

Newsletter

Creating Safer Space

October 2025



Dear All,

Here is some great news to start: **The UCP Academy is now live!** Read all about the launch of this online learning and sharing platform, the re-launch of the revamped **UCP Knowledge Database** in a more user-friendly format, and Nonviolent Peaceforce's new **Changemakers programme** in this newsletter.

In this context, **we also need your input:** Do you have any feedback on the UCP Knowledge Database content, anything we should add, anything you could make available for publication on the database? Let us know and we will see to it!

As always, lots of **Creating Safer Space projects** have been busy publishing and disseminating their work. Explore videos of the "Shadow to Strength" event in Kenya, listen to CSS project team contributions to the "Beyond Compliance: In Conversation Podcast", read two new Policy Briefs on Rakhine state, Myanmar, an article on art and protection in Colombia, and an English-language brochure on participatory action research methods in Colombia, and learn about a practitioner workshop's call to UCP action in Cameroon.

We hope you will enjoy this update and look forward to hearing from you!

Nonviolent Peaceforce and Creating Safer Space launch the UCP Academy and UCP Knowledge Database

Earlier this month, Nonviolent Peaceforce (NP) officially launched the [UCP Academy](#), an online learning platform designed to equip individuals and organisations with the skills to practise Unarmed Civilian Protection (UCP)—a proven, practical approach to protecting civilians, preventing violence, and fostering peace.

UCP Academy has been developed in collaboration with the *Creating Safer Space* network and will soon feature a course on "Unarmed Community Self-Protection" based on CSS (and related) research. Watch this space...!



The Academy will feature:

- Opportunities for collaboration and mentorship across regions and sectors.
- Resources to support community-led initiatives for the protection of civilians.
- Foundational and advanced UCP courses with field-tested strategies.

Read NP's press release about the launch [here](#).

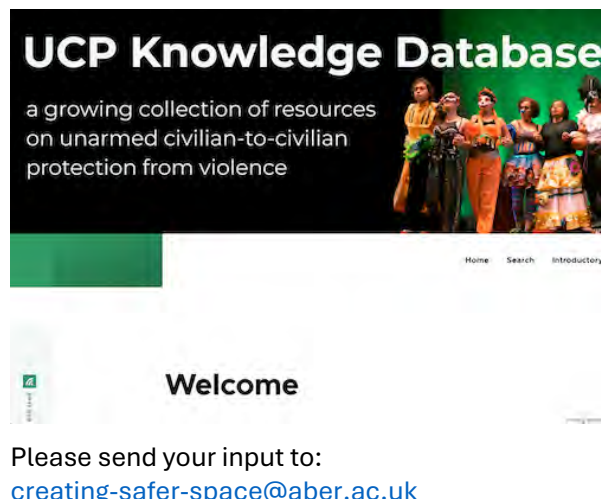
Developed by *Creating Safer Space*, UCP Academy also hosts the revamped [UCP Knowledge Database](#), the biggest public repository on Unarmed Civilian Protection, community self-protection and related topics. It includes academic research publications, working papers, NGO documents, films, music, and more and is now available on a user-friendly, open access platform.

UCP Academy and Nonviolent Peaceforce (NP) also announced the launch of the [Changemakers Programme](#)—a global initiative designed to scale up civilian-led initiatives while equipping participants with the tools to integrate Unarmed Civilian Protection (UCP) strategies into their work. Changemakers is open to individuals worldwide, including practitioners, researchers, artists, and policy advocates committed to advancing civilian-led protection initiatives. Selected participants will receive training, mentorship, and opportunities to collaborate on real-world projects that enhance the ability of communities to protect themselves and others amid violent conflict and displacement. [Applications are now open!](#)

We need your feedback!

We seek to continuously grow and improve the [UCP Knowledge Database](#), and to do so, we need your input:

- Are there UCP resources missing which should be included?
- Do you, or does your organisation, hold resources that could be made available through the database?
- Can you help pointing out UCP resources in languages currently under-represented?
- Any other constructive feedback?



News from *Creating Safer Space* Projects



In December 2024, the project “[Nonviolent Activism Against Police Brutality in Kenya](#)” held a powerful exhibition, performance and panel discussion event at the Kenya National Theatre in Nairobi.

“**Shadow to Strength: Resilience in the Face of Adversity**” brought together artists, activists, survivors, and experts to discuss questions of human rights advocacy against police brutality in Kenya, which will also resonate with the experiences of many other communities around the world.

You can now watch highlights of this events in the “[Shadow to Strength](#)” [documentary](#), the recording of an insightful [panel discussion on activism against policy brutality](#), and in a [series of art clips](#) showcasing performances by Kenyan artists.

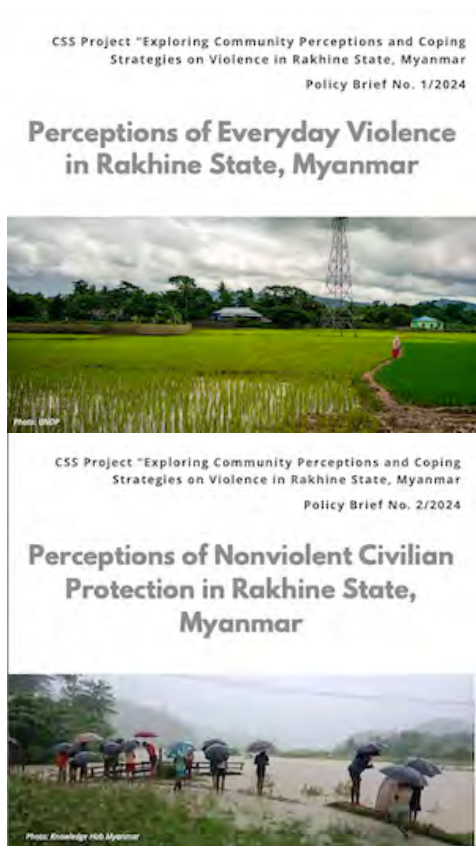


Several *Creating Safer Space* project researchers have contributed to the series “**Civilian agency, armed groups and international law**” of the [Beyond Compliance: In Conversation Podcast](#), which is co-hosted by CSS project team member Florian Weigand together with Katharine Fortin.

In [Episode 4, “Negotiating with Armed Actors”](#), Riyad Anwar and Abellia Anggi Wardani of the project “[Exploring Community Perceptions and Coping Strategies on Violence in Rakhine State, Myanmar](#)” discuss: How do civilian communities negotiate with armed groups? What do people try to achieve in these negotiations? And what enables them to negotiate with an armed actor?

In [Episode 11, “Civilian Self-Protection and Land”](#), Marwan Darweish and Piergiuseppe Parisi of the projects “[Enhancing unarmed civilian protection amongst Palestinian communities in the South Hebron Hills](#)” and “[“Ritualising’ protection in conflict”](#)” discuss: How does a community’s relationship with the land they live on feed into their experiences of harm? What solutions do they find to protect themselves?

CSS co-investigator Roger Mac Ginty also features in a podcast of this series. Read more [here](#).



The project team of “[Exploring Community Perceptions and Coping Strategies on Violence in Rakhine State, Myanmar](#)” has published two **Policy Briefs** on perceptions of violence and of nonviolent civilian protection in Myanmar’s Rakhine state.

Policy Brief No. 1, “[Perceptions of Everyday Violence in Rakhine State, Myanmar](#)”, examines years of civilian-targeted violence that occurred in central and northern Rakhine. Discussion with respondents reveals a population in distress, losing hope and feeling isolated.

Policy Brief No. 2, “[Perceptions of Nonviolent Civilian Protection in Rakhine State, Myanmar](#)”, presents the project team’s findings on local conceptions of nonviolent protection in Rakhine State and gives recommendations on how to expand access to protection for all Rakhine ethnic communities and what support unarmed third parties may need to better prepare their interventions.

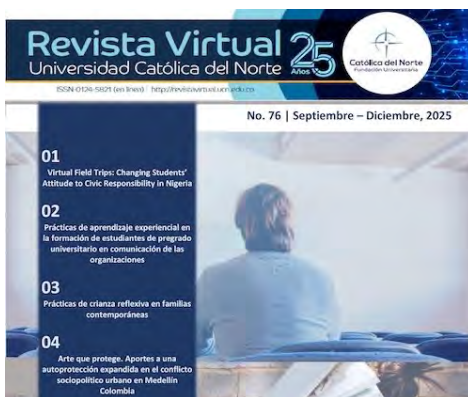
Read more [here](#).



The team of the project “[Exploring unarmed civilian self-protection in Cameroon’s Anglophone conflict](#)” organised a practitioners workshop in Yaoundé on 19 March 2025, entitled “**Strengthening Community-Led Approaches to Unarmed Civilian Protection in Cameroon**”.

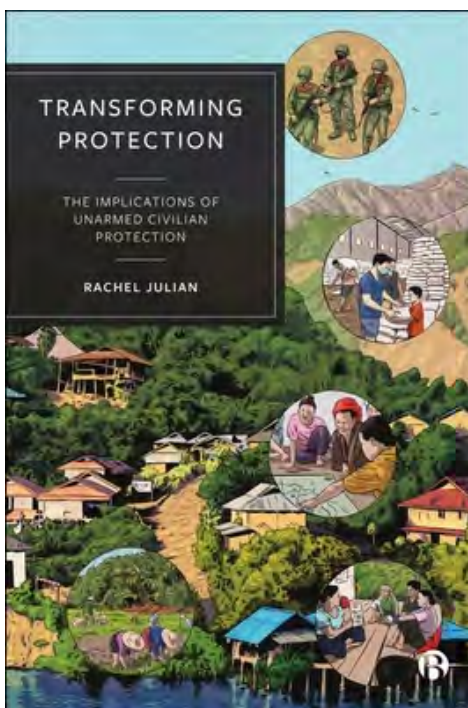
The event was held at the Friedrich Ebert Foundation office and attended by 30 representatives of local, national and international NGOs and diplomatic officials. The aim was to share research and experiences and brainstorm on ways to strengthen community-led nonviolent approaches to protection in Cameroon. **Read more [here](#).**

The workshop concluded by formulating a **joint media statement and call to action** in **[French](#)** and **[English](#)**.



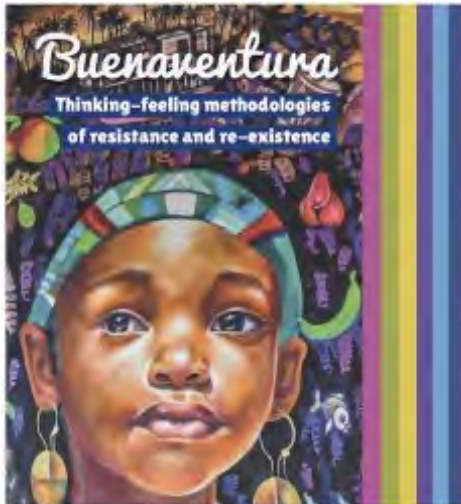
Beatriz Arias López and Laura Jiménez Ospina of the project “[Art That Protects](#)” have published a new open-access article under the title “[Art that protects: Contributions to expanded self-protection in the urban socio-political conflict in Medellín, Colombia](#)” (in Spanish) in the journal *Revista Virtual Universidad Católica del Norte*.

The article can be downloaded [here](#).



New Book: **Rachel Julian**, co-investigator of the Creating Safer Space network, published a new book titled “[Transforming Protection: The Implications of Unarmed Civilian Protection](#)” (Bristol University Press, 2025).

Rachel argues that “while UCP is useful and transformative in its own right, its principles and values mean it has the potential to transform our responses in a range of social contexts where there is violence. Chapters investigate the relationship between power, protection and peace; community-led aspects of protection; and successful behaviours and actions in protection. The book argues that when UCP is accepted as a viable form of protection from direct violence, there are wider implications for communities, security and violence. In turn, these insights can provide us with new models for ensuring people’s safety.”



The team of the project “[Community strategies for Unarmed Civilian Protection in South-West Colombia: local experiences and lessons learned](#)” has now also published an English language version of Volume 2 of its Participatory Action Research Semillero.

The brochure is titled “[Buena Ventura: Thinking-feeling methodologies of resistance and re-existence](#)” can be read and downloaded from the CSS website.

This resource is also available [in Spanish](#).



Book Preview: CSS project team members **Marwan Darweish, Mahmoud Soliman, and Andrew Rigby** look forward to publishing their book titled “[Unarmed Civilian Protection in Palestine](#)” (Bristol University Press, 2026).

The digital book version will be available open access.

External News

Call for Unarmed Civilian Protectors / Support for UCP in Palestine:

[UCP in Palestine \(UCPiP\)](#) are working to expand and strengthen protective presence, accompaniment, and unarmed civilian protection (UCP) across Palestine. This initiative stems directly from the recommendations outlined in an [Assessment Report \(September 2024\)](#), which emphasizes the urgent need to deploy skilled UCP practitioners in the West Bank, East Jerusalem, and, when conditions allow, in Gaza.

UCP in Palestine teams have been successfully working side by side with the community to keep settlers from overrunning their homes and the village. One indicator of success comes every morning when they see the children walking peacefully to school.

UCPiP are now building up teams for 2026. This is part of the long-term goal of building toward a mission of at least 100 highly trained UCP personnel while also strengthening existing UCP organizations in Palestine. *If you, or experienced members of your networks, are interested in joining this pilot project as part of a future cohort, please indicate your interest (without commitment) by completing this form:* <https://forms.gle/ftCXkxDJ4jYJe69q8>.

Support: UCPiP Team 3 is currently doing online training and will arrive in December. The project still needs about \$40,000 to bring them to the West Bank and support them for three months. [Click here to donate to provide much-needed support for unarmed civilian protection in Palestine.](#)

Call for Papers: Pacifism and Nonviolence Workshop:

The [Journal of Pacifism and Nonviolence](#) invites submissions for a free online workshop, to be held over multiple days between 13 April and 1 May 2026 (dates TBC), hosted by Loughborough University’s Institute of Advanced Studies. Each paper will be assigned a full hour for presentation and discussion. Submissions should align with the journal’s multidisciplinary remit, with

particular interest in work on feminism/gender and from the Global South. Selected papers may be submitted to *JPN* for publication.

- **Abstract deadline (150 words):** 5 November 2025
- **Submit to:** jpneic@gmail.com
- **Full papers due:** 20 March 2026

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