

Unarmed Civilian Protection (UCP)

Civilians Nonviolently Protecting Civilians

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Nonviolent civilian protectors are directly protecting civilians and deterring violence in some of the most violent places on the planet today. Unarmed civilian protection (UCP) is emerging at the very time when more civilians are displaced for longer periods of time because of violent conflict than any other period since WW II. The need for civilian protection as evidenced in the bush of South Sudan, the refugee routes in the Balkans and the cratered streets of Aleppo strips all current responses.



Currently 12 international, nongovernmental organizations and many more local groups provide unarmed civilian protection in 17 areas of violent conflict from the Mindanao region of the Philippines to South Sudan to Palestine to Colombia to the United States. Coming from throughout the world (with over 40% being women), these unarmed civilian protectors are typically:

- Nonviolent.
- Nonpartisan.
- Respecting the primacy of local actors.

Selecting a strategic mix of methods designed to encourage and/or deter violence, UCP:

- Directly protects civilians under threat of war and imminent violence.
- Supports local communities to deter violence.
- Strengthens local peace infrastructures.

UCP evaluations, case studies, reports, interviews and observation have shown that:

- Lives are saved.
- Communities are able to stay at home, instead of becoming refugees or IDPs.
- Peace and human rights work is more possible, involving more people, in a wider area.
- Re-establishment of relationships in divided communities is facilitated.
- Behaviour of armed actors is changed.
- Unarmed trained civilians can head off violence.
- All of this takes time.

Extracts from Two UN Global Reviews (HIPPO and 1325) on UCP

Uniting Our Strengths for Peace—Politics, Partnerships and People

Report of the High-Level Independent Panel on UN Peace Operations.

Release date 16 June 2015.

(http://www.un.org/sg/pdf/HIPPO_Report_1_June_2015.pdf)

“Unarmed strategies must be at the forefront of UN efforts to protect civilians.” (paragraph 84, page 23).

“Many non-governmental organizations, national and international, also ensure protection by their civilian presence and commitment to non-violent strategies for protection. Missions should make every effort to harness or leverage the non-violent practices and capabilities of local communities and non-governmental organizations to support the creation of a protective environment.” (paragraph 87, page 23)

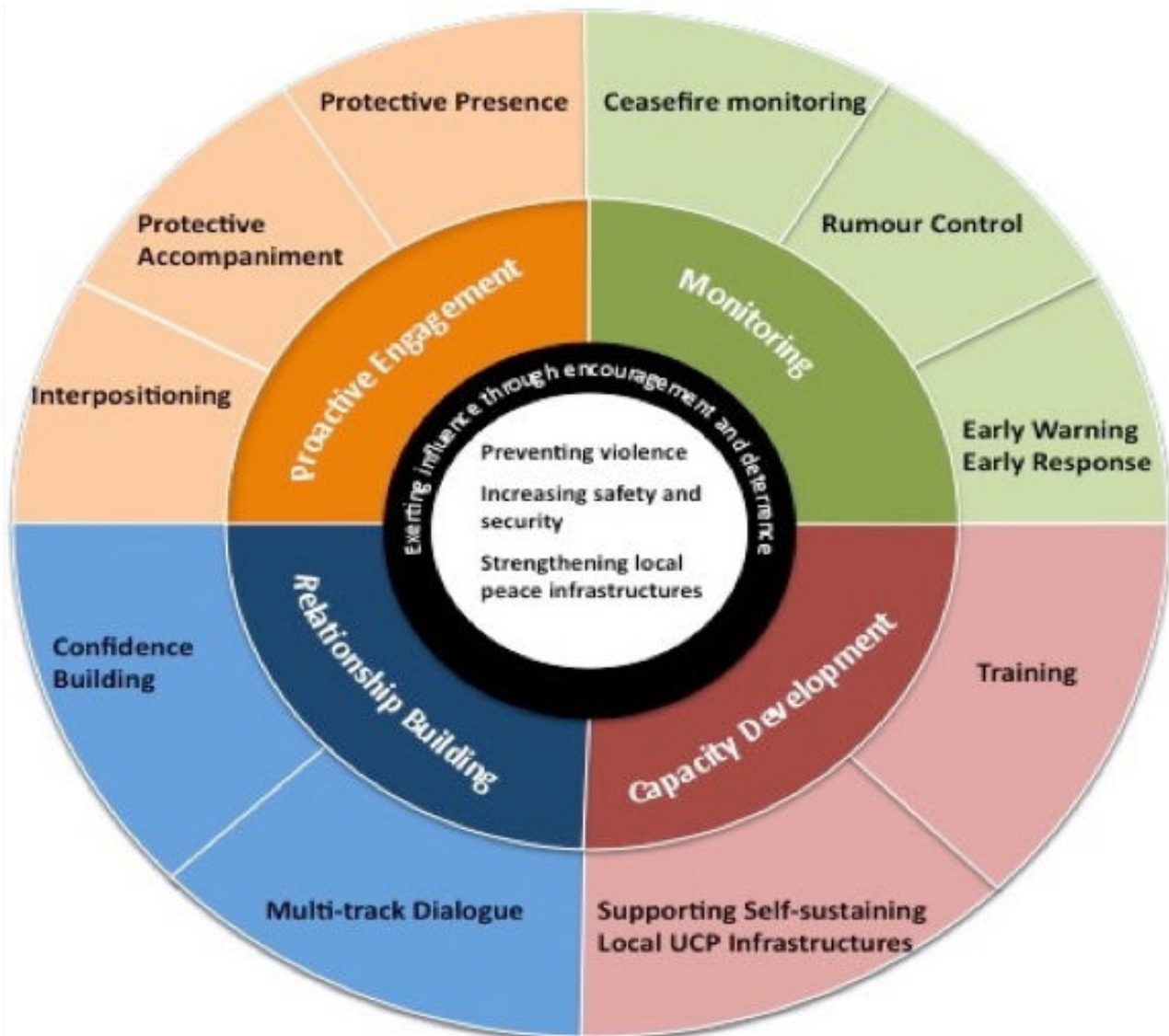
Preventing Conflict, Transforming Justice, Securing the Peace

Global Study on the Implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security. Release date 14 October 2015.

(<http://wps.unwomen.org/en>)

“Unarmed civilian protection (UCP) is a methodology for the direct protection of civilians and violence reduction that has grown in practice and recognition. In the last few years, it has especially proven its effectiveness to protect women and girls.

“Promote women’s empowerment and non-violent means of protection...”
Scale up their support to unarmed civilian protection (UCP) in conflict-affected countries, including working alongside peace operations.” (p.157)



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