



**Training Guidelines for Nonviolent Peaceforce
Field Team Members
Participant manual**

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Introduction

History and purpose of Guidelines

The Nonviolent Peaceforce (NP) conducts core trainings to prepare people to become field team members (FTMs) in actual deployment projects. The trainings use the “Opening Space for Democracy – Third-party Nonviolent Intervention” training curriculum as a major resource. This curriculum was originally written for NP trainings and was the basis of the first two core trainings offered in 2003 and 2005. NP solicited and received extensive feedback on the trainings from the trainers themselves, participants and others who train people in peace work.

Based on that feedback the NP training committee in early 2006 developed this manual of guidelines. These guidelines are intended to address the criticisms and concerns about the previous trainings with instructions and recommendations to trainers and participants in NP core trainings.

These guidelines are intended to be just that, guides. Learning to do peace work in the field is a life long process, and these three weeks as just one brief episode. They are called guidelines because NP knows that for training to be effective, it must be a living and breathing experience, flexible and responsive to the actual moment. All of the trainers who deliver NP training, have delivered similar training before. All of the participants have already participated in some peace work training. The purpose of these guidelines is to be sure that the core training develops not only a shared knowledge of methods, but shared definitions and approaches. Thus some of it will be repetitive of what participants already know. NP asks participants to please bear with that in service to the process of developing a community of peace workers with shared vision.

NP undertakes two kinds of deployments. The usual deployment takes many months (12-24) of investigation and planning before deployment and potential field team members are recruited from the pool of people who have participated in this core training, with a month or two to prepare to leave home. The rapid response deployment occurs over the space of approximately two months and field team members are asked to join with very few weeks, perhaps only days, to prepare. The in-country training for usual deployment can take a number of weeks, while the rapid response in-country training will be quite intense and brief. This core training is designed to prepare people for the full range of types of deployments, as best as possible.

These guidelines include information on NP’s mission, code of conduct and methods, values and framework, desired competencies to be achieved, instructions for specific tasks and a suggested agenda for the training itself.

They are meant to create a context in which trainers and participants co-create the core training.

Opening Space for Democracy Manual

The Opening Space for Democracy is an extremely important resource, reflecting the wisdom not only of its authors, but of the many people from around the world they interviewed in its creation. It should be used as a central resource for NP trainings, as much of it was developed with NP in mind. However, in reflecting on the experience of previous core trainings, it was felt that NP training needs to:

- include more input from participants
- be more flexible in the agenda and use of training materials
- draw more on the particular experience and expertise of the current trainers
- reduce the number of competencies cultivated to allow more time for each
- increase the time for learning from exercises and decrease the number of exercise/activities
- include more material based on actual NP experience in the field, than could be done before the first projects.

Context and Framework

Values

Gandhi thought and spoke of his life and work as “an experiment in truth”. NP is committed to providing the best work it can in deployments while at the same time continuously improving. The preamble to the NP By-laws includes “NP welcomes criticism and suggestions for improvement on all levels of work and invites advice, assistance and empowerment.”

While the title of this manual doesn’t include the word “cultivating”, it could. Farmers know that cultivation is an ongoing process, each year another cycle. Developing the practice of nonviolent peacekeeping is a relatively new endeavor and there is much to be learned. Thus the core training must be imbued with the spirit of openness, curiosity, flexibility and humility. While we all know something, we don’t know everything we need to know. We must continue to explore and learn.

Becoming a member of the NP staff implies a commitment to participating in this process. Each of us must share what we are learning as well as be open to what others are learning. NP is not a static organization. It is an organic and growing system which is chaotic at times and at other times quite orderly.

NP Principles from the Code of Conduct

The Nonviolent Peaceforce operates within a Code of Conduct adopted by the International Governing Council in 2003. Similar to the code of conduct of other peacekeeping teams, this code sets the framework for NP's work. Below are excerpted the principles from the Code of Conduct.

Primacy of those involved in the conflict

NP believes that a conflict can only be solved/transformed by those directly involved in it. Its role as an international intervener is to support the parties in conflict to do so.

Nonviolence

Nonviolent Peaceforce is committed to nonviolence by which it means that it will never actively engage in or support actions which may result in physical or mental or spiritual harm, or loss of life. NP's adherence to nonviolence is unconditional, because it asserts that conflict transformation between and within countries cannot be achieved by violent means.

Nonpartisanship

The Nonviolent Peaceforce will remain nonpartisan. It will not take the side of any party and seeks to offer its protective services upon request to unarmed civilian groups committed to nonviolent and peaceful resolution. In doing so, the NP opposes the use of violence and dedicates itself to the safety of all while justice and durable peace are sought. By not taking sides NP means it will refrain from taking a position on political demands or views by either side in a conflict. NP is not neutral in terms of the principles and values of international humanitarian and human rights law, and seeks to support them everywhere.

Independence

NP is an independent organization, independent from any interest group, political party, ideology or religion, and free to formulate policies and operational strategies in accordance with its decision-making procedures, goals and principles.

Human Rights and International Law

While recognizing that the notion of universality of human right has been challenged on the grounds of different value priorities, NP sees the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the other Covenants and Pacts regarding human rights as the broadest common denominator the peoples of the modern world have found so far.

NP is committed to the principle and practice of promoting human rights in its work. It seeks and urges compliance with international humanitarian law and principles, and respect for human and peoples' rights amongst everyone.

Nonviolence

The complexity and richness of nonviolence, its manifold traditions and social experiences, and the large number of individual approaches to nonviolence cannot be summarized easily. The broad range of these things challenges us to avoid simple descriptions and to question if we have managed to cover all relevant aspects and dimensions of nonviolence. Therefore this chapter more than any of the others is a preliminary one that needs further joint reflection.

People understand nonviolence in many different ways. For some people it encompasses the most effective and powerful strategies to struggle for justice and peace. For some it is a total way of life, a spiritual and philosophical practice day to day. Many people are somewhere in between. Nonviolence is practiced around the world. While underlying principles may be similar, the actual methods and manifestations will vary by culture and region.

The World Health Organization defines violence as “The intentional use of physical force or power, threatened or actual, against oneself, another person, or against a group or community, that either results in or has a high likelihood of resulting in injury, death, psychological harm, maldevelopment or deprivation.” Thus nonviolence is about more than just not causing direct harm, but is also about building social structures that support development and well being for all. Nonviolence is active transformation. Therefore NP is not just about preventing violence, but also about supporting local civilian involvement in the process to build peaceful and just societies.

While each person may understand nonviolence and violence in their own way, it is critical that field teams have enough common understanding to guide their work together. Of equal importance FTMs need to have an understanding of, tolerance for and even curiosity about their differences, so that these differences do not contribute to misunderstandings and conflicts. Ideally if misunderstandings do occur, FTMs will practice communication strategies that promote inquiry and further learning from differences on the part of all the team members involved.

Basic Purpose of Training

NP primarily trains people in the principles and practice of nonviolent peacekeeping for the primary purpose of having effective staff for its own project. In order to be able to respond in a timely way to requests for interventions and decisions to deploy in a particular situation, NP needs a pool of well trained people, committed to NPs principles and methods.

In addition, NP hopes that this training will contribute to the success of other nonviolent interventions, whether individual or organizational. NP is committed to

building the field of nonviolent peacekeeping more broadly. NP hopes that participants will use skills and knowledge gained through this training to address conflicts in their own home country or other regions of the world to promote peace and justice.

Training Phases

This core training is just one phase of cultivating peace workers. All participants have had some previous training. Before attending a core training all participants have been through an assessment process. This process itself included some opportunities to learn about peace work. If a participant is hired by NP for a particular project, they will receive further training in country for that deployment. In country training maybe be brief or last 8-10 weeks, depending on the situation. FTMs receive in-service training as well.

For many trainings, the assessment will immediately precede the training. Once the assessment is over, participants who continue are no longer being reviewed for their potential fit with NP. However, trainers will work closely with participants to give them feedback. Occasionally it may become clear that there are sufficient concerns to determine that it is not appropriate to consider a participant for employment with NP as a field team member.

Guiding principles for NP training

Adult Learning – Trainers and participants alike are seen to be co-learners responsible for their own learning. Learning takes place best when people’s knowledge, experience and emotions are respected in a relaxed environment utilizing participatory practices.

Flexibility – The actual agenda for each training, though worked out in advance, must be implemented with flexibility to respond to emerging needs and changes. Trainers must respond flexibly to the input of participants, with careful consideration.

Conflicts happen – Inevitably conflicts emerge between trainers and participants and between participants (and even among trainers!). It is important to welcome conflicts and be open to what each conflict can teach about the practice of nonviolence, self awareness, cultural diversity and sensitivity, conflict transformation, team building and good communication. Conflicts that are suppressed or avoided tend to fester and grow.

Trainers are facilitators – Trainers for NP are selected because they have experience in the practice of nonviolence and peace making as well as in teaching others. The role of the trainers is to provide leadership and facilitation

of the training. It is important that they role model their teaching as best as possible. Trainers are also learners and open and curious to learning from other participants.

Active Participation – Participants are both teachers and learners. Each participant brings rich experiences and knowledge to share with the group. Participants are responsible for contributing constructively to training, both by sharing what they know and asking for unmet learning needs to be addressed. Participants are responsible for advanced reading, identifying personal goals and actively being responsible for the development of the whole group.

Personal development – As long as we are alive, there is room for personal growth. All participants and trainers are committed to understanding their own impacts on others, their own internal experiences and how they express that to others and to actively participate in reflection and debriefing to both share and learn with others.

Group is the central arena for learning – Much of what needs to be learned about cultural diversity, working and living together as a team, group roles and process, working in conflict and the relationship between individual autonomy and group needs, can be learned during the training through the group experience itself. This requires careful attention and openness.

Embracing diversity – Most NP trainings include people from many regions of the world, various religions, ethnicities, first languages, ages and both genders. NP not only embraces this diversity but believes that it is essential to the mission and work in the field. While all participants are committed to embracing this diversity, in practice it can be a challenge, with differences that are difficult to embrace, contradictions that are hard to reconcile. The time in the training is an excellent time to explore, learn and grow in this regard, while not in the middle of life and death situations.

Openness and transparency – As much as possible trainers and participants will be transparent about process and decisions.

Dialogue – Dialogue is a way of communicating that celebrates differences in thinking and perception and explores these differences with curiosity so that a deeper truth can emerge. Dialogue invites people to question their assumptions and be curious about different perspectives. It welcomes disagreements and is patient with the time it takes for everyone to be heard. It requires careful listening and thoughtful speaking.

Positive Feedback – Appreciations and positive feedback help build individual and team morale. NP encourages the liberal sharing of both.

Outcomes of the Training

All participants have many competencies before attending an NP training. It is assumed that they will increase the competencies they already have as well as learn new ones. Specifically participants will be prepared to become active field team members (FTMs). FTMs ideally will:

1. Be able to deal creatively and well with cross cultural conflicts and misunderstandings
2. Be able and empowered to intervene creatively, nonviolently and powerfully with violent and potentially violent conflicts
3. Have cultural sensitivity- able to live and work in a sensitive way in a different culture and with people from different cultures (not assuming that the way you do things in your culture is the "correct" way to do things).
4. Practice nonviolent communication - able to listen well, reflect back the essence of what you have heard from another(s) and express your own needs and concerns in a caring, sensitive and non-dogmatic way
5. Be able to respond nonviolently when confronted with violence, anger and/or hostility in word or actions
6. Understand nonviolence and how to live it and apply it in relations in the team, with others in the communities in which we work, and with people/groups which may be willing to use violence against others. Commitment to use nonviolence within the teams and in our work while with NP.
7. Be able to work well in a team providing leadership and facilitation as well as cooperation and subsuming self interest to group interest.
8. Be able to analyze the work and write reports for various purposes.
9. Be able to exercise sufficient self care to recover from stress, avoid burn out, celebrate small successes, engage in recreation and fun periodically.

Competencies

1 Mission

- 1 **To be familiar with** the history of NP, its mission and the concept of third-party non-violent intervention, code of conduct, structures and its relations with other organizations
- 2 **To be familiar with** NP's projects, personnel policies and FTM conditions
- 3 **To understand** non-violence, its origins, philosophy, theory, methods, campaigns in different parts of the world
- 4 **To be able to** reflect on and to inform others about NP's essentials (non-violence, non-partisanship, impartiality, making space for local peace efforts)
- 5 **To be able to** be clear on the relation between NP and its FTMs (loyalty, conscience, autonomy and individual values) and to accept NPs values and rules

2 Large Scale Conflict Analysis

- 1 **To be aware of** the structural differences between large scale intervention and small group civil peace services or PBI activities
- 2 **To be familiar with** the Spectrum of peace building: direct action, relief aid, trauma work, dialogue, development, capacity building, etc.
- 3 **To be familiar with** political space and deterrence theory
- 4 **To be able to** analyse roughly the political and social context of a crisis region, taking in regard structural violence and outcomes of religious and/ or cultural dominance, nationalism, racism + sexism
- 5 **To be able to** use analysis models (as "People, Problems, Process", with a clear analysis of stakeholders/needs, conflict mapping) and to identify different interests and interests in common

3 Working In and On Conflict

- 1 **To be familiar with** crisis management activities (including dealing with ambiguous situations and safety in crisis situations)
- 2 **To be familiar with** development of work plans and respective strategies
- 3 **To be familiar with** approaches like 'do-no-harm' and with methods of result monitoring
- 4 **To understand** human rights issues and their relevance for large scale intervention and for peace teams
- 5 **To understand** several approaches of conflict transformation
- 6 **To be able to** explain and to work with methods and tools of third party nonviolent intervention and conflict transformation
- 7 **To be able to** identify and to cope with cultural norms and practices and to increase one's own cross cultural understanding
- 8 **To be able to** identify, use, and support local peace makers and multitrack peace alliances
- 9 **To be able to** offer methods of capacity building to local activists
- 10 **To be able to** support the different roles of women and men in peace processes
- 11 **To be able to** de-escalate face-to-face conflicts

4 Personal Growth

- 1 **To be aware of** one's own competencies and behaviours
- 2 **To be aware of** one's identity and how it may be perceived and/or affect behaviour
- 3 **To understand** the relevance of coping with stress and burnout
- 4 **To be able to** reflect on one's own motivation, vision and role within NP and appreciate small successes
- 5 **To be able to** realize one's own potential for violence and aggression, to deal with fear, to defuse anger and aggression
- 6 **To be able to** act individually and cooperate collectively with self-discipline and self-awareness
- 7 **To be able to** be a pro-active learner (taking situations and learning from them)

5 Team

- 1 **To be aware of** conflict potentials in the team
- 2 **To understand** the necessity of role flexibility and change your perspective through learning from others
- 3 **To understand** relationship dynamics (as in-group processes, dynamics with locals, close and sexual relationships in the field)
- 4 **To be able to** accept diversity and change and react with context sensitivity
- 5 **To be able to** work together as a team, to engage in trust-building, mutual empowerment and conflict resolution
- 6 **To be able to** contribute constructively to decision-making (quick decisions, consensus building), to offer and to accept feedback, to take full responsibility for one's own contributions to the team

6 Communication and Interaction

- 1 **To be aware of** your own and others feelings, needs and interests and to show respect
- 2 **To be able to** communicate non-violently across cultures, languages and backgrounds
- 3 **To be able to** be a good listener and to be a clear communicator
- 4 **To be able to** guarantee a smooth information flow within the team, and with the wider circle of NP
- 5 **To be able to** facilitate team, small and large group meetings

Role of Participants

This is a reminder of things participants may already know, but seem worth repeating here. Participants are responsible for joining in the training whole heartedly. While there may be difficulties with the training – it may be in a strange environment with certain challenges, it may immediately follow an assessment and require a significant shift of attention and there may be tensions and conflicts, participants are responsible for ensuring they get from the training what they need. And the only way to do that is to be as completely present and transparent as possible.

While all participants already have knowledge and skills in peace work, there is always more to learn. Participants are responsible for cultivating curiosity and an openness to learning something new in all areas and from all people. Trainers and participants come from diverse cultures, religions and class which will provide many opportunities for challenging one's own way of doing things and experiencing different perspectives and practices.

Please be sure to be thoroughly prepared before you arrive. Read everything on the advanced reading list and reflect on it in terms of your own experiences. Bring whatever you need and is recommended in the information you received before you arrived.

Participants help set the tone and create the atmosphere for the training. Not to diminish the role of trainers, but ultimately it is the participants' own awareness and attitudes that determine the "feel" of the training. NP asks that you be respectful of everyone, showing up on time for sessions, sharing appreciations and positive feedback freely.

Participants are encouraged to generously share their skills and knowledge. Please don't be shy or hold back from making contributions or asking questions. While it won't be possible to fully utilize the vast store of experience in the room from all participants and trainers, it will be utilized to the best of everyone's ability. Have patience if you offer something that is not used at the moment.

Try to participate as fully and authentically as possible. Different cultures have different norms for how much emotion, what kinds of emotions and how honest and transparent a person can be in a setting like this training. While recognizing that everyone will participate from within their own cultural norms, the training requires that you stretch yourself, to share as much of yourself as you can and then a little bit more. At the same time it is good to self monitor your participation to be sure you are not dominating, taking up a lot more time and emotional space than others, or sharing in a way that makes it hard for others to also share. There is a living contradiction here that can only be addressed in the moment, with self awareness.

In order for the training to go well, it is important that each participant exhibit leadership when that is needed and “followership” when that is needed. There is a relationship between offering leadership through suggestions, organizing things, inspiring others on the one hand, and supporting the leadership of others by following their lead on the other. This will be explored extensively through the team work sections of the training but good to keep in mind from the very beginning.

Please take good care of each other. At times most participants will experience elation, joy, satisfaction, and engagement and at other times feel discouraged, angry, hurt or bored. Take care of each other in your ups and downs. Be as kind and considerate as you can.

And hopefully, do have fun. Take care of your needs for recreation, physical movement, having fun, getting time to yourself, and whatever ways you keep healthy and happy. This training is designed to prepare you to be a field team member. One of the critical skills for an FTM is to balance the deep commitment to the work with enough time for self care so that you don't get exhausted and burn out.

Some thoughts about methods

The following list is from a report on the work in Sri Lanka written in January 2006. It is a list of methods currently used. You will note there is little reference to the four big categories of presence, accompaniment, monitoring and documenting, and inter-positioning identified in the OSD curriculum. . Nor is there an attempt to classify the methods as peacekeeping, peacebuilding or peace making. While most of these can be easily grouped under one or more of those categories, feedback from the field suggests that it is important to think of methods and tools quite flexibly. FTMs do what it takes to carry out the particular project mission, within the framework of the overall code of conduct and NP mission. Work in the field evolves as FTMs learn the intricacies of the particular communities where they work and what is most needed in their particular context. Over time the whole field of third party nonviolent intervention is growing and changing. Each individual FTM will find they have certain strengths and will imagine and create new ways of doing their work. Preventing violence and human rights abuses and making space for and supporting local civilians in their work for peace and justice is a constantly changing undertaking. While it is critical in training to address a core set of methods, participants should feel empowered to work at the intersection of creativity and wisdom.

“Specific methods and activities (in Sri Lanka as of January, 2006), have included:

- connecting people to resources
- linking CBOs with national NGOs and International Organizations
- Facilitating people to connect with local leaders / authorities
- networking CBOs in different places with each other, making them known to other people
- accompanying activists or other threatened people
- providing transportation when appropriate for peace work, crises management or protection
- presence at events or places at risk
- facilitation within or between communities including mediation and/or building bridges over communication and community barriers
- documentation of threats to human rights and/or violence
- support of local groups and individuals including accompanying local NGO workers as requested
- document, monitor and fact finding that contributes to rumour control or supports non-violent problem solving
- visiting and listening
- consulting with local activists and people in general on options of what to do in crisis
- supporting the development of the Rapid Deployment Peace Brigade of Sarvodaya
- provide safe places to meet
- introduce INGOs and IOs to areas that are difficult, remote or familiar to NP
- helping build nonviolent alternatives
- supporting early warning efforts
- supporting new, emerging leaders working for nonviolent solutions to individual and community problems
- training in non-violence and nonviolent methods and sharing inspiration and experiences of peace and human rights work from different parts of the world or Sri Lanka
- supporting free and fair elections through our work with PAFFREL
- being a trusted partner to think and plan with on difficult issues or in a crises.”

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