



Norwegian University  
of Life Sciences

# Community-Based Policing and Post-Conflict Police Reform

*A five-year social and innovation-oriented  
research project.*

Department for International Environment and  
Development Studies.

# Community-Based Policing and Post-Conflict Police Reform



Photo:  
Frode Bjerkås

Inter-disciplinary and international, exploring the practice of policing and emphasizing information and communications technologies for human security, this EU funded applied social research project will create greater knowledge of social, cultural, legal and ethical dimensions of community-based policing in post-conflict societies.

# The Challenge

Post-conflict societies, although they vary in most respects, have something in common: public institutions are considered weak and untrustworthy. This is true for policing institutions as well. Abuse of policing powers, corrupt practices, and impunity are characteristics people often ascribe to their authorities. Meanwhile, conflicts have regional and global ramifications. Citizens everywhere are endangered by problems arising from conflict, such as human and drug trafficking, and terrorism.

This research project sets out to better understand these and interlinked challenges, and to propose new ways for dealing with them. Questions to be addressed include:

- **Could policing in post-conflict societies become a public service and not merely a public authority?**
- **Are the police in post-conflict societies accountable to the population, and able to respond to gender- and youth-specific crimes and insecurities?**
- **To what degree can information and communications technologies contribute to or detract from improved human security for vulnerable populations?**



Photo: UNAMA

# About the Project

Understanding human security is at the core of the research. Community-based policing holds promise but also entails challenges while conventional forms of top-down institutional reform fail to be effective.

In-depth qualitative research will be conducted in Latin America, South-Eastern Europe, Africa, and South Asia, and crosscutting themes including youth and gender issues in policing, will be studied.

A clear ambition for the project is to identify both differences and commonalities in community-oriented policing in post-conflict societies.

## *Regional Focus:*

- **Latin America:** Research will be conducted in **Guatemala, El Salvador and Nicaragua.**
- **South-Eastern Europe:** Research will be conducted in **Bosnia-Herzegovina, Kosovo and Serbia.**
- **Africa:** Research will be conducted in **Kenya, Somalia, and South Sudan.**
- **South Asia:** Research will be conducted in **Afghanistan and Pakistan.**

## *Cross-cutting themes:*

- **Youth:** In all regions, specific research questions related to young people's attitude to policing and the rule of law will be considered.
- **Gender:** In all regions, specific research questions related to gender relations and gender perspectives will be considered.
- **Police Training and Education:** particular attention will be given to learning about and influencing how community-based policing is taught both in post-conflict societies and in countries who provide police reform advice.

### *Information and Communications Technologies:*

Understanding how information and communications technologies (ICTs) might contribute to increased human security is an important objective. In this endeavor, the challenges ICTs may pose in terms of the protection of the identity of vulnerable groups and individuals must be thoroughly understood. UK-based Social Impact Lab Community Interest Company will explore the potential and risks of ICTs for human security in post-conflict societies. Ireland-based Applied Intelligence Analytics work on the ICT dimension of police training and education.

### *International Policing Experts Network:*

A wider network of international policing practitioners and experts are involved in the project as advisors. This will ensure that the practice of local and international policing is well understood in the research process, and results are easily shared in policing environments. The Norwegian Police University College coordinates the policing expert network.

### *Methodological Approach:*

The project takes a qualitative and explorative approach. Researchers will conduct fieldwork in all regions, draw heavily on the expertise of the policing network, and collaborate closely with ICT partners. The core tenet of the exploratory research approach is “building knowledge together”, meaning that researchers and participants engage in conversations that bring about learning for both parties simultaneously.

# Project Consortium

## *Partner institutions:*

- Norwegian University of Life Sciences
- Norwegian Police University College
- University of Durham, UK
- Ruhr University of Bochum, Germany
- Norwegian Institute of International Affairs
- Jagiellonian University Krakow, Poland
- Social Impact Lab Community Interest Company, UK
- Applied Intelligence Analytics, Ireland
- University of Bremen, Germany
- Norwegian Institute for Urban and Regional Research

## *Regional affiliated institutions*

- Instituto de Asuntos Públicos, Universidad de Chile
- Universidad del Valle, Guatemala
- COMSATS Institute of Information Technology, Pakistan
- NCA, Afghanistan
- University of Juba, South Sudan



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# Project Management

## *Coordination Team:*

- Dr. Ingrid Nyborg, Associate Professor at the Norwegian University of Life Sciences, is the project leader.
- Ms. Ingunn Andersen (Msc), Project Coordinator, Norwegian University of Life Sciences.
- Mr. Frode Bjerås (MA), Research Communications Specialist, Norwegian University of Life Sciences

## *The Steering Committee consists of the Coordination Team and the work package leaders:*

- Dr. John Andrew McNeish, Associate Professor, Norwegian University of Life Sciences
- Mr. Tor Damkås, Police Superintendent, Norwegian Police University College
- Prof. Alice Hills, Professor of Conflict Studies, School of Government and International Affairs, Durham University.
- Prof. Thomas Feltes, Law Faculty, Ruhr-University Bochum, Germany
- Mr. Robin Hofmann, Researcher and PHD fellow, Department of Criminology, Criminal Policy and Police Science, Ruhr University of Bochum.
- Mr. Jay Chaudhuri, Senior Researcher and ICT lead, Social Impact Lab Foundation.

The General Assembly is the ultimate decision-making body of the consortium and is composed of one representative from each partner institution.

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This project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement No 653909

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