



Reem Ibrahim Mohamed Ahmed El Fasher (North Darfur)

As part of the UNs' support to the African Union's Initiative on Silencing the Guns in Africa by 2020, UNAMID has partnered with Nonviolent Peaceforce (NP) to provide capacity building on unarmed protection methodologies to African youth and peace leaders in Darfur through an online training course. From June to July, over 40 Darfuris from all 5 Darfur states were trained. Below, you find one out of eight interviews of course graduates who give their insights on how the eight-week course has changed their perspective on how to deal with conflict and how to change behaviours of those around them to prevent or mitigate violence.

My name is Reem Ibrahim and I am from El Fasher, North Darfur state. I am a last year medical student and general coordinator of the Darfur Youth Network for Governance and Peacebuilding. I also volunteer at Plan International Sudan as a community facilitator. I am 23 years old.

How has this course added to or changed what you knew or believed about protecting civilians or securing communities?

The course has changed my perspective on peacebuilding and peacekeeping methods, and that we can make peace without using weapons. The letter of love is stronger than hatred. We can all change the community. As well, being unarmed, respecting others, loving them, avoiding rumors, control and evaluate situations, respecting cultures, negotiations and being honest is highly necessary to protect civilians.

Of the things you learned or experienced in the UCP course, what has been the most important for you?

Peace is the way. Communication skills are necessary, assessing situations and being honest are

all crucial means to achieve it.

Were you able to use the information and methods from the UCP course in your life, whether in your family, your community, or your work? Can you give one example?

Yes, in my daily life at home and at work. Through thinking before reacting, avoiding conflict, being positive, help in solving problems, be protective for others, etc. For example, one day I had a conflict with my staff at work and I got really angry; we reached a blind end, and then I remembered that there must be analysis for the conflict, review the connectors and dividers. By applying peace and forgiveness, and after several attempts, we managed to solve the problem.

What initiatives in civilian protection have you participated in since you took the course, if any?

I continued participating in the Darfur Youth Network for Governance and Peace building, Youth For Darfur Peace Initiative and started with the Peace Bridge Association.

What opportunities for UCP do you see in your community?

UCP can succeed in my commu-

nity because people are in need for peaceful methods especially because we got out from a war and there are several armed groups, child soldiers... etc. Also increased awareness of the community is helpful.

How do you see that UCP can contribute to silencing the guns in Darfur?

Through negotiations and building a road map to peaceful coexistence, making bridges for conflict parties to sit around one table, assist in developing an early warning and response (EWER) mechanism, human rights and peacebuilding education.

Many people, including civilians, have and use weapons in Darfur. Do you see that UCP can effectively protect people in this context? How?

Although it might take a while, UCP can effectively help, through protective presence, bringing conflict parties and government together, promote the community participation in stabilizing and keeping peace. Add more value to media campaigns and messages. So yes, I believe UCP has the power to protect people in Darfur.