiality instead of nonpartisanship, but all agreed that "neutrality" was not a suitable term.

All groups had arguments and evidence why their approach "works":

Nonpartisanship

- helps to get better access to the conflict area and to people;
- is an essential condition to build collaborative and functional relationships;
- helps to generate trust.

An 'activist approach'

- helps to generate trust. One organization said that if they dialogue with Israeli soldiers or settlers they would lose the trust of the Palestinians.
- be closer to the groups you work with.
- helps to receive protection from the local groups.

Of note here is that protagonists of both approaches argue that their approach helps to generate trust. It was suggested that in the end it depends on the primary goals of the UCP organization. If the objective is protection, then perhaps nonpartisanship may be better. When the objective is fighting injustice, you are closer to a partisan, activist approach.

To explain the conundrum about the generation of trust further, perhaps a reference back to the two mechanisms how UCP works may help: deterrence and encouragement (through relationship-building) with all sides. Though going beyond what was discussed and elicited in the workshop, it seems to the rapporteur that those who come to a conflict in solidarity with one side (the Palestinian, for example), tend to rely primarily on deterrence and "the world is watching you." This is different for organizations such as NP whose objective is to keep civilians safe. They base their work on relationship-building with all sides and on dialogue and communications, and therefore need to be nonpartisan to the parties of the conflict. There may be situations where such an approach is not acceptable to people on the ground, especially if they are already used to a particular type of protective accompaniment. This is something for organizations like NP to keep in mind when exploring future projects.

There are different good practices to heed when wishing to be recognized as nonpartisan:

- Nonpartisanship can begin with language. In many conflicts, certain terms - like "human rights" or "occupation" in Palestine are codes for being against Israel and thereby indicate taking a side in the conflict.

- Nonpartisanship should be expressed through diversity in teams, including members from all groups (sectarian, ethnic).

Challenges listed at the World Café table and in the working group were:

- How should UCP organizations respond when some select group won't like or even won't work with you, if they sense you are communicating with adversaries? Does such communication with adversaries ultimately and overall build better or less trust? Does such communication enable continued oppression by the oppressors, i.e. unhealthy behavior by the oppressors, or by avoiding such communication does it enable the broader social conditions for the conflict to continue longer, i.e. unhealthy behavior by the select group?
  The same question was raised in the working group. Many organizations face difficulties when trying to build relations with multiple sides of a conflict and exert their nonpartisan strategy. The "other" side always perceives them as taking sides and this can jeopardize their operations and put their staff at risk. The best way of dealing with this, it was said, is to be clear about your work and put a lot of effort into community engagement.
- Would it be helpful to complement or balance nonpartisanship with other principles to mitigate the potential issues with it or with those who slide into partisanship? For example, empathy, human dignity/humanity, human needs (i.e. belonging, meaning, trust, etc.), re-humanization, reflexivity (keeping means and ends as consistent as possible), sustainability, or conflict transformation?
- If one side seems to have much more political, economic, and military power, how should a UCP organization respond? Is this the only power that is relevant in such an analysis? For example, what about integrative power, i.e. the power to form relationships, or to act in accord with dignity regardless of what the other does? Some have argued that integrative power is even stronger than those other types of power. (See section 3.6)
- The concern was raised that signaling that there is one ""bogeyman" group in a conflict can perpetuate a pattern in the society of identifying anyone later who seems "out of bounds" as the next "bogeyman," which then reinforces the legitimacy of armed responses.
- Similar to the workshop in Manila, it was pointed out that it is harder for local organizations to be nonpartisan because they are part of a particular region or ethnic group so they are dragged into the political situation. They are also labeled as belonging to one side or another due to their ethnic group or geographical location. Even if they try to be nonpartisan the other actors perceive them as being on one side.
- It is challenging for international organizations that are nonpartisan to have partnerships with local organizations that are not. This can put their staff at risk and jeopardize operations. It would be problematic to demand that a local organization not take sides, but at the same time an international organization should be careful with whom to establish relationships.
- Nonpartisanship is connected to independence, and donor dependency is a problem.

Primacy of Local Actors

The primacy of local actors was a principle almost everybody agreed to. The way it is translated into practice however, varied somewhat. NP spoke of relationship building with as many actors as possible though not always having formal partners. EAPPI has a local reference group that advises on its work. Some organizations look exclusively at civil society, others include state institutions (e.g., municipalities, ministries in Palestine).

Many participants had experience with internationals not respecting this rule. Instead the internationals tried to set the agenda and impose projects. One participant reported that in her observation disempowerment was experienced in Palestine resulting from international organizations. Whereas civil society had been strong in the 1980s, it has been weakened when many international organizations came in thereafter. Donors tend to support disempowerment by giving most money to international NGOs even in cases where there are local organizations with a much longer track record in the same field in general, as is currently experienced in Iraq.

The table agreed that internationals and locals have different roles, each bringing their strengths. The importance of local ownership was also noted in regard to sustainability and in advocacy and information-spreading.

One good practice to deal with power hierarchies was the recommendation to access through the local hierarchy, but then also work with communities themselves and broaden the range of actors with whom a group works. This also includes gender issues – while local leaders in the area normally are men, UCP organizations figured out ways to include women in their work. This requires good internal knowledge and analysis since it is often certain personalities or families that seek to build and monopolize relationships with internationals.

Challenges identified were:

- Who are "the locals?" The principle can only be a starting point, but then much work is needed to understand the power relationships, interests etc. in a local (or national) community.
- How to choose partners? What criteria are used? What if a local group is interested in partnering with an international, but the international feels they are not trustworthy? Local groups can easily harm an international group, for example, by spreading rumors.
- Having local partners may affect the perception of nonpartisanship. This was also discussed a lot at the Manila workshop. Local organizations are almost by definition not nonpartisan.
- What to do when having official partners but receiving requests for activities from others?
- How to deal with internal conflicts in communities?
- Who is a local actor; does an international passport make you an outsider? What are the opportunities and risks in working with individuals who hold several nationalities (e.g., an Iraqi and a US passport)?
- Power relationships within communities and privilege (middle class, English speakers, people from certain families) are difficult issues when choosing and working with local partners.
- Gender: NGO and community leaders are often men – how to access women?
- How to resist disempowerment by internationals? One hint was that well-organized communities are better in resisting, but the challenge of needing the resources limits the will to resist. At a later point examples were given of donors who are flexible and do not require strict projects and log frames in order to decide to fund an organization.

Independence

The discussion started with each group reading the Nonviolent Peaceforce definition of the principle of independence, which states that: "We strive to be independent in our actions from all

religions, political ideologies, and government policies." The facilitator asked the participants in the World Café if this definition resonated with them.

Core points that came out were:

- For some it was an important general principle that feeds into a complex picture – an important way to inform how you make your "least bad decision," not a strict rule that automatically tells you what to do.
- Some discussants however felt that the term was too general and too disconnected from the context, and there was also critique on philosophical terms – no human being is truly independent. Also at least one organization (EAPPI) as a project of the WCC does not see itself independent from the local churches and from Christian belief. While another Christian group, CPT, said that they try to maintain independence from religious ideologies even though it has the legacy of being a Christian organization. Its initial major focus on faith has shifted towards a focus on undoing oppression, a participant explained.
- Independence can be expressed through references to overarching norms or international law, and also through symbols – like uniform vests or hats.
- There is a close inherent link between independence and nonpartisanship or neutrality. The question was raised if it even makes sense to have independence as a separate principle.
- Money and the need for funding are important parts of why independence is a challenge. UCP organizations need to think carefully about their relationships with funding organizations, and reevaluate them as projects go on. If there is only one donor funding a project, there can be no talk of real independence.
- Even when one is striving to be independent, one may not always be perceived as being independent. Figuring out ways to strategize so that others will see you as independent is an important and distinct challenge for being independent.
- Independence can conflict with the necessity to side with the oppressed and stand against injustice. Some participants said that they didn't see themselves as being independent from their local partners.
- A challenge in some contexts is misperceptions of civil society as not being independent (paid by interested foreign governments) and as being irrevocably connected to revolution.

Do No Harm

At the table it was agreed that Do No Harm was an important principle which everyone should be committed to.

Some key thoughts of the importance for operationalizing do no harm were collected:

- There is the need to develop good relationships with a cross section of people, so as to get many perspectives and have good information in order make careful assessments to avoid doing harm.

- Primacy of local actors comes into play here – it is often better to let locals handle a situation because they have a better sense of the consequences of an action.

- An important lesson is the need to question the assumption that international presence is beneficial and effective everywhere. There are situations where it may endanger local activists rather than being an asset.

Several challenges or questions regarding this principle were gathered as well. Operationalization can be complex and fraught:

- What do we mean by harm? To the people we're a protecting, to ourselves, to buildings or fences?
  Examples for possibly doing harm:
  - An international organization joins a nonviolent protest and helps to cut a fence. When it leaves, the army retaliates against the local community.
  - Bringing political rivals together for dialogue without having prepared carefully enough – the outcome being that the conflict was sharpened and the mediating team probably also lost trust.
  - People attending workshops abroad being arrested after their return.
  - Children throw stones because they want volunteers (or the media) to take photos.
- In some settings power difference comes with skin color – how to avoid strengthening patterns of racism?
- Payment of local staff – how to pay a fair wage but avoid that some in the community suddenly earn more than others? And also, related: Most international agencies pay high salaries which leads to activists leaving local NGOs to work with them. This drains rather than strengthens local infrastructures.
- Another financial issue: UN agencies paid participants at workshops high per diems which created expectations of potential participants regarding workshops given by organizations not willing or able to pay such per diems.
- Internationals can harm their local partners by taking information on rights' violations and using politicized terms for advocacy purposes.
- Recognition that though something may be beneficial in the short term, it may have harmful negative consequences in the long term. There is rarely a situation of no harm at all – we are often in the position where the UCP team members need to make the least bad choice, rather than a perfect one, as one participant repeatedly stressed. An example of this, mentioned several times, regards reporting of domestic or sexual violence cases versus harms that can come to victims if details of these cases become public in some contexts.
- A realistic risk analysis regarding risks for local people who get involved with internationals (work with them, for them, whose experiences are published in public reports, attend their workshops).

Other Principles and Issues

The last table (and also one of the other tables) collected a number of additional principles of importance to participants: Solidarity, Humanity, Unity/Oneness, Human Security, Integrity, Accountability, Empathy, Safety, IHL, Universal Human Rights. The table discussed these principles, and asked why each is important, and why it is important to have principles at all. The answer: Principles inform our actions in the field. We do not have a prescription or recipe of what to do when. As interaction with partners happens, principles are critical guides because they help to decide what to do. However, they are fraught with dilemmas. Principles interact with each other. At times there are conflicts between principles, for example having to accept armed guards in a

convoy in order to fulfil one's mandate or having to compromise nonpartisanship by going to a crisis area with a certain party to the conflict in order to be able to help, etc.

Conclusions

Although 'do no harm' was mentioned at the Manila workshop, it was much more prominent in the discussion of principles in this workshop. The other principles discussed are the same as those identified in Ellen Furnari's study as playing important roles. That study noted that nonpartisanship was not a universal principle, and this was confirmed in the Beirut workshop. Regarding the challenges with each principle, the findings in Beirut were comparable to those in Manila.

The interrelatedness of nonpartisanship, independence and primacy of local actors was clearer in this workshop. It seems almost impossible to define one of these principles without referring to, or facing consequences regarding, the other two. A partisan organization will probably be less independent and work hand in hand with local groups that it supports. A nonpartisan one will probably emphasize its independence and express the principle of primacy of local actors in a different way.

There was also an interrelation noted between partisan (activist) approaches and nonviolence: More than one participant said that if they saw violence committed against a person, they would intervene, even if the victim for example was a policeman or a soldier. For them clearly nonviolence took precedence in such cases. However, not everyone shared this.

How do these principles relate to "good practices?" "Principles become practice in the field" Furnari wrote, and that was confirmed by many examples in the workshop. It was also emphasized that having principles is important, because they guide decisions. Thus, it is how they are enacted that may constitute good practice, usually not the principles per se. It became clear in the example of the nonpartisan vs. the activist approach that different principles may underlie actions that the protagonists of each approach consider good practice.

This even leads to the question of what "good practice" is at all – is it something that "works" to meet a particular objective and does no collateral harm? Then it is the objective and the definition of harm that are in question. To give a fictional example from the field of resistance studies: An organization works to overthrow a government, and receives international accompaniment to lessen the threat to its activists. Because the government is susceptible to international pressure, the accompaniment is successful and prevents activists from being murdered or arrested and tortured. Another organization looks at the same situation as a conflict between two sides, and uses its presence on the ground to open up dialogue between moderate representatives of the opposition and the government which lead to an accommodation – the government remains in power but elections are prepared and a new constitution is written. In this – to repeat: fictional- example both organizations may claim very different good practices, while at the same time probably not liking each other too much because they work for different goals. Each may feel that the other side does harm – the NGO may feel that the international activists incite radicalism or even violence; the activists may feel that the NGO is betraying the cause of the local freedom fighters. However, both may succeed in the objective to protect human rights and lives, even if using quite different strategies, based on different interpretations of principles.

2.2 Official Government Recognition or Informal Acceptance

<u>Questions to Discuss</u>[14]

After the World Café the workshop started to work in small groups. These groups received a list of questions to discuss before beginning, and the facilitators decided whether to go through them all or pick only some of them. This is the first of these small groups. Its questions were:

In what contexts, if any, is it possible and preferable to have government or some form of formal recognition/registration for doing civilian protection work? How do these choices impact our ability to protect civilians? Why is it not preferable in some contexts? When it is not possible or advisable, what are the arrangements being made? What are the challenges or obstacles faced? How does the increase in hacking emails, use of social media, etc. impact the ability to work without formal approval or informally? How do organizations work with local government informally, if at all? How does a more formal relationship with government improve, or undermine, protective effects? How do organizations work with informal forms of acceptance in the community and with other armed groups besides the government? If there is an opportunity to increase the size/scale of accompaniment/UCP intervention, how would the status of not being fully registered or recognized, impact this potential?

<u>The Situation in the Various Countries</u>

The group had an exchange about the practices of the participant organizations, and collected information on the countries the organizations work in:

Iraq: It is much easier to register in autonomous Iraqi Kurdistan than in Federal Iraq. In the autonomous region, registration is not difficult and the only requirement is making monthly reports to the regional government. At least one INGO for that reason is registered in Kurdistan but works (also) in Federal Iraq. It was remarked that this is volatile and would not be possible once a larger number of staff would be hired. An additional challenge for Iraq is that the country is in turmoil and, as one participant put it, "there are new regulations every day". One local organization therefore even has registered abroad (in the U.S.).

Palestine and Israel: Those working in the occupied territories of Palestine (West Bank, there was no one working currently in Gaza) are there with the full acceptance or even invitation of the Palestine Authority (PA). As to legal regulations of the PA, it seems that registering with the local police, submitting a translation of by-laws, and regular reporting about the activities (every two months) is sufficient. As was mentioned in the World Café at the table on local actors, all UCP organizations maintain good relationships with the Palestinian Authority. One INGO reported that the Ministry for Education refers protection cases to them – e.g. schools that are under particular threat. Registering in Israel means in the eye of Palestinian activists (and probably the PA as well) that you recognize the occupation which can jeopardize the group's acceptance in Palestine. On

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[14] The "questions to discuss" were given to the facilitators and participants with the agenda of the workshop.
The working group was facilitated by Fadi Abi Allam. Sources: Notes of Group A1, taken by Mel Duncan; notes of plenary after Groups A, taken by Christine Schweitzer; input from other groups, in particular the World Café.

the other hand, since most international volunteers access Palestine through Israel, the pretense to be a tourist carries the risk of not being let into the country. The TIPH, which is a governmental monitoring mission in Hebron, is officially registered in Israel but participants spoke rather dismissively of them as "mere observers" with no effect (though the case study in Waging Nonviolence drew a different conclusion).

Syria: In Syria, international NGOs can work in government-controlled parts of the country. But they must get legal approval from places called "Incubator Centers" which are quasi-governmental institutions dealing with international business and NGOs coming in. These Centers take heavy fees from the INGOs registering with them.

Lebanon: In Lebanon, to have a large scale project with visibility is very hard and takes a long time. The Ministry of Interior first approves registration. Then the President, the Prime Minister and 30 ministers have to approve, it was said.

Good Practices and Challenges

The question of official government registration versus informal acceptance is dependent on various factors. The following list is probably not inclusive:

1. Operational issues: How easy is it to:

a) Enter the country and get visas for a reasonable period of time. This of course refers only to international staff and volunteers. Some organizations, especially those who work with volunteers who stay a limited period of time, ask their people to come in as tourists. In the case of Palestine, it is known that the Israeli border control at the airports sometimes refuses entry, especially if someone is known for what Israel considers ""anti-Israel activities" or if the traveler lays open that s/he plans to work with certain NGOs in Palestine. Even the Secretary General of the World Council of Churches (that set up the EAPPI project) was refused entry to Israel in 2015.

There are also differences in regard to where internationals hail from. For example, in Lebanon, it is impossible for Israelis to enter the country even as a tourist, and next to impossible for Syrians to register and work openly, while registration and work visas are possible for people from the West.

b) Hire local staff and have work permits for (national and international) staff.

c) Move around (e.g. through checkpoints). This was mentioned in particular for Federal Iraq. Due to the volatility of the situation, soldiers at checkpoints make rather arbitrary requests in regard to documentation.

d) Transfer money to the country. One organization uses companies to help though they take a cut. Others send cash with individuals but that makes the individuals involved vulnerable.

e) Also the costs associated with registration play a role. For Syria and Lebanon it seems that they are very high (in Syria, the government takes up to 50% of the income, in Lebanon fees and lawyers needed are costly).

f) Another factor is bribery. In most countries registration is facilitated by bribes. This is a challenge for those organizations that have made it a policy not to support corruption by paying bribes.

2. Issues of acceptance and mandate:

a) Acceptance is a critical issue in the region covered by the workshop, especially in Palestine, where there is a double authority: The elected Palestinian Authority and the state of Israel that occupied the territories and controls them, and that in addition controls the access to them since

most people need to travel through Israel.

b) In Iraq the authorities have a say in the by-laws of the organization seeking registration. One had to take the goal "disarmament" out of their by-laws in order to be registered. In Syria, working on human rights is not welcome. The organizations concerned rename what they do – for example "children" instead of "human rights".

c) the principle of openness: At least one organization felt that openness is a necessary requirement for the work to be successful. This may also relate to other principles like nonviolence.

3. Security of the work and ability to carry it out:

a) There are security issues related to registration. In some ways, registration can increase security and in others, decrease it. Most governments demand reports from the NGOs that are registered with them. If the government is not an ally[15] in the protection work (which in the countries covered in this workshop may only be the case in Palestine), this may mean a risk both for the work and for the staff involved. On the other hand, registration makes access to the country, passing checkpoints and dealing with security forces easier because the NGO workers have a more solid basis for their work. Being a volunteer on a tourist visa adds volatility to the status and increases the threat of being summarily evicted. At least one organization reported that they had to refuse numerous requests for accompaniment because of not having full registration in the area (Federal Iraq). Without registration they were not sure if they would be allowed to pass the checkpoints.

Conclusions

It is difficult to discern general "good practices" here. It is all context-specific, as was pointed out often in the workshop. Decisions made by organizations seem to depend:

- on the situation in the country the UCP organization is working in, in particular the legal requirements for registration and the attitude of the government towards the kind of work the UCP organization is doing;

- on the structure and ways of working of the (I)NGO, for example the citizenship of its volunteers and staff. For local organizations, the situation is different than for international or mixed groups. (""Mixed" here means not only a mix of staff, but organizations that have a strong local identity without being purely local. Muslim Peacemaker Teams for example are registered in the U.S. but are mostly or exclusively Iraqi Muslims);

- on individual choices the organization makes based on what it deems to be most feasible for its particular mandate or to be a requirement stemming from its principles and statutes;

- Scale also matters here. For small organizations or organizations with few personnel it seems easy to get by without full formal registration, but in case scaling-up is intended, the requirement for formal acceptance increases as well. One organization working in f seeks to promote a different type of status for their work (neither tourists nor NGO) because of the problems and negative associations attached to the latter.

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[15] Referring to cases like Nonviolent Peaceforce in the Philippines where it has a formal status within the peace process monitoring.

2.3 International Advocacy and Influence, Including Donor Relationships

<u>Questions to Discuss</u>[16]

In what ways, if any, do UCP/accompaniment interventions relate to international (track one) intervention, mediation, influence, meddling? What are the ways in which this international influence increases effectiveness and/or undermines effectiveness of UCP type interventions? Are some international actors more accessible than others? How does this all play out at the grassroots/on the ground in accompaniment/UCP work? How are advocacy messages shaped? If you get international funding, how does that relate to your work? Do you rely on international governments or international organizations/military to extract your staff/volunteers if the risks are too high, and if so, how does this impact your work? What is being learned about good practices in this regard?

<u>Different Approaches to Advocacy</u>

In the discussion it became clear that participants had different understandings or definitions of the meaning of advocacy. Some included under this term all work addressing the public, while others spoke specifically about trying to influence decision-makers and donors, be it at the local or international level.

The need for advocacy (in both broad and narrow meanings of the term) was recognized by all in the workshop. For those following a more activist approach, a representative from one organization working in Palestine put the relationship between accompaniment and advocacy in very clear words: "Accompaniment may deter violence at a school or help individuals to pass check-points. But we need a change of policy – that there is no military at the entrance of schools and no more checkpoints. For the second, advocacy is needed."

These organizations generally seek to combine accompaniment and advocacy in a broad sense of addressing and informing the wider international public (churches, newspapers, talks at schools as well as with diplomats), in spite of repercussions they suffer (e.g. denial of visas). Some participants reported this sometimes leads to tension and internal debates in the teams– some team members wanting to be more vocal while for others, not risking the presence of the team was more important.

On the ground, UCP organizations have been asked in several cases (Palestine, Iraq) by local people and partners to "get the story out." However, there is also much work being done in the region that is not reported anywhere because of its sensitivity.

Local organizations in Syria and Iraq that work without international volunteers or staff seem not to be engaged in advocacy with higher levels, nor communicate publicly much about what they are doing.[17]

At the opposite side of the range of options NP is an organization that has a principle practice never to "to blame and shame." In-country it does very specific advocacy work which is usually

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[16] The group was facilitated by Tiffany Easthom. Sources are notes of working group A2 and notes of plenary after groups A, both taken by Christine Schweitzer.

[17] The rapporteur is not sure about this point – the working group mostly looked at international organizations.

very quiet, and directed at donors or diplomats. In the field, it doesn't do advocacy itself with high-level persons but tries to influence the behavior of people they work with and those who influence policy-makers. Most of its high--level advocacy work takes place at the UN and with UN member states to adopt UCP as a tool.

Access to regional or global powers is a big issue in the region. Palestinians do not have direct useful access to Israeli authorities or the U.S. government, nor do Syrian CSOs have access to Russian, Iranian or U.S. military or politicians. Some participants stated that there is a need to find someone ""higher up" to open dialogue at that level. Where there are people who either belong to the high level or have access to it and are open to issues of human rights and protection, one strategy that organizations (in Palestine) have tried was to organize field visits for them, so that they could see the issues at stake with their own eyes.

More effective in regard to advocacy done by UCP organizations is advocacy at the local level, seeking to influence the behavior of local leaders, military and others. This kind of advocacy is achieved through direct relationship building.[18]

In that context, it was mentioned that in formal track 1 negotiations, protection of civilians may be a good-will measure. But it can also become a problem when protection becomes something that is optional and can be traded in negotiations rather than a given obligation as prescribed by IHL. This has happened repeatedly in Syria.

While none of the UCP organizations have access to the level 1 negotiations in the countries covered by the workshop, it was pointed out that they can support negotiations by "truth-telling" – using their observations and reports to prove or challenge what big players claim or deny what happens on the ground.

With globalization new actors have entered the field that are even less open to advocacy. In particular China gives a lot of money to countries without raising human rights issues. And the behavior of the West, in particular its failure to sanction the unlawful attack of the U.S. and its allies on Iraq in 2003 and its unconditional support of Israel, has decreased the trust in its willingness and ability to take up matters of international law and human rights, and its actual influence on countries in the region. On the other hand, there are countries that have a good name in regard to being more impartial and open for good offices regarding conflict resolution – the Scandinavian countries and South Africa were mentioned particularly here.

One person spoke of a general crisis in international humanitarian law and human rights. After 9/11, calling a party "terrorist" has become a very powerful legitimizing narrative for all kinds of human rights violations and military aggression, and the emergence of ISIS has strengthened this picture. In Syria and Iraq, one participant said, the image was promoted that "everything goes" as long as it destroys ISIS.

One point raised was that when there is war, all embassies leave. But local activists emphasized they need embassies operating, in order to open dialogue between the parties.

International Donors

Another topic the group looked at was international funding. Again, the policies of the UCP organizations vary a lot regarding donors. One organization said that it could not imagine

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[18] There are organizations in other parts of the world who direct blaming and shaming at local authorities but this was not reported in this workshop.

accepting any money from a government that was having troops fighting in the country. They see this as helping that invader to pretend that it does humanitarian work. In addition, there was concern about espionage happening under the cover of support of humanitarian work. For that reason, one organization said that while it would generally accept money from USAID, it would not do so for a research component.

Generally, all organizations ask how much a particular donor might affect their work on the ground. "Donor education" as well as alliances to do so are needed (this has been shown to be possible in some cases) – by discussing the issues with them or by inviting them to field visits to understand better the reality on the ground. The point in question was that many donors, with some fixation on firmly defined projects and one-year funding cycles, are not flexible enough for the work of UCP which often has to quickly respond to changing circumstances. But there were also a few good examples like Sweden, the Netherlands and even the EU who gave money to certain groups in the area without any strings attached.

Sub grants to local organizations, where the internationals do the needed administration work, was mentioned as another possibility to handle the complex requirements of international donors. However, international donors need to learn to deal with local organizations and "read reports written in broken English", as one participant said.

Good Practices

The following points were listed or mentioned in the course of the discussion:
- Look at advocacy as part of a holistic approach, multi-layered (not only high level).
- Look at the mutual strengthening roles of protective accompaniment and protective advocacy.
- Reports on what is happening on the ground can become references in track 1 negotiations.
- Doing advocacy and public presentations by team members after they return home rather than while being in the field. This may at least prevent them from having their visa cancelled.
- Organize field visits for policy-makers.
- Try to make sure that the right voices are at the table, meaning the voices of local people. The role of internationals is to help the right voices get there, and amplify their voices.
- Donors who are very flexible in their funding, not requiring particular "projects".
- Sub-granting from international NGOs to local CSOs, freeing them from the burden of financial administration and reporting.

Dilemmas and Challenges

- In advocacy work, political demands may be perceived as radical – how to tailor the message in a way that it is acceptable to the intended audience? We need to frame our language depending on with whom we talk.
- The meddling of regional and international powers that are often more difficult to access than the governments of the countries in conflict.
- Humanitarian issues becoming optional and something that can be traded in track 1

negotiations.

- A danger of track 1 is politicizing the protection of civilians.
- Change of (international) governments impacts the work.
- When to risk access in order to speak out? Making violations public may mean endangering the permission to stay.
- Risk of espionage: Reports to donors being misused.
- Calling an opponent "terrorist" has become common and legitimizes all means used in fighting them.
- NGOs are challenged by the question of working with any donor or drawing lines. What is acceptable for partners in the field and to the NGO itself, since donors have political interests in the areas where UCP organizations are working and may be tainted by their general politics, by having been involved in military interventions etc.

Conclusions

UCP organizations are probably at their best when doing advocacy at the local level, seeking to influence power holders in the area where they work. This is the level where relationship and trust building can be most successfully carried out. Access to high-level actors that are playing a decisive role in the region is difficult, though two of the organizations (NP and WCC) have formal observer status at the UN.

Access to high levels does not necessarily require desisting from making public known violations of IHL. But it requires appropriate language and proper documentation methodology in order to get a hearing and be taken seriously. Therefore, it would be wrong to assume that "naming and shaming" and wielding influence at high levels rule each other out. The main problem identified here with the approach of "blaming and shaming" is that it may jeopardize the work on the ground if those who control the access are those who are the target of the blaming and shaming.

It wasn't clear what the theory of change is, for those who included all work with the public in their understanding of advocacy. Of course, it could be surmised that the assumed effects are indirect though there are various trajectories (that do not exclude each other) imaginable. For example: Tell the people of the countries supporting Israel – citizens then make their government change its attitude towards Israel - it puts pressure on the Israeli government – the Israeli government changes its policy towards the occupation. Or: Making the situation in Palestine known to citizens internationally leads to an outcry and civil society activities in support of Palestine, including perhaps joining the Boycott, Divestment and Sanction (BDS) campaign - public international criticism, boycott and disinvestment activities influence directly the decision-makers in Israel – or even making international actors decide to militarily enforce UN decisions regarding the occupation. Or: public international criticism may influence the public in Israel which in turn will pressurize its government (or elect one with a different stance towards the occupation). The recommendation that grows out of this workshop is to first discuss and get clarity on what is to be achieved and how. It would be useful for those engaging in wider communications to think about these questions. Otherwise there is the danger that much energy goes into activities with very little outcome and impact.

2.4 Deterrence and Encouragement

Questions to Discuss[19]

Part of the discussion of group A 3 with the long title "Accompaniment/UCP protection strategies focused on deterring violence and strategies focused on encouraging respect for civilian rights for safety and wellbeing" has been separated out to chapters of its own because it seemed in hindsight that this group tackled different issues. The questions dealt with in this chapter are:

What are the sources of leverage for deterring violence and/or encouraging respect for civilian safety? How, if at all, are changes in the current contexts affecting changes in strategies?

Discussion

The group agreed that the choice of deterrence or encouragement was all context-specific, and often both approaches go hand in hand. Depending on the situation, it may vary from team to team within one organization, and both may sometimes be part of one and the same activity. One person put it that: "We live with those at threat and thereby encourage them. When we accompany them, we deter rights' violations'".

The group listed what gives UCP organization leverage:

- Local capacities; (meaning material capacities – money, vehicles, communication devices, as well as local knowledge and the number of volunteers/staff);Mobilizing higher level attention – especially that can affect reputations;
- Visible/obvious international presence;
- Record/document visually;
- Show/expose contradictions;
- International law – some circles are receptive;
- Credible messengers (the examples were elderly Israeli Women who engage with border guards or peers of young Israeli settlers);
- Relationships of trust;
- Narrative-shifting reminders of common humanity;
- Confidence building within and among groups: Solidarity and agency;
- Asking empathic questions to deescalate a situation;
- Ceasefire monitoring methods – adapted to counter disinformation;
- Having internationals working with a local organization in various capacities.[20]

To the question of how to choose whom to target with an activity, for example should the work aim at leaders or lower level soldiers? Either way, it was pointed out that it is necessary to build relationships based on trust. And again, it was noted that it is context-specific. Sometimes it is best to go through the hierarchy and command structures. But sometimes leaders are not trusted

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[19] The working group A3 was facilitated by Jenny McAvoy, notes were taken by Karen Karam and Abir Hajibraham. Notes of plenary after groups A taken by Christine Schweitzer.

[20] This was not listed by the group but needs to be added since it came out clearly in other working groups.

so it is not always the right way to go. Also, lines of command are sometimes broken.

Some examples were shared of how specific organizations protected people, or helped improve a situation. They all have in common appealing to the humanity of individuals and expressing empathy.

Documenting what is going on, with photos and video, is one example given, of ways to protect people. Often those threatening to perpetrate violence do not want it to be recorded. The following are examples shared:

- A refugee camp where there was a lot of conflict and no trust. The NGO provided a workshop in this community and one-on-one meetings with leaders and bringing people together to share, asking them empathy questions, in order to build trust/confidence.

- At a demonstration in the US, the police officer attacked one of the demonstrators. People started shouting that he is human, treat him with dignity, etc. As a result, the officer stopped.

- In the context of Syrian refugees in Northern Lebanon:
  ° Living with people in their tents.
  ° Treating them as humans and not as refugees.
  ° Helping them to participate in peace talks so that they are not just helpless pawns, but actor in solving this situation.
  ° Giving them power. Accompanying them is not enough, it was said, it is necessary to change the narrative and give them the opportunity to express themselves.

- Example from Palestine: In Palestine an organization produced a series of bumper stickers: 'What about our children?' 'We are all human beings' etc., and also addressed soldiers with texts like 'Soldier, why did you kill Fadi? Fadi was a student, he liked to do picnics'.

Conclusions

Comparing the outcome of this group to the similar discussion in the workshop in Manila reveals that in both workshops people agreed that both approaches- deterrence and encouragement - "work" and are contextual. In Beirut there was much more emphasis on deterrence as the dominant approach, while in Manila more organizations emphasized the importance of relationship-building. Again, the discussion failed to clearly work out the criteria of what is chosen under which circumstances – what is the context? It could be hypothesized that use of internationals has a direct relationship to deterrence – local groups will probably find it much harder to play a deterrent role except in special circumstances where they have a role recognized by all conflict parties (as Bantay Ceasefire has in Mindanao). Some organizations mentioned that this is the reason why they work with internationals. But this is only one aspect, and there are also internationals (like NP in some deployments) that try to focus on relationship-building and minimize the deterrence factor. Perhaps, in the next workshop the discussion could be focused on the following questions: With which conflict parties do you seek to have direct contact? 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? Etc.

3. Tactics of Protection

3.1 How to Decide on Beneficiaries

This is part of what the group A 3 discussed on the first day.

What is good practice in deciding who to protect, and who, if anyone, to exclude? And from whom and what/what kinds of violence? And how does this relate to protection strategies – how are they to be protected? Whose knowledge and views are solicited? What does primacy of local actors and nonpartisanship mean here?

Discussion and Good Practices

Often organizations need to make choices with whom to work / who to protect, either because they receive more requests for accompaniment than they can handle, or because they themselves see much more need than can be met. The group discussed criteria for making such decisions:

- Those most at risk;
- Key people who in turn can influence others;
- Those asking for protection;
- Asking locals or local partners who is most at risk;
- The level of risk the organization and/or the individuals in the teams are willing to take.

It was emphasized that doing good context, risk and impact analysis as well as actor mapping and needs and capacity assessment are necessary for making such decisions.

Good practices included:

- To consult with the local community about who to prioritize because it has the best analysis.
- Building relationships with local organizations. They may be able to deal with issues (like domestic violence) that are difficult for UCP organization to tackle directly.

Challenges

Top challenges when choosing beneficiaries are:

- Protecting communities that have a high level of internal violence such as sexual or domestic violence. The issue here is the question if to intervene in such situations or not to tackle them as they are not part of the mandate of the UCP organization. The analysis must explore the interaction between these kinds of violence and intergroup violence.
- People requesting aid that have private agendas, or are not who they say they are. (For example, in Palestine it happened that people claimed to be poor and work near the settlements but it turned out they were rich and located far from the settlements.)
- Situations that are very difficult to handle, like being attacked by radicalized civilians

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[21] The working group A3 was facilitated by Jenny McAvoy, notes were taken by Karen Karam and Abir Hajibraham. Notes of plenary after groups A taken by Christine Schweitzer.

including children.

- How to decide whom to trust when asking for advice or for protection?

<u>Conclusions</u>

While it is difficult to formulate "hard" criteria for deciding who to protect and who not, it was made clear that such decisions require good analysis, strong partners to consult with and being clear about the capacities of one's own organization. It is also important to have policies regarding what kind of violence to deal with. In the workshop the participants mostly agreed that the focus must be on political violence, leaving domestic and GBV to other organizations that are more specialized. However, it is important to be aware – and this was also said repeatedly in the workshop - of these other kinds of violence since they may easily trigger larger scale political violence. This is different from the conclusions in the Manila workshop where people were more inclined to consider the whole spectrum of violence, from domestic through clan to regional and international violence.

3.2 Responding to Different Kinds and Degrees of Violence

Questions to Discuss[22]

In the Middle East context, what kinds of violence and perpetrators of violence are susceptible or responsive to civilian protection efforts and why? What kinds are not and why? How do the practices of deterrence and encouragement address particularly extreme violent armed groups/government military or individuals? What strategies are used in contexts of lower intensity vs higher intensity violence (i.e. primarily on the ground fighting vs use of air power and bombs, drones, etc.)? How is UCP practiced in the midst of urban conflict/urban warfare? Is this different than in rural areas? How does stress or PTSD in staff/volunteers impact programming in contexts where staff/volunteers are targeted? How does it impact those you are protecting/supporting (beneficiaries)? Does the use of social media and digital communication increase or decrease vulnerability, in what contexts, and why? If larger interventions could be funded – scaled up – what are the potentials for civilian protection in the face of these extremely violent armed groups/military?

Discussion

The group discussion started with a basic mapping exercise on the different actors encountered and the different kinds of violence encountered. The following exhaustive list was created:
- Formal military forces,
  - foreign
  - domestic
- Secret services and secret police. More indirect violence. Related to governments.
- Corporate international contractors (like Blackwater).
- Criminal gangs/structures. Conflict environment is ripe to be taken advantage of.
- ISIS & similar groups are presenting many conflict environments.
- Israeli settler civilian violence: In Palestine violence from civilian groups, esp. settlers who engage in structural and often also direct violence.
- Gender-based, domestic violence.
- Foreign fighters.
- Provocateurs at peaceful protests.
- Quasi-state groups and international proxies of international forces.
- IDP camp security; prison authorities. Security forces at IDP camps and prisons.
- Arms at community level /violence penetrating society. Informal community-based violence.
- Informal local authority structures.

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[22] The group B2 was facilitated by Berit Blieseman de Guevara. Notes were taken by David Browning. Notes of plenary after Groups B taken by Christine Schweitzer. Also a part of the discussion of the group A 3 was included here (see 2.4). The group did not manage to go through all the questions but focused on identification of armed actors.

There was also a contribution to the question "what kind of violence" from group A 3. Its discussion centered on the question of how to deal with internal, domestic and gender-based violence. It was suggested that it might be a good practice not to be drawn into directly dealing with such violence but referring cases to specialized local actors, while at the same time recognizing that one kind of violence easily leads to another. But the UCP organizations should concentrate on armed conflict and political violence.

Good Practice

- Alliances with third parties to reach inaccessible groups. Important to build alliances with third parties to build indirect connections for example to ISIS.
- Working from a position of nuance and complexity. Not assume motivations but do analysis to understand group and individual motives.
- Using existing communication channels when possible, within local society at large (not only UCP groups).
- Careful analysis of past failures to plan new strategies.
- Mapping of all actors' interests to find common ground.
- Using local legal processes when beneficial. For example to call police in cases of settler violence.
- High-level advocacy (meaning governments or international organizations) for change at policy level (Palestine: High-level advocacy to change policy is critical. Individual settler groups are not amenable to dialogue, so there needs pressure from top down down.)
- Reporting and monitoring violence at a granular level.
  - Making use of existing communication mechanisms.
  - Mapping of actors.
  - Seeking to provide nuance to the broader narrative.

Challenges

- Getting involved in "personal matters" (like domestic violence) can undermine credibility. Violence seen as private matter may undermine credibility of UCP.
- Huge presence of arms in communities leads conflict to easily shift levels and become violent.
- Foreign military forces perpetrate a lot of violence but are mostly inaccessible for UCP.
- Complex motives of individuals within groups. No straightforward motivation of groups. Not easy to understand.
- For some groups targeting UCP practitioners may be of strategic benefit.
- Difficult to connect with groups that have been demonized by media and international community ("terrorists").

Challenges in the Palestinian/Israeli settler conflict:
- Limited interaction
  - Lack of structured hierarchy on the side of the settlers.
  - Settlers are above the law.

- Political agendas.
- Lack of reporting mechanisms on settler violence.
- Damage to agricultural land.

Conclusions

The group concluded that state violence and macro violence are related and connected to the other types of violence. Unpacking those relationships is inherent to doing the work well. Another group, A 3, had argued that GBV/SGBV should be excluded from the mandate of UCP organizations, respectively dealt with only through referral to other actors. In this group here, people reported trying to tackle GBV directly but spoke of many problems and ethical dilemmas that arose from trying to do so.[23] But again, the main conclusion was that it is all context-specific and good analysis is most important.

Like in Manila, there was no easy answer to how to deal with violent political extremism. While CVE was considered important, none of the organizations present in Beirut saw a way to approach such organizations as ISIS in their contexts. It was pointed out that especially ISIS was a foreign group. That in turn may support the conclusion that there may be possibilities to influence extremist actors if they are part of a local community, something that had been indicated to be possible in the previous workshop in Manila.

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[23] In the workshop, nobody disagreed in the plenary with this statement. However, the rapporteur suspects that this view might not have been as commonly shared as it seemed, given that protecting women from GBV is part of the mandate in several NP projects.

3.3 Local Organizations Protecting Local People

What does primacy of local actors and nonpartisanship mean in these contexts? How does it work, when local people protect themselves? What are the leverage points for protection? What are strengths and what are the challenges? What does protection mean and accomplish in these contexts? What is good practice, from a local perspective as individuals and organizations, in working with international organizations? Is it preferable in some contexts for international organizations to enhance the capacity of local organizations to do protection work themselves, rather than do direct protection? If so, what are these contexts? How should decisions be made then, as to whom gets this training from international organizations? What is the effect, if any, of remote support? Is social media used in these protection efforts, and if so, how and why? Are international organizations accountable to local organizations in any way, and what is good practice in terms of this accountability?

Discussion and Good Practices

The group discussed several situations –Iraq before and during the war of 2003, the White Helmets in Syria, the groups present at the workshop that are based in Syria and local groups in Iraq. Various activities were described– from capacity-building in protection tools for villagers related to evacuating civilians to mediation and promoting social cohesion. Both Syria and Iraq are countries where UCP (unlike in Palestine) was unknown until recently. The situation of some local groups is so volatile and risky that participants preferred not to share details about their work, or requested that this was not reported.

It was pointed out that just distinguishing local and international groups maybe an oversimplification, given that international organizations may have a strong local component, and that local organizations may use international volunteers and be dependent on international funding. For a new group starting work on UCP, mapping conflict, actors and capacity-building are very essential tasks.

Good practices that were listed:
- For some organizations, winning trust with security forces was an important task.
- Given the complex picture of different organizations with different political interests, partnership management is crucial, and transparency.
- Capacity-building (through trainings and support of teams formed afterwards) plays an important role in one of the countries represented at the workshop.
- For some organizations, making use of international volunteers is useful.

Challenges

- Internationals being misused by powerholders (foreigners as human shields for Saddam

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[24] Group B1 was facilitated by Sami Rasouli; notes of the group and the plenary after Groups B were both taken by Christine Schweitzer.

Hussein).

- Local or tribal groups are not neutral but are siding with one or the other party in the conflict or at least have sympathies on one or the other side. Even if they don't, probably they would be suspected of being partisan. The challenge for them is therefore to gain respect and hearing from those who they address as potential perpetrators of violence. The political situation in Iraq with wide-spread corruption and heavy international influence.
- "Invasion of internationals" with money – artificial creation of NGOs to get part of the cake.
- Lack of resources: funding and talented human resources. After 2003, many either left or joined international organizations.
- Groups doing protection but that are partly militarized and controversial. People may confuse them with the nonviolent UCP organizations, or vice versa there may be faulty expectations regarding UPC practitioners getting involved in defense activities.
- UCP carried out by young people but society is based on tribal structures where older men (Sheiks) rule.
- UN and other internationals drawing activists away from their work and employing them as staff.[25]

Conclusions

The situation of the local groups in the Middle East is quite different from that of the local groups in South East Asia that came to Manila. The latter were well-organized and experienced while many of the groups that work in Iraq and Syria are new and fragile and working under very volatile circumstances. Those that work without international presence do so because internationals would not be tolerated where they are based or would increase the risk for the local activists. For some of them UCP seems to be rather an add-on to their activities than something they focus on primarily. It was also expressed as a challenge that most are dependent on international financial support.

And as it was already remarked above, drawing a line between local and other than local, is not always useful or easy. Lines blur when there are locally lead groups working with international volunteers, or international groups working only with locals.

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[25] This point came from another break-out group.

3.4 Accompaniment/UCP with Displaced People

<u>Questions to Discuss</u>[26]

What needs to be in place in terms of Standard Operating Procedures (if anything) before starting a project and while the project is ongoing? Whose knowledge is included in security management and decisions? Is there anything in particular to a broadly Middle Eastern context to consider, or in your own specific context? How does Accompaniment/ UCP function when government troops/police/armed groups are willing to kill international and local staff/volunteers? What are your policies related to kidnapping staff? Do urban conflict/urban warfare pose particular challenges to security management? When staff/volunteers are targeted/attacked, how is security managed? What are security implications and how are they managed, when staff/volunteers are traumatized by experiences, potentially affecting their decision-making and trust? How is digital security addressed, if at all? If projects scale up, with significantly larger staff, what does this all mean for security?

<u>Discussion and Good Practices</u>

The group exchanged various examples of work with IDPs, both in rural and urban environments. Activities and concerns collected were[27]:

<u>Prevent displacement</u>

- Rumor control.
- Free and informed decision-making.
- Persuade fighters to move away from civilian areas.
- Mitigate environmental triggers / pressure.[28]

<u>Accompany evacuation</u>

- Displacement can be a way to seek safety.
- Open corridors.
- Prepare passes, vehicles etc.
- Negotiate safe passage.
- Medical evacuations /negotiated ceasefire.

<u>Refugee/IDP camps</u>

- Accompaniment from departure points.
- Accompaniment in screening /pre- and post-screening.

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[26] The group was facilitated by Jenny McAvoy, notes of Group C2 and notes of plenary after Groups C both taken by Christine Schweitzer.

[27] The rapporteur added a couple of points to the list the group made.

[28] This was formulated as a desideratum. The group in question had not actually started working on this.

- Mixed populations (demographically).
- Sexual harassment / abuse.
- Intercommunity tensions.
- Joint theatre project.
- Joint workshops.
- Maintaining weapons-free camps.
- Encouraging community self-organizing.
- Accompaniment to access resources, services, distributions.
- Facilitating/accompanying movements for those without identity and resident papers.

Refugees/IDPs dispersed in urban areas

- Dealing with IDPs or refugees if they have moved in with relatives or found a place to live (sometimes even on the streets) is a particular challenge since it is not easy to reach them.

IDP/refugee return, Risks upon return

- Preventing forced return, e.g. premature push.
- Ensuring free, informed, voluntary leave.
- Go and see visits to home areas before deciding to return.
- Highlight those "left out" of return schemes to aid agencies.
- Property disputes.
- Post-conflict perceptions of affiliations, leading to tensions.
- Forming local organization to facilitate reintegration and reconciliation.
- Return should be as quick as possible but not forced or premature.
- Protracted displacement ---- displaced again when returning; plus socio-economic changes.
- Reconciliation among clashing communities
  —- role of formal authorities, compensation
  --- tensions emerging over many years
- Community sector and economy, may have changed, influenced by war.
- Return/ resettlement needs comprehensive and multi-sector plan --- supported by legislation.
- Social integration among youth.
- Socio-economic support in the region of origin is important: If there is no infrastructure created, people hesitate to go back.

This long list that presented to the plenary shows a wealth of experiences in working in refugee camps and with IDPs present. The activities described could perhaps be categorized into three types:

1. Preventing displacement through rumor control, approaching fighters to move away, and other supportive measures.
2. 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.

3. 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.

Challenges

The list of challenges was shorter but this may be misleading. It became clear in the discussion that the challenges are very high and working with displaced people to protect them is both a very urgent need and often difficult to put into practice.

- Common risks include arrests, abductions, GBV etc.
- Structures of IDPs in camps that are hard to influence. This refers to informal leadership structures, relationships between different groups placed in one camp as well as to the structures set up by those who run the camp and supervise it.
- Camp management not being accessible and trying to prevent external groups coming in to support IDPs.
- Well-equipped IDP camps: People prefer to stay rather than return home.
- If there is no infrastructure in terms of socio-economic support and basic facilities created, people hesitate to go back.

Conclusions

Accompaniment/UCP with refugees and IDPs is a complex task with many different aspects. One thing was confirmed here that also came out in the discussion in Manila regarding peacebuilding and peacekeeping: In order to protect people, pure accompaniment might not be enough. Work that does fall in the category of peacebuilding is often necessary in order to keep people safe in the longer term[29], and to mitigate their situation – ideally allowing them to return.

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[29] A facilitator in the workshop commented on this asking if this could not be understood as a case of mission creep, i.e. something that goes beyond UCP core tasks. This question will need to be explored in the next workshops further.

3.5 Local Mediation, Negotiation and Shuttle Diplomacy

Questions to Discuss[30]

In what contexts, if any, do staff/volunteers engage in some local forms of (formal or informal) mediation, negotiation, shuttle diplomacy with an emphasis on civilian protection? 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? How are these practices impacted by the specifics of particular Middle Eastern contexts and cultures? How does this change over time?

Discussion and Good Practices

Not all UCP organizations get involved in mediation efforts. For those who do, different approaches or roles were distinguished:
- "Good offices"[31] behind the scenes, for example finding people in the community who take on a mediating role, technical support, transport, concerns about the roles of women (their involvement).
- Training individuals to then work as mediators.
- Getting engaged directly in mediation efforts themselves.

Mediation by UCP organizations typically deals with the following situations (in the Middle East):
- In the communities to reduce violence between religious sects and political parties as well as in family conflicts.
- Work with women to help decrease tension in camps or communities.
- Dialogue with armed groups about their intentions and plans.
- Open space or advocate for civil society to participate in official mediation.
- Linking negotiation tracks is very important. Any small local mediation process, if taken to track one, will help with building trust.
- Set up peace committees (in Syria).
- Facilitate meetings with politicians and donors abroad.
- Facilitate calls / relationships between different peace communities, for example between Colombia and Syria.

There are three key preconditions for entering a mediation process as a UCP organization:
- Strong relationships and knowledge of existing local context, including if there may already be mediation. If you do not pay attention to what is in place, you may really do damage.
- Relationships with a diverse range of leaders (esp. if leaders are causes of conflict).

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[30] The group C3 was facilitated by Felicity Grey. Notes by Yara Attalah. Notes of plenary after Groups C by Christine Schweitzer.

[31] This is a term used in political mediation. It refers to what is described here – (diplomatic) support in the background to further conflict resolution, for example in preparation of direct negotiations or mediation meetings.

- Time to build trust and relationships. Successful processes are long-term.

If UCP organizations want to take a lead in mediation, several things need to be taken into account:

- Constant work that needs to be done includes communications, maintaining and nurturing relationships.
- Building trust is important.
- Assess who from the national staff is in better position to do the task. For example: female staff could involve women in mediation processes.
- Have a good relation and connections to various leaders in the community: religious figures, community leaders.

Challenges

- How do you go about identifying and selecting mediators without dictating who they are - for example trying to strengthen the involvement of women.
- Local team members have an important role in identifying mediators, or even serve as a mediator, but it is a difficult role given their local connections.
- There may be a risk associated with becoming a mediator. In Syria people have been arrested or killed. If some party doesn't like the agreement then they target the mediator.
- Turnover of people you are building relationships with, and, for the beneficiaries, also the turnover of staff is a challenge.
- Dominance of male leaders and mediators in some contexts.
- Does mediation need equal power? Can there be mediation in case of asymmetrical conflict like Palestine-Israel? Complexities of power imbalances (e.g. Israel-Palestine) – both parties need to be convinced to come to the table (need to identify common gains).

Conclusions

Mediation and what is called "good offices" (background support to mediation processes) are an important element of the work to protect civilians, because it engages the various parties. UCP organizations mostly – at least this was true for the examples in this workshop – are active on the grassroots or middle level. Sometimes they try however to influence track one (high level) negotiations by advocating for civil society groups' participation or input. It was emphasized that mediation processes are long-term processes and an organization should ask itself if it is able to maintain the long-term commitment necessary.

3.6 Gender in Protection Work in the Middle East

Questions to Discuss[32]

Does the gender of accompaniment/UCP staff/volunteer impact effectiveness, and if so, in what contexts and conditions and how? When does the gender of volunteers/staff strengthen or weaken effectiveness? If local cultures have particular gender protocols, do international organizations and/or local organizations always respect these? When, if at all, are local gender norms challenged? How does UCP address women's rights, if at all? How do organizations deal with discrimination against, or harassment of specific genders?

Discussion

The group explored various issues: gender and the teams, gender norms, women's rights and dealing with harassment. For each of the topics, it identified good practices and challenges.

How Gender Affects the Teams and the Work of the Teams

Good practices:
- Team members learning from each other.
- Diversity of identities in a team makes it stronger. If there is only one gender, women are better than men: Women can meet with men, but a male team may not be able to meet with women.
- Women are often perceived as less threatening which may open access. (There were examples given, for example having women in the car in the front seat when passing through checkpoints.)
- Sometimes women leaders in organizations may experience being considered as a "third species", especially if there is no man with whom to deal.
- Cultural sensitivity to local norms is essential rather than seeking open confrontation on gender issues. However, modeling - for example employing women in roles that traditionally men take (for example as mediators) – and referring to norms like those laid down in UNSC 1325 may work. Capacity-building on UN SC 1325 is useful to overcome resistance to inclusion of women in peace processes.
- In some communities, both men and women are needed to access their peers in the community.
- Men can contribute to the safety of their female colleagues by, for example, intervening if there is bad language.
- Age diversity, in addition to gender, is another important asset. Older people may earn more respect.

As to harassment, after the Oxfam scandal, NP and others see an increase in reporting mostly

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[32] The group was facilitated by Tiffany Easthom. Notes of Group D1 and notes of plenary after Groups D, both taken by Christine Schweitzer

amongst internationals. Good practices:

- Policies and training for all staff / recognize differences in approaches and views regarding the role of women, what constitutes harassment etc. also among staff. Policies and training are needed to provide some common understanding of what is acceptable and what is not. This does not only refer to personal (sexual) relationships between staff members but also to issues like expecting the other gender(s) to behave in certain ways – for example protective attitudes by men, expectation that it is the women who do the housework and care for children, etc.
- Most organizations end volunteer or staff contracts immediately if guilty of harassment.
- Before doing so, give both sides a chance to tell their story. (Avoid the tendency to automatically side with the accuser and assume the accused to be guilty.)
- Speak openly about the issues, normalize the subject. (In many communities, talking about harassment is a taboo and women tend not to talk about it.)
- Create opportunities for learning and resolution
- Make use of peer to peer coaching
- Disclosure of close relationships is helpful.

Challenges:

- Understanding the dangers women can experience.
- Especially for local staff: Men may be targeted because they may be suspected of being fighters.
- Women need to be flexible – for example willing to adapt to local clothing rules. (Men also but often it is Western women who may feel challenged for example by having to wear a scarf. This should be initially discussed in training.)
- The way people interact, e.g. hugging, may cause confusion.
- There are different understandings of where harassment begins (e.g. "no is no" vs. a man expecting a game to win the woman over slowly).
- Need for separate accommodations for men and women in some cases.
- Sending a mixed couple of equal age may lead to misperception, making people suspect an illicit relationship (if they are obviously not married). If age difference is big, then people may assume parental relations.
- Finding women as staff in some places (education, English proficiency may be less with women than with men)
- Harassment may not be reported due to cultural norms leading to the fear it will start rumors, the woman will be stigmatized, even lose her work.
- Male supervisors sometimes do not take harassment seriously.
- Living and working together creates ambiguity.

Gender Norms and Impact of Women's Rights

The following observations were made regarding how including gender in programming changes gender norms:

- Through the work, over time gender norms / roles change.

- When children see their parents working in mixed teams, it sets a positive example.
- Intentional inclusion of women in programming affects norms. Working with women gives their voices a chance to be heard.
- Capacity-building about UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on "Women, Peace and Security" (adopted in the year 2000) to overcome resistance in communities.
- Participation shifts the role away from being victim.
- Such programming creates opportunities for women.
- Overall inclusive approach challenges patriarchy.

Challenges:

- Need to be careful about what we say about gender norms.
- People might entrench into "social norm" as an excuse to not engage.
- The immediate focus on violence reduction can have negative impact on women rights.
- Working on GBV is difficult because it is "private" and may get the organizations entangled in nets of intracommunity conflicts.
- Immediate protection against GBV may have longer-term negative effects on women rights in general.
- To be open to LGBTQI issues and rights' engagement. Only some of the organizations in the workshop tackle this issue.

Conclusions

The level of awareness about gender aspects as they relate to women (as staff or beneficiaries) was rather high among all organizations present in Beirut, and a number of good practices were collected. Themes in gender that relate to men (like expectancies to be fighters) received only a small amount of attention, as did addressing LGBTQI issues. Gender is still often a synonym for "women", in the UCP discourse.

As discussed in other working groups during the seminar, many organizations active in the Middle East prefer to focus on political violence and do not see SGBV as political, so do not address SGBV. The same for LGBTQI: While participants agreed that there were discrimination and special risks faced by members of this community, some said that they did not address it. However, some of the organizations do in fact address SGBV in their work, but this was not discussed in this particular workshop.

It can only be speculated about the reasons – the strong patriarchal culture in the region which makes dealing with the issues so sensitive or the daily military violence many people experience which may push other issues to the background are two factors that come to the mind.

3.7 Power Asymmetries

This was the first of the groups in the round where participants chose topics that had not been previously discussed sufficiently.

Discussion[33]

The group looked at three situations of extreme power asymmetries in particular: The struggle of the Palestinians against the Israeli army and settlers in the West Bank; Northern Iraq with bombings by international powers (Turkey, Iran) and unequal power between the local population and Sunni population vs. Iraqi military and militias, and Syria with the local population vs. the various armed forces and militias and changing control of the territories. Also examples from other parts of the world were included, in particular Kashmir and the U.S. with the struggle against an oil pipeline at Standing Rock in North Dakota.

A current pattern was observed in many places – Iraq, Syria, and also in other countries of the region not represented at the workshop like Afghanistan, Yemen etc.:

- A military operation from the air, based on information gained through surveillance. No information on how many civilians are being killed. Only small footprint on the ground. Difficult to interact with decision-makers because they are far away. High civilian casualties and damage to civilian property. This lowers the bar for other actors as well. So they feel they do not need to show compliance with IHL which matters for everyone else's behavior.
- Partnership with non-state armed forces, for example YPG. Security partnerships, arms transfers, training, logistical support (refueling), joint planning and conducting operations
- Failure to influence partner's behavior. Very difficult to make US policy makers see that they can influence their partners. This is slowly changing.
- US counterterrorism practice. It imposes its interpretations on the rest of the world, and creates an atmosphere of stigma and discrimination. Many states copy them. All kinds of repression and violence are justified by labeling it counter terrorism operations.
- Israel is perceived by many people in the Middle East to play a central role in the overall conflict setting in the region.

Good Practices

The group collected the following points which were presented in the plenary:

- Deep listening (follow the lead of local people).
- Name the issue and point to power imbalance.
- Activists on "opposite" sides should work together, act in solidarity across countries.
- Civil society actors from big power countries that intervene in Syria could map interests, could strategize together, build on local knowledge.
- Utilize networks to raise issues in different ways / different paces.
- Put civil society reps together with parties participating in political negotiations.

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[33] The group was facilitated by Tiffany Easthom, notes were taken by Christine Schweitzer. Notes of plenary after groups E, taken by Christine Schweitzer.

- Bring politicians to communities, publicize what is happening.
- Use our privilege to help local organizations have access to diplomats / decision-makers.
- Important for the world to see peace movements calling out abuses.
- Model respectful relationships, reject divisions and manufactured tensions, connect as human beings.

Challenges

- Violence by Palestinians is seen as equal to that of the IDF. Leverage for Palestinians is needed.
- Kashmir: armed resistance is seen as cross-border terrorism, and history of nonviolent resistance not recognized by Indian state.
- Unarmed resistance is perceived as violence.
- Under- or non-representation of affected communities at the global stage.
- Financial / publicity / support from international community (UN, USA – actors that often are considered with suspicion or outright rejection in the area for their involvement in the various wars). Some organizations therefore have decided not to accept any support from these actors in order not to lose the trust of the local community.
- Issues of representations, for example US representing Israel/Palestine conflict.
- U.S. use of force: there is a lack of truth regarding their role and interventions.
- UN Security Council and NATO: Design is flawed - it allows same players to retain power.
- In parts if not most of the area, civilians do not have much leverage when confronting a government for example on human rights violations. The concept of respect for, and rights of civil society is often missing.
- Isolation camps for wives/ children of ISIS: Iraq government unwilling to tackle the issue because of elections.
- Sectarian divide between government and population leads to violent detentions (Iraq). Can lead to violence and unlawful arrests.
- Power of being armed vs. powerlessness of process.
- Idea of giving fighters a platform gives them undue legitimacy.
- Reconciliation agreements put civilians at risk.

Conclusions

Situations of asymmetrical powers have some elements in common:
- Groups are being labelled terrorists which make it difficult to approach them.
- Ignorance of or deliberate mislabeling of nonviolent actors and nonviolent resistance from the side of power holders and the wider public.
- Legitimacy of state actors is questioned by the UCP organizations.
- The concern to work with non-state armed groups is high.

Looking at the good practices identified in the group, generally it can be concluded that "internationalization" of the issue seems to be the only viable strategy that actors will recognize and respond to the potential pressure.

Johan Galtung has coined the term "great chain of nonviolence" for this indirect strategy. If the direct opponent is not receptive, it may be possible to find intermediaries whose intervention is being heard by the opponent. There are many examples for this strategy, from Gandhi's salt

march which addressed via media the public in Britain and other countries to cases like the Israel-Palestine conflict. [34]

Some examples given in the workshop were the cooperation of Palestinian organizations with Israeli activists, the communications and advocacy work of returning international volunteers back home and the advocacy that bodies like the WCC are doing at the level of the United Nations. Also in Iraq and Syria nonviolent groups managed to find international support and voices speaking for them in powerful third countries.

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[34] Galtung, Johan (1989) *Nonviolence and Israel/Palestine.* Honolulu: University of Hawaii Institute for Peace; Martin, Brian and Varney, Wendy (2003)'Nonviolence and Communication`, in: *Journal of Peace Research, vol. 40, no. 2, 2003, pp. 213–232, Sage Publications (London, Thousand Oaks, CA and New Delhi)*

3.8 De-escalation of Armed Shootings

This was another of the groups formed spontaneously at the end of the workshop.

Discussion[35]

The group discussed first what sort of escalation may warrant an intervention, and under which circumstances an intervention may be feasible. The group concluded that it is hard to intervene in larger scale fighting (war, or when one side is a state army). Non-state armed actors tend to be more responsive. In gang or clan violence intervention may be possible if it can be done safely. In confrontations it also matters if the actor, for example a military commander, is known. Relationship-building again is key here. Another criteria is how much discipline there is in an armed group – the more discipline, the more predictable a situation becomes. It gets extremely dangerous if soldiers are drunk – this makes the situation unpredictable.

In Palestine, there also has been successful interpositioning - older men and women standing in front of snipers during a peaceful protest.

It is preferable in any case is to try to intervene before the shooting starts. (There was an example of that from South Sudan where NP brought local leaders to the place where fighting was threatened. They then deescalated the situation.)

Good Practices

- Involve credible mediators.
- Have key resources available (e.g. a car with fuel).
- Keep trying to interact with unpredictable actors (dealing with unaccountable people like drunken soldiers).
- Verbal style (which tone you use), speaking the language.
- Trying to use relationships with a commander, head of protests, media.
- Confidence.
- Surprise (doing something unexpected).
- Know your threshold or limits when deciding if to intervene. .
- Knowing the intention to shoot.
- Have cameras or journalist around.
- Being visible (esp. at night).
- Try to evacuate civilians.

Challenges

- Is it ever proper (the group probably meant the term in the sense of "having chances to

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[35] The group was facilitated Jonathan Pinckney, Notes of group E2 taken by Jennifer Grey and Eli McCarthy; notes of plenary after groups E, taken by Christine Schweitzer.

succeed") to intervene when government actors are on one side?

- Is the training for UCP practitioners sufficient to address these situations and potential clashes?
- Random shooting, snipers, drunken security personnel.

<u>Conclusions</u>

Intervening in armed clashes is always a high-risk activity. It requires good preparation on the side of the intervening group, and a good understanding of the situation. There were examples given in the workshop for interpositioning, and examples for prevention of armed confrontations by involving credible mediators (local chiefs) in time. Again, both elements of the strategies of deterrence and of relationship-building play a role here: Deterrence is used when for example foreigners or elderly respected people intervene or interposition themselves. Relationship-building with armed factions – individual soldiers/fighters and commanders – is essential to convince them not to use arms in a certain situation, or to allow people to leave the area.

4. Managing UCP Projects

4.1 Security Management

What needs to be in place in terms of Standard Operating Procedures (if anything) before starting a project and while the project is ongoing? Whose knowledge is included in security management and decisions? Is there anything in particular to a broadly Middle Eastern context to consider, or in your own specific context? How does Accompaniment/ UCP function when government troops/police/armed groups are willing to kill international and local staff/volunteers? What are your policies related to kidnapping staff? Do urban conflict/urban warfare pose particular challenges to security management? When staff/volunteers are targeted/attacked, how is security managed? What are security implications and how are they managed, when staff/volunteers are traumatized by experiences, potentially affecting their decision-making and trust? How is digital security addressed, if at all? If projects scale up, with significantly larger staff, what does this all mean for security?

Discussion and Good Practices

There were many commonalities, but also differences between those organizations whose work is based more on a consensus model for decision-making and those that practice line-management. The difference mostly was where decisions in cases of acute threats are being taken, and how much power the individual has to decide her or his own security precautions (e.g. wearing a flak vest which is voluntary with ISM) or over how her/his case is treated in case of wounding, killing or abduction. With NP as an organization based on line management, it is a security manager and the team leader who decide how to deal with safety and security matters. ISM, MPT and some of the other international as well as local organizations tend to make these decisions at the team level, based on consensus found in rapid decision-making. Red lines however are predefined and at least in some organizations volunteers may be sanctioned if these red lines are breached. At ISM, individuals put down in writing what should happen in case they become a victim; this information will only be opened by a team mate in case the volunteer is unable to tell herself/himself. However, there is no strict dichotomy between consensus and line management here. EAPPI, which has a field office in Jerusalem, can be placed somewhere in the middle between both models. This office makes security-related (and other) decisions for the teams, for example whether to monitor a certain situation or travel to a certain place, but otherwise the teams are quite free in their day-to-day decisions All organizations have SOPs for safety and security, and all felt that their practice was "good practice".

What the international organizations have in common is preparation through trainings for security-related issues. Again, in details the trainings might vary, but all spoke about preparing and/or simulating different scenarios. Some also have handbooks that volunteers or staff can refer to, especially on kidnapping, and at least one organization includes in their trainings military knowledge about different types of weapons likely to be encountered work. .

They also have in common the value they place on the knowledge of local people for determining risks. For all international organizations, local contacts are the first point of reference.

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[36] The group was facilitated by Mel Duncan. Notes of group C 1, notes of the group from the tape and of plenary after groups C, both taken by Christine Schweitzer.

Compared to many other kinds of international organizations, there is another element that all these organizations have in common though this was not so much made explicit in the discussion: They all are willing to take a rather high risk. "Assessing risk versus impact" was the formulation that was shared by the group in the report back to the plenary. This does not mean that ANY risks are taken when the hope for impact is high enough. But still this displays an attitude very different from that of international organizations that only look at predefined risks and whose SOPs are much more regulative than those of any of the organizations that came to Beirut.

As summary, the group identified a number of good practices[37] for international organizations:

- Be sure that there is agreement and buy-in of SOPSs.

- Prepare for the worst-case in each scenario, especially for the highest risk-cases.

- Train individuals for hostile scenarios both mentally and physically.

- Have good communication with local people, and do a background check with each area we go into.

- Local actors are an important asset during cases of emergency because they know all the paths and where to go to.

- Have SOPs for security and follow them. They also include a list of equipment to always carry (like phones, for some also medical kits and flak jackets).

- Never have a team member go alone – work at least in pairs.

- Assessing risk vs. impact: When is it necessary to go to a risky area?

- Prepare a plan for evacuation (see this also under "challenges" below).

- Have knowledge of weapons being used and be able to distinguish them.

- Use the privilege of being a foreigner to move embassies and the UN to help.

- Learn from previous situations.

As to kidnapping, the group listed:

- It is best to use community pressure.

- Have a manual with instructions.

- Use local contacts and connections to ease the situation.

- Adjusting to different contexts is necessary. But bottom-line is the same.

- Always be prepared for trauma, and have methods ready for first aid when traumatic situations occur.

Representatives of local organizations pointed out that for them the security and safety issues are somewhat different, because they live in the situation daily. On the one hand that may make them hesitant to do extra planning for safety and security; while on the other hand, there is an enormous, sometimes century-old practice of dealing with violent threats.

Particularly mentioned were two items: 1. Information sharing with other actors – in Syria it is suspected that countries intervening in Syria get information via UN offices about underground hospitals. It also makes groups and individuals visible and noted by government actors which may

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[37] This list and the list of challenges below are not fully identical with what the group represented in the plenary. A few things seemed to fall in the other category (challenges into good practices and vice versa) or be repetitive.

put them at risk. 2., and probably most important: It was pointed out that having internationals with a local organization or international pressure in case of arrest may not be helpful but rather increase the risk enormously – of arrests (or diminish the chance to be released), killings or kidnapping for ransom. There are situations where being connected to internationals is a liability rather than an asset. International UCP organization confirmed this, pointing out that from time to time they withdrew or did not deploy teams for that reason. One organization also reported that they had internationals with them, but they disguised them as locals when passing through check points.

Challenges

- Recognize that there is unpredictability in how people respond in crisis.
- Locals may be hesitant to do advance planning on security because they live in the midst of conflict every day.
- SOPs need to match local context.
- Consider the impact of SOPs.
- Does pulling out or remaining in a situation as internationals tend to create more or less risk for the locals? What to do with national staff that cannot leave if international staff pulls out?
- There might be a need for more training, including weaponry (recognizing weapons and their effects) and first aid.
- When things are calm for a time, there is a tendency to get lax.
- Understanding the difference between capacity building and capacity recognition (meaning existing established ways of how to handle crisis).
- Ensure that all have kidnapping policies with an emphasis on building local connections ahead of time.
- For some locals being seen with internationals may make them a target (Seen as someone with money or implied power). In some areas pairing is not a good idea.
- Sharing information (e.g. with official bodies or with UN) may threaten safety of the locals.
- Money and politics are great motivations in some communities, and may lead to behavior that puts the UCP groups at risk.
- Mental health and dealing with traumatic situations. Danger of burn-out.
- Evacuation of staff – should UCP organizations rely on governments/military to extract staff? And how could they be required to take local staff as well?[38]

Conclusions

The issue of security and safety in this workshop has addressed contexts with much more escalated, violent situations than the workshop in South-East Asia. Shootings with live ammunition, bombings and shelling are common and wide spread in three of the four countries covered. All organizations, local as well as international, have – written or informal – SOPs on how

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[38] This came from another break-out group.

to deal with such threats. A number of common good practices as well as challenges were identified. Interesting enough, quite different organizational models seem to work in the eyes of their protagonists. For example, both strict line management and consensus found in teams are seen as 'good practice'. It also became clear that security issues look different for international and for local groups and practitioners. While many SOPs may be similar, for locals the situation has become their daily life, from which they can neither withdraw nor expect to be rescued by international agencies in case something goes wrong.

4.2 IT Security

<u>Discussion</u>[39]

This working group took place in the last round when people could chose topics that they felt still needed taking care of. It replaced an information session that had been scheduled for earlier in the workshop but had to be cancelled because the expert did not come. The three participants all declared that they were not really knowledgeable on the subject, but had an exchange about the issues and challenges they are facing when dealing with digital security.

<u>Good Practices</u>

Generally, the IT security concerns are the same as with all other security-related issues: First comes the security of local people and organizations; then the teams on the ground (if they are not in the first category already), and third the organizations back home in the case of international organizations.

The group was too small to have an exchange about the various practices in the UCP organizations present, or about evidence that communications were intercepted by governments or others. What was mentioned was a leak of information from the Israeli Army to right-wing private people: A Greek Orthodox priest in Israel had[40] published an "Evil Tourism" Facebook page identifying accompaniers including information the soldiers have, e.g. photos of passports. Mentioning in social media locations of activists may lead to the intervention of security forces.

Some good practices were identified:

- Assume any e-mail is open communication (with the security level of a postcard).
- Use own organization's server.
- Restrict access to certain information.
- Make sure volunteers who use social media do not reveal their location. (or travel plans)
- Use time lag in posting articles and photos.
- Be careful with language. Fact based. Don't compare to anything else.
- Create a list of words and phrases not to used.
- Keep emotions out of communications.
- If writing an article, the head office reviews it first.
- Be aware of attacks and misuse of information on social media.

<u>Challenges</u>

The group listed:
- Without experts we don't know where the boundaries are. (when and where IT behavior

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[39] Facilitation and notes of group E 4 by Mel Duncan; notes of plenary after groups E, taken by Christine Schweitzer.

[40] It has in the meantime been removed by Facebook.

becomes risky)

- How do you assess reasonable risk vs. paranoia?
- Is it more secure to be low profile or to make a lot of noise?
- Tension between security on the ground and ability to do effective advocacy in their home countries.

There could be added: Is it safer to encrypt all communication or not do it? The advantage is that e-mails cannot be read that easily, and in particular 'private' hackers can probably be excluded. On the other side, so the arguments run, encryption may be flagging to intelligence agencies that there is something worth following and that it gives a false sense of security (only recently there were reports in the media that intelligence agencies are able to break them, and also encryption does not help if someone is arrested and forced by police to tell them the codes).

Conclusions

The recommendations formulated in the group are certainly to be emphasized. There are sufficient experts available to give trainings and this should be pursued.

4.3 Effect of Media and Social Media Use

This has been separated out from the discussion of group A3. The relevant question was: How are social media used, if at all, for civilian protection, and if so, what makes these practices effective?

Discussion and Good Practices

The group started this part of the discussion with the question: "Nowadays nothing can be believed, everything is questioned, there are a lot of manipulations of information, uncertainties, and disinformation, and how is your work influenced by that?"

There were particular (negative) experiences recounted by the groups working in Palestine. They constantly need to struggle against being labeled as anti-Semitic.

Most organizations have experiences with misinformation and rumors. Good practices to counter them were listed:

- Commit to truth telling, as little deception as possible.
- Give sources to support what you say.
- Do not tell secrets, but be truthful and transparent.
- Have a media strategy for quick response if needed to counter disinformation, for example regarding ceasefire breaches.
- Train community members to constantly monitor rumors that would affect the government, region, and social media.
- Have credible messengers available who have influence.
- Track hashtags on social media to see what people are saying.

Challenges

- Counter dominant narratives (like protesting against occupation being anti-Semitic), especially if they are promoted by a state or other powerful actors.
- Counter disinformation spread by such actors.

Conclusions

A good media strategy is required for all UCP organizations. The examples given in Beirut focused on the activist groups working in Palestine who are particularly challenged by powerful narratives and media campaigns against them. But spreading of rumors and false information about the UCP organization are also a challenge in other places, and it is essential to be aware of such risks and monitor social media so as to counter them in time.

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[41] The working group A3 was facilitated by Jenny McAvoy, notes were taken by Karen Karam and Abir Hajibraham. Notes of plenary after groups A taken by Christine Schweitzer.

4.4 Evaluation and Learning

What processes/methods (qualitative and quantitative) are best for learning from the work and evaluating these interventions? How often should evaluation be done and by whom, whose knowledge should be included? Are recent developments in digital technology being used in learning and evaluation processes (i.e. cell phone data entry, review of social media messages, etc.?) What kinds of evaluation questions are asked by funders, and how are these being answered? How is staff/volunteer learning 'captured' and used in daily practice? What are the implications for scaling up – how might particular strategies and methods be assessed for replication, in what contexts and sequencing, etc.? What are indications that certain methods can be used at a much larger scale, in what conditions and with what level of risk? What knowledge is needed to make these decisions and how is it being developed?

Discussion and Good Practices

The Working Group had the title "Evaluation/learning and scaling up," however; the subject of scaling up was not discussed. Instead, the participants had an exchange about different methods and occasions for evaluation.

The group discussed both internal and external evaluations with their different pros and cons (like misunderstandings by external evaluators vs. greater credibility for donors); baseline surveys where possible, evaluation of ongoing work and post-exit evaluations; evaluations conducted as part of one's own policy and evaluations requested by donors (though the two may not be in contradiction); qualitative and quantitative studies (with the first being the majority); measuring perceptions versus measuring indicators for change/peace. Methodologies mentioned included focus groups, interviews, online and offline questionnaires, storytelling, and PRA (participatory rural appraisal) methods.[43]

As "good practices" the group participants formulated:

- Not just focusing on vulnerability indicators, but focus also on changes and trends on threat / perpetrator behavior / indicators.
- Integrating / including indicators of peace (for example (e.g. if children go to school, if it is save to fetch water etc.) rather than being led only by perceptions.
- Initial analysis that can disaggregate risk factors and associated indicators goes some way to being able to measure changes.
- Base the methodology on a theory of change which is then evaluated regularly.
- Don't wait for end of cycle to evaluate, do continuous monitoring and analysis.
- Being involved in external evaluation processes: Work with the evaluators to prepare them and give them feed-back on their findings before the final report is written.
- Gather baseline data when possible (perceptions, fears, levels of violence).

- Use a mix of quantitative and qualitative data.
- Measuring perceptions is important in addition to "objective" data because they inform about people's thinking and behavior.
- Conduct post-activity evaluation meetings.
- It is good practice to use participative assessment methodologies, allowing communities to participate in their own monitoring, and also inform them after the evaluation of the outcomes.
- There is a need to educate donors on what to expect rather than contort to their expectations. Proactively showing them the best methods can help to shape expectations.

A pilot guide on the evaluation of protection by ALNAP was recommended: https://www.alnap.org/our-topics/evaluation

A second topic in the group was learning within the organization, starting with the question "How is staff/volunteer learning 'captured' and used in daily practice?" besides internal or external evaluations. Practices listed were:

- Overlap of two weeks (or at least 10 days) between departing and arriving volunteers.
- Tracking of information (generally, everything that concerns the work), by the local or HQ office.
- Debriefing volunteers after they have left.
- Writing documentations as a team.
- Three-month-work plans developed by staff which is then assessed.
- Staff journals encouraged.
- Database used for information.
- Set aside time for staff to reflect.

The group A 3 also discussed this issue under the question: How often do you assess the impact on violent actors whose behavior you're trying to change? They listed:

- Behavior of soldiers and everyone in the community, on regular basis, every few months, see how perceptions are changing, how actions are changing throughout time.
- Piloting conflict monitoring framework, constant monitoring, co-designed with USIP (in Iraq).
- Direct testimonies from interviews with impacted people regarding how the work has impacted them.
- Israeli/Palestinian soldiers lay down their guns to work for peace, model this for other soldiers, and then monitor number of soldiers that join.
- Inviting soldiers to participate in role-playing so that they can see others point view.

Challenges

The following list was partly created by the group, partly taken from contributions to the discussion as noted in the minutes.

- We cannot claim causality. Protection is hard to measure. The issue of attribution is probably the biggest challenge in evaluations dealing with complex social change. An example was given from South Sudan: When the frontline there moves, the number of

rapes usually goes down; so a UCP organization working on GBV can measure risk factors, but the moving of the frontline was the cause of GBV going down, not the work of the organization.

- Security issues around conducting and publishing evaluations.

- Change of project director (leads to new approaches and changes of direction).

- Long-term presence can diminish perceptions of relevance. This means that people (the so-called "beneficiaries") get so used to the UCP organization being present, people stop realizing what role it plays.

- Plus the presence does not seem to change anything about the overall problem which is seen as a problem over a long time as well. Often evaluations take data from community and do not return anything. Rarely are the results fed back to informants about what has been shared and what has happened with the information; there needs to be a better system to collect and share this information

- Initial analysis doesn't go far enough.

- We are often evaluating perceptions of security and safety. For rapid interventions, what are the most common abuses and how to reduce them? What are the most common risk factors, how do we measure change in abusive behavior?

- External evaluators being paid by the organization that commissions the evaluation may create a conflict of interest.[44]

- To whom do we feedback what we found? Feedback may have impact on the current situation. But non-publication, while for security reasons sometimes a must, also has its negative side, especially when it goes hand in hand with no publication about the project at all (as in the case of NP's Syria project). People want to read about an organization and its work online and when there is no mention anywhere, it may lead to disappointment and, in the worst case, distrust.

- A lot of knowledge that is included focuses on individuals/beneficiaries. Not so often on knowledge from perpetrators.[45]

- Learning from other projects: Not everything is transferable to new contexts; studies do not replace doing one's own analysis.

- Baseline surveys: People interviewed may not tell the truth, for example GBV is a taboo topic; camp inhabitants may say that they feel safer than they do in reality because they fear the camp authorities or because male heads of families find it hard to admit that they cannot keep their families safe.

- There is a tendency to focus on indicators of vulnerability but we also need indicators for the threat side of the equation; this will help to discover new strategies and ultimately to build up a causal logic and theory of change.

- If UCP means living and working 24/7 in a net of relationships – how can this be measured? There are no indicators for these complex relations.

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[44] This and the following challenges have been extracted from the notes of the small group; they were not included in the group's report to the plenary.

[45] Though there are a few studies – on Guatemala and El Salvador, on Mindanao and a recent work by Oliver Kaplan.

Conclusions

A number of analysis and evaluation techniques were mentioned by the facilitator and by participants of the group, among them focus groups, interviews, online questionnaires, storytelling and PRA methods. Probably the best is to use several of them because each has its advantages and disadvantages. It was also strongly emphasized that analysis and evaluation need to accompany the whole project cycle, and that both qualitative and quantitative data are valuable.

It was emphasized that it is necessary to be clear about the purpose of an evaluation: Learning for one's own organization may require other methods and data than evaluations for donors who often are most impressed by quantitative data. Again the need to educate donors on what to expect from evaluations is still, after years of international discussions around evaluations, very urgent. It seems that the expert exchanges are only very slowly filtering through to them. And of course (I)NGOs may also profit from expert knowledge about evaluation and analysis – one group mentioned that it had much support from INTRAC[46]; another is using ALNAP as a resource.

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[46] https://www.intrac.org)

4.5 Staff/Volunteers Training, Length of Service, Support, and Post-Deployment/Service

How is staff/volunteer competence developed and assessed? How much training, and in what topics, is appropriate before working in the field. What qualifications or experiences are required/desired when selecting staff/volunteers? When and where and by whom is the training offered? How are staff/volunteers supported in response to stress, trauma, distress of experiences in the work? What are the strengths and challenges of short term volunteers/staff and long term service? When advocacy post service is expected of volunteers/staff, how is this supported, encouraged, and what are the effects of this advocacy? How do organizations support current and previous staff/volunteers with ongoing adjustment/mental health issues?

Discussion and Good Practices

The group moved through a life cycle of a team member at UCP. There were three organizations represented – CPT, ISM and NP.

As to recruitment as well as length of service, the organizations follow different models:

CPT: The process before the training is that the person joins a delegation, and then s/he can be part of the training. After the training, the participant needs to apply to join a team and then is part of a reserve. Sometimes after the training the participants are not necessarily eligible to be part of the team, it could be something else, for example an internship. This process could take a year.

NP: At the beginning NP used to provide training for one month to prepare people to be deployed, but it was expensive. After the training it took a while to be sent to the field, so people got jobs or joined other organizations. Today, NP has one in-country training. But it is still very challenging to identify people who have the skills to work under stress, and necessary intercultural skills. The people really show how good they are once they are in the field. The training covers, in addition to various work methods an important combination of skills: commitment, cultural sensitivity, and the value of local staff.

ISM: There is a process of basic training and screening. When the person comes to Palestine, they receive two days training, and after this they decide whether the person joins or not. They are looking for different profiles including interpersonal skills, whether there is racism, experience living with internationals and working with internationals. There are cases where people are not accepted and they are sent back home. In that training, they prioritize the oppression (activism) training. The training takes place from Monday to Thursday, and then on Friday they go to a protest, but they are not allowed to go alone or to very dangerous places. They see how comfortable people are in this situation.

Good practices:

- Choose people who are trustworthy and good at teamwork (issue of character). It is less

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[47] The group D 3 was facilitated by Jonathan Pinckney. Notes of group D3 by Martha Hernandez; notes of plenary after groups D by Christine Schweitzer.

about resume and technical background but being able to work in teams.

- People with good intercultural skills. Being well versed and experienced in working in other environments is very important.
- There are benefits of having longer training and a probationary period.
- Trainings: Simulations and role-plays are very good.
- Training people in self-awareness and awareness of others in a team.
- Ease people into violent or high-pressure situations. Not go straight away into highly escalated environments.
- Mentorship and guidance by respected senior staff members.
- Daily team meetings with updates and sharing. This is also the moment for context analysis for most groups.
- Having some form of regular access to professional counselling or therapy, on-site or offsite. NP: when there is a serious violent incident that the team experienced, normally the persons involved are evacuated and taken to the main office and there together with the manager and a member of the senior team do a debrief. In case there is need, the person is offered psychological counseling which could be in person or via skype. Depending on how that process goes sometimes the person is given some time off to take a good break.
- Mandatory or highly recommended breaks. Team leaders may intervene and insist here.
- On-site stints long enough to build meaningful relationships. Longer stays are preferable because of relationship building.
- After time is over? Give former team members access to support structures (counselling) and medical insurance.

Challenges

- Difficulty of people with savior complex (white, western, male, other). May sometimes not be apparent until someone is actually on team.
- Long training means high costs. Some find it difficult to find right length of training.
- Shifting organizational needs is a challenge for training.
- Difficult to evaluate people's susceptibility to trauma before starting the work.
- Exposure to violence leads to trauma (in unpredictable ways). This is a core challenge for this kind of work.
- Trauma leads to unhealthy practices of self-care. Alcoholism and other substance abuse is a major challenge here.
- Sometimes people resist taking breaks.
- Cultural or personal barriers to health self-care. In parts of ME it is not practiced to talk about trauma. People hold it inside themselves.
- Alcoholism and burnout poses danger for individuals sand teams as whole.
- Bringing in inapplicable lessons from missions in different countries to the training.
- Difficult to keep track of team members after their return from the field. Some people tend to disappear.

<u>Conclusions</u>

As to recruitment and training, in spite of all the differences regarding length of service and character of the UCP work (activist or nonpartisan etc.), it seems that the organizations look for rather similar qualities in the people doing the work. Intercultural skills and ability to work in teams seem to be important for all. Practical elements like role-plays or exposure to real-life situations prior to final deployment can be found in all the trainings.

Generally it seems that the training given to volunteers/staff in the groups assembled in Beirut is relatively short when compared to other types of groups protecting civilians.

More challenging for the organization – again this seems to be a commonality – is to stay in contact with volunteers or staff after they have left. If there are good practices around that other than giving people access to psychological aid if needed, they still need to be explored in further workshops.

4.6 Scaling Up (and Down)

This has been separated out from the discussion of group A3. The relevant question was: If projects/interventions were able to greatly expand or scale up, how, if at all, would it affect how this work is done? If so, what strategies/methods might be most useful and which least useful?

Discussion

Scaling up was mostly understood as having "more people" on the ground – more teams, covering more regions, larger teams. This may be more volunteers or staff working with the organization, it also may be increasing the number of partners who practice elements of UCP. A few major determining factors need to be taken into account:

- Resources.
- Access (visas, permissions).
- Strategic questions (what to focus on in the work).

Challenges:

- Finding the necessary resources.
- Getting the necessary permission (or visa) for larger numbers of people.
- At some point, unarmed civilian protection might be incorporated in the UN for example. The challenge is that those INGOs that promote and practice UCP currently might lose control of how to shape perceptions of what UCP is. Association with UN could be problematic as to how people see UCP.
- There is the danger that UCP may be seen as a toolbox, from which single tools may be taken and employed by e.g. UN organizations, while not subscribing to the values and principles that underpin the UCP work overall. How does it, for example, impact UCP if accompaniment is used by female UN police officers in uniform and carrying (but not using) a weapon? Also, there is the risk of losing adaptation to local contexts that was emphasized so much at the workshop – because they are so large, UN missions follow a general blue print and have a hard time to adapt to individual situations. Bureaucracy: the more people, the more admin is needed. This may undermine values and principles such as primacy of local actors, independence, and the needed flexibility.
- Scaling down once you have grown.

Conclusions

This chapter reflects only a short discussion held by one working group that had multiple topics to discuss. The outcomes of the discussion therefore definitely need expansion and further discussion- perhaps based on the experience of organizations that did scale up (as NP did in South

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[48] The working group A3 was facilitated by Jenny McAvoy, notes were taken by Karen Karam and Abir Hajibraham. Notes of plenary after groups A taken by Christine Schweitzer.

Sudan).

4.7 Closing Projects, Maintaining the Mission

This was the first of the groups in the round where participants chose topics that had not been discussed sufficiently before.

Discussion, Good Practices and Proposals[49]

The facilitator suggested three topics for the group:
- Lessons learned from missions already closed and whether to replicate in future occasions practices where closing of the project was successful, or learn not to repeat the mistakes from when it was unsuccessful
- Part of our work is to leave some sort of legacy in the community where we work. How can we improve on that?
- What kind of support do actors need after the project?

In the working group, only members of NP participated. So although some of the other international organizations present in Beirut had experiences with closing projects or at least team sites, their experiences were not captured.

The findings of the group were – probably not surprisingly – similar to what was discussed in Manila regarding this topic. Proposals made included:
- Capacity-building (trainings) in local communities so that they can use some of the tools of UCP, perhaps including supporting people wishing to start a local initiative. (People in the Philippines played with that thought when NP considered leaving.)
- Ongoing continuous support and advising beyond the project timeline for local groups, for example also giving them support in fundraising from international sources. Other support could be networking, advisory functions and consultancies.
- One possibility after an international project closes is to support national staff continuing the work in their communities in one way or the other, because they carry local ownership.
- Following the Red Cross model with creating national branches which continue the work. Participants saw UCP as a worldwide movement which needs to be perpetuated.
- To do an assessment some years after having left a field site to assess what the situation is, see what happened, in order to learn and know what to do before closing down the next project.
- Spreading the UCP manual as a book could be a good practice – combined with training.
- Try to learn from the history of closing other projects and the mistakes made there. This requires documenting evaluations in order to maintain an institutional memory.

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[49]   The group was facilitated by Thiago Wolfer, notes were taken by Karen Aram. Notes of plenary after groups E, taken by Christine Schweitzer.

<u>Conclusions</u>

Looking at the discussion in Beirut as well as the past one in Manila, there is one observation to be made regarding the role of UCP in the societies where projects occur. Military peace-keeping and international work focusing on security sector reform with police and military trainings follow the philosophy of being there only for a short(er) period of time and aim at being able to leave under circumstances where regular state institutions and rule of law replace the international efforts. They do not aim to be sustainable as such but sustainability is to be achieved by these regular institutions taking over the functions temporarily fulfilled by the internationals. For UCP as practiced by (I)NGOs, the primary target group or the beneficiaries are local civil society rather than state institutions.t (Leaving aside that some organizations, certainly NP, have also conducted training for military, for example, in human rights.)

There may be three possible reasons for the discussion of "leaving something behind":

1. In some countries, the departure of UCP organizations may be because state authorities no longer tolerate the UCP organization. In this case, the security situation remains threatening, perhaps even worsening, and the UCP organization needs to address the question if there is any role they could play remotely, to increase safety and security.

2. Even when leaving voluntarily, it seems to happen in situations where there is no full internal security so that a need for protection, although perhaps diminished, remains. (Though "voluntary" may need qualification – it may be the withdrawal of funds by donors which forces an organization to close.)

3. UCP organizations became a factor in the local communities and of course a source of income for local staff and communities. People wish this not to end.

In all three cases, the common denominator discussed in both workshops is local people continuing UCP tasks. Not yet considered carefully (so far) are strategies like "protection from afar" – strategies that Amnesty International, for example, is using for political prisoners where international intervention, be it behind closed doors or through public campaigning, aim to secure the safety of the beneficiary. Devising such strategies (or learning about how they are already practiced) for communities under threat is something that perhaps could be looked at in the next workshop(s).

5. Conclusions

5.1 Final Plenary on Good Practice

The final plenary of the workshop, similarly to the one in Manila, 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 both workshops, red are those were most doubts were expressed in both workshops.

Beirut Workshop	Most important (blue)	Doubts /needs more nuance	For comparison: the result in the Manila workshop	Most impor-tant	Doubts /needs more nuance
Relationship building	10	1	**Primacy of local groups**	15	4
Well-trained teams	9	0	**Multi-level relationship-building**	14	--
Primacy of local actors	8	1	Capacity enhancement for all – local actors and all of us	9	--
Be proactive in our monitoring and evaluation and learning	8	0	**Ongoing context analysis:**	7	1
Learning from local communities / experiences of others	8	0	Co-Creation (instead of implementation)	5	1
Analysis	4	1	Seeking the humanity in the other	5	--
Non-partisanship	3	5	Creativity:	3	1
Self-care and mandatory breaks	3	2	Adhere to principles	2	6
Focus on prevention	3	2	Flexibility	2	3
Adaptability	3	0	Trust-building:	2	1
Outcomes oriented approach	2	3	Good listening	2	--
Donor education	2	3	Adaptability	1	1
Sharing diversity	2	2	Innovation	1	1
Having hope	2	1	Sustainability	1	1
Planning strategic engagements	2	1	Acceptance (in the community)	1	--
Forming local peace committees	2	0	Interdependency of protection work	1	--
Commitment	2	0	Different role of local, national and	1	--

			international in different phases		
Empathy:	2	0	Team work	1	--
Solidarity	2	0	Concrete action	–	2
Ongoing training	2		Remember the greater vision you part of	–	--
Protecting all life	1	5	Persistence to nonviolence	–	--
Disaggregation of threats	1	1	Constant learning	-	1
Networks and local relations	1	1	Unity	-	--
Sharing	1	0			
Diversity in our teams	1	0			
Credible interrupters:	1	0			
Maximizing different roles and skills	1				
Relevance of UCP wheel	0	5			
De-escalation	0	3			
Relationships of all stakeholders and unexpected actors:	0	2			
Ongoing reflection and sharing:	0	0			
Beauty of faces and stories I listened to	0	0			
Sharing successes and challenges with broader community		3			

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

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

In Beirut, "relationship-building" was considered most relevant (and it was rated second-highest in Manila), followed by "well-trained teams" which was not listed in Manila at all. [50] "Primacy of local actors" and "analysis" are two other points with high ratings from both workshops.

As to the category "Doubts, not sure, questions": "Protecting all life" and "nonpartisanship" ranked highest in Beirut, followed by "using the UCP wheel". In Manila it had been "primacy of local groups" and "adhere to principles" which led the list of points regarding practices that people had doubts, or wanted more nuance, about. Primacy of local groups ranked high as a good practice in both workshops, but in Manila it also ranked high for needing more nuance.

That nonpartisanship was a contested practice, with many concerns for needing more nuance, is not surprising. As reported in earlier chapters, not all organizations have this as a central principle.

The doubts regarding "protecting all life" had to do with two points: at least one person had understood it as "all sentient life" which that person felt went too far. The other concern, perhaps more to the point of UCP, was doubts if protecting armed actors (soldiers, police men etc.) should be part of a UCP mandate. Some said that they had done this and also criticized the implicit message of "it is ok to kill armed people" when you emphasize that you protect "innocent civilians". Others felt that this was beyond their mandate and pointed to IHL as an orientation mark. (The IHL makes a clear difference between combatants and civilians).

Five people had doubts about the UCP wheel. They explained that they saw UCP more as a practice, and that there were activities not covered in the wheel. They felt it was too static, and did not quite capture what is distinctive about UCP as compared to other approaches. As to "self-care and mandatory breaks", those marking it as doubtful explained that they objected to the word "mandatory". They also felt that it gave undue privilege to internationals (who can take breaks) while the locals cannot get away.

Closure of the Workshop

The workshop ended with sincere thanks to all participants, extended by Madani and the Permanent Peace Movement as the host and NP as the organizer of the workshop.

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[50] The point on capacity building in Manila referred much more to work with beneficiaries and less to training of volunteers doing accompaniment / UCP work.

5.2 Summary and Conclusions

<u>Good Practices and Challenges</u>

The participants of the workshop formulated a number of good practices and challenges. The most important of them can be found in section 6.1 and 6.2. Some of them add to what was collected in Manila, but there were also a number of new topics and issues – for example working with IDPs, de-escalation of armed shootings, dealing with power asymmetries and gender in the UCP work.

As to the 77 general good practices extracted from the field studies in "Wielding Nonviolence", a number of them have been implicitly or explicitly confirmed again in the workshop in Beirut, as had already happened in Manila.

As in Manila, the Beirut group considered a strict categorical distinction between the strategies of 'encouragement' and 'deterrence' to be faulty, because there is always an element of deterrence present even if the emphasis lies in the strategy of encouragement. The groups present in Beirut probably put more emphasis on deterrence than those in Manila, but there were also ample examples of work (mostly in Iraq and Syria) that depended totally on building relationships with various actors, including armed ones.

Nonpartisanship – as was to be expected – was not a principle shared by all organizations in its meaning of not taking sides in regard to one actor or one conflict issue. Interesting here is that protagonists of both approaches argued that their approach helps to generate trust. It was suggested that in the end it depends on the goals of the UCP organization (see below).

Another main theme in Beirut was the complex relationships between local and international actors. Many observations and thoughtful evidence were collected regarding the comparison and relationship between local and international groups – access to conflict parties, deterrent power, knowledge of backgrounds and contexts, different SOPs etc. There were also – perhaps unlike in Manila -groups that could not easily be categorized as either "local" or "international", because they were local groups using larger numbers of internationals as volunteers (ISM) or worked in close partnership with an international organization (Muslim Peacemaker Teams). Important points were made regarding an influx of internationals to a conflict zone leading to disempowerment of activists (in itself not a new debate but one which to the knowledge of the rapporteur has so far not played a role in the reflections on UCP). Important, and so far not universally recognized by those engaging in UCP or comparable work, was the observation that the presence of internationals does not automatically lead to more safety and security. There are contexts where it adds to the danger of local activists and civilians.

Similar problems were raised regarding relationships or a formal status with the government of the respective country where the UCP group works. Among the three or four countries where UCP work was represented in Beirut, only one government seemingly fully welcomes and invites UCP practitioners: The Palestinian Authority. But the Iraqi government, the Syrian, and Israeli government that has occupied Palestine, are at best, grudgingly accepting the work of the organizations (or at least not fully banning it as Israel could do in Palestine if it chose to). It was not fully explored in the workshop but the impression remains that at least the majority of the organizations present do not seek a positive relationship with these governments. In the case of Israel, it was stated that getting acceptance by Israel would mean losing trust with the PA. In Iraq, the NGOs come in through the autonomous Kurdish area where it is easier to get permission. The local groups in Syria, while living and operating in government-held areas, also seem to want to

keep distance from their government. Unlike Manila, it is not only or not in all cases, the fear of being perceived as partisan (rather than nonpartisan), but organizations seek acceptance through the perception as being in solidarity with those they seek to protect (Palestine).

The issue of relationship-building with all actors in the conflicts, seeking the common humanity in all interlocutors, was not universally shared in Beirut as it had been in Manila. Limitations to such relationship-building were considered to be more imposed from the outside (e.g. government or donors) than being inherent in the nature of conflict parties – with the exception of Palestine where activists don't want the accompaniers to build relationship with those representing Israel's policies in the Occupied Territories (security forces, settlers etc.).

Also contrary to Manila but in line with the findings in the study by Eli McCarthy and Jonathan Pinckney in "Wielding Nonviolence" edited by Ellen Furnari[51], the groups in Beirut universally shared the principle of nonviolence. (Though having different interpretations of what it means for their practice.)

In other regards, the outcomes of the Beirut workshop regarding the work in Palestine did not add much to what the two researchers – who also attended the workshop – had found. They also had interviewed more groups, including Israeli ones which were sadly missing in Beirut. Here only a few words to highlight slight differences the rapporteur noticed: Some of the challenges they listed[52] did not play a role in Beirut, or were put in different words. There was no real question

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[51] Unarmed Civilian Protection in the Israeli and Palestinian Conflict, By Eli McCarthy and Jonathan Pinckney, pp72-157

[52] They list:
- Mandate and Group Proliferation: Are there too many different mandates and UCP groups?
- Mandate: Protection vs. Systemic Change - What should be the emphasis of UCP groups?
- Deployment Length: How long should UCP members commit?
- Staffing: Who should UCP groups hire?
- Positioning: Where on the spectrum of partisanship and nonpartisanship should UCP groups land?
- Independence of UCP groups: How much independence should UCP groups maintain in determining their strategy and practices?
- Advocacy: Should UCP groups do advocacy? If so, to whom and how?
- Dialogue Partners: Should UCP groups seek to build relationships and communication with all parties in the conflict or just with some?
- Dialogue and cooperation with other UCP Groups
- Israeli Soldiers
- Israeli Government Relations
- Legal registration
- Israeli Settlers
- Human Rights and Human Dignity for all: Should UCP groups more clearly recognize the dignity of all? If so, how should this get expressed? Should they promote love of enemies, especially Christian UCP groups?
- Trauma-Healing: Should UCP groups link more with trauma-healing, restorative processes, or public health approaches?
- Nonviolence: What should the commitment to nonviolence look like?
- Direct Intervention: Should UCP groups intervene? If so, under what circumstances and how?
- Humanitarian Aid and Development: Should UCP groups are directly involved in humanitarian aid or development work?
- Language of Protection: Is "protection" the best language for what UCP groups offer?
- Constructive Conflict: Does the presence of UCP escalate the conflict or even the violence?

(for Palestine) that advocacy and work on the ground are both needed. The challenge participants saw was that being outspoken in advocacy might mean losing access on the ground. It was also clearly said that nonpartisanship and complete independence were two principles not sought by some UCP groups. The question raised in the case study, are there too many UCP groups with too many different mandates, was not addressed in Beirut and must remain an open question, as does the question if UCP work perpetuates the occupation. (The question here is: What is the alternative?)

<u>Two Paradigms</u>

What role may UCP play in support of resistance movements? This is a question asked in Manila, and in Beirut where there were groups doing exactly this.

Probably the most distinctive feature of the Beirut workshop compared to Manila was the participation of organizations doing what has been called the "activist approach" practiced by some international and local organizations particularly working in Palestine.[53] This activist approach as in Palestine strongly related with the approach of 'deterrence' and with a partisan stance to the conflict issues.[54]

It shall be suggested here that these are rather fundamentally different paradigms for accompaniment/ UCP. On the surface they may look similar: "Some of the main methods of most UCP groups in this conflict [Palestine-Israel] include protective presence, accompaniment, monitoring and documentation, and relationship building. A number of UCP groups also engage in capacity development, intervention, and advocacy"[55], McCarthy and Pinckney wrote in "Wielding Nonviolence".

Also the operational objectives on the ground may be similar – protecting people from violence. However, the wider goals are different: The nonpartisan approach (for lack of a better word for this) aims at contributing to a settlement of the violence but is not much focused on influencing the contents of how such a settlement would look. From the results of Beirut, it seems that this usually comes hand in hand with emphasizing relationship-building as a basic strategy. However, this may not be the case overall when thinking of the work of Peace Brigades International for example whose work is much more based on deterrence.[56]The activist approach, by contrast, sees the protective work as a contribution to a social struggle. As to organizational structure, the nonpartisan approach, if run by an international organization, may be more "professional" in the sense of being likely to be using paid staff working for the organization longer term, larger HQs,

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- Damaging property
- Decision-Making Structure
- Exit Strategy: How valuable is a clear exit strategy for UCP groups? How best to develop it?
- Short vs. Long Term: Does UCP perpetuate the occupation?

[53] It may be also the case for some of the local organizations in Syria, and for CPT wherever they work, however this was not fully explored and may be a faulty assumption.

[54] Eli McCarthy and Jonathan Pinckney in their study on UCP in Palestine/Israel for "Wielding Nonviolence" had already concluded that there was "not presently a UCP group on the ground that combines NGO status, nonpartisanship, and willingness to regularly directly intervene".

[55] McCarthy & Pinckney a.a.O., pp72-73

[56] Mahoney, Liam and Eguren, Luis Enrique (1997) Unarmed Bodyguards. International Accompaniment for the Protection of Human Rights. West Hartford:Kumarian Press

line management etc. The activist approach is often employed by smaller organizations that work with short- and midterm volunteers[57], and the working structure is based on consensus decision-making. (Again, PBI is an exception here: They practice consensus to a large degree.) For local organizations, things are different, but also there is a difference between organizations that seek to maintain at least some degree of independence if not non-partisanship and those that are in the middle of a struggle for human rights or freedom.

To make the point, two simplified types are proposed here:

	Activist	Nonpartisan
Objectives	Protect activists engaged in a struggle	Protect civilians
Basis of legitimacy	Solidarity with a shared cause	IHL, human rights covenants etc.
Context	Uprisings/revolutions; resistance (civilian-based defense)	Civil or international war, armed conflict
Position towards conflict issues and actors	Partisan	Non-partisan/impartial
Main values	Nonviolence Primacy of local actors	Nonviolence Nonpartisanship Independence Primacy of local actors
Belief basis	Often religious	Secular, neutral towards religious beliefs
Strategies	On the ground: Deterrence, relationship building only with limited range of actors International: Building pressure on the opponent through reporting to decision-makers and/or wider public	On the ground: Relationship-building with all sides (encouragement) and deterrence International: At best reminding all sides of the obligations they entered through signing IHL / HR covenants
Activities	protective presence, accompaniment, monitoring, documentation, interpositioning, advocacy with wider public and decision-makers	Whole UCP wheel[58] (see 6.5) Advocacy: On the micro-level. With decision-makers more limited to finding (political & financial) support for UCP

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[57] Short-term is defined here up to 3 months, middle term 3 months to 1 year.
[58] See 6.5

Practitioners	Volunteers	Staff
Organizational structure	Consensus-based	Hierarchical

Figure 3 Two paradigms for international UCP organizations

To make the point, these two approaches are contrasted. However, in practice there are many shades in between, and exceptions that break all typologies.

The purpose for making the contrast is to suggest that, when going deeper into good practices, it may make sense to better distinguish both approaches, and look at separate sets of good practices for both of them. Some of the "it is all context-specific" statements so rampant in Beirut could be avoided in future when just recognizing that perhaps approaches were compared that cannot fully be compared because they are based on different objectives (and perhaps values).

Questions and Recommendations for Future Workshops

Several questions were formulated in the workshop that may deserve more attention in the next workshops, or were questions that had been listed for working groups but were not dealt with:

- Which specific factors influence a UCP organization when deciding to seek dialogue or set store on 'deterrence' instead? (It is pretty clear after the two workshops that the two go hand in hand and rarely one is completely missing, but when exactly is which strategy predominate and why?)
- Are the suggested paradigm and the hypothesis viable that both partisan and nonpartisan approaches 'work', depending on the paradigm and context?
- The unanswered questions from breakout-group 3.3 in Beirut:
  What strategies are used in contexts of lower intensity vs higher intensity violence (i.e. primarily on the ground fighting vs use of air power and bombs, drones, etc.)? How is UCP practiced in the midst of urban conflict/urban warfare? Is this different than in rural areas? How does stress or PTSD in staff/volunteers impact programing in contexts where staff/volunteers are targeted? How does it impact those you are protecting/supporting (beneficiaries)? Does the use of social media and digital communication increase or decrease vulnerability, in what contexts, and why? If larger interventions could be funded – scaled up – what are the potentials for civilian protection in the face of these extremely violent armed groups/military?
- Upscaling projects: This had been on the agenda but was only briefly touched upon.
- Disempowerment of local actors by internationals.
  How to avoid this and (from the point of view of local actors), how to resist this?
- Supporting and staying in contact with volunteers or staff after they have left.

Left-overs from Manila not dealt with in Beirut:
- Strategies to deal with extremist groups who are the perpetrators. (This was already listed in Manila as well.)
- The contradiction of UCP organizations that claim nonviolence as their principle but rely on police force or sometimes even (legitimate) military force needs further attention.
- Protection "from afar".
- Another question is in regard to "providing aid" as a good practice. In the Manila workshop, it was mentioned that it was important that an international UCP organization

not be seen as delivering aid but just accompanying those who delivered it. Also the local participants did not indicate that they considered their provision of aid as part of their UCP activities.

Last not least two practical recommendations:

- For some groups (and for this documentation here) it turned out to be a challenge that there were so many questions listed for each working group discussion. Most did not manage to go through them all, those who did often had no opportunity to go in depth into issues or pursue something that came up unexpectedly. Therefore, the recommendation of the rapporteur is to stick to perhaps 3-4 questions at maximum, and encourage facilitators to explore issues when they come up.

- Perhaps the order of the groups could follow the structure suggested in the two documentations – with principles, then strategies and tactics, then management questions?

- Focus on the region; stop giving examples from other places. While this worked well in the first workshop, it became a bit repetitive in the second. Therefore it is recommended that representatives from those organizations that work in more than one region focus their contributions to the workshop to reflect only the region the workshop is held.

6. Documentation
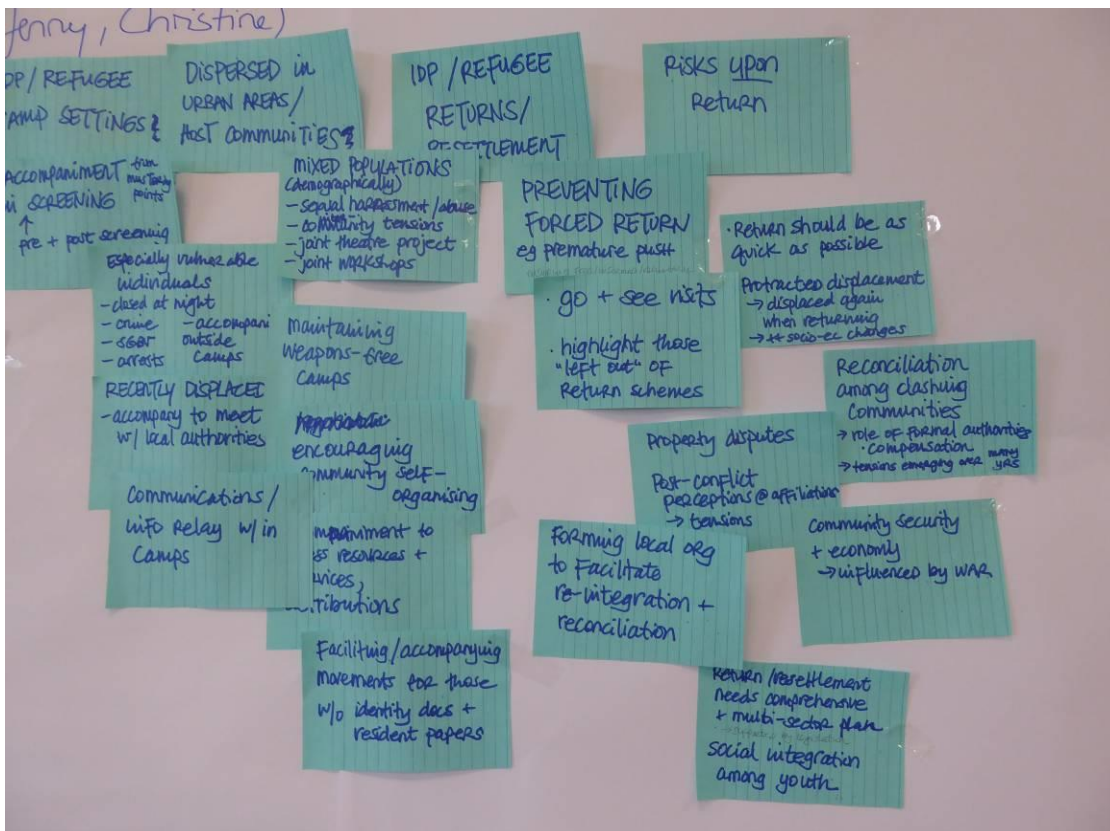
6.1 Summary of Good Practices

<u>Use of Principles</u>

Generally, as in Manila people agreed that it is important to have principles. They help to inform decisions in difficult situations. But organizations should be aware that principles may contradict each other, forcing UCP organizations to make choices regarding which principle has priority. The two principles everyone fully agreed on were nonviolence and primacy of local actors, and in general also "do no harm" was agreed. Nonpartisanship and independence were not shared by all.

Nonviolence

- Importance of education to address the different challenges.

Nonpartisanship

- Nonpartisanship can begin with language. In many conflicts, certain terms - like "human rights" or "occupation" in Palestine are codes for being against Israel and thereby indicate taking a side in the conflict.
- Nonpartisanship should be expressed through diversity in teams, including members from all groups (sectarian, ethnic).

Independence

- Independence can be expressed through visible markers like uniforms (vests, caps etc.)
- Having more than one donor for a project can help support independence from a donor's agenda.

Primacy of local actors

- Supporting local actors' agenda of what needs to be done and how is important.
- At the beginning it is good to be working through local hierarchies to gain access to a community, but then to spread out and involve those not represented by these local (mostly male) leaders, including women.
- UCP organizations should be aware of power structures in communities, including the possible existence of certain personalities or families that seek to build and monopolize on relationships with internationals.

Do no harm

- There is the need to develop good relationships with a cross section of people, so as to get many perspectives and have good information in order make careful assessments to avoid doing harm.
- Primacy of local actors comes into play here – it is often better to let locals handle a situation because they have a better sense of the consequences of an action.
- An important lesson is the need to question the assumption that international presence is beneficial and effective everywhere. There are situations where it may endanger local activists rather than being an asset.

Reference to international law

- International law might not always be the best starting point – in some conflicts it is seen as an indicator for being on one side. And in some places there may be much stronger local norms that are quite similar and more acceptable.

Official Government Recognition or Informal Acceptance

- Not everybody may consider it a good practice, but some organizations resort to presenting their work in a way that is acceptable to the government in order to be allowed to work there, avoiding terminology and issues that the government would not accept.
- Similarly, some organizations resort to having their volunteers / staff enter the country as tourists because they would otherwise be refused entry.

Advocacy and Donor Relationships

- Advocacy should be looked at as part of a holistic and multi-layered (not only high level) approach.
- The roles of protective accompaniment and protective advocacy should strengthen each other.
- Reports on what is happening on the ground can become references in track 1 negotiations.
- Often it may be a good idea to defer advocacy and public presentations by team members until after they return home rather than while being in the field. This may at least prevent them from having their visa cancelled.
- Organizing field visits for policy-makers is a good tool for advocacy.
- Organizations involved in advocacy in the area of conflict should try to make sure that there are the right voices at the table, meaning the voices of local people and significant participation by women. The role of internationals is to help the right voices get there, and amplify their voices.
- Donors should be very flexible in their funding, not requiring particular "projects".
- Sub-granting from international NGOs to local CSOs, freeing them from the burden of financial administration and reporting, is a good practice.

Deterrence and Encouragement

- The choice of deterrence or encouragement was all context-specific, and often both approaches go hand in hand. Depending on the situation, it may vary from team to team within one organization, and both may sometimes be part of one and the same activity.
- Many things may give an organization leverage: The group listed what gives an UCP organization leverage: material capacities, ability to mobilize higher level attention, visible/obvious international presence; visual documentation, exposing contradictions, reference to international law, credibility through who you are, building relationships of trust, using narrative-shifting reminders of common humanity, doing confidence-building,

asking empathic questions to deescalate a situation, apply ceasefire monitoring methods and having internationals working with a local organization in various capacities.[59]

How to Decide on Beneficiaries

- Criteria for making decisions on beneficiaries include:
  ° Those most at risk;
  ° Key people who in turn can influence others;
  ° Those asking for protection;
  ° Asking locals or local partners who is most at risk;
  ° The level of risk the organization and/or the individuals in the teams are willing to take.

- It was emphasized that doing good context, risk and impact analysis as well as actor mapping and needs and capacity assessment are necessary for making such decisions.
- To consult with the local community about who to prioritize because it has the best analysis.
- Building relationships with local organizations. They may be able to deal with issues (like domestic violence) that are difficult for UCP organization to tackle directly.

Responding to Different Kinds of Violence

- UCP organizations should be consulting with the local community about who to prioritize because it has the best analysis. Doing so using existing communication channels within local civil society.
- Workshop participants in Beirut thought UCP interventions should concentrate on armed conflict and political violence,
- and refer GBV to specialized (local or international) organizations while recognizing that one kind of violence may lead to another.
- One possibility to reach groups that cannot be contacted directly is to make alliances with third parties.
- Organizations should be working from a position of nuance and complexity. They should not assume motivations but do analysis to understand group and individual motives.
- Another good practice is to use existing communication channels when possible, within local society at large (not only UCP groups).
- Careful analysis of past failures to plan new strategies is useful,
- as is mapping of all actors' interests to find common ground.
- Using local legal processes when beneficial is another good practice, for example to call police in cases of settler's violence.

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[59] This was not listed by the group but needs to be added since it came clearly out from other working groups.

- At least for Palestine it was stated: High-level advocacy to change policy is critical. Since individual settler groups are not amenable to dialogue, here needs to be pressure from top down.

Local and International UCP

- For some organizations, winning trust with security forces was an important task.
- Given the complex picture of different organizations with different political interests, partnership management is crucial, and transparency.
- Capacity-building (through trainings and support of teams formed afterwards) plays an important role in one of the countries represented at the workshop.
- For some local organizations, making use of international volunteers to gain more leverage and deter violence from opponent state forces is a well-established practice. (In other contexts, however, this strategy is not advisable because the presence of internationals may also increase the risk for local activists.)
- The presence of groups doing protection and that are partly militarized and controversial, may be a challenge because people may confuse them with the nonviolent UCP organizations. Or vice versa there may be faulty expectations regarding UPC practitioners getting involved in defense activities.

Protecting IDPs

- Preventing displacement through rumor control, approaching fighters to move away, and other supportive measures, are good practices.
- Another is to use protective accompaniment or presence to directly prevent violence, be it from external forces or among the IDPs/refugees themselves. And to do so in various situations, from fleeing through living in camps to returning.
- To lessen tensions and to strengthen people's capacity, it helps to conduct peacebuilding activities, empowerment, capacity-building etc. with refugees/IDPs. This also includes socio-economic support in the region of origin. If there is no infrastructure created, people hesitate to go back.
- An important theme is forced return and participants considered it a good practice to seek to prevent forced return through advocacy work.
- Addressing tensions between the local community and IDPS/refugees is an important task and good practice.

Mediation Roles

Not all UCP organizations get involved in mediation. For those who do, the following points are important:
- For mediation, it is important to build strong relationships with a diverse range of leaders and knowledge of existing local context, including if there may already be mediation taking place.
- Equally important is to allow time to build trust and relationships, and sticking to the process once started. Successful processes are long-term.

- A good practice is to offer "good offices"[60] behind the scenes, for example finding people in the community who take on a mediating role, technical support, transport, concerns about the roles of women (their involvement).
- Training individuals who then work as mediators is a good practice.

Gender

- Diversity of identities in a team makes it stronger. If there is only one gender, then women-only teams are preferable to men-only teams: Women can meet with men, but a male team may not be able to meet with women.
- Women are often perceived as less threatening which may open access.
- Cultural sensitivity to local norms is essential rather than seeking open confrontation on gender issues. However, modeling - for example employing women in roles that traditionally men take (for example as mediators) – and referring to norms like those laid down in UNSC 1325 may work. (There were some examples given where it did.)
- In some communities, both men and women are needed to access their peers in the community.
- Men can contribute to the safety of their female colleagues by, for example, intervening if there is bad language.
- Capacity-building about UN SC Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security is useful to overcome resistance to inclusion of women in peace processes.
- Policies and training for all staff / recognize differences in approaches and views regarding the role of women, what constitutes harassment etc. also among staff. Policies and training are needed to provide some common understanding of what is acceptable and what is not. This does not only refer to personal (sexual) relationships between staff members but also to issues like expecting the other gender(s) to behave in certain ways – for example protective attitudes by men, expectation that it is the women who do the housework and care for children, etc.
- Most organizations end volunteer or staff contracts if there are charges of harassment. But before doing so, both sides need to be heard, and it is important to avoid the tendency to automatically side with the accuser and assume the accused to be guilty.
- Another good practice in the field of modeling is if the UCP practitioners themselves speak openly about gender issues, and thereby normalize the subject. (In many communities, harassment is a taboo and women tend not to talk about it.)
- Creating opportunities for learning and resolution of issues, including peer to peer coaching, is a good practice.
- Disclosures of close personal relationships in teams are helpful.

Programming may contribute to social change regarding the status and inclusion of women:

- Through the work, over time gender norms / roles change.

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[60] This is a term used in political mediation. It refers to what is described here – (diplomatic) support in the background to further conflict resolution, for example in preparation of direct negotiations or mediation meetings.

- When children see their parents working in mixed teams, it sets a positive example.
- Intentional inclusion of women in programming affects norms and challenges patriarchy. Working with women gives their voices a chance to be heard.
- Participation of women shifts the role away from being victim.

Power Asymmetries

- For international NGOs, deep listening and following the lead of local people is important when addressing such issues.
- A simple good practice is to name the issue and point to the power imbalance.
- Activists on "opposite" sides should work together, and act in solidarity across countries.
- Civil society actors from big power countries that intervene in Syria could map interests and strategize together, building on local knowledge.
- This could be part of the wider use of internationals' privilege to help local organizations have access to diplomats / decision-makers.
- Utilizing networks to raise issues in different ways / different places is another good practice identified.
- To counter power imbalances, UCP agencies should advocate for civil society representatives to join the political, often armed parties participating in political negotiations.
- Bringing politicians to communities and helping them publicize what is happening can help.
- It is important for the world to see peace movements calling out abuses.
- Modelling respectful relationships, rejecting divisions and manufactured tensions, connecting as human beings are also tactics dealing with power asymmetries.

De-escalation of Armed Shootings

- It is essential to
  ° understand the situation very well,
  ° involve credible mediators,
  ° have key resources (like cars, cameras) available,
  ° make sure that there are media present,
  ° to speaking the language, using considerate language,
  ° to try to use relationships with commanders, soldiers, heads of protests, and media,
  ° to acting with confidence,
  ° to use the element of surprise (doing something unexpected),
  ° to know the individual threshold or limits of the UCP practitioner when deciding if to intervene, and
  ° to be visible (esp. at night)
- Another good practice is to try to evacuate civilians.

Security Management and IT Security

- Making sure that there is agreement and buy-in to SOPS, is essential

- Security provisions require preparing for worst-case scenarios.
- SOPs need to match local context.
- The impact of SOPs on the work and in the context of doing no harm needs to be considered.
- Training individuals for hostile scenarios both mentally and physically is important.
- Organizations should include weapon identification and first aid in their trainings.
- It is crucial to have good communications with local people, and do a background check with each area before going there. .
- Security SOPs should include a list of equipment to always carry (like phones, for some also medical kits and flak jackets).
- There should never be a team member going alone anyplace; UCP practitioners should work at least in pairs.
- It is important to assess risk vs. impact: When is it necessary to go to risky area?
- Plans for evacuation are part of a security plan.
- Often embassies or UN missions have special information regarding the security situation. Foreigners can use the privilege of being a foreigner to get information and help from them.
- It is important to learn from previous situations.
- Organizations should always being prepared for trauma, and have methods ready for first aid when traumatic situations occur.

As to kidnapping, it was listed as important

- It is best to use community pressure.
- It is important to have a manual on kidnapping;
- Using local contacts and connections to ease situation and to apply pressure has been proven to be good practice.

IT:

- It is important to assume that any e-mail is open communication which can easily be read by third parties.
- Using an organization's own server is a reasonable precaution.
- Often it is necessary to restrict access to certain information.
- In the field, it is often important not to reveal one's location when using real-time social media, and to apply a time lag in posting articles and photos.

Media

- Generally good practice is to be careful with language, focusing on facts, avoiding comparisons to other situations and keeping emotions out of such communications.
- It is helpful to create and make available a list of words and phrases not to use.
- Equally helpful is to have someone review articles that are written (HQ for example).
- It is important to be aware of attacks and misuse of information on social media. For example, tracking hashtags on social media to see what people are saying is common

practice.

- A rule is to commit to truth telling and transparency, but to be aware of confidential information and not to divulge secrets.
- In press statements, it is necessary to give (credible) sources to support what is said.
- To counter disinformation, organizations need to have a media strategy for quick response if needed.
- It can help to train community members to constantly monitor rumors that would affect the government, region, and social media.
- Media work is more effective when there are credible messengers available who have influence.

Analysis, Evaluation and Learning

- In analysis, it is important to not just focus on vulnerability indicators, but focus also on changes and trends in threat / perpetrator behavior / indicators.
- Integrating / including indicators of peace (for example (e.g. if children go to school, if it is save to fetch water etc.) rather than being led only by perceptions, is a good practice.
- It is important to conduct an initial analysis that can disaggregate risk factors and associated indicators, this goes some way to being able to measure changes.
- The methodology should be based on a theory of change which is then evaluated regularly.
- Organizations should not wait for end of cycle to evaluate but do continuous monitoring and analysis.
- Organizations should make sure that they are involved in external evaluation processes: They should work with the evaluators to prepare them and give them feed-back on their findings before the final report is written.
- Good practice not only for the sake of donor satisfaction is to collect baseline data when possible (perceptions, fears, levels of violence).
- Generally a good practice is to use a mix of quantitative and qualitative data.
- It is important to measure perceptions in addition to "objective" data because they inform about people's thinking and behavior.
- Organizations should conduct post-activity evaluation meetings.
- It is good practice to use participative assessment methodologies, allowing communities to participate in their own monitoring, and also inform them after the evaluation of the outcomes.
- There is a need to educate donors on what to expect rather than contort to their expectations. Proactively showing them the best methods can help to shape expectations.
- To monitor ongoing activities, it is important to analyze the behavior of soldiers and everyone in the community on regular basis, e.g. every few months, to see how perceptions and actions are changing throughout time.
- Organizations found it useful to work with direct testimonies from interviews with impacted people regarding how the work has impacted them.

Learning in the organization:

- An overlap of two weeks (or at least 10 days) between departing and arriving volunteers was recommended.
- Tracking of information (generally, everything that concerns the work), by the local or HQ office, is important, as is
- debriefing volunteers after they have left.
- A good practice is to write documentations as a team, and also staff journals are a good practice.
- It is recommended to have three-month-work plans developed by staff which are then assessed.
- To gather information, use of a database is a good option. .
- Generally, it is important to set aside time for staff to reflect.

Recruitment, Training and Post-deployment

- Good practice is to choose people who are trustworthy and good at teamwork, have good intercultural skills, and are well-versed and experienced in working in other environments.
- There are benefits of having longer training and a probationary period.
- In trainings, simulations and role plays are very good.
- Training people in self-awareness and awareness of others in a team is important.
- Easing people into violent or high-pressure situations is a good practice.
- For induction, it is very useful to provide mentorship and guidance by respected senior staff members.
- It is recommended to conduct daily team meetings. This is also the moment for context analysis for most groups.
- Having some form of regular access to professional counselling or therapy, on-site or offsite is important.
- After service, providing former team members access to support structures (counselling and medical insurance).
- It is important to apply mandatory or highly recommended vacation, time off or breaks.
- Longer terms of service are preferable because of relationship building.

Scaling up and Closing Projects[61]

There were no good practices regarding scaling up named in the discussion. For closing down, it was stated:

- Capacity-building (trainings) in local communities is recommended, so that they can use some of the tools of UCP, perhaps including supporting people wishing to start a local initiative.

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[61] Most points the group discussed on this were rather proposals than existing good practices, and have been moved to the section "proposals".

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- It is important to try to learn from the history of closing other projects and the mistakes made there.

Proposed was also:

- Ongoing support and advising beyond the project timeline for local groups, for example, giving them support in fundraising from international sources. Other support could be networking, advisory functions and consultancies.
- One possibility after an international project closes is to support national staff continuing the work in their communities in one way or the other, because they carry local ownership.
- One option suggested was to follow the Red Cross model with creating national branches continuing the work. Participants saw UCP as a worldwide movement which needs to be perpetuated.
- It could help to do an assessment some years after having left a field site to assess what the situation is and to see what happened, in order to learn and know what to do before leaving in the next project.
- Another idea was to spread the UCP training manual as a book could be a good practice – combined with training.

6.2 Challenges

Use of Principles

Nonviolence

- A general challenge is to be nonviolent or maintaining nonviolence in a very violent context where the concept of nonviolence itself is not deeply rooted nor, is considered "harmless" (in the sense of not militant enough for the struggle).
- It is not easy to find donors willing to finance nonviolent projects.
- Asymmetrical violence: Is throwing stones violence, especially when the other side uses deadly weapons?
- Can our work be nonviolent if some of the groups with whom we work are violent or advocate violence?
- There is an issue about acceptance of nonviolent strategies: Nonviolence in the region is often considered as ""harmless" by activists and not as an efficient tool.
- Blurred lines between violence and nonviolence: When you know that a protest will lead to the army shooting at the demonstrators – is doing the protest still nonviolent? (This was a question raised at the Do-No-Harm-Table.)

Nonpartisanship

- How should UCP organizations respond when some select group won't like or even won't work with you, if they sense you are communicating with adversaries? Does such communication with adversaries ultimately and overall build better or less trust? Does such communication enable continued oppression by the oppressors, i.e. unhealthy behavior by the oppressors, or by avoiding such communication does it enable the broader social conditions for the conflict to continue longer, i.e. unhealthy behavior by the select group?
  The same question was raised in the working group on nonpartisanship. Many organizations face difficulties when trying to build relations with multiple sides of a conflict and exert their nonpartisan strategy. The "other" side always perceives them as taking sides and this can jeopardize their operations and put their staff at risk. The best way of dealing with this, it was said, is to be clear about your work and put a lot of effort into community engagement.
- Would it be helpful to complement or balance nonpartisanship with other principles to mitigate the potential issues with it or with those who slide into partisanship? For example, principles and practices of empathy, human dignity/humanity, human needs (i.e. belonging, meaning, trust, etc.), re-humanization, reflexivity (keeping means and ends as consistent as possible), sustainability, or conflict transformation?
- If one side seems to have much more political, economic, and military power, how should a UCP organization respond? Is this the only power that is relevant in such an analysis? For example, what about integrative power, i.e. the power to form relationships, or to act in accord with dignity regardless of what the other does? Some have argued that integrative power is even stronger than those other types of power.
- The concern was raised that signaling there is one ""bogeyman" group in a conflict can perpetuate a pattern in the society of identifying anyone later who seems ""out of bounds" as the next ""bogeyman," which then reinforces the legitimacy of armed

responses.

- Similar to the workshop in Manila, it was pointed out that it is harder for local organizations to be nonpartisan because they are part of a particular region or ethnic group so they are dragged into the political situation. They are also labeled as belonging to one side or another due to their ethnic group or geographical location. Even if they try to be nonpartisan the other actors perceive them as being on one side.
- It is challenging for international organizations that are nonpartisan to have partnerships with local organizations that are not. This can put their staff at risk and jeopardize operations. It would be problematic to demand that a local organization not take sides, but at the same time an international organization should be careful with whom to establish relationships.
- Nonpartisanship is connected to independence, and donor dependency is a problem.

Local actors

- Local actors have different interests and are often in conflict with each other. Whom to choose as a partner under such circumstances?
- Having local partners may affect the perception of nonpartisanship. This was also discussed a lot at the Manila workshop. Local organizations are almost by definition not nonpartisan.
- What to do when having official partners but receiving requests for activities from others?
- How to deal with internal conflicts in communities?
- Who is a local actor; does an international passport make you an outsider? What are the opportunities and risks in working with individuals who hold several nationalities (e.g., an Iraqi and a US passport)?
- Power relationships within communities, the impact of privileged status (middle class, English speakers, people from certain families) are difficult issues when choosing and working with local partners.
- Gender: NGO and community leaders are often men – how to access women?
- How to resist disempowerment by internationals? One hint was that well-organized communities are better in resisting, but the challenge of needing the resources limits the will to resist. At a later point examples were given of donors who are flexible and do not require strict projects and log frames in order to decide to fund an organization.

Independence

- Money and the need for funding are important parts of why independence is a challenge. UCP organizations need to think carefully about their relationships with funding organizations, and reevaluate them as projects go on. If there is only one donor funding a project, there can be no talk of real independence.
- Even when one is striving to be independent, one may not always be perceived as being independent. Figuring out ways to strategize so that others will see you as independent is an important and distinct challenge for being independent.
- Independence can conflict with the necessity to side with the oppressed and stand against injustice. Some participants said that they didn't see themselves as being independent from their local partners.
- A challenge in some contexts is misperceptions of civil society as not being independent (paid by interested foreign governments) and as being irrevocably connected to revolution.

Do no harm

- Do no harm: There may be conflict between short-term and long-term outcomes of an action. Generally priority is given to the short-term needs, but this may create harm in the long term. It may be that the best that can be done is creating least harm. Payment of high per diems and international salaries to local participants and staff may lead to misperceptions and drain local civil society.
- It is not easy to do a realistic risk analysis regarding risks for local people who get involved with international organizations, whether as staff, partners, or as people protected, etc., especially when this becomes public knowledge.
- In some settings power difference comes with skin color – how to avoid strengthening patterns of racism?
- Internationals can harm their local partners by taking information on rights' violations and using politicized terms for advocacy purposes.
- It needs to be recognized that though something may be beneficial in the short term, it may have harmful negative consequences in the long term. There is rarely a situation of no harm at all – we are often in the position where the UCP team members need to make the least bad choice.

Official Government Recognition or Informal Acceptance

- To get visa for international volunteers and staff is often a challenge, as is
- to hire local staff and have work permits for (national and international) staff.
- Checkpoints are often a problem, especially when local soldiers at such checkpoints make rather arbitrary requests in regard to documentation.
- Transferring money to the country is not always easy.
- Registration in a country may be expensive, a long process and a challenge when seeking to avoid to resort to bribes.

Advocacy and Donor Relationships

- Radical asks in advocacy work are challenges: Political demands may be perceived as radical – how to tailor the message in a way that it is acceptable to the intended audience?
- The meddling of regional and international powers which are often powers that are more difficult to access than the governments of the countries in conflict.
- Humanitarian issues may become optional and something that can be traded in track 1 negotiations.
- The danger of track 1 is politicizing the protection of civilians.
- Change of (international) governments impacts the work.
- When to risk access in order to speak out? Making violations public may lead to losing permission to stay.
- There is the risk of being used for espionage: Reports to donors may be misused by intelligence agencies.
- Calling an opponent "terrorist" has become common and legitimizes all means used in fighting.
- NGOs are challenged by the question of whether to approach any donor or drawing lines. What is acceptable for partners in the field and to the NGO itself, since donors have political interests in the areas where UCP organizations are working and may be tainted

by their general politics, by having been involved in military interventions etc.

<u>Deterrence and Encouragement</u>

- Although these approaches often go hand in hand, there may be situations when choices have to be made – blaming and shaming may harm attempts to win trust and convince, for example, security personnel from the other side to behave differently.

<u>How to Decide on Beneficiaries</u>

- Protecting communities that have a high level of internal violence such as sexual or domestic violence. The issues here are the questions of whether to intervene in such situations or not to tackle with them as not being part of the mandate of the UCP organization and the interaction between these kinds of violence and intergroup violence.
- People requesting aid that have private agendas, or are not who they say they are. (For example, in Palestine it happened that people claimed to be poor and work near the settlements but it turned out they were rich and located far from the settlements.)
- Situations that are very difficult to handle, like being attacked by radicalized civilians including children.
- How to decide whom to trust when asking for advice or for protection?

<u>Responding to Different Kinds of Violence</u>

- Getting involved in "personal matters" (like domestic violence) can undermine credibility. Violence seen as a private matter may undermine credibility of UCP.
- Huge presence of arms in communities leads conflict to easily shift levels and become violent.
- Foreign military forces perpetrate a lot of violence but are mostly inaccessible for UCP.
- Complex motives of individuals within groups. No straightforward motivation of groups. Not easy to understand.
- For some groups targeting UCP practitioners may be of strategic benefit.
- Difficult to connect with groups that have been demonized by media and international community ("terrorists").
- A challenge is when there are perpetrators who are above the law and who are not accessible to the UCP organization or others.

<u>Local and International UCP</u>

- Internationals may be being misused by powerholders (for example, foreigners as human shields for Saddam Hussein).
- Local or tribal groups are not neutral, but are siding with one or the other party in the conflict or at least have sympathies on one or the other side. Even if they don't, probably they would be suspected of being partisan. The challenge for them is therefore to gain respect and hearing from those who they address as potential perpetrators of violence

- "Invasion of internationals" with money often leads to distortions including the artificial creation of NGOs to get part of the cake.
- A challenge is the lack of resources for local organizations: funding and talented human resources, as many staff join international organizations. Generally a challenge is the existence of groups doing protection but that are partly militarized and controversial. People may confuse them with the nonviolent UCP organizations, or vice versa there may be faulty expectations regarding UPC practitioners getting involved in defense activities.
- UCP may be carried by young people but society is based on tribal structures where older men (Sheiks) rule.

Protecting IDPs

- Common risks for IDPS include: Arrests, abductions, GBV etc. Structures in camps are often hard to influence. This refers to informal leadership structures, relationships between different groups placed in one camp as well as to the structures set up by those who run the camp and supervise it.
- Camp management may not be accessible and trying to prevent external groups coming in to offer support and protection.
- Well-equipped IDP camps: People prefer to stay rather than return home.
- Relationship and peacebuilding with surrounding communities is a challenge. If there is no infrastructure in terms of socio-economic support and basic facilities created, people hesitate to go back.

Mediation Roles

- How do you go about identifying and selecting mediators without dictating who they are - for example trying to strengthen the involvement of women?
- Local team members have an important role in identifying mediators, or even serving as mediators, but it is a difficult role given their local connections.
- There may be a risk associated with becoming a mediator. If some party doesn't like the agreement, they might target the mediator.
- A challenge is the turnover of people you are building relationships with, and also for the beneficiaries the turnover of staff.
- Dominance of male leaders and mediators in some contexts is a challenge.
- Does successful mediation require equal power? Can there be mediation in cases of asymmetrical conflict like Palestine-Israel? Complexities of power imbalances (e.g. Israel-Palestine) – both parties need to be convinced to come to the table (need to identify common gains).

Gender

- Understanding the dangers women can experience is a challenge to some team members of UCP organizations.
- Especially for local staff: Men may be targeted by perpetrators because, being men, they may be suspected of being fighters.
- Women (and men) need to be flexible in regard to clothing and behavior in public that

sometimes goes against their convictions.

- The way people interact, e.g. hugging, may cause confusion, depending on local norms.
- There are different understandings of where harassment begins (e.g. "no is no" vs. a man expecting it is a game to win the woman over slowly)
- Sending a mixed couple of equal age may lead to misperception, making people suspect an illicit relationship (if they are obviously not married).
- Need for separate accommodation for men and women in some cases.
- Need to be careful about what is said about gender norms.
- The focus on immediate violence reduction/promotion can have negative impact on women rights.
- Working on GBV is challenging because it is "private" and may get the organizations entangled in nets of intracommunity conflicts.
- Immediate protection against GBV may have longer-term negative effects on women rights in general.
- To be open to LGBTQI issues and rights' engagement is a challenge in societies with a strong taboo against LGBTQI people.
- Finding women as staff is difficult in some places (education, English proficiency may be lower with women than with men).
- Harassment may not be reported due to cultural norms leading to the fear it will start rumors, the woman will be stigmatized, even lose her work.
- Male supervisors sometimes do not take harassment seriously.
- Living and working together creates ambiguity.

Power Asymmetries

- Violence by Palestinians is portrayed by many as equal to that of the IDF. Leverage for Palestinians is needed.
- Resistance, even if unarmed, is perceived as violence.
- Under- or non-representation of affected communities at the global level is a challenge.
- Sometimes financial / publicity / support from international community (UN, USA – actors that are often considered with suspicion or outright rejection in the area for their involvement in the various wars) put an organization at risk.
- U.S. use of force: There is lack of truth regarding their role and interventions.
- UN Security Council and NATO: Activists often feel that the design is flawed, and that it allows the same players to retain power.
- Legitimacy of a government vs. being a civilian: In parts if not most of the area, civilians do not have much leverage when confronting a government.
- Governments sometimes are not willing to tackle an issue because of upcoming elections.
- Sectarian divide between government and population can lead to violence and unlawful arrests.
- The idea of giving fighters a platform gives them undue legitimacy.
- Reconciliation agreements may put civilians at risk.

De-escalation of armed shooting

- Are there ever chances to succeed to intervene when government actors are on one side?
- Is the training for UCP practitioners sufficient to address these situations and potential clashes?
- Random shooting, snipers, drunken security personnel all pose specific challenges.

Security Management and IT Security

- A challenge is a certain unpredictability of how people respond in crisis.
- Locals may be hesitant to do homework on security because they live in the conflict every day.
- Does pulling out or remaining in a situation as internationals create more or less risk for the locals? What to do with national staff that cannot leave in a crisis?
- When things are calm for a time, there is a tendency to get lax.
- For some locals being seen with internationals may make them a target.
- Sharing information (e.g. with official bodies or with UN) may threaten the safety of locals.
- Money and politics are great motivators in some communities.
- Mental health and dealing with traumatic situations is a very general challenge: There is danger of burn-out.
- How do you assess reasonable risk v. paranoia?
- Is it more secure to be low profile or to make a lot of noise?
- For internationals, there is a tension between security on the ground and ability to do effective advocacy in their home countries.
- Use of encryption in digital communication is a challenge because it is controversial.

Media

- A challenge is to counter dominant narratives and disinformation, especially if they are promoted by a state or other powerful actors. There is a need to counter disinformation spread by such actors.

Analysis, Evaluation and Learning

- Protection is hard to measure and therefore it is difficult to claim causality.
- Security issues around conducting and publishing evaluations are challenges.
- Changes of project directors may lead to new approaches and changes of direction.
- Long-term presence can diminish perceptions of the relevance of a UCP project.
- Evaluation of perceptions of security and safety may be a challenge.
- External evaluators being paid by the organization that commissions the evaluation may create a conflict of interest.
- Sharing findings of studies and evaluations with others is a problem. Feedback may have an impact on the current situation. But non-publication, while sometimes necessary for security reasons, has also its negative sides.

- Evaluations and analysis including information and knowledge from perpetrators is risky.
- Learning from other projects: Not everything is transferable to new contexts; studies do not save one from doing one's own analysis.
- Baseline surveys: People interviewed may not tell the truth for various reasons.
- There is a tendency to focus on indicators of vulnerability but also indicators for the threat side of the equation are needed.
- If UCP means living and working 24/7 in a net of relationships – how can this be measured? There are no indicators for these complex relations.

Recruitment, Training and Post-deployment

- There may be people drawn to the UCP work with a savior complex (white, western, male, other). Sometimes this may not come out until someone is actually on a team.
- Long training means high costs. Some find it difficult to find the right length of training, balancing what is needed and what can be afforded.
- Shifting organizational needs poses challenges for training.
- Intensive learning about the dynamics of UCP in a short time is difficult.
- It is difficult to evaluate people's susceptibility to trauma before starting the work.
- Exposure to violence leads to trauma (in unpredictable ways). This is a core challenge for this kind of work.
- Trauma leads to unhealthy practices of self/care. Alcoholism and other substance abuse are a major challenge here.
- Getting people to take breaks is a challenge.
- There may be cultural or personal barriers to healthy self-care. In parts of the Middle East it is not common to talk about trauma.
- Alcohol and burnout pose dangers for the individual and the team as whole.
- Bringing in inapplicable lessons from missions in different countries to the training.
- Difficulty to keep track of team members after their return home. Some people tend to disappear.

Scaling up and Closing Projects

- To find the necessary resources for scaling up is very hard.
- Getting the necessary permissions (or visas) for larger numbers of people is a challenge
- At some point, unarmed civilian protection might be incorporated in the UN for example. The challenge is that UCP organizations might lose control of how to shape perceptions of what UCP is. Association with UN could be problematic depending on how people see it.
- There is the danger that UCP may be seen as a toolbox, from which single tools may be taken and employed by e.g. UN organizations, while not subscribing to the values and principles that underpin the UCP work overall. How does it, for example, impact UCP if accompaniment is used by female UN police officers in uniform and carrying (but not using) a weapon? Also, there is the risk to lose adaptation to local contexts that was

emphasized so much at the workshop – because they are so large, UN missions follow a general blue print and have a hard time to adapt to individual situations.

- Bureaucracy: the more people, the more administration is needed. This may undermine values and principles.
- Scaling down once you have grown is a challenge of its own.

6.3 Agenda as carried out-
   Workshop on Good Practices in Nonviolent, Unarmed, Civilian to Civilian Protection, 18-20 June 2018,

18 June 2018, Day One

8:00 – 9:00 Breakfast at venue

9:00 Welcome Plenary and Introductions

11:00 Break

11:15 Placing ourselves on a diagram of civilian protection (UCP wheel)

11:30 'World café' on core principles of UCP/accompaniment work (for description, please see below the agenda)

13:00 - 14:00 Lunch at venue

14:00 Review the roles of small group moderators and notetakers – all who are doing this please gather in the meeting room

14:15 Plenary gathering - Ice breaker exercise

14:30 Results of 'World Café' on basic principles and general discussion

15:00 Break

15:20 Plenary gathering – selection of small groups for period A

15:30 Small group period A

   1. Doing Accompaniment/UCP with or without official government recognition or informal acceptance

   2. UCP/Accompaniment as it relates to international advocacy and influence in the area of work

   3. Accompaniment/UCP protection strategies focused on deterring violence and strategies focused on encouraging respect for civilian rights for safety and well being

16:50 Break

17:00 – 18:00 Plenary – brief reports from small groups and discussion

19:00 – 20:00 Dinner at venue

19 June 2018, Day 2

8:00 – 9:00 Breakfast at venue

9:00 Plenary – Ice breaker exercise and check in. Selection of small groups for period B.

9:30 Small group period B

   1. Good practice when local organizations protect local people in their own or nearby communities (this group is intended to be primarily or solely local organizations)

   2. Accompaniment/UCP responding to different kinds and degrees of violence

   3. Accompaniment/UCP and the principle of nonpartisanship or neutrality in the work in the Middle East

11:00 Break

11:30 Plenary – brief reports from small groups and discussion

12.30 Digital communication, ethics and security – presentation and Q&A

13:00 – 14:00 Lunch at venue

14:00 Plenary gathering - Ice breaker exercise and selection of small groups for period C.

14:30 Small group period C

      1. Security management (initiating and ongoing)

      2. Accompaniment/UCP with displaced people

      3. Accompaniment/UCP interventions and local mediation, negotiation, shuttle diplomacy

16:00 Break

16:30 – 17:30 Plenary – reports from small groups and discussion

19:00 – 20:00 Dinner at venue

Evening (optional): Discussion of political situation in the region

20 June 2018, Day 3

8:00 – 9:00 Breakfast at venue

9:00 Plenary – Ice breaker exercise and check in. Selection of small groups for period D.

9:30 Small Group period D

      1. Accompaniment/UCP and gender in protection work in the Middle East

      2. Evaluation/learning and scaling up

      3. Staff/volunteers training, length of service, support, and post-deployment/service

11.00 Break

11.30 Plenary – brief reports from small groups and discussion

12:30 Discussion and selection of topics for open space (period E)

13:00 – 14:00 Lunch at venue

14:00 Small group period E 'Open topic' – topics to be suggested and decided by participants

      1. Closing projects, maintaining the mission

      2. Power asymmetries

      3. Deescalation of armed shootings

      4. IT security

15:00 Plenary – brief reports from small groups and discussion

15:30 Break

16:00 Final plenary – Key points on good practices, next steps, and wrap up

18:00 End of plenary

19:00 Farewell Dinner

6.4 Attendees - Good Practices in Accompaniment and UCP – Beirut, Jun 2018

Organization(s)	Country the organization is based in	Country (countries) they work/ have worked in with a UCP organization
Academics from the following universities and research institutions: • Aberystwyth University • Georgetown University • IFGK • InterAction • Norwegian University of Technology and Science	UK, , US, Germany, Norway	n/a
CPT	USA / international	Iraqi Kurdistan
EAPPI	International	Palestine
Gulf Peace Team	International	Iraq
Iraq Peace Team	USA	Iraq
ISM	International / Palestine	Palestine
Kafa team in Salamiye	Syria	Syria
Local CSOs	Syria	Syria
Madani	Lebanon/Syria	Syria
MEND	Palestine	Palestine
Meta Peace Team	USA	Palestine
Moubaderoon	Syria	Syria
Muslim Peacemaker Teams	USA/ Iraq	Iraq
Nonviolent Peaceforce (NP)	International	Sri Lanka, South Sudan
NP Iraq	UK	Iraq
NP Syria	International	Syria (Lebanon)
Operation Dove	Italy	Israel – Palestine, Lebanon - Syria
Permanent Peace Movement	Lebanon	Lebanon
Sanad for Peacebuilding	Iraq	Iraq

6.5 The Unarmed Civilian Protection Wheel

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

Red meant: "That is what we are doing"

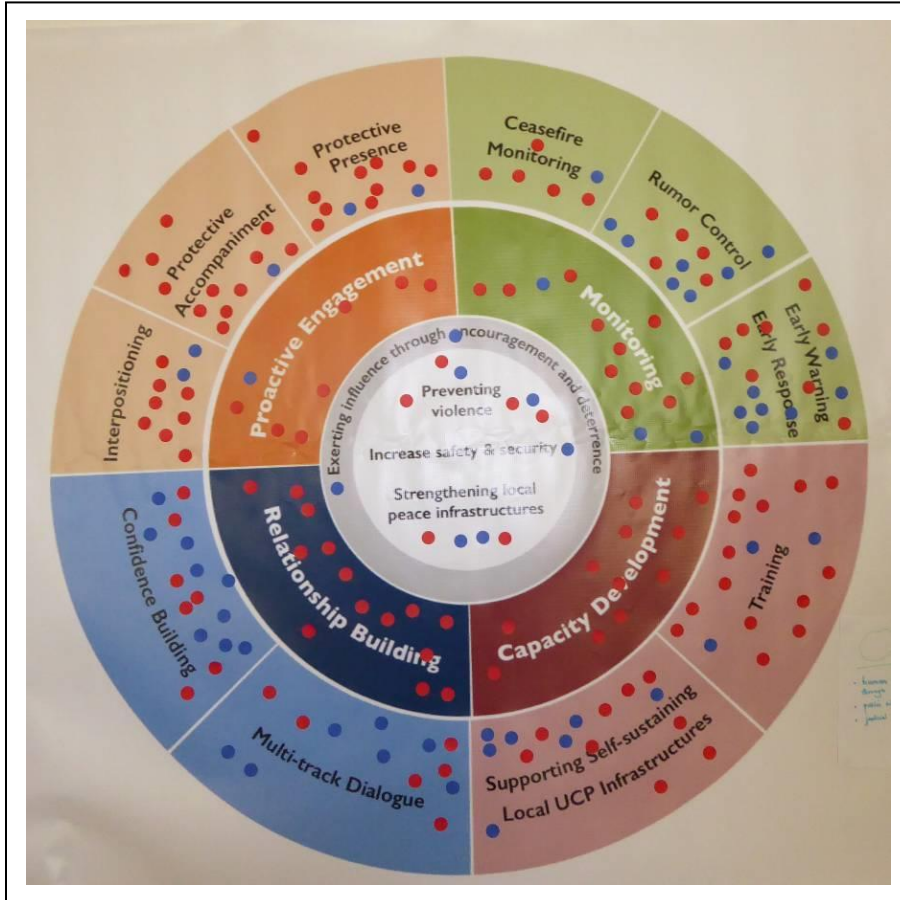Blue meant: "I would like to learn more about it".

Figure 4 UCP Wheel with markings

Red: I / my organization has used this

Blue: I want to know more about this.

The workshop did not spend time to evaluate the markings. Perhaps remarkable is how evenly spread the dots are through most activities. But it was also remarked in the final evaluation that several people did not find the wheel particularly useful because it did not fully cover all they do.