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APPENDICES

Appendix 1

Glossary

| Concept | Description/definition |
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| Accompaniment | <p>Accompaniment in its broadest usage refers to unarmed civilians using their presence to deter violence against other civilians. It is usually, though not always, carried out by international organizations. Accompaniment may be provided to individuals such as human rights defenders or other activists, as well as to whole communities. Some organizations refer to physical accompaniment as well as legal, psychosocial and political accompaniment. In this text accompaniment has been used in a narrower sense only of physical accompaniment of people who are traveling, or moving, from one place to another. Among ucp actors, accompaniment is often used interchangeably with protective accompaniment, though not all accompaniment has a protective aim. See also protective accompaniment.</p> |
| Capacity enhancement | <p>Capacity is the ability of individuals, institutions, and broader systems to perform their functions effectively and efficiently, and achieve their development objectives in a sustainable way. Capacity enhancement is a process whereby people, organizations, and society as a whole unleash, strengthen, create, adapt, and maintain capacity over time.</p> <p>In the context of ucp, it is understood as the strengthening of knowledge, skills, and abilities for the purpose of violence prevention and protection of civilians. Capacity enhancement includes training courses or workshops on topics such as ucp and human rights or early warning early response. It also includes the coaching and supporting of existing or newly established local protection mechanisms.</p> |

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| Ceasefire monitoring | Ceasefire monitoring refers to the observation and communication of compliance or non-compliance to a ceasefire agreement by its signatory parties. A ceasefire is understood as a period of truce, especially one that is temporary and is often a preliminary step to establishing a more permanent peace on agreed terms. Civilian ceasefire monitoring within the concept of ucp focuses on reducing the impact of ceasefire violations and ongoing armed clashes on civilian populations. It complements observation, verification and reporting with protective presence, proactive engagement and other ucp methods. Ceasefire monitoring is perhaps the most prominent and most complex application of monitoring. See also Monitoring . |
| Civilian immunity | Civilian immunity is to be understood as ‘an <i>almost</i> absolute principle that spells out one of the central and most stringent requirements of justice as it applies to war, and recognizes an <i>almost</i> absolute right of the vast majority of civilians—namely, all those who cannot be considered “currently engaged in the business of war”—not to be targets of deadly violence.’ |
| Civilian-led | Civilian-led refers to the partnership (whether formal or informal cooperation) between (international or national) ucp organizations and local civil society actors. It also refers to the notion that the ucp organization itself and the local people most engaged with it are civilians, not operating as part of a military organization. |
| Conflict | Conflict refers to the tensions between people over specific needs or wants they try to fulfil. It is the interaction of interdependent people who perceive incompatible goals and interference from each other in achieving their respective goals. Conflict is a part of life and cannot be avoided. See also Horizontal and Vertical conflict. |
| Conflict analysis | Conflict analysis refers to the detailed examination of the elements, structures and dynamics of a conflict. Conflict analysis is a tool that helps in understanding of a particular conflict, in order to prevent violence and to manage or solve that conflict in a timely manner. See also Context analysis . |

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| <p>Context analysis</p> | <p>Context analysis or situational analysis refers to the detailed examination of the ongoing developments and dynamics of a specific situation. Context analysis is different from conflict analysis, but they are interrelated. <i>Conflict</i> analysis has a limited focus on one particular conflict and its development through time (focus on the past). <i>Context</i> analysis on the other hand has a broad focus on one particular moment in time (focus on the present). <i>Conflict</i> analysis precedes context analysis and is undertaken periodically, especially at the beginning and end of a project cycle. <i>Context</i> analysis is done continually. UCP personnel at the field level may conduct context analysis on a weekly or monthly basis.</p> |
| <p>Deterrence</p> | <p>Deterrence means confronting aggressors with sufficient negative consequences, or the potential for negative consequence, to influence them not to commit human rights violations or abuse. See also Encouragement.</p> |
| <p>Duty bearer</p> | <p>Duty-bearers are actors who have a particular obligation or responsibility to respect, promote and realize human rights. By ratifying a un human rights treaty or convention, the state (as principal duty bearer) automatically assumes the role of guaranteeing these rights (of the right holders), namely the obligations to respect, protect, and fulfil people’s rights. In other words, the state must take all necessary procedures to guarantee their citizens’ rights. Non-state duty bearers (aka moral duty bearers) include parents, teachers, principals, administrators, ngos, etc.</p> |

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| <p>Early Warning Early Response</p> | <p>Early Warning Early Response (EWER) is a systematic application of monitoring for the sake of preventing violence, reducing the impact of violence and increasing the safety and security of civilians in tense situations of violent conflict. It is based on the awareness that conflicts generally progress through well-recognized stages. By monitoring the progression of a conflict, it may be possible to predict the development of a crisis or at least be aware of signs of imminent violence. Timely awareness of an imminent crisis may help civilians to prepare themselves to face the crisis or to evacuate the area. A timely response may prevent the crisis from developing or at least reduce its impact.</p> <p>Early Warning can be defined as the collection and communication of information about a crisis, the analysis of that information, and the initial consideration of potential response options to the crisis. Conflict early warning requires (near real-time) assessment of events that, in a high-risk environment, are likely to trigger the rapid escalation of violence. It consists of data collection, risk analysis, and the sharing of information and recommendations with selected recipients.</p> <p>Early Response (Action) is often used in conjunction with early warning. It refers to the actions that are taken to prevent violence or the escalation of violence and to protect civilians who are in danger of harm due to the conflict. In addition to direct ucp intervention, actions to prevent or de-escalate violence can be diplomatic, military, humanitarian, and/or economic. They may be as simple as getting armed parties to agree to wait until all civilians are removed from the area before resuming fighting, or as complicated as organized civilian displacement to safe places.</p> <p>See also Monitoring.</p> |
| <p>Encouragement</p> | <p>Encouragement can provide moral support, boost morale, and provide new ideas and additional protection tools. This can support local peace infrastructures in generating renewed efforts for peace and security. It can also support perpetrators of violence in respecting human rights and identifying alternative strategies to fulfil their needs without resorting to violence. See also Deterrence.</p> |

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| Environment-building action | Environment-building action refers to a more structural process aimed at creating and/or consolidating an environment conducive to full respect for the rights of individuals and groups. See also unarmed civilian peacekeeping. |
| Horizontal conflict | Horizontal conflict refers to conflict between non-state actors. This includes tribal conflicts and conflicts between religious or ethnic groups. Conflicts between indigenous communities and multinationals are also referred to as 'horizontal', though multinationals are usually backed by state power. See also Conflict and Vertical Conflict . |
| Human rights defender | Human rights defenders , individually or with others, act to promote or protect human rights, including civil and political rights as well as economic, social, and cultural rights. Particular issues of concern in areas of violent conflict are executions, torture, arbitrary arrest, and detention, discrimination, forced evictions, and access to health care. Human rights defenders investigate and report on human rights violations and abuse. They also accompany survivors of human rights violations, take action to end impunity, support better governance, contribute to the implementation of human rights treaties, and provide human rights education. |
| Human security | Human security goes beyond the traditional concept of national security to a new and inclusive concept that brings together the agendas of basic human rights, freedom from want, and freedom from fear. It recognizes the intrinsic indivisibility of human development, rights, and safety. |
| Intercultural competence | Intercultural competence is a set of cognitive, affective, and behavioural skills and characteristics that support effective and appropriate interactions in a variety of cultural contexts. |
| International Human Rights Law | International Human Rights Law (IHRL) is made up of an accumulated body of international instruments including treaties, declarations and standards that aim to establish the basic rights of all people. |
| International Humanitarian Law | International Humanitarian Law (IHL) is the law of armed conflict. It is a set of international (conventional and customary) rules specifically designed to govern the humanitarian issues stemming from armed conflict, whether international or internal. |

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| International Refugee Law | International Refugee Law (IRL) is a set of rules that aims to protect: i) persons seeking asylum from persecution; and, ii) those recognized as refugees under relevant legal instruments. |
| Interpositioning | Interpositioning is the act of physically placing oneself between conflicting parties in order to prevent them from using violence against one another. See also Proactive engagement . |
| Monitoring | Monitoring is essentially the practice of observing compliance to a standard. The purpose of monitoring is to help all those involved to make appropriate and timely judgments and decisions that will improve the quality of the work, ensure accountability, and encourage implementation according to plan. Within the context of ucp there are three main applications of monitoring: ceasefire monitoring, rumour control, and early warning early response (EWER) . |
| Multi-track dialogue | <p>Multi-track dialogue is a term for dialogue (deliberate, arranged conversations organized, and often facilitated by, organizations or individuals.) Processes operating on several tracks simultaneously.</p> <p>Track 1 usually refers to official dialogue between high-level political and military leaders, focusing on ceasefires, treaties and post-conflict political processes;</p> <p>Track 2 refers to unofficial dialogue and problem-solving activities aimed at building relationships and encouraging new thinking that can inform the official process. It typically involves influential academic, religious, and ngo leaders and other civil society actors who can interact more freely than high-ranking officials;</p> <p>Track 3 refers to people-to-people dialogue undertaken by individuals and private groups to encourage interaction and understanding between hostile communities. This involves awareness-raising and confidence building within these communities.</p> <p>More information: http://glossary.Usip.Org/resource/tracks-diplomacy</p> |

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| Needs assessment | A needs assessment is a systematic process for determining and addressing needs, or ‘gaps’ between current conditions and desired conditions or ‘wants’. ‘Needs’ refer to basic human needs that apply to all human beings. In the context of ucp, a needs assessment usually determines the safety and security needs of civilians in situations of violent conflict. Ucp teams aim to measure the discrepancy between current conditions and wanted conditions, and to measure their ability to appropriately address the gaps. |
| Nonpartisanship | Being nonpartisan means not choosing or taking sides in a conflict. Nonpartisanship does not mean indifference or passivity. Nonpartisan actors proactively engage in a conflict. They may work against injustice and the violations of human rights, or for personal dignity and individual freedom, as means for establishing an enduring peace. |
| Nonviolence | Nonviolence is a framework that consists of a specific ethical and political philosophy, principle, and practice. In its most basic form can be defined as the use of peaceful means, not force, to bring about political or social change. As an ethical philosophy, nonviolence upholds the view that moral behaviour excludes the use of violence; as a political philosophy it maintains that violence is self-perpetuating and can never provide a means to a lasting peaceful end. As a principle, it supports the pacifist position that war and killing are never justified. As a practice, both pacifists and non-pacifists have used nonviolence to achieve social change and express resistance to oppression. |
| Peacebuilding | Peacebuilding efforts aim to resolve violent conflict and improve political processes, social services, state functions, and economic development. |
| Peacekeeping | Peacekeeping is action undertaken to preserve peace, however fragile, where fighting has been halted and to assist in implementing agreements achieved by the peacemakers . Peacekeeping efforts deliver security and early peacebuilding support. |
| Peacemaking | Peacemaking efforts aim to bring about a negotiated agreement between conflicting parties. |

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| <p>Power</p> | <p>Power is the ability to get what you want. There are different forms of power: visible, hidden, and invisible power. Visible power includes formal rules, structures, authorities, institutions, and procedures of decision-making; hidden power relates to influential people and institutions maintaining their influence and determining the agenda; invisible power involves the shaping of psychological and ideological boundaries of participation.</p> |
| <p>Primacy of local actors</p> | <p>The phrase ‘primacy of local actors’ refers to the principle that local actors have the right and responsibility to determine their own futures, govern their own country or community, and solve their own problems. In the context of violent conflict this means that third parties can support, protect, empower, and/or collaborate with local actors, while recognizing that the local actors remain the drivers of peace processes, development, and socio-political change.</p> |
| <p>Proactive engagement</p> | <p>Proactive engagement refers to the need of being proactive for the sake of providing protection. It means being physically present, as well as being proactively engaged with all stakeholders for the purpose of providing protection. It has three different, but closely related, applications: protective presence, protective accompaniment, and interpositioning (definitions in glossary).</p> |
| <p>Protection</p> | <p>Protection can be defined as a concept that encompasses all activities aimed at obtaining full respect for the rights of the individual in accordance with the letter and spirit of human rights, refugee, and international humanitarian law. Within the context of ucp, protection is mainly understood as direct physical protection from imminent violence. Un agencies sometimes refer to direct physical protection as ‘general protection’ to distinguish it from the word ‘protection’ as commonly used by humanitarian actors (i.E. Risk reduction). See also Civilian self-protection.</p> |

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| <p>Protective accompaniment</p> | <p>Protective accompaniment is a preventive strategy whereby individuals or groups under threat of imminent violence are accompanied to move from one place to another. Protective accompaniment is provided to civilians because they perceive a threat either during their journey from one place to another, or upon arrival at their destination. It usually requires elaborate protection strategies, conscious visibility, or the establishment of a support network of influential actors. Whereas ‘protective accompaniment’ is used for the purpose of providing protection, other forms of (‘strategic’ or ‘physical’) accompaniment are used as a way to build confidence or connect vulnerable civilians to designated service providers. While fear may play a role in these other forms of accompaniment, there may not be an immediate identified threat or a potential perpetrator to be deterred. See also Accompaniment and Proactive</p> |
| <p>Protective presence</p> | <p>Protective presence is a specific method by which ucp practitioners are strategically placed in locations where civilians face imminent threats. It is the stationary version of the mobile protective accompaniment. Physical presence tends to increase the feeling of safety among civilians nearby. Protective presence is perhaps the most basic application of ucp methods. Proactive presence is usually provided for a shorter period of time, from a few hours up to a few months, and represents more accurately the concept of proactive engagement than the sometimes-used definition of protective presence as the more long-term presence of a ucp team in an area of violent conflict. See also Proactive engagement.</p> |
| <p>Refugees, IDPs, Returnees</p> | <p>Refugees and IDPs (internally displaced people) are people who have left behind their homes and communities because they have suffered (or fear) persecution on account of race, religion, nationality, and political opinion or because they flee from conflict or natural disaster. Whereas refugees are outside their country of origin or habitual residence, idps have not crossed an international border to find a safe haven. Returnees are people that voluntarily or involuntarily return to their country of origin after a long absence.</p> |

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| Relationship building | <p>Relationship building with local and international actors at the grassroots, key parties in the conflict, middle-range, and top levels of society is used by ucp actors to prevent or reduce violence, create community acceptance, control rumours, communicate needs, dissuade potential perpetrators, connect communities with duty bearers, and influence decision makers. A crucial element of relationship building is establishing and improving relationships with actors who have the power to influence potential perpetrators of violence or parties in conflict. These actors include government representatives, armed actors (state and non-state), and local religious and community leaders. While establishing such relationships inherently provides some protection, these influential persons can be called upon if and when threats do occur. They may be able use their influence to dissuade potential perpetrators from actualizing their threat.</p> |
| Remedial action | <p>Remedial action is aimed at supporting people in restoring their dignity and ensuring adequate living conditions subsequent to a pattern of violence. It usually involves access to rehabilitation, restitution, compensation, and repair. Remedial activities are longer-term and aim to assist people living with the effects of a particular pattern of abuse.</p> |
| Responsibility to Protect | <p>The Responsibility to Protect (R2P) doctrine introduces the concept of ‘sovereignty as responsibility’. It places limits on national sovereignty in case a government cannot or will not protect its own citizens. Until recently national sovereignty was an undisputed organizing principle of the post-wwii order. There is a growing realisation that no single actor can do the work of civilian protection alone. This applies especially in cases of mass atrocities.</p> |
| Responsive action | <p>Responsive action is undertaken in connection with an emerging or established pattern of violation. It is aimed at preventing the recurrence of violence, putting a stop to it, and/or alleviating its immediate effects.</p> |
| Rumour control | <p>Rumour control refers to the verification of rumours about imminent threats. It includes the timely sharing of factual information with various parties within and across conflict lines in order to prevent escalation of conflict and premature displacement. Rumour control is always intended to de-escalate tensions. See also Monitoring.</p> |

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| Safety | Safety can be defined as being free from danger, risk, or injury. Safety implies an inner certainty that all is well. In a sense, safety is internal. |
| Security | Security can be defined as the condition of being protected from or not exposed to danger. In a sense, security is external. |
| Stages of conflict | <p>Stages of conflict include: latent conflict, confrontation, crisis, outcome, and post crisis.</p> <p>Latent conflict is the stage when there is an incompatibility of goals between two or more parties, which could lead to open conflict. At the stage of confrontation, the conflict has become more open. The crisis is the peak of the conflict, when tensions and/or violence are most intense. One way or another, the crisis will lead to an outcome. One side may surrender or defeat the other(s), or perhaps call a ceasefire. In any case, at this stage the levels of tension, confrontation, and violence decrease somewhat with the possibility of a settlement. In the stage of the situation is resolved in a way that leads to an ending of any violent confrontation. It also leads to a decrease in tensions and to more normal relationships between the different parties in the conflict.</p> |
| Unarmed Civilian Protection | <p>Unarmed Civilian Protection (UCP): UCP is the practice of unarmed civilians providing direct physical protection to other civilians before, during, and after violent conflict, to prevent or reduce violence, and strengthen or build local peace infrastructures. The practice is nonviolent and nonpartisan. It provides protection on invitation from local actors. It supports local actors as they work to resolve the consequences of violent conflict. This practice is grounded in the global promise of civilian immunity in war and protections afforded by international conventions. Ucp methods can be responsive, remedial, or environment-building actions. Ucp was originally an acronym for Unarmed Civilian Peacekeeping, a term some ucp actors and researchers continue to use.</p> |
| Vertical conflict | Vertical conflict refers to conflict between the state and civilians. See also Conflict and Horizontal Conflict . |

Violence

Violence is a particular response to conflict. It is the behaviour that involves the use of force intended to dominate, hurt, damage, or kill someone or something. Violence can be physical, sexual, psychological, and emotional. These types of violence are usually called *direct violence*. This is inflicted directly from one person to another. Violence can also be *indirect*, such as cultural violence or structural violence. The dehumanization of other cultures is a form of cultural violence. Structural violence refers to violence that is built into social, political, or economic structures. Unjust or violent structures are often an underlying cause for secondary violence (e.G. Oppressed minority groups may resort to physical violence as a response to unequal access to economic resources).

Appendix 2

Case Studies

Source: Nonviolent Peaceforce

April 2011

Verifying Violence and Cultivating Confidence in Western Mindanao

A sudden firefight erupted in one of the most isolated and disputed locations of western Mindanao on 7 April 2011 when some 400 armed men from law enforcement agencies surrounded an island with land troops and military boats in an operation aimed at securing the arrest of a criminal group. A 4.5 hour firefight ensued in which several loud explosions were heard displacing some 4,000 civilians, the entire population of the island, burning 13 houses and killing nine suspected criminals – burnt beyond recognition.

On the request of local stakeholders, Nonviolent Peaceforce's (NP) Quick Response Team, comprised of both International and National Protection Monitors, embarked upon a three-day verification mission. Mindanao is a large island about the size of Greece so it took the team some 10 hours and a boat-ride to reach the secluded site in western Mindanao.

The prompt intervention of NP helped to ensure the immediate and safe return of the 4,000 frightened civilians to their homes. Before NP's presence, they were reluctant to do so for fear of further attacks.

A local representative of the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) said, "The people in my municipality, and in particular the people in the village which you visited, are very happy for your eagerness to help them diffuse their fears..."

NP's presence also helped to ensure the incident was dealt with immediately and was afforded proper attention warranted by higher authorities one result of which was compensation to the families whose houses were burned.

The Vice Mayor of Naga, Zamboanga Sibugay Province, said: "Thank you Nonviolent Peaceforce for the concern for the people of my community. We will do our best to cure their trauma and will assist them the best we can".

A complicating feature to the conflict, and of relevance in this particular incident, is that ordinary but widespread banditry confuses the origin of violent attacks, extortion and kidnapping. In this case, it was unclear whether the target of the operation was indeed an MILF member or only a criminal. If he was a MILF member, the operation would have implications far greater than just an operation against criminal elements and could indeed constitute a ceasefire violation. Such a violation could trigger retaliation and counter-retaliation, thereby derailing the entire peace process resulting in massive displacements and irreparable damage to civilians and their property. In the past, triggers not unlike this one precipitated full-scale hostilities. It was therefore imperative for NP's team to

determine the affiliations and alliances of the target of the operation. In Mindanao, these alliances and affiliations are not straight-forward and are often complicated by multiple affiliations which can include a vast network of family, political and criminal alliances. Upon arriving at the site, one member of the verification team said: “The first thing that struck me was the imposing silence and emptiness of the area. Houses remained closed and only domestic animals were seen wandering. The scene portrayed chaos and destruction. Thirteen houses and many trees were totally burned. Impacts of bullets could be seen on walls of the remaining houses and trees.” After the incident all civilians had left the island, fearing for their safety and security.

The reconstruction of the incident with the police and some witnesses shed light on the course of the incident and focused on the sequence of events and questioned the balance of force against the objective pursued. The observation also evaluated the amount of destruction and assessed the needs and possibilities for civilians affected by the incident to return safely to their location.

As per the Civilian Protection Component’s mandate, the resulting detailed report was sent to the International Monitoring Team who in turn shared the report with the both the government and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front Peace Panels. The key parties to the peace process on the basis of NPP’s verification conducted an investigation of the incident. Further, the report was discussed at length during a round of exploratory talks of the peace process held in Malaysia. This speaks to the positive impact that NP is having on civilian protection-related issues and is the first time a specific civilian protection-related issue was talked about in the forum of the official exploratory peace talks.

NP’s report found that no violation of the ceasefire between the government and the MILF had occurred during the encounter. Rather, it was an operation meant to reinforce the law and was ordered by the police in Zamboanga Sibugay supported by the army. However, it did suggest that future similar operations be better coordinated, especially when carried out in predominantly Muslim areas, so as to preclude panic amongst civilian populations resulting in displacement because of *the impression* that the army is targeting Muslim populations. Joint mechanisms to combat criminality exist.

As a final testament to the positive impact of such interventions, local residents of the secluded island requested NP establish an office there to help ensure their safety and security. Incidentally, NP was officially requested by local civil society to establish a field office in the Zamboanga peninsula previously. Although the request is still under consideration, NP made a series of initial courtesy visits to local Government authorities to explore the viability of the proposal. Local response has thus far been positive.

Source: Nonviolent Peaceforce

June 2012

Cultivating a Culture of Peace in Future Leaders

Nonviolent Peaceforce (NP) in the Philippines supports the peace process by assisting in the development of future Bangsamoro leaders and managers who will utilize their political and socio-economic knowledge and skills to improve the situation in conflict-affected Mindanao.

Twelve future leaders, from all across conflict-affected central and western Mindanao, including the most conflict-affected island provinces of Sulu and Basilan, attended a three-day training from 28-30 May 2012 given by NP's Maguindanao field team. The training was done in support of the Bangsamoro Leadership and Management Institute (BLMI).

Majid Nur, a participant from Al-Barka, Basilan, where late last year a clash between the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) and the Armed Forces of the Philippines resulted in the death of 19 soldiers said: "Thank you Nonviolent Peaceforce for delivering this training. We live in places with many challenges so it is good for us to learn more about human rights and conflict management. It will help us support our people in time of conflict."

The BLMI, a registered nongovernmental organisation, is envisioned to be a centre of excellence and repository of knowledge in the discipline of human resource development that produces individuals of impeccable character, equipped with exemplary leadership and managerial qualities for the transformation of the Bangsamoro people.

The establishment of the BLMI was discussed during the 10th Formal Exploratory Talks between the two parties in February 2006. It was finalized and formally agreed upon during the 14th Formal Exploratory Talks held on November 14-15, 2007, with funding commitment from the Philippine Government to jumpstart the Institute's operations.

The Government of the Philippines (GPH) panel chair Dean Marvic Leonen said: "If I have to underscore the many gains that the negotiating process between the government and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front achieved, I would count the establishment of the Bangsamoro Leadership and Management Institute to be close to the top of the list."

In the wake of NP's training, the BLMI officially launched the institution on 6 June 2012 in a new building. Mohagher Iqbal, chair of the MILF Peace Panel, during the turnover ceremony, attended by NP representatives, said: "We acknowledge with utmost sincerity the big contribution extended by... Nonviolent Peaceforce through its Country Director, Brother Atif Hameed, in conducting training... needed to capacitate future Moro leaders especially from the youth sector."

The training was conducted on the request of the BLMI with an eye to forming a long-term sustainable partnership wherein NP will act to capacitate the Institute and conduct trainings related to unarmed civilian peacekeeping and human rights. The training in May first gave an overview of NP and unarmed civilian peacekeeping and then delved into

various related topics including sessions on but not limited to: conflict analysis, peaceful approaches to solving conflict, International Humanitarian Law, Grave Childs Rights Violations, the Convention on the Rights of the Child, and the Universal Declaration on Human Rights. The sessions were participatory in nature and the participants were eager to share their own experiences in light of the training.

Tirso Tahir, a participant from Zamboanga City said: “It is very hard for us living in conflict-affected Mindanao to be patient. But we would like to thank NP for the opportunity to come together here. It is important that we listen to each other and the other party. This platform will help us to understand human rights violations and its remedies.”

The training not only served to educate the future leaders on their rights and obligations under international and national law, but also connected the participants with the newly appointed Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao’s Commission on Human Rights Director, Attorney Laisa Alamia.

At the turnover ceremony, the Malaysian facilitator Tengku Dato' AB Ghafar Tengku Mohamed aptly pointed out: “Peace without education is not peace, this is a very good step towards peace and development.”

As a member of the International Monitoring Team’s (IMT) Civilian Protection Component, and due to initiatives such as partnering with the BLMI, NP acts on two fronts in support of the peace talks: it supports the ceasefire as a member of the IMT and supports initiatives such as the BLMI, a product of the peace negotiations, geared towards confidence building and institutionalising endeavours supporting the peace process.

Silvestre Afable, former government chief peace negotiator under president Gloria Arroyo at the turnover ceremony said: "Confidence-building measures lie in the meat of any peace process anywhere in the world. While we seek a political solution in the peace talks, we try to safeguard the ceasefire like precious life itself, and carve out a positive direction for fighters-on-hold—who will hopefully trade their guns for ploughshares when a final settlement is reached."

NP in the Philippines Country Director, Atif Hameed, said: “The budding partnership with the BLMI is a poignant example of how unarmed civilian peacekeeping can support actors in a conflict while they try to negotiate a sound and lasting peace.”

Source: Nonviolent Peaceforce

2012 November

Averting Violence and Displacement in Mindanao

“It was not long ago that in barangay Mamaanon that the AFP [Armed Forces of the Philippines] and the MILF [Moro Islamic Liberation Front], heavily armed and ready to fight, came as close as 50 meters to one another. If it was not for Nonviolent Peaceforce who intervened, the community would have experienced the effects of another war ... Piagapo is already affected by conflict and cannot afford any more, so I would also take the opportunity to appeal the community to support Nonviolent Peaceforce for the wonderful work they have been doing for peace in our community.”

This was said by the former Mayor and current Chairperson of the Association of Barangay Captains of Piagapo municipality on 8 November 2012 during a programme which included the official signing of a peace covenant between local military and MILF commanders, in the presence of Nonviolent Peaceforce (NP) and the community.

The Chairperson was referring to an incident wherein due to a lack of coordination and miscommunication, elements of the AFP and the MILF were set for an imminent armed clash. The roughly 800 inhabitants of the barangay were panicking and preparing to flee.

An NP-trained early warning and early response local monitor informed NP's local partner, the Kalimudan Foundation Inc, who in turn informed NP. NP immediately contacted the MILF and government bodies responsible for coordinating troop movements so as to avoid violent clashes under the ceasefire agreement.

They also contacted the security component of the International Monitoring Team, a third-party ceasefire mechanism led by Malaysia, of which NP is a part.

Within an hour, the ceasefire mechanisms did what they were designed to do – prevent open hostilities by utilising structured lines of communication. Sometimes though these lines become plugged and that is where NP and the local early warning mechanisms it helps to build have a profound impact, at many levels. A clash was avoided thereby surely preventing the loss of life. Civilians did not flee and the terrible consequences of such an action like the disruption to livelihoods and education was avoided.

And at the higher level? At the time, MILF and Government representatives were meeting in Malaysia for peace talks. Had violence occurred that day, it is likely that the talks would have been cut short, and had the violence spiralled out of control, in a worst-case scenario, the delicate talks could have potentially been derailed. It was not long after the incident in question that the MILF and the Government signed a Framework Agreement for peace – a monumental step in achieving a just and lasting peace.

Source: Nonviolent Peaceforce

2011 March

Building Bridges Across Conflict

Hundreds of people participated in a “Walk for Peace” in the conflict-affected municipality of Datu Piang, Maguindanao province, an event demonstrating the strong push of civil society organizations (CSOs) for the Peace Negotiating Panels of both the Government of the Philippines (GPH) and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) to forge a negotiated political settlement of the conflict as soon as possible. Had it not been for Nonviolent Peaceforce’s (NP) assistance, the walk would most likely not have taken place.

Maguindanao province is the most conflict-affected province in Mindanao. According to the International Organization for Migration some 82,000 individuals remain displaced in the province, resulting mainly from the 2008 conflict but also stemming from years of clan feuds over political power and land, which often boil over into renewed violence. The most infamous event in recent history connected to a clan feud in the province was the “Ampatuan Massacre” in which 57 people were slaughtered. At least 34 of these were journalists making it the single deadliest event for the press in recorded history.

The massacre illustrates the often dangerous position that civil society finds itself working in, and Nonviolent Peaceforce Philippines can play a crucial role in supporting local initiatives for peace by, for example, bridging and convening a wide array of local actors and providing neutral space for these actors to come together, without fear.

Field Coordinator of Maguindanao field site said: “The community here is extremely polarized springing from years of conflict, and although difficult, we are in a position where we can bring the communities together.”

NP’s local partners in Datu Piang, the Bangsamoro Centre for Justpeace (BCJP) and the Kaduntaya Foundation Inc. (KFI) spearheaded the “Walk for Peace” initiative. To do so, the partners had to arrange a meeting with the Mayor and involve him in the planning. The partners also wished to include religious leaders in the peace walk, with whom they had not previously engaged. Upon their request NP’s field team held a series of meetings with the Mayor and/or his representatives and religious leaders, on separate occasions.

Both the local government unit and the local religious leaders had earlier been collaborating with NP and were therefore familiar with its mandate and thus agreed to meet NP’s local partners. The religious leaders however agreed to meet only on the condition that the meeting was to be held within the NP’s compound as they felt much safer talking openly within NP’s premises. The meeting went ahead and subsequently the Mayor appealed to all citizens to join the activity.

Abdulbasit R. Benito, BCJP’s Executive Director said: “NP’s field presence has really helped us bridge divides created by conflict and even strengthen our links with local institutions, a key factor in creating a robust and resilient civil society.”

The peace walk was a success and sent a clear message of the peoples' desire for a just and lasting peace. People from all walks of life including women, youths, civil society organizations and non-governmental organizations participated. Further, both the local imam and the local priest invited their respective communities.

Shadab Mansoori, Field Coordinator of Maguindanao said: "I think the best part of the peace walk was that the local imam and the local priest led the procession holding hands and chatting the entire time."

This was a promising step towards reconciliation because new paths of communication and dialogue were created which sent a clear and resounding message to the communities: peace is the way forward.

Benito said: "We are very grateful for the work that Nonviolent Peaceforce has been doing in our community and its sincerity of purpose is evident in that it is the only international nongovernmental organization actually living and working conflict-affected communities across Mindanao."

NP recognizes it is just one actor in a wide array of local organizations, local community leadership, national civic movements, political parties, women's organizations, religious organizations and others. In a conflict situation their diverse activities are critical to any serious strategies for change and need to be supported. NP supports peace initiatives of local actors like the BCJP and the KFI and works to connect diverse actors, like the Mayor with civil society. And crucially, NP bridges divides created by conflict like that between the local imam and the local priest.

Source: Nonviolent Peaceforce

2010 October

Helping Unknown Victim of Violence

In September, while visiting a municipality Nonviolent Peaceforce (NP) had not been to before, the team noticed a camp for Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) beside the highway. As the team was new to the area, it went down to meet the IDPs living there and learn more about their situation. NP was received with intrigue and it soon became clear that these IDPs were not used to international visitors. Initially they responded politely to our questions about their well-being, not sure about the team's motives or relationships with other actors in the conflict. However, once the NP team explained that it is a member of the International Monitoring Team and has a specific Civilian Protection mandate, the IDPs began to open up about their anxieties and experiences. They described living in fear over the past few months because lawless armed groups had been roaming the area and targeting vulnerable communities like their own. They started to tell the NP team about recent incidents and pointed to a ramshackle shelter nearby. They said a young girl living there had been shot two weeks before when one of these lawless groups entered the camp. NP quickly made its way to the shelter to find out what had happened.

Sitting quietly in the corner was 10-year-old Liz , wearing a bright yellow plaster cast on her leg. Liz's mother described how armed men had surrounded their home and fired indiscriminately as the family hid for safety inside. When the firing stopped, the family members realised Liz had been shot, a bullet passing through a bone in her leg. They told NP that the only support they had received since the incident was a small hand out from the local mayor to cover their transport to the hospital. Liz's mother said that the cost of the medication Liz needed was draining the family's resources and they were struggling to survive. NP then explained that it would try to link the family to an organisation that could assist them and immediately returned to base to set about this task.

Through the main office NP was able to contact a number of International Nongovernmental Organisations and local welfare organisations. Details of the incident quickly passed from one agency to another, all alarmed by what they heard and eager to assist. Within a few days, several organizations came to visit Liz's family: the local Department of Social Welfare, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the International Committee of the Red Cross; all of which pledged their support for Liz's future medical treatment.

The NP team recently returned to the camp where Liz resided and visited the family. Although Liz is still wearing the cast, it is due to come off shortly and the doctor expects her to make a full recovery. Moreover, there was a noticeable change in how the family spoke with NP. They were much more positive about Liz's situation and the mood of the camp in general, saying that they had not been harassed in recent weeks and felt a lot safer.

IDP communities are among the most vulnerable in Maguindanao and are often located in conflict-prone areas where NP is the only international organisation with a sustained presence. Not only do they have to cope with the trauma of war and displacement,

but they are also an easy target for armed groups. The recent influx of international organisations at the camp clearly sent a message to the armed groups that people do care about these communities and their actions will not go unnoticed. On one level, NP's intervention was simple, and on another level it was vital. There is a real need for the work NP is doing in these communities. NP bridges the gap between abandoned civilians and the people who can help them. It's a crucial link connecting those in need of services with those who can provide them, but very often a missing one.

