



NP staff meets with members of the nomad community. West Darfur, Sudan, 2022. ©NP

From Separation to Connection in Darfur, Sudan



TWO COMMUNITIES WITH LONGSTANDING TENSIONS — NOMADS AND FARMERS — ARE REACHING OUT TO ONE ANOTHER TO DE-ESCALATE CONFLICT BEFORE IT TURNS VIOLENT

Farid and his community are nomadic herders in West Darfur — they raise livestock and move around with the animals as they search for different lands to graze.

With support from NP, Farid's mindset had shifted from separation to connection. In our meetings we talked about how something as simple as connecting with a neighbor can set you up to respond together when presented with an issue or a crisis. When NP led a community safety training, Farid learned to trust his instincts that gave him clues about what tensions might escalate into violence. He also learned and practiced skills like active listening and de-escalation.

After completing NP's training, Farid was keen to directly apply these skills in his life. So, he decided to reach out to farmers when he had the chance — despite the longstanding tensions between his community and theirs.

One day, not long after the NP training, he noticed a group of farmers loading watermelons from their patch onto a truck. In the past Farid might have kept walking past the group, but not this time. He knows that relationships are the key to peacebuilding, so he stopped and offered to help.

“ My Arab nomad community has never been approached by any international organisation before NP invited me to participate in a training on unarmed civilian protection. ”

After they finished loading up the truck for the market, they had all become friendly enough that Farid exchanged phone numbers with one of the men. He knew that the grazing animals from the nomads sometimes wandered onto the farmers'



lands — a common source of conflict across Darfur, especially throughout the agricultural season. Thinking ahead to how they might work together to de-escalate conflict, Farid invited the farmer to alert him in case he found any animals from the nomads trespassing on the farms.

Sure enough, only a few days later, the farmer called Farid for help. Sixty cattle had invaded the farmers' land. Typically, this could easily cascade into a violent clash. But on that day, the farmer encouraged his peers to pause — not rush to commit any violence against the nomadic community — instead, he called Farid.

Farid jumped into action, he no longer feared stopping conflict. And he knew that he didn't have to resolve the issue alone: with a group of others from the nomad community, Farid quickly and safely moved the animals off the farmland and avoided violence that day.

Farid and the farmer were both relieved. Especially since they live in Kereneik, a town that witnessed brutal attacks on civilians and health workers last April, when 200 people were killed. After this outbreak in violence, farmers could not safely access the lands outside the town, while nomads like Farid could not access the town and markets out of fear of retaliation from the farming community.

The whole community has since been on edge, and even international groups had left the area for a time. NP was the first international organization to return to Kereinek after the April 2022 massacre, and we did so through building trust with the community, not through armed escorts.

Over the course of 2022, NP staff met with more than 1,000 people like Farid, different women, youth, and men in the area — from government and tribal leaders, to people in displacement camps and nomadic groups to discuss what the community wanted for safety and peace.

Just as the watermelons could grow next to the grazing lands for the animals in harmony, Farid saw how the farmers and the nomads could live beside one another in peace. With your support, NP is growing and deepening our work in Darfur, so that more people like Farid have the skills and confidence to move themselves and their communities towards peace.



You Plant Seeds for Peace



2022: NP program starts in Darfur

2021: NP launches pilot mission

2021: UN peacekeepers leave, but the UN, now with a better understanding of the importance of UCP, asks NP to start a program

2020: Those relationships led NP to virtually train Darfuri youth peace leaders

The start: You make it possible for NP to advocate to the UN and governments to support unarmed civilian protection (UCP)

Hope Against Anti-Asian American Hate



NP & THE ASIAN AMERICAN FEDERATION (AAF) ARE WORKING TOGETHER FOR SAFER COMMUNITIES

Noel Quintana is a Filipino American non-profit worker who has been vocal about combating Asian hate after surviving a violent hate crime in February 2021. He's a man of faith, and one of the reasons he ultimately moved to the US from the Philippines over a decade ago was because he asked God for a sign—and once he saw it, he moved. Prior to his current job, he spent seven years as a barista and became known for his perpetual smile and positive attitude.



NOEL QUINTANA

Watch Noel's Story



bit.ly/hope-noel

“So much of what happens ... is the fact that people don't look out for each other ... the question that [Noel] asked at the rally, and the question that [he's] asked before, *why didn't somebody do something?*” shared AAF Executive Director Jo-Ann Yoo.

So that Noel doesn't have to keep asking that question, NP teamed up with AAF on their Hope Against Hate campaign. Together, we are confronting anti-Asian violence with nonviolent, community-led approaches to safety and conflict de-escalation.

Kalaya'an Mendoza, NP's Director of Mutual Protection, reflects: “We shouldn't have to do these trainings, right? Our community members shouldn't have to learn how to protect themselves from violence... but that's where we're at.”

Since 2021, NP and AAF have worked alongside local communities throughout New York on **SafeZones** (local businesses that are safe places and resource-hubs), **SafeWalks** (safety patrols and accompanying people to get where they need to go without fear), and **Community Safety Trainings** (skills and practice on how to intervene to prevent violence).

Jo-Ann is looking forward to building a safer future: “[Kalaya'an and NP have] trained over 2,000 people to understand situational awareness. And we know that we have a long way to go. And my hope is that we are learning how to think about what community means, and thinking about how to build community with people that don't look like us.”

Noel's photo and bio: Asian American Federation (AAF)

BOARD MEMBER SPOTLIGHT



TIFFANY TOOL

Tiffany Tool has been working alongside communities for more than a decade in Indonesia, South Sudan, Gaza, and South Korea. “What draws me to the work is that civilians, without the use of arms, are able to protect their own families and communities.”

While reflecting on her experience working for NP in South Sudan in 2013, **Tiffany recalled the small but impactful moments in our work** – like when her team had sun shades built for women sitting out in the hot sun as they awaited aid.

“I think the best way to understand and learn more about this work is to meet and hear from people living in these situations. **Listen to their stories.** It really shows the power of what we do.”



From the beginning of time this [UCP] has been happening, and now I'm very proud to be a part of showing the rest of the world that this has always been the case - and it works.



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Visit nonviolentpeaceforce.loomstate.org



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