Center for Civilians in Harm's Way

Why Should We Help Locals Brace for Violence?

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When violence approaches, we, as aid agencies[†], can do more to support the proven capacity of our *counterparts* (local staff and partners) to serve alone in the face of danger. As violence approaches, we can—with those counterparts in the lead—do more to support the proven capacity of local *communities* to survive alone in the face of danger. That is, we can help physically prepare local counterparts and communities today for the violence they will face after becoming separated from us tomorrow. We can do this. We can help local providers and populations with what is called "preparedness support." But should we?

Yes. By doing this we might better fulfill our "duty of care" to these local providers and better ensure we "do no harm" to local populations by lulling then leaving them in harm's way. And if those normative reasons are not enough—helping brace locals for unstoppable violence also happens to be in agencies' own best self-interest.

CORE OBLIGATIONS

A duty of care

What happens when security degrades to the point that foreign aid personnel must pull out? When strategic thought is given this fundamental question it has typically focused—in descending order—on expatriate evacuation; stewardship of programs and properties by local counterparts; local staff security; and lastly local partner security. That is to say, we differentiate our "duty of care" for those doing dangerous work for us depending upon who they are. This bias is most evident when expatriate staff retreat to safer locations, hoping to continue work via remote management of their local counterparts. A range of reporting shows that all too often we still hand them the office keys ill prepared for what will come next. Our local staff and local partners become first-tier targets for whom we offer second and third-class protection.

Local staff ill prepared

As early as 2000, Koenraad Van Brabant concluded that, "The security of national staff remains a painful weakness; there is even resistance to facing the issue."[1] Yet a decade later another authoritative report found that while agencies have "increasing awareness of the need to provide better and more equitable duty of care to [host country] staff, they nearly universally admit that they have a long way to go in this regard."[2] "National staff receives a disproportionately low share of training and material resources" for security.[3] Moreover, "few organizations have a specific policy on what security-related equipment would be handed over to national staff or local partners" upon evacuation.[4] "Statistical analysis points overwhelmingly to the conclusion that aid work is becoming increasingly dangerous for national staff, and safer for international staff."[5]

Local partners ill prepared

At the bottom of this ranking order come the local groups that we work with. One report concludes that, "In terms of local partner organisations there is more of a gap to bridge." They are "used and treated as service providers rather than partners," and

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[†] In this report, "we" refers to development and humanitarian aid providers. Both often face looming violent threats that they, local counterparts, and local communities or camps are ill-prepared for.

"security training provided for [them] is still a rare occurrence…"[6] Another report finds that in terms of our security policies, training and support, "local NGOs [ranked] the lowest of all."[7] As of 2011, "With one or two exceptions, few agencies and INGOs reported discussing with their implementing partners the partners' security needs, or budgeting for security capacity or equipment."[8]

"Going remote" transfers risk

It is often claimed that when we retreat into distance management mode we essentially transfer risk to our local counterparts. Furthermore, aside from removing risk-averse foreigners, remote programming does, "not necessarily overcome the operational constraints to service delivery that led to its adoption in the first place."[9] The constraints are driven by insecurity. A report by the European Commission's Humanitarian Aid Office found "there has been little examination of the security implications of [remote management] operations for national staff."[10] But the implications are evident: our local staff and partners are easy targets with a street address. They are made vulnerable by a fixed infrastructure and riskily exposed as they handle our very alluring assets. We give them the office keys and a public promotion at the same moment such a high profile could put them at great risk. "Working for an international agency exposes national staff to risks they are unlikely to face otherwise."[11] Studies find our remote operations have been reactive and ad hoc, typically reflecting last-ditch efforts rather than careful contingency procedures. They have lacked tactical foresight; without plans for a strategic exit or return.[12] One authoritative 2010 report adds that "the dearth of agency guidelines and procedures on the subject seems particularly problematic given how widely the practice is used in insecure settings."[13]

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There are reasons why we invest little in the security of our local counterparts. One is the dubious assumption that they are safer than expatriates. Another is the view that we do not have legally, and cannot absorb fiscally, the same contractual responsibility for them. Reasons such as these are either flawed and can be debunked, or have some merit yet can be fixed, as is discussed in a forthcoming CCHW reflection paper on "aid industry mindsets."

Ethos and equity

Legal and contractual norms do not offer the strongest argument for giving more attention local counterpart security preparedness. A stronger "pressure point" has to do with the humanitarian ethos. Putting local counterparts further in harm's way without commensurate preparations may amount to an *ethical* dereliction of the agency's duty of care. This is an anathema to the very purpose of an aid service provider and completely incompatible with its institutional persona.

The fact that it raises questions of bedrock obligation is proven in the scorching experience of many expatriate workers who have evacuated only to later return and find their former counterparts killed or disappeared. David Reiff once charged: "The deeper reality—that Western aid workers were Westerners first and aid workers second—could not have been plainer, above all to the Rwandans. One of the buried traumas of the

humanitarian international that is a searing legacy of that killing time is that when the major agencies redeployed they found that most of their Tutsi local staff had been murdered."[14]

It is uncomfortable to acknowledge that this is essentially a caste system—yet it is an unavoidable point to broach in campaigning for preparedness support. A moral reason to change this status quo does not need to be

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"fabricated." Any agency founded for the purpose of saving and improving human lives can find rooted in its bedrock ethos and written in its mission documents all it needs to justify a policy for better ensuring the survival of local providers. Perhaps part of the leverage that can be exerted in an incentives campaign is to "increase the discomfort" agencies feel with this ethical situation.

Beyond this there are other levers—tactical remedies that can be offered. An initial step is to level out the inequities by providing counterparts with security training and hardware (radios, vehicles, etc.) equal to what expatriates received before they withdrew. Unfortunately, "equity" alone will not adequately improve the safety of local service providers. After all, if a regimen of training and equipment proves not good enough to keep expatriates from evacuating, then it is not good enough for the locals who are left behind either. It is unethical to outsource more risk than is necessary: we need to modify the aid service delivery vehicle itself. (This paper will cite new field craft and new aid architecture which enables "a workplace" that is both discreet and mobile when needed.)

Forget about "duty of care"— here is the bottom line

If an agency resists this line of persuasion, arguing that what happens to local staff and partners is limited to the contracts they themselves sign, then we must persuade it of two things. One is that the agency was founded for the purpose of serving local populations in need—and local counterparts are part of that population. How can it work with them every day but then leave them unprepared for violence?

The other is that a beneficiary populations' fate is tied to the ability of counterparts to continue safe effective service. The less we help local counterparts prepare, the less they can help their compatriots with what will be the biggest killers amid violence: the collapse of life-critical sustenance and services. An agency that does not help retrofit and prepare its local counterparts for service amid violence effectively undermines what may be the last best opportunity to help the populace survive. This goes against an agency's very reason for being.

Do No Harm "2.0" ~
Neither lull nor leave them ill prepared in harm's way

Mary B. Anderson, architect of the Do No Harm movement, said "international practitioners *choose* to become involved in other people's conflicts. Thus we have a special responsibility to avoid making things worse" for the populations we are trying to serve.[15] The movement grew out of the profound failures of the 1990s and this "special responsibility" has become one of the aid industry's core obligations.

There are many pitfalls by which we violate the Do No Harm dictum in our work with locals. The doctrine is well established and need not be reiterated here other than to say

that our programs or even mere presence can at times put locals in harm's way. If we are objective enough to reflect on our potential for such culpability, then we might be persuaded to help locals with preparedness support. The Do No Harm dictum may therefore provide leverage in arguing for support of locals' self-protection from violent events that we ourselves might be exacerbating.

> *Unfortunately there are even deeper violations of the Do No Harm dictum than to put locals in harm's way.*

Unfortunately there are even deeper violations of the Do No Harm dictum than to *put* locals in harm's way. CCHW's upgrade of the maxim to *Do No Harm "2.0"* asserts that an agency can "make things worse" for locals in harm's way if it either *lulls* them there or it *leaves* them there ill prepared. One can be considered a failure to ensure their informed consent and the other a case of severe negligence. In order to address this all-too-common risk, a new generation of Do No Harm vigilance is needed.

It is "important to recognize that external agents alter the calculations of local actors" facing civil strife.[16] Agencies may be seen by locals as carrying the mantel or imprimatur of the entire international community. At times, our programs supplant local leadership, our financial largess distorts local economies, and our pronouncements alter local opinion. As Michael Barnett meticulously documents in *Empire of Humanity*, there is frequently a power imbalance between locals and representatives of the aide international.[17]

In the context of this oft-imbalanced relationship, the aid community offers its favored remedies for violence and injustice. It prefers efforts that mobilize civil society on behalf of good governance, rule of law, human rights, social justice, peace building, and conflict prevention. It also promotes early warning, accompaniment, diplomacy, peacekeeping, security sector reform, and more.

As a consequence, locals may think they are being promised solutions and solidarity. This risks prematurely raising expectations and assuaging fears. After all, conflict prevention efforts rarely help locals prepare for a failure to prevent violence. Human rights efforts rarely share tactical skills for living out those rights by outliving killers. And early warning efforts may sound an alarm—but rarely wire warning first to those in harm's way.

The stakes are high for civilians. Clearly it is not enough to say that local counterparts and communities generally "want" the presence and programs of the aid industry

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and "willingly" participate. Would it not be natural for endangered populations to be lulled by our reassuring presence and programs? Do we realize how much we might sometimes "tip the scales" in their decision making? We might create a false sense of security and essentially "hold" them in harm's way?

The opportunity cost

As Edward Luttwak bluntly warns, well-intended efforts by outsiders might "inhibit the normal remedy of endangered civilians, which is to escape from the combat zone. Deluded into thinking they will be protected, civilians in danger remain in place until it is too late to flee."[18] In holding sway over local opinions and actions, outsiders can

inadvertently impose an "opportunity cost" upon them. This cost is the attention, effort, and precious time given to one course of action as opposed to another.

$$\left[\textit{That which is overlooked and omitted is the opportunity cost.} \right]$$

Mary Anderson claims that external aid has "both a minimalist goal and a maximalist goal." At a minimum, aid "should not cause additional harm." But, her injunction continues, ask "what additional good can be done"[19] Maximalist goals require us to look not just at what is being done but what else *could* be done; not just at acts of commission but of omission as well. That which is omitted is, again, the opportunity cost. How do we try to ensure that we have taken all possible steps to save lives? Do we double down, strengthening our ability to do what we are already trying? Or do we instead look elsewhere for inspiration?

The Brookings' Beth Ferris finds that, "When international agencies leave—as they often do when the situation becomes too dangerous for them—communities are left on their own. That reality is recognized by all the major international actors even though much, and perhaps most, of their work focuses on strengthening their own ability to intervene instead of supporting local communities' self-protection capacities."[20] In terms of listening to and learning from locals, it is an opportunity *lost*. And "as many agencies discovered over the last decade, sometimes the unintended consequences of their programs were a result of their failure to listen to the people they wanted to help." [21]

Local genius and self-determination

As Fred Cuny once wrote, we view at-risk populations as "making 'rational' choices amongst unsatisfactory options… [We assume they] make choices for some purpose, and we must understand those purposes." Yet he goes on to say, "Indicating that a choice is 'purposeful' or 'rational' does not necessarily mean that it is careful or conscious, that it lists all alternatives and consequences... Many people simplify complex decisions by relying on habit, instinct, simple cues, and trial and error."[22] (He could well have added that they might rely on a trust in outsiders which is later shown to be misplaced.)

Fred Cuny's emphasis on understanding locals' purposes and choices and on considering consequences and alternatives is mirrored in the medical world from which the maxim Do No Harm comes. The core principle of *autonomy* requires respect for the self-determination of those being served. To seek and ensure their *informed consent* is to respect their autonomy and safeguard their capacity for self-determination. An aid agency risks undermining locals' self-determination if it neglects to:

1. discuss with them what consequences might result from a failure of outside protection efforts; and
2. learn about locals' own risk-benefit calculations and protection alternatives, then offer to:
   a. help mitigate any harmful consequences of their coping choices;
   b. support their most viable coping choices; and
   c. share, and support their informed adoption of, self-protection lessons learned elsewhere

Many an agency has worked with local counterparts and communities for long periods before one day being separated from them by violence. Yet despite whatever good it does, an agency distorts its very reason for being if it interrupts civilians' instinct to brace

for survival, fails to fully discuss with them potential consequences and alternatives—and then leaves them in harm's way ill prepared. This might not constitute a form of negligence in the legal sense, but it certainly could by the agency's very own core ethical standards.

SELF INTEREST

All providers, whether offering development or humanitarian aid, may encounter violence and no assumption can be made about which type of agency is most apt to face it. In today's many prolonged situations of "no war, no peace," a humanitarian "emergency relief" agency may find itself settled into a fairly safe position of providing maintenance aid for years—while a development agency may find itself increasingly unsettled as benign conditions turn more and more dangerous. The point here is that both can and often do find themselves ill prepared for increased violence.

It is in the profound best interest of these agencies to do whatever they can to *salvage and sustain* any benefits of their work with locals that will be impacted by violence. Though counterintuitive, it is by harnessing the abilities of local communities and local counterparts themselves that our missions may be rescued.

In the best interests of development work

A development agency that anticipates and adapts to growing danger not only stays relevant to the needs of people in harm's way but also helps safeguard years of work. There is no sector of development work that cannot be undone by violence. "One in every three development dollars was lost over the last 30 years due to reverses from conflict or disaster." [23] As is said, "Conflict is development in reverse." How can helping to mitigate such impacts through better preparedness not be a core concern of the development community?   (Conflict also forces evermore funding from development aid to humanitarian aid. How can helping reduce that trend not be a core concern of the development community?)

> *Violence will set progress back— but a foundation of readiness will help buffer both private and public assets.*

The USIP's Nancy Lindborg contends that, "We will need to double down on our efforts to shock-proof development."[24] Support of local preparedness can help agencies get development work onto a conflict footing. Violence will set progress back—but a foundation of readiness will somewhat help buffer both private and public assets.

Private property and livelihoods

In regard to private property and livelihoods, families and communities facing violence often find ways to cushion and conserve resources, adapt and substitute livelihoods, or strip and transfer their properties. When all else fails, they may take flight—but it need not reverse all gains made in development. Well-planned flight focuses on getting social units and economic assets out of harm's way. The better preserved these two things remain, then the less severe and lengthy displacement may be.

The ultimate duration of displacement—a grave concern and cost of the international community these days—depends on many factors. But, security allowing, those who have kept their social units and economic assets most intact have a better chance of not

being impoverished by displacement; of navigating the costs and demands of returning home; and of rebuilding their lives earlier. For them, a vital portion of past development gains will have been salvaged and actual development can resume sooner. On a prima facie level, this is clearly in the basic self-interest of the development aid community.

Public infrastructure and utilities

In regard to public infrastructure and utilities, locals often try to mitigate damage done to public assets. They also create "workarounds" that substitute for and temporarily offset the damage or disruption that does occur. Efforts to relocate and hide necessities ranging from pumps and generators up to entire factories or services, and to stockpile spare parts and exhaustible resources, all lessen the initial losses of vital infrastructure to bombardment or looting. Subsequent to that locals may, as the ample history of wartime undergrounds and shadow governments show, keep public works and workers functioning to a degree.

The sectors of transportation, energy (electricity and fuel), water, sanitation, health, telecommunications, education, banking and finance, markets, and more all require skilled workers. Conflict often reduces their number because many leave (the 'brain drain') and fewer come in (since technical schooling and placement is disrupted) to the skilled workforce. Yet often, non-formal training and certification of professionals continues discreetly. At the same time, entrepreneurs or even cottage industries spring up to establish stopgap measures in all these vital service areas. And all the while, everyday civilians devise and disseminate—on a massive scale—methods of working around or substituting for gaps in public service. They are all classic examples of the adage: "Nothing works, but everything is possible."

> *Locals try to salvage and sustain utilities and services thus preserving some facets of development.*

There are limits to mitigation in the face of armed conflict, thus the result is more apt to be "shock resistant" than "shock proof." There are also limits to "workarounds" that may prove to be suboptimal, unsustainable, or even detrimental. Regardless, locals in most conflicts try to salvage and sustain (if even just in the short term) utilities and services for sake of public welfare. In this way, some facets of development are preserved. And new ones are created: small-scale income is generated (water 'taxi' transport, garbage removal teams, telecom kiosks, etc); innovation is spurred (a great many in the area of alternative energy alone); and "appropriate technology" (which stresses self-reliance, accessibility, affordability, and adaptability to community and changing contexts) is bolstered.

All of these actions can be incubated or supported by outsiders. The basic goals of "shock resistance" are to preserve what one can and be positioned for faster rehabilitation when conditions finally allow for peace and reconstruction. Although violent conflict inflicts a net decline of public infrastructure and utilities, these efforts keep many more assets and modified services in play than would be the case otherwise. And this too is in the profound self-interest of the development aid community.

In the best interests of humanitarian work

Fundamental humanitarian access, space, and presence

If the CEOs of every emergency relief agency were asked which is most essential: *who* gets humanitarian action done, or simply that it get done—they all would state the latter. This leads to one of the great puzzles *and* opportunities of humanitarian aid work. Those very same CEOs might also argue that their right to humanitarian access, humanitarian space, and humanitarian presence is essential to humanitarian action itself. That is, humanitarian action *is theirs*. This is not a rhetorical flourish: it adamantly defines *who* does humanitarian work. "Underpinning the logic of institutional preservation is the aid community's ingrained belief that humanitarian action is indispensable to the survival of [conflict's victims]… This remains the axiomatic starting point for humanitarian action."[25] This conflates lifesaving work with the modern humanitarian enterprise: that is, with *us*.

The reality is that much of what civilians in harm's way do (and have done for millennia) is "indispensable to their survival" and can easily be called humanitarian action. Humanitarian "access" can be seen as our own unfettered ability to move, reach, and serve them—or as *their* ability to acquire or devise what they need. Humanitarian "space" can be seen as a physical reference to our workspace and a functional reference to our ability to work unhindered—or to *their* ability (not at all dependent upon a demarcated inviolable 'space') to help each other in safe and effective enough fashion. Humanitarian "presence" can be seen as our being there—or simply the existence of lifesaving action: *by them*.

For many years the humanitarian aid community has expended great amounts of advocacy and negotiation on these questions of access, space, and presence. The concern is that each of these is under grave threat—and thus the entire enterprise faces an existential threat. Yet this threat presents an *opportunity* for incentivizing the humanitarian community to offer local preparedness support. Such support will help preserve humanitarian access, humanitarian space, and humanitarian presence *by locals*. This is the case whether they be local counterparts or local communities—they are all involved in humanitarian action. So again, which is most essential: *who* gets humanitarian action done, or simply that it get done? The strong tendency has been for aid agencies to relinquish center stage only after their backs are to the wall; when it's clear that danger may force them to work remotely.

> *Much of what civilians in harm's way do actually **is** humanitarian action.*

Remote management—the practice of removing expatriate workers to safer locations and having local counterparts bear the full responsibility and risk of aid delivery—has been experimented with for years and likely saved a great many lives. Nevertheless, numerous reports continue to find that our planning for "post-access" strategies like this is too often thin or even absent. It is still commonly found to be ad hoc and belated. Thus it is in the profound interests of humanitarian work that this transition be given more strategic thought. One place to begin is to revisit what humanitarian access, space, and presence really mean.

Fundamental safety and effectiveness in worst case scenarios

A humanitarian agency's concern for safe and effective delivery is never more profound than when danger is at its peak. But an agency that adjusts the architecture and field craft of aid delivery amid growing violence can help its local counterparts serve

more safely and effectively as its expatriates pull back. Local counterparts who are going to face violence alone must be safe before they can serve. And they will be safer if certain adjustments in the "architecture" and "field craft" of aid delivery have been made. This vital retrofitting is described later here.

In regard to the profile or *architecture* of the aid vehicle, a fresh and flexible mindset is needed. Facilitation modules can cover tactics like how to downgrade identity; downsize infrastructure; disperse, monetize, or outsource supplies; disperse staff; disperse beneficiaries; and delegate work. These steps "deconstruct" aid institutions so they are less of a target. It may entail flattening hierarchies and moving from static platforms to mobile networks. In place of echeloned organization flowcharts and office trappings might be rudimentary and devolved structures with decision-making pushed to the ground. Some describe it as work while "dissolving" into society. Working while "cut off" is natural under this architecture.

> *Local counterparts will be safer and more effective if we adjust the architecture and field craft of aid delivery.*

In regard to *field craft*, facilitation modules could cover skill sets such as humanitarian intelligence, communications, safe movement, and threat response. More than the skill sets so-named today, the preparations envisioned here would pertain to more asymmetric, less permissive conditions. (As but one example: beyond today's road security courses in route planning, pairing up, defensive driving, and radio checks—preparedness support could also broach topics like dispersed privatized motor pools; off-road, nighttime, and non-mechanized movement; and nonlethal tactics to decoy, divert or delay hostile pursuit.)

Most UN and NGO relief agencies have found it necessary at times to adopt discreet profiles, defensive deception, and selective transparency. We tend to rigidly view these compromises as "exceptions to the rule" and do not easily internalize or share them. These exceptions were driven by crises, *not* by doctrine or tactical skill—and that is the recipe for continued ad-hoc and amateur efforts.

Adjustments in the architecture and field craft of aid benefit not only the security of local counterparts, but their freedom of movement as well. That, in turn, enhances the quality and effectiveness of the aid. With a strengthened ability to communicate and move with more discretion and less hindrance, local counterparts will establish and sustain better community relationships. This improves the acceptance and targeting of aid. That is to say, agencies do not need overt visibility in order to establish an effective presence among the population.

This same operational freedom helps local providers navigate the powers that be. Selectively they deal with trustable actors—but avoid criminal or violent spoilers who have forfeited any claim to be dealt with as a legitimate authority.[26] "Active presence does not necessarily mean a large footprint or presenting an attractive target… [Moreover,] presence without armed protection is possible... for organizations that have a small footprint."[27]

Revamped local providers will find they can: better assess security; discreetly reach and win acceptance from communities; navigate friends and foes; deliver aid based on need rather than extortion; monitor and evaluate goods or services with less interference; and more. In doing this they will stand even more accountable to beneficiaries, parent agencies, and donors. And with this improved ability to deliver on commitments comes

a virtuous circle: operational freedom that nurtures ties of acceptance *improves delivery*—and improved delivery further strengthens acceptance.[28]

Well before reaching a threshold of violence which forces expatriates to withdraw, an ever-increasing amount of daily operational control can be devolved to local counterparts. And preparedness discussion can focus on future aspects of the remote interface, should they become necessary. They could include plans for distance consultation, distance resourcing, distance monitoring and evaluation, distance humanitarian intelligence, and more.

Agencies will experience less disruption to their mandate because they have more systematically helped brace their local counterparts for violence. There is no more existential purpose than this. The stronger the remote relationship during the months or even years of separation ahead—the more "intactness" that is sustained—then the better

> *This offers a continuity of mission such as agencies have never achieved before.*

will expatriates someday to hit the ground running upon rejoining the local counterparts they once had to leave behind. This represents a continuity of mission such as agencies have never achieved before.

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Most fundamentally, we should support locals' capacity to outlast violence because we so often lack or lose our own capacity in the face of it. Through their own ingenuity and durability "most people survive and do so without assistance from external parties" despite the horrendous risk they face in conflicts or abusive environments. [29] The Center for Civilians in Harm's Way hosts an ongoing ***Inventory*** of how civilians attain safety and life-critical sustenance and services by themselves outlines hundreds of tactics. Some of these tactics alone have saved millions of lives in the modern era.

And this begs the question: how many millions more might survive with just a modicum of support for those survival capacities? The implications for where we invest our support are enormous—yet still largely unheeded. In 2001 Kofi Annan said that local actors are "the basic source of protection, especially when all other layers of protection fail … funding and training [them] is an important investment." [30] Yet fifteen years later the Secretariat of the World Humanitarian Summit reported:

> One call has arisen more than any other: recognize that affected people are the central actors in their own survival… This requires a fundamental change in the humanitarian enterprise…. [There must be] a greater investment in empowering people… Humanitarian preparedness must be reoriented to support local coping strategies… support individual and community-based self-protection. [31]

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By the end of this paper, aid agencies will be held up as the last best hope for bolstering local self-protection. But before describing that great potential in a companion document, the Facilitator's Guide for Preparedness Support, it must also be noted here that since the modern inception of our enterprise we have also had severe limitations.

UNWELCOME TRUTHS

Without a doubt our work over the years has brought safety, sustenance, and services to millions. But of course that is not the whole storyline. There also are deadly junctures when we fail to act on warnings, prevent conflict and abuse, continue our programs, guarantee our asylum or safe havens, withdraw into well-prepared remote-support operations, protect repatriation, or prevent the slide from "post-conflict" back to conflict.

This paper is concerned with the many times we are separated from the local people we work with and for. Questions must be asked: Have we helped them brace for the coming violence? Will any protection that we helped set up remain effective beyond our separation? The unwelcome truth is that we still commonly overestimate our capacity and underestimate theirs. Simply put, we often lack or lose any meaningful *influence* or *presence* and must leave too many men, women, and children to their own devises.

Elusive Influence

Consider all of the protective actions we attempt that are premised upon our ability to influence violent actors and events. Consider then that this premise commonly proves wrong—and we are not ready with a Plan B based on local capacity for self-preservation.

Our *prevention-based* efforts do not help locals prepare for the frequent failure to prevent conflict. Our *early warning-based* efforts rarely wire that warning toward those actually in harm's way. Our *rights-based* efforts do not help them live out their rights by out outliving their killers. Our efforts to help build *good governance* and *rule of law* do not help brace them for the lawless situation we frequently must leave them to.

When atrocities commence, how often then do other remedies based on *advocacy* or *negotiation*, *censure* or *sanction* succeed? Not often enough. How often do *peacekeepers* prevail, or *security sector reforms* take hold, before the worst of the killing is over? Quite seldom. How often do *diplomacy-based* protections succeed? As the head of UNDP once noted, "90% of fragile peace agreements could revert back to conflict during the first year of a peace." [32] We all know how frequently the word "ceasefire" is followed by "violated" and "truce" is followed by "collapsed". We all know that a chronic state of "no war—no peace" is the status quo for decades in many places.

Our notion of a *responsibility to protect* is commonly interpreted to mean that if governments are unwilling or unable to protect their citizens, then responsibility vests

> *Consider the protections we attempt that are premised on our ability to influence violent actors and events. Consider then how often this premise proves wrong.*

upward to the international community—which likewise is often unwilling or at least unable, foundering on the obvious limits of our influence. Seldom do we heed or act on the fact that responsibility and the capacity for protection also vest downward.

Ephemeral Presence

Consider too all of the protective actions we attempt that are premised upon our ability to be with those who are threatened. This is another premise that commonly proves

unrealistic. We often fail to attain the "humanitarian holy trinity" of access, presence, and space we need to be relevant—but again, are then seldom ready with a Plan B.

   Though many still see our having "a presence" as a sin qua non for saving lives, it is axiomatic that a presence is hardest for us to gain or maintain where it is most needed—where danger is the greatest. Even where we establish havens, *camp-based* protection may be limited to a curfew for international staff and a fenced perimeter for the residents inside. And often what one finds inside is a very tenuous situation. History is replete with examples of agencies leaving camp due to insecurity or the manipulation of aid, camp residents leaving because of onerous or dangerous living conditions, and country hosts simply forcing them to go. In the face of bleak, unlivable warehousing or refoulement or both, camp residents leave with nothing but our "repatriation kits" that do little to safeguard them from the dangers they may face next.

   Program-based protections based on outsiders' expertise are short-lived if those programs collapse without having added to local capacity for self-preservation. We do not question the wisdom of "mainstreaming" protection into our daily work—until the day violence forces us to abandon that work midstream. Is it wise to "integrate" protection into programming that might soon "disintegrate"?

   None of these are controversial observations. These are the well-recorded gaps and transitions when our efforts not only fail—but may place locals further in harm's way. Still, we rarely ask whether our bedrock notion of "presence as protection" might foster in locals a false sense of security and interrupt survival strategies that they might otherwise have attempted for themselves. By affecting their calculus we become an organic part of events. Local populations are reassured by our presence. They are reassured by our pronouncements of solidarity and of stock characters like the "duty bearer" and "rights holder;" of diplomatic salvation by those in pinstripe suits or dramatic rescue by those in blue helmets. When such rescue never arrives, the real-world effect of the hope we offered may be to have delayed their preparedness.

> *Consider too the protections we attempt that are premised on our ability to be present—and again how often the premise proves ephemeral.*

> *There are a number of unwelcome truths. Most obviously, the landscape in which [we] operate is changing…. Without the prerequisites of access and space, we fail our responsibility to protect. We seem to be moving into a time in which the protection of civilians must be addressed with direct and innovative tools.* [33]
>
> —*Jan Egeland, Under-Secretary General*

   Dozens of the **"best and brightest"** in the aid world have concluded we must do more to support local capacity to survive alone before we lose meaningful influence or access. That finding is not unique to this paper. It is as Walter Kälin claims: "Crisis-affected populations will continue to suffer the consequences of our compromised access unless we develop new, innovative approaches such as assistance by 'remote control' or development interventions in the midst of a crisis that strengthen the resilience of communities at risk …." [34]

   The promise which lies in front of us is that although violence will often incapacitate us, we are in a position to bolster the capacity of local providers to serve and local populations to survive in our absence. In her exhaustive overview of civilian protection

Elizabeth Ferris claims we must be clear about our limitations—but also *be aware of our unrealized potential*: "In addition to providing humanitarian assistance, the particular and perhaps unique contributions which [we] can make is in supporting communities to protect themselves." [35] Some of those limitations have been described above. The good news is that in modest ways we have begun probing this unrealized potential.

PROMISING EFFORTS

Given these inescapable conclusions, there have been encouraging experiments in supporting local providers through "remote management" and local populations through "community-based protection". So far these tests have been small scale, scattered, and not systematized. Yet they help us see the possibly exponential impacts of supporting locals' ability to deal with violence when they are forced to face it alone. These efforts are promising—and should be taken to their next logical levels.

Remotely-Run Service Provision

Delivering aid through third parties or using judiciously transparent and selectively consensual methods have long been part of the humanitarian community's experience. In the modern aid era there have been times when we discreetly moved aid cross-border without passports, visas, customs approval, radio licensing, registration, host country agreements, or any other trappings of "due respect" for the constituted powers.

We have also practiced defensive deception. As Mary Anderson notes, "warriors often steal aid goods [... and] theft is the most widely recognized process by which aid feeds into conflict." She highlights "practical lessons learned" such as "strategies for delivering aid secretly that thwart thieves' need for knowledge [about when and where valuable resources will be, and] strategies for dispersing aid that thwart both opportunities and incentives for extortion or plunder.[36] She provides examples of how aid providers have used concealment, evasion, and secrecy to trick "warring factions and thugs". [37] That phrase cuts a large swath: thuggery constitutes much of what is nominally called "soldiering" today.

There have also been many occasions when we largely relinquished and entrusted our relief resources to local third parties for delivery. Sometimes they were armed groups working without the consent of sovereign governments.

These tended to be episodes of limited duration when conventional aid was blocked and our backs were to the wall. They were aberrations, aid's "exceptions to the rule," and rarely made it into our repertoire of retrievable lessons learned. But with the advent of more prolonged crises, more thought has been given this past decade to ways of operating through the discreet "remote management" of local counterparts in dangerous environments. A landmark report on good practice in complex security environments, "found that the few aid organisations that have maintained or expanded operations in the most dangerous environments have employed a combination of highly localized programming that enables local acceptance with a low-profile stance and low visibility..." [38]

There are now more deliberate efforts to adapt to these settings. According to Gerry Martone of the International Rescue Committee, "it's a different profile than we've had in the past… remote control has become the dominant implementation methodology" in insecure aid settings. [39] By now virtually every major aid agency has used it. The logic of having locals in the lead and operating in ways less exposed to risk is unassailable.

Yet despite the number of lives being saved by remote and low-profile work, these experiments need to be taken to the next level. As the World Disasters Report of 2015 notes, "remote management is becoming a necessary mode of operation but one that presents ethical dilemmas about risk transfer to local actors." [40]

Nearly all the literature highlights a need for better preparedness and planning for remote management options.

Such a transfer of risk often happens because the transition is ill prepared, treats our counterparts inequitably, and fails to retrofit the aid vehicle enough for those dangers. In turn, each of these shortcomings diminishes the safety, quality and effectiveness of service delivery in the post-access period.

Not Prepared

Generally, aid agencies have "[not dedicated] resources to developing formal policy" for remote management because they "saw the practice as a temporary measure and not their normal way of programming; […they saw] it as "less-than-optimal and potentially negative operational model." [41] This of course is the nature of any Plan B.

Perhaps in the minds of many, a distance-support model is hard to accept. It suggests that locals can adequately handle daily operational control—which in turn challenges our hegemonic professionalism. And it drives home the fact that we could not cope with violence, much less exert meaningful influence over it. It means we could not "rescue" them. So too, an aid model premised on less-than-full transparency or consent chafes against our self-image of doing obvious good that need not be done discreetly.

We have the skillsets to fix valid concerns raised about the quality of aid under remote arrangements—but it may be these "aid industry mindsets" that cause us to withdraw in belated and makeshift ways. Planning for our own tactical retreat is professionally and personally unpleasant. But plan we must.

As far back as 2004, a UNHCR review found that locals are often "ready and willing to undertake responsibilities [when foreigners evacuate, but that] "there is no systematic preparation of national staff members for such contingencies." [42]   Not enough has changed on the ground in the decade since.

As of 2013, "nearly all the literature reviewed highlighted a need for better preparedness and planning for remote management options." [43] "Despite the prevalence of remote programming, little policy guidance exists within the international aid community on how to effectively plan for and implement it. At the same time, the demand for such guidance… in dangerous settings is evident." [44] Our planning for "post-access" strategies like this is still too often thin or even absent. Despite the life-critical service they help sustain, today's remote management practices have been referred to as "reactive rather than strategic, reflecting a last-ditch effort," [45] "scrambling at a moment's notice," [46] and "ad hoc" as well as "unethical." [47]

Without a policy commitment rooted in agency ethos which declares a duty of care to local counterparts, and without guidance delineating red line triggers for consulting with

those counterparts about preparing the ground for remote support—then adequate plans will rarely be in place when intolerable thresholds of violence arrive.

"While these issues are undoubtedly difficult and ethically fraught, not addressing them only delays the formation of clearly communicated, transparent policies and practical field-based operational plans." [48] Action driven by crisis rather than policy and doctrine is the recipe for continued ad hoc and amateurish efforts. "Several evaluations note poor experiences when local partnerships or increased reliance on national staff happens without preparation." [49] "Very few agencies have systematically or strategically planned for when, whether, and how to employ [remote work…]. As a result, the outcome was sometimes an unethical transfer of risk to national staffers and local partners." [50]

> The logical outcome of this ill preparedness is that we put our local counterparts more in harm's way than necessary.

Not equitable

When strategic thought occurred it has typically focused—in descending order—on expatriate security and evacuation; stewardship of properties and programs by local counterparts; local staff security; and lastly local partner security. That is to say, we differentiate our "duty of care" for those doing dangerous lifesaving work depending upon who they are. Often the result of shifting to remote management "is not a security gain, but rather a shift of risk from internationals to nationals—who typically are provided with fewer security resources, materials, and training than their international counterparts. [51]

Local counterparts are first-tier targets for whom we offer second-class protection. Essentially it is a caste system. Arguably, in the parallel world of humanitarian ethics, the paramount *principle of humanity* would apply. Do locals fall outside the scope of humanity just because they work for us? And as regards the *principle of impartiality*, would making security distinctions on the basis of nationality not violate the spirit of that norm?

As early as 2000 Koenraad Van Brabant concluded that, "The security of national staff remains a painful weakness; there is even resistance to facing the issue." [52] Yet a decade later another authoritative report found that while agencies have "increasing awareness of the need to provide better and more equitable duty of care to [host country] staff, they nearly universally admit that they have a long way to go in this regard." [53]

At the bottom of this caste system come the local groups that we work with. The same report concludes that, "In terms of local partner organisations there is more of a gap to bridge." They are "used and treated as service providers rather than partners," and "security training provided for [them] is still a rare occurrence…" [54] Another report found that in terms of our security policies, training and support, "local NGOs [ranked] the lowest of all." [55]

There are reasons for the different level of security attention that we pay expatriate staff as opposed to local counterparts. They usually have to do either with a faulty assumption that local counterparts are safer than expatriates or with the view that we do not have (or cannot absorb) the same legal responsibility

> The logical outcome of inequitable security based on nationality or contract status is that we put our local counterparts more in harm's way than necessary.

for them. Reasons such as these are either flawed and can be debunked or have some merit yet can be fixed, as is discussed in a forthcoming reflection paper on "aid industry mindsets". The reasons are not malicious or callous—but those are not the standards required in charges of negligence or dereliction of duty.

The bottom line is that we do not adequately prepare for the risk which our employed or contracted counterparts will face and that "amounts to a dereliction of agencies' duty of care." [56]

The dangerous inequity cited here will not be resolved just by providing counterparts with security training and hardware (like radios, vehicles, etc.) equal to what expatriates received before they withdrew. After all, if a regimen of training and equipment proves not good enough to keep expatriates from evacuating, then it is not good enough for the locals who are left behind either. Rather, we need to pay our local counterparts the *same fidelity* as we do expatriate staff. Many would argue that, "Agencies have an *equal duty of care* to all employees, regardless of nationality." [Emphasis added] [57] This duty of care can only be animated by a commitment rooted in agency ethos and actualized by retrofitting the aid delivery vehicle for new terrain where the old principles, standards, and procedures are dangerously failing.

Not retrofitted

Beyond pulling risk-averse foreigners back, remote management practice "does not necessarily overcome the operational constraints to service delivery that led to its adoption in the first place". [58] In this regard, today's remote work often is not an innovation but instead an extension—an outsourcing—of our vulnerable aid delivery practices.

Those practices are woven into aid's indelible iconography: the well-flagged office, warehouse, camp and convoy. We see ourselves in a business of self-evident good and are not easily inclined to veil our identity or leave the bricks-and-mortar infrastructure we worked so hard to build. We try to ensure our operational freedom through principled negotiation and advocacy—which rely on an ability to *influence* violent actors and events that may not exist.

Our security regimens are left the very difficult task of safeguarding this architecture of exposed platforms and backstopping field practices better suited to more permissive environments. By and large they cannot prevent the office and warehouse from being looted, the camp from being militarized, or the multimillion dollar convoy from being stopped by a seven-dollar landmine. Conversely, these are "opportunity structures" for belligerents and criminals. [59] These are enticing undefended repositories of resources (food, supplies, vehicles, conscripts) that armed groups almost have no choice but to fight for control over.

This then is what we pass on to our local staff and partners. They are easy targets with a street address. They are made vulnerable by a fixed infrastructure and exposed to harm as they handle very alluring assets. We give them the office keys or contracts at the same moment such a public promotion could put them at great risk. Unless they can win acceptance from armed groups, including criminals and spoilers, or they fall under the deterrent protection of a patron, clan or community, then working for absentee bosses like us may put them deeper in harm's way.

We often require them to run an aid vehicle that we have not had the strategic foresight and tactical prowess to retrofit for the changed realities. Our institution-building and capacity-building efforts with them remain largely unchanged. We usually have a firm idea of what good local service providers should look like: a lot like us. It is another of our "aid industry mindsets". We model them after ourselves—even though our own highly evolved aid machinery, with all of its administrative, logistical, financial, and evaluative capability, is not well designed to survive violence. The "right capacity" can become diminished or even dangerous in the wrong situation.

> The logical outcome of failing to retrofit aid delivery is that we put our local counterparts more in harm's way than necessary.

Local providers typically know more about these situations than we do. Even locals who spontaneously rise up to lead relief and protection efforts, though not versed in the service profession, tend to have the off-setting advantage of knowing their environment. We have much to learn from them which would improve our missions.

As it is expressed by some humanitarian leaders from the Global South, "Local actors should be the ones 'capacity building' internationals: to explain contexts and culture and how to work" in specific crisis environments. [60]

—The Local to Global Protection Project

Time and again locals have devised structures and strategies to survive dangerous environments so they could serve their people. Yet we have given "[scant] thought to the coping strategies of local organizations." [61] There is remarkably little research into how local groups deal with the threats they face so they can help others. [62] However, as is noted in a future briefing paper, "Civilians serving civilians amid violence", there is boundless proof of local capacity to provide life-critical support amid violence.

It is found within the local NGO sector—and beyond. Indeed the local actors most capable of mobilizing a populace to brace for threats may more often be found outside such formal organizations. [63] It is found within the humanitarian aid experience—and beyond. In regard to the latter: undergrounds, resistance groups, and civilian auxiliaries or relief wings of armed movements, segments of which are unarmed, carry out life-saving preparations and services without benefit of the professional guidance or standards we assume are essential.

The same is true of civil society groups facing repression. They are often brutally forced into an evasive posture yet continue their non-violent action and even shadow governance and service. In these many ways history reminds us that mere civilians learn how to survive and serve amid overwhelming odds.

The lessons they have learned should be incorporated into any retrofitting we do to the aid delivery vehicle and its security envelope. Consider the "security triangle," long cited as the paradigm for aid security.

Acceptance

Protection   **Deterrence**
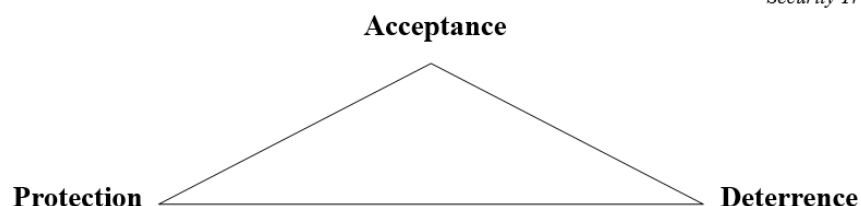
We tend not to learn much less heed local provider insights and preferences which could perhaps strengthen this triad. For instance, as is described in the upcoming "Facilitator's Guide for Preparedness Support," local providers might not feel *"deterrence"* is best achieved by a warning of sanctions or threat of withdrawing aid. After all, the one rarely succeeds while the other revokes aid and protection from their own people.

Nor might they feel deterrence will be accomplished by the formal host state forces or peacekeeping missions that outsiders think are the most legitimate but which they themselves may not trust. They might instead feel their best choice is to arm themselves or ensure their security through payment to or allegiance with an armed group. It is of course their right, but this paper does not address or advocate or it. This is not a judgement made on ethical or legal grounds—after all, Protocol I of the Fourth Geneva Convention recognizes the legitimacy of armed civil defense undertaking humanitarian tasks.
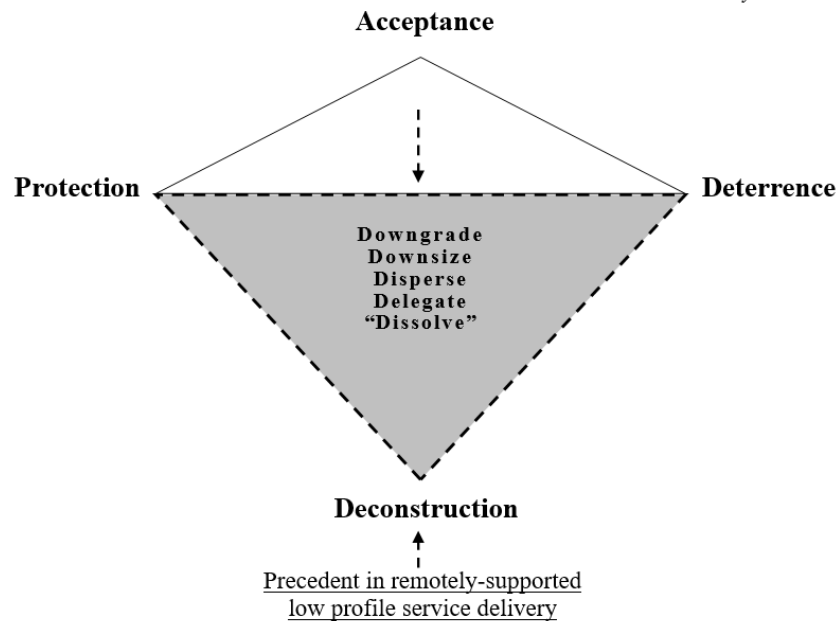
Rather, this paper holds that more focus is needed on (1) the all-too-common situations in which there simply will be no outside rescuer, formal or informal, present and with the influence to deter atrocity, and on (2) the many unarmed strategies for securing local providers and populations (cited under the next two legs of this triad).

Local providers might not feel *"acceptance"* is best achieved by exhibiting principled action and relationship building or negotiating with all powerbrokers, as outsiders tend to recommend. Instead they might feel safer with a more selective path to transparency and consent, evading specific powerbrokers while approaching others and cutting deals for accommodation—some based on cost-benefit calculations which we on the outside may find unpalatable.

Local providers might not feel *"protection"* is best achieved by curfews, no-go zones, and hardened compounds; these measures, often urged by outsiders, can leave them cut off and bunkerized—which itself is an unsafe posture. They might feel that announcing their movements to belligerent parties to prevent misunderstandings might in fact invite attack by criminals and spoilers.

A method of protection increasingly recognized by outsiders and agreed upon with their local counterparts is to reduce operational visibility. Yet even here, local providers have been known to take this practice to the next level: in dire situations they adopt strict anonymity and avoidance, relying on networks of affinity groups in order to do their lifesaving work.

This drastically reduced profile—arguably a deconstruction of aid—constitutes the fourth corner of what can be described as a "security diamond". It essentially adds a lower canopy of security to the conventional triangle.

Acceptance

Protection · Deterrence

Downgrade
Downsize
Disperse
Delegate
"Dissolve"

Deconstruction

Precedent in remotely-supported
low profile service delivery

In the future this will be at the heart of any effective retrofitting of aid in least-permissive settings. It relies upon drastic, though reversible, changes in the architecture of the aid vehicle and the procedures (or "field craft") that safeguard it.

Counterintuitively for we who have long focused on institutional building, there would be in these settings a strategic effort to *de*-institutionalize. This temporarily subordinates formal work hierarchies to the kind of social architecture that has governed people's aid and protection for millennia: kinship groups and social networks down in associational life. These trusted customary subgroups

> In the future, aid delivery will survive the most dangerous settings by deconstructing itself. This is a new idea for us—but not for civilians themselves.

often survive when violence polarizes or atomizes governments and institutions. In an era when "the unwritten social contract for aid workers [in many conflicts] no longer seems to hold," [64] and amid situations in which we might soon be separated from them, the best possible bonds and networks to reinforce are the ones they hold between themselves.

The powerful impulse to serve "one's own people" is what makes this effective. Where the social contract discriminates against some groups there are ways to disperse and calibrate aid to checkerboard loyalties, making aid "impartial in the aggregate."

Deinstitutionalizing aid entails major changes to its physical architecture of aid. This includes reversible yet methodical steps to downgrade identity; downsize infrastructure; disperse, monetize or outsource supplies; disperse staff; disperse beneficiaries; and delegate work. Some describe it as work while "dissolving" into society.

This architecture forms a workplace both discreet and mobile that is further secured by certain procedures ("field craft") long used by locals facing violence but seldom considered by internationals. It revamps a providers' humanitarian intelligence, communications, movement, and threat response in ways more suitable to these dangerous asymmetrical situations. It *also* requires a new generation of remote support practices in distance consultation, distance resourcing, distance monitoring and

evaluation, and distance humanitarian intelligence. Working while physically "cut off" is natural under this architecture and these modalities.

Winning "acceptance" is the security method closest to humanitarian principles. Even when aid moves toward a low (deconstructed) profile, acceptance should remain a core objective. It is important to note that remote operations can have a low profile *and* popular acceptance at the same time. Some observers conclude the opposite, reasoning that a low profile comes at the expense of acceptance. They might be conflating "presence" with "visibility" or equating transparency with openness under all circumstances.

> A low profile joined with retrofitted tactics improves operational freedom. Working while physically "cut off" is natural under this architecture and these modalities.

Historical analogies have shown time and again that overt visibility is *not* needed by a movement to ensure its acceptance from and coordination with a population living under repressive occupiers and tyrants. The same is true as local providers try to aid their own people. A low profile architecture with retrofitted tactics actually improves their *operational freedom*; it helps them discreetly maintain access to and presence among the populace.

During the war in Iraq, "networks for relief [were] established through close contact with local leaders, understanding political structures and building up trust with the population, whilst at the same time retaining a low profile." [65] Operational freedom is the reverse of "bunkerization" which inhibits building strategic relationships and which many have noted degrades efforts at building acceptance. It also is at the heart of "humanitarian space," which most often is a reference to "the conditions that allow" lifesaving work.

This same operational freedom helps providers navigate the powers that be. Selectively they deal with trustable actors—but avoid criminal or violent spoilers who have forfeited any claim to be dealt with as a legitimate authority. [66] "Active presence does not necessarily mean a large footprint or presenting an attractive target… [Moreover,] presence without armed protection is possible... for organizations that have a small footprint." [67]

With this improved ability to deliver on commitments comes a virtuous circle: operational freedom that nurtures ties of acceptance *improves delivery*—and improved delivery further strengthens acceptance. [68] This is remotely-supported aid delivery at its best.

Sound like too much to plan for? "There is no doubt that there will be future crises where high levels of insecurity will make the deployment of foreign aid workers impossible. But these crises are unlikely to arise without warning, giving time for careful preparation for effective remote delivery." [69]

Conclusion

Remotely-run service provision is a tremendously important step toward supporting local capacity for self-preservation. Yet as of today, the obvious conclusion is that remote programs are

> The mindsets that often lock us into this posture of ill-preparedness, harmful inequity, and failure to adapt can be explained—but no longer excused.

neither as safe nor as effective as they could be. When an aid agency is not prepared, the

result is ad hoc and amateurish action—which in turn is unsafe. When its duty of care is not equitable, the result is less attention to counterpart security—which by definition is unsafe. When its operations rely on profiles and protocols which worked well before but are not being retrofitted for growing dangers, then the result is "right capacity, wrong situation,"—which is simply unsafe.

Our local counterparts need to be reasonably safe before they are able to serve reasonably well. Short of that, it is the beneficiary who suffers. The revamped architecture and field craft cited here can pull them more out of harm's way.

Potential for quality aid and community protection

The retrofitting discussed here would enhance our counterparts' operational freedom—which could improve the quality of their work. Specifically, they could better assess security; discreetly reach and win acceptance from communities; navigate friends and foes; deliver aid based on need rather than extortion; monitor and evaluate goods or services with less interference; and more. In doing this they would stand much more accountable to beneficiaries, parent agencies, and donors.

"Agencies and donors generally accept that standards and the level of sophistication and quality of programme activities will slip, often dramatically, when an operation 'goes remote'. [But] lack of planning and guidance… exacerbates the problem." [70] That is, we needlessly endanger and hinder the effectiveness of remotely-run service provision.

Importantly, the resulting harm to local *communities* is not only that aid is being compromised by a poor transition to our local counterparts. The potential for better protection of the populace is too. As noted in the "Facilitator's Guide for Preparedness Support," when violence closes in our local counterparts will often be best position to pivot and support community-based protection in new ways.

It is vital to note that conflict can change not only *how* providers deliver—but perhaps *what* they deliver as well. Should their aid and services not stay relevant to the recipients' changing reality? If so, this obliges them to reevaluate their missions with an eye to helping recipients cope with growing violence and its effects. In the face of a dire loss of *security*, a collapse of *sustenance* (particularly with access to markets and livelihoods blocked), or an utter breakdown of conventional *services* (especially public health), a local provider may need to realign its mission.

This takes foresight, retooling, and a deeper engagement with the populace. A vital lesson voiced in one of the few authoritative reports on distance work is: "Invest in relationships with local staff, partners, and communities prior to shifting to remote management." [71]

Community-Based Protection

The *Responsibility to Protect* doctrine is commonly interpreted to mean that if governments are unwilling or unable to protect their citizens, then responsibility vests upward to the international community (which likewise is often unwilling or at least unable). We hear far less about how responsibility and the capacity for protection also vest downward. For this reason, our

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increasing experimentation with activities called "community-based protection" is a very important development.

Most often atrocities happen when we are not present. We typically cannot stand with them at the physical point of contact with violence when capacities matter the most. Thus of all possible protections, the ones that help prepare locals for self-preservation will be the last ones standing because they support the very people who are left standing alone as violence shuts the world out. Communities are the first, last, and too often the only agents of protection in the face of violence and thus are an eminently logical place to invest more support. Taken at face value, approaches called "community-based protection" would do exactly this.

But the term needs to be unpacked and clarified. The public's interpretation of these words might be that of civilians organizing to protect themselves from violent threats to their community. Yet misnomers and an unhelpful mix of concepts often lead to a different practice of "community-based protection" than that popular image.

Not always what it sounds like

The impression one might have upon hearing the word "community" is that of home—of families, neighbors, houses, assets, and livelihoods that need protecting. Yet many "community-based protection" projects actually take place in a *camp* for refugees or displaced persons. If this is the stage at which we first support civilians' self-protection, then we have begun very late. The worst of the killing, damage, and displacement will have been done months or even years earlier. Those neighbors, houses, assets, and livelihoods may be long gone. This seems a far cry from the notion of "community-based protection."

> Much "community-based protection" work actually take place in a *camp*. If this is the stage at which we first support civilians' self-protection, then we have begun very late. Their homes may be long gone.

There are of course safety concerns in camps and efforts to support self-protection in such settings are quite worthy. Yet too often the threats that people face in camps are caused by—the camps themselves. Despite all the good that camps do, the tradeoffs tied to their existence are very well documented. Too often they become vectors for health threats. They become tense, unnatural polyglots combining very dissimilar groups. They can grow into zones of instant urbanization, de facto dependency, and social breakdown. "These conditions have had important consequences for relationships within the household and within the population ('community' may not be an appropriate word in this context) as a whole." [72] Social anomie can quickly become a security issue.

Camps are often politicized, the populations within made pawns that often are forced to stay or, conversely, forced to go. So too, camps too often are militarized from within and preyed upon from without. At times they are manipulated for (counter) insurgency purposes by abusive powers. These are situations of population control—not cohesion. Though such powers set the table, we may in effect grace the arrangement with our very presence. This again turns the notion of "community-based protection" on its head.

Paradoxically, our work in theaters of conflict can prevent or dissipate more robust actions. This happens when military planners become concerned about collateral damage and hostage taking (our being there thus creating a paralyzing presence, as in Bosnia) and when diplomats see that our work offers a humanitarian fig leaf behind which to hide

political inaction. Even more perversely, our presence—too often conflated with those political and military agendas—can and often does stir distrust and hostility in large swaths of the global South and the Islamic world. It is a difficult milieu in which expatriates propose to help engineer anything "community-based"—and makes the case for a more sincere pivot to local counterparts even more compelling.

More importantly, months or years of flight and camp life can turn out to be just as dangerous, or more, than staying in place. Fred Cuny found that, "Any strategy that helps reduce displacement is an important element in reducing the number of deaths." He noted "comparisons of mortality among refugees and those who remain behind in conflict areas, show that, in most cases, people have a better chance of survival in war zones." [73] Bearing in mind that physical violence often accounts for a smaller portion of civilian deaths in a war zone (the bigger killers being a lack of preventive health or food security on the run), one can better understand why civilians sometimes chose to stay where they are. [74]

None of this is meant to advocate for a predisposition toward making civilians stay or be contained in situ and abdicate their right to relief and asylum elsewhere. But it does suggest a posture of being ready, if possible, to support their choice whether it be to stay or to go. Learning and supporting local perceptions and preferences requires sincere consultation. But if we consult *early enough* while they are still based in their community—in the real physical and communal sense of the word—then we will likely find a stronger foundation of resilience on which to help them build protections.

Not always focused on community

Many "community-based" protection programs actually focus on vulnerable *groups*, most commonly women and children. While these demographic groups often prove remarkably capable during violence, they may indeed also face unique risks, thus making programs that address their welfare very important.

It is of course necessary to understand how different groups perceive, respond to, and feel the impacts of violence. Yet one pitfall to avoid when conceptually segregating groups is to be sure that our subsequent activities do not neglect or undermine the many nuanced protections nested within the family and community. Although "individuals may not be considered resilient because of potential vulnerabilities, they may be resilient as part of a supportive and capable family unit, social or community context." [75]

It is possible to miss those nuances if we focus more on the capacity or vulnerability of "groups" than of community. As a report by the U.S. aid consortium *InterAction* concluded, we should "ensure that protection analysis examines the situation of the entire affected population, without pre-defined criteria, groups, or individuals labeled as most vulnerable. Targeting specific groups and standardized vulnerability criteria creates a bias… skewing choices about how to respond… [76] We might end up with protection programming that is more group-based than community-based.

Another possible pitfall, particularly if a program aims to strengthen self-protection by better empowering a given group, is that we may cause community friction at precisely the wrong time. In its mapping of a crisis setting, an agency sometimes identifies existing community authorities and structures—but does find them to be inclusive enough. It tries

> This is controversial, but they do not need to be pretty. They just need the willingness and ability, as well as legitimacy in the eyes of their people, to take on the challenges of protection.

to reform, or work around, or substitute for those entities with new ones. The literature is replete with adamant references to diversity and inclusiveness that converge with the finding that vulnerable groups are often excluded or underrepresented.

Outsiders are often accurate in this analysis and confident in the universality of the liberal democratic principles they are promoting. But locals will not always see it the same way. In these cases it could be a misnomer, for example, to call the promotion of socially-diverse protection committees a "community-based" notion. In their push for a values-laden modality that might actually be alien to a community—and specifically to the traditional gatekeepers of protection (often older males)—agencies might lose the trust and cooperation they need to be effective. Worse, they might sow dissension within the community at a time when norms of confidence, conformity, and compliance might do more to save lives.

If time is running out, then we need to deal with the community as we find it. This will be an anathema to the rights-based movement that has guided modern views of humanitarian protection, but community gatekeepers of protection can be unelected, autocratic, and self-aggrandizing. They can be ethnocentric, parochial, and chauvinist. They do not need to be pretty.

But they do need the willingness and ability, as well as legitimacy in the eyes of their people, to take on the challenges of protection. The word "legitimacy" here refers to the notion of a social contract that a populace defines in its own way. If we are going to talk with locals about our own way of defining legitimacy—let it be later. The verge of violence is not the time to challenge a community's norms or weaken its cohesion. As the authoritative CDA Collaborative Learning Projects have found, *internal cohesion* is one of the "overarching" traits of communities that have been able to cope with and evade conflict. [77]

> We must avoid the pitfalls of segregating groups from, our creating divisions within, the community. It is precisely the wrong time to weaken community cohesion.

This paper is about armed conflict and violence. Preparations pertaining to imminent armed violence should come first; other less life-critical concerns, second. Settings in which political exclusion or social wrongs are the primary protection issues do not apply to this paper.

Not always about armed violence

Community-based protection programs often do not focus on helping civilians brace for armed violence and its life-threatening impacts. Rather, they address social concerns, like domestic abuse, early marriage, female genital mutilation, sexually-transmitted diseases, inequity, discrimination against LGBT persons or the elderly, unwanted pregnancies, child labor, non-abusive parenting and more.

> Our community-based protection is not what the average person would imagine it to be. It does not prepare people for violence that will not be stopped.

This mixing of a wide range of issues is one of the things that muddles discussion of protection. These are issues that require addressing, but their severity and their remedies differ from armed violence. Their touchstone is more apt to be human rights and dignity than weapons or war-induced starvation and disease.

Yet even when focused on armed violence, our community-based protection is perhaps not what the average person would imagine it to be. As Médecins sans Frontiérs' Marc du Bois has oft observed, "the public overwhelming thinks" of physical protection from armed violence when it hears humanitarians speak of protection. But in reality, "we humanitarians have substituted a specialised notion of *protection of rights* for actions designed to provide directly and forcefully for the safety of people. We have seized upon the language of protection, colonised it and made the calculated decision to recast even the most mundane of aid activities as protection. The provision of a blanket takes on the garb of protection work; distributing sacks of corn flour equates to protecting people's right to food." [78]

These measures, though "protective" in nature, do not prepare people for violence that will not be stopped. They are not preparations for direct on-contact (moment-of-threat) protection. As Phillip Lancaster, Gen. Dallaire's confidant in Rwanda, said, those actually at risk live in "a separate world" where it is the "survival imperative" that keeps them alive in the moment. [79]

When bombs or sniper fire target your city of Sarajevo, Grozny or Aleppo; when the Khmer Rouge, Lord's Resistance Army, Interahamwe, or Islamic State come to your village; when the Janjiwid, Boko Haram, Arkan's Tigers, or D'Aubuisson's death squads come to your home, then if you are prepared you will respond in tangible tactical ways. You will warn and shelter, deal or pay, run or hide, fool them, join them or shoot them. You will take discreet, unorthodox steps to secure lifesaving sustenance and services. And the paramount measurement of readiness will be: did you keep your family and assets out of harm's way—or did you not? Timely steps taken at the point of contact with violence are fatefully decisive.

Not always local ideas

In practice, "community-based" protection programs do not always have as much local authorship or ownership as the term would seem to imply. In too many projects that we call "self-protection," the word *'self'* is appended to the names of projects that *we* conceive and a local community then runs it-*self*. That is, in many protection projects, what we call "community-based" is not community-born.

A 2014 survey of community-based protection "found that truly locally led protection efforts are rarely acknowledged or supported by outside agencies." [80] Despite decades of genuine attention to participatory and empowering approaches, international agencies still tend to approach communities with largely set categories of problems and solutions. With this comes the undeniable inducement of money and resources. The distorting effect of big aid's arrival has long been discussed. The risk in this context is that "the dye is already cast" by the time local ideas are solicited.   Locals' perceptions and preferences can easily be skewed by such an approach.

This critique over authorship and ownership was one of the overriding themes to emerge from the World Humanitarian Summit of 2016. And if the focus had been on dangerous settings where agencies tend to be even less consultative, then the critique would have been even more severe.

International agencies clearly have important expertise and experience which, when transmitted, can save lives. But locals do as well. Community-born ideas already exist. They can also be generated by mutual listening and iterative sharing—with locals in the

lead and outsiders in a *support role*. This does not mean blind support of every local idea. It is possible some emergency coping practices are completely without benefit (do not support them) or completely without risk (support them). But the majority of practices are the result of local risk-benefit calculations and contain elements of both. If we work within this reality, then we may be able to help inform, mitigate or substitute practices having aspects of self-inflicted risk or harm.

In the aid world we ourselves speak of "inherent" and "residual" risk, and urge "smart" and "evidence-based risk-taking". This is virtually the same calculation that locals go through, so we need to learn more about their calculus. It is they who have to live with the risks and sacrifices and thus their opinions which should carry the most weight.

Moreover, we can learn locals' opinions and support their abilities even amid crisis. Mary Anderson has noted it is possible to support local capacities "in conditions of social and political upheaval, and where the regime in power imposes limits on NGO work. It is even possible…where the situation is extremely volatile and polarized." [81]

> *""They tell us—again and again—that they will decide and take their own chances when they collaborate with us, even up to and including death, if they believe in what they are doing. [They say] 'We are more aware than you of where the lines are drawn.'" And, of course, "we respect this deeply.".*[82]

And as the Local to Global Protection (L2GP) project contends, case studies in several countries "demonstrate that innovative work to support local responses, including relationship building and financing, is possible even in large-scale sudden onset crises." [83] If building upon local ideas can be done amid volatile, polarized or sudden emergencies—then it certainly can be done earlier through preparedness.

L2GP makes a distinction which could be helpful. It "uses '*localisation*' as... an umbrella term referring to all approaches to working with local actors, and '*locally led*' to refer to work that originates with local actors, or is designed to support locally emerging initiatives." [84]

> There needs to be instances in which the words "community-based protection" actually mean helping communities prepare to cope with violence all alone, at least for a period.

Agencies running protection programs should perhaps ask themselves if these are "community-based" more in location than in leadership. The distinction matters because those which are not community-born or at least locally led have a greater chance of falling apart when violence forces its expatriate patrons out.

Not always local implementers

In practice, "community-based" protection programs are not are not always run by or wholly reliant upon people of the community. As various reports find, outsiders too often equate host country nationals with "locals." Yet in many places, people from outside the community are not viewed as "local" by the locals themselves. They may seem very nonlocal by virtue of their dress, education, or urban cosmopolitanism (which expatriates are likely more comfortable with). They might even be deemed suspicious by virtue of their government affiliation, dialect or the locale or ethnicity from which they come.

One common example is of the program *staff person* who hails from another location but travels with some regularity to the community. They are the ones who accompany us in our Land Cruisers into slums and villages where the at-risk populations live. Such staff often garner a degree of trust. But danger is a powerful winnower of trust and can reduce "true" community to those who are left standing alone to face violence. If commuting staff do not suffer the impact of violence in the same ways locals do—then they are not tied together by the same affinity and fate. In protection situations especially, this reduces the meaning of "community-based." Yet we tend to give these nonlocal nationals the key implementation and intermediary roles.

> In some projects called "community-based" the ideas aren't community-born. Yet it is locals who have to live with the risks and sacrifices and thus their opinions which should carry the most weight.

Other examples of implementers actually from outside the community are conflict prevention groups and security forces. Too often we give the name "community-based protection" to arrangements in which locals "participate" by triggering a warning to these outsiders. Ask: who is the warning wired to? Very often it is wired up and out either to conflict prevention players or to police, national troops or peacekeepers.

This runs afoul of two points: one is that it is not community-based in the sense of primarily-local implementation. The other is that it relies upon the *influence* and the *presence* of outsiders which, as noted at the start of this paper, often never materializes. Despite these unwelcome truths, efforts should of course be made to get local capacities joined up with external negotiating and rescue efforts. But regardless, there needs to be instances in which the words "community-based protection" actually mean helping communities prepare to cope with violence *all alone*, at least for a period.

Not enough scope or scale

The good news is that some protection programs do focus on community and armed violence, and rely primarily upon local ideas and implementers. Such programs represent a genuine "Plan B" in which the main object of support is locals' own ability to evade and mitigate the impacts of violence that won't be halted by mediation or rescue.

This refers to a relative few peacekeeping missions, aid agencies, and specialized NGOs. They encourage communities to prepare to fend for themselves—typically via *protection committees, watch groups, technology platforms, non-formal policing or patrols, contingency plans, warning and evacuation*. It has been an especially bold step for aid agencies, always concerned about an image of neutrality, to support responses that are essentially paramilitary in concept and tactic.

These scattered and nascent efforts reveal the next generation of community-based protection to be taken up, but are as yet neither deep enough nor wide enough.

In regard to "depth," genuine protection consists of more than *safety*; life-critical *sustenance* and *service* must be addressed as well. The approaches just cited largely exclude the latter two and concentrate on safety—yet even that focus has arguably been quite shallow.

There is far more to safety than "flight," and there is far more to flight than a "grab bag." As noted earlier, sometimes it turns out that civilians would have been safer staying in conflict zones, so there should be no default assumption that flight is the best course. If flight is going to happen, it may unfold in graduated steps: affinity groups strengthen,

deals are sought, and patrons are solicited; "family split up" and "commuting" tactics begin, the tentative stripping and transfer of assets starts, etc. As noted in the aforementioned *Inventory*, many local structures and hundreds of strategies arise which might be supportable in given situations.

There is much more to be done than urge the formation of committees, watches, police, patrols, and plans. In order to support the depths of local ingenuity when and where it most matters, outsiders who want to bolster community-based protection need to take a more proactive stance.

Aid agencies and peacekeepers need resist the come-to-us posture (whether it be in camp or cantonment) and go into the community more. And technology initiatives specialized in the transmission of early warning need to concentrate on helping "prepare the ground" for warning more. This requires getting steeped in the communities in order to better ensure the "last-mile connectivity" of these brilliant technologies. If they fail to, then their initiative can take on all the hazards of an ill-prepared air drop.

Beyond this, *safety* along with *life-critical sustenance* and *services*—should be treated as equal and indivisible parts of protection. The logic of factoring each of these elemental needs into efforts at protection is irrefutable: the great majority of people who die during conflict die from malnutrition and disease. Collapse of markets and services (especially for public health) is the biggest killer. Yet with foresight, many such hunger and health-related deaths will be preventable.

> These scattered and nascent efforts reveal the next generation of community-based protection to be taken up, but are as yet neither deep enough nor wide enough.

Protection is a hollow concept without the sustenance or services to survive. Just as importantly, civilians often *put themselves* in harm's way in order to attain those life essentials, so safety cannot be tackled in isolation from these other factors. Much of their risk-taking might not be necessary with more preparedness.

In regard to "scale," these promising next generation efforts at protection must make better use of important *multipliers*. As stated, they already premise their effort on community initiatives. Thus to their credit they use a local scaffolding for preparedness action that already exists. It need not be invented or imported—just amplified. But there are two more very important multipliers.

One is the incomparable *bulwark of aid service providers*, local and expatriate, around the world. Some aid agencies have, as noted, begun to foray into community-based protection (as well as remotely-run service provision). But they are only a small segment of the aid community, and more agencies need to appreciate that they can play this role. So too, peacekeeping missions, early warning NGOs, and other entities with protection goals need to recognize the comparative advantages that aid agencies possess—then leave their silos and get joined up with them.

Why? Because the "best platform available" for mobilizing and scaling up grassroots preparedness (community-based protection) will very often be the aid service provider. Generally speaking, they are the most apt to have the best access, contacts, and trust on the ground; the best situational awareness and cultural nuance. They have vital skill sets (recalling that most deaths during

> We must use two multipliers: the bulwark of aid providers and the proven pedagogies for mass the transmission of protection information.

conflict stem from the loss of life-critical sustenance and services). Community

mobilization is their bailiwick. If any entity can animate information and mobilization campaigns to inoculate communities against the worst of violence—it likely is the aid provider.

They are the most apt to have defensible reasons for being in conflict areas and comparatively more autonomy of action than outside entities too associated with political solutions and agendas. Finally, in their sheer numbers, local and international aid providers together form a huge latent bulwark in the remote and unstable areas in which they work.

> *Safety* along with *life-critical sustenance* and *services*—should be treated as equal and indivisible parts of protection.

The other multiplier is the use of *pedagogies for mass transmission* of information. Consider the techniques by which rudimentary protection messages already reach millions of civilians: landmine awareness and natural disaster risk reduction campaigns are premised on a philosophy of preparedness and indeed on many tactics that are quite transferrable to concerns about armed violence. Do we shy away from this undeniable fact because conflict is sensitive and political? Civilians in harm's way would be forgiven for not understanding our distinction between the threat of a landmine—and deadly roadblocks, ambushes, and abductions on the very same roads that have been freed of mines. And it would be excusable if they did not understand why we are fast to help them prepare for deadly rains—but not deadly raids. Monsoons and machetes kill with equal effectiveness.

These proven pedagogies need to be adapted then used for community-based protection. There are many *lessons waiting* to be shared, whether within a community, between neighboring communities, or even, with the help transnational aid agencies, on a South-to-South axis of sharing. Why should civilians in today's conflicts not benefit from the lethal learning curve of civilians in yesterday's conflicts?

Nascent models of rudimentary protection messaging tried in Sudan and elsewhere already demonstrate the exponential reach and self-replication that is possible. They begin with a genuine, mutual sharing of experience and ideas, then launch with nominal micro-grant support. They next meet—then exceed—their hoped for reach: spin-off teams of facilitators independently conduct a second generation of dissemination. Then third-generation messaging spontaneously occurs through word of mouth.

Conclusion

"Community-based protection" is not always what it sounds like. To date, there appears to be quite little in the portfolio of work by this name that actually is about helping communities (as opposed to camp populations that have already passed through the worst violence or as opposed to parts of a population that we conceptually segregate and focus on as vulnerable) deal with armed violence (as opposed to social justice or political reform) by relying on local ideas and implementers (as opposed to external ones).

A handful of initiatives do meet each of these criteria, but must take their work to the next level. They should deepen their scope by supporting a multitude of local tactics that can enhance safety. And along with safety, they should treat life-critical sustenance and services as equal and indivisible parts of protection.

Finally, they should ramp up their scale by harnessing two enormous multipliers that already exist: the large, latent bulwark of aid service providers and the proven pedagogies

of mass messaging against threat. Any serious effort to help locals survive alone amid violence must prioritize such scalability.

<p style="text-align:center">*   *   *   *</p>

All in all, promising efforts at remotely run service provision and community-based protection show the way forward. They are truly more innovative than doubling down on strategies that rely upon our having meaningful influence or presence—something which we often lack or lose. Aid agencies will often be the last best hope for bolstering local self-protection.

ENDNOTES

[1] Koenraad Van Brabant, *The Organizational Mainstreaming of Safety and Security: Where are We Now?,* Humanitarian Practice Network, ODI/HPN, November 22, 2000; p. 7 of article.

[2] Abby Stoddard, et. al, *Once Removed: Lessons and Challenges in Remote Management of Humanitarian Operations for Insecure Areas*, Humanitarian Outcomes, London, 25 February 2010; p. 36.

[3] Abby Stoddard and Adele Harmer, *Room to Manoeuvre: Challenges of Linking Humanitarian and Post-Conflict Recovery in the New Global Security Environment*, Human Development Report, Occasional Paper, Human Development Report Office, New York, January 2005; p. 23. **See also:** Abby Stoddard, et. al., *Providing Aid in Insecure Environments: Trends in Policy and Operations*, Humanitarian Policy Group, HPG Report 23, Overseas Development Institute, London, September 2006; p. 32.

[4] Katherine Haver, "Duty of Care? Local Staff and Aid Worker Security", *Forced Migration Review*, Issue 28, July 2007; p. 10.

[5] Abby Stoddard, et. al., *Providing Aid in Insecure Environments: Trends in Policy and Operations*, Humanitarian Policy Group, HPG Report 23, Overseas Development Institute, London, September 2006; pp. 11 and 20.

[6] Abby Stoddard, et. al, *Once Removed: Lessons and Challenges in Remote Management of Humanitarian Operations for Insecure Areas*, Humanitarian Outcomes, London, 25 February 2010; p. 36 and 28.

[7] Jan Egeland, Adele Harmer and Abby Stoddard, *To Stay and Deliver: Good Practice for Humanitarians in Complex Security Environments*, commissioned by the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, Policy and Studies Series, 2011; p. 43. **See also:** Lisa Schreter and Adele Harmer, *Delivering Aid in Highly Insecure Environments: A Critical Review of the Literature, 2007–2012*, Humanitarian Outcomes, London, 18 February 2013; p31. The authors conclude that many international agencies "have only just begun to think about their responsibilities [in these relationships, including] the responsibilities that agencies have to partners regarding security."

[8] Jan Egeland, Adele Harmer and Abby Stoddard, *To Stay and Deliver: Good Practice for Humanitarians in Complex Security Environments*, commissioned by the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, Policy and Studies Series, 2011; p. 33. On p. 40 the authors add that, "As a rule, the personnel of local NGOs receive an even lower level of security support through their organisations, even when engaged in implementing partnership arrangements with international entities. 'Duty of care' technically does not extend to local partner organisations in the same way it does to an international organisation's own national staffers, but as security conditions deteriorate and local NGO partners take on greater roles in program implementation as a result, the ethical issues become vitally important for the international organisation to consider."

[9] Abby Stoddard, et. al., *Providing Aid in Insecure Environments: Trends in Policy and Operations*, Humanitarian Policy Group, HPG Report 23, Overseas Development Institute, London, September 2006; p. 43.

[10] *Report on Security for Humanitarian Personnel: Standards and Practices for the Security for Humanitarian Personnel and Advocacy for Humanitarian Space*, European Commission's Humanitarian Aid Office (ECHO), Brussels, 2004; p. 22.

[11] John Fawcett and Victor Tanner, *The Security of National Staff: Towards Good Practices*, A Report for InterAction, Washington, DC, 27 July 2001; pp. 6 & 7.

[12] Jan Egeland, Adele Harmer and Abby Stoddard, *To Stay and Deliver: Good Practice for Humanitarians in Complex Security Environments*, commissioned by the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, Policy and Studies Series, 2011; p. 25. The authors find that, "Despite its commonplace and often protracted usage, however, very few agencies have systematically or strategically planned for when, whether, and how to employ this practice [of remote management] as an effective programmatic adaptation, as opposed to an ad hoc response. As a result, the outcome was sometimes an unethical transfer of risk to national staffers and local partners..." **See also:** Abby Stoddard, et. al, *Once Removed: Lessons and Challenges in Remote Management of Humanitarian Operations for Insecure Areas*, Humanitarian Outcomes, London, 25 February 2010; pp. 22 and 35. The report contends that, "One of the key findings in Afghanistan, which holds true for other remote management contexts, is that … most NGOs consider remote management to be a temporary measure, [and] very few have thought through an exit strategy or criteria to guide the shift back from remote management."

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[14] David Rieff, *A Bed for the Night: Humanitarianism in Crisis*, Simon and Schuster, New York, 2002; p. 164. **See also:** Sheri Fink, *War Hospital*, Public Affairs of the Perseus Books Group, New York, 2003; p. 293. It says: "In Rwanda in 1994, hundreds of local hires from humanitarian organizations and intergovernmental organizations were left to their killers as their employers fled." **See also:** Roméo Dallaire, *A Good Man in Hell*, Video documentary by the US Holocaust Museum. In this documentary, Dallaire recounts that within five days of the genocide's start, all expatriates left behind the Rwandans who had served with them for years. **See also:** Roméo Dallaire, with Foreword by Samantha Power, *Shake Hands with the Devil: the Failure of Humanity in Rwanda*, Carroll and Graf Publishers, New York, 2003; p. 270. The author states that UNAMIR was "able to rescue some of [its] workers, but the majority were killed as priority targets in the early days of the tragedy."

[15] Mary B. Anderson and Lara Olson, *Confronting War: Critical Lessons for Peace Practitioners*, the Collaborative for Development Action, Inc., Cambridge, MA, 2003; p. 21.

[16] Alex Bellamy and Paul D. Williams, *Protecting Civilians in Uncivil Wars*, Working Paper No. 1, Program on the Protection of Civilians, Asia-Pacific Centre for the Responsibility to Protect , August 2009; pp. 31-32.

[17] Michael Barnett, *Empire of Humanity: A History of Humanitarianism*, Cornell University Press, Ithaca, 2011.

[18] Edward Luttwak, "Give War a Chance," *Foreign Affairs* 78 (4): 36–44, July–August 1999; p. 38.

[19] Mary B. Anderson, *Do No Harm: Supporting Local Capacities for Peace through Aid*, The Collaborative for Development Action, Inc., Cambridge, 1996; p. 5.

[20] Elizabeth Ferris, *The Politics of Protection: The Limits of Humanitarian Action*, Brookings Institution Press, 2010, Washington D.C., 2011; p. 62.

[21] Michael Barnett, *Empire of Humanity: A History of Humanitarianism*, Cornell University Press, Ithaca, 2011; pp. 45-46.

[22] Barry N. Stein and Frederick C. Cuny, *The Contemporary Practice of Voluntary Migration: Repatriation during Conflict, Reintegration amidst Devastation*, Michigan State University and the Center for the Study of Societies in Crisis, 22 February 1994; p. 9.

[23] Nancy Lindborg, *From Fragility to Resilience*. Found at: https://www.usaid.gov/frontiers/2014/publication/ section-4-from-fragility-to-resilience.

[24] Nancy Lindborg, *From Fragility to Resilience*, USAID, 2014. Found at: https://www.usaid.gov/frontiers/ 2014/publication/ section-4-from-fragility-to-resilience.

[25] Fiona Terry, *Condemned to Repeat? The Paradox of Humanitarian Action*, Cornell University Press, Ithaca, 2002; pp. 233 and 206. **See also:** Paul Harvey, *Cash-based Responses in Emergencies*, Humanitarian Policy Group, HPG Report 24, Overseas Development Institute, London, January 2007; p. 54. The author quotes Barbara Harrell-Bond as saying, "'Outsiders view African refugees as helpless; as needing outsiders to plan for them and take care of them.' This assumption is the cornerstone of nearly all appeals for funds."

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[27] Greg Hansen, *Briefing Paper # 1: Adapting to Insecurity in Iraq*, one of a series of briefing papers on NGOs' and others' humanitarian operational modalities in Iraq, NGO Coordination Committee in Iraq, January 2008: p. 1.

[28] Jan Egeland, Adele Harmer and Abby Stoddard, *To Stay and Deliver: Good Practice for Humanitarians in Complex Security Environments*, commissioned by the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, Policy and Studies Series, 2011; p. 19. The authors conclude that, "the basic prerequisite to acceptance is competence in humanitarian delivery and capacity to fulfil commitments and demonstrate results for beneficiaries."

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[31] World Humanitarian Summit secretariat, *Restoring Humanity: Synthesis Report of the Consultation Process for the World Humanitarian Summit*, New York, United Nations, 2015; pp. 12-13.

[32] *The Development Dimensions of Crisis and Post-Conflict Management*, Keynote address, Fifty-eighth General Assembly, Second Committee, Press Release, GA, 4 November 2003; p. 2.

[33] Jan Egeland, Under-Secretary General, UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, UN Open Meeting of the Security Council, 9 December 2003; p. 1.

[34] Walter Kälin, "Walter Kälin on the Outlook for IDPs", *Forced Migration Review*, Issue 37, Refugee Studies Centre, Oxford, March 2011; p. 44.

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[36] Mary B. Anderson and Marshall Wallace, "Challenges for Food Aid in Conflict Situations", *Hunger Notes*, found at www.world hunger.org/articles/global/armedconflict/Anderson.htm; p. 3. This article is based on and partially extracted from: Mary B. Anderson, *Do No Harm: How Aid Supports Peace or War*.

[37] Mary B. Anderson, *Do No Harm: Supporting Local Capacities for Peace through Aid*, The Collaborative for Development Action, Inc., Cambridge, 1996; pp. 22-24.

[38] Jan Egeland, Adele Harmer and Abby Stoddard, *To Stay and Deliver: Good Practice for Humanitarians in Complex Security Environments*, commissioned by the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, Policy and Studies Series, 2011; .p 3.

[39] *Access During Humanitarian Crises: Barriers to Protection and Assistance*, panel discussion, The Brookings Institution, Washington, D.C., February 15, 2011; pp. 24 and 25.

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[41] *World Disasters Report 2015: Focus on Local Actors, the Key to Humanitarian Effectiveness*, the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, Geneva; p. 130. **See also:** Katherine Haver, "Duty of Care? Local Staff and Aid Worker Security", *Forced Migration Review*, Issue 28, July 2007; p. 10. The author found that, "Few organizations have a specific policy on what security-related equipment would be handed over to national staff or local partners" upon evacuation".

[42] *A Review of UNHCR's Security Policy and Policy Implementation*, Report of the Steering Committee on Security Policy and Policy Implementation, United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, Geneva, October, 2004; pp. 24 and 25. **See also:** *Report on Security for Humanitarian Personnel:*

Standards and Practices for the Security for Humanitarian Personnel and Advocacy for Humanitarian Space, European Commission's Humanitarian Aid Office (ECHO), Brussels, 2004; p. 22. The report found "there has been little examination of the security implications of [remote management] operations for national staff."

[43] Lisa Schreter and Adele Harmer, *Delivering Aid in Highly Insecure Environments: A Critical Review of the Literature, 2007–2012*, Humanitarian Outcomes, London, 18 February 2013; pp. 7-8 and 24.

[44] Abby Stoddard, et. al, *Once Removed: Lessons and Challenges in Remote Management of Humanitarian Operations for Insecure Areas*, Humanitarian Outcomes, London, 25 February 2010; p. 7.

[45] Abby Stoddard, et. al, *Once Removed: Lessons and Challenges in Remote Management of Humanitarian Operations for Insecure Areas*, Humanitarian Outcomes, London, 25 February 2010; p. 35."

[46] Lisa Schreter and Adele Harmer, *Delivering Aid in Highly Insecure Environments: A Critical Review of the Literature, 2007–2012*, Humanitarian Outcomes, London, 18 February 2013; pp. 29-30.

[47] Jan Egeland, Adele Harmer and Abby Stoddard, *To Stay and Deliver: Good Practice for Humanitarians in Complex Security Environments*, commissioned by the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, Policy and Studies Series, 2011; p. 25.

[48] Katherine Haver, "Duty of Care? Local Staff and Aid Worker Security," *Forced Migration Review*, Issue 28, July 2007; p. 11.

[49] *World Disasters Report 2015: Focus on Local Actors, the Key to Humanitarian Effectiveness*, the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, Geneva; p. 130.

[50] Jan Egeland, Adele Harmer and Abby Stoddard, *To Stay and Deliver: Good Practice for Humanitarians in Complex Security Environments*, commissioned by the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, Policy and Studies Series, 2011; p. 25. **See also:** Lisa Schreter and Adele Harmer, *Delivering Aid in Highly Insecure Environments: A Critical Review of the Literature, 2007–2012*, Humanitarian Outcomes, London, 18 February 2013; p.29. The authors state that, "The increased reliance on national staff has resulted in 'risk transfer' and greater insecurity for [national staff]."

[51] Abby Stoddard, et. al, *Once Removed: Lessons and Challenges in Remote Management of Humanitarian Operations for Insecure Areas*, Humanitarian Outcomes, London, 25 February 2010; p. 8. **See also:** Antonio Donini, Larry Minear, Sippi Azarbaijani-Moghaddam, et. al., *Humanitarian Agenda 2015: Principles, Power, and Perceptions*, Feinstein International Center, Tufts University, September, 2006; p. 30. The distinguished authors of this report find that national staff "are often at high risk, but NGOs often do not take account of this when developing and implementing security measures. One of the more troubling developments in recent years has been the passing on of security risks from international to national staff, as if the latter were more expendable."

[52] Koenraad Van Brabant, *The Organizational Mainstreaming of Safety and Security: Where are We Now?*, Humanitarian Practice Network, ODI/HPN, November 22, 2000; p. 7 of article.

[53] Abby Stoddard, et. al, *Once Removed: Lessons and Challenges in Remote Management of Humanitarian Operations for Insecure Areas*, Humanitarian Outcomes, London, 25 February 2010; p. 36.

[54] Abby Stoddard, et. al, *Once Removed: Lessons and Challenges in Remote Management of Humanitarian Operations for Insecure Areas*, Humanitarian Outcomes, London, 25 February 2010; p. 36 and 28.

[55] Jan Egeland, Adele Harmer and Abby Stoddard, *To Stay and Deliver: Good Practice for Humanitarians in Complex Security Environments*, commissioned by the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, Policy and Studies Series, 2011; p. 43. **See also:** Lisa Schreter and Adele Harmer, *Delivering Aid in Highly Insecure Environments: A Critical Review of the Literature, 2007–2012*, Humanitarian Outcomes, London, 18 February 2013; p31. The authors conclude that many international agencies "have only just begun to think about their responsibilities [in these relationships, including] the responsibilities that agencies have to partners regarding security."

[56] Abby Stoddard, et. al, *Once Removed: Lessons and Challenges in Remote Management of Humanitarian Operations for Insecure Areas*, Humanitarian Outcomes, London, 25 February 2010; p. 8.

[57] Katherine Haver, "Duty of Care? Local Staff and Aid Worker Security", *Forced Migration Review*, Issue 28, July 2007; p. 11.

[58] Abby Stoddard, et. al., *Providing Aid in Insecure Environments: Trends in Policy and Operations*, Humanitarian Policy Group, HPG Report 23, Overseas Development Institute, London, September 2006; p. 43.

[59] John Stedman and Fred Tanner, Editors, <u>Refugee Manipulation: War, Politics and the Abuse of Human Suffering</u>, Brookings Institution Press, Washington, DC, 2003; p. 7.

[60] Imogen Wall and Kerren Hedlund, *Localisation and Locally-Led Crisis Response: A Literature Review*, Local to Global Protection Project, Copenhagen, May 2016; p. 24.

[61] Ian Smillie, Ed., *Patronage or Partnership: Local Capacity Building in Humanitarian Crises*, Humanitarianism and War Project, Tufts University, Kumarian Press, 2001.

[62] Lisa Schreter and Adele Harmer, *Delivering Aid in Highly Insecure Environments: A Critical Review of the Literature, 2007–2012*, Humanitarian Outcomes, London, 18 February 2013; pp. 6, 31 and 34.

[63] Maria J. Stephan, Sadaf Lakhani and Nadia Naviwala, *Aid to Civil Aid Society: A Movement Mindset*, United States Institute of Peace, Special Report 361, Washington, D.C., February 2015; pp. 2-6. The authors conclude that, "NGOs are often not the most salient actors in mobilizing people." **See also:** Liam Mahony, *Non-Military Strategies for Civilian Protection in the DRC*, Fieldview Solutions, March, 2013; p. 20. The report states: "The professional NGO sector is just a small fraction of civil society, and some of the most important civil society capacities for self-mobilization and problem-solving are often found elsewhere. One of the key arenas... is at the level of community coping skills. Communities... confront conflict together"

[64] Antonio Donini, Larry Minear, Sippi Azarbaijani-Moghaddam, et. al, *Humanitarian Agenda 2015: Principles, Power, and Perceptions*, Feinstein International Center, Tufts University, September, 2006; p. 27.

[65] *Humanitarian Action in Iraq: Putting the Pieces Together*, HPG Policy Brief 30, Humanitarian Policy Group, Overseas Development Institute, London, March 2008; p.6.

[66] Thomas G. Weiss, *Humanitarian Intervention: Ideas in Action*, Polity Press, Cambridge MA, 2007; pp. 110-11. The author did considerable work for the International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty. He states here that one of the Commission's "essential results" was that "if a state is unwilling or unable to exercise its protective responsibilities for the rights of its own citizens, it forfeits the moral claim to be treated as legitimate."

[67] Greg Hansen, *Briefing Paper # 1: Adapting to Insecurity in Iraq*, one of a series of briefing papers on NGOs' and others' humanitarian operational modalities in Iraq, NGO Coordination Committee in Iraq, January 2008: p. 1.

[68] Jan Egeland, Adele Harmer and Abby Stoddard, *To Stay and Deliver: Good Practice for Humanitarians in Complex Security Environments*, commissioned by the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, Policy and Studies Series, 2011; p. 19. The authors conclude that, "the basic prerequisite to acceptance is competence in humanitarian delivery and capacity to fulfil commitments and demonstrate results for beneficiaries."

[69] Don Hubert and Cynthia Brassard-Boudreau, "Shrinking Humanitarian Space? Trends and Prospects on Security and Access", *The Journal of Humanitarian Assistance*, Feinstein International Center, Tufts University, Medford MA, November 24, 2010; p. 11.

[70] Abby Stoddard, et. al, *Once Removed: Lessons and Challenges in Remote Management of Humanitarian Operations for Insecure Areas*, Humanitarian Outcomes, London, 25 February 2010; p. 8.

[71] Abby Stoddard, et. al, *Once Removed: Lessons and Challenges in Remote Management of Humanitarian Operations for Insecure Areas*, Humanitarian Outcomes, London, 25 February 2010; p. 37.

[72] Jeff Crisp, *No Solution in Sight: The Problem of Protracted Refugee Situations in Africa*, Center for Comparative Immigration Studies, working paper 68, University of California, San Diego, 2003; p. 13.

[73] Frederick C. Cuny with Richard B. Hill, *Famine, Conflict and Response: A Basic Guide*, Kumarian Press, West Hartford, Connecticut, 1999; pp. 147 & 150.

[74] James Darcy and Charles-Antoine Hofmann, *According to Need? Needs Assessment and Decision-Making in the Humanitarian Sector*, Humanitarian Policy Group, HPG Report 15, Overseas Development Institute, London, September 2003; p. 13. The report states that, "People may be more likely to die from the consequences of prolonged internal displacement than from the direct effects of violence." **See also:** James Darcy, talking points for presentation at the Wilton Park conference, West Sussex, February 2005; p. 1. In regard to trying to avoid threats through flight, Darcy states that "Angola and DRC show just how deadly that option can be: far more are reckoned to have died from the effects of displacement— exposure to disease, lack of adequate food or water, lack of health care—than from violent attacks."

[75] Greg Ireton, et. al., "Disaster Preparedness: Partnerships to Promote Resilience," in *Liaison: A Journal of Civil-Military Disaster Management & Humanitarian Relief Collaborations*, Volume VII, Spring 2015, *Connecting the Dots: Partnerships for a Stronger Community*, pp. 56-58.

[76] *Key Elements of Results-Based Protection*, draft under development, InterAction, Washington, D.C., 2015; p. 1. Found at: https://protection.interaction.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/09/Key-Elements-of-RBP.pdf.

[77] Marshall Wallace, "Learning from Communities that Prevent Conflict", <u>Global Future</u>, First Quarter 2005, World Vision International, Monrovia, CA, 2005; pp. 1, 2, and 3 of article.

[78] Marc du Bois, Protection: the New Humanitarian Fig Leaf; p. 6. **See also:** Marc DuBois, *Protection: Fig-Leaves and Other Delusions*, Médecins sans Frontiérs, March 2010.

[79] Philip Lancaster, "Human Rights and the Survival Imperative: Rwanda's Troubled Legacy, " in William Sweet's *Philosophical Theory and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights*, University of Ottawa Press, Ottawa, 2003; p. 143.

[80] Nils Carstensen, "Understanding and Supporting Community-Led Protection," *Local Communities: First and Last Providers of Protection*, Forced Migration Review, Issue 53, University of Oxford, October 2016; p. 7.

[81] Mary B. Anderson and Peter J. Woodrow, *Rising From the Ashes: Development Strategies in Times of Disaster*, Westview Press, Boulder, 1989; p. 41.

[82] Author's correspondence with Mary Anderson on September 18, 2007.

[83] Imogen Wall and Kerren Hedlund, *Localisation and Locally-Led Crisis Response: A Literature Review*, Local to Global Protection Project, Copenhagen, May 2016; p. 3.

[84] Imogen Wall and Kerren Hedlund, *Localisation and Locally-Led Crisis Response: A Literature Review*, Local to Global Protection Project, Copenhagen, May 2016; p. 3.