

Dear All,

The *Creating Safer Space* exhibition visited Cardiff (UK) in March, and we were delighted to receive a visit from the First Minister of Wales, Eluned Morgan, and to share our research findings with her.

We are also very happy to share two new Creating Safer Space working papers and a film and several publications from our projects: scroll down to learn more about community-led civilian protection in Indonesia, Colombia, Myanmar, South Sudan and Burundi!

Leader of Welsh Government Visits Creating Safer Space Exhibition

The Creating Safer Space Exhibition was on show at the Temple of Peace and Health in Cardiff, UK, from 24-28 March. It was co-organised with Academi Heddwch Cymru and the Welsh Centre for International Affairs.

We were delighted to receive a visit from the First Minister of Wales, Eluned Morgan, who is the leader of the Welsh Government. We provided her with a tour of the exhibition, and a copy of our new [Creating Safer Space brochure](#).

In conjunction with the Exhibition, we also co-hosted a Lunch & Learn policy event on Civilians and Nonviolence in Crisis Preparedness and Management. Speakers included Prof. Berit Bliesemann de Guevara (Creating Safer Space Principal Investigator), Prof. em. Colin McInnes (Academi Heddwch) and David Warren (Head of International Relations at Welsh Government). Discussion centred on how community-led civilian protection initiatives can be supported by Welsh politics and civil society, and how lessons from other contexts can enrich Welsh initiatives and policies, such as Academi Heddwch's 'Wales as a Nation of Peace' report.

A new Creating Safer Space policy brief was also published for the occasion, [Nonviolent Community Strategies Make Civilians Safer](#) (available in English and Welsh).

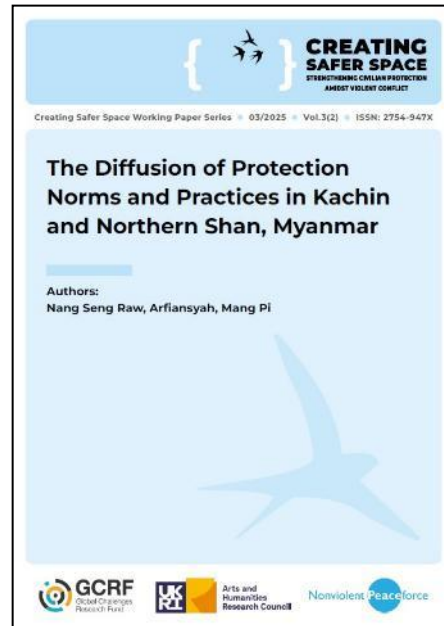


From left to right: Hayley Morgan (Welsh Centre for International Affairs), Jill Evans (Academi Heddwch), Eluned Morgan (First Minister of Wales), Berit Bliesemann de Guevara (Creating Safer Space Principal Investigator).

Working Paper on Protection Norms and Practices in Myanmar

A second new *Creating Safer Space* Working Paper has been published, titled [The Diffusion of Protection Norms and Practices in Kachin and Northern Shan, Myanmar](#). The working paper is written by Nang Seng Raw, Arfiansyah and Mang Pi.

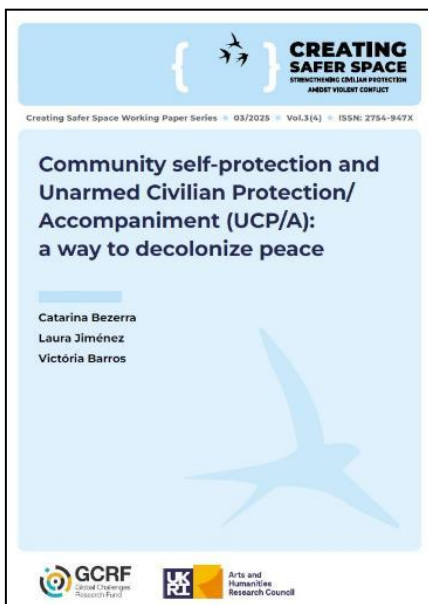
This working paper discusses the diffusion of protection norms in Kachin and Northern Shan, two among many conflict areas of Myanmar. Nonviolent Peaceforce has worked with local civil society organisations in Myanmar for several years, and have accompanied them in developing protection mechanisms. This working paper explores how protection norms were localised and diffused, and how they were transformed following the military coup of 2021.



Working Paper on Community Self-Protection, UCP/A, and Decolonization

A new *Creating Safer Space* Working Paper has been published, titled [Community self-protection and Unarmed Civilian Protection/Accompaniment \(UCP/A\): a way to decolonize peace](#). The working paper is written by Catarina Bezerra, Laura Jiménez and Victória Barros, and is available in [English](#) and [Spanish](#).

The working paper provides insights into the effectiveness and challenges associated with nonviolent strategies, highlighting the importance of self-protection, dialogue, and community-based relationship building as catalysts for sustainable solutions in conflict-ridden scenarios. It explores decoloniality as a foundation for self-protection initiatives, and examines three case studies of civilian self-protection in South Sudan, Burundi and Colombia.



News from *Creating Safer Space* Projects



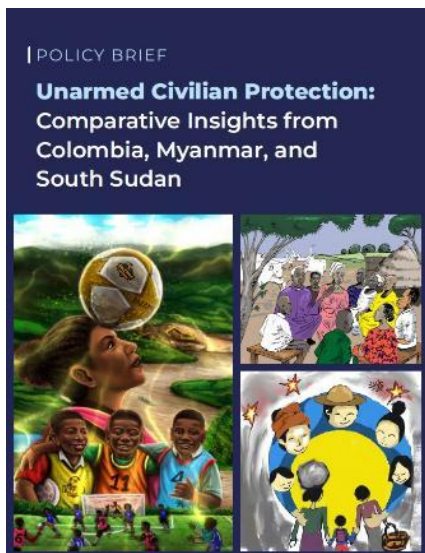
The *Creating Safer Space* project '[Civilian \(Self-\) Protection from Violent Conflict in Papua: Exploring Local Infrastructures and Initiatives](#)' has published a new policy brief, [Building Peace Amidst the Papua Conflict: Supporting Grassroots Protection and Peacebuilding Agents](#). The policy brief is written by Arfiansyah, Reza Idria and Delsy Ronnie, and draws upon interviews, focus group discussions and arts-based research methods in Papua. It explores the causes of the conflict in Papua, and how civilians protect themselves and others from violence.



The *Creating Safer Space* project '[Community strategies for Unarmed Civilian Protection in South-West Colombia: local experiences and lessons learned](#)' has created a short film, [Safe in Our Home](#). The documentary explores the potential of local semilleros (seedbeds) in facilitating community-based research on strategies for the protection of unarmed civilians and wider issues of (in)security. It was created by two students at Universidad Autónoma de Occidente (UAO) in Colombia, Santiago Hernandez and Manuela Romero, who presented it as their final year project under the supervision of Dr Natalia Campo (Co-Investigator on the project).



The *Creating Safer Space* project '[Exploring Community Perceptions and Coping Strategies on Violence in Rakhine State, Myanmar](#)' has published an article, '[Agency during Armed Conflict: Everyday Life under Competing Authorities in Myanmar's Rakhine State](#)', in the *Journal of Global Security Studies*. It is authored by Florian Weigand, Riyad Anwar, Tony Neil and Abellia Anggi Wardani. The paper draws upon fieldwork in Myanmar's Rakhine State to analyse the relationship between ordinary people and competing authorities during armed conflict. In particular, the paper investigates the sources of agency that enable civilians to engage with armed actors, for instance, to ensure their own protection. It is openly accessible online.



The Creating Safer Space project '[Understanding Community-level Spontaneous Unarmed Civilian Protection \(UCP\): A Comparative Study of Initiatives in South Sudan, Myanmar and Colombia](#)' has published a policy brief, [Unarmed Civilian Protection: Comparative Insights from Colombia, Myanmar, and South Sudan](#). This comparative policy brief explores how local communities engage in UCP and what lessons learned from existing UCP activities may, and may not, be transferable across conflict contexts. It focuses on the activities of local community actors in Nariño, Colombia; Central Myanmar, Kachin and Chin State in Myanmar; and Juba (Central Equatoria) and Rumbek (Lakes State) in South Sudan.

External News

The **UCP/A Community of Practice** has published a co-created report with [2024 Achievements](#), sharing achievements from its members.

World Beyond War offers a six-week online course on [Unarmed Civilian Defense Instead of War](#) in May-June 2025.

The **Institute of International Studies** at Universitas Gadjah Mada has published a book, [The World is Not Okay: Nonviolent Resistance in Indonesia and the World 2024](#) (open access), authored by Diah Kusumaningrum, Dhanisa Salsha Handiani, Daniel Petz, Huijbert Oldenhuis and Chayanit Poonyarat.

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