**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

Interdisciplinary and international, exploring the practice of policing and emphasizing the use of information and communications technology for human security, this EU-funded applied social research project has created greater knowledge of social, cultural, legal and ethical dimensions of community-based policing in post-conflict societies.

The Challenge

Although post-conflict societies vary in most respects, they 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 sought to better understand these interlinked challenges and has explored new ways of dealing with them. Questions that were addressed include:
- Could policing in post-conflict societies become a public service and not merely a public authority?
- Are 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) human security for vulnerable populations?

About the Project

Understanding human security has been at the core of project research. Community-based policing holds promise but contains challenges, while conventional forms of top-down institutional reform fail to be effective.

In-depth qualitative research was conducted in Central America, South East Europe, Africa and South Asia, and crosscutting themes including youth and gender issues in policing have been studied.

This project has aimed to identify the differences and commonalities in community-oriented policing among post-conflict societies.

Regional Focus:
- *Central America:* research from Guatemala, El Salvador, and Nicaragua.
- *South East Europe:* research from Bosnia-Herzegovina, Kosovo, and Serbia.
- *Africa:* research from Kenya, Somalia, Somaliland, and Uganda.
- *South Asia:* research from Afghanistan and Pakistan

Cross-cutting Themes:
- *Youth:* in all regions, specific research questions considered young peoples' attitudes toward policing and the rule of law.
- *Gender:* in all regions, specific. Research questions considered gender relations and perspectives.
- *Police Training and Education:* particular attention was 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; the challenges ICTs may pose in terms of protecting the identities of vulnerable groups and individuals must be thoroughly understood. During this project, the University of Oslo has explored both the potential and risks of ICTs, and developed field-based technologies together with police and communities that address local human security needs in ways that are ethically responsible

International Policing Experts Network:

A wider network of international policing practitioners and experts have been involved in this project as advisors. The inclusion of the Policing Experts Network (PEN) ensured that the practice of local and international policing was well understood throughout the research process, and that the results could be easily shared in policing and civil society environments. The Norwegian Police University College coordinates the PEN.

Methodological Approach:

This project took a qualitative and explorative approach. Researchers conducted fieldwork in all regions, drew heavily on the expertise of the PEN, and collaborated closely with ICT partners. The core tenet of the exploratory research approach is "building knowledge together", meaning that researchers and participants engaged in conversations that brought 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
- University of Oslo, Norway
- SIMLab, UK (until Sept. 2017)
- 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 University, Islamabad, Pakistan
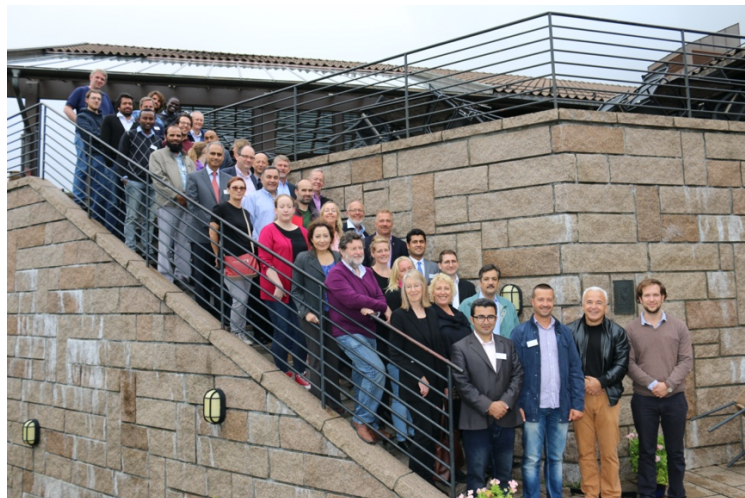- NCA, Afghanistan

Photo: Frode Bjerkås

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Project Management:

Coordination Team

- Dr. Ingrid Nyborg, Associate Professor at the Norwegian University of Life Sciences, is the Project Leader and Leader of Work Packages 2: Comparative COP, 6: Gender and 8: South Asia.
- Ingunn Andersen (MSc), Norwegian University of Life Sciences, is the Project Coordinator and Leader of Work Package 1: Project Management.
- Daniel Lohmann (MSc), Norwegian University of Life Sciences, is the Leader of Work Package 11: Dissemination and Exploitation of Results.

The Steering Committee (with the Coordination Team)

- Dr. John Andrew McNeish, Associate Professor at the Norwegian University of Life Sciences, is the Leader of Work Package 9: Central America.
- Dr. Anne Rød, Associate Professor at the Norwegian Police University College, is the leader of Work Package 4: Police Training & Education.
- Fabienne Coenders (MSc), Research Officer at the Ruhr University in Bochum, is the leader of Work Packages 5: Youth and 10: South East Europe.
- Stian Lid, Researcher at OsloMet, is the leader of Work Package 7: Africa.
- Arunima Sehgal Mukherjee, Postdoctoral Fellow at University of Oslo, is the leader of Work Package 3: Technological Development

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

Norwegian University of Life Sciences, NMBU
Phone: +47 67 23 00 00
www.nmbu.no