



UNARMED CIVILIAN PROTECTION (UCP) and its application in South Sudan

An Information Guide

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WHAT IS UNARMED CIVILIAN PROTECTION (UCP)?

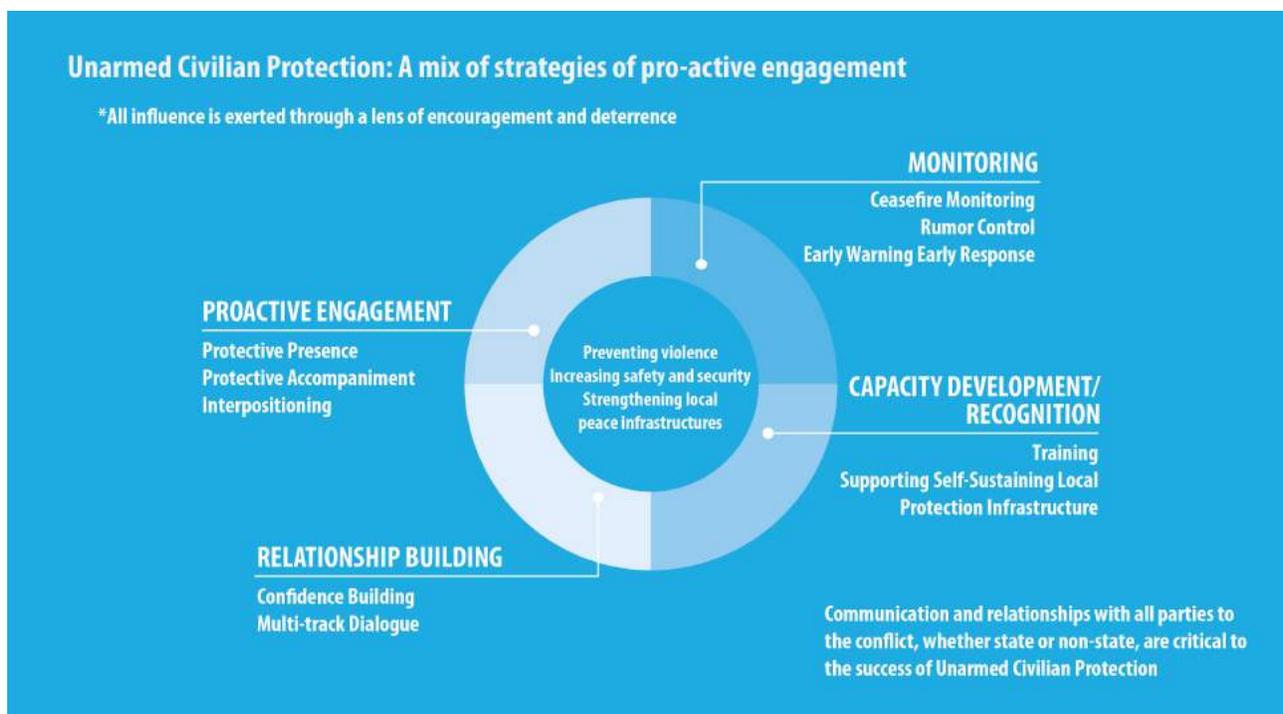
Unarmed civilian protection (UCP) is an emerging methodology for the direct protection of civilians and for localised violence reduction. UCP provides unarmed, specially trained civilians, recruited from multiple countries and cultures, who live and work with local civil society in areas of violent conflict. It has grown in practice and recognition in the last few decades, with over 50 civil society organisations applying UCP methods in 35 conflict areas since 1990. UCP can be applied at all stages of a conflict, but it can be particularly effective early on, and after conflict has subsided. UCP can work in conflict areas where no UN peacekeepers are present (e.g. Mindanao, Myanmar, Colombia) but also, in a complementary manner, with UN missions (e.g. South Sudan). The concept of UCP contributes to several discourses taking place at the UN and elsewhere, including Women, Peace and Security; Protection of Civilians; Children in Armed Conflict; Mediation; Human Security; and Peacebuilding.

What is the aim of UCP?

Deploying professionally prepared unarmed civilians before, during or after conflict aims to prevent or reduce violence, provide direct physical protection to civilians under threat and strengthen or build resilient local peace infrastructures that help communities protect themselves and resolve conflict non-violently. Unlike traditional military peacekeeping or armed private security firms, this is done without the use of, or reliance on, weapons; instead, UCP emphasises relationships over military power.

How is UCP implemented?

Although different organisations implement UCP in different ways, they usually share key methods, principles (e.g. non-violence, non-partisanship), sources of guidance (e.g. International Humanitarian Law) and skills. UCP practitioners engage with affected communities for varying periods of time, usually ranging from a few months to a few years. The four main methods of UCP are proactive engagement, monitoring and intervening, relationship-building and capacity development. Each of these methods has a number of applications, including protective presence, protective accompaniment and inter-positioning, ceasefire monitoring, rumour control, early warning/early response, confidence-building, multi-track dialogue, local mediation and training and supporting local UCP infrastructures. Each intervention may use a different combination of these tools depending on the context and the specific protection needs at the time.



ADVANTAGES OF UCP

The absence of guns and uniforms can make it easier for UCPs to be accepted by all parties. It can pose less of a threat to actors that are in conflict with the national government. This strengthens the perception of non-partisanship and reduces the risk of being targeted by rebel groups. All of this can make it easier for civilians to approach UCPs, especially in areas where state and non-state armed actors may be actively fighting. When civilians receive protection from actors perceived as partisan, they can be assumed to be partisan themselves. When non-partisan UCP implementers provide direct protection it can provide the opportunity for civilians to separate themselves from parties to the conflict.

How is UCP operationalized in South Sudan?

Nonviolent Peaceforce (NP) has been implementing UCP programming in South Sudan since 2010. The scope of the civilian protection and violence reduction programming of NP in South Sudan includes Child Protection, Women's Participation in Peace and Security, Prevention and Protection from Sexual Violence, Violence Reduction in Armed Conflict, Early Warning and Early Response, Protection in Displacement Settings, Inter/Intra Communal Violence Reduction, and Protection Mainstreaming within Conflict related Emergency Humanitarian Assistance.

Increasing the Safety and Security of Civilians at Imminent Risk of Violence

NP interrupts immediate violence affecting the civilian population through proactive protective presence in vulnerable communities, and provides protective accompaniment to vulnerable groups and individuals facing elevated threats. Through rumor control and facilitated dialogue, NP de-escalates tension within and across communities. NP also secures the commitment of other protection actors to engage with and conduct regular preventive patrols in vulnerable communities.

Strengthening Local Capacities for Peace-Building and Violence Reduction

NP seeks to end violent conflict by building the capacity of communities to manage conflicts, self-protect and build peace. NP facilitates and develops training programs for communities and other stakeholders on the following areas: Monitoring of Conflict Indicators; Contribution to and Use of Early Warning and Early Response (EWER) Systems; Conflict Analysis; Dialogue; Confidence and Trust building. In doing so, NP increases awareness on the use of non-violent strategies to prevent, manage and resolve conflict and build sustainable peace in the country. Strengthening local capacities for peace-building and violence reduction positions communities as experts in their own safety and protection.

Preventing and Reducing Gender-based Violence through Enhancing Women's Role in Peace-Building

Women's Protection Teams and other community-based protection mechanisms foster the active participation of women in peace and security issues affecting their communities. Through training and mentoring, NP helps strengthen local capacities for gender-based violence prevention and women's protection. Women's Protection Teams work with communities to identify risks, including gender-based violence, and establish mitigation measures thorough coordination with security actors, government and traditional authorities to reduce violence and increase the safety and security of all civilians.

Preventing and Reducing Child Protection Concerns

NP's programming aims to prevent and reduce the incidence of violence affecting vulnerable and at-risk children. Through case management, reunification of separated families, sustainable capacity-building of local protection structures and awareness-raising, NP seeks to address key child protection concerns in South Sudan. In providing safe spaces for children affected by violence, conflict and displacement, NP supports children to play and develop, not only empowering children to be change agents within their own community but also promoting resilience and healthy conflict resolution. Simultaneously, NP works to raise awareness and knowledge amongst community members on preventing and reducing child protection concerns.

NP OUTREACH AND INFLUENCING IN SOUTH SUDAN

NP South Sudan is supported by donor countries, UN agencies and private individuals

NP coordinates with and provides support to the following stakeholders:

Women Protection Teams (WTPs) across South Sudan	15 CSOs from 4 state working on social cohesion and peace building	South Sudan Human Rights Defenders Network representing 45 CSOs	TRIBES Civil Society Movement representing 35 CSOs and NGOs	Women Associations & Women Task Force across South Sudan
National and International NGOs	Religious Groups: South Sudan Muslim Council; South Sudan Council of Churches	Youth Protection Teams (YPT) and non-affiliated youth across South Sudan	UNYOKE Group (12 young leaders)	Juba Rotary Club

NP coordinates with the following bodies for the provision of humanitarian assistance:

- Government of South Sudan:
 - Ministry of Humanitarian Affairs (RRC)
 - Ministry of Gender and Social Welfare
- Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD)
- Ceasefire and Transitional Security Arrangements Monitoring and Verification Mechanism (CTSAMVM)
- UN Agencies
- UN Humanitarian Country Team
- South Sudan NGO Forum
- Protection Cluster:
 - GBV Sub-cluster
 - Child Protection Sub-Cluster



Nonviolent Peaceforce (NP) is a global civilian protection agency (NGO) based in humanitarian and international human rights law. Our mission is to protect civilians in violent conflicts through unarmed strategies, build peace side by side with local communities, and advocate for the wider adoption of these approaches to safeguard human lives and dignity. NP envisions a worldwide culture of peace in which conflicts within and between communities and countries are managed through nonviolent means. We are guided by principles of nonviolence, non-partisanship, primacy of local actors, and civilian-to-civilian action. 's Response to Conflict.

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