What is Unarmed Civilian Protection?

Unarmed Civilian Protection (UCP) refers to unarmed civilians working to reduce incidents & cycles of violence, & increase the safety & security of civilians impacted by violent conflict. UCP prioritizes direct physical protection from immediate threats of violence, even as it works to interrupt systemic violence.

How does NP use UCP?

NP's mission is to protect civilians in violent conflicts through unarmed strategies, build peace side by side with local communities, & advocate for the wider adoption of these approaches to safeguard human lives & dignity. NP carries out this mission through the practice of UCP.

What makes up Unarmed Civilian Protection?

The practice of UCP is governed by a series of principles, objectives, strategies, tactics & sources of guidance. Together, these form a frame of reference that guides UCP practices through differences in language, application, & cultural context.
UCP is guided by five principles: nonviolence, nonpartisanship, primacy of local actors, independence, & civilian leadership. The application of these principles can vary, but the foundation remains constant.

**Nonviolence**
Acknowledging the complexity of community needs, & understanding that there are alternative ways to meeting needs that do not need or rely on the threat or use of force. This principle means shifting to a culture of conflict navigation grounded in nonviolence.

**Nonpartisanship**
Not taking sides in a conflict, but working directly against injustice & violence.

**Primacy of Local Actors**
Recognizing that those who live in a community have the right to self-determination, & that they know best how to assess their needs & how to drive change.

**Independence**
Being separate from large international institutions, interest groups, political parties, private companies, or religious groups.

**Civilian Leadership**
Prioritizing bottom-up organization, leadership, & trust-building in order to shift attention to the needs & experiences of local communities.
**UCP: key objectives, strategies, & tactics**

**Objectives**
1) Interrupting cycles of violence  
   a) Preventing violence  
   b) Stopping violence  
   c) Reducing the impact of violence  
2) Enhancing nonviolent responses to conflict

**Strategies**
1) Directly protecting people from violence  
2) Influencing state actors, non-state actors, & organizations to protect people  
3) Bolstering the capacities of at-risk individuals & communities to protect themselves

**Tactics**
1) Encouragement, or positive engagement with all relevant actors  
2) Deterrence, or negative pressure to discourage certain behaviors
UCP: key sources of guidance

UCP relies on international laws & conventions to monitor human rights violations & prioritize protection needs.

- **International Humanitarian Law**
  Aims to protect human life & dignity within the context of armed conflict, & establishes the responsibilities of armed actors.

- **International Refugee Law**
  Aims to protect refugees, persons seeking asylum, & those whose governments are unable or unwilling to protect them.

- **International Human Rights Law**
  Aims to prevent governmental abuse, and holds that human rights are inherent and inalienable.

- **Women, Peace, & Security**
  Frames conflict through the lens of power relations, & calls on actors to address the root causes of conflict.

- **Children & Armed Conflict**
  Highlights the vulnerability of children and the necessity of priority protection services.

- **Youth Peace & Security**
  Highlights the intersection between youth vulnerability & lack of access to decision making processes.

- **Seville Statement on Violence**
  Holds that violence is not inherent in the human condition, & that peace and nonviolence can be learned.

- **Civilian Immunity in War**
  Aims to contain violent conflict & prevent the aftermath from spilling over into future generations.

NP aims to contribute to structural nonviolence by training volunteers in UCP & building a collective attitude towards conflict that does not default to violence or threat of force.