

Consortium on Civilian Safety and Security

Phase II: Preventing and Mitigating Violence

Against Civilians in Humanitarian Contexts

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1. Introduction and Background

1.1. Introduction

Over the past two decades, the humanitarian system has made significant strides in recognising protection as a central objective of humanitarian action. The development of the IASC's definition of protection, the mainstreaming of protection principles across sectors, and the institutionalisation of the "centrality of protection" have all advanced the normative framework guiding humanitarian responses. Yet, these achievements have not been matched by commensurate improvements in the safety and security of civilians affected by violent conflict. Despite the scale and sophistication of protection architecture at global and national levels, civilians in many conflict-affected contexts continue to experience direct attacks, forced displacement, and persistent insecurity.

This gap reflects a deeper problem. The prevailing model of protection practice remains too narrowly focused on compliance with international law and response to harm after violence occurs. While such approaches are necessary, they are not sufficient to prevent violence or to address the conditions that allow it to persist. The majority of protection programming today still centres on post-violation services, such as case management, referrals, and legal aid, rather than on actions that actively prevent, interrupt, or mitigate violence in real time. As a result, the humanitarian system remains reactive, even in places where early warning signals are clear and where communities themselves are already taking steps to protect one another.

The premise of this project is that civilian protection can no longer rely solely on legal advocacy, post-harm assistance, or the mainstreaming of protection principles. It must be reimaged as proactive, adaptive, and civilian-led: a dynamic system of practice that reduces threats, interrupts violence, and strengthens the ability of communities to sustain safety amid conflict. The most effective way to bring this vision about is by connecting theory with practice, bringing together thought leaders in research and learning, policy change and practical application of civilian protection. Key in this second phase of this project is an intentional shift of attention towards the direct application of proactive forms of protection and centring the voices of frontline implementers and the communities they protect.

1.2. Current Challenges in Protection

Despite decades of normative progress, the international protection system continues to fall short of preventing and mitigating violence against civilians. Recent analyses point to a widening gap between the humanitarian sector's growing commitment to "protection" and the lived experience of civilians in conflict settings. CIVIC's 2024 *Trends Report* found that civilian casualties and displacement continue to rise globally, even as the number of protection policies, task forces, and coordination mechanisms has multiplied. Similarly, the ICRC's 2024 *Report on the Challenges of International Humanitarian Law* notes that while legal norms remain essential, they have not translated into effective protection on the ground. The humanitarian system has, in effect, become more articulate about protection, but not necessarily more protective.

This disjunction stems in part from how protection has been defined and operationalised. The IASC definition "all activities aimed at ensuring full respect for the rights of the individual in accordance with the letter and spirit of the relevant bodies of law" has provided an important legal and normative anchor. Yet it situates protection primarily within compliance frameworks rather than practical efforts to prevent harm. It describes the *ends* of protection (respect for rights) but not the *means* through which safety and security are achieved in contexts of active violence. For civilians themselves, protection is not a question of legal status but of physical and relational safety - the ability to move without fear, to coexist despite tensions, and to act collectively in defence of life and dignity.

In response to these conceptual gaps, the humanitarian system has, since the early 2000s, focused heavily on embedding protection principles across all sectors of humanitarian action through protection mainstreaming. Emerging from the work of the IASC, the Global Protection Cluster, and the Sphere Standards, mainstreaming aimed to make humanitarian programming safer for affected populations by ensuring that all aid interventions "do no harm," are inclusive and accountable, and facilitate safe access to services. These measures were an essential corrective to assistance that at times exposed people to additional risks. Over the past two decades, protection mainstreaming has been institutionalised across the humanitarian architecture, with extensive guidance, training, and monitoring mechanisms to ensure that humanitarian actors integrate protection considerations into their work.

While mainstreaming has significantly improved the quality and safety of humanitarian programming, it has not necessarily improved the protection of civilians from

violence itself. Its purpose is to minimise the risks associated with humanitarian action, not to prevent, interrupt, or mitigate violence. As a result, the term “protection” has been stretched to encompass almost every form of good humanitarian practice, from safe shelter distribution to gender-sensitive water management. This has blurred the line between protection as a *way of delivering assistance* and protection as a *direct outcome* for civilians at risk of harm. In many contexts, what is labelled as “protection work” safeguards programming rather than people.

The reliance on the International Normative Frameworks including human rights, refugee, and humanitarian law, has further reinforced this trend. Since these frameworks encompass many activities aimed at fulfilling rights, almost any humanitarian or development intervention can be described as “protective.” This breadth allows for flexibility and conflict sensitive programming but dilutes focus and accountability for actually preventing harm. It has entrenched a model of protection centred on advocacy toward state and non-state actors to meet their legal obligations. While important, this approach leaves limited room for recognising the agency of civilians themselves, including their capacity to negotiate safety, mediate disputes, and manage risks through nonviolent collective action. It also excludes the many forms of violence that unfold beyond the clear jurisdiction of international humanitarian law, such as localised intercommunal clashes or contexts of fragmented authority where no recognised duty bearer exists. In such environments, legal frameworks alone rarely change behaviour or reduce violence.

These limitations are increasingly visible in practice. The ODI Humanitarian Policy Group’s 2025 paper *Keeping Protection Paramount Amidst a Humanitarian Reset* highlights that protection efforts remain overwhelmingly remedial, focused on services and advocacy after violations occur, rather than proactive and preventive action. Humanitarians tend to revert to familiar approaches even when evidence shows their limits, constrained by risk aversion, short funding cycles, and rigid mandates. As a result, interventions that could interrupt violence, such as civilian accompaniment, protective presence, early warning and response, or community negotiation, are often under-resourced or treated as peripheral.

At the same time, the inconsistent application of international law and politicisation of humanitarian action have eroded confidence in the global normative protection framework. In contexts such as Gaza, Sudan, and Ukraine, civilians continue to bear the brunt of warfare despite extensive international engagement. This erosion of trust does not invalidate legal frameworks but underscores the urgent need to complement them

with operational, context-responsive strategies that can effectively protect civilians and in partnership with affected communities.

Finally, protection continues to be siloed within the humanitarian sphere, even though safety in conflict cannot be achieved by humanitarians alone. Effective protection requires sustained collaboration with peacebuilding, human rights, and development actors, as well as with communities themselves, who are often the first and most consistent responders. Moving forward, protection must therefore be understood not as a discrete activity but as a collective, layered effort - one that bridges sectors, blends global standards with local knowledge, and emphasises prevention and restraint as much as response.

1.3. How this Project Responds

This project responds to the limitations of current protection practice by shifting the focus from defining protection to operationalising it. Phase I laid the conceptual foundation for proactive protection, identifying approaches, developing resources, and catalysing dialogue. Phase II moves from concept to practice, demonstrating what proactive protection can achieve in conflict-affected settings and how it can be scaled. It advances a coherent model that connects evidence, policy, and practice to show how humanitarian actors can act early, work with local partners, and embed violence prevention within their programmes.

The inclusion of Nonviolent Peaceforce (NP) marks a deliberate evolution for the consortium. NP's operational engagement in complex conflict environments anchors the consortium's collective expertise in the lived realities of affected communities. Through this, the project will test, adapt, and document proactive protection approaches developed in Phase I, showing how they can be translated into measurable reductions in harm.

The lessons emerging from this operationalisation will inform the consortium's broader work to influence humanitarian policy. Evidence generated through implementation will feed into targeted analysis and policy dialogue, helping to demonstrate that proactive protection is both feasible and effective. At the same time, the project will strengthen sector-wide learning by refining and validating operational tools, training materials, and guidance developed in Phase I. These will be tested and adapted with practitioners through the [Unarmed Civilian Protection \(UCP\) Academy](#) and [UCP Community of Practice](#), and rolled out to humanitarian, peacebuilding, and other relevant

actors to expand uptake and institutional learning. This ensures that proactive protection approaches remain grounded, practical, and accessible across contexts.

Ultimately, Phase II seeks to catalyse a wider systemic shift in how protection is understood and enacted. By demonstrating through evidence and practice that proactive approaches can effectively prevent and reduce violence, the project aims to influence the structures that shape humanitarian response, from coordination mechanisms to training systems and policy frameworks. In doing so, it seeks to move proactive protection from the margins to the centre of humanitarian action, laying the foundation for a system that invests in prevention, values civilian agency, and treats safety as a collective responsibility rather than a reactive outcome.

1.4. Target Groups

This project will engage a diverse range of actors across sectors who play a role in protecting civilians or shaping protection policy and practice. Primary target groups include both mandated and non-mandated organisations at national and international levels, such as humanitarian development and peacebuilding agencies, protection coordination bodies, and members of the Global Protection Cluster, as well as experienced aid workers directly involved in protection coordination and response. It will also work with community leaders, local protection champions, and communities affected by violence in Myanmar and other contexts where proactive protection approaches are being implemented and tested, recognising their central role in applying and sustaining these practices over time. The training and learning components will additionally involve actors from related sectors, including multi-mandate organisations and development actors, whose work can integrate proactive protection principles into broader humanitarian and recovery programming. Finally, the project will engage donors and policymakers at global and national levels to strengthen their understanding of proactive protection interventions and their relevance within the humanitarian programme cycle.

2. Vision and Theory of Change

2.1 Vision and Cross-component Coherence

This project's vision is to redefine how protection is understood and practiced amid accelerating global complexity. It recognises that the environments in which civilians seek safety and security are not predictable or stable. They are dynamic systems where risks

evolve rapidly and crises overlap or cascade. In such settings, protection cannot follow a linear path from activity to impact. It must operate as an adaptive ecosystem that learns, connects, and evolves across multiple levels, from local communities to global policy spaces. This project embodies that shift, building a coherent, evidence-driven model of proactive protection that integrates local implementation, research, and policy engagement, with each reinforcing the other towards achieving lasting protection outcomes.

At the centre of this model is implementation, led by NP. In contexts such as Myanmar, NP will operationalise proactive protection, testing and adapting civilian-led approaches that reduce violence and enhance safety. Learning generated from these interventions will be deepened and analysed through close collaboration between HPG/ODI and NP's MEAL architecture. HPG/ODI will complement NP's monitoring and impact analysis by helping to structure and interpret data emerging from in-country partners. Working in an integrated way, HPG/ODI will support NP to build out a more robust understanding of how proactive protection interventions contribute to changes in civilian safety and community resilience.

In addition, the body of evidence that is developed will be deepened through further research and analysis led by HPG/ODI. Building on NP's monitoring and outcome data, HPG/ODI will conduct in-depth research in at least one country, prioritising Myanmar to complement NP's investments in outcome monitoring (feasibility dependent), and potentially another context where NP is working, to understand how civilians and civil society perceive their safety and protection as a result of proactive protection interventions. This research will not only analyse NP's work but examine a wider set of local and international actors applying similar approaches, identifying the conditions and enabling factors that make proactive protection effective across contexts.

The insights generated through implementation, MEAL collaboration, and research will inform targeted policy engagement. HPG/ODI will translate this evidence into actionable recommendations for its global network of humanitarian coordination bodies, donors, policymakers and practitioners. This process will not only promote wider recognition of proactive protection but also address systemic barriers, such as risk aversion, funding silos, and limited cross-sector collaboration, that currently inhibit its uptake. This will be complemented by operational and/or policy dialogue on specific thematic issues, barriers and/or entry-points to progress the proactive protection agenda.

In parallel, NOHA will transform the learning generated through implementation and research into education and professional training, embedding proactive protection principles into the offers available for its graduate students. This will aim to ensure that the evidence and methodologies developed through the project continue to shape future generations of protection professionals.

Finally, NP's UCP Academy and UCP Community of Practice will act as connective infrastructure linking these components, enabling practitioners, researchers, and policymakers to exchange knowledge, test training materials, and refine operational guidance developed through the project. The consortium will also explore how the existing UCP Community of Practice can be further connected to broader platforms and networks on proactive protection, creating opportunities for peer exchange and collective learning among diverse actors across the humanitarian, development, and peacebuilding sectors. HPG/ODI will contribute through facilitation, policy dialogue, and dissemination, ensuring that learning and evidence from the Community of Practice and the Academy inform wider policy and coordination fora.

2.2 Theory of Change

The theory of change defined in the initial phase of the project, and refined for the current proposal is as follows:

IF actions to improve protection through proactive approaches aimed at reducing threats, mitigating harm, and increasing safety can be identified, recognised, studied, and developed; and

IF additional proactive approaches are piloted in areas of conflict, while measured and analysed through the lens of the broader project framework and objectives, and

IF learning modules developed in phase 1 are tested and or reviewed by frontline implementers of civilian protection; and

IF the evidence base of the effectiveness of these strategies can be strengthened and made more available and accessible;

THEN these actions will become critical aspects of policy and practice; *and*

The capacity of donors and partners to engage with, support, and fund these activities will increase; *and*

The number of such actions will increase; *and*

The safety and security of civilians will be strengthened.

BECAUSE organisations active in the protection field working across the humanitarian, development, peace, and human rights sectors will be able to access resources on how these strategies work and can be implemented; and

Key staff at global and country level at these organisations will gain further knowledge on these strategies and learn how to integrate them more systematically in policy and practice and influence more policy and decision makers; and

Policy makers and donors will be better-informed about these strategies, their effectiveness in achieving protection, and what potential programmes integrating these strategies could look like, enabling them to support additional civilian protection initiatives and push back against voices who call for more militarised approaches or who are unaware about the limits of humanitarian protection; and

Those entering the humanitarian sector will be educated so that these strategies and their underlying logics are integrated into protection-related curriculum at an early stage, and can play a role of changemakers; and

Existen resources on these strategies will be collated, more systematically housed, analysed for commonalities and key threads, and more broadly communicated and included in cross-organisational advocacy, increasing access to available approaches and creating opportunities for conflict affected groups to initiate their own efforts to protect civilians from violence.

3. Objectives

3.1 Overall Objective

Enhance the capacity of the aid system - including local and international humanitarian, development, and peacebuilding actors - to prevent or reduce risks of violence against civilian populations affected by armed conflicts.

3.2 Specific Objectives

- Measurable improvements in civilian safety and security through the implementation of proactive protection in emergency conflict-affected contexts.
- Cross-contextual evidence on factors that enable proactive protection to be effective, drawing on implementation results to identify the conditions that lead to protection outcomes across different environments.

- Consolidation and dissemination of practical and operational field-level tools and resources on proactive protection interventions to the national and international aid community.
- Continuation of existing trainings and creation of additional trainings to complement the tools and resources developed in Phase I.
- Roll-out of graduate course on proactive protection to set the foundation for the next generation of protection experts.
- Peer-to-Peer exchange on current proactive protection interventions, approaches, frameworks and practices through workshops and events.
- Evaluation and analysis targeting current proactive protection interventions, approaches, frameworks, and practices through comparative field research.
- Strengthening the evidence base on proactive protection interventions, approaches, frameworks and practices through research, M&E, and exchange on effectiveness of practices.
- Leverage learning, evidence and practice to raise awareness amongst the humanitarian community and donors as to the benefits, opportunities and outcomes of proactive protection approaches (including as demonstrated through this project) to strengthen donor and diplomatic buy-in, and inform policy and practice.

4. Project Implementation: From Phase I to Phase II

4.1 Progress Made in Phase I

In the first phase of the project, activities were split into three distinct components that address different aspects of the Theory of Change. These included *Train, Coach, and Mentor, Connect, Stimulate, and Enrich*, and *Evidence, Monitor, and Learn*. The key outcomes of this phase of the project, as well as progress made in the overall objective of the consortium, will be highlighted below:

4.1.1 *Train, Coach, and Mentor*

Under this component, NOHA and NORCAP worked together on the creation of resources to disseminate practice on key modes of action identified under this approach. These resources were split into focuses on Community-Based Safety and Security Analysis and Planning, Protection by Presence, Armed Actor Engagement and CMCOORD, Negotiations for Protection, Mediation for Protection, and Anticipatory Action / Early Warning/Early Response. Written resources were developed for each of these to be housed on the Consortium's website. These resources were meant to be a first stop for practitioners to interact with these topics and learn some of the key basics for implementation, highlighting practical steps to be taken by actors to implement modes of action and integrate them into ongoing protection activities. Where possible, co-funding

was utilised to increase the work on these resources, particularly under Anticipatory Action / Early Warning/Early Response, where a major gap in existing resources was observed.

In addition to the written resources, trainings were developed and rolled out during the latter stages of phase 1. These included trainings by NOHA on Armed Actor Engagement in CAR and DRC, Mediation in Kenya and Ireland, Protection by Presence in Colombia, and more generally on Proactive Protection in Bochum and Brussels and by NORCAP experts in Palestine and Colombia. These trainings had a range of target audiences, linking back with the holistic approach under the theory of change, including current and graduating masters students on international humanitarian action, field-based practitioners, academics, and targeted higher-level humanitarians. Complementary to these efforts, the NORCAP experts have been engaging in advocacy around proactive protection in the protection clusters in Palestine and Colombia.

4.1.2 Connect, Stimulate, and Enrich

The work of the consortium partners under the project led to a number of workshops, roundtables and events aimed at building and connecting a network of allies and organisations working with these modes of action in order to strengthen shared learning and explore potential ways forward. These included supporting a panel at the European Humanitarian Forum, organising a panel at the annual Protection of Civilians week, as well as participation at the International Studies Association Global Conference and International Humanitarian Studies Association Conference. Additionally, workshops were organised in relation to the creation of both research and resources including on Evacuations and Armed Actor Engagement, as well as broader policy engagement with a range of practitioners and policy makers to discuss learning and identify ways forward amidst this moment of significant uncertainty in the aid sector.

4.1.3 Evidence, Monitor, and Learn

This final component, led by Humanitarian Policy Group / ODI, focused on increasing the availability of evidence on the use and effectiveness of specific modes of action where there were identified evidence gaps, identifying key learning and test existing guidance as a means to strengthen the buy-in of specialised actors. As discussed, as part of the action research approach to the research, workshops, roundtable, policy fora were convened to stimulate learning and contribute to or complement direct research. To this end, a series of policy briefs and briefing notes have been published, including an advocacy focused policy brief on the necessity to [keep](#)

protection paramount during the humanitarian reset, as well as thematic briefs on the practice of civilian evacuations, armed actor engagement for protection, and early warning, early response to violence for civilian safety and security. A final policy brief will be published by the end of the project.

4.2 Shifting Focus for Phase II

Through the first phase of the project, there were clear successes and shortcomings observed by the consortium members that should either be leveraged, re-adapted, or changed to ensure that the consortium is able to achieve its overarching objectives through the project. In reference to the theory of change of the project, headway has been made in the collection and collation of evidence and resources in particular. With the resources now being finalised, attention will shift in the next phase as to how to increase buy-in and further expand upon the existing evidence and resources to ensure that the consortium is successfully able to advocate for the further integration of these interventions in practice.

One key shortcoming seen in the first phase was the lack of an implementing partner. While there was considerable success in using the collective networks of the consortium to reach out to practice partners, a gap was observed in showing the immediate link between the work of the consortium and improved civilian safety and security.

4.3 Integrating Practice

A primary objective of the Phase II of the project is to further increase the footprint of the implementation of these modes of action by bringing an implementing partner, namely Nonviolent Peaceforce (NP) into the consortium. In this way the consortium will be able to make more clear concrete steps towards the overarching objectives of the consortium, first and foremost increasing the safety and security of communities affected by violence.

NP's inclusion marks a deliberate shift from concept to practice. It anchors the consortium's collective expertise in lived realities, where proactive protection approaches can be adapted, applied, and refined in situations of active conflict and constrained humanitarian access together with communities. Through this, the consortium can deepen its understanding of how proactive protection functions in practice, including what enables communities to act, how local systems sustain these approaches over time, and which institutional conditions best support their use.

The integration of practice also strengthens the consortium's ability to generate and validate evidence collaboratively. NP's implementation will provide a basis for comparative learning and reflection, enabling ODI/HPG to analyse practices and outcomes across contexts and at global levels, and NOHA to translate grounded methodologies into future training and academic curricula. It will also allow the consortium to connect its efforts with like-minded efforts NP is undertaking under the cover of unarmed civilian protection as well as connect its networks to NP's networks of frontline protection actors.

4.4 Dual Approach: Local and Global

Phase II of the project will meet the objectives of the project through complementary approaches. Firstly, the work of the consortium will continue on a global level through outreach, research, and training, to increase knowledge and capacity on these interventions. This will be built on successful aspects of the first phase, including through trainings in multiple countries to target different audiences. Simultaneously, the consortium will zoom into everyday practice at the local level, connecting theory with practice, gathering evidence for specific aspects of the practice, comparing global best practices with local wisdom and refining modules developed in phase I from the perspective of practitioners, and feeding local examples of practice into global policy outreach.

4.5 From Resource Development to Consolidation and Uptake

The resources developed in Phase I aimed to establish a set of introductory materials for learning how to implement the identified modes of action into practice to better protect civilians in conflict. To increase the visibility and usability of these resources, the consortium will in Phase II sensitise these resources to practitioners for their feedback on potential remaining gaps and streamline the language and interconnectivity of these resources to ensure readers can easily jump between them and discover new tools that may be found elsewhere among the available resources. Beyond this, the resources will be utilised in training and other events to increase uptake of the materials. Finally, NP country teams and local partners will be mobilised to examine how key tools and materials can be used by practitioners and inform the consortium how further outreach could accelerate their uptake.

4.6 Refocusing on Training

While both the creation of materials and roll-out of training were achieved under Phase I of the project, the development of resources has taken a significant part of time

invested in the project, particularly where resources were lacking. Accordingly, and as a tool to increase buy-in into these modes of action, training will play a more central role in the second phase of the project, with attention given to maximising the number of participants through strategically chosen locations of the training and further communicating the outcomes of Phase I.

4.7 Consortium Governance

For Phase II, NOHA will serve as the administrative (grant-holding) lead, responsible for receiving and disbursing funds on behalf of the consortium, and managing compliance, contracting, audits, and consolidated financial reporting to the donor. NP will act as the operational and strategic consortia lead, representing the consortium externally and leading the steering committee, planning, and overall coordination. NP will coordinate field implementation of proactive protection with in-country partners and feed practice-based insights into the consortium's learning and policy processes. Governance will operate through a joint steering mechanism, with NP as operational and grant lead, NOHA as administrative lead, and ODI/HPG as core partner, which will review and approve annual workplans, budget adjustments, risk management, and results tracking.

The reason for the change in consortia lead from Phase I is to ensure that the consortia is grounded in the re-orientated focus of Phase II to the main component of implementation, and therefore by NP. Given challenges for NP to be the grant-holder, NOHA, as a founder of the consortium, was identified as the most relevant solution to keeping the strategic and technical oversight

5. Phase II Planned Activities

5.1. Implement, Pilot, Test, and Innovate

5.1.1 Cross-Context Implementation and Comparative Learning

NP will operationalise proactive protection in Myanmar, focusing on Sagaing and Chin States, with lighter engagement in Mandalay and Magway where strategic opportunities arise. Building on its long-standing presence and established partnerships, NP will apply a range of proactive protection approaches articulated in Phase I, with particular emphasis on:

- Negotiations for the release of detainees at the community level,

- Rapid response and facilitation of emergency assistance by community protection teams,
- Protective accompaniment for civilians, including farmers and returnees,
- Community-driven early warning and early response (EWER), integrating humanitarian coordination and proactive self-protection,
- Timely and safer evacuations and displacement grounded in early warning, preparedness, and anticipatory action,
- Security management and self-protection strategies for humanitarian actors,
- Community-driven advocacy for protection, and
- Protection analysis and monitoring.

While NP's work is grounded in Unarmed Civilian Protection (UCP), the proactive protection approaches outlined in Phase I are closely aligned with UCP principles and can be readily applied in the Myanmar context. Core practices such as protection by presence and anticipatory action are already central to NP's engagement with local protection partners, including Early Warning/Early Response (EWER) mechanisms. As humanitarian access becomes increasingly politicised and aid workers face heightened risks, NP's partners have expanded their work to include humanitarian negotiations and safe evacuation support. This project therefore provides an opportunity to apply, analyse, and document proactive protection approaches in practice, examining where UCP and other proactive protection approaches overlap, reinforce, or diverge, while also piloting additional methodologies that NP has not yet or only partially applied.

NP will work with local civil society organisations, informal community groups, and community-based protection and EWER teams that it has supported for a number of years. As international actors have withdrawn and access has narrowed, these groups have assumed central protection roles. By strengthening their capacity to apply and adapt proactive protection approaches, the project will help reduce violence and generate grounded evidence on what works at community level. Through these equitable partnerships, NP will also link community-led efforts with consortium partners and relevant protection mechanisms at national and global levels. This will connect lessons and evidence from the front lines to broader policy and coordination discussions, keeping proactive protection rooted in the lived realities of communities operating in hard-to-reach and high-risk contexts.

In parallel, NP will draw on comparative data and analysis from other country programmes, such as Sudan, where community protection teams navigate similar challenges in protracted crises with restricted humanitarian access. This cross-context

learning will clarify the factors that enable or hinder proactive protection and will inform evidence-based, adaptable models applicable across diverse humanitarian settings.

Expected outputs include tangible improvements in civilian safety and security through the implementation and testing of proactive protection approaches, demonstrating how these interventions can reduce violence and make people safer. The project will also produce tested practice notes, operational guidance, and/or case studies from Myanmar and at least one other conflict context, which will inform the development of learning materials and manuals. In addition, learning briefs and notes will also support advocacy and policy dialogue, including with humanitarian coordination bodies and donors.

5.2 Resources and Training

5.2.1 Resource Consolidation

NOHA will consolidate the resources created in Phase I of the project by different authors to ensure that the tools and materials are uniform in their language and structure. As many of the resources touch on similar themes and topics, authors have discussed modes of action and ways of approaching protection from different angles. To avoid confusion through overlapping and potentially incongruent language between the resource, an initial focus will be placed in best smoothing out the resources to make them more user friendly.

Another key component of this consolidation process will be the interlinking of connected resources. For example, the resource on armed actor engagement includes information on negotiations for protection and the resource on negotiations includes information on engaging in negotiations with armed actors. Accordingly, these resources should be linked through the resources themselves and through the consortium website to ensure that users engaging with one topic have the ability to seamlessly open up complementary documents which could further assist their implementation of these modes of action.

5.2.2 Resource Sensitisation and Uptake

While the work undertaken on resource development in Phase I has been substantial, these resources will only successfully address the objectives of the project in the hands of practitioners who can and do integrate their tools in their own work. To best ensure that this is the case, NOHA will work with NP, as well as other individuals and

organisations that have supported the work of the consortium in Phase I, to review and sensitise the resources to ensure they can and will be translated into practice in humanitarian interventions. Concretely, this will mean a sensitisation session as well as online sessions and communications about the resources to create greater visibility for the resources and garner further interest in engaging with them. This will be done in tandem with the trainings offered, as the trainings have already shown an ability to attract significant interest.

5.2.3 Training

Building on the successful trainings at the end of the first phase, NOHA would continue to offer the trainings developed and increase the offer of trainings to include those components which were not included in the training offer in Phase I. This will mean at least seven trainings across the twelve months of the project to include the already established trainings on mediation, protection by presence, armed actor engagement and protection of civilians in humanitarian settings, as well as additional trainings on community-based safety and security analysis and planning, negotiations for protection, and early warning and early response. From the early stages of the project, the full offer of trainings will be made available to attract cross-interest between the trainings and make clear the interconnections between the different trainings as falling under this project. Reflecting the dual local and global approach of the second phase, NOHA will work with NP to see which of these trainings could be offered in neighboring countries to Myanmar to best support the work of NP and attract other participants from the region. Other trainings will be hosted in other venues to allow the trainings and tools created by the project to be shared with a broader audience.

5.2.4 Follow-up

Finally, NOHA will follow up with participants following the trainings to see if and how they have been able to implement lessons learned through the trainings in their interventions. This will enable monitoring on where the tools are utilised as well as allow for critical reflection on what blockages may exist toward implementation. The follow-up will also aim to get insights as to which further tools or materials could be created by the project to better support translating the materials and trainings into successful implementation.

5.3. Connect, Stimulate, Enrich

Building on the foundations established in Phase I, NP will leverage the existing UCP Community of Practice (CoP) and UCP Academy, which it has established separately, to consolidate, validate, and share learning from this project.

The UCP CoP brings together hundreds of primarily practitioners, but also academics, and policymakers engaged in civilian protection. It will serve as a platform to test and refine training materials, manuals, and learning tools developed through this project, ensuring they are practical, relevant, and grounded in local realities. The CoP will also support the practitioner-research convening envisioned in Phase I, providing space for dialogue, peer exchange, and collaboration between operational and research communities. Connections will be made between the UCP CoP and the various networks and CoPs that NOHA, HPG and NORCAP are connected to, and which have a shared interest in effective civilian protection.

The UCP Academy, co-founded by NP and Creating Safer Space (CSS), provides structured learning on unarmed and nonviolent approaches to protection and hosts a knowledge database of more than 700 resources on UCP, community self-protection, and related methodologies. The Academy will serve as one of the key resources for disseminating project learning, making tested case studies, operational guidance, and training materials on proactive protection accessible to practitioners, researchers, and policy makers.

NP, NOHA and HPG will explore how existing and emerging sources, platforms and opportunities for learning could be connected, building complementarity across the respective networks and CoPs.

This will be further complemented by targeted policy engagement with the view to identify opportunities to strengthen policy and practice. This could include, for example, policy engagement with donors and diplomatic actors, and/or to strengthen learning and practice on specific thematic issues building on learning in phase I and/or gaps and needs emerging within this phase of the consortia.

5.4. Evidence, Monitor, Learn

The Humanitarian Policy Group at ODI Global will build on and further develop evidence and learning generated from the first phase and other complementary research HPG has been carrying out. Evidence, learning and feedback from phase I identified a strong appetite for further evidence and learning - including for more in-depth research.

As such, HPG will complement Nonviolent Peaceforce's investments in evidence and learning from its interventions. It will carry out deep dive research in at least one country, prioritising Myanmar (dependent on feasibility) in order to understand how civilians and civil society perceive their safety and security as a result of the range of actors and actions that have proactively sought to reduce civilian harm. Depending on identified gaps and developments, HPG could complement this with further light-touch global level / thematic research. Decisions on the focus of research and evidence will be taken in consultation with consortia members to ensure it responds to identified gaps, complements consortia activities, and flexibly responds to emerging developments. Evidence and learning will be shared through policy briefs, briefing notes, learning stories while considering potential opportunities for a broader range of dissemination outputs such as podcasts.

Evidence-building will continue to take an action research approach to institute two-way learning. This will ensure that evidence is grounded in current relevant operational and policy deliberations, and to inform and be informed by such deliberations, including to ensuring that real-time opportunities for uptake are identified and taken forward.

Along with other consortia members, evidence and learning will be leveraged to inform national, regional and global learning and policy engagement fora - including through targeted policy engagement.

6. Timeline

Phase II of the project will be scheduled for 12 months from mid-December 2025 until mid-December 2026. This will allow the consortium to begin contracting and planning for activities and be able to dive into implementation and roll-out of the foreseen activities at the beginning of 2026.

Annex 1. Detailed overview of partners

The **Network on Humanitarian Action (NOHA)** is an international association of universities was founded with the aim to enhance professionalism in humanitarian action through education & training, research & publications and projects. As a network of academic institutions, NOHA brings a university ethos to the existing humanitarian principles that govern humanitarian action. Over the past 30 years, the network has expanded and now comprises universities from 9 EU member states as well as 11 global partner universities on different continents. With the support of the European Commission's Directorate General for Education and Culture (DG EAC), NOHA has been able to grow its network and expand its range of activities. NOHA currently develops education & training programmes, research & publication initiatives, and projects to serve students, professionals, researchers as well as institutions and organisations in the humanitarian action sector. NOHA currently offers the inter-university and multidisciplinary Joint Master's Degree in International Humanitarian Action, annual thematic schools, thematic and regional seminars and undergraduate modules. In early 2015, NOHA launched NOHA Global which aims to support academic institutions in other regions of the world to establish their own NOHA networks. NOHA has also founded the Journal of International Humanitarian Action and is implementing several projects aiming at professionalisation of the humanitarian sector.

While NOHA is a network of universities, NOHA and its members have a long history of partnering with humanitarian organisations on common projects on topics around improving humanitarian practice and professionalisation. In the first phase of this project, NOHA worked with ODI and NORCAP to develop a set of trainings and resources aimed at improving knowledge and understanding of proactive modes of action in humanitarian protection to improve the effectiveness of humanitarian actors to protect civilians in conflict. Beyond the work in this project, NOHA has organised seminars and trainings on cash based interventions with Acción Contra el Hambre, and international humanitarian law with the Belgian Red Cross and ICRC. NOHA has also worked on several larger projects with humanitarian partners including with Concern Worldwide on the Building Resilience Through Education (BRTE) project and with RedR, Institut Bioforce, Aktion Deutschland Hilft on the European Humanitarian Action Partnership (EUHAP), which aimed to track and map aspects of humanitarian professionalisation. NOHA also led the European Humanitarian Roundtables, a set of conferences funded by DG ECHO to foster exchange in the humanitarian community around core themes and priorities of the WHS process and the European Union's policy position towards the WHS.

As a network of universities, NOHA's members also engage individually on projects with humanitarian partners including a collaboration of University College Dublin, Universidad de Deusto, Ruhr-Universität Bochum, Rijksuniversiteit Groningen with Concern Worldwide, Plan and Future Analytics Consulting on the Preparedness & Resilience to address Urban Vulnerability. Likewise, the Ruhr-Universität Bochum currently works with the German aid organisation consortium Bündnis Entwicklung Hilft on the World Risk Report, which manages a global index on risk published annually in the report, and with Concern Worldwide and Welthungerhilfe on the Global Hunger Index.

Within the context of this project on pro-active protection, NOHA will bring expertise in the pedagogical development of advanced training courses and competencies on research on issues around protection and humanitarian action. These elements will be used to consolidate the training manuals developed in Phase I and continue with the capacity building activities. Finally, NOHA's over 4,000 alumni will be utilised to bolster attempts to find new audiences working in the humanitarian and adjacent sectors, to provide greater impact for the project and increase the potential pool of candidates both for trainings and members of the community of practice.

NP is a niche, single-sector protection agency that works to prevent violence and increase the safety and security of conflict-affected civilians. Since 2002, NP has implemented Unarmed Civilian Protection (UCP) in some of the world's most violent and complex contexts, including Myanmar, Sudan, South Sudan, Iraq, Mindanao, and Sri Lanka. UCP is an evidence-based, civilian-centred approach that embodies proactive protection by preventing, mitigating, and responding to violence through nonviolent, community-led action. Through UCP, NP has protected tens of thousands of people worldwide and impacted millions more by helping communities live free from fear, strengthen their own protection capacities, and build sustainable peace.

NP is recognised as the world's largest implementer of UCP and has contributed to its institutionalisation within international policy frameworks. UCP has been referenced in six UN Security Council resolutions (most recently UNSCR 2579 on Darfur) and in U.S. congressional directives encouraging support for unarmed civilian protection organisations.

Working and living alongside affected populations, NP supports local actors to lead and sustain their own protection, even in high-risk, hard-to-reach areas and during rapidly evolving emergencies. Drawing on more than two decades of operational experience, NP addresses protection challenges in entrenched and protracted conflicts while adapting

programming to respond swiftly to emerging risks and urgent humanitarian needs. NP brings this expertise in applying proactive, civilian-led protection and generating practice-based evidence to inform the project's training, research, and policy work. In recent years, NP has brought together a variety of organisations, individuals and researchers in unarmed and nonviolent approaches to civilian protection across continents to establish a network for learning and collective action.

ODI is an independent, global think tank, working for a sustainable and peaceful world in which every person thrives. We harness the power of evidence and ideas through research and partnership to confront challenges, develop solutions and create change.

- We undertake cutting-edge research and analysis to generate evidence, ideas, and solutions.
- We act as trusted, expert advisers to those making change around the world.
- We bring people together to turn ideas into action.
- We communicate our work around the world to increase its reach and impact.

In pursuit of this vision, ODI has a long track record in providing expert humanitarian policy advice, analysis, and training through the [Humanitarian Policy Group](#) (HPG). HPG is one of the world's leading think tanks dedicated to reforming, informing and improving humanitarian policy and practice. HPG's influential work combines rigorous research and high-quality policy analysis, dialogue and debate with significant convening across the humanitarian system and high levels of communication to ensure insights are heard and adopted. HPG is driven by concerns that – despite advances in the proficiency and professionalism of humanitarian action – too often it is politicised, inadequate and unaccountable. HPG is committed to independent, expert evidence, analysis and debate that can enable better outcomes for people affected by conflict and crises. HPG is a demonstrated independent thought leader on protection with a track record of high quality, evidence-based research and analysis to identify tangible opportunities to effect change across humanitarian, political and peace action. To promote uptake, HPG will leverage its strong networks across the international humanitarian system as well as those it works alongside (e.g., member states, donors, ICRC, UN and NGOs as well as Global South institutions and organisations), ensuring that key actors engage with the research, and deploy HPG's significant convening capacity to bring together key stakeholders and identify practical policy and operational opportunities to promote restraint.