

Nonviolent Peaceforce

CAPACITY STATEMENT

Nonviolent Peaceforce Iraq

Nonviolent Peaceforce (NP) is a global civilian protection organisation that aims to interrupt cycles of violence, build peace side-by-side with local communities and advocate for the wider adoption of nonviolence to safeguard human life and dignity.

NP IN IRAQ

NP began operating in Iraq in 2017, focusing on protecting people affected by violence, particularly those in critical need of protection in the IDP camps, people returning to contested and high-risk areas and those located in tense regions near the Syrian and Turkish borders, Northern Iraq. Amid the current shift from a humanitarian response to development, NP expands its focus on both violence prevention and peacebuilding.

MISSION NP aims to prevent the re-emergence of violence within communities affected by Daesh in Ninewa Governorate, Iraq

OBJECTIVES Foster **healing, reconciliation, and reconnection** within fragmented communities impacted by Daesh

Promote **inclusivity and diversity in peace and security** processes and infrastructures

Ensure the voluntary **safe reintegration of IDPs and returnees** into their former or new communities

Through these objectives, NP is contributing to the resilience of communities against violence since there is a more conducive environment for nonviolence and sustainable positive peace, particularly for youth and women - two often excluded groups in decision-making processes.

WHERE NP WORKS

NP's country office is located in Erbil with field offices in all areas of operation across Ninewa Governorate, covering Ba'aj, Sinjar, Mosul, and Tel Afar districts.



NP'S APPROACH

NP's core methodology is **Unarmed Civilian Protection (UCP)**, an innovative, evidence-based approach with a demonstrated track record of reducing violence against civilians across the globe. UCP is based on relationship building, acceptance and trust by the community. It utilises a mix of strategies to prevent violence, enhance the safety and security of civilians, build and strengthen local peace infrastructures, and create an enabling environment for communities to devise and implement locally led peace and protection strategies.

NP's approach is **community-driven**. NP staff live in the communities to best support them in shaping and leading on addressing their needs and priorities - which guides our projects and position us to swiftly respond to emerging issues.

WHAT NP DOES

NP's expertise in Iraq lay within direct protection, peacebuilding, particularly bridging divisions and trust-building between and within divided communities, amplifying the voices of youth and women within peace and security processes, and creating links and trust between civilians and duty bearers in local communities.

1

Provide direct physical protection to those experiencing threats of violence through accompaniment, patrols and interpositioning

2

Strengthen local infrastructures and processes for violence prevention, self-protection, conflict management, and peacebuilding in an inclusive manner

3

Increase and improve the responsiveness of duty bearers, state, and non-state actors to protect civilians through building positive relationships and trust building between these actors and community members

All activities are designed to respond to the immediate protection needs of beneficiaries and support the resilience, adaptive capacity and recovery of communities from violent conflict and insecurity.

EXAMPLES OF NP'S IMPACT

NP has **prevented and reduced violence** against civilians. In Ba'aj, NP has conducted shuttle diplomacy between conflicting tribes and UCP training, successfully mitigating violence. Coupled with this, NP's work in building relationships between dividing tribal and religious lines has supported in **fostering social cohesion and peaceful coexistence**. Such relationship-building extends to communities and state actors, which has improved the responsiveness of the latter to access to services and peacebuilding initiatives. NP has been able to bring Yazidis in Sinjar and Sunni Muslims in Ba'aj together, which not only dispelled

negative stereotypes and cycles of fears, but extended to the improvement of service provisions and access to IDs after Yazidis travelled to the predominantly Sunni Qahtaniyah district.

NP has done such activities in an inclusive manner that has **supported girls and women's influence**. Girls and women feel safer and more secure, and, as a result, are more present and active in public spaces. They are no longer afraid to speak up; in South Mosul, women now report cases of violence and online extortion to the police after building a trusting relationship and gaining awareness of reporting mechanisms.

KEY OUTPUTS 2022

Patrols around schools increased the safety of nearly **3000** girls on a regular basis

95 community security forums with **1272** participants, bridging gaps between duty bearers, local leaders, women and youth

UCP trainings for **987** women, youth, duty bearers and NGO staff, equipping them with the tools to resolve conflict through nonviolent means

11 cases where shuttle diplomacy were used to deescalate tensions and prevent violence

NP'S FUTURE IN IRAQ

As the challenges facing IDPs and returnees are far from resolved, NP's activities will continue addressing the protection concerns of IDPs, returnees, and host communities – expanding on our existing projects and expertise to increase the safety and security of civilians and enhance the peaceful coexistence of communities.

In addition, NP Iraq has also begun expanding into new sectors based on its expertise and community needs:



NP extends its protection efforts to **digital protection**, with a focus on safeguarding women's access and influence on peace and security processes in both physical and online spaces. In turn, NP specialises in **digital peacebuilding** to address divisive narratives, including rumour control, resilience against disinformation and addressing hate speech, both during emergencies and to enhance social cohesion.



NP integrates **climate-related conflicts** into programming in a conflict-sensitive manner that ensures for violence prevention and social cohesion. NP further collaborates with communities and other development actors on conflict-sensitivity in climate change mitigation and adaptation programming to prevent violence related to competition over resources and marginalisation.



NP works with local organisations to ensure their own digital and physical protection, enhance their protection capacities, and address any gaps in safeguarding those dedicated to **protecting civilians**.

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