

GLOBAL PROTECTION FORUM 2023



Coming Up...



GLOBAL PROTECTION FORUM

01 NOV 2023

14:00 to 15:30 CET

**Proactive Engagement with Armed Actors to
Reduce Violence and Protect Civilians**



GLOBAL PROTECTION FORUM 2023



Beginning in...



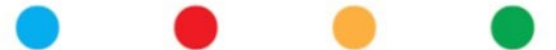
INTERPRETATION

This room will have translation enabled for Spanish, French and Arabic speakers

Esta sala tendrá habilitada la traducción para los hablantes de Español, Francés y Árabe

Cette salle sera équipée de traduction pour les orateurs espagnols, français et arabes

يوجد ترجمة باللغات العربية و الانجليزية و الفرنسية و ايضا الاسبانية



AGREEMENTS

- Please note that this session will be recorded and streamed live on LinkedIn
- We invite and encourage you to have your video on if your bandwidth will allow
- If you have any questions for presenters throughout this year's forum, please put them into the Zoom Q&A, rather than the chat box
- Please note that the chat function will only allow participants to send messages to the host and/or co-hosts, not everyone in the meeting
- Please reach out to the technical team (Look for the word Producer in their name in the participant list) for any questions on interpretation or other IT issues





Proactive Engagement with Armed Actors to Reduce Violence and Protect Civilians

Examples and tactics

Nonviolent  Peaceforce

I want out,
but they will kill my
family if I defect

I aspire a job as a
UN peacekeeper –
I can't afford a bad
record

These NGOs have
no idea that they
are
manipulated by
the rebels.



I am pastor by
day,
guerilla by night



I will support
you,
but not publicly



**Connect to the human being behind the gun.
Understand their interests and pillars of support**

“No!” today, doesn’t mean “no!” tomorrow.

“No!” to you, doesn’t mean “no!” for everyone.

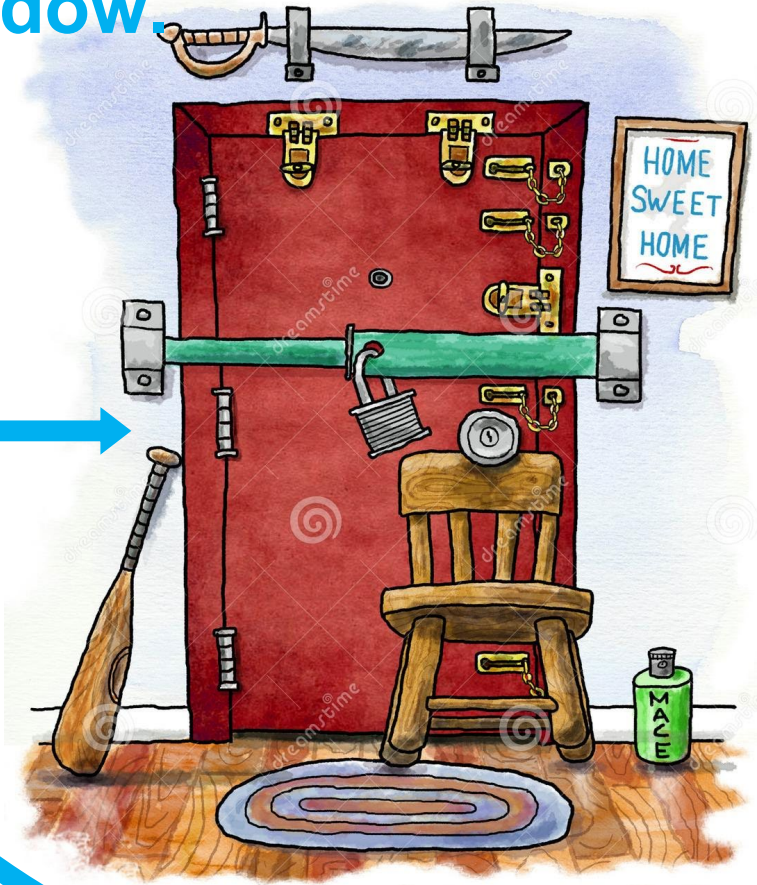
Counter military tactics of separating soldiers from civilians.

Drop by regularly

It doesn’t have to be everyone’s job.



If the front door is locked, try a back door or a window.



Focus engagements on non-targeted threats, rumours, misinformation –

These protection interventions often demonstrate your usefulness to armed actors and enhance relations, trust, access and your security.





“Some bad elements on the ground perhaps.”



“It’s not me.”



“I just follow orders”



Pinpointing responsibilities

Appeal to individual responsibilities

Finding leverage points across the chain of command

Proactive engagement as a way to:

Keep armed actors away from civic spaces or vulnerable communities

Distract aggressors and redirect their attention away from civilians at risk.

“After we offered training to this group of foot soldiers, they became our greatest allies – no one had ever engaged with them”.



Mirror violent attitudes and behaviour back to armed actors and force them to see their behaviour in a new light.

Repeat lofty statements back to armed actors and help them implement their ideals.



HUMANITAIRIAN MEDIATION FOR VIOLENCE PREVENTION

FACILITATING THE RETURN OF DISPLACED PERSONS TO BOALI (RCA)

The Context:

Like many cities in the Central African Republic, Boali has a cosmopolitan population. This population, composed of Muslims and Christians, lived in peace and harmony for years. In 2013, a conflict broke out, shattering the peaceful coexistence between these two communities.

In the city of Boali, violence was committed against the Muslim minority, which led to the departure of the Muslim community. As they left the city, some members of the Muslim community entrusted their property to friends and acquaintances. Others simply left. Their belongings were recovered by other community members who were enrolled in armed groups. Their properties were then occupied by members of the Christian community.

When the IDPs expressed their desire to return, tensions raised over the return of their property.



FACILITATING THE RETURN OF DISPLACED PERSONS TO BOALI (RCA)

Action:

NRC facilitated a dialogue through its humanitarian mediation programme. The programme conducted the process as followed:

1. A conflict sensitive analysis for ensuring a broad understanding of the conflict.
2. Separate meetings with stakeholders prior the dialogue
3. The Dialogue
4. An Action Plan and support from NRC to ensure that dialogue outcomes are implemented



FACILITATING THE RETURN OF DISPLACED PERSONS TO BOALI (RCA)

The result:

During the dialogue, the participants discussed all problems raised and find solutions for facilitating a peaceful returning of IDPs.

- A committee of housing, land and property was in charge of identifying all the occupied properties (houses, plots, fields and shops,...)
- It has been agreed that all occupied property will be returned to the owner.
- It was agreed to conduct sensitization session in Boali and neighboring towns for ensuring the IDP returning and free circulation.

The IDPs returned and have freedom of movement.



Mediation for ensuring meaningful and peaceful access to social services

Context:

In 2021, NRC humanitarian mediation team received an alert of tension between two communities, Langba and Pkaterere, in Mingala, Basse-kotto region (RCA). The tensions were about the access of all children to the school. The children of one community were regularly victims of violence when going to school. Over time, this led to significant tensions between the two communities. The children got afraid and could not be able to go to school was now.



Mediation for ensuring meaningful and peaceful access to social services

Action:

1. When the alert was received, NRC deployed a team to conduct a conflict sensitive analysis. This analysis highlighted the fact that the situation persisted for years and has had a negative impact on relationship between the two communities.
2. After the conflict analysis, the team facilitated separate meetings within the communities. These meetings enabled us to gather more information on the situation and to obtain the mandate from the two communities to facilitate the process as a neutral and impartial third party.
3. Facilitation of the mediation meeting
4. The Action Plan implementation and follow-up



Mediation for ensuring meaningful and peaceful access to social services

Result:

- The mediation meeting enabled the two communities to find a solution to their problem – and children were able to return to school safely.
- The meeting also helped to reduce tensions and prevent violence between the two communities. After the mediation meeting, two leaders from the two communities was holding hands since several years.



Humanitarian mediation demonstrates the **incredible potential that this approach has for reducing the risk of violence.**

It is an effective form of engagement between communities and humanitarian organizations. That allows for **greater accountability, dignity** and for **people to take part in the decision-making process** that affects them.

Humanitarian actors' have a role to play in both **facilitating dialogue, as well as providing the resources** to do so.

It highlights that even where humanitarian mediation has had less sustained impact, it **still contributed to an overall reduction of violence** and strengthening of community capacity for mediation and peaceful resolution of conflicts.



International actors should focus on:

reinstating community mediation and negotiation as well as strengthening communities' own capacities.

This is central to our humanitarian mediation approach.

But it is difficult to implement:

- Requires proximity and relationships – longer term presence, longer term funding
- Requires solid conflict-sensitive analyses – traditional models take a long time
- We are exploring how to modify our methodology to focus on interrupting violence, rather than securing long term peace agreements. Requires a lot of experimentation and learning – and donors and partners with appetite for this.





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THANK YOU FOR JOINING US



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