



Documentation of the Virtual Gathering Good Practices in Unarmed Civilian Protection/Accompaniment

12-14 and 19-21 November, 2021

Christine Schweitzer



12-14 and 19-21 November 2021

Practitioners, partners and academics from 160+ organizations
in 45+ countries have been invited.

Abstract

A virtual international conference on good practices in Unarmed Civilian Protection / Accompaniment (UCP/A) was convened by Nonviolent Peaceforce as part of a multi-year process to identify good practices in UCP/A. After the successful conduct of six regional workshops, the goals of this virtual conference were to discuss findings elicited from the regional workshops, develop a better sense of organizations in the Field of UCP/Accompaniment, gain a better understanding of shared organizational concerns, develop a list of shared opportunities to collaborate and to form a “community of practice”. Practitioners, partners, and academics from 160+ organizations in 45+ countries were invited to the online conference. A total of 22 Zoom workshops took place over the period of two weekends discussed different topics including discussions of global trends impacting UCP/A, decolonizing UCP/A, UCP/A in the digital age, solidarity and nonpartisanship, and building a community of practice.

Nonviolent Peaceforce

Documentation of the Virtual Gathering “Good Practices in Unarmed Civilian Protection/Accompaniment”

12-14 and 19-21 November, 2021

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Executive Summary

Unarmed Civilian Protection or Protective Accompaniment (UCP/A) is the practice of deploying specially trained unarmed civilians before, during, or after violent conflict to prevent or reduce violence, provide direct physical protection to civilian populations under threat, and strengthen or build resilient local peace infrastructures.

Several years ago, Nonviolent Peaceforce (NP) embarked on a process to research and discuss good practices as well as challenges in UCP/A.

This concept encompasses a range of approaches through which civilians protect other civilians against violence, without using violence themselves. The four stages of the research process are:

1. Conduct case studies in four areas of the world where UCP/A is being practiced: South Sudan, Colombia, the Philippines (Mindanao) and Israel/Palestine.
2. Convene six regional facilitated consultation groups, with Europe being the last one.
3. An international UCP/A Good Practices conference which will be held in two parts – on zoom toward the end of 2021 and hopefully in person in 2023.
4. Publish, disseminate, and evaluate findings.

The Conference

Practitioners, partners, and academics from 160+ organizations in 45+ countries were invited to the online conference, including local as well as international and regional organizations.

186 registered participants discussed 15 topics identified in the regional workshops in a total of 22 Zoom workshops that took place over two weekends. At 15 UTC each day, there was a general session where topics were discussed which were assumed to be of more general interest and in a time zone acceptable for people from all continents. The workshops were:

- Welcome and Introduction
- Global Trends: Climate Disruption, Pandemics, and the Decline of Democracy
- Decolonizing UCP
- UCP in the Digital Age
- Responding to Transnational Corporate Violence
- Where do we go from here?

The other workshops were titled “Good Practice Discussions,” most of them being offered twice during a day, either at 3 UTC and 17 UTC or at 9 UTC and 19 UTC to accommodate all time zones. The workshops and subjects were:

- UCP and Community Self-Protection
- The UCP and Accompaniment Umbrella: What are We Talking about?
- The Role of Nonviolence in UCP & Accompaniment Practice
- Solidarity and Nonpartisanship
- Evolution of UCP/Accompaniment in Southeast Asia
- Intersections of UCP and Accompaniment with Humanitarian Aid and Strategies for Peace
- Unarmed Protection Missions by States & Multilateral Organizations
- Knowledge Creation and Sharing
- Developing UCP and Accompaniment as a Community of Practice

In addition to the Zoom workshops which lasted about 1½ hours each, there was a web resource based on the Loomio technology platform where people could continue the discussion and share information and materials.

Summary of Findings from the Workshops

General sessions

Global trends including climate change, pandemics, the decline of democracy (shrinking/closing space), erosion of global norms, and the growing threat of a military confrontation between nuclear powers all pose challenges for the security of everyone and thereby also for Unarmed Civilian Protection. Preexisting conflicts may be amplified, or new divisions and conflicts can be created. For the approach of UCP/A this means both more and different challenges (more conflict, less space) but also potentially more demand for this unarmed alternative to military missions.

Racism, white privilege, and the colonial heritage are some of the main issues that many UCP/A organizations, especially those from the Global North, struggle with. They are faced by the dilemma that racist privilege can at times, protect people under threat. In several countries, Whites from the Global North still have greater deterrence power. Some groups and activists from the Global South do want to make use of this factor for their own safety and security.

In response to these issues, many Northern UCP/A organizations have started to include nationals and/or people from other countries of the Global South in their teams and include in their trainings awareness-raising on White privilege and colonialism or coloniality.

On some points all speakers agreed: Listening to local actors is a central principle; not speaking for others, people can speak for themselves; be aware of privileges and how to use them (if it all); question terminology (“beneficiaries”, “empowerment”); stop seeing groups that experience discrimination as victims only, thereby denying them agency in their struggle.

Many people at the workshop thought that the discussion should be continued.

The session on “**UCP in the digital age**” led to at least four important lessons:

- Organizations need to have reliable ways to identify misinformation in social media.
- IT technology can be used to strengthen monitoring of violence or potentially violent situations by collecting and quickly processing information on movements etc., by evaluating information coming through social media.
- There are many free or low-cost apps that can help make computer and cell phone communication safer.
- The degree of awareness of data protection in the field of peacebuilding is low and much in need of improvement. Data protection is protection of people.

A challenging topic for the protection of civilians is **transnational corporate violence**. The actions of corporations, mostly in close collusion with the governments of the countries they work in, often become a threat to people, especially when their mines or plants destroy habitat and nature. When people resist such exploitation, they are met with violence from state or private security agents.

The workshop discussed cooperation between activists from the Global South and the Global North and how this could happen. UCP/A by internationals is one such cooperation; advocacy in the Global North is another strategy. And they are often combined. There are often international solidarity networks to mobilize public opinion in the countries where the transnational corporations are based. A special challenge is China with its close links between the economic and political sphere, and the difficulties to influence Chinese companies or the government.

Good Practice Discussions

Communities have developed various tactics to protect themselves. There are different forms of protection, and sometimes community self-protection and international accompaniment work hand in hand, as is the case in some of the Colombian peace communities. Some of the most important aspects of community self-protection are realization of agency by the participants, visibility of the protection measures (so that potential perpetrators are aware of them), and rumor control.

There seem to be two models at work regarding self-protection: cases when the whole community develop and implement tools and strategies and/or makes use of existing, “traditional” ones, and situations when new, special roles are being created and funded. Secondly, building international solidarity networks directly connecting local actors with a broader international community can give nonviolent actors leverage to stop violence though they need to be organized with care, because this practice might also lead to accusations of illegitimacy (e.g., that the protection is sponsored by outside actors).

“The UCP & Accompaniment Umbrella: What are We Talking About?” was the title of two workshops to identify central elements of UCP/A. Nonviolence and the direct protection of civilians are core elements unifying the UCP Community of Practice, along with the centrality of relationship building and engagement with local actors. The nexus between solidarity and nonpartisanship was presented as an important element as well as a point of tension, which somewhat unifies but also divides the UCP Community of Practice, not only among organizations but also at times within the same organization. Most participants did not see a conflict between solidarity and nonpartisanship. Another complexity for the UCP Community of Practice is that UCP calls for flexible approaches on the ground, which requires maintaining an agile approach to enable learning from and adaptation to the local context.

Facilitating opportunities to learn from each other, adopting an integrated approach for the engagement of key stakeholders, and sharing best practices were identified as enablers to strengthen the UCP Community of Practice. While there is still a long way to go, the UCP Community of Practice can really play a crucial role in supporting the paradigm shift to make UCP a reality in all the contexts that might benefit from it.

The role of nonviolence in UCP/A practice is very important to most practitioners. In a survey conducted with the participants when they registered, over 90% described nonviolence as central to their work. During the workshops it became clear that, while most UCP/A practitioners subscribe to the principle, there are different understandings of what nonviolence means in practice. Nonviolence may refer both to how an organization works internally (for example, for some working by consensus is an expression of nonviolence), and to how they do their work – not carrying weapons, not accepting armed guards or escorts, speaking to all sides, etc. Some of these elements are less than universal, for example when it comes to internal organization or to expand the protection net to former combatants. But these differences did not mean that there was not a vast area of agreement. Everybody agreed that nonviolence is powerful, that being unarmed facilitates the creation of relationships with various actors of the community, and that those using nonviolent tools need to be committed to it to be credible. Nonviolence is key to protect civilians and deescalate violence, and contrary to the assumption many people may hold, it often is also the safer option for practitioners as well as those they accompany.

Nonpartisanship does not exclude being in solidarity with activists or generally the people an UCP/A organization works with. However, there is a clear difference in approach among various organizations. Some may understand their efforts to open space so that the local activists can do their work. Others may join activities of those they accompany to some extent (while respecting the primacy of the local actors). Some organizations conduct advocacy campaigns outside of the host country in support of local groups’ positions. Still others do not have nonpartisanship as a principle at

all. (In the survey, around 89% of the participants agreed totally or “somewhat” to the principle; about 71% were in total agreement.)

In a workshop where representatives of UCP organizations (most were involved with NP) from **countries in Southeast Asia** met, it became clear that they all share similar problems to some degree and that therefore exchange among activists from the different countries could be very useful. A lot of local groups in the different countries provide some type of unarmed security though they might not use the term “UCP”. Contacts among organizations from different countries and the training work NP offered seems to have been a catalyst leading to more efforts in this field.

Another workshop explored the **intersection of UCP/A with humanitarian aid and strategies for peace**. The speakers agreed that the interconnections especially between aid and UCP/A need to be further explored. Most UCP/A organizations would not engage in delivering humanitarian aid themselves but link people to aid agencies who would meet the need. Another task for UCP/A organizations is to alert the aid community to potential conflicts (conflict sensitivity) and sometimes also directly facilitate in conflicts that may arise between IDP and host communities about aid. Sometimes they maintain a presence when aid is distributed. At other times, they open up humanitarian access. As to peacemaking, UCP/A organizations sometimes mediate conflicts on the ground or perhaps at middle level but are not engaging in top-level conflict resolution efforts. The distinction between peacebuilding and UCP/A did not become really clear in this and other workshops. Especially organizations from the Global South and local organizations seem not to consciously distinguish between these.

A contested topic is if **states and multilateral organizations** “can do UCP”. In the discussion, the question of the definition of UCP played an important role – when states or multilateral organizations send civilian missions, are they really doing “UCP”? Among the session participants, some essential elements in the definition of UCP included: presence on the ground, being experts in mediation, direct physical protection of civilians and violence prevention. Unlike the UCP carried out by NGOs, international organizations/governments can intervene in the framework of UCP only if invited by the country of deployment. There were many concerns about mixed military-civilian peacekeeping missions. Several participants thought that as long as there is civil-military cooperation, one cannot talk of unarmed work because the threat of use of violence is always present. It is controversial whether expanding UCP to international organizations and states is an opportunity or a challenge. Some organizations (especially in Europe) advocate for it, others consider UCP/A as something that only NGOs/CSOs can and should do because state actors never can be impartial or nonpartisan, and even if those on the ground are unarmed, usually they have armed back-up ready. A middle position may be the position that while states and multilateral organizations can utilize some UCP/A methodologies, they cannot do full UCP.

A number of ideas have been exchanged on how to improve the **creation and sharing of knowledge**. There are plenty of resources. Listed were people (especially local knowledge), storytelling, trainings, books, electronic resources, videos. Challenges are that sometimes there may be too much information and people get overwhelmed, how to save information to access later, language issues and materials that take a too academic language/approach. To convince politicians and donors, figures and “hard proof” (often meaning quantitative analysis) are sometimes missing, and academics also miss comparative studies on UCP/A.

Developing a Community of Practice: Workshop and General Session

On the day before the last of the conference, there were two workshops on “**Developing UCP & Accompaniment as a community of practice**”. Generally, participants responded positively to the concept of such a community. Several ideas and suggestions were collected how this could come

about. They focused on three aspects: more learning from each other, more sharing of resources, and building more awareness of UCP/A with governments, donors, and the public.

In the closing session, “**Where Do We Go from Here?**”, some ideas for further cooperation were discussed. The group identified three high priority opportunities to collaborate: developing training to address decolonization concerns including cross-cultural trainings, sharing good practices on listening to local voices, and educating the public to change our violent culture.

Acronyms

BSV = Bund für Soziale Verteidigung (Federation for Social Defence), Germany
CPT = Community Peacemaker Teams (formerly Christian Peacemaker Teams)
CSO = Civil Society Organization
DRC = Democratic Republic Congo
EWER = Early warning- early response
FARC = Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia, a Colombian rebel group
GPACC = Global Partnership for the Prevention of Armed Conflict
HRD = Human Rights Defender(s)
IDP = Internally Displaced Person(s)
IFGK = Institute for Peace Work and Nonviolent Conflict Transformation, Germany
IRNC = Institut de recherche sur la Résolution Non-violente des Conflits, France
MILF = Moro Islamic Liberation Front, Philippines
MONUSCO = Mission de l'Organisation des Nations Unies en République Démocratique du Congo
MPT = Meta Peace Teams, USA
NGO = Nongovernmental Organization
NLP = Neuro-linguistic programming
NP = Nonviolent Peaceforce
NPA = New People's Army, Philippines
OC = Operazione Colomba (Operation Dove, Italy)
OHCHR = UN High Commissioner for Human Rights
ONAD = Organization for Nonviolence and Development (South Sudan)
OSCE = Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe
PBI = Peace Brigades International
PI = Protection International
PPF = Presbyterian Peace Fellowship
PPM = Permanent Peace Movement, Lebanon
SIPAZ = Servicio Internacional para la Paz. Mexico
SOP = Standard Operating Procedure
UCP/A = Unarmed Civilian Protection / Accompaniment
UNDP = United Nations Development Programme
UNITAR = United Nations Institute for Training and Research
UNMISS = United Nation's Mission in South Sudan
USIP = United States Institute of Peace
WANEP = West Africa Network for Peacebuilding
WPT = Women Protection Team (NP)
YAV = Tucson Borderlands Young Adult Volunteer program

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Introduction

Unarmed Civilian Protection / Accompaniment (UCP/A) is the term increasingly used to describe the protection of civilians, human rights defenders, nonviolent activists, or specially threatened groups like IDPs/refugees from violence in conflict situations by unarmed civilians. These civilians are usually present locally and use a variety of tools to prevent violence and directly protect people. This task can be performed by international and domestic civilians alike, who may be activists, volunteers, or paid staff.

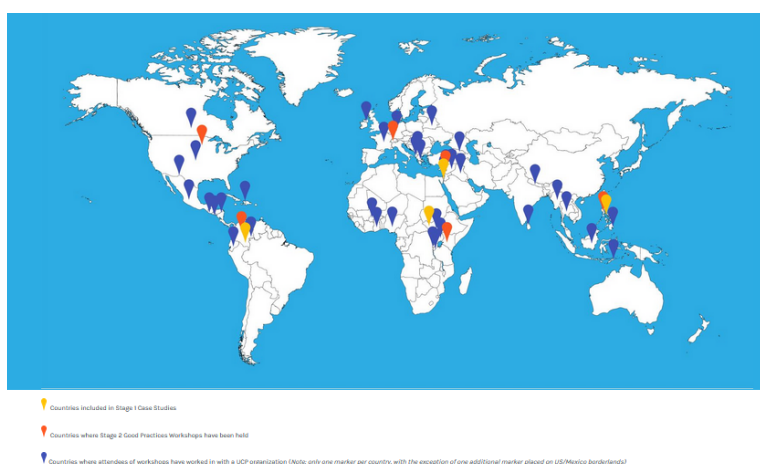
In the process of the Good-Practice-project, NP found at least 60 organizations doing this kind of work in at least 25 countries on four continents; probably the total number is much higher¹.

The Good Practice Project

Several years ago, Nonviolent Peaceforce (NP) embarked on a process to research and discuss good practices as well as challenges in what NP calls Unarmed Civilian Protection (UCP)². The four stages of the process are:

- 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/A good practices. Their findings were published in the book "Wielding Nonviolence in the Midst of Violence", edited by Ellen Furnari.
- Convene six regional facilitated consultation groups made up of UCP practitioners, field partners, 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 Manila in December 2017, the second in Beirut in June 2018, the third in Nairobi in November 2018, the fourth in the USA in October 2019. The fifth took place in Bogota in January 2020, reviewing UCP work in Latin America, the sixth was an online workshop on the European region in February 2021.³

Places included were:



¹ When using the database at Sellkirk college and adding countries to it which are missing there, the total number would be closer to 40. See <https://selkirk.ca/unarmed-civilian-peacekeeping-database>

² Since not all organizations use the term UCP, in the conference and in this report the acronym "UCP/A" has been used, standing for "Unarmed Civilian Protection or Accompaniment".

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

- The next step was described in the earlier reports as “assemble the first international UCP/A Good Practices conference -- gathering practitioners, field partners, beneficiaries, policy makers and academics to discuss the findings of the case studies and consultation groups. And to validate UCP/A good practices that can be scaled up and replicated as well as to improve upon existing practice.” Due to the Covid pandemics, this conference has now been split in two parts; this report covers the first part, an online gathering. If and when a face-to-face conference will take place, was unclear at the time this report was written.
- Publish, disseminate and evaluate findings.

Findings of the Workshops Regarding Commonalities of Practice

In the Good Practice workshops, it became clear that there are different approaches and models of UCP/A:

- Shanti Sena (Peace Army in Hindi), a concept that dates back to Gandhi and Abdul Ghaffar Khan in the 1930s and was implemented in what is today Pakistan in the 1930s and by Gandhians in India in the 1960s and later.
- (Short term) nonviolent intervention across borders: peace marches etc.
- Short-term assignments in one’s own country: e.g., Meta Peace Teams, USA.
- Longer-term international presence: PBI, EAPPI, various peace teams, Operazione Colomba, NP, etc.
- Longer-term presence at hot spots in one’s own country: e.g., Cure Violence
- Conflict-affected communities organizing themselves for their own protection.

The following elements though not universally present, were identified by many as good practice. However, they all depend on the context.

- Invitation by local actors or at least close consultation with them (aka primacy of local actors)
- The almost universal principle of nonviolence and (not for all, though) the principle of non-partisanship
- Longer-term unarmed presence on the ground
- Locals and internationals working in teams together
- Good and ongoing analysis, using various methods, and almost always involving local actors
- Relationship-building with all stakeholders
- Multi-level engagement
- Identification of community capacities
- Enhancing self-protection
- Some sort of capacity-building/ enhancement of programmatic elements
- Protective accompaniment is almost universally one of the activities
- Violence reduction by building relationships with (potential) perpetrators
- Early warning – early response systems strengthened or set up

The organizations currently practicing UCP/A have never all met together. (There have been earlier international consultations in the 1990s and early 2000s, but then the community was much smaller, primarily Northern, and many of the groups currently doing the work did not yet exist.)

The Conference

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, it was decided in early 2021 to conduct the conference in two parts: an online event at the end of 2021, and a face-to-face conference envisaged in June 2022 in Geneva. Currently, while this report is being written and the Covid epidemic is going through its fifth wave, the plan for a face-to-face conference will probably be pushed back timewise. Nonviolent Peaceforce is exploring other options to continue the work in the meantime, like initiating working groups on topics of joint interest.

Practitioners, partners, and academics from 160+ organizations in 45+ countries were invited to the online conference, including local as well as international and regional organizations. The total number of registered participants was 186. The participation in the various workshops differed and ranged from 5-7 participants (at the 3 UTC sessions) to approximately 50.

The conference was organized by a small working team of Nonviolent Peaceforce staff and volunteers coordinated by Adele Lennig and consisting of (in alphabetic order) Gilda Bettencourt, Berit Bliesemann de Guevara, Mel Duncan, Ellen Furnari, Huibert Oldenhuis, Jan Passion and Christine Schweitzer.

Various questions were discussed during a total of 22 Zoom workshops comprising 15 topics that took place over the period of two weekends. At 15 UTC each day there was a general session where topics were discussed which were assumed to be of more general interest and in a time zone acceptable for people from all continents:

- Welcome and Introduction
- Global Trends: Climate Disruption, Pandemics, and the Decline of Democracy
- Decolonizing UCP
- UCP in the Digital Age
- Responding to Transnational Corporate Violence
- Where do we go from here?

The other workshops were titled “Good Practice Discussions”, most of them (with the exceptions of the “Intersections with Aid and Strategies for Peace workshop” and “UCP/A in Southeast Asia”) were offered twice on the same day, either at 3 UTC and 17 UTC or at 9 UTC and 19 UTC. The organizers hoped this would accommodate all time zones. These workshops were:

- UCP and Community Self-Protection
- The UCP & Accompaniment Umbrella: What are We Talking about?
- The Role of Nonviolence in UCP & Accompaniment Practice
- Solidarity and Nonpartisanship
- Evolution of UCP/A in Southeast Asia
- Intersections of UCP & Accompaniment with Humanitarian Aid and Strategies for Peace
- Unarmed Protection Missions by States & Multilateral Organizations
- Knowledge Creation and Sharing
- Developing UCP & Accompaniment as a Community of Practice

In addition to the Zoom workshops which lasted about 1½ hours each, there was a web resource based on Loomio technology where people could continue the discussion and share information and materials. It was not used very much – less than the organizers had hoped – but in addition to the workshops the entries there were useful and enriching.

Last but not least, Nonviolent Peaceforce gives its thanks to all speakers, participants, volunteers, technical support staff and the donors who made it financially possible to hold this conference with translation in three languages (French, Spanish, and Arabic).

The Report

This report presents the sessions more or less in chronological order, going day by day. For each day, first there is the “general session” and then the other workshops that took place that day. To make the report more readable, the description of the workshops that were conducted twice are combined, even if there were different speakers in the different sessions.

The report ends with a section “Concluding Observation” which highlights major points from the conferences.

The two appendices are 1. the results of the Organizational Survey which the participants filled in when registering and 2. a list of speakers and facilitators with their organization affiliation and, when available, short bios. Unlike the regional workshop reports, there is no list of participants since not everyone who registered attended at all, and different people attended different workshops.

The basis of this report are the notes taken by different people on the workshops who were assigned to this task beforehand, the notes taken by the rapporteur and in some cases also the PowerPoints of the original presentations if they had been made available. Also comments and entries on the Loomio website have been included; resources only if they are publicly available (website resources etc.).

Since this report was intended to come out as quickly as possible, it has not been possible to ask all the speakers for consent on the summary of their inputs. Therefore, the summaries are the responsibility of the rapporteur alone who preemptively asks for forgiveness for any mistakes, wrong emphases or points skipped which the speakers would have considered important.

Last not least, the rapporteur thanks Ellen Furnari for editing the report, and Mel Duncan, Adele Lennig and Huibert Oldenhuis for their comments and revisions!

Friday, 12 November, 2021

Opening Session

12.11.2021, 15 UTC⁴

Watch the session:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2zdPxJDC6ms&list=PLIKzOAg8KAlh9k4v4t1nLukDSIRskA7Lv&index=1>⁵

The meeting introduced the participants to the conference and the topics. This session was focused on getting to know each other and sharing visions and personal stories of unarmed ways in which people around the world are keeping themselves and others safe in the midst of violent conflict.

Speakers were:

Lucy Nusseibeh, NP Board Chair

Milena Rincon, Christian Peacemaker Teams (now called Community Peacemaker Teams)

Rocky Ambago, NP Iraq

Sam Taitel, NP USA

Peter Dougherty, Meta Peace Team, USA

Claudia Samayoa; Human Rights Defender, Guatemala

Facilitation:

Berit Bliesemann de Guevara, Aberysthwyth University

Lucy Nusseibeh, NP

Lucy Nusseibeh opened the conference by welcoming all participants and saying that the event for the very first time brought together practitioners, partners and theorists from the Global North and South. No matter what the work is called – “unarmed civilian protection”, or “accompaniment”, or “peace teams” – *“what matters is not the name but the importance of the work itself. We have come together now to connect, to share and to learn and to explore how to build – how to make this work even more widely recognized and used”*, she stated. UCP is an emerging field or practice that is effective, affordable, and eco-friendly. It is much needed in a world increasingly polarized and increasingly at risk due to many conflict issues and threats that overlap and lead *inter alia* to increased militarization, securitization, and authoritarian rule. In her words: *“UCP is contributing to an elemental and needed shift in security towards human security. But a growing number of people believe that fixing existing systems is not enough to prevent the collapse of our interlinked environmental, economic, and social systems. A radical shift in the way we view the world is needed. This is a shift from separation to interdependence, to seeing, perhaps “understanding” societies, as living organisms whose vitality requires the flourishing of all their parts; from viewing human beings as inherently evil or at odds with each other, to nonviolence as the manifestation of the natural order.”* UCP contributes to this by *“opening space for dialogue, for finding solutions to the/a conflict, and space for the struggle for justice, peace, human rights, protection of the environment.”* What is needed is the *“coming together of the global community of UCP practitioners to establish a network of leaders, common goals, a shared knowledge base, standards of practice, credible evidence, organized funding streams, and a conducive policy environment”*, she concluded.

⁴ Sources: Top Line Notes, notes by Christine Schweitzer, manuscript of Lucy Nusseibeh’s talk, Power point of Claudia Samayoa

⁵ These videos may not be available in the long term.

Lucy Nusseibeh's introduction was followed by five speakers who had been invited to share their stories and visions for UCP.

Milena Rincon, CPT

Milena Rincon presented the basics of Christian Peacemaker Teams: They join in resistance with communities opposing war and oppression. Developing relationships and building trust is key, and partners tell them that they don't feel alone due to CPT's presence. They connect with their partners through presence, solidarity, communication, advocacy, encouragement, accompaniment, resisting for justice and peace, work for prison releases, meeting with authorities and helping migrants.

Rocky Ambago, NP

Rocky Ambago, senior international protection officer, NP Iraq, and from South Sudan, described the work of NP as being *"the water putting out the fire"*. He emphasized that UCP/A can be practiced in violent conflict as well as in post conflict situations. Conflict, he said, can only be resolved through nonviolent approaches rooted in communities. The task of UCP/A practitioners is therefore to engage with the communities. People often think that it is impossible not to use violence. But the very moment it looks impossible, is the very moment when you think out of the box and develop alternative strategies.

Sam Taitel, NP USA

Sam works in Minneapolis in the context of institutional, police and community violence that was illuminated during the protests against the murder of George Floyd. Sam shared a story how they were able to calm down an angry man at a demonstration through communicating, caring, expressing respect for the autonomy of the person, and asking for their consent. Through acknowledgment it is then possible to co-create solutions to a situation.

Peter Dougherty, Meta Peace Team

Meta Peace Teams provide presence and accompaniment at both domestic (US) and international locations including public events that might have conflict, on the West Bank and the border between the U.S. and Mexico.

Peter shared his experiences in the West Bank where MPT has worked since 1995. He spoke about an experience where they had been able to stop a house demolition because they, two white North American Catholic clergy persons (a priest and a nun), were present. The privilege of being white and coming from a powerful ally of Israel protected them and the Palestinians that day.

Claudia Samayoa, Human Rights Defender from Guatemala

Claudia, speaking from the point of view of a local HRD, said that international accompaniment expands the work they can do. However, there are at least two myths regarding UCP/A in Guatemala:

- That only white people can serve as an international deterrent.
- That nonviolence is a thing of wartime only⁶

Both are false, she said. Locals can protect other locals, and UCP/A is on its way *"from a Global North and Colonizers Perspective towards the vision for a future for humanity (if the North does not destroy it first)"*.

⁶ Remark by the rapporteur: This is a different perception than how UCP/A is often perceived in the Global North where the argument rather runs: 'Nonviolence can work as long as there is no high level of violence, no war'.)

Claudia observed that a national organization can protect HRDs:

- *“Impartiality allows solidarity work regardless of who is attacked for its work.*
- *A strong adherence for the principles of nonviolence [is] observed by example.*
- *The intersectionality of identities and the way violence [is] expressed is taken into consideration.”*

We have learned, she continued, to

- *“Use deterrence at the local, national, and regional level*
- *Combine protection actions with [training] persons, organizations and communities that defend human rights*
- *Use networking as key tactic for protection overcoming socio-political differences, working with gender and ethnical discriminatory conducts and niches of work.*
- *Overcome fear of working with government officials, transnational companies, and local powers without losing our independence or validating their stance.”*

But one contradiction remains here: that the money for the human rights work still has to come from the Global North.

Claudia ended her presentation by speaking about challenges for the future, among them the emergence of new forms of authoritarian regimes and the fragility of the rule of law, securitization, a multifaced crisis (climate change) and organized crime.

Saturday, 13 November, 2021

Global Trends: Climate Disruption, Pandemics, and the Decline of Democracy

13.11., 15 UTC⁷

Watch the session:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=N-r6ngMYRxs&list=PLIKzOAg8KAIh9k4v4t1nLukDSIRskA7Lv&index=4&ab_channel=NonviolentPeaceforce

The world is facing existential challenges that are likely to have the biggest impact on communities that are already struggling. What has the practice of UCP & Accompaniment to offer a world in transition? How can we prepare ourselves, individually or collectively, to face these crises head on? What are the opportunities for innovation and transformation?

Speakers were:

Jose Ramos-Horta, 1996 Nobel Peace, former President of East Timor

Maria J. Stephan, United States Institute of Peace

David Mozersky, Energy Peace Partners

Facilitation:

Barbara Wien, American University

José Ramos Horta, East Timor

Horta delivered his presentation with a pre-recorded video. He began by talking about security risks in the region. Asia is increasingly dangerous and a region with more and more countries possessing nuclear weapons.

First, there is the militarization of South China Sea with China claiming the islands, a claim that is disputed by countries. The U.S., the United Kingdom and Australia are deploying their air forces and navy, and there is a potential for the conflict to escalate.

A second hotspot in the area is the Korean peninsula with North Korea having between 100 and 200 nuclear weapons.

Thirdly, there are unresolved legacies from the colonial era like Kashmir over which Pakistan and India are facing each other, each with hundreds of thousands of troops and also with nuclear weapons.

Fourth, there is the border dispute between China and India.

The fifth issue he named was Myanmar. He expressed the hope that the military in Myanmar might respond positively to the new Special Rapporteur for Myanmar, Tom Andrews, who was nominated by the UN. The military in Myanmar would never accept UN peacekeeping, but Horta believes that the deployment of unarmed civilian observers might be a face-saving option they could agree to.

He believes that the UN Secretary General would embrace this approach and initiate contacts.

As former chair of the High Level Independent Review Panel of UN Peace Operations (HIPPO) he sees UCP as a fundamental pillar of UN peace operations.

Generally, Asia is becoming increasingly dangerous. It is the continent with the highest number of countries possessing nuclear weapons.

⁷ Sources: Topline Notes, Notes by Christine Schweitzer, Background material: UCP and Climate Change (NP), Excerpts Global trends for UCP actors to pay attention to (NP)

He ended with an optimistic note: In spite of the right-wing challenge to democracy that the world witnesses today, he thinks that these are passing phenomena. Hundreds of millions of people who have experienced democracy will not allow going back to the world of World War II and the promises of easy solutions. Democracy will prevail but we need to fight for it. But it also has to change; it has to deliver to the people at the periphery who have not seen dividends of democracy.

His presentation can be downloaded from Vimeo:

<https://vimeo.com/user8196671/download/644082550/51bc5679d5>

Maria J. Stephan, USIP

Stephan agreed regarding the challenges to democracy. There are several big global trends that have significance also for UCP. One of the most profound transformations is global climate change. In watching the current climate summit (COP 26), what stood out for her are the youth leading the push on climate change; and the marginalized (women and youth) doing groundbreaking work. COVID-19 has shown our interconnection and highlighted global inequality, which disproportionately affects the poor and is causing the worst food shortage in 50 years. The global gap between the rich and the poor has increased, and millions more are falling into poverty. And violent nationalism is on the rise. The global food crisis and food shortages are the worst in 50 years. While the pandemic has demonstrated our interconnectedness and fluidity of borders, it has also deepened global inequality.

The Pandora papers revealed the intensity of world-wide kleptocracy. Corruption is a driver for conflict. The concentration of wealth has also supported a rise in nationalism and decline of democracy around the world. There were military coups in Sudan and Myanmar, and at the same time democratic elections resulting in autocratic leaders once they are in power. Civil space has been closing. Also in the U.S., there is a danger of more political violence with the attack on the Congress in January 2021 showing how fragile democracies are.

In response to these dangers, it is important that people organize. Nonviolent resistance is the most powerful antidote to authoritarianism. However, Erica Chenoweth⁸ found that we are seeing a decrease in overall effectiveness. This is partially because regimes have learned how to deal with resistance, but also due to weaknesses of movements themselves. There is more emphasis on mobilizing than on organizing with a reliance on street demonstrations over other forms of nonviolent resistance. Nonviolent movements are getting smaller and sometimes include violent planks.

It is important, she said, to reverse these trends. UCP can play an important role here: It has the potential to open up spaces that otherwise do not exist. There could be a synergy between peace building, nonviolent resistance and UCP. We have unprecedented access to information, and solidarity is possible at scales never reached before. UCP should be brought together with other forms of nonviolent, direct action. UCP workers also negotiate behind-the-scenes talks to protect “face” for parties involved and forge coalitions. Displaced people (e.g., Afghans) can connect around the world to provide tools and resources to those on the ground, and communities are protecting themselves through concepts like the underground railroad in North America in earlier times. Community rootedness, adaptation and relationship building are necessary.

On questions she further said that:

- Expanding the repertoire of nonviolent action is critically important. Demonstrations on the street are only one tool, targeting institutions (for example strikes) historically have been very powerful.

⁸ Maria J. Stephan and Erica Chenoweth co-authored the book “Why Civil Resistance Works” in 2011. Chenoweth in 2021 followed up on their findings with “Civil Resistance: What Everyone Needs to Know”.

- Asked how UCP organization could be pairing with nonviolent movements she responded that these are different roles or approaches that complement each other as she observed in South Sudan where she worked with a nonviolent movement.
- Building coalitions is useful. Opening civic space is needed for many things, also health care etc. Sometimes bringing in the corporate sector can help. Business leaders can become allies.
- The example of Afghanistan shows the need for resistance movements in the underground to protect themselves.

David Mozersky – Energy Peace Partners

David Mozersky presented the work of his organization⁹ which is focusing on the synergy of climate change and peacebuilding. He started by saying that though climate change is in the headlines, conflict does not play a big role in the discussion nor in the climate movement, although climate change has contributed to a number of conflicts either as a driver or by sustaining ongoing conflict. There is the concept of Environmental Peacebuilding, but it is mostly an academic concept, not operational in the field. In his eyes, it is not clear how a peacebuilding organization could use the concept.

The focus of his organization is on access to renewable energy. The least electrified countries are those most vulnerable to conflict, he said. Renewable energy removes the power of those who control oil and disperse it. But in 2019, only 6% of money for renewable energy went to poor countries.

As an example, he described how South Sudan is one of the least electrified and most dependent countries on fossil fuel in the world. Currently access to electricity there depends on diesel generators, with the fuel mostly available only on the black market. Those in power have access to fuel. So, transition to sustainable renewable sources of energy also offers a tool for decentralization. They are exploring an option to integrate renewable energy into NP's efforts there. The idea is to place solar systems into the hands of the Women Peacekeeping Teams.

In Mali they did a study finding the same problem. Although the current Peace Agreement highlights the expansion of solar energy, there is very little happening to implement this plan. UN peacekeeping missions have huge energy footprints, and they could bring renewable energy to underserved areas and promote peacebuilding through local energy projects that demonstrate their value.

Discussion at the Workshop and Summary

The global trends listed in the title of the workshop all pose challenges to UCP/A. While not discussed much in this workshop, during the pandemic many organizations had to withdraw international workers and to rely solely on their staff/volunteers from the host country.

As to climate change, participants observed that it affects the security and safety of people they work with – extreme climate events, drought etc. all may impact preexisting conflicts or lead to new ones. Shrinking or closing space in many countries – which was already a topic in several of the regional workshops that took place before the conference – leads to increased threats to human rights defenders and other activists and prevents international groups from supporting the groups directly through presence (and sometimes also through funding). However, José Ramos Horta also thought that in some situations – he talked about Myanmar – an unarmed peacekeeping / UCP force might be an acceptable alternative to UN forces in the eyes of the government in place.

⁹ <https://www.energypeacepartners.com/>

Horta in addition raised the risks stemming from the global political situation with the various tensions between the growing number of nuclear states especially on the Asian continent.

Background Materials on Loomio: Reflections by Nonviolent Peaceforce on Climate Change

There are two background materials on Climate Change, both produced by Nonviolent Peaceforce. One of them, titled “Responding to Crisis Multiplied: Climate, Conflict, and Unarmed Civilian Protection” is public and can be read here:

https://www.nonviolentpeaceforce.org/images/Publications/UCP_and_Climate_Change.pdf

The other was an adapted excerpt from a policy paper titled “Global trends for UCP actors to pay attention to,” written by Huibert Oldenhuis in 2020. It lists two challenges, the “decline of the multilateral world order and national political authority” and “climate change”. The first means *inter alia* for UCP organizations that the “*reliance on international support systems and deterrence through international presence*” is decreasing. Protection becomes more complex; accompaniment alone is not enough anymore but threats need to be countered using different strategies simultaneously. As to climate change, besides reducing their own carbon footprint, the most promising way to integrate the issue into programming was a “*clear focus on understanding, articulating, and communicating the impacts of climate change on already vulnerable communities.*” A focus on climate change could also reinforce the focus on decolonization and racism because again it is the Global South that suffers most from what is caused primarily in the Global North.

UCP and Community Self-protection

13.11., 3 UTC and 17 UTC¹⁰

Watch the session:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xNVFnHyE7vs&list=PLIKzOAg8KAlh9k4v4t1nLukDSIRskA7Lv&index=2>

Many communities and groups around the world have developed effective self-protection mechanisms which rely on nonviolence. This theme offers an opportunity to learn more about ways in which communities protect themselves; the wider visions and/or traditions their practices are embedded into; and their views on collaboration with outside protectors to strengthen rather than undermine local capacity and knowledge.

In the Zoom session, we will learn about the experiences of some self-protecting communities from four different locales. Questions include:

1. What does community self-protection mean for you/your group/your community?
2. Which conditions and resources are needed for your community self-protection to work?
3. What would you like others, and especially outside UCP organizations, to know about your self-protection?
4. What does a UCP/Accompaniment Community of Practice need to talk more about, what are we missing?

Speakers were:

There were no speakers but instead several videos were shown.

Facilitation:

Louise Ridden, Beatriz Elena Arias Lopez (17 UTC), Berit Bliesemann de Guevara

Videos

In preparation of the conference, Louise Ridden and Berit Bliesemann de Guevara invited several groups around the world to record short videos about their work and experiences, to get the conversation started. Five guiding questions were given: What does self-protection mean? What conditions are needed? What would you like other external actors know about self-protection? What is missing, what do you need more to talk about UCP? Most of the videos are available on YouTube:

UCP Traditional Way, video recorded by Rural Women Peace Link, Kenya,

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Rz_DT4zzFI&feature=emb_imp_woyt, 8:49 minutes.

The film describes how people manage conflicts in rural Kenyan society. The speakers presented four symbolic tools that have been used and are still in use by pastoral people in Kenya: Women wear a ceremonial belt. When there is conflict, they put it on the ground giving a strong message that men must stop fighting. Women also carry a gourd with milk, which is used for two people who have reconciled to drink milk from. Small twigs from a certain tree are a symbol that a party in conflict is surrendering and peace talks can begin. And carrying a certain grass when there has been a killing means that the killing was unintentional and the perpetrator is willing to make amends.

The institutions dealing with conflict are a council of elders, judges (who probably are also part of this council) and people the speaker calls “executives” – people who go out among the community to talk to people in conflict and then report back to the Council.

The speakers also emphasized the need for early warning and early action, and that a lot of effort and resources are needed to solve conflict and protect people.

¹⁰ Sources: Topline notes from the 17.00 group, general notes (from both sessions, presumably) with good practices and challenges, notes from a break-out group at 3 UTC, notes by Christine Schweitzer, entries in Loomio, the videos listed.

Self-protection in Colombia: perspectives of the Peasant Association of Antioquia (ACA), video recorded by Mateo Valderrama

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9Kd3cWd5JR4&feature=emb_imp_woyt , 6:55 minutes

The speaker explains that self-protection for their organization are activities integrated into everyday life. It deals with different threats to the people, villages and nature, threats from armed groups are only one of them. They have a network to protect human rights defenders. Solidarity networks that function at the local, national, and international level are essential. The community fabric is being strengthened, communities work together, and they develop political leverage through advocacy. Protection also means planning for the future and the protection of nature, water etc.

The Community-led Peace Zone of Sagada in the Philippines, video recorded by Dr Nerve Macaspac, City University of New York (no link available).

The video speaks of activities taken in Northern Philippines, with the communist rebels of the New Peoples' Army (NPA) and the Philippine government military being the main armed actors. People were afraid to go to the rice fields because soldiers might shoot them. In this situation a community initiative arose to ban all armed groups and create a zone of peace. They had to overcome suspicions from both sides – the NPA suspected community leaders of cooperating with the CIA and the government considered them rebels. They do not usually use the term “nonviolence” or “self-protection”, but it is, Nerve said, unarmed civilian protection. The research shows that it takes a lot of work to make peace zones effective, because both the NPA and government try to delegitimize the community.

Women Protection Teams in South Sudan, video recorded by Nonviolent Peaceforce South Sudan

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Xlu-xvhIL_0 , 6:19 minutes

The speaker leads a Women Protection Team located in an IDP camp in South Sudan which was organized by Nonviolent Peaceforce. The women were trained to prevent violence and manage conflict. They teach people about nonviolence, patrol the communities, monitor food distribution, accompany gender-based violence (GBV) survivors. and engage in early warning and early action, for example when there are rumors. They wear special uniform clothing when working to be recognized. In their work, they must overcome the challenge that women are not expected or allowed to be community leaders, but that stigma is slowly fading away, and the women are recognized in their role of conflict managers. They were able to link with the leadership of the existing service providers in the camp, and to become leaders in the community themselves.

The Work of EMERGE in North Minneapolis, USA

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9CDxM_sDbuc&feature=emb_imp_woyt , 7:28 minutes

EMERGE offers support and training to young Black men in the local community who have been in or are vulnerable to gangs. Over the past year NP had provided weekly training in UCP. The youth are trying to bring change to the community, trying to make people safer by stopping violence. Building relationships in the communities is key for that. Because of their experience with gangs, they know all the people involved. Of course, they had to overcome suspicions but mostly managed to do so. Five of the young men were hired at a local Catholic school to provide unarmed security including watching the street and making sure that the buses come on time and transport the children safely home.

They provided presence at the polling stations during the national elections in 2020. They have also provided accompaniment and presence at demonstrations and accompanied a priest from elsewhere in the US who came to visit George Floyd Square.

In addition, in the Loomio Thread there is a link to a video about the **Peace Community of San Jose de Apartado en Colombia:**

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3gjWIXV_W2Q&feature=emb_imp_woyt

Discussion at the Workshops and Summary

There are different forms of protection, and sometimes community self-protection and international accompaniment work hand in hand, as is the case in some of the Colombian peace communities. Some of the most important aspects of community self-protection are visibility of the protection measures, meaning that potential perpetrators are aware of these measures, and rumor control. For people from the outside, it is important to recognize that for local communities, “protection” may not only be about human beings – nature and the spiritual realm may be as important to them. Much of the discussion focused on the role of internationals as they relate to local self-protection (probably also because the local voices were mostly brought in by videos and not by presence in the workshop). In the videos, training for activists and local communities was an element that could be found in many places.

As to international organizations supporting community self-protection, they underwent a learning process over the years. Earlier on in the history of peace teams, there was the assumption that only internationals can protect. The deterrence effect of non-locals was the center piece of their protection model. Then came the model of mixed teams. Now it is recognized that purely local protection works as well.

The observation was made that there seem to be two models at work regarding self-protection: cases when the whole community develops tools and strategies or makes use of existing, “traditional” ones (Kenya, Colombia, Philippines), and situations when new, special roles are being created (like with the Women Protection Teams in South Sudan) – and funded (salaries, uniforms, equipment like mobile phones).

The question of what happens if violence escalates to a point that the internationals have to withdraw, was raised. This discussion then was continued on Loomio. Early warning- early response (EWER) can help with these threats of overwhelming violence by identifying and warning communities of these risks, and allowing preparations, and it gives a chance to intervene before violence escalates. Strategies to evacuate/ flee as a last resort are also methods of community protection.

One challenge identified was working productively within power imbalances of different kinds. Community awareness and education of alternatives to violence are important and are key themes across UCP projects. In several videos it was emphasized that building solidarity networks can give nonviolent actors leverage to stop violence. However, they need to be organized with care, because they might also lead to accusations of illegitimacy (e.g., that the protection is sponsored by outside actors). It can also be important to win over and involve former combatants in efforts, because their credibility and their knowledge inspires people and strengthens efforts for peace.

Discussion in the Loomio Threads

Worst-case scenarios

This discussion debated the above-mentioned question “what if the internationals withdraw?”. To this another worst-case scenario was added: “How to stop a shooter in a school?” In the discussion, some participants challenged what they called the “thinking in worst-case scenarios” which closes the mind to thinking of all the other scenarios where nonviolence might work. However, as it was often pointed out, situations usually change from more to less permissive and back again and allow for pockets of less danger for protectors (whether local or not), to continue their activities.

Some participants tried to reply to the questions raised. Comments and recommendations made included:

- Increasing the visibility of local nonviolent groups. Activists who pursue justice and human rights is most effective when people associated with violent fighting groups take the initiative (fathers, wives, mothers, sons, relatives). When these people place themselves between two rival groups, the violence will be curbed by the fear that they may accidentally kill their relatives.
- Finding solutions to avert school shootings. The movie, *Faith Under Fire*, based on a real event shows how a school office manager who was a struggling single mom from Georgia averted a tragedy, saving hundreds of lives when a well-armed young man stormed the school. She de-escalated the confrontation, showed empathy and listened to the gunman helping him decide to surrender. (<https://www.mylifetime.com/movies/faith-under-fire>)
- Building good relationships with the local actors and among the violent parties. Capacity building combined with raising awareness and improvement of technical knowledge is critical. Then, when the UCP expatriates need to pull out, the local UCP practitioners and civilians will be ready and well trained to protect themselves. This must be the purpose of any exit strategy, it was said, not only of unplanned forced exits.

How can outside actors support self-protecting communities? And what are potential problems?

Training was one element mentioned often, as well as encouraging early response. Providing material resources is another element. The challenges are risks to the credibility of the local actors (see above).

If you are a UCP practitioner, what have you learned from communities or groups who are protecting themselves?

Several participants expressed in the workshop and on Loomio how impressed they are with these local efforts. On Loomio, one participant gave a brief list of learnings:

- Some self-protecting strategies are subconscious
- Listen
- Collaborate
- Steadfastness (Sumud)
- In the face of extreme danger, retreat for a bit,
- A spiritual practice can help in the face of extreme threats
- Study the law of redemptive suffering (see M. L. King, Michael Nagler, et al)

Is there a danger that the trend towards self-protection approaches could put local communities at more risk?

One participant listed:

Here are some potential risks (though, let me emphasize I believe each one can be handled):

- It undermines existing efforts at conflict prevention/management.
- It sparks allegations and reprisals by armed groups.
- It panics the population (ill-advised flight, preemptive violence, etc.)
- Outside actors use support of Community Self-Protection (CSP) as substitute (of “fig leaf”) for other protection responsibilities.

The UCP & Accompaniment Umbrella: What are We Talking About?

13.11., 9 UTC and 19 UTC¹¹

Watch the sessions:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SbVgwwz8cul&list=PLIKzOAg8KAlh9k4v4t1nLukDSIRskA7Lv&index=3>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WijPtQQkgrg&list=PLIKzOAg8KAlh9k4v4t1nLukDSIRskA7Lv&index=6>

Discover our shared values and explore our differences to better understand how our activities create synergies or impair our ability to advance on our organizational missions and create a community of practice.

Speakers were:

Giulia Zurlini, Operazione Colomba

Parfaite Ntahuba, Quaker Peace Network- Burundi

Hannah Redekop, CPT (09:00-10:30 UTC only)

Hannan Mamun, NP Women Protection Team (09:00-10:30 UTC only)

Huibert Oldenhuis (09:00-10:30 UTC only)

Eli McCarthy, DC Peace Teams (19:00-20:30 UTC only)

Jet Nauta, SIPAZ (19:00-20:30 UTC only)

Milena Rincon, CPT (19:00-20:30 UTC only)

Facilitation:

Adele Lennig and Rosemary Kabaki (both 09 UTC) and Alvaro Ramirez-Durini (19.00 UTC)

The workshop started with Adele Lennig presenting the results of the Organizational Survey which people were asked to fill in when register (see the appendix 1). A few points stood out:

Over 90% of participants described nonviolence as central to their work. Over 74% expressed a strong feeling of solidarity with the oppressed and over 70% strictly adhere to the principle of non-partisanship. There were some differences in the type of “protection” and “accompaniment” and activities performed by the organizations. About 60% of respondents cite advocacy to influence local and international governments as core to the work of their organization. Only 29% stated that civil resistance or protesting was core to their work.

Hannah Redekop, CPT

Hannah emphasized at the beginning that undoing oppression is the lens through which CPT does all its work. This refers to many different things, from racism and colonialism to LGBTQI issues etc. CPT works closely with partners who invite them. They stand in solidarity with them. They do not engage with armed actors and police. In recent years, they very intentionally include nationals and locals in their teams. During the pandemic, it was only the locals who continued the work.

Their activities vary a bit from place to place. Advocacy generally is done by everyone. But in some places, physical accompaniment of HRD's and local communities is very important (like Colombia), in others the monitoring of trials is important (Lesvos, Iraq Kurdistan), in Palestine it is the monitoring of check points.

¹¹ Top Line Notes from both sessions, a note reporting on both sessions, a PDF report on the session by Adele Lennig, placed on Loomio, Christine Schweitzer's notes, Organizational survey,

Milena Rincon, CPT

Milena Rincon works for CPT in Colombia and presented their work in that country. During its two decades of work, CPT has used teams of half local/half international volunteers, an important point since most volunteers are white and from the northern hemisphere. She spoke of the difficulty of maintaining non-partisanship while working against a history of oppression and violence. They support their partners in resistance, so they are not impartial. She asked if nonviolence might be becoming a colonial construction.

Parfaite Ntahuba, Quaker Peace Network- Burundi

Parfaite Ntahuba presented the work of the newly founded (in 2020) Quaker Network in Burundi. They engage in election monitoring in Burundi and other countries. Before the elections in 2020 in Burundi, they established early warning/early response teams in five different communities where there had been much violence in the 2015 presidential election season. The network successfully contributed to violence reduction; for example, they were able to stop the destruction of houses of opposition leaders in one province and in another accompanied an opposition leader to the polling station.

Today, the organization includes 125 workers on on-going teams in five communities to prevent gender-based violence,

She presented five lessons that they drew.

- Protection needs to come from civil society to be nonpartisan
- Be on the ground to prevent violence
- Building a relationship with the local administration is very key
- If we intervene in smaller conflicts, it prevents the conflict from spreading into wider violence.
- It is very important to understand the context before you intervene.

Giulia Zurlini, Operazione Colomba (Operation Dove)

The speaker explained about the work of “Operation Dove”. The organization was founded in 1992 and has done peacekeeping work in Albania, Kosovo, and now in Columbia, West Bank, and in Lebanon. In total, they have deployed over 2,000 volunteers. They work with both short and long-term volunteers.

Their most important principles and basis of their work are:

- nonviolence to interrupt the cycle of violence triggered by armed conflict. Violence isolates people. Nonviolence brings people together.
- equiproximity with respect to the parties, and
- direct sharing by living in the communities, sharing knowledge and risk. This allows volunteers to build contacts to the parties and build trust.

Their activities include protective accompaniment, monitoring of human rights violations and reporting them to the authorities, interpositioning and methods of nonviolent action (marches, strikes, civil disobedience and other). They also informally support mediation processes as well as institutions protecting human rights.¹²

¹² See also the report from the European Workshop on Good Practices which describes their activities more fully. https://www.nonviolentpeaceforce.org/images/Good_Practices/UCP_in_Europe.pdf

Hannan Mamun, NP Women's Protection Team

Hannan Mamun joined the WPT in 2014. She described the core of their work as “bringing people together”. They deal with different issues, from domestic violence, mediating between husbands and wives, to awareness raising in the community (including early pregnancy and other health issues) to dealing with tensions in the community, for example around water issues.

They always wear a kind of uniform to be recognized as members of the WPT.

(See also the video that was shown in the workshop on Community Self-Protection.)

Huibert Oldenhuis, NP

Huibert Oldenhuis presented the main activities and places of NP's work. He explained that NP defines itself as a global protection agency, protecting civilians in armed conflict. Its principles are nonviolence, nonpartisanship, independence, primacy of local actors and civilian-to-civilian action. NP was established in 2002, and currently works in South Sudan, Myanmar, the Philippines, Iraq and the U.S. NP is in process of establishing a presence in Darfur and Thailand.

Protecting civilians is the core of what NP does, using physical presence to prevent violence. The work is different from place to place, tailored to the context. For example, they do patrols, monitor protests, rumor control and shadow diplomacy to prevent tensions. The second part of NP's mission statement is building peace alongside local communities. NP seeks also to interrupt endemic cycles of violence, monitors ceasefire processes and assists women and communities to participate in dialogue. The third element is advocating for wider adoption of these approaches to safeguard human lives and dignity. This is put into practice mainly by advocacy work at the UN. The organization's overall goal is to trigger a paradigm shift away from military “solutions”.

Eli McCarthy, DC Peace Teams

Eli McCarthy described how the DC Peace Teams began in 2011. Eli wanted to get into peacekeeping work, already having a history of brokering conflict within his family, and he was in contact with Cortez McDaniel, recently out of prison, who was looking for constructive activity for the community. They took a training course from Nonviolent Peaceforce and some others, and afterwards set up the project Safe Passage, with volunteers walking kids to school in tense neighborhoods. Another project was the Gallery Place project, defusing tension between homeless people, store owners, and police, building relationships between the stakeholders.

Today the DC Peace Team works is to cultivate the habits and skills of nonviolence in daily life so that communities can better resist injustice and build just peace. DCPT has three areas of work today:

1. Nonviolent skill training modules (given online), for example nonviolent communication, nonviolent intervention when there is violence, restorative justice circles focusing on harm done, racial justice, trauma awareness and meditation. They trained groups in different countries, including Afghanistan and India.
2. Deploying Community Safety Units, dealing with people who cause problems in a community, to deescalate conflict and prevent violence. They also deescalate police behavior, connect people to social services, and sometimes break up a few fist fights. DC Peace Teams has worked at political demonstrations, for example during election time, to protect demonstrators from attack.
3. Protecting individuals receiving death threats, for example they protected a congressional candidate who was receiving death threats.¹³

¹³ See also the report from the North America Workshop on Good Practices which describes their activities more fully, https://www.nonviolentpeaceforce.org/images/Good_Practices/Paynesville_2019-10_final.pdf

They are part of the Shanti Sena network, a network of North American organizations doing similar work. They try to generate alternatives to armed policing among other things.

Jet Nauta, SIPAZ

Jet Nauta has lived in Mexico for the last two decades working with SIPAZ. SIPAZ was founded by internationals from different organizations after the Zapatista uprising. People in Chiapas asked for an international permanent presence. SIPAZ is a coalition of more than 50 organizations from the Americas and Europe, working in Mexico (Chiapas and two other provinces).

They have also three areas of work:

1. International accompaniment. SIPAZ has decided to concentrate on accompaniment for organizations – for example, indigenous organizations that might be in danger. They are present at actions, for example marches, organized by the organizations they accompany. They also do observation together with other organizations from Mexico to visit communities and report on the HR violations that have happened in these communities, informing the outside world on the human rights situation.
2. Conflict transformation work in the communities through popular education.
3. Participation in networks to have a broader voice. They are members of the network of international accompaniment organizations (OAI) in Latin America as well as the Global Partnership for the Prevention of Armed Conflict (GPPAC). The network meets once a year where they exchange and learn from each other.

Discussion at the Workshop and Summary

The workshop then broke into small groups; each was given three questions to discuss and then to report back to the plenary.

What have you heard that connects us?

Nonviolence and the protection of civilians were identified as core elements unifying the UCP Community of Practice, along with the centrality of relationship building and engagement with local actors. Differences among groups are part of our strength.

Another group talked about solidarity and nonpartisanship. Solidarity can be very messy, short-term versus long-term, spending resources in a place which is not currently a hot spot.

What have you heard that keeps us apart?

The discussion about nonpartisanship and solidarity work was one answer. The nexus between solidarity and non-partnership is an important element and also a tension point, which somewhat unifies but also divides the UCP Community of Practice, not only among organizations but also within the same organization. There needs to be a common understanding that nonpartisanship does not mean neutrality.

Other than that, the approaches depend very much on the context, and what the partners are doing. So often it is not really the different approaches that keep organizations apart.

How could our synergies enhance our work and increase safety and security in more communities under threat?

Facilitating opportunities to learn from each other, adopting an integrated approach for the engagement of key stakeholders, and sharing best practices were identified as enablers to strengthen the UCP Community of Practice. Accept that we have different values. While there is still a long way to go, the UCP Community of Practice can really play a crucial role in supporting the paradigm shift to make UCP a reality in all the contexts that might benefit from it. Concrete proposals were:

- Staff and volunteer exchanges
- Sabbaticals across our organizations

Another complexity for the UCP Community of Practice is that UCP calls for different approaches on the ground, which requires maintaining an agile approach to enable learning from and adaptation to the local context.

Discussion in the Loomio Threads

Several answers were given to the question of “what unites us – what keeps us apart”.

What unites us?

- The UCP principles (e.g., nonviolence, nonpartisanship, independence, and primacy of local people) and common objectives
- Nonviolence as a principle and a method
- The importance of being locally led and having meaningful partnerships with local actors
- The context of violence and responses to it is always important
- Relationships and trust being at the heart of UCP work
- Taking responsibility for a situation
- Respect to humanity, and always (be) flexible and willing to use empathy even among ourselves while handling issues as well (as) when we engage with communities
- Caring for the other
- Good communications and coordination with clear objectives related to what needs to be accomplished and achieved.
- Deciding to have the vision to invest in the life of one person whether he is a colleague or a beneficiary developing their capacity, that will lead to having that person rooted in UCP, having the same mind, consequently keeping us connected and united and broadening the scope of our relationship and outreaches
- Understanding our limitations regarding the principles of our work in its totality keeps us together.
- Collaboration/cooperation
- Dialogue
- Realization that we are all “tenants on Mother Earth”
- Willingness to learn and create this new field of practice

What keeps us apart?

- If these standard principles are missing or there are differing principles
- Variety and diversity of cultures, ideologies, geographics, and historical backgrounds can keep us apart
- Different standard operating procedures (SOPs)
- Different contexts
- Lack of personal vision that goes along with the UCP vision can keep us apart.

- Lack of self-motivation towards our goal
- Selfishness and comparisons
- Pursuing different objectives other than organizational objectives and goals.
- The moment we do not practice what we preach it divides us. Some people cannot stand such.
- Competition

Sunday, 14 November, 2021

Decolonizing UCP

14.11., 15 UTC¹⁴

Watch the session:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sZpX3ZU1xWw&list=PLIKzOAg8KAlh9k4v4t1nLukDSIRskA7Lv&index=9&ab_channel=NonviolentPeaceforce

All UCP & Accompaniment organizations share a commitment to putting local actors first, and many explicitly consider questions of race, ethnicity, and other protected characteristics in the way they organize themselves and engage with others. Are UCP & Accompaniment strategies dependent on global inequalities? What can be done to decolonize (and de-paternalize) the practice of UCP & Accompaniment? Tackle these hard questions and more, sharing our experiences and ideas.

Speakers were:

Shannon Paige, Peace Direct

Rexall Kaalim, NP

Moses John, ONAD

Tejan Lamboi, Anti-racism Trainer, Federation for Social Defence (BSV)

Alison Wood, Presbyterian Peace Fellowship

Facilitation:

Martha Hernandez and Berit Bliesemann de Guevara

Introducing the topic, the facilitator stated: White privilege may be advantageous, but at the same time the power structures create much suffering. We formulated some basic questions (see above in the frame) to discuss.

Shannon Paige, Peace Direct

Shannon started her presentation by saying that it was a hard lesson to learn, that peacebuilders are not neutral and non-political. 'We have practices directly linked to colonial times and need to ask the question if these strategies are dependent on global inequalities' (Protection stemming from holding passports from the Global North or being with an organization imbued with power).

Peace Direct investigated colonizing practices intersecting with other inequalities, like patriarchy, and how it was created in colonial times and other powerful norms and structures that can be traced back to that period. White privilege was constructed during the colonial period and is, like patriarchy, perpetuated in modern times.

In a consultation with peacebuilders, several participants shared how they were seen by people from the Global North. For example, Muslim women were seen only as victims, not as actors for change. This disempowers them.

Paige concluded: "We must recognize the skills and abilities of the community we are accompanying. We are not saviors; ask if and where they need us."

Rexall Kaalim, NP

Before NP came, there were already local organizations doing accompaniment in Mindanao (Philippines). They invited NP, and the internationals strengthened the local groups, but there were

¹⁴ Sources: Topline notes from the session, Christine's notes

situations when international staff was not allowed to go to certain places. (For example, in 2017, only nationals were allowed to go into Marawi when there was unrest there.)

NP was invited to be part of a ceasefire mechanism, together with some women's organizations. In their work, the focus is on how to strengthen the ability for women and youth to participate.

Survivors of violence work to protect other victims and advocate for gender equality and peacebuilding.

Moses John, ONAD

Moses John is an activist from a South Sudanese organization, ONAD, and completed a Ph.D. in the field of peace and conflict.

He agreed that issues like race, colonialism etc. are very important. 'We as practitioners did not want to be part of the problem but of the solution, and therefore need to reflect on our work', he said.

Earlier, he went to Croatia (Osijek Peace Center) as a peace consultant of the German Civil Peace Service to work with youth and elderly Roma. He came from a country in conflict and so could share stories about protecting self and community. He emphasized that it is crucial to listen, and increase communication with the local community, other peacekeepers, and the government. The future of UCP is local ownership. This need to be the driving force, he said.

He further stressed that power needs to be addressed when working on violence.

He presented four lessons:

- Working with, not FOR the local community. They should be the key partners, not the beneficiaries (service recipients). "Beneficiaries" is a colonial idea.
- Learning, collaboration is key.
- Not all understand what UCP is. Some think we are spies. Therefore, we need to increase communication with government and peace actors.
- A focus needs to be on youth. 75% of people in Africa are youth. Youth have been used by negative forces to perpetuate violence. We can secure peace with the help of youth, both girls and boys.

Tejan Lambo, BSV

Lamboi started with the question: Are we really unarmed while doing peacekeeping? When countries are still suffering from exploitation from our countries, how do we contribute to more violence, make people more dependent? We must be aware of the colonial history and understand our position in the world, and the oppression/power that created it.

He emphasized the need for an intersectional perspective. Race is very important in this context. UCP/A groups often go to countries that have been destroyed by colonialism. Race has a very long history of repression.

He formulated several demands to UCP/A practitioners: We have to decolonize ourselves and be willing to give up power. The term "empowerment" sounds paternalistic. Power sharing means we need to listen to the oppressed, and this means giving up power. We must not speak for others; people can speak for themselves. Be aware of our privilege. Understand and allow people to have their own spaces, which you do not have access to. And last not least: Allow people to have spaces that you are not invited into.

Alison Wood, PPF

The Presbyterian Peace Fellowship is 'mainstream' in all ways, she said: White, US, and a wealthy mainstream church. 'We live in a bubble as colonizers and don't recognize it', she said. Their UCP/A

model is to send monitors from U.S. to places in the Global South (Colombia, Mexican border). So, they started to ask themselves: What do we do to destabilize colonial power structures, individually and structurally?

She formulated some insights and stated that White people need to LISTEN, learn from elders, have humility, seek consent. Language matters: For example, do not speak of “our partners” but speak of communities that host companions.

Three things they learned to do:

- Be led by experts from different traditions of pre-colonial times, for example Standing Rock. This is not to outsource my education. It is my responsibility to educate myself, not that of the oppressed.
- To orient towards consent as a key value in everything.
- Ongoing internal work on an organizational and individual level.

Discussion at the Workshop and Summary

Two questions were given to break-out groups that afterwards reported their answers:

What is the role of privilege in our work?

- Privilege provides access to conflict areas and status with state actors, useful in dealing with power; it can enable protection.
- Often Whites are not attacked as locals might be and don't suffer the same consequences, but this can also create resentment. Differing treatment replicates systems of privilege.
- Funders have power to set the rules, but accountability should be given to locals.
- Being known and respected is also a privilege (not connected to colonialism), for example being known as a member of WANEP in West Africa.
- Access to politicians is a privilege.
- Privilege as being part of research can be useful.
- Going someplace else to support peace is a very privileged position in itself. Ask yourself: Am I the right person/institution to do that? It creates power imbalance to be an expat.
- It is hard to always keep a critical perspective, but it is needed to do so.

What could we do to decolonize our work at a practical level?

- We can reach out to all different actors.
- It starts with us; we all need discuss and to give up power although it is difficult.
- Money is one of the sources of power. Those who provide funding for peacebuilding projects, enjoy more power because they make rules about how the funding can be used. Issue of accountability: The local actors should provide local accountability and the funders accept it.

Racism, White privilege, and the colonial heritage are some of the main issues that many UCP/A organizations, especially those from the Global North, are discussing and trying to work on. They are faced by the dilemma that racist privilege can protect people under threat, and that furthermore some groups and activists from the Global South do want to make use of this factor for their own safety and security.

In response to these issues, many Northern UCP/A organizations have started to include nationals and/or people from other countries of the Global South in their teams. And especially in their trainings they include awareness-raising on White privilege and colonialism.

On some points all speakers agreed: Listening to locals as a central principle, not speaking for others, people can speak for themselves. Be aware of privileges and how to use them (if it all). Question terminology ("beneficiaries", "empowerment"). Stop seeing groups that experience discrimination as victims only, thereby denying them agency in their struggle.

Many people at the workshop thought that the discussion should be continued.

Background Material / Further Readings Recommended on Loomio

(There was no discussion on Loomio)

Sara Koopman (2013): "The Racialization of Accompaniment: Can Privilege Be Used Transparently?", FOR Peace Presence blog.

Alison Wood (2019): "Navigating the dilemmas of unarmed accompaniment on the US-Mexico border", Waging Nonviolence blog.

[Navigating the dilemmas of unarmed accompaniment on the US-Mexico border - Fellowship of Reconciliation, wagingnonviolence.org](#)

[The Racialization of Accompaniment | FOR Peace Presence, peacepresence.org](#)

I.M. Boothe and L.A. Smithey (2007): "Privilege, Empowerment, and Nonviolent Intervention", Peace and Change 32(1): 39-61.

P. Coy (2011) "The privilege problematic in international nonviolent accompaniment's early decades: Peace Brigades International confronts the use of racism", Journal of Religion, Conflict and Peace 4:2. Privilege, Empowerment, And Nonviolent Intervention, works.swarthmore.edu

Peace Direct (2021): "Time to Decolonise Aid: Insights and lessons from a global consultation", London

Salih Booker & Diana Ohlbaum (2021): "Dismantling Racism and Militarism in U.S. Foreign Policy", Friends Committee on National Legislation.

Work of Louis Pasteur, NIZIGIYIMANA from Burundi, 2021-11-11 (Pasteur is a member of the Quaker Peace Network in Burundi)

Elena B. Stavrevska (2021): "On feminist anger and imagining peace otherwise", LSE blog

The Role of Nonviolence in UCP/Accompaniment Practice

14.11., 3 UTC and 17 UTC¹⁵

Watch these videos:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dHE8fbiGYXM&list=PLIKzOAg8KAlh9k4v4t1nLukDSIRskA7Lv&index=7&ab_channel=NonviolentPeaceforce

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SUGBKaBE70A&list=PLIKzOAg8KAlh9k4v4t1nLukDSIRskA7Lv&index=10&ab_channel=NonviolentPeaceforce

Does nonviolence matter when you are working in the field? Let's explore the intersections between nonviolence and your UCP & Accompaniment or Peace Team activities, and consider how nonviolence currently impacts your work and the broader field.

Speakers were:

Mary Hanna, Meta Peace Team

Delsy Ronnie, NP (03:00-4:30 UTC only)

John Braithwaite, Emeritus Professor at the Australian National University (03:00-4:30 UTC only)

Meenakshi Gopinath, Founder and Director WISCOMP and NP board member (17:00-18:30 UTC only)

Thiago Wolfer, NP (17:00-18:30 UTC only)

Facilitation:

Felicity Gray (03:00-4.30 UTC only), Simonetta Costanzo Pittaluga (17:00-18:30 UTC only) and Huibert Oldenhuis

The workshops were organized as panel discussions with different questions asked by the facilitators. The first workshop was very small, and participants stayed together. During the second one, participants spent some time in break-out groups.

At the beginning of both workshops, the facilitators asked for an opinion poll on the sentence: "My organization puts about the right amount of emphasis on the principle of nonviolence". In the first workshop, 89 % (of nine people) strongly agreed, 11% "somewhat agreed". In the second (with 36 participants), it was 52% to 48%.

Mary Hanna, MPT

Prompt by the facilitator - "An explicit commitment to NV has little impact on organizational effectiveness in the field."

Mary Hanna briefly described the work of Meta Peace Teams¹⁶. They are mostly working with short-term volunteers who commit to three months. Nonviolence, she said, is absolutely essential for MPT. They are not a religious organization but there is what she called a sacred connectedness to all people and all life. "There is no enemy, only people whose hearts we yet have to reach", she said. For MPT, nonviolence means that they are not cooperating with any armed institution (including police), because they want to avoid being considered their agent. They protect everybody from violence, no matter who they are. In some cases, police accepted the stance MPT takes and asked them to do peacekeeping at certain demonstrations which they feared might get violent, accepting that MPT would not point out perpetrators to them or stop protesters from carrying out their protest by any nonviolent means they chose. They also offered to train police, but the police declined; however, individual police officers have attended their trainings.

15 Sources: Notes from the 3 UTC session, 17 UTC session, Notes by Christine Schweitzer

16 See the report from the North America workshop, a.a.O.

Fear is one driving power for violence, she pointed out. So, it should be asked what are they afraid of? Often people who otherwise reject violence make an exception for the case of self-defense. But where does this start and end? What is the definition of self? In the case of governments, self-defense is used to justify preemptive military strikes. There are many tools of nonviolence and if one tool does not work, you can try another one. If we believe that nonviolence can be used “except” in certain circumstances, we leave a weapon in the toolbox.

Prompt: A personal commitment to nonviolence in all aspects of one's life is essential for effectiveness for UCP/A

Hanna answered: For MPT there is always the recognition of the agency of every person on a team. They are not hierarchical and are based on consensus.

Instead of thinking “what is wrong with you” ask, “what happened to you”. They try to incorporate nonviolence into their organization by taking care of each other– there is centering at beginning and debriefing at the end of each of their meetings.

They see themselves as one piece in a large pie with all the pieces together building a peaceful world (Michael Nagler) or filling one niche.

Delsy Ronnie, NP

Prompt: An explicit commitment to NV has little impact on organizational effectiveness in the field

Ronnie explained that for NP in the Philippines nonviolence is not only a principle (together with other principles) or a goal but also a tactic or a means with different activities (relationship-building, accompaniment etc.).

He pointed out that personal violence is only one type of violence. UCP can only deal with this, not with structural and cultural violence. It is a negative understanding of peace.

Huibert Oldenhuis added: Within NP different teams have different engagements with police and military, depending on the context. In the Philippines NP is probably closest to armed actors, being part of the ceasefire mechanism. He asked if there was any resentment in the local community because of that. In response, Ronnie said that the nonpartisanship, building trust and having developed a track record is acknowledged, allowing NP to engage with military commanders in cases of violence breaking out.

Is commitment to nonviolence in all aspects important to be effective?

Ronnie answered that there is a learning process to be observed in many of their staff. People start getting more committed even if at the beginning they came without deep commitment, and often then also apply nonviolence to other, private situations.

John Braithwaite

Prompt: An explicit commitment to NV has little impact on organizational effectiveness in the field

Braithwaite has experience in different countries of the South Pacific. He described a program in the Solomon Islands where weapon-free villages were created by talking first to one, then to the enemy village and convincing them to lock their weapons away. They start with one village, then certify that it has put the guns away and then go to the other, explaining what their enemy has done and convincing them to do the same. He said that you cannot do that without talking to and engaging with armed actors.

In Timor Leste the Catholic Church cooperated with the police to separate fights between groups on the street. First a well-respected nun interpositioned herself, talking to both sides, and stopping the

throwing of projectiles. Then she called in police medics to look after the wounded, and thereby the fighting groups were separated even more.

In Bougainville, Australians had problems with sending an unarmed truce monitoring mission, and only reluctantly agreed. But everyone in the Australian military today agrees that it partly succeeded for this reason of being unarmed. Each team had a military person, a diplomat from MOFA, and some civilians.

He also had a personal experience in Bougainville when doing research there: He took a severely wounded young man to the hospital through a blockade by armed groups. He went with a local driver but turned down the offer to take an armed police officer with him.

His view however is that there are situations where nonviolence is not the answer. Also, nonviolent people might seek armed protection, for example fleeing inside a UN compound. And he gave as a stereotypical situation the example of a suicide bomber who is stopped by a sniper. He thinks that different people are suitable for different things or kinds of situations ("horses for courses"), and this ought to be considered when making choices in particular cases. But thinking of extreme cases must not mean that, for example, all police need to be armed at all time. US police kill more than 1000, British never more than 10 per year, in spite of the IRA etc.

Is commitment to nonviolence in all aspects important to be effective?

Braithwaite thinks that using soft skills is always useful, including with police. As example he noted that the number of police killed went down when police started to go on patrol not in pairs but only with one officer. The reason was that an individual was less likely to resort to methods of coercion, and thereby less likely to escalate the situation to a point where he himself got killed.

Later in the discussion he spoke about the need for courage which is required for any kind of nonviolent action or intervention. He noted that violent and nonviolent methods could be part of the same action. "Think smart about your mix."

Meenakshi Gopinath, WISCOMP and NP

Prompt: An explicit commitment to NV has little impact on organizational effectiveness in the field

She observed that we are weaving together a community of practice with each thread bringing something unique to the tapestry. We are creating a new community (sangha) to replace the military approaches. The lotus stands in muddy places and rises up. She shared a Buddhist understanding of nonviolence to see the continuity in us and every other person. We need to be nonreactive, aware of the non-distance between self and others, and to be set free from the arrogance of certitude. Violence is resourceless. Her organization works in support of the Dalai Lama and in Kashmir. She emphasized the importance of dialogue and entering into such dialogue with an open mind and without prejudices.

Is commitment to nonviolence in all aspects important to be effective?

Gopinath strongly felt that nonviolence is an all-encompassing principle. She talked about "coming together in awareness of wholeness, non-distance between self and others, and calling nonviolence a permanent hypothesis".

Thiago Wolfer, NP

Prompt: An explicit commitment to NV has little impact on organizational effectiveness in the field

Thiago Wolfer talked about the work of NP in South Sudan. Their work, he said, is finding people in the community who are willing to find other ways to deal with conflict, thereby opening space for nonviolent action. Every culture has ways of nonviolence.

NP operates in South Sudan within a militarized context with local security forces, militias and a large UN mission (UNMISS).

Many humanitarian organizations including NP must work within military bases because that is where the IDPs are. They had to be really strict regarding distinguishing themselves from the soldiers. Sometimes it is hard for a community to differentiate who is part of military mission and who is not. Not to be distinguished would undermine their work.

They also prefer not to go with armed escorts whenever possible.

NP has 250 staff from 40 different parts of the world in South Sudan. It is normal that they also need to deal with interpersonal conflicts inside the organization.

Is commitment to nonviolence in all aspects important to be effective?

Wolfer pointed to Galtung's concept of 'deep culture': there are elements of exclusion and violence everywhere.

Discussion at the Workshop and Summary

In the first workshop, Mel Duncan reported about his experience with UN Peacekeepers in South Sudan. They refused to accompany women from IDP camps when they went into the bush to get firewood, eventually admitting that they considered it too dangerous. (NP staff did do the accompaniment and did not consider it to be especially dangerous.) And when contacting UN Civil Affairs and wanting to work together with them, the UN civilians always brought an armed escort which made NP then break off the cooperation. Mel thinks that this may be very typical of any governmental unarmed missions – having civilians being protected by armed force - and that, while using certain UCP methods, they therefore cannot do real and full UCP work.

The break-out groups in the second workshop were asked to discuss: How does nonviolence manifest in your organization, how do you train people, what protocols do you have regarding nonviolence?

Some points mentioned were:

- Relying on consent when dealing with domestic violence because that is a stronger bar than nonviolence; generally, nonviolence must be centered in consent.
- Setting up alternatives to police.
- Capacity-building for communities so that they can make informed choices (for example on risk level at protest actions).

During the workshops it became clear that, while most UCP/A practitioners subscribe to the principle, there are different understandings of what nonviolence means in practice. Nonviolence may refer both to how an organization works internally - for example, for some working by consensus is an expression of nonviolence, and to how they do their work – not carrying weapons, not accepting armed guards or escorts, speaking to all sides, etc. Some of these elements are less than universal, for example when it comes to internal organization or to expand the protection net to former combatants. But these differences did not mean that there was not a vast area of agreement. Everybody agreed that nonviolence is powerful, that being unarmed facilitates the creation of relationships with various actors in the community, and that those using nonviolent tools need to be committed to it to be credible. Nonviolence is key to protect civilians and deescalate violence, and contrary to the assumption many people may hold, often it is also the safer option for practitioners as well as those they accompany.

There are contested views regarding some aspects, especially whether to engage with armed actors or police in a proactive way (for example giving training to police or facilitate the reintegration of former combatants).

Discussion in the Loomio Threads

The survey taken from the participants when they registered, shows that 91.7% of participants believe the principle of Nonviolence is central to the work of their organization. One participant wrote in addition: *When interviewing people about practices of unarmed civilian protection, it is common that people place their hand on their heart. This intuitive movement, palm to chest, occurred across organizations and contexts, enough for me to notice it over time as a familiar, connecting pattern as I spoke with people. When asked where the power of unarmed civilian protection comes from – a question I asked almost every person I interviewed – it was almost a reflex, a gesture that attempted to locate physically something intangible and difficult to explain in words. “A lot of the work comes from here,” said a violence interrupter in Brooklyn, pointing to his heart. “You have to be yourself.”*

On the question: What are the difficult dilemmas in this topic that need further discussion at the In-Person Gathering, one participant answered as follows:

Michael Nagler makes a useful distinction between strategic nonviolence (nv) and principled nonviolence, somewhat equivalent to the difference between people power vs. person power. Whenever I protest, I do it solo so that I am vulnerable and approachable, which invites disagreement and open-mindedness.

In 1968 (Peace Corps, Thailand) I was given a death threat. But before I went to buy a gun, I was given a dream - a prophet (Jesus?) took me by the hand to go talk to the man who wanted to kill me. He did not promise that I would survive, but he did promise that he would not abandon me. That has been the greatest of all gifts - I live, not by abstract theology, but by trust in this friend who demonstrated the ultimate power of self-sacrificing nonviolence. Gene Stoltzfus said this dream obviously came from my father's Mennonite collective subconscious.

During my seven summers in Hebron, we (CPT) were attacked several times by Zionist teenagers throwing large stones at close range. Nagler taught me the law of redemptive suffering, found in the teaching of both Gandhi and King. When I try to teach that now, it ends up as:

When we suffer voluntarily for others, our courage wins their respect, and our disciplined love wins their trust, which first opens their hearts, which then opens their minds.

Solidarity and Nonpartisanship

14.11., 9 UTC and 19 UTC¹⁷

Watch these videos:

<https://youtu.be/pMCLGVQe6z0>

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NrNkwPyTJU0&list=PLIKzOAg8KAh9k4v4t1nLukDSIRskA7Lv&index=11&ab_channel=NonviolentPeaceforce

Explore two basic approaches to protection: What difference does it make if we consider ourselves to be nonpartisan/impartial or standing in solidarity with those we protect? How does it influence the practice of UCP & Accompaniment? Discuss the relationship between UCP & Accompaniment and civil resistance. Consider how UCP & Accompaniment actors engage or choose not to engage with state security forces.

Speakers were:

Runbir Serpekani, CPT

Olga Karatch, Our House

Vicente Vallies, PBI (09:00-10:45 UTC only)

Javier Garate, PBI ((19:00-20:45 UTC only)

Facilitation:

Berit Bliesemann de Guevara (9 UTC only), Deepa Sureka (19 UTC only) and Christine Schweitzer

Vicente Vallies and Javier Garate, PBI¹⁸

Could you shortly present the work of PBI, and how it has developed over the years since PBI started working exactly 40 years ago?

Peace Brigades International (PBI) “*was founded in 1981 to undertake the task of peacekeeping, peace-making and peace-building under the discipline of nonviolence. It draws inspiration from Mahatma Gandhi's philosophy and experience in the field of nonviolent social change, strengthened by similar movements throughout the world. As a third-party force it applies methods of nonviolent intervention in situations of conflict to establish peace and justice.*”¹⁹ PBI has been in Colombia for 27 years accompanying human right workers to create safe space for their work. PBI works only where it is invited and doesn't do anything that is not agreed upon with people they accompany.

At the beginning, they sent volunteers with “dissuasive power” (North Americans, Europeans). Today, 35-40% are from other Latin American countries but not from the country where they work.

Nationals, PBI thinks, are more susceptible to attack, and get pressure from their family.

They lobby usually outside of the country where they work. They sponsor international delegations. Because many HRD's do not trust government to protect them, PBI will intervene on their behalf at the UN High Commission on Human Rights and at the Organization of American States.

What principle or policy does your organization have about solidarity and non-partisanship?

¹⁷ Sources: Topline Notes from the 19 UTC session, Christine's notes

¹⁸ The inputs that the speakers gave in their respective sessions are put together because they overlapped to a large degree.

¹⁹ www.peacebrigades.org

Nonpartisanship for them means not taking the side of a political party. It does not mean neutrality – they take the side of human rights. Nonpartisanship is fundamental – both as a principle and a strategy. The local organizations know what they need. It is important that the authorities don't see PBI as part of the organization they accompany. This needs constant explanation to the authorities - PBI is there to accompany and protect human rights defenders (not politicians), thereby opening the space for them to do their work more safely. PBI never publicly denounces anything or anyone. They try to have impact in a bi-lateral way through confidential meetings with all sides.

Do you think it makes a difference being allowed into a country if you are seen as an activist organization or a neutral organization?

There is the risk of being expelled from country when doing actions. Maintaining the legality of PBI's position in the country is an important factor when analyzing a potential accompaniment. The same risk analysis is needed when asked to accompany former combatants. PBI was once expelled from Guatemala by the government that is now not allowing visas for people working for PBI.

Have you been working in countries where there is a strong resistance movement?

In Colombia the movement is very strong – many large protests started in April through the summer. They resulted in many incarcerations of the protesters. PBI has supported and accompanied the protestors to show the presence of the international community, however it was a challenge because many protests happened at night when PBI's logo and vests were invisible. Maintaining the role of accompanying, PBI does not take part in the actions.

Could you compare the role of protection between protection in general and protection in the context of peace communities in Colombia? Isn't it more difficult to be nonpartisan in the context of peace communities, with a closer integration (often in remote areas)?

PBI accompanies a very active peace community but does not live in the community and does not take part in the activities. In contrast, an organization from Italy that is also very active in Colombia lives in the community and participates in the peace community's activities.

PBI & CPT have different approaches. Can you show that your approach is working in the context you are in? Do you do evaluations, anecdotes, etc.?

PBI does constant reflection on the internal dynamics of power, in the organization and in the communities, they accompany – always seeking nonviolence internally and externally. Their largest impact is the daily protection to individuals who have been threatened. Many believe they are alive thanks to the accompaniment of PBI. Last week they were told by an armed group that they will stay out of the area because PBI was going to be in the area. This is the type of anecdote that gets fed into their daily and weekly risk and strategy analyses. These stories allow PBI to believe that their work impacts lives.

How did you get involved with the movement/organization that you are involved with?

Javier comes from Chile and his family were victims of oppression there. He resisted the oppression as a nonviolent activist. Eventually, he was introduced to the work of PBI. He decided that he wanted to pursue accompaniment and protection activities rather than continue with the protests and actions he was organizing before with War Resisters' International.

In Colombia, it is hard to distinguish the difference between victims and perpetrators. How do you think about neutrality?

PBI is not neutral. We build trust and relationship with our partner organizations. By getting to know them, we can discern who are victims (vs. perpetrators) and can amplify their messages. We work in

solidarity with human rights organizations to create conditions of safety from threats and attacks. We try to create protection and safe space from a sense of solidarity and a belief in the universal principle of human rights

Runbir Serpekani, CPT

Could you shortly present the work of CPT, and how it has developed over the years since CPT started working in the mid 1980s, being slightly younger than PBI?

CPT has been doing this work for 35 years springing from an anti-war Anabaptist peacemaking tradition, now working on undoing oppression on a variety of fronts (racism, sexism, colonialism, Palestinian rights, immigration, indigenous rights, LGBTQI, etc.) They are a very multicultural organization, grounded in spirituality and today also religiously diverse. The teams are hosted by the community that invited them. They mostly work by consensus but there is a certain hierarchy.

What principle or policy does your organization have about solidarity and non-partisanship?

CPT's approach is solidarity. They take the side of their partner as long as they choose nonviolent means. They don't partner with armed forces or those who are involved in oppression (e.g., Israeli settlers). More and more CPT groups are composed only of locals who can never be seen as nonpartisan (e.g., Palestine.). They focus on undoing oppression wherever they find it. They take part in nonviolent direct action seeing nonviolence being about "fierce struggle." They do press releases supporting partners and the causes they care about. They are often "loud" about their support. They are grounded in spirituality. They work on invitation but decide whom they accompany and whom not – for example they would never accompany political parties in Iraqi Kurdistan. They have supported groups who were blocking oil company vehicles there. Peace equals access to power plus resources.

Do you think it makes a difference being allowed into a country if you are seen as an activist organization or a neutral organization?

There are different ways to enter a country. CPT has to navigate the nuances of every single struggle. Sometimes they only listen and monitor. Sometimes they take action, produce press releases, etc. Every situation is unique and has its own needs. They work on micro-politics not macro-politics.

Have you been working in countries where there is a strong resistance movement?

Yes, Palestine for example.

PBI & CPT have different approaches. Can you show that your approach is working in the context you are in? Do you do evaluations, anecdotes, etc.?

Runbir explained that they partner with a group, however, are careful not to become too involved in the struggle, not to supplant the local activists in any way. Their role is to support the struggle. For them, protection is therefore a side-effect of solidarity.

How did you get involved with the movement/organization that you are involved with?

Runbir comes from Iraq, is a survivor of genocide, whose family had to use violence to protect themselves. CPT's experiences around the world and their framework of nonviolence gave him a new lens. Runbir was in a protest walk supporting the rights of the undocumented in Sweden. He met two men working with CPT that were accompanying undocumented minors. Then he met an activist in CPT, and Runbir was very impressed with her. Eventually he met more CPT team members and decided to become involved.

Can one be nonpartisan and still respect the right to self-determination of people and communities?

If we accompany someone doing an action, we never tell them what they should do. We would not take their agency away from them. We accompany them in what they want to do. If we take agency away from our partners, we would be acting in a white supremacist model.

Olga Karatch, Our House

You represent a local organization. Perhaps could you shortly introduce what your organization is doing, and what threats to your security you are facing?

Nash Dom (Our House) is a Belarusian civil society organization founded c. 2002 and registered abroad in the Czech Republic and Lithuania due to political repression in Belarus. It is organized in a network structure that extends all over Belarus and links and coordinates more than 19 volunteer groups in 18 Belarussian cities. Its head, Olga Karatch, a former City Deputy, had to leave the country after having been arrested and threatened in 2011 and now mostly works from Vilnius.

Their values and goals are nonviolence, fighting for sustainable development and democratic change, respect for human rights and promoting women's rights. They have run various projects, in recent years focusing on women rights defenders and minor prisoners. Since the elections of 2020, Olga and her team from Vilnius are fully engaged in producing videos and other messages as well as collecting money for political prisoners and their families.

They need international solidarity because the dialogue within the organization is often too much focused on the inside, losing the wider perspective. They have some international partners, for example the Federation for Social Defence (BSV) in Germany. International attention saves lives.

What principle or policy does your organization have about solidarity and non-partisanship?

Honest discussion is not widely available in Belarus due to oppression. But more discussion is starting to happen. Now is the time to ask questions even if there are no answers.

Nonviolence is also important regarding the relationships within the organization.

What role do you play in the civil resistance movement in Belarus?

Nash Dom is supporting the civil resistance movement.

Role of protection

When Olga was in prison under suspicion of being an international terrorist, she was released, but two boys in prison at the same time were shot. International attention saved her life and the lives of the others released with her. International pressure (post cards, etc.) has helped children be released from prison.

Olga believes in people power and moral power. In Belarus, the police often rape people in prison because they want to break their moral power. But it doesn't work. People are stronger than that. Now it is time for nonviolent civil resistance to be more united and more active. 'We can change the world without violence and without war.'

Discussion at the Workshops and Summary

Nonpartisanship and solidarity do not have to be at opposite poles. Nonpartisanship does not exclude being in solidarity with activists, several participants and speakers pointed out. However, there is a clear difference in approach between, for example, PBI and CPT. PBI's role in a political struggle (defense of human rights, anti-oppression) etc. is much more limited than CPT's. PBI seeks to

open space so that the local activists can do their work. CPT joins the work to some extent while respecting the primacy of the local actors because its goal is to “undo oppression”.

One topic in the discussion after the panel was the role of former combatants. Some organizations invite them to join the UCP/A work, others may be more hesitant. For a resistance movement, the situation is different. There it is important to involve former soldiers because they can open access to current combatants and win them over. The support of security forces is considered important for the success of any large-scale resistance movement. In Belarus, in addition there is the issue of patriarchal attitudes – activists in the resistance movement are mostly women, but women are not well listened to in Belarusian society and soldiers ignore them.

Discussion in the Loomio Thread

There was little discussion on Loomio. One participant quoted someone from CPT distinguishing “Prophets” and “Reconcilers”, and that both are needed in a team.

Friday, 19 November, 2021

UCP in the Digital Age

19.11., 15 UTC²⁰

Watch the video:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pigrDDRBHGA&list=PLIKzOAg8KAlh9k4v4t1nLukDSIRskA7Lv&index=19>

Modern technologies provide great opportunities to enhance UCP & Accompaniment practice. At the same time, there are also associated risks emerging from these widespread technologies, which threaten to harm beneficiaries and thwart the efforts of UCP & Accompaniment organizations. Therefore, it is vital for UCP & Accompaniment actors to consider digital age threats across the cybersphere as they carry out their work. Take this opportunity to learn from experts on both the opportunities and the risks of modern technologies in UCP & Accompaniment.

Speakers were:

Brendan O'Hanrahan, ecologist, crisis mapper, media monitor and community land use activist

Dennis Ogonji, Sisi Ni Amani Kenya (Kenyan NGO), Digital Literacy trainer

Samuel Maina, Regional IT and Digital Security Officer at Protection International Africa

Liv Williams, PH. D student at Department of International Politics at Aberystwyth University

Eli McCarthy, DC Peace Teams

Facilitators were:

Rosemary Okello Orlale and Berit Bliesemann de Guevara

The first two speakers were invited to speak to the topic "Using technology in monitoring".

Brendan O'Hanrahan

He is working for an NGO that does media monitoring in the US. They did remote support for election monitoring in Kenya in 2013 and 17, and he learned a lot from colleagues there. In the U.S., they are focusing on Twitter, having 40-50 lists covering most States. It is not so much hate speech they are interested in but (potential) incidents of violence. Among others, they cooperate with DC Peace Teams, informing them about what they learn regarding movements of potentially violent groups at demonstrations in real time.

His main theses were²¹:

- Media monitoring deserves serious attention.
- Political incident and crime reporting and remote support are possible due to digital technology.
- Use sources reporting from the ground.
 - People on the ground need information to focus on physical events and incident types. Media monitoring allows someone to remotely extract relevant reports from social or traditional media and put the data into reports via Signal or Slack for those on the ground.
 - Information can be put in a Slack channel, but screen space economy is not good for phones.

²⁰ Sources: Topline notes, notes by Christine Schweitzer, PowerPoint by Olivia Williams

²¹ Quote from the Topline notes.

- Signal is a good way to communicate on the ground; efficient, get clear information quickly.
- Reports can include number of people, location, where have they been, where are they going, when trouble starts.
- Crowdsourcing is not a good option, can't verify credibility.
- People who specialize in generating media are better than the casual observer.
- Twitter provides the best reports from social media; lists can be set up to focus on geographic areas with protests and political violence.
- Independent videographers and freelancers work for political reasons or pay. Must be aware of ideology and pre-filter sources. Experienced monitors are important and must be well trained to avoid propaganda
- Live streaming is a rich source of data.
- Reports can be compiled from all this data on YouTube, Twitch, videos, etc.
- Natural language processing (NLP) systems are hard to train for monitoring and too slow for real time. But in US and Western Europe sophisticated communication infrastructure works.
- Drones could be used to monitor movements of protesters but are a problem in policed spaces due to electronic interference.
- Problems: In cities there may be too much video trying to come in at once; in rural/remote areas, not enough coverage for sending good digital video.
- Walkie talkies are good where the internet is shut down and in rural or remote areas or where there are too many people to use social networks.
- Street view is a god send.
- Don't depend on Hashtags.

Eli McCarthy, DC Peace Teams

Media monitoring helps with situational awareness and rumor control. When they receive alerts they can move scouts to the location to gather more information. At the elections at the end of 2020, his organization was part of broader collective of UCP groups and deescalators who worked together with people setting up counter demonstrations. They used technology to improve their responses. In particular, they tried to track people, locations and help with situational awareness (for example weapons on the ground, trajectory of movements of protesters as well as police) as well as getting the newest press conference information. They cooperated with Brendan O'Hanrahan's group and used satellite imagery. This was extremely useful.

He also recommended to use earpieces rather than walkie-talkies where conversations can be overheard.

As next steps, he imagines two things:

- Have on the ground scouts, possibly on bikes, feeding back information
- Combine information with a map to identify spots where there might be a risk.

The last two speakers addressed the topic of Cyber security.

Olivia Williams, University of Aberystwyth

Olivia Williams worked for the BBC and then for the government in crisis regions, and later decided to write a PhD about cyber security. Her research questions are: What do NGOs say that they do to protect the beneficiary data that they collect? What do aid workers say that they do to protect the beneficiary data that they collect? How are beneficiaries harmed by humanitarian information activities? She did an e-Survey with participants from 28 countries. What she found is:

Data Handling²²:

- Significant number of aid workers use their own devices to collect, process and share beneficiary data, and have not been instructed by their NGO not to do so.
- Devices and papers containing beneficiary personal data kept in locations where unauthorized persons could access them.
- Devices were often protected by a password or PIN as well as hidden in physical locations. Although AV equipment was also hidden, they were not digitally protected.
- Email most common means of sharing beneficiary data, but physical handover of beneficiary file or USB stick and use of messaging apps and phone calls to share data also relatively common.
- Aid workers 'trusted' that onward safeguarding would occur, rather than checking by any other means.
- Majority of aid workers 'are not sure' if NGOs are purposefully targeted by cyber threat actors and some believe that they are not.
- Common types of cyber-attacks are little understood by aid workers.

E-Survey Findings regarding Aid Worker Awareness

- Majority of aid workers understand the need to protect data throughout the data lifecycle, but some suggested that protections were only 'sometimes' required, whilst a few others said they were 'never' necessary.
- Protecting data during collection and dissemination is important, during processing not so much.
- Data protection training for aid workers is irregular, with high number of those who had received it saying it was 'inadequate' and not fit for purpose.
- Many aid workers never received a debrief. The majority of those who had received one within the past 5 years expressed that they'd never been asked about their data handling experiences.
- Applying NGO policies to field settings is unrealistic.

Regarding: Aid Worker Publicizing of Beneficiary Personal Data:

- Beneficiaries are rarely informed of their rights.
- Aid workers who had shared beneficiary data had almost all shared a photograph of a beneficiary's face, and a smaller number had posted video and audio recordings of beneficiaries.
- There are often no plans to secure data during deployment.
- Data is vulnerable since NGOs say they protect it, but workers on the ground may not.

²² Quoted from her powerpoint.

- Risk assessments are generally not done for individuals and programs nor is harm potential identified.

Samuel Maina, PI

Maina has worked in cyber security in Tanzania. He pointed out the following issues:

- Cyber security isn't the same as information security but is a part of it.
- Issues: risk in data collection, security, and costs.
- Risk analysis mapping is key – physical harm, do organization-wide risk assessment, select security tools, firewall, anti-virus tools.
- Must change behaviors to build in cybersecurity and protect data.
- Need to incorporate cyber security into training.
 - Need in-house IT person who is well trained - shorten feedback loops.
 - Train volunteers and community groups and follow up on security agreements.
 - Build security into initial project design, including storage tools, not as add-on.
 - It must be available, affordable, secure, accessible by those who need it.

Discussion at the Workshop and Summary

In the discussion on the first topic, using technology in monitoring, questions were raised about the verification of information received and possible attempts by police or others to distribute false news. Verification requires well-trained monitors. Often, they recognize false news, for example re-tweets from other sources.

As to technology, it was remarked that some groups are using satellites and open-source networks. A Kenyan group used cell phone SMS to prevent violence. They had a free number where people would SMD and share information for intervention. O'Hanrahan responded that sometimes the cell phone towers could not cope because so many people try to report at same time. Old technology like Walkie Talkies can be useful in such cases or in places where the internet is closed down.

The session led to at least four important lessons:

- Organizations need to have reliable ways to identify misinformation in social media.
- IT technology can be used to strengthen monitoring by collecting and quickly processing information on movements etc., by evaluating information coming through social media.
- There are many free or low-cost apps that can help make computer and cell phone communication safer.
- The degree of awareness of data protection in the field of peacebuilding is low and much in need of improvement. Data protection is protection of people.

Background Material / Further Readings Recommended on Loomio

Three IT experts from Protection International were available on Loomio to answer questions about IT security. Here are links that were shared either by the facilitator or by them.

- [Cybersecurity Assessment Tool](#): designed to measure the maturity, resiliency, and strength of an organization's cybersecurity efforts (by Ford Foundation)

- [Your Security Plan](#): a guide will teach you how to make a security plan for your digital information and how to determine what solutions are best for you (by Surveillance Self-Defense)
- [Digital Security Helpline](#), by Access Now; works with individuals and organizations around the world to keep them safe online
- [Guardian Project](#)
- [Freedom on the Net 2021](#), by Freedom House
- [Surveillance Self-Defense](#): Tips, Tools and How- To-Dos for Safer Online Communication (by Electronic Frontier Foundation)
- [Safe Sisters](#): support to Human Rights Defenders; see especially their Resources section with guides in English, Kiswahili, and Burmese
- [The Digital First Aid Kit](#): a free resource to help rapid responders, digital security trainers, and tech-savvy activists to better protect themselves and the communities they support against the most common types of digital emergencies (by Rapid Response Network and CiviCERT)
- [The UK National Cyber Security Centre](#): a list of the broad range of cyber security related topics that their advice and guidance covers
- [Eraser](#) and [cleaner](#) can be used to erase sensitive data. But it takes a while to do so, and still experts might be able to recover them. For a mobile device, and assuming that those checking a mobile phone might not be experts, a recommendation was made to create a secondary user on your phone. On Android, you should find these settings in Settings->System -> Multiple Users. (On an iPhone this feature is in development). You can add a guest account which always starts afresh (so no traces are easily recoverable). Or you create 2 users: 1) one user for your "everyday" tasks with all kinds of apps you normally use (to make it realistic). 2) another user for your sensitive tasks. In case of a tight situation, you switch to the "everyday user", only with the apps you want to appear.
- VeraCrypt: (<https://www.veracrypt.fr/>), you can keep all the sensitive files in a disguised folder.
- In response to the question, how to know if anyone is accessing your computer or email, the experts pointed out that prevention by using good passwords, not opening suspicious e-mails before verifying the sender, etc. is better because it is hard to determine if anyone is accessing a computer. Sometimes unusual things happening on the computer may be a sign. For websites, you can right-click a link, then "copy link location", and paste it into a fresh email: that way you see where it actually takes you.
- [Signal](#) is an encrypted messaging app which does not sell data.
- VPN: [riseupVPN \(https://riseup.net/en/vpn#download-riseupvpn\)](https://riseup.net/en/vpn#download-riseupvpn) or ProtonVPN (<https://protonvpn.com/>): both have free options, and very good security/privacy track record
- ProtonMail (protonmail.org) and mailbox.org are safer email providers.
- If you are interested in reading more about how our online behavior is monetized, and ultimately used against ourselves, I can really recommend Shoshana Zuboff's book on Surveillance capitalism: <https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/26195941-the-age-of-surveillance-capitalism> . Another good book, focusing also on the economic downsides of "big tech" is Don't be Evil from Rana Foroohar (<https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/53081232-don-t-be-evil>)
- Guide from frontline defenders: <https://www.frontlinedefenders.org/en/resource-publication/guide-secure-group-chat-and-conferencing-tools>

Evolution of UCP/Accompaniment in Southeast Asia

19.11., 3 UTC²³

Watch the video:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7b597_1dP80&list=PLIKzOAg8KAlh9k4v4t1nLukDSIRskA7Lv&index=17

The focus of the session had been modified. It originally was meant to be the early session on “Intersections of UCP & Accompaniment with Humanitarian Aid and Strategies for Peace”. Instead, it looked more broadly at the evolution of UCP/Accompaniment in Southeast Asia (Myanmar, Thailand, and the Philippines in particular) and ways to strengthen a regional community of practice.

Speakers were:

Daphne Macatimbol, NP Philippines

Anchana Heemmina, Duay Jai Group in Patani, Thailand

Ashish Pandey, NP Myanmar

Facilitation:

Huibert Oldenhuis and Diah Kusumaningrum

After an exchange of why people were there, three presenters talked:

Daphne Macatimbol, NP

Daphne works with NP in the Philippines. Relationship building with many different stakeholders (from mayors to religious and rebel leaders, government, military) is key for their work, identifying and addressing specific protection needs, setting up an early warning-early response mechanism, etc. The most impactful work in the Philippines has been enabling and building an environment to support the peace process. NP is part of the official ceasefire / peace process mechanism in Mindanao since 2010, with responsibility for the protection of civilians. It took some years, but in 2014 the number of violent incidents in the conflict area between the government and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) had gone down to zero.

Currently, NP is scaling up their capacity development to build relationships with the new Government in Mindanao. They also work with religious organizations to stop religion from being used as a recruitment tool for violent actors. The principles of non-partisanship and independence are very important for their work, making it possible to facilitate ceasefires as a result of independent status and because of long standing relationships with the different actors. This has even led to a situation where NP, together with the International Monitoring Team, accompanied MILF soldiers (the rebels who agreed on a peace process with the Philippine government) out of an area to their base when they were threatened by another armed group.

Anchana Heemmina, Duay Jai

- For many decades there has been an ongoing violent conflict in Southern Thailand (Patani); in 2005 a peace process started without ending the violence. The speaker said that many civilians and civil society organizations in Thailand are not familiar with the terminology of UCP but are practicing the protection of civilians. The work of her organization includes:
 - Psychosocial and mental health support
 - Rehabilitation of ex-combatants into the community

²³ Sources: two sets of topline notes, notes by Christine Schweitzer

- Monitoring and reporting of human rights violations
- Alerting the public to potential risks.

Her organization received training from NP, especially on Early Warning-Early Response.

It is important, she said, to have an open dialogue with the community around the peace processes. There are different conflict contexts in different communities, and they all need to be addressed individually.

Ashish Pandey, NP

NP's engagement in Myanmar started when local groups had heard of NP's activities in the Philippines. The work started in 2012, and NP workers (mostly local people) went to different states, talking to people. A focus was on building the capacity of women as well so they can participate in different processes. The activities vary depending on the situation. Local UCP activists did negotiate ceasefires so that civilians were able to get out of a fighting zone, and they engaged in capacity building in the communities so that they can protect themselves.

After the coup, violence has become more ruthless and many local partner organizations are in hiding. NP is supporting its partners in Myanmar remotely. Digital security became increasingly important in the face of increased surveillance with many CSO having now been targeted. Asked what could be done now, he said: 'What is needed now is making public what is happening, amplifying the voices of the local activists, and on the other to raise funds so that they can continue their work.'

Discussion at the Workshops and Summary

In the discussion it became clear that the countries in Southeast Asia share to some degree similar problems, and that therefore exchange between activists from the different countries could be very useful. There is a lot of experience of local groups in the different countries though they might not use the term "UCP". Contacts between organizations from different countries and the training work NP offered seems to have been a catalyst leading to more efforts in this field. There was also one participant from West Papua who urgently asked for UCP/A in their country, especially to protect IDPs.

Background Material / Further Readings Recommended on Loomio

Huibert Oldenhuis shared several papers on Core Competencies. They are not publicly available, but here is a public summary:

https://www.nonviolentpeaceforce.org/component/pages_np/freeform/2020-12-14-16-43-36 .

Unarmed Protection Missions by States & Multilateral Organizations

19.11., 9 UTC and 19 UTC²⁴

Watch these videos:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lqfguQduivM&list=PLIKzOAg8KAlh9k4v4t1nLukDSIRskA7Lv&index=18>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=72jqSld3QgU&list=PLIKzOAg8KAlh9k4v4t1nLukDSIRskA7Lv&index=21>

Pursue two interlinked questions:

There have been in past and present some international governmental peacekeeping and/or monitoring missions which could – perhaps – be counted as UCP. What are the differences and what is identical when states and when NGOs practice UCP?

In some countries, NGOs advocate to their governments or international organizations to deploy unarmed civilian missions instead of military missions. What are the concepts in detail, and what lessons have been learned in the course of such advocacy?

Speakers were:

Mayeul Kaufmann, researcher and President of IRNC

Francois Marchand, co-president of Non-violence XXI, Board member of Nonviolent Peaceforce and former president of IRNC

Sheila Romen, has been working with various UN organizations in various African countries as Protection of Civilians officer (19:00-20:45 UTC only)

Facilitation:

Berit Bliesemann de Guevara (9 UTC only), Ellen Furnari (19 UTC only), Christine Schweitzer

Mayeul Kaufmann, IRNC

Mayeul Kaufmann is currently carrying out research to define and build a database of what they understand as UCP activities by different actors (including NGOs, International/Regional Organizations and States). He uses a wide definition of UCP, following the definition by Jean-Marie Muller (1997)²⁵: *“We can propose the following definition of the strategy of civil intervention: an unarmed intervention, on the ground of a local conflict, by external missions, mandated by an intergovernmental, governmental or non-governmental organization, coming to accomplish actions of observation, information, interposition, mediation and cooperation in order to prevent or stop the violence to ensure respect for human rights, to promote the values of democracy and citizenship and to create the conditions for a political solution to the conflict that recognizes and guarantees the fundamental rights of each of the parties involved and allows them to define the rules of peaceful coexistence.”* He quoted several other definitions as well. They decided to use a broad definition in order to do their research. As part of his classification, these are the most reoccurring activities they counted: accompaniment, physical protection, mediation, conciliation, training on violence prevention, election monitoring, conflict management, gun-free zones etc.

As examples, he talked about UN Habitat that conducts community mediation in the DRC and conflict management training in Somalia; the conflict management training by UNITAR, the work of UNICEF in El Salvador to create weapon-free zones, the World Bank’s support for mediation, the protection of HRDs in Nepal by the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) and its monitoring in

²⁴ Sources: Notes of the 9 UTC meeting, notes of the 19 UTC meeting, manuscript of presentation by Francois Marchand, manuscript by Mayeul Kaufmann, notes by Christine Schweitzer

²⁵ Jean-Marie Muller, *Principes et méthodes de l’intervention civile*, IRNC, Desclée de Brouwer, 1997, p. 70.

Rwanda, a number of projects by UNDP, several UN peacekeeping missions, the EU, OSCE, African Union, and others.

He was not able to identify cases of UCP carried out by a single country unless it was in collaboration with other international organizations (case of OECD and UNDP collaboration with UK).

Given the complexity of the matter, there is an overall suggestion to keep the inclusion criteria as broad as possible for the database, since different approaches can be deployed on the ground. He maintained, however, that UCP is to be done by outside actors.

Christine Schweitzer, IFGK

In the first session, Schweitzer added to the presentation by Kaufmann: In her writings, she used a narrower definition of civilian peacekeeping or UCP. Besides being unarmed and having a presence on the ground, she used the criteria of elements of protection in the mandates or at least in the practice of the missions, in order to include in her research. These are governmental missions of that type that she either found in her research for the European workshop or earlier in the work on the NP Feasibility Study of 2001:

- In Bougainville (South Pacific) the Truce Monitoring Group/Peace Monitoring Group (TMG/PMG) started working at the end of 1997 to monitor the peace agreements between Papua New Guinea and the warring parties in Bougainville. TMG/PMG was organized by the militaries of four neighboring countries, but the teams did not carry weapons and included additionally civilians from these countries
- In Kosovo, the Kosovo Verification Mission of the OSCE 1998-99, was deployed to verify a cease-fire agreement between Yugoslavia and the insurgent Kosovo Liberation Army. The KVM was staffed by a mixture of internationals from all OSCE member states and included local staff mainly as interpreters, drivers, and aides.
- After the wars in former Yugoslavia, the EU has deployed EU Monitoring Missions, both in the former Yugoslavia (Croatia) and currently in Georgia. Their task is to monitor ceasefires and agreements; protection is not high on their agenda though in their field work they deescalate conflicts and thereby prevent violence.
- Earlier UN missions in El Salvador, East Timor, and Darfur (Sudan) were mandated with both preparation of elections /a referendum and monitoring violence. They were staffed by civilians, police and (unarmed) military observers provided by the United Nations.

Legally, they were all part of ceasefire or peace agreements, and received invitations from the host country. They were not under Chapter VII and had no mandate by the UN Security Council.

Francois Marchand, Non-violence XXI

The concept of what in French is called “Intervention Civile de Paix (ICP - Civil Peace Intervention)” has been developed from early in the 1990’s, just after the fall of the Berlin Wall; it has been significantly inspired by the first ten years of experience of PBI (Peace Brigades International); It was originally conceived as a non-violent alternative to the military interventions that the French government often engages in. (The wording “intervention” is well accepted by the majority of French.)

In 1997, the late Jean-Marie Muller and IRNC released a book “Principles et méthodes de l'intervention civile”. In 1999 every French NGO involved in ICP gathered in a “Comité français pour l'intervention civile” (“French Committee for Civil Intervention”).

For 30 years, IRNC and the Comité, has had many opportunities, formal or informal, to meet and sometimes to negotiate with French governmental organizations: Ministries of Defense and foreign affairs, the General Secretariat for National Defence (“Secrétariat général de la défense nationale”,

SGDN), militaries or diplomatic organizations, and others. As example, he described a recent meeting they had in the Paris Military School about “external operations” of the French military. The military recognized that various domestic political objectives were guiding their military interventions and so, spoiled the military success. *“We are able to win a war, but unable to win the peace”*, one of them summed up. The military did not know UCP and showed interest in it.

Marchand finished by presenting the university course set up in 2019 at the Catholic University of Paris where students can get a diploma in UCP, and two online courses in French given by NP in 2021 for about 40 students from the Sahel region.

They are currently planning to change the scale of these initiatives by working with the Agence française du développement (AFD), a huge governmental agency focused on economic development, but also working for human rights and peace. The question he put forward for discussion was: if missions are funded by a government agency, can they be impartial?

Sheila Romen

Sheila Romen worked in three UN Peacekeeping blue helmets missions recently. She is aware of NP’s work through supporting a training in UCP in Darfur last year with NP, an example of how this collaboration can take place. UCP, for the UN, is a new kid on the block. UN Peacekeeping has used the terminology of protection of civilians since the 1999 mission in Sierra Leone in most of their mandates. Since 1999, the concept has expanded.

They distinguish three pillars of Protection of Civilians: protection from physical violence (understood as a component of UN military and police); support of dialogue, and contribution to a protective environment.

Sudan: In Sudan they had national Protection of Civilian (POC) officers, who could speak local languages and have their own networks. They were based in team sites on the basis of hotspot mappings and were tasked with building relationships, including with local populations and the large concentration of IDPs.

MONUSCO in Congo: This mission did not have POC officers, only two advisers, placed at the Deputy representative’s office. They did oversee what the mission did on a strategic level. Community liaison assistants were recruited. These were locals, ideally placed because they could liaise with the local communities.

Romen pointed out: A peacekeeping mission with a military component will always be a military mission no matter how many civilian staff and police are included. The military component often makes up two thirds to three quarters of total mission personnel.

Strengths and weaknesses of UN missions:

- 25.000 staff, civilian the smallest, police second large. Size is a big advantage.
- Mandate from the highest level of the UN. And usually, the head of the operation is the highest official in the country--special representative of the UN Secretary General who has access to heads of state and heads of the military and can intervene.
- Geographic footprint much larger.
- Resources, including supplies by helicopter, internet, accommodations, food, etc. to complete the protection mandate on 24/7 basis and to allow staff to take leave, which is difficult to reach for an NGO
- Political access and leverage
- Military capability to intervene
- Have an annual budget and though they need to defend it every year at the UN’s General Assembly, this is still easier fundraising than for an NGO

- Possibility to collaborate with multitude of actors.

Weaknesses

- Dependencies created by simple presence. Sustainability of the mission and transitions²⁶ of missions are issues.
- Accountability (to whom are such missions accountable?)

Discussion at the Workshops and Summary

In the discussion, the question of the definition of UCP played an important role – Are the civilian missions that had been discussed, really doing UCP?

Among the session participants, some elements in a definition of UCP that were understood to be essential included: presence on the ground, being experts in mediation, direct physical protection of civilians, violence prevention.

Unlike the UCP carried out by NGOs, international organizations/governments can intervene in the framework of UCP only if invited by the country of deployment.

There were many concerns about mixed military-civilian peacekeeping missions. Several participants thought that as long as there is civil-military cooperation, one cannot talk of unarmed work because the threat of use of violence is always present.

It is controversial whether expanding UCP to international organizations and states is an opportunity or a challenge, or even possible. Principles of impartiality and non-partisanship and related practices are seen as challenged in this context. This becomes even more complex when the spectrum of activities identified as UCP are not standardized. One discussant thought that UN peacekeepers can use methods of UCP, but not do full UCP. In addition to the obvious concern that they are armed, or have armed back up, they are also often hampered by their SOPs and concern for the security of their staff. For example, their SOPs in South Sudan did not allow them to accompany women off of the roads when they needed to go and gather firewood. Romen countered that in UNAMID (Darfur) firewood patrols were carried out by UN Police.

The second workshop ended with a voting on Zoom on the question: Would you agree that governments and/or international organizations should develop and deploy missions of UCP?

Yes: 10; No: 3; Not decided:1

On the whole, there were different views within the session participants, but there is also broad curiosity to explore more the potential of expanding UCP beyond NGOs.

Background Material / Further Readings Recommended on Loomio

On Loomio, excerpts were shared from the Report of the European Workshop on Good Practices that took place in February 2021

(https://www.nonviolentpeaceforce.org/images/Good_Practices/UCP_in_Europe.pdf) , and from Chapter II of the NP Feasibility Study of 2001 (<https://www.nonviolentpeaceforce.org/blog/blog-items/111-nonviolent-peaceforce-feasibility-study>)

Film: "Soldiers Without Guns" - film by Will Watson - <https://vimeo.com/490372154> - It's about 90 minutes. 2-minute trailer: <https://vimeo.com/462441310>

A UN document on protection of civilians is at

https://peacekeeping.un.org/sites/default/files/poc_policy_2019_.pdf

²⁶ UN missions often change their character, elements are added or taken away from mandates, more or fewer civilian personnel added or withdrawn, etc.

Intersection of UCP & Accompaniment with Humanitarian Aid and Strategies for Peace

19.11., 17 UTC²⁷

Watch this video:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7qtqEQ__gKA&list=PLIKzOAg8KAlh9k4v4t1nLukDSIRskA7Lv&index=20

The strategic application of physical presence and engagement at the grassroots level to reduce violence against civilians is widely cited as a core feature of UCP or Accompaniment. Some organizations apply these methods in situations of humanitarian emergencies, surrounded by other actors that may provide food and medicine. They may combine their protective presence with activities of rebuilding houses and providing medical accompaniments or deliberately decide to refrain from mixing such activities. Other organizations may apply protective accompaniment in a context of peace processes and bring it into a ceasefire monitoring, peacekeeping, or mediation processes. Take a closer look at how these core methods of protective presence and accompaniment are applied in different settings and how that changes the way they are applied.

Speakers were:

Martha Hernandez, NP

Alberto Capannini, Operazione Colomba in Lebanon

Goran Bozicevic, Miramida Center

Rosemary Kabaki, NP

Facilitation:

Huibert Oldenhuis and Gay Rosenblum-Kumar

The workshop was primarily a panel with several questions asked by the facilitators. Here, the answers are put together as if they had been one consistent input rather than questions and answers.

Martha Hernandez, NP

Hernandez is working for NP in South Sudan. She said that they encounter many humanitarian needs, and that this brings them opportunities for violence prevention. The coordination with the large number of humanitarian partners in South Sudan and with the UN peacekeeping mission (UNMISS) is very demanding but also fruitful. UCP has a strong component of community engagement. To bring this into the humanitarian community is crucial. It is possible to influence different responses of partners, for example they facilitated encounters between IDPs and UNMISS.

NP does not provide humanitarian aid itself, but it links people in need to aid organizations. They also facilitate dialog or mediation in conflicts that may arise between IDPs and host communities about aid, thereby contributing to conflict-sensitive delivery of aid. Sometimes they maintain a presence when aid is distributed. At other times they patrol routes taken by IDPs. NP also negotiates with armed actors to open up humanitarian space. The Women's Protection Teams identify strong women leaders in communities and strengthen their capacities.

²⁷ Sources: Topline Notes, Notes by Christine Schweitzer

Goran Bozicevic, Miramida Center

Goran Bozicevic has been active in the field of grassroots peacebuilding since the 1990s. He was first connected to the volunteers of international Balkan Peace Team in Croatia. He finds it difficult to distinguish between UCP and other forms of peacebuilding.

On the question, "what role internationals played in that time", he answered that it was an ongoing discussion on who was local, who was a foreigner? It did not have much to do with passports, but with values. "If you are here with me, you are not a foreigner to me." Influencing is about broadening perspective. He first became a colleague of the internationals and then a trainer. He emphasized that peacebuilding is always mutual and about relationships. He worked with hundreds of international volunteers. UCP should maintain fluid connections. Their contribution to the local community just through their presence was enormous.

Alberto Capannini, OC

The volunteers of OC live with the people affected by war. In Lebanon this is with Syrian refugees in a camp at a village with 3,000 Lebanese and 2,000 refugees. For them this is the only way to build a relationship built on trust. First, they were told that as internationals they could not live in a tent, but they insisted. They built relationships both with the authorities (that at first did not trust the Syrians and assumed that they had weapons hidden) and the refugees.

OC opens humanitarian corridors by linking people in need to aid organizations and helping the refugees talk to the aid structures. Also, they promote peace proposals that refugees write. The refugees knew about OC's work in Colombia, and copied it, asking for a peace zone in the camp.

UCP is context specific and multidimensional.

Rosemary Kabaki, NP

Rosemary Kabaki has been with NP in Myanmar. As in South Sudan, they experienced that conflicts and peace processes are not linear but have their ups and downs. UCP offers the chance for people to see how protection can happen without weapons. The bilateral ceasefire agreements had very little civilian protection elements. NP supported the local communities (through capacity enhancement) to develop new relationships and prevent violence. NP was invited by local organizations to work with them. The communities identified who should participate in a training.

Since the coup however, these peace processes are defunct. But they can use the networks to bring in aid to people who are now hiding in the forests.

UCP is always mutual and has more to do with values rather than passports. An important UCP activity is to connect locals with other locals and affirm, "What you are doing is important."

Discussion at the Workshops and Summary

One question asked was about linking of people to aid agencies without people thinking that the aid then comes from the UCP organization. The answer was at the beginning there is often confusion but that after some time the role of the different organizations becomes clear to the recipients of the aid.

Another question was: "If the UCP organization itself is doing work that could be seen as humanitarian or peacebuilding - such as running a sports group for youth - does this blur the line of protection and humanitarian work?" A representative of NP answered that NP would not run a sports group for youth. Instead, they would work with youth in a sports group or teams on things like violence reduction. They have experience working in places where inter-communal violence frequently breaks out during or because of a football game and that violence reflects the larger scale conflict dynamics and can escalate.

One participant working for a peacebuilding organization pointed out that there is a lot of movement on the humanitarian side, thinking much more about violence reduction etc. The discussion is very similar to what UCP organizations are discussing. Lines are more and more dissolving.

The speakers agreed that the interconnections especially between aid and UCP/A need to be further explored. The speakers agreed that they would not engage in humanitarian aid themselves but link people to aid agencies who would meet the need. Organizations sometimes also facilitate dialog or mediation in conflicts about aid that may arise between IDPs and host communities. Sometimes they maintain a presence when aid is distributed.

UCP can help to reorient humanitarian work. Nonviolence and the people-to-people approach of UCP/A can be useful especially in light of the aid industry often staying aloof and not developing a real understanding of the local situation. When humanitarian aid becomes like a business, local people become suspicious. UCP can contribute to conflict-sensitive delivery of aid.

As to peacemaking, UCP/A organizations sometimes mediate conflicts on the ground or perhaps at middle level but are not engaged in top-level conflict resolution efforts.

UCP should always build on local capacities. The work needs to be flexible and creative to remain relevant and respond to changing contexts.

The distinction between peacebuilding and UCP/A did not become really clear in this workshop. Especially organizations from the Global South and local organizations often seem not to consciously distinguish both.

Background Materials / Further Readings on Loomio

Huibert Oldenhuis shared several papers on Core Competencies. They are not publicly available, but here is a public summary:

https://www.nonviolentpeaceforce.org/component/pages_np/freeform/2020-12-14-16-43-36 .

Saturday, 20 November, 2021

Responding to Transnational Corporate Violence

20.11., 15 UTC²⁸

Watch this video:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A5A71Lhs5Sg&list=PLIKzOAg8KAlh9k4v4t1nLukDSIRskA7Lv&index=26>

Explore the specific challenges and good practices of unarmed civilian protection and accompaniment in violent contexts related to transnational business corporations.

How does UCP respond to threats to activists and local communities, which derive from transnational corporations (pollution, mining, land grabbing, exploitation, etc.)? What is the leverage for local communities to protect themselves?

How can 'outsiders', whether from other places in the country or internationals, support civilian protection in these contexts?

What are successful examples of work in the community and of advocacy with local, country and international authorities in this context?

Speakers were:

Anabella Sibrian, Protection International

Vanessa Vasco, Corporación Jurídica Libertad (CJL) in Colombia

Ramu Manivannan, University of Madras

Facilitators:

Berit Bliesemann de Guevara and Beatriz Elena Arias Lopez

Anabella Sibrian, PI

Corporate crime has been an issue for decades, it is not a new phenomenon. State power is used to give immunity to crime and corruption. Concessions for transnational corporations are imposed mostly without the consent of local people in Columbia and Mexico. The justice system protects the corporations. Defenders of human rights are threatened, slandered, and surveilled.

PI published a study on transitional justice in January 2021 where they also talk about the role of business.

Civil society has been denouncing corporate crimes. Protesters are criminalized; displaced communities are displaced again.

There is a role for international pressure. UCP is supported by international frameworks for the corporate sector and the obligations of the states. The UN in 2011 developed guiding principles on human rights and the role and responsibilities of corporations which stated a duty to protect rights during business activities even if there are no in-country rules to protect locals. But these UN rules have not been fully implemented. 127 people defending water and land rights were murdered in 2020, mostly indigenous and African descendants. The largest numbers of fatalities were in Mexico, Guatemala and Colombia.

Prevention: The EU could play a role in prevention. Activists should make sure that EU legislation applies to all companies from the EU at home and abroad. And it should be extended to the value chain in conflict zones.

²⁸ Sources: Notes of Workshop, Notes by Christine Schweitzer

Indigenous people should be supported in their right to give consent to concessions. Rural, indigenous communities have a small footprint, but the wealthy have a great impact on them.

Protection of territory: It must include a human rights approach, culture and gender; must use local networks and practices of the community, not using some foreign import.

Risk reduction: public denouncement before international financing since it is difficult to intervene in isolated communities and defend their autonomy once things are moving forward.

In Guatemala, a State of Emergency was declared to prevent indigenous (Mayan) people from defending their territories. The company managed to extend their concession for another 25 years.

Alliances with other organizations and with the climate movement are needed to get results in the Global South, and to challenge corporations with solidarity movements in the Global North. Public opinion in the Global North should be enlisted for support. In one example of a hydro plant, the protesters sought to influence the banks.

The Global North must realize its issues of too much consumption. The Global South are not victims but protecting and defending the life of the whole planet.

Vanessa Vasco, CIL

In Colombia, human rights violations are committed by the state and paramilitary groups as well as national and transnational companies that contribute to the context of violence and local displacement. The law and constitution in Colombia support corporations and private interests, including with tax benefits.

Following the peace agreement with FARC, the conflict got worse. People were re-victimized while trying to rebuild and are again subject to displacement.

People have historically and culturally built relationship with the land, water, and mountains. They are the ones managing all the relations in the countryside. She mentioned one tradition: families on holidays go to rivers. Now they cannot do so anymore because rivers are privatized, and “trespassing” is forbidden.

Communities are organizing themselves to stand up to corporations to defend territory, water, and crops.

Social networks can help communities to organize themselves, e.g., territorial patrols on the river to see where hydro work is planned and show the impact on flora and fauna. They identified problems of a project which was stopped and the displaced are returning to their land.

The local officials have supported the local communities, but not national leaders who give permission to act in a territory despite environmental consequences. Rather companies should be prosecuted if there is any risk.

In some cases, protests have been successful: In Antiochia, a mining company was denied a license after protests by the local community. In another case, a hydrological project was stopped. A judge forbade its being carried out because it would have taken place on territory being claimed by displaced people who want to return.

Generally, she concluded: The Global North causes problems in the Global South whose issues are the symptom of that.

Ramu Manivannan, University of Madras

Corporate violence in India goes back to the East India Company, a multinational corporation, before India became a British colony.

India has vast natural and mineral resources – iron ore, zinc, copper, etc., but multinationals have control of the land and resources and strong influence with the government and military. They take on the form of an Indian organization to look local.

Some examples: Coca Cola mines deep for fresh water; Monsanto controls 70-100% of the crop market, sells pesticides that deplete the soil and then sells GMO seeds that are the only seeds that can grow in that soil, creating dependency, diseases, and child labor issues. There has been little justice after the Union Carbide Bhopal disaster in 1984.

The Supreme Court of India found that these multinational companies function without transparency, and without any justice for local populations.

Mobilizing public responses is the most effective approach.

The civil liberty movement in India provides witnesses, and a presence in tribal areas, but protection for protest groups is needed since police claim protesters are violent. The accompaniment is organized on a local/national basis, with Indians providing protection for their fellow citizens. They take inspiration from Gandhi's approach to form a modern version of a Shanti Sena.

Manivannan said that we need a social movement in both the Global North and South to transform government and bring about change. International support is very important for the struggles in India.

Discussion at the Workshop and Summary

In the discussion, the first question raised was about cooperation between activists from the Global South and the Global North. The presence of UCP/A organizations is important in Latin America, but in some countries their presence is limited by law.

Advocacy in the Global North is another strategy. For example, 'Global Exchange'²⁹ represents one attempt to educate public opinion in the US.

International advocacy can complement the struggle in the countries where corporations are connected to violence and criminal activities. There are international solidarity networks, but they are often not strong enough to mobilize public opinion. Sibrían mentioned as a positive example the EU legislation for companies which was an important result of advocacy work by civil society organizations.

The discussion then turned to the role of China. Chinese companies represent the state rather than a corporation, so there is no place to appeal and no accountability. This may well be the challenge of the 21st century, Manivannan thought. In the end, the Global North may be seen as the lesser evil. However, Sibrían said, Chinese banks have started a discussion which may be a result of ongoing criticism.

To summarize, transnational corporations often wield considerable power and are closely linked to governments. Often, they also use direct violence (mostly through private security firms) when encountering protesters (This has occurred in the Global North as well). UCP on the ground to protect communities and ecological movements has proven to be important. However, to counter the violence of such companies, advocacy and protest are also needed in the Global North to put pressure on the companies in their homelands. Movements in the South and North must complement each other. Solidarity is fundamental. There are international solidarity networks to mobilize public opinion in the countries where the transnational corporations have their seat. A special challenge is China with its close links between the economic and political sphere, and the difficulties to influence them.

²⁹ <https://globalexchange.org/>

Knowledge-Creation and Sharing

20.11., 3 UTC and 17 UTC³⁰

Watch these videos:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ILgSMFrCw58&list=PLIKzOAg8KAlh9k4v4t1nLukDSIRskA7Lv&index=22>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U-Ut8wk2lGM&list=PLIKzOAg8KAlh9k4v4t1nLukDSIRskA7Lv&index=24>

Explore how knowledge about UCP & Accompaniment is shared and disseminated. What type of knowledge has helped practitioners or researchers most in protecting civilians or in evaluating UCP? How is knowledge created and shared? What materials have been most widely used? What is missing and what are the resources no one bothers to read? What is the role of language, audio-visual, or written materials in sharing knowledge?

Facilitators

Ellen Furnari and Rungrawee Chalermripinyorat (03:00-4:25 UTC):

Jonathan Pinckney and Nerve Macaspac (17:00-18:25 UTC)

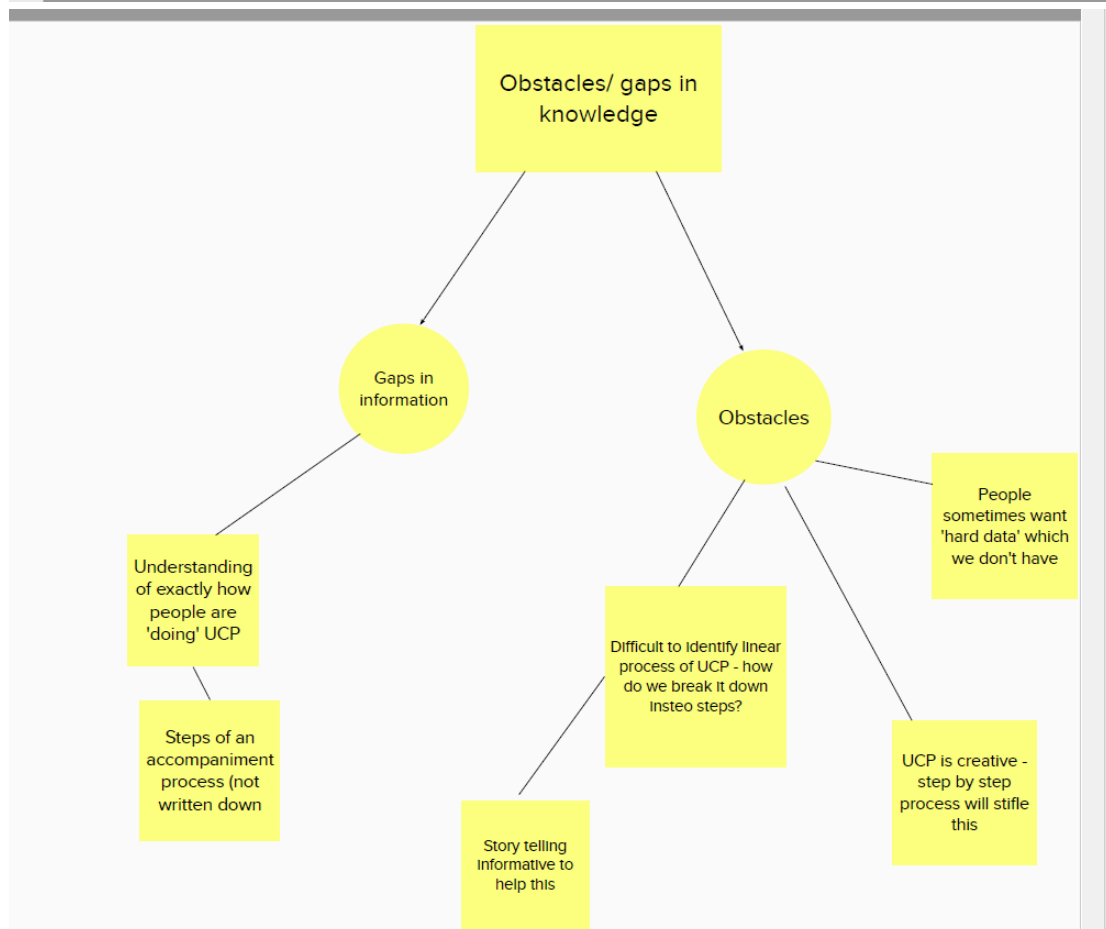
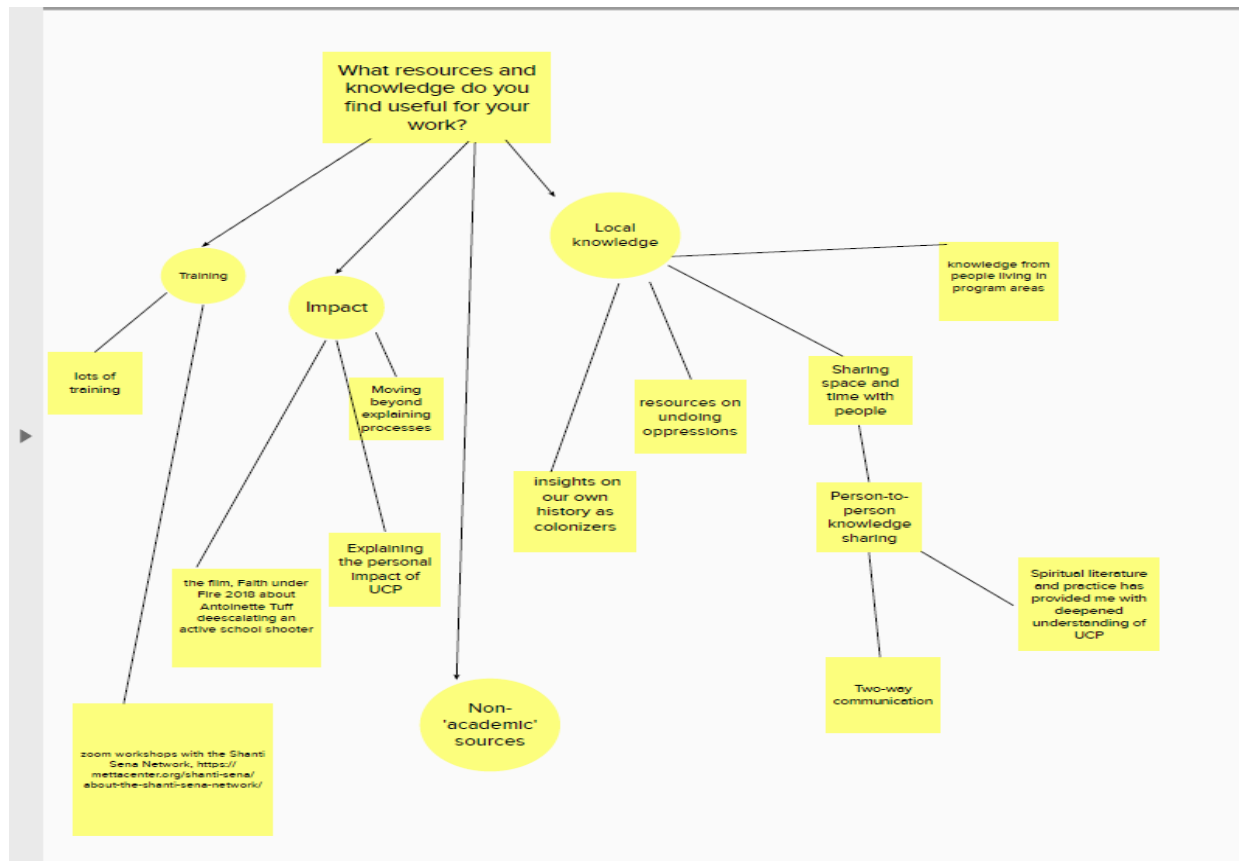
Discussion at the Workshops and Summary

The workshops did not have presentations like most of the others. Instead, participants were invited to work in groups on a “mural” – an electronic white board. The participants were asked to discuss three questions:

1. What resources and knowledge do you find useful for your work – maybe when you started, in a training, but also currently now? What does your organization create and what does it share with others if anything?
2. Of those resources you find useful, which are produced by your organization, and which come from elsewhere – and what organizations, news sources, etc. are these?
3. What types of knowledge, skills, sharing, resources do you want more of and what are obstacles to learning, sharing, creating?

Initially the group took time to post notes about ideas to answer the three questions on the internet based white board. Then, various individuals in the group summarized important ideas which were posted. The summary simply consisted of reading through the postings.

30 Topline Notes from group 1 and 2, Murals of group 1 and 2, Notes by Christine Schweitzer



These are the murals from group 1.

The mural consists of the following elements:

- Yellow sticky notes:**
 - Case studies of UCP in action
 - Back in the day I learned much from reading Gandhi, Freire and Lederach in how to do UCP
 - A good resource for Gandhian Nonviolence (in mostly English, but some other languages as well) is www.mefiacentre.org
 - from local organizers and people working in my community
 - I learned a lot from people on the ground both co-workers and communities
 - from my colleagues working in other locations
 - Proactive presence by Mahony was an important guide when I started with PBI
 - academic articles about peacebuilding models that I used to strengthen or innovate UCP work
 - One challenge in sharing knowledge is language & cultural barriers
 - Nonviolent Peaceforce has a great deal of resources on its website. Worth checking out if you haven't already.
 - "A Force More Powerful" film series was also quite helpful
 - (Question 1) Everything written by Robyn Ayers - grounded and expansive
 - (Question 1) Books: An Ordinary Man by Rusesabagina, Undrowned by Gumbs, Emergent Strategy by Brown
 - (Question 1) Resources - the huge bibliography created by the Safe Spaces project - <https://creating-safe-spaces.com/ucp-research-database/>
 - (Question 1) Case studies, Evaluations that also Name what goes wrong, Training handbooks, Reports of conferences, manuscripts of internal Meetings
- Green sticky note:**
 - Academics can help in taking a step back and asking more fundamental questions; BUT we could get better in sharing between academic knowledge and practitioner knowledge
- Orange sticky notes:**
 - (Question 3) We need better agreed on definitions. I was worried by the approach of a very broad definition from last workshop.
 - (Question 3) How can academics provide resources for data collection from the field?
 - (Question 3) The many newsletters from CPT, PBI, NP - these are the three I receive. This helps me have a sense of the ongoing work.
 - (Question 3) Older training manuals from nonviolent interventions, nonviolent resistance, etc. There is a huge wisdom accumulated in older training materials.
 - (Question 3) One silver lining of the pandemic has been the proliferation of zoom presentations of the work from PBI, CPT and NP. There are probably others I don't know.
 - (Question 3) What my organization, Federation of Social Defence, Shares: Conference Reports on what we call civilian peacekeeping, articles, workshops
 - (Question 3) Obstacle: organizational gatekeeping of information.
 - (Question 3) I wish we could develop across many organizations some agreed on evaluation methodology so that results could be shared and compared more effectively.
 - (Question 3) more of: teachers accepting theses on the Topic
 - (Question 3) Obstacle: standardization of academic language being inaccessible to non-academics & vulnerable populations
 - (Question 3) Particular questions for me have to do with understanding it is all relationships. What kind of relationships, how they are 'used' etc.
 - (Question 3) Obstacle: overwriting historical learnings and knowledge because of the limitations of nonpartnership & advocacy requirements.
 - (Question 3) More of: Evaluations being open About what is not going well, academic books to create a field of Research at academia
 - (Question 3) Oral tradition and history from Indigenous communities
- Blue sticky note:**
 - A challenge may be that there is never enough time to read up on recent lessons and research
- Light blue sticky note:**
 - There are lots of case studies, but we need more comparative, overarching, and theoretical research
- Gray digital cards:**
 - Nonviolence News - The world is changing.**
Editor's Note From Rivers Sun The COP26 protests are loud, colorful, and over-the-top, but they're not as ridiculous as political leaders continuing to bury their heads in the sand over climate change. This week, as the COP26 climate summit gathers world leaders and thousands of global climate ...
Wagingnonviolence
 - Homepage | ICNC**
What factors drive people to choose nonviolent civil resistance to achieve human rights, peace, and justice? This Special Report offers ground-breaking knowledge about the link of colonialism, the Cold War, and the War on Terror with Talibanization, oppression, and human rights violations in the ...
Nonviolent-conflict
- Placeholder images:**
 - Picture not available
 - Picture not available
 - Picture not available
 - Picture not available

Mural Group 2

Additional obstacles mentioned:

- Less materials in other languages than English. Not know about them or able to read them (for example in Japanese)
- Communication in multiple languages in general
- Access for internationals from the Global South to trainings given in the North (visa, Covid-19).

In the general discussion, the following points were raised:

- Is there a difference between information and knowledge?
- Is implicit knowledge important as well as explicit knowledge?
- Recording and sharing regular zoom sessions and presentations
- There are obstacles both to generating knowledge and to sharing knowledge already generated. Should there be a central repository for information? (Berit noted there is a resource for this now in existence) (development of keywords is critical to create a usable searchable data base; need to be accessible for non-English speakers as well). There was considerable discussion on this topic.
- Need to save electronic information more permanently
- Make trainings more accessible (less academic)
- New knowledge needs to be integrated into field training.
- Certain kinds of knowledge have to be embodied to be learned.
- Not only get consent but active participation of those directly involved in situation being studied.
- Need consent from communities to share information.
- Focus knowledge on the needs of practitioners, not the interests of academics (evidence-based practice).
- Need a smoother knowledge transfer.
- Need to make information accessible and usable by people working in the field. This may involve a more narrative focus.

A number of ideas have been exchanged on how to improve the creation and sharing of knowledge. There are plenty of resources. Listed were people (especially local knowledge), storytelling, trainings, books, electronic resources, videos. Challenges are that sometimes there may be too much information and people get overwhelmed, the saving of information to access later, language issues and a too academic language/approach. To convince politicians and donors, figures and “hard proof” are sometimes missing, and academics also miss comparative studies on UCP/A.

Background Materials / Further Readings Mentioned in the Workshop and on Loomio

Different Materials shared at the workshops

- NP Training Manual
- NP Videos (from practitioners in the field)
- World Cafés run by NP

(All three to be found under www.nonviolentpeaceforce.org)

Books:

- Unarmed bodyguards by Liam Mahoney and Quique Eguren
- Captivity: 118 Days in Iraq and the Struggle for a World Without War by James (Iraq) –
- I'm not leaving, by Carl Wilkins (Rwanda)

Different types of training

1. Training for practitioners who will do UCP-A as their main work (paid or volunteer, internationals, and locals) for a specific period of time. This includes training for the different job descriptions on the UCP-A team/organization. Training for a new role of remote coach, a Covid adaptation, to coach people who took virtual UCP training that they will use as volunteers in various contexts. Training for people replacing police as school protection officers. Training for international or state actors who do civilian protection/accompaniment as part of their work, such as African Union or UN Peacekeepers and police.
2. Training for locals who will volunteer to do parts of UCP-A for specific events or intermittently over longer times, initially alongside UCP-A practitioners (1 above) who are doing this as full-time work. Examples: local volunteers receiving capacity-building training as part of a UCP-A project, Women's Peace Teams in S. Sudan, volunteers in Early Warning Early Response networks, election monitors, others supporting the peace infrastructure, students in the Sahel in Africa who studied UCP virtually and will be coached virtually by NP staff to implement UCP-A projects that they develop as volunteers.
3. Training for what we've called domestic peace teams of volunteers who will volunteer to do parts of UCP-A for specific events such as protests, elections, or intermittently over longer periods of time (a lifetime for some of us) as individuals, as affinity teams, and/or as part of a larger organization. Hopefully, this community self-protection will expand alternatives to policing. The Shanti Sena Network <https://mettacenter.org/shanti-sena/about-the-shanti-sena-network/> shares resources.

UCP Research Database

From Berit Bliesemann de Guevara - I am a professor at Aberystwyth University. Together with other academics and practitioners in different countries around the world, we have a research network on UCP/Accompaniment called "Creating Safer Space", which aims to support research and impact activities that will strengthen nonviolent civilian-to-civilian protection. Our website with more information can be found here: <https://creating-safer-space.com>

Among many other things, we have set up a UCP Research Database, to collect research literature and NGO reports about UCP/Accompaniment. You can create an account to access the database here: <https://ucpresearch.uk/resourcespace/> - this is also the login page. We hope this will be useful to organization's learning.

Within the Database, it is also possible to upload documents, and it would be great if we could jointly grow this online space into the go-to space for research / reports on UCP/Accompaniment.

To find out more about how to use the UCP database, have a look at these instructional videos: https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLDRfIX2tBwmK_9XK2xFCVyycur9-mlrcu

UCP Competencies

https://www.nonviolentpeaceforce.org/component/pages_np/freeform/2020-12-14-16-43-36 .

Materials mostly in German on "Civilian Peacekeeping": www.soziale-verteidigung.de .

Developing UCP & Accompaniment as a Community of Practice

20.11., 9 UTC and 19 UTC³¹

Watch these videos:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ENfNfkOpGUU&list=PLIKzOAg8KAlh9k4v4t1nLukDSIRskA7Lv&index=23>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RU9uwFbZmzA&list=PLIKzOAg8KAlh9k4v4t1nLukDSIRskA7Lv&index=25>

Explore how a UCP & Accompaniment/Peace Team Community of Practice could benefit our organizations as well as communities in the midst of violence. Examine how it might detract from our work.

Speakers were:

Ansoumane Samassy Souare, West Africa Network for Peacebuilding

Fadi Abdi Allam, Permanent Peace Movement Lebanon (0900-10.30 UTC only)

Melanie Greenburg, Humanity United (19:00-20:30UTC only)

Facilitation:

Fatuma Ibrahim and Mel Duncan

The sessions both began with an introduction by Mel Duncan. He asked: Is it helpful to create a Community of Practice and who is interested in developing a group? Who is interested in developing a face-to-face meeting in June at Geneva?

In the present form UCP is not keeping pace with the need. This year 80 million people have had to flee their homes because of violence. All UCP in the world is way short of that need. We need to push ourselves to meet this need.

The statement coming out of COP26 is that we can expect continued and increasing climate disruption which will drive more violence. We need to look toward what role we can play in helping people protect themselves and protect others

This was followed by a short video on UCP created by Nonviolent Peaceforce for presentation at the UN in 2018:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OJNKBLF32SA&t=2s>

Fadi Abdi Allam, PPM

There is impact from the work of preventing violence all over the world; there are many people risking their lives to offer peace throughout the world. The PPM organization was founded during the Lebanese war, working with a team of students. Their aim was to stop the war in the country. They cooperated with several organizations to share their points of view and objectives, and found that all work with the same purpose, to achieve peace. Peace can be effective as long as it is permanent. They work to stop child soldiers and against the impact war has on childhood.

In a local network they are trying to influence armed groups. In addition, there is an extended nonviolence network through several countries of the region.

Nonviolence and peace need to be promoted globally. It is the responsibility of everyone, the UN cannot do it alone. The European office of GPPAC³² had several positive actions in that sense.

31 Sources: Notes from the 9 UTC session, Notes from the 19 UTC session, polling results, Notes by Christine Schweitzer, Powerpoint on Community of practice, Powerpoint Presentation by Ansoumane Samassy Souare
32 <https://www.gppac.net/>

They also worked with the Arab League to draft a statement that women and children should not be involved in war.

5% of the armed conflicts are in the Middle East, 57% of refugees, 18 armed conflicts, 45% of all terrorist attacks, 68% of people killed in armed conflict.

Their big dream is to work for nonviolence and peace regionally, but they cannot do it alone. It is like a great building, he said, if one stone is missing the whole building is unstable.

Ansoumane Samassy Souare, WANEP

He showed a presentation on the work of WANEP. WANEP was founded after the civil wars in West Africa. WANEP was established in 1998 and this establishment was necessitated by the visible absence of a professional and specialized regional network of CSOs with the expertise and competence to work in conflict resolution and peacebuilding across West Africa. WANEP has succeeded in establishing its networks in 14 countries in West Africa with a focal point in Cape Verde. Over 600 civil society organizations across West Africa are members of WANEP.

In 2004, WANEP signed a historic partnership agreement with the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) for the implementation of the ECOWAS Early Warning and Response Network (ECOWARN). In 2016, WANEP signed an MoU with the AU to support the Continental Early Warning System (CEWS). Through these partnerships, WANEP has Liaison Offices in both institutions (ECOWAS and AU).

Violence is rampant in many countries of West Africa. In the 2nd and 3rd quarters of 2021, more than 1,400 people were killed in each quarter in terrorist attacks. In addition, there are protests against governments which are often met by police violence with casualties and injured people.

The Early Warning and Response Network (WARN) is one of the main projects of WANEP. Its flagship, The National Early Warning System, is an integral part of their work and is established across all WANEP networks in West Africa. It strengthens the WARN program by reaching remote communities that are at risk of both man-made and natural catastrophes including violent conflict, and enhances human security and socio-economic development. There are 500 community monitors across West Africa who are providing real time early warning data on conflicts and human rights violations in their communities.

Other programs of WANEP are:

- Peace education (of various types, including peer mediation)
- Prevention of violent extremism (indicators developed and monitored)
- Election Violence Monitoring, Analysis and Mitigation Program

The challenges they encounter are the evolving and complex nature of conflicts in the region, poor documentation of UCP initiatives undertaken at the community level in the region, lack of financial resources, lack of political will and of a holistic approach to adopt peace education, gaps in coordination and collaboration and of proper interest in peace education by all the stakeholders.

But there are also opportunities: Implementation of normative frameworks on good governance, human rights and inclusive processes, growing citizens' awareness (including women and youth groups), National Peace Infrastructure, National Reconciliation Commission. There are local and traditional leaders who can be approached, interfaith dialogues, electoral management bodies, and of course CSOs and media organizations.

He finished his presentation with several recommendations

- Strengthen local peace infrastructure in communities where we operate
- Empower community members and other relevant actors in data collection and information sharing

- Ensure continual funding for Early Warning and Peace Education initiatives to strengthen UCP initiatives
- Ensure that the youth and gender dimensions of peacebuilding initiatives are well addressed across the region
- Strengthen collaboration and synergy among UCP actors.

Melanie Greenburg, Humanity United

She was asked to draw parallels between UCP and Alliance for Peacebuilding³³ and the state of the field of UCP. She started out by describing the history of the Alliance for Peacebuilding. It was founded 20 years ago, when five or six leaders in the field of conflict resolution from the U.S. (the term Peacebuilding did not yet exist) recognized there was a need to bring together a range of practices in response to a post-cold war world, with the Rwanda genocide, the wars in former Yugoslavia, new forms of civil wars and civil violence. They felt that the needs were not being addressed. She identified four issues:

1. What is in a name?

The original name was “Applied Conflict Resolution Organization Network” and later changed to “Alliance for Peacebuilding”. It grew from a small number of 10-12 organizations who at the beginning simply formed a network with an annual retreat (not conference), comparing best practices and providing moral support, to today’s Alliance with about 150 organizations. One development that she thought is a weakness was that there is a conceptual separation between working internationally (as the members of the Alliance do) and working in the U.S. although the U.S. is as much a conflict setting as other places in the world.

2. Who are we, who is under our umbrella?

The network tried to reach beyond the core of the about 30 member organizations they included by sending out a questionnaire on values and activities to organizations they thought had something to do with peacebuilding. Many replied positively, so they increased to 50-60 organizations. Now there are +120 member organizations. They mapped the field.

The discussion around the developments in the field of humanitarian assistance gave them a wider approach around the topic of conflict sensitivity of aid projects.

One challenge they met when growing larger: How do you ensure that peacebuilding values are spread? What do you do if organizations join who do not share them?

3. How do we define success?

There was a strong demand for a matrix to measure success. This became one of the most contentious issues in the field because of the question of who defines values and success – people on the ground or centrally by the peacebuilding organization and the donors.

4. Challenges of diversification in the field:

One of the big issues for peacebuilding is that it is very professionalized and very *White*. In the light of the discussion on decolonization: How to ensure that the peacebuilding field is not something that white professionals impose, through their values and methodologies, on local contexts?

And secondly, how do we bring into the field of peacebuilding the dynamics of social justice movements?

33 <https://www.allianceforpeacebuilding.org/>

Discussion at the Workshops and Summary

After the two presentations and a short exchange in the whole group, break-out groups continued the discussion.

Fadi Abdi Allam had compared peacebuilding to a house that needs to be built. One proposal was to better think of peace as a quilt or patchwork than of a house.

In the small groups, various ideas for a community of practice were collected. They were given four questions for consideration:

- How can a community of practice benefit the world at large and especially the communities that are in the midst of violence?
- How would our work benefit from having a community of practice?
- What opportunities do we have to collaborate cross organizationally?
- What are the obstacles to creating a community of practice?

The suggestions and ideas on the first three questions are listed here as results of both groups together.

Benefits:

- Sharing about successful experiences from UCP helps to create discussion and learning. Lessons can be learned from different experiences - both positive and what was difficult, what did not work so well. This could help people starting from a surer ground.
- If we had a community of practice, it would be easier for more people to see the growth and effectiveness of UCP.
- We are bigger than the sum of our parts.
 - Doing UCP we are used to working behind the scenes. We are well positioned to coordinate peace efforts.
 - Through a community of practice, we can legitimize people who are doing the work and help people who want to replicate the work.
 - Community of practice would be one more thing for people to concentrate on, but it could provide support to the people on the ground.
- Avoid duplication.
 - The stories are not being documented. We could be clearer that we are creating an alternative to the militarism with what we are doing. We are applying solutions that come out of our cultures.
 - UCP enhances local groups; it also builds capacity. Responsibility of maintaining peace is the responsibility of everyone.
 - Regional approaches such as the example of WANEP are good examples.
 - Raising the visibility of this kind of work as an alternative to force and military.
 - Community of practice can help legitimize and bring in more people. We are often inspired by our partners. We need to facilitate having more people being involved.
 - Document the stories of many organizations whose work is not documented is important.
 - Working with local organization is important; it also enhances participation of all organizations.

- Early Warning systems is a global task

Obstacles and concerns were:

- Limited capacity exists to add another layer of work. Building a community takes another effort.
- Danger of collaboration without solidarity.
- If collaboration is not about transformation, it becomes assimilation.
- Collaboration could reinforce existing power imbalances.
- Lack of shared terms, e.g., who decides what peace is?
- Burn out and trauma.

Back in the plenary, Mel Duncan showed two slides that he had prepared on advantages and concerns about a community of practice.

Advantages of a Community of Practice

Improved sustainability with reduced burn out because there is . .

<p>More learning from each other</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Perspectives from communities doing self protection • Good practices from other organizations 	<p>More sharing of resources</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training curriculums • HR policies • Monitoring and evaluation tools • And more!
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More awareness of UCP&A

- Increasing the awareness of the broad array of UCP&A methods through collective advocacy
- Recognition of the growing number of organizations using UCP&A strategies
- Growing awareness in donor community
- Increasing trust and credibility for UCP&A methods

It all adds up to more protection for more communities

Concerns were listed on a 2nd slide;

- How will we determine what the community should look like as it moves forward?
- Will creativity be stifled because some part of the group isn't open to some ideas or methods?
- In our attempt to define a community, will we mistakenly limit who belongs within the community?
- If we try to standardize definitions, language and content across communities, will we lose the context and nuance of different community needs?
- Can we maintain confidentiality?
- How can we determine who will benefit from the collaboration of the community?
- Will larger organizations dominate the activities and perspective of the community?
- How can we limit the impact of colonization and the domination of English when we bring together organizations from both the Global North and Global South?

The workshops ended with opinion polls. Everyone said yes in answer to the question 'Is it worth it to build a community of practice?' The second question listed different possibilities of how to do so.

Building a Community of Practice - PollQuestion #2				
Benefits of CofP to the Communities We Serve	03:00 Session	19:00 Session	Total	% of Total
Scaling up existing organizations capacity to provide protection.	3	8	11	55%
Advocating for the UN or other multi-lateral organization to provide UCP/Accompaniment/Peace Teams.	2	3	5	25%
Supporting other grassroots groups to provide UCP/Accompaniment/Peace Teams.	6	10	16	80%
Advocating for additional money for the UCPUCP/Accompaniment/Peace teams.	3	5	8	40%
Sharing our good practices among ourselves.	4	7	11	55%
Increasing our ability to monitor, evaluate and document the effectiveness of our work.	5	7	12	60%
Creating an effective alternative to militarized protection of civilians.	4	11	15	75%
Promoting a culture of peace and nonviolence	3	1	4	20%
Total folks voting	6	14	20	

Discussion in the Loomio Thread

Six people provided their names, email address, and geographical location to volunteer to participate in a working group preparing recommendations for building our Community of Practice to be shared at the In-Person Gathering in Geneva. (This is being followed up by Nonviolent Peaceforce).

In one thread, there was a PDF of a PowerPoint on global challenges – number of refugees (see UNHCR), climate change magnifying other conflict risks (approximately 25 million people across 140 countries were displaced in 2019 due to weather-related events. By 2050, 200 million people will be in need of humanitarian assistance annually due to the effects of climate change without dramatic action), and the impact of the pandemic on refugees and resettlement.

One participant from Sudan argued in favor of a UCP mission in Sudan. NP responded by saying that they are planning to set one up.

Sunday, 21 November 2021

Closing Session: Where Do We Go from Here?

21.11., 15 UTC³⁴

Watch this video:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KVGyYK3swUA&list=PLIKzOAg8KAlh9k4v4t1nLukDSIRskA7Lv&index=27>

Let's reflect on what we have learned together so far together and decide what we need to learn more about. Then let's map some steps forward and identify topics to explore at the face-to-face gathering.

Facilitation:

Adele Lennig and Mel Duncan

Discussion at the Workshop and in the Chat³⁵

The workshop started with several speakers invited to share inspiring reflections.

Alvaro Ramirez-Durini, Ecuador

This is a dream come true. We have been working promoting UCP. Our workshop today addresses the question "Where are we going? How are we moving forward for peace? Today is a step forward for justice and human rights. After all the workshops we can understand that we cannot sit down and wait for peace to come, for peace to flourish. Peace is much more than just a word. The real name of peace is dignity between citizens. Trust between citizens. If there is poverty, no employment, no real education, unequal healthcare, there is no peace. Peace is a world of respect, generosity, and opportunity for all. It is clean water, dignified work, and beautiful cities that resemble nature. What breaks peace is selfishness and power.

Beatriz Elena Arias Lopez, Universidad de Antioquia, Colombia

We are all talking about peace from a personal place. I am talking from the place as a Latin American woman in Colombia that has so many problems. I come from the world of health care and the world of nursing. Many of the things I take from this event come from myself and where I come from. I have just learned about this idea of UCP in the last two years. Protection is not just protection of physical bodies. Weapons are not only the rifle and the gun. There are multiple weapons of oppression. So, we need to reinvent multiple ways of thinking. We should focus on decolonization of UCP, self-protection by communities unaided by others, and understanding the root causes of global injustice. We from the Global South bring our own perspective which could widen the scope of UCP. There are gaps that can separate us, but we can find ways to come together. There are a lot of threads that we can weave.

Sam Taitel, NP USA

Contextualization is so important. I am speaking from Turtle Island on Dakota, Lakota, Ashinabe ancestral lands. We are trying to communicate, but our definitions and terminology are not always understood across communities. We need an accountable process. We need to uplift indigenous wisdom. We can codify it, share it out to others. We need to work in solidarity with consent. We

34 Notes from the session, Topline Notes (summary), Transcription of the session, Notes by Christine Schweitzer

35 These notes are mostly copied from the full notes of the session taken by Madelyn Mackay.

must be transformative – not just patching a broken system. Our transformation should be based in community and relationships. This has been a really amazing first step in actually being in relationship. We have come together and should continue to be self-critiquing and building systems and institutions that allow self-critiquing. We need to hear every story and codify the ways we can help.

(A fourth speaker, Parfaite Ntahuba, was not able to connect.)

Then the group co-created a list of collaborative opportunities and prioritized them using a poll.

Responses from 21 participants at Where Do We Go From Here? Session on 11/21/2021		
Opportunity for Collaboration	Responses	Percentage
Jointly work on decolonization, cross-cultural trainings, etc.	17	81%
Share good practices on listening to local voices	14	67%
Collaborate on changing a violent culture / educating the public	12	57%
Share materials (training, policies, etc.)	9	43%
Create opportunities for joint advocacy to governments and donors	9	43%
Create a mechanism for wider consultation/more voices	9	43%
Seeking collaboration with other missions and causes to work on complex problems	9	43%
Organize exposure visits to each other's field sites	8	38%
Build a centralized data repository for existing and new organizations	7	33%
Develop a process for joint strategy development in a region or country	7	33%
Sponsor more Gatherings to learn from each other	7	33%
Encourage academic research on UCP	6	29%
Share good practices for measurement and evaluation grounded in work	5	24%
Develop/share human resources materials (recruiting, onboarding, surveys, etc.)	5	24%
Set up a mechanism to avoid competition	1	5%

Some additional comments during the process (from both in person and chat)

- Should there be a working group on decolonization, charged with making case studies and provocative encouragement as to how to do this better?
- It might make sense to seek collaboration with other missions and causes that are also rooted in breaking down systems of oppression (colonialism, racism, misogyny) to actively be mutually reinforcing on working on complex problems.
- We could form a group that would do a risk analysis regarding possible conflicts in each region.
- We should push back a bit about the phrase “educate the public” because I feel that’s adding more barriers rather than uplifting the practices that already exist in community. I would like to practice collaboration and learning together rather than a prescriptive, missionary style of teaching. Another participant added: the concept of “collaborative learning” instead of “educating” is useful.
- We need to address source rather than symptom. Conflict is a symptom of an unmet need, & violence is a way to meet said need.

How to approach the highest priority opportunity

The group identified jointly work on decolonization by offering cross-cultural trainings etc. as being the opportunity with the highest priority.

- With emphasis on primacy of local actors, look at the causes of oppression and poverty. What is UCP doing to address the causes?

- Those who represent the dominant cultures need to do work on ourselves. How are we expressing the various forms of oppression? This requires a lot of individual work.
- Individual work is needed to create a decolonial lens on all aspects of your life and workplace. We should work to understand what decolonization means in the context of non-profits and INGOs. How do grant requirements and donor requirements drive us toward colonization?
- There are three realms to think about colonizing. 1) Personal internal work 2) Within organization – structures, policy, who gets hired, how language gets used 3) How colonization expresses itself in our work in the communities. Concretely – we could share training materials and policies and create accountability buddies
- Decolonization is needed in terms of structure, training, academic research. Whenever we say decolonization, we mean MIDDLE PATH or searching for harmony in work, vision and process as an organization

Input into planning in-person-meeting in Geneva

- We want some practical steps as the outcome of the in-person meeting (e.g., working groups across organizations etc.)
- Make time for story telling.
- Demonstrate to policy makers about the scope and scale of this community.
- I really like the power of face-to-face communication, but it again means that the poor will owe their presence to the largesse of the rich. It is really hard to get away from that taint.
- Use the in-person time to build relationships and connections by planning more informal and less structured time. Develop some shared definitions that allow us to communicate across organizations effectively.
- Engage in some creative ways of reflecting - for example through textile narratives (or other activities).
- Develop some shared goals for the next five years of collaboration and the practical steps to begin that work. Pick just a few, not as many sticky notes as we have.
- Develop an advocacy program to address this culture of violence.

The workshop closed with a final reflection from Tiffany

Bearing witness for one another is in no way new – has been going on for all of time. This is a reflection on our moment in our time. Why come together now? We are working to find ways like violence prevention, immediate protection, and interrupting cycles of violence. How can we reduce the noise without adding violence to the situation? We have had to learn to speak the language of those that perpetuate the violence. We need to demonstrate the scope and scale of the part of our communities that are unwilling to participate in violence. Language shows our growth for example from “Best Practice” to “Good Practice” to “Common Practice” to “Community of Practice.” This group is inspiring and motivating as we navigate the barriers of time zones and language and cultural backgrounds. We are not just building a tool to address oppression and violence in the moment and in the day; we are really working to transform the world away from violence and colonization.

Concluding Observations on the Conference

By Mel Duncan, Ellen Furnari, Adele Lennig and Christine Schweitzer

In Need of a Paradigm Shift

Global, national and local threats to security and safety of everyone: the catastrophic consequences of the man-made climate change, the continued threat of a nuclear World War, ever new hotspots of violent conflict in almost all parts of the world, racism, diminishing respect for global norms, and the growing authoritarianism restricting civil society; require an urgent multidimensional paradigm shift. Spreading and increasing Unarmed Civilian Protection is an important element of such a shift because it is an approach based on effective nonviolent methods to make people safer and to open space for civil society to continue its struggles.

An Emerging Community of Practice

UCP/A takes many different forms, depending on the practitioners and their location, objectives, and their analysis of the situation and its context. Still, it is possible to speak of a fledgling Community of Practice because there is a common sense among practitioners that they are part of a constructive alternative to the violence and oppression of today. And UCP/A practitioners recognize that they have many things in common. Nonviolence, solidarity, seeking to overcome the colonial heritage and the recognition that everyone has the power and agency to contribute to nonviolence and protection were identified as core elements unifying the UCP Community of Practice. All UCP/A groups recognize the centrality of relationship building and engagement with local actors.

UCP/A is highly contextualized with methods and combinations of methods being adjusted to fit the changing dynamics of a conflict. It is not a “one size fits all.” UCP/A practitioners apply a systems approach engaging many stakeholders. It is much more of a process than a prescription.

UCP/A is connected to many other fields of active nonviolence, from nonviolent resistance to peacebuilding, conflict resolution and mediation (peacemaking) and developing constructive nonviolent alternatives in daily life. Still, it is not identical with any of them, because it is defined by direct protection of unarmed civilians as the/a central focus, whether for self-protection or by other civilians. Central tactics are presence, accompaniment and the development of certain tools (like early warning-early action systems).

Many organizations in the peacebuilding field have discovered the need to include the protection of civilians in their toolbox, as has the UN and some of its organizations. This is important and has to be encouraged. But at the same time there is also a need, in the eyes of many practitioners of UCP/A, for organizations to specialize in UCP/A. In order to be done ‘fully’ it requires separation from other agendas such as UN mission mandates, aid distribution, or specific agendas for what peace and peace building should consist of. Additionally, UCP/A requires too many human resources to be done well “on the side” besides multiple other tasks, and while conflict sensitivity is essential for all work *in* conflicts, it alone may at best prevent new conflicts or the escalation of already existing ones. Active protection requires active work.

Next Steps

It is hoped that the lengthy ‘good practices’ project – the six regional workshops, this online gathering, and an in-person meeting in the near future – will contribute to strengthening the work of all those doing UCP/A. Already some new connections have been made and materials shared. Hopefully over time these informal connections will continue to produce benefits.

There is also an emerging vision of what the many different organizations and individuals doing this work, might benefit from, by conferring, connecting, and cooperating together on specific topics and projects. For example, two working groups are being explored as a result of a poll conducted after

the conference of all registrants: 1) strategies for incorporating decolonization principles into the organization's culture and 2) gathering good practices for engaging local communities and listening to local voices.

Of course, there are obstacles including the shortage of staff/volunteers for the work in communities let alone for building the community, power imbalances, colonial practices, the challenges of raising funds for all aspects of this work, and the need to transform some of the fundamental assumptions about violence prevention and 'what works'. Nonetheless it is hoped that people and organizations that have found ways to work collaboratively in communities to prevent, decrease, and stop violence, can also find ways to collaborate internationally to build our work, to both protect more and more people while simultaneously transforming the understanding of and response to violence.

Appendices:

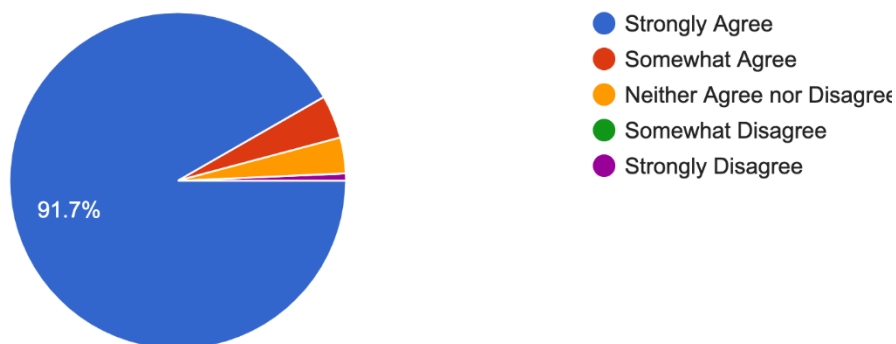
Organizational Survey

The following charts are based on 155 responses to the Organizational Survey included in the registration process of the UCP & Accompaniment Virtual Gathering held in November 2021.

Respondents were asked to describe the values and activities of the organization with which they are primarily affiliated. Not all respondents answered all questions. The Survey was evaluated, and the charts created by Adele Lennig (NP).

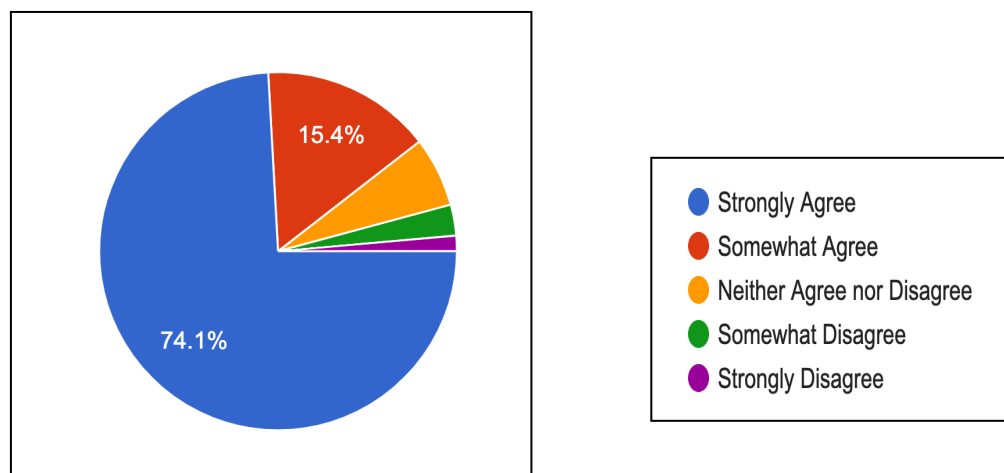
The principle of nonviolence is central to the work of our organization

145 responses



Our organization always strives to actively express solidarity with those oppressed by violence.

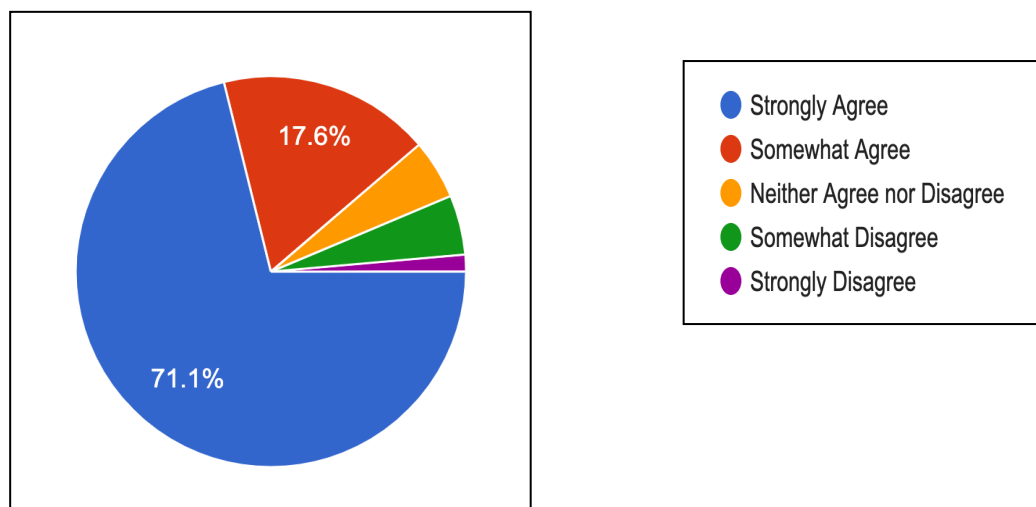
143 responses



Together almost 90% of the respondents agreed to this sentence fully or "somewhat".

Our organization strictly adheres to the principle of nonpartisanship.

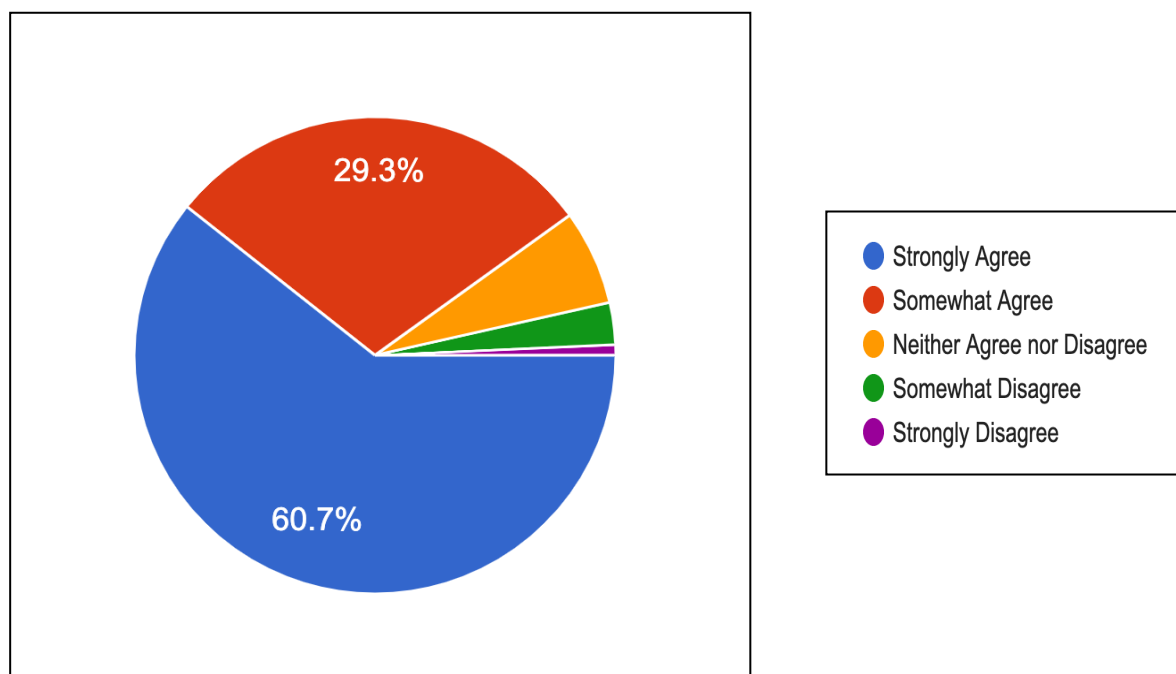
142 responses



Together around 89% agreed totally or “somewhat” to this principle; the number of people disagreeing is slightly higher than in the question of nonviolence.

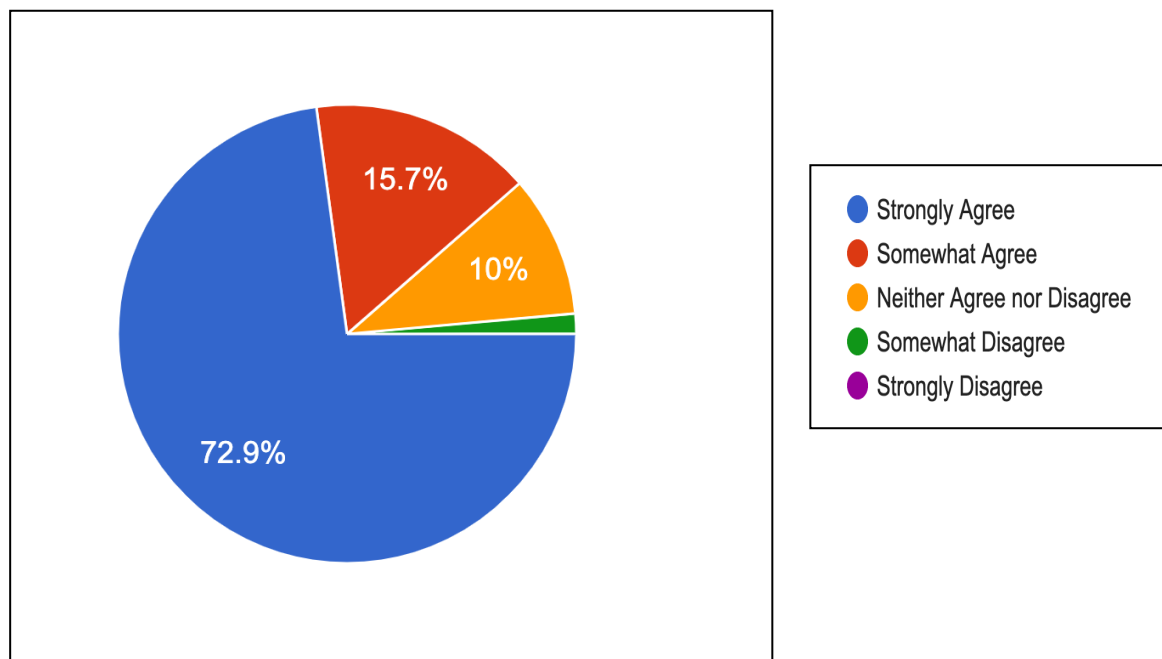
In our organization, local actors determine the strategic direction and tactics chosen for the programs that impact them.

140 responses



The total agreement here is more than 60% but compared to the first two questions, remarkably lower, though almost nobody strongly disagreed.

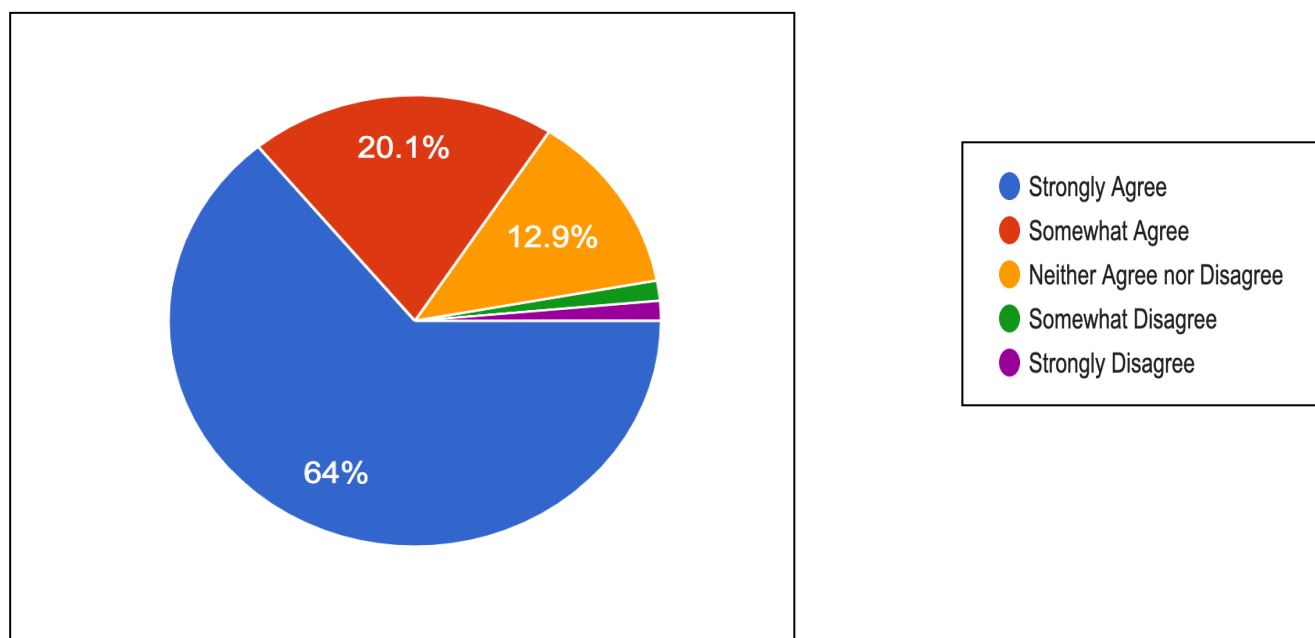
Being independent is a prerequisite for our organization to protect civilians without using arms.
140 responses.



Independence is rated very similar to nonpartisanship.

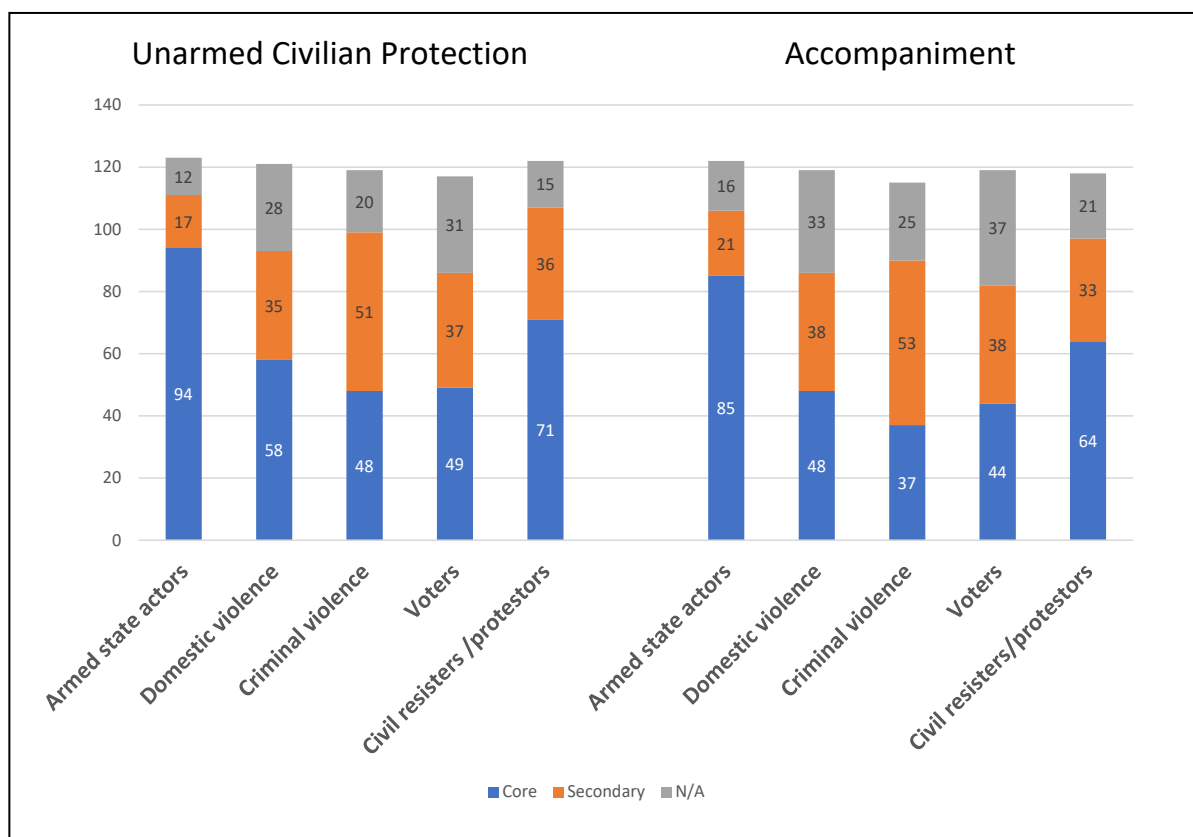
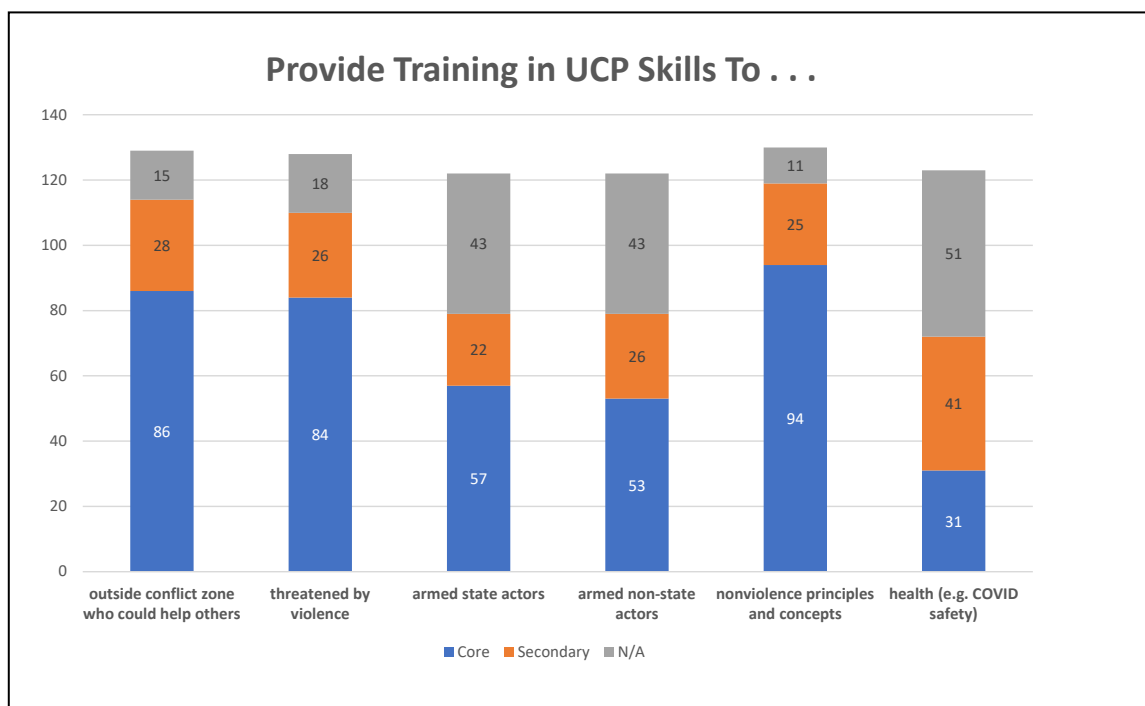
The term "Unarmed Civilian Protection" is a good description of the work that our organization does.

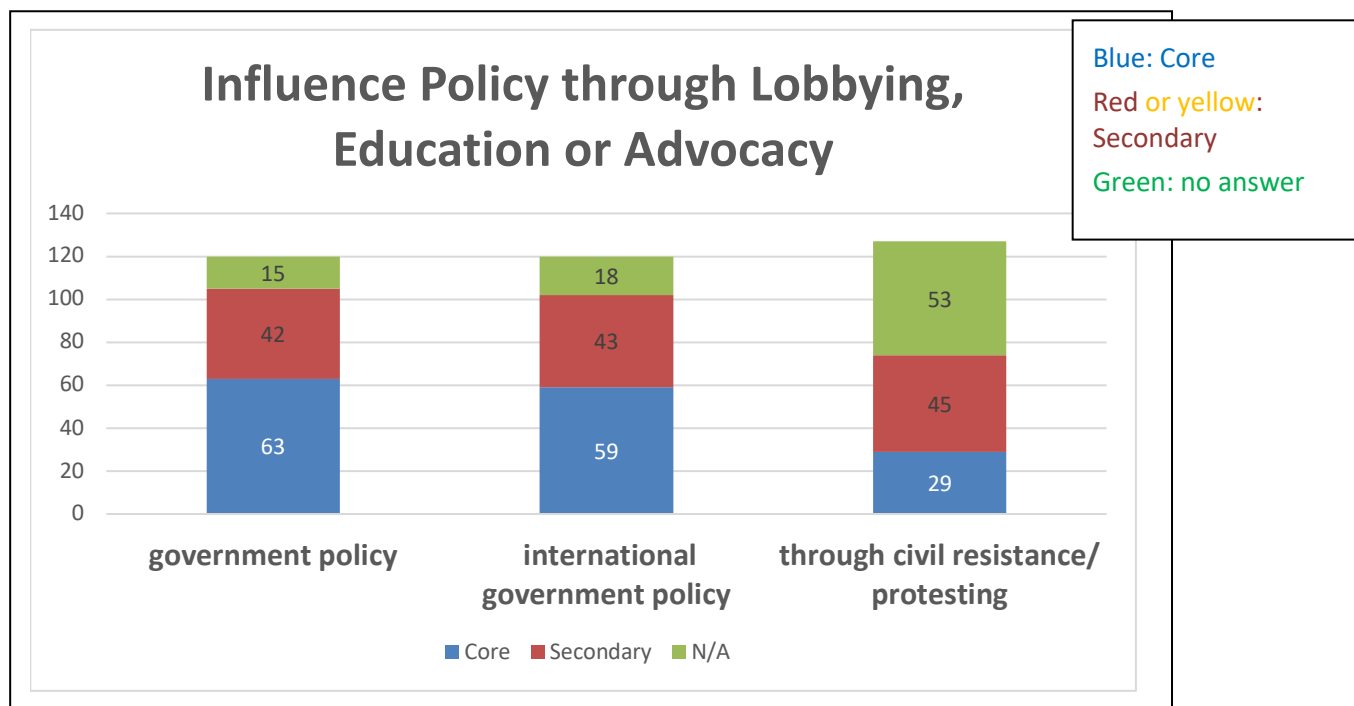
139 responses.



UCP seems to be an acceptable term for almost 85% of the respondents though there are some who have reservations.

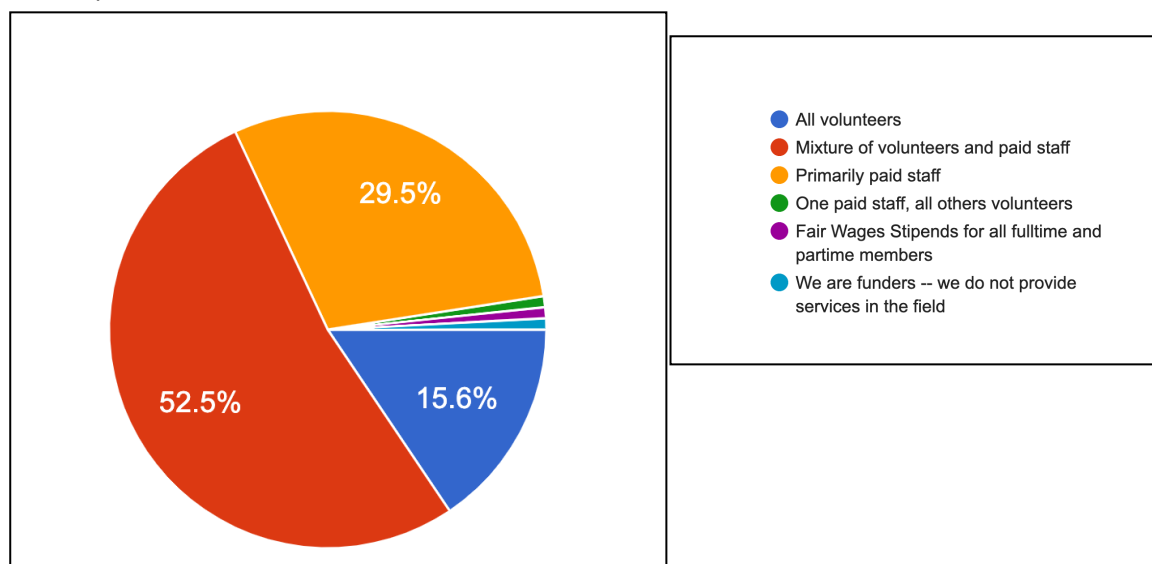
Identify which activities should be included in a definition of the work of your organization



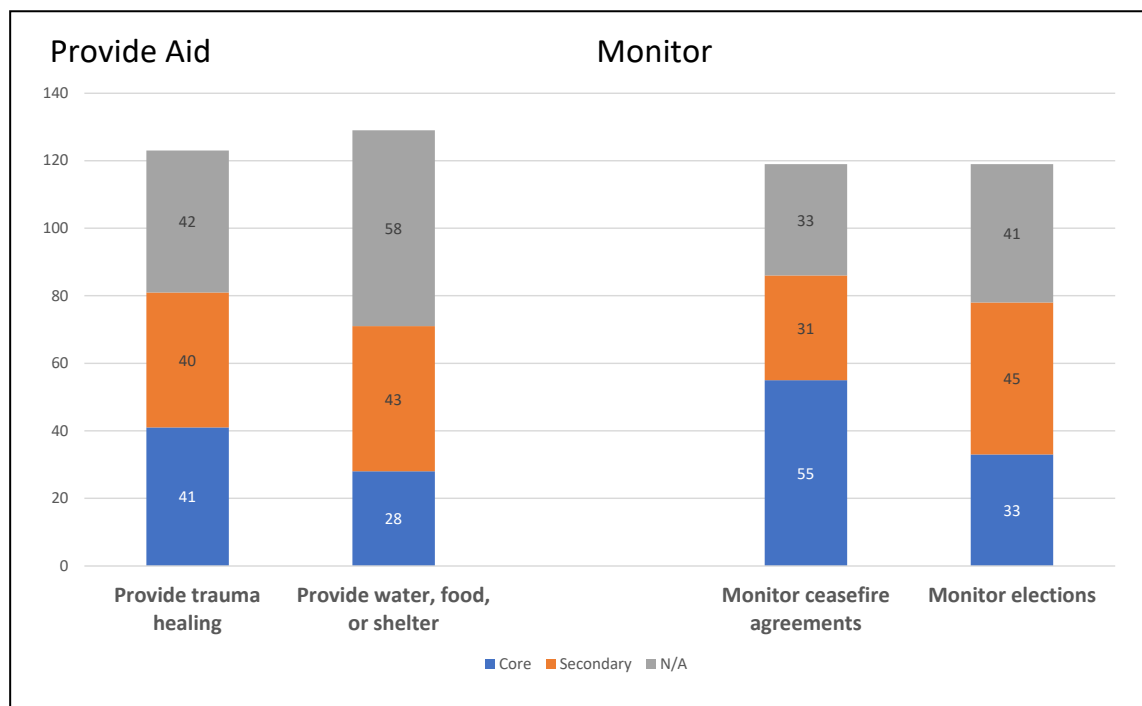


In your organization, what is the compensation model for individuals who are providing services in the field (select one)

122 responses



This is an interesting picture which may contradict the assumption sometimes held that the larger part of the work of UCP/A is done by volunteers only. Much more common seems to be a mixture with some paid staff (presumably to maintain the infrastructure or to direct the project) and volunteers doing part of the practical work.



Biographies of speakers and facilitators (in alphabetic order)

Facilitators

Arias Lopez, Beatriz Elena, Universidad de Antioquia, Colombia

Bliesemann de Guevara, Berit, Professor at Aberystwyth University

Chalermripinyora, Rungrawee

Costanzo Pittaluga, Simonetta, President of International Institute for Nonviolent Action (NOVACT), formerly on NP Board

Duncan, Mel, co-founder of NP, currently partially retired and coordinator of Good Practice Project

Furnari, Ellen, affiliated with NP, member of Good Practice Project Team, USA

Gray, Felicity, NP advocacy lead in Washington DC

Hernandez, Martha, NP, currently in the South Sudan Mission

Ibrahim, Fatumah, NP Board Vice Chair, Kenya

Kabaki, Rosemary, NP Head of Mission, Myanmar

Kusumaningrum, Dr. Diah, teaches at the Department of International Relations, Universitas Gadjah Mada, Indonesia. Among her courses are Introduction to Peace Studies, Nonviolent Studies, and Ethnic Conflict. With her colleagues and students, she created Damai Pangkal Damai, the first ever database on nonviolent actions in Indonesia (1999-present).

Lennig, Adele, affiliated with NP, coordinator for the conferences on Good Practice, USA

Macaspac, Nerve, Professor, City University of New York

Okello Orlale, Rosemary

Oldenhuis, Huibert, NP, Global Head of Programming

Pinckney, Jonathan, US Institute of Peace

Ramirez-Durini, Alvaro, lawyer from Ecuador, formerly NP's Latin America representative

Ridden, Louise, Aberystwyth University

Romen, Sheila, Most recently served as Protection of Civilians officer at the UN-AU Hybrid Mission in Darfur (UNAMID)

Rosenblum-Kumar, Gay, NP's representative at the United Nations, USA

Schweitzer, Christine, researcher at Institute for Peace Work and Nonviolent Conflict Transformation (ifgk.de) and coordinator at the Federation for Social Defence, member of NP's Good Practice Project Team, Germany

Sureka, Deepa, Board member of NP. She is originally from India She has led many businesses with the vision and passion to build, restructure and grow. Her educational and career footprint spans the world of marketing, advertising and ecommerce, building, growing teams and businesses for global organizations like Rakuten, Balsara (acquired by Dabur India).

Wien, Barbara, PBI, nonviolence scholar, peace educator, trainer, human rights activist, and public speaker, with expertise in grassroots women movements around the world, teacher at American University.

Speakers

Allam, Fadi Abdi holds a Master's Degree in Political Sciences; he also holds a BA in International Affairs and a BS in Business Economics, in addition to his certificates in Restorative Justice, Globalization, Religions, and Peace Building from the Eastern Mennonite University and a certificate

from the Harvard Kennedy School on Strategic management of the leaders of organizations. He is a founding member and president of the Permanent Peace Movement (PPM). His 20 years of experience in the Peace Building field enabled him to build bridges across the region to the world. He is currently the Coordinator of the Middle East and North Africa Partnership for Prevention of Armed Conflict (MENAPPAC) which is acting as the MENA initiator for the Global Partnership for Prevention of Armed Conflict (GPPAC). He is additionally the Regional Focal point for the MENA Network on the Involvement of children in armed conflict and the coordinator of the Non-Violence Network in the Arab Countries, and he is head of the Lebanon branch of NP.

Ambago, Rocky is a former pastor who has implemented Unarmed Civilian Protection (UCP) for more than 10 years. As a South Sudanese growing up in a war-torn country, he decided to commit his personal and professional life to making an active contribution to peace by working side by side with people in his own community. Joining Nonviolent Peaceforce in 2010, he began to apply UCP in his community, followed by other communities in South Sudan and abroad. Rocky is currently working as a senior international protection officer at Nonviolent Peaceforce in Iraq to facilitate the return of IDPs, defuse tensions and mitigate conflicts together with local government officials, traditional leaders and communities.

Arias Lopez, Beatriz Elena, Universidad de Antioquia, Colombia

Bozicevic, Goran is co-founder and current director of Miramida Centar – Regional Peacebuilding Exchange in Groznjan-Grisignana (Istria, Croatia). A natural-science teacher by vocation, he has been active in peacebuilding since 1993, working all across the post-Yugoslav region since 1996. As a trainer in nonviolent conflict transformation, he works in divided communities and with people with different values, for example in the Volunteer Project Pakrac, which he co-founded and coordinated (1993-1995). In 1996, he co-founded the Centre for Peace Studies in Zagreb, of which he also was the founding director (1996-1999) and where he continues to teach. He has been actively involved in Dealing with Past issues since in 2002, when he started serving as the Representative in the post-Yugoslav countries of Quaker Peace & Social Witness's Dealing with the Past Program (2002-2006). Goran was born in 1962 in Zadar (Croatia), married in Skopje (Macedonia) in 2001, and is father of Luna and Vladimir Sol. With his family, he lives between Groznjan and Skopje.³⁶

Braithwaite, John is an Emeritus Professor at the Australian National University where he leads the Peacebuilding compared project in the School of Regulation and Global Governance which he co-founded. His publications on violence and nonviolence can be found at johnbraithwaite.com. He has been active in the peace movement, the movement for restorative justice and other social movements. His most recent book on nonviolence is John Braithwaite and Bina D'Costa, *Cascades of Violence: War, Crime and Peacebuilding Across South Asia*: <http://press-files.anu.edu.au/downloads/press/n4135/pdf/book.pdf?referer=4135>

Capannini, Alberto, Operazione Colomba in Lebanon

Doherty, Peter is a Catholic priest involved in full-time nonviolent peacemaking for the last 50-plus years. He was involved in nonviolent direct-action campaigns opposing nuclear weapons and the Cold War, which included a couple years in jail and prison. In 1993 he co-founded Meta Peace Team. Over the years, always in teamwork, he has taught peace, conducted nonviolence trainings, and organized international and domestic peace teams. Peter places emphasis on the need for personal transformation as the foundation for communal and global nonviolent social change. In 2004 Peter received the Pax Christi USA Teacher of Peace Award, in 2009 he received the Jamnalal Bajaj International Award in Mumbai, India, for Promoting Gandhian Values Outside India.

36 <https://www.mirovna-akademija.org/rma/index.php/en/education/pyppa-2009/instructors/goran-bozicevic>

Garate, Javier is from PBI Colombia where he works with the advocacy team with a special focus on advocacy in the US and Canada.

Gopinath, Meenakshi is Founder and Director of WISCOMP, an initiative begun in 1999 to promote the leadership of South Asian women in the areas of international politics, peace, security and diplomacy. In addition to her work on education, her research and publications also focus on issues of security, peacebuilding, gender and politics.

Dr. Gopinath has piloted and fostered confidence building measures through regular conflict transformation workshops and collaborative projects among intellectuals of the SAARC region and especially between young Pakistani and Indians.

Greenburg, Melanie Cohen is the Managing Director, Peacebuilding, at Humanity United. Previously she was President and CEO of the Alliance for Peacebuilding. Before that, she was the President and Founder of the Cypress Fund for Peace and Security, a foundation making grants in the areas of peacebuilding and nuclear nonproliferation. In her work on international conflict resolution, Ms. Greenberg has helped design and facilitate public peace processes in the Middle East, Northern Ireland, and the Caucasus. She has taught advanced courses in international conflict resolution, multi-party conflict resolution and negotiation at Stanford Law School and Georgetown University

Hanna. Mary L, M.Ed., has been the Operations Manager for Meta Peace Team since 2005. She also coordinates MPT's Nonviolence Skills Training program and the MPT Internship program. Mary has Bachelor's Degrees in Therapeutic Recreation and Music Therapy from Michigan State University, and a Master's Degree in Behavior Disorders from Vanderbilt University. Mary worked as a counselor/case manager for Community Mental Health for 20 years, taking early retirement in 2005 and shortly after becoming full-time staff at Meta Peace Team (MPT). In addition, Mary is the State Coordinator for Pax Christi Michigan, and helped to found the Shanti Sena Network. As a member of MPT, she has served on both International (Palestine/ Israel, U.S./ Mexico Border) and Domestic (within the United States) peace teams.

Heemmina, Anchana, Duay Jai Group in Patani, Thailand

Hernandez, Martha, NP South Sudan

Horta, José Ramos (born December 26, 1949, Dili, East Timor), East Timorese political activist who, along with Bishop Carlos F.X. Belo, received the 1996 Nobel Prize for Peace for their efforts to bring peace and independence to East Timor, a former Portuguese possession that was under Indonesian control from 1975 to 1999. Ramos-Horta served as prime minister of East Timor from 2006 to 2007 and as president from 2007 to 2012.

John, Moses is a nonviolent action activist, trainer and researcher. He is a co-founder and the Executive Director of the Organization for Nonviolence and Development (ONAD) based in Juba, South Sudan. John has more than 15 years' experience in planning and management of NGOs development projects, designing and implementing nonviolent action and peacebuilding training, community protection projects, organizational development and DO NO HARM programming. He has practical experience of working with the grassroots, national and international actors on Unarmed Civilian Protection and Accompaniment. John completed his PhD in Public Administration majoring in peacebuilding from the Durban University of Technology (DUT), South Africa, in 2021. He teaches as part time Lecturer of conflict management in the graduate School of Public Service in University of Juba. He authored several book chapters, academic articles and training manuals on nonviolence, conflict mitigation and management.

Kaalim, Rexall is a Bangsamoro leader and serves as assistant program manager and safety and security coordinator of Nonviolent Peaceforce (NP) in the Philippines. Before joining NP, he worked for the Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue (HD) as a consultant for NMLF-MILF dialogues (2012-2013).

Kabaki, Rosemary, Head of Mission, NP Myanmar

Karatch, Olga is one of the founders of the peace movement in Belarus. Since December 2005, she and her colleagues have founded the International Center for Civil Initiatives "Our House". "Our House" is actively working in 23 cities of Belarus on a variety of issues related to the violence of the power structures of Belarus. Olga Karatch is one of the founders of various network initiatives fighting for peace and against violence, such as the "Women's Peace Dialogue" international network and Global Peacebuilders Summit in Berlin (Germany). Olga Karatch is currently the most famous and popular YouTube blogger in Belarus, her video messages on the topics of non-violent protests in Belarus were viewed by more than 40 million people. Olga Karatch largely promotes the ideas of nonviolent resistance / peaceful conflict resolution even in the face of very violent conflicts, including the abduction and rape of children in prisons by the Belarusian security forces. She is the author of some 200 articles in non-violent resistance, conflict resolution, gender problems etc.

Kaufmann, Mayeul studied political science in Sciences Po Paris and economics in Paris XI University, McGill University (Canada) and the University of Grenoble, where he earned a Master's degree in International Security and a PhD in International Economics (thesis dissertation global economic governance and armed conflicts). He has a research experience of 25 years in peace research using quantitative and qualitative methods and published numerous articles, books and reports on these issues. He served as Senior Data Scientist and Director of Research in various public and private research institutes (including the European Commission Joint Research Centre, several renowned international NGOs and universities). He is a member of the UCP Research Network and he founded the working group on UCP data. He has an international experience as lecturer in various universities and currently teaches political science, international relations, as well as GIS and statistical methods in peace research, including for the UCP Diploma (Institut Catholique de Paris & Nonviolent Peaceforce, « DU Intervention Civile de Paix »). He is the president of the IRNC (research institute on nonviolent conflict resolution, Paris). He is also interested in linguistics, mountain environment and musicology.

Lamboi, Tejan is an Anti-racism and Diversity Trainer. He consults for different NGOs as workshop facilitator on the question of being aware of colonial continuity and (white) privileges in the context of International Development work. Since March 2020, he coordinates the project "Stark gegen Diskriminierung und Gewalt" (Strong Against Discrimination and Violence) at the Federation for Social Defence (BSV), Germany. Born and raised in Sierra Leone, he has lived in Berlin since 2008. Tejan Lamboi holds a Master's degree in Intercultural Conflict Management from the Alice Salomon Hochschule in Berlin. He has worked with various non-governmental organizations as a project consultant in Germany and in Sierra Leone. His work focuses on: Peacebuilding, Migration, Dealing with the Past, Diversity and Anti-Discrimination.

Macatimbol, Daphne, NP Philippines Gender Advisor

Maina, Samuel is a digital security strategist and trainer with more than 10 years' experience in the field. He is currently the Regional IT and Digital Security Officer at Protection International Africa (PIA) having joined them in January 2020. In 2019 he spent a year researching digital security needs of three HRD organizations in Tanzania and DRC and providing them with long-term accompaniment to build their respective system resilience and digital security practice. In 2015, he published, under the Tactical Technologies Collective, a Digital Security Guide for Environmental Rights Defenders in Africa. He has also conducted trainings, studied and provided digital security accompaniment in Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania, Zimbabwe, Rwanda, Burundi and Ethiopia. Sam brings to the table on-the-ground experience and understanding of the digital security space in Africa.

Mamuon Pachuol, Hanna was born in 1975. Now she is a member of the NP established Women Protection Team at Juba IDP camp 3 formally known as the Protection of Civilian Site. Hanna was 10 years old when she started her primary education in 1985 and completed the secondary education, but was not able to complete her higher education due to financial crisis. Currently she is attached to the Women Protection team which was formed by Nonviolent Peaceforce. She joined the Women

Protection Team (WPTS) in 2016 voluntarily and was selected as one of the WPT focal points within the IDP camp 3 in 2017 by the rest of the WPT members. Being part of the Women Protection Team, she has been involved in conflict mediation and peacebuilding within the IDP community.

Manivannan, Ramu is currently a Visiting Professor in Political Science, University of Madras. He has been working with the refugees from Tibet, Burma and Sri Lanka for over two decades in the areas of peace, education and development. Ramu Manivannan is a holistic teacher-social activist engaged at the grassroots with the human rights and other social movements in India/South and Southeast Asia. He has published seven books and articles including Sri Lanka: Hiding the Elephant-Documenting Genocide, War Crimes and Crimes Against Humanity. He has contributed to the development of education policy/curriculum for the Myanmar (Burmese) Refugees Community in India and Thailand since 2003 and has founded fifteen non-formal schools for the children from tribal areas, stone quarry areas and the weavers' community. Ramu Manivannan was a member of the International Governing Council and Executive Member of the Nonviolent Peaceforce from 2002.

Marchand, Francois is a "Civil engineer", retired since 1966 after a very international career (26 countries) in mass transit. Conscientious objector in the seventies, he is involved pro bono for 45 years for the non-violence development. He was the founder in 2001 of Non-violence and is still currently chairman; he is well involved in the advocacy for UCP and, in particular, a Board member of the NGO dedicated to UCP, Nonviolent Peaceforce.

McCarthy, Eli, PhD, teaches at Georgetown University in Justice and Peace Studies. Eli initiated and taught the first course at Georgetown University in Unarmed Civilian Protection. He has been to Palestine to monitor the Palestinian Elections with the Nonviolent Peaceforce, and to co-lead their search on "good practices" of unarmed civilian protection in the area. His co-written case study was published in the book "Waging Nonviolence in the Midst of Violence." Eli is now the Director of the DC Peace Team deploying UCP units and offering training in unarmed civilian protection, nonviolent communication, restorative justice, bystander intervention, and meditation. Eli has also published a book called "Becoming Nonviolent Peacemakers: A Virtue Ethic for Catholic Social Teaching and U.S. Policy,". Eli has worked for a national advocacy conference mobilizing religious and community leaders and working to enhance U.S. policy in emerging peacebuilding practices and vision. He has been advocating the State Department, NGO's, the Vatican, and the broader religious community to scale-up UCP programs. McCarthy, PhD, teaches at Georgetown University in Justice and Peace Studies. Eli initiated and taught the first course at Georgetown University in Unarmed Civilian Protection. He has been to Palestine to monitor the Palestinian Elections with the Nonviolent Peaceforce, and to co-lead their search on "good practices" of unarmed civilian protection in the area. His co-written case study was published in the book "Waging Nonviolence in the Midst of Violence." Eli is now the Director of the DC Peace Team deploying UCP units and offering training in unarmed civilian protection, nonviolent communication, restorative justice, bystander intervention, and meditation. Eli has also published a book called "Becoming Nonviolent Peacemakers: A Virtue Ethic for Catholic Social Teaching and U.S. Policy,". Eli has worked for a national advocacy conference mobilizing religious and community leaders and working to enhance U.S. policy in emerging peacebuilding practices and vision. He has been advocating the State Department, NGO's, the Vatican, and the broader religious community to scale-up UCP programs.

Mozersky, David is a Nonresident Fellow with the Protecting People Program at the Stimson Center. He is the co-founder of Energy Peace Partners, a new organization working on linking climate solutions with peace building. He has been involved in peace building and conflict prevention work since 2001, with a specific interest in mediation and peace processes, having worked with the International Crisis Group, the African Union, and Humanity United, among others surrounding conflicts in the Horn of Africa.

Nauta, Jet studied Human Geography at the university of Amsterdam with one semester in Lund (Sweden), and obtained her master degree in Political Geography in 1998. After her studies she

worked at the city counsel of Amsterdam at the communication department. In 2002 she moved to Chiapas, Mexico and started working with SIPAZ (Servicio Internacional para la Paz). Jet has a 20 year experience in the field of International Observation and Accompaniment mainly in Mexico. As a member of the SIPAZ-team she has been accompanying indigenous communities and organizations. She has been involved in International Observation Missions, delegations, workshops on conflict transformation, and in several networks on a local, national and international level.

Ntahuba, Parfaite is an ordained pastor in a Quaker community in her home country of Burundi, central Africa—one of only 4 women to hold such a position. Ms. Parfaite is the national coordinator of Friends Women's Association, FWA. Ms. Parfaite has a Master of Arts in Theological Studies from the Hope Africa University, one of very few women afforded the opportunity for a post-secondary education in her country. Ntahuba Parfaite is a leading advocate in her country to address the issue of gender-based violence which is rooted in the Burundian culture. As the national coordinator of the Quaker Peace Network (QPN) Burundi since 2019, Ntahuba Parfaite has led QPN member organizations to initiate five EWER teams in five different communities to protect civilians from violence before.

Nusseibeh, Lucy is the founding director of Middle East Nonviolence and Democracy (MEND), a nongovernmental organization that educates grassroots political leaders, Palestinian youth, their teachers and their families about nonviolence and democracy. Previously, Nusseibeh taught in the Philosophy and Cultural Studies Department in Bir Zeit University, headed the Palestinian Centre for the Study of Nonviolence, and held a fellowship in the Women and Public Policy Program at the John F. Kennedy School of Government of Harvard University. Nusseibeh is the Chair of the Board of Nonviolent Peaceforce. She is married to Sari Nusseibeh.

Ogonji, Dennis was born and bred in a slum known as Korogocho, in Nairobi, Kenya, and is 34 years old. He is a program manager with some background in IT. Dennis works with Sisi Ni Amani Kenya, an NGO that works with communities in Kenya to prevent violence through political dialogues and technology by sending out peace messages in case there is tension in particular areas. He is also a volunteer as Digital Literacy trainer at Kamukunji Constituency Innovation Hub, which equips youth with computer skills to avoid them being taken away by Al-Shabab and other terror groups and equips returnees with the skills to start a new life.

O'Hanrahan, Brendan is an ecologist, crisis mapper, media monitor and community land use activist. He is originally from Kilkenny, in the southeast of Ireland, but has mostly lived in the Highlands and Islands of Scotland since 1988 (with a four-year detour to Germany in the late 90s). His crisis mapping experience has been acquired with a number of groups and projects since 2011, principally Open Crisis, Standby Task Force, Ushahidi and Syria Map—this experience has spanned both classical humanitarian mapping and more politically-oriented work, such as election monitoring and covering aspects of conflict and human rights in the Middle East and North and East Africa. Since Sept 2020 he set up and has since run the operational side of Political Incident Reporting USA (PIRUSA), which constitutes the media monitoring and remote Early Warning arm of the TRUST Network, an alliance of peace building and mediation organizations set up to tackle political violence and threats to democracy in the US in the autumn of 2020. On the ground in Scotland, he has been very active in land reform, community land management, local journalism and crofting projects and politics since 2013.

Paige, Shannon is a Policy Associate working at Peace Direct. She leads Peace Direct's research and advocacy efforts around decolonizing the aid and peacebuilding system, is co-leading efforts on legislation to address the over-militarization of U.S. foreign policy, and is working to develop Peace Direct's U.S. peacebuilding programming. She holds a B.A. in International Studies and Arabic from Kenyon College, where she wrote her senior capstone on how public perceptions of migrant domestic and sex workers impact the hostility of the legal system in their destination countries. She has interned at a number of small international non-profits, most recently at New Light, a non-profit

based in Kolkata, India that works with migrant sex workers. She is eager to build upon her first-hand experiences working with conflict-impacted communities to better integrate diverse perspectives into peacebuilding efforts.

Pandey, Ashish, NP Myanmar

Redekop, Hannah works with Community (Christian) Peacemaker Teams.

Rincon, Milena from Colombia has a degree in Psychology, a master in Political Sciences and a master in International Relations and Good Governance. She has been with Christian Peacemaker Teams since 2003 and began full-time service with the Colombia team. She participated in CPT's exploratory work in the Democratic Republic of Congo and Uganda. She was also the Program Support Coordinator the Colombia and Iraqi Kurdistan programs. Milena is currently working as CPT's Program Director.

Romen, Sheila is a practitioner in the fields of peacekeeping/Protection of Civilians, transitional justice, post-conflict peacebuilding and development. She last served as Protection of Civilians officer at the UN-AU Hybrid Mission in Darfur (UNAMID). Previously, she served as Protection of Civilians and Human Rights officer with MONUSCO, DR Congo and as Human Rights officer with BNUB, Burundi. Before joining the UN, she worked for the German Development Service in Kigali, Rwanda as well as INGOs on peacebuilding/transitional justice. She holds an M.A. in International Relations and an LL.M. in International Criminal Law.

Ronnie, Delsy has 18 years of experience in programming on conflict resolution, research, emergency response and community development, including nine years at senior management level at the country program. He was the director of the social department at Aceh-Nias Reconstruction and Rehabilitation Agency (BBR), the national body of rehabilitation and reconstruction of Aceh and Nias, two provinces of Indonesia, where he oversaw the rehabilitation and reconstruction process on social sector post-2004- Indian earthquake and tsunami. He also has served as National Team Leader for Conflict Early Warning and Early Response in Indonesia. Before joining with Nonviolent Peaceforce, he led Muslim Aid Myanmar from 2013 - 2015. Ronnie has worked extensively on the peace process in Southeast Asia, including Indonesia, the Philippines, Thailand, and Myanmar. He has a doctorate from the University of Helsinki with the research focus on the peace process in Aceh. He has served as Head of Mission in the Philippines since November 2015.

Samassy Souare, Ansoumane is the Regional Programme Officer in charge of the WANEP Peace Monitoring Center (PMC). He holds an MA in International Affairs, from the Legon Centre of International Affairs and Diplomacy (LECIAD), University of Ghana and a BA in Political Science, from General Lansana Conté University of Sonfonia, Conakry, Guinea. He is bilingual and speaks fluent French and English. Over the years, he has been facilitated trainings for WANEP's Community conflicts early warning monitors across West Africa. Ansoumane has also participated in a number of professional trainings in West Africa and has worked toward regional nonviolent resistance.

Samayoa, Claudia is a Guatemalan Human Rights Defender. She is the Founder and President of the Guatemalan Unit for Protection for Human Rights Defenders (UDEFEQUA by its acronym in Spanish). Currently she supports human rights defenders and organizations in Latin America to develop protection measures. Claudia acted as co-chair of Nonviolent Peaceforce during the organization's first years and currently serves as the Vice-Chair of the World Organization Against Torture (OMCT by its acronym in French).

Serpekani, Runbir, born 1984 in the village of Serkepan, northern part of Zagros Mountains. Runbir lives on Lesbos Island in the Northern Aegean. He loves poetry, walking, having nice conversations and fighting injustice and capitalism. He is working with CPT.

Sibrián, Anabella, Guatemalan, has worked in national and international human rights organizations since 1992. Currently, she is the Mesoamerica Office Regional Director of Protection International.

Stephan, Maria. Her career has bridged the academic, policy, and non-profit sectors, with a focus on the role of civil resistance and nonviolent movements in advancing human rights, democratic freedoms, and sustainable peace in the US and globally. She co-leads the Horizons Project and earlier, Stephan founded and directed the Program on Nonviolent Action at the U.S. Institute of Peace. Stephan is the co-author (with Erica Chenoweth) of “Why Civil Resistance Works: The Strategic Logic of Nonviolent Conflict” and of “The Role of External Support in Nonviolent Campaigns: Poisoned Chalice or Holy Grail?”. From 2009-14, Stephan was lead foreign affairs officer in the U.S. State Department’s Bureau of Conflict and Stabilization Operations, receiving two Meritorious Service Awards for her work in Afghanistan and Turkey. She is a lifetime member of the Council on Foreign Relations, co-directed the Future of Authoritarianism initiative at the Atlantic Council, and directed policy and educational initiatives at the International Center on Nonviolent Conflict and has taught at Georgetown University and American University. She received her BA in political science from Boston College and her MA and PhD from the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy

Taitel, Sam [they/them] is a Mixed, Black and Ashkenazi, Queer community organizer, martial artist, and facilitator living on occupied Dakota, Lakota, Nakota, and Anishinaabe lands. They began practicing Aikido, a Japanese martial art centered on embracing conflict and bolstering connectivity, in 1999 and have achieved the rank of sandan (third-degree black belt). Sam is recognized as an internationally influential instructor, panelist, moderator, and practitioner. Sam serves as a Program Specialist at Nonviolent Peaceforce where they strive to nourish individual safety and mutual protection through hyperlocal relationship building, authenticity, and body forward inquiry. They deeply believe that uplifting people’s capacities to be sensitive and aware can radically shift how we share this world together; we must notice to care.

Vallies, Vicente has been connected with PBI Colombia for 20 years in various roles (volunteer in the field, staff in charge of training workshops for brigadistas and human rights organizations, member of the project committee, and now he has just started as coordinator from Brussels).

Vasco Vargas, Vanessa is a lawyer working with Corporación Jurídica Libertad (CJL) in Colombia. She specializes in Administrative Law with experience in litigation before the Contentious Administrative Jurisdiction for serious violations of Human Rights caused by the Colombian State. She is a Human Rights Defender who has accompanied organizational processes mainly in urban areas from perspective of social movements, and in the training and legal fields, connecting professional experience with the needs of different social actors, expressed in cultural, neighborhoods, student and victims' spaces, among others.

Williams, Liv has a background in international emergency response having been deployed across fragile, conflict, violence (FCV) and natural disaster affected environments. Her expertise and deep interest in cyber and information/data security stems from this first-hand experience of these complex and rapidly changing contexts and in particular from deployments to the Middle East, Asia and Africa, where she led specialist teams to gather and handle sensitive information. Her personal experience of these domains led her to being awarded a fully funded Ph.D. scholarship to American University in Washington D.C. (completed in 2020), where she conducted original research related to the information and cyber security protocols and practices of organizations and their agents operating on the humanitarian frontline. Liv now works as a Senior Cyber and Information Security Consultant at Apache iX, pursues a second Ph.D. within the Department of International Politics at Aberystwyth University and continues to conduct original ‘frontline’ research.

Wolfer, Thiago is from Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. He has extensive experience in managing, designing, directing and implementing programs of protection of civilians affected by armed conflict in different parts around the world. Thiago has a major in International Relations, a post bachelorship in International Politics and a Master’s Degree in Peace Studies and Conflict Transformation at the University of Basel in Switzerland. He joined NP in 2007 and has worked in ever since with the organization in a number of country programs including Guatemala, Sri Lanka, Philippines, Syria,

United States and South Sudan. Thiago is committed to his work and believes in Unarmed Civilian Protection as an alternative to transforming conflict together with communities.

Wood, Alison is a facilitator, advocate, and educator rooted in the U.S./Mexico borderlands. She splits paid work time between PPF and coordination of the Tucson Borderlands Young Adult Volunteer (YAV) program. Alison served as an accompanier in Colombia in 2014 and participated in the 2018 Fossil Free PCUSA Walk to Divest.

Vocationally, Alison is engaged in peacemaking and accompaniment work alongside migrants and asylum seekers, other white people seeking anti-racism practice, and young adults exploring the world as YAVs.

Zurlini Panza, Giulia, 38 years old from Modena (Italy), since 2006 actively involved in Operazione Colomba, the Nonviolent Peace Corps of the Association "Comunità Papa Giovanni XXIII". She has been engaged in nonviolent civil peacekeeping, peacemaking and peacebuilding in the Peja-Peć area, Kosovo, from 2006 to 2010, and in Shkoder, Albania, from 2012 to 2020 as project coordinator on the ground and from Italy. Currently she is supporting the project of Operazione Colomba in Colombia and the fundraising for the Association. She got a Bachelor's Degree in International Relations in 2005 (University of Bologna) and a Master's Degree in Analysis of Conflicts, Ideologies and Politics in Contemporary World in 2011 (University of Modena and Reggio Emilia) with a thesis about Conflict Management and Reconciliation in Kosovo and Israel-Palestine. She got a PhD in Humanities (University of Modena and Reggio Emilia) with a research project in the field of Intercultural Conflicts Sociology.

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