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EXTRA-CUSTODIAL USE OF FORCE

ENHANCING HUMAN RIGHTS PROTECTION IN URBAN AREAS THROUGH A COMPREHENSIVE APPROACH.

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Position Paper on Urban Violence:

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*ENHANCING HUMAN RIGHTS PROTECTION IN URBAN AREAS
THROUGH A COMPREHENSIVE APPROACH*

By Maya Mynster Christensen, Steffen Jensen and Kari Øygard Larsen

A position paper prepared in collaboration between Balay, CSVR, LAPS and DIGNITY
for the Global Alliance.

Extra-custodial use of torture and CIDTP: Key conclusions and recommendations

- Torture and CIDTP in extra-custodial settings is increasing, yet the contexts and circumstances under which law enforcement officials in such settings make use of excessive force have not been systematically documented.

- In the city, the need is particularly acute to address the scope, rationales and consequences of excessive extra-custodial use of force. Here policies of securitization and order-making target the urban poor and give rise to processes of exclusion, marginalization and criminalization of the poor, increasing the prevalence of torture and CIDTP.

- Policies and practices aimed at the prevention of torture and CIDTP within law enforcement agencies must adopt a comprehensive approach that links between different domains and settings of state violence, including the link between custodial and extra-custodial violence, and between torture, CIDTP, and the wider ecology of violence.

- The prevention of torture and CIDTP in extra-custodial settings demands dialogue and sustainable partnerships between human rights organizations and law enforcement agencies.

- An approach for prevention must pay attention to the underlying causes and consequences of urban violence, torture and CIDTP, and comprise a place-based approach and the building of coalitions with mid-level law enforcement officers.

An emergent agenda for addressing torture and ill-treatment in extra-custodial settings

In 2017, the UN Special Rapporteur on Torture observed that whereas torture and ill-treatment in custodial settings is decreasing, it is increasing in extra-custodial settings.1 Despite this increase, the extent to which the excessive use of force takes place in these settings has not yet been systematically documented. This observation indicates the emergence of an agenda for human rights organizations to address law enforcement in extra-custodial settings.

Past approaches undertaken by human rights organizations towards preventing torture and ill-treatment have focused mainly on the setting of state custody. While this focus is important, there is a need to pay attention to the excessive use of force by law enforcement agencies outside of detention centers, police stations and prisons – in so-called extra-custodial settings. Based on evidence from research-driven interventions across the global North and South, this paper argues for the need to systematically document and act against torture and CIDTP in extra-custodial settings by addressing the wider implications of extra-custodial use of force.

Addressing the extra-custodial use of torture and CIDTP demands a focus on the factors that trigger the spread of torture and CIDTP from the prison and the police station into public spaces and people's private homes. When law enforcement officers employ extra-custodial torture and CIDTP, it is often closely linked to poor detention facilities and ineffective criminal justice systems, since these are the circumstances that offer possibilities and incentives for handling criminal cases outside of formal procedures and institutions. Furthermore, the spread of torture and CIDTP beyond custodial settings is often facilitated by political processes of securitization, and by order-making policies which give rise to militarized law enforcement based on criminalization of urban poverty and the urban poor.

To understand and document what extra-custodial use of force entails, it is important to direct attention to different forms of violence, ranging from the extraordinary to the mundane. Here, extraordinary forms of violence include lethal policing methods such as extrajudicial killings and enforced disappearances – phenomena that are widespread in contexts where police abuse occurs on the pretext of countering organized crime, violent extremism and terrorism. The focus on extraordinary use of lethal force should, however, be complemented by increased attention to mundane forms of violence committed by law enforcement officers in extra-custodial settings. Such forms of violence include beating suspects during events leading up to official arrest, and the systematic targeting of marginalized populations as expressed for instance in ethno-racial profiling and pre-emptive stop and search practices.

> ### *CIDTP:*
> *"Acts of cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment which do not amount to torture as defined in article 1, when such acts are committed by or at the instigation of or with the consent or acquiescence of a public official or other person acting in an official capacity" (UNCAT, article 16).*

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1   United Nations. General Assembly, Third Committee, 13 October 2017.

Law enforcement, violence and torture in the city

While excessive use of force by law enforcement agencies is widespread in rural settings – especially in national border areas – it is particularly urgent to prevent excessive extra-custodial use of force in cities, where there are higher concentrations of both civilians and police officers. A number of interrelated factors fuel violence and help to legitimize torture and CIDTP in urban settings:

- *Dynamics of inclusion and exclusion:* The close coexistence of poverty and wealth in urban centers has produced social, political and territorial boundaries between rich and poor populations which are reflected in violent processes of inclusion and exclusion. An influx of refugees and migrants into cities, and consequent rise in the number of urban slum dwellers, has combined with capital speculation and investments reinforced these processes. To put this in another way, rising urban inequality across parameters of security, income, education and health has intensified local struggles over access to resources, democratic participation and the right to sustainable futures in the city.

- *Criminalization of urban poverty:* The social welfare system is increasingly used as a tool in the enforcement of criminal law. As a result, the urban poor face greater risk of being monitored, profiled and subjected to excessive use of force.

- *Securitization of urban space:* Global and national policies of order-making and all-pervasive discourses of crime and terror contribute to ongoing securitization of urban spaces, which in turn creates suspicion, fear, anxieties and enemies, and divisions between wanted and unwanted populations. While security is provided for some, insecurity is produced for others.

> ### *Torture:*
> *"Any act by which severe pain or suffering, whether physical or mental, is intentionally inflicted on a person for such purposes as obtaining from him or a third person information or a confession, punishing him for an act he or a third person has committed or is suspected of having committed, or intimidating or coercing him or a third person, or for any reason based on discrimination of any kind, when such pain or suffering is inflicted by or at the instigation of or with the consent or acquiescence of a public official or other person acting in an official capacity" (CAT, article 1)*

Towards a comprehensive approach to custodial and extra-custodial use of force

Legal approaches undertaken by human rights organizations towards preventing torture and CIDTP often address custodial and extra-custodial state violence as separate domains. In order to understand the dynamics of torture and CIDTP there is a need to move beyond this tendency to compartmentalize. Instead, attention should be directed towards the interrelated causes and consequences of diverse forms of custodial and extra-custodial excessive use of force.

To document and act upon torture and CIDTP across different settings, a comprehensive approach must be adopted. This approach entails attention to the following linkages:

Custodial and extra-custodial use of force is a continuum

Although mandates and mechanisms of law enforcement vary from custodial to extra-custodial settings, excessive use of force has a number of common defining features across both. These common features are an outcome of an underlying logic of policing that seeks to contain and neutralize perceived threats associated with special groups, such as migrants, slum dwellers, refugees and young men. This gives rise to selective law enforcement and the extension of policing practices beyond the official mandate. Moreover, such dynamics must be understood against the observation that it is the same groups who move between the apparently different domains and settings where state violence is prevalent.

Different forms of extra-custodial use of force are interrelated

Extra-custodial excessive use of force includes diverse forms of preventive and punitive measures employed in peacetime as well as in armed conflict such as extrajudicial killings, enforced disappearances, arrests, crowd control, surveillance, and stop and search practices. Human rights institutions have a tendency to approach these forms of state violence in isolation, focusing for instance specifically on how principles of proportionality and precaution apply to the policing of assemblies within the framework of particular national legal policies. In different ways, however, the diverse forms of extra-custodial violence are often employed with the same purpose: enforcing the control and marginalization of undesired and disenfranchised populations.

Extra-custodial use of force seen in a context

When addressing extra-custodial use of force, it is often difficult to determine the thresholds between torture and CIDTP on the one hand, and between these two and excessive use of force, on the other. These concepts are derived from international conventions, but are interpreted differently by different judicial bodies, and moreover depending on the nature, purpose and context of the form of state violence that is being assessed. However, too close a focus on separating the judicial categories can cause us to lose sight of the connections between torture and CIDTP; or to put it another way, a preoccupation with static definitions could obscure the processes and practices through which excessive use of force and CIDTP turn into torture. Indeed, the reality is that these forms of state violence are linked to a much wider ecology of violence that includes mob justice, gender-based violence, random street crime and organized crime.

By linking the domains and settings of torture and CIDTP and putting them in context, it becomes possible to address the underlying dynamics of why law enforcement agencies resort to excessive use of force, and how it impacts on populations across national settings, often in very similar ways.

An approach for partnerships and the prevention of torture and CIDTP

To prevent torture and CIDTP there is a need to develop and implement an approach which complements legal human rights approaches.

When human rights bodies address excessive use of force by state agents, it is predominantly through attempts to ensure that national laws prohibit torture and CIDTP, in other words that they adhere to international human rights standards, particularly in the global South, and that the laws are upheld. They also monitor places of detention and conduct human rights training programmes with law enforcement officials. However, the record shows that the effects of such attempts to implement international human rights standards through domestic legal frameworks and external monitoring and training are limited. Worse, they often have the unintended effect of pushing the use of excessive force from places of detention to extra-custodial settings where oversight mechanisms are not in place.

This paper argues for an approach to torture prevention which can complement legal attention to gaps between international and national human rights standards governing the use of force, and which moves beyond traditional thinking around torture and CIDTP as phenomena limited to custodial settings. This approach is based on ongoing dialogue and sustainable partnerships between human rights organizations and law enforcement agencies which can be used to strengthen motivation and improve the possibilities for law enforcement officers to prevent torture and CIDTP in extra-custodial settings.

The approach draws on the following underlying approaches to ensuring successful partnerships which strengthen human rights protection:

- *Mutual understanding and interests:* Partnerships must be based on a mutual understanding of why and under what conditions law enforcement officers resort to excessive use of force, and how human rights based approaches can facilitate effective law enforcement. This entails dialogue on legal, political and socio-economic factors, on organizational and attitudinal aspects, and on relations between police and civilians.

- *Place-based coalitions:* Partnerships must be focused on coalition building within specific geographical areas, and be aimed at promoting supportive environments at community level across both state and non-state boundaries.

- *Engaging mid-level commanders:* Experience shows that partnerships must be established with mid-level station commanders who are in charge of operational activities in the area, and thus have the power to implement change in police tactics and who can be held accountable.

- *Working through informal networks:* Partnerships must be formalized and built upon institutional ownership when possible, but human rights workers should also build informal networks and strengthen collaborative relations between law enforcement personnel, on the one hand, and community-based organizations and other frontline human rights actors, on the other hand.

Excessive use of force:
The use of force exceeding what is necessary and proportionate in the circumstances to achieve a lawful purpose.

Extra-custodial law enforcement: Case studies

Extra-custodial law enforcement is shaped by the specific socio-political contexts in which state officials are mandated to maintain public security, law and order. In instances when state officials resort to excessive use of force it is therefore pertinent to examine the particular circumstances under which this occurs.

The cases presented below emerge out of long-term research-based interventions by the Global Alliance in urban neighborhoods in Manila, Copenhagen, Johannesburg and Monrovia. The Global Alliance is a strategic alliance between civil society organizations working towards building a global alliance of communities against torture and CIDTP in extra-custodial settings. We do this through country-based as well as collaborative research, and through knowledge-generating joint projects that focus on countering state and authority-based violence in poor, urban neighborhoods in the four countries of Liberia, South Africa, the Philippines and Denmark. The local engagements in these settings are the drivers that generate our research-based interventions, which in turn help to shape local and global agendas.

The cases illustrate how extra-custodial use of force takes place across a spectrum ranging from the lethal to the non-lethal, and from the spectacular to the mundane. To a large extent, this spectrum reflects different levels of insecurity and the enforcement of different order-making policies. Yet, as the cases document, there are a number of similarities between different instances of extra-custodial use of force, and often the same extra-custodial law enforcement dynamics can be detected across different national settings.

Extra-custodial use of force:
The use of force by law enforcement officers and other officials outside the context of custody.

Manila:

The 'war on drugs' and extrajudicial killings
In Manila, the 'war on drugs' has fundamentally undermined the trust between formal policing structures, which have been placed in the front line of this war, and the residents of poor urban neighborhoods who have disproportionately suffered the brunt of the violence.

In terms of the law, Filipinos are policed through two tiers of formal policing structures – the Barangay Justice System (BJS) and the Philippine National Police (PNP). The BJS adjudicates in all cases which can attract a fine of up to 5000 Philippine pesos (US$100) and up to one year of imprisonment. All other cases, often violent crimes, are dealt with by the PNP. In practice, this means that most local conflicts will go through an elaborate system of negotiations, mediation and arbitration. The agents of BJS emanate from within the community and often have intimate relationships with their neighbors. As they are potentially replaced every three years (through elections) they can never be certain of their position. There are relevant critiques of the BJS, but it has often been lauded as a system built on trust and local knowledge. In sharp contrast, the PNP is often used as an instrument of political power, and has a history of violence, extrajudicial killings, warfare and corruption. Filipinos have learnt how to deal with the police through a complex mixture of relationships (knowing someone with connections), money (bribes) and cunning (locally known as diskarte), to the extent that police violence has become normalized.

This is very much the case in Bagong Silang, home to some 250.000 people who have been displaced from other parts of Metro-Manila. Like other similar resettlement sites for the urban poor, Bagong Silang has a reputation for crime, violence and drugs. Hence it became a hotspot when President Duterte declared his 'war on drugs' on June 30, 2016.

To carry out this 'war' – known as Oplan Tokhang or Operation Knock and Plead – the PNP and BJS were given central roles. Operation Knock and Plead consisted in local authorities drawing up lists of suspected drug personalities, both users and pushers. Based on the lists, police reach out to alleged drug personalities, drug users, addicts, and pushers in exposed communities to make them change their ways and advise other suspects to surrender if they are involved in illegal drugs. In the case of voluntary surrender, the suspect must sign a waiver, which registers and affirms their status as drug offenders with the authorities; this process is termed 'surrendering'. The watch lists are part of what is known as Masa Masid, meaning the 'people observe'. Operating from state to street level, recruited community members work as watchdogs, or intelligence units, gathering information about activities of illegal drugs and crime in their neighborhood. Many of the people asked to help draw up the watch lists are BJS members.

As the pile of bodies began to mount and the watch lists turned into kill lists, BJS officials were increasingly squeezed between the demands of the police and the government, on the one hand, and the expectations of the community in which they lived, on the other. Many BJS officials endorsed the 'war on drugs' wholeheartedly. However, others – less vocally – expressed doubts and others again fought to remain neutral. In one area, a BJS official refused to contribute to the lists, even while residents asserted 'she is making lists!'. Some BJS officials have been killed amidst suspicions related to the watch lists. Others have been threatened and rightfully fear for their lives. However, even if an official wants to stop, it is not that simple. Should you refuse to contribute to the list you can be accused of being a drug 'asset', meaning that you help drug dealers – an allegation that is equally risk-laden.

From the point of view of the residents, the uncertainty about who is on the list and what might happen to those on it does not corrode trust relations with BJS officials only, but with each other as well. Due to the correlation between the killings and those suspected of involvement with drugs, people simply stay away from anything or anyone that could possibly be drug-related, including those who may be at risk, those associated with a suspect, and those standing by in the event of an unexpected attack. While this climate of fear is actively fed by the government to make drug personalities change their ways, the role of BJS officials has also changed in ways that undermine their ability to adjudicate in local conflicts: the erosion of trust has eaten into their social capital in the community.

Copenhagen:

The war on gangs and ethnic profiling
In Copenhagen, the war on gangs has legitimized the extension of stop and search operations – an interpretive policing practice that has perpetuated patterns of ethnic profiling and triggered new formations of suspicion, conspiracy and violence.

In 2017, an escalation of gang-related violence in Copenhagen activated the formulation of a set of policies and interventions in the context of what national and municipal government authorities as well as law enforcement agencies have termed 'the war on gangs'. The principal rationale of this war is that gang-related crime can be combatted if gang members are put under maximum pressure, stressed, arrested even for minor offenses, and imprisoned for as long as possible. Since the aim is to move gang members from the streets to the prisons, these policies and interventions include a number of preventive and punitive extra-custodial law enforcement mechanisms. One such mechanism is 'visitation zones' – areas in which police officers, without being given due cause, are legally mandated to stop and search persons and personal belongings with the purpose of finding weapons and explosives.

Visitation zones are adopted around the public housing areas – or 'ghettos' – where gang-related crime is most prevalent. These areas are characterized by a high concentration of first and second-generation immigrants and refugees from non-Western countries. Many are unemployed and consequently poor, which in turn demands multiple social service interventions. Mjoelnerparken, a public housing area comprising 560 apartments, is one of these areas. Despite the limited size of this area, it is a hotspot when it comes to political attention, state monitoring and surveillance.

In Mjoelnerparken, the war on gangs has resulted in an extensive presence of police officers, including aerial surveillance and visitation zones. The proliferation of these law enforcement authorizations has inflamed already existing tensions between marginalized residents and state institutions. While police maintain that stop and search practices are simply a 'tool in the toolbox', a preventive measure that has brought to light numerous weapons, residents argue that the practices do not comply with the law as excessive use of force is deployed systematically against ethnic minorities, and in particular young men, residing in the area. Stop and search practices have thus given rise to the perception that police are acting outside the laws of the Danish state, and that they employ their mandate to harass innocent ethnic minority populations. Combined with the extensive police presence and surveillance, stop and search practices have eroded trust in the police to the extent that a conspiracy theory has gained considerable traction. The thread of this narrative is that police deliberately fuel gang conflicts by practicing selective law enforcement that allows rival gang members to attack residents; such incidents in turn legitimize their ongoing monitoring of the area and secure further allocation of resources to the police.

The conspiracy narrative emerges in a context where residents feel insecure, desperate and powerless, and where they lack an explanatory framework for the escalation of conflict. The gang war and the war on gangs has affected all spheres of daily life, including creating constant fear among parents of losing their children to gang-related violence or having their children stopped and arrested in anti-gang state interventions. Fear also constrains mobility. Young men are reluctant to attend school and afraid to walk unaccompanied, for instance from after-school activities in youth clubs in the area. In this context, the police come to personify their troubled relationship with the welfare state. And because the police are unable to secure the territory of Mjoelnerparken, gang members argue that only they can be entrusted with the protection of the area. Hence, the war on gangs is counter-productive in this area when it comes to enhancing public trust in the police and breaking cycles of violence.

The case of Mjoelnerparken clearly shows that the line between extra-custodial excessive use of force and legitimate law enforcement is contested and differently interpreted. Because stop and search practices are based on tacit human decision-making, the police are not always aware of the discriminatory patterns that are often inherent in these practices, and they perceive these practices to be a central tool of crime prevention that helps residents feel safe and secure. According to the police, the intention is not to criminalize but to communicate and engage in dialogue with the residents. Yet from the residents' perspective it is exactly the criminalization of the population in the housing areas that produces suspicion and undermines the legitimacy of the police.

Johannesburg:

Post-apartheid policing and normalization of violence
_In Johannesburg, everyday police violence has been normalized
and legitimized when aimed at vulnerable groups who have been
associated with destructive and immoral behavior like sex work,
undocumented migration or criminality_

Apartheid policing in South Africa was renowned for its brutality and its almost complete disregard for – one could even say deliberate infringement of – the rights of the vast non-white majority. The apartheid police tortured, maimed, killed and disappeared thousands and harassed millions of South Africans and migrants in a violent defense of white, capitalist interests. When the regime broke down, hopes were high for a South African miracle which, in many ways, did materialize for some. Furthermore, the transformation of apartheid often happened to the tune of progressive human rights agendas, which are enshrined in the constitution, laws and policies. Specific attention was focused on reforming the police as the violent incarnation of the regime. Human rights manuals were produced; all officers were trained; civilian oversight was institutionalized and lack of demographic diversity in the workforce was prioritized in policy and in practice.

The urgency in transforming the police, however, was paralleled by other urgencies, not least of which were a sharp increase in violent crime and a migratory influx from troubled countries to the north. For many South Africans these concerns threw a shadow over the South African miracle. In both cases, the police were put in charge of saving the nation from crime and undocumented migration. Hence, within years of the breakdown of apartheid, the police were mandated by leading ANC politicians to engage in a violent struggle against crime, drugs and gangs as well as to act against undocumented migration. The police took this task upon themselves and began policing with brutality in townships as places from where crime, drugs and gangs emerged, often engaging in outright warfare with vigilante groups and gangs. Inner-city spaces of large metropolitan areas – the putative place of the migrant – were policed with a mix of brutality, deportation and corruption. Mostly the ordinary South African would not only accept but also endorse the use of violence. Police, on their part, would understand their practices as the practical implementation of their mandate to keep the community safe, detect and solve crime and bring criminals to justice. One of the police officers interviewed for this report stated: "To some extent you can say that the community members expect the police to use these extreme methods."

While much police violence happens in detention, the police engage in systematic and widespread excessive extra-custodial use of force as well, especially against certain groups. In this way, it is fair to say that police violence has been normalized and legitimized when it affects groups of people who have been disenfranchised as equal members of society. In the townships of Kagiso and Diepsloot in western Gauteng and peri-urban Nkangala in Mpumalanga, the police engage township youth violently, arresting and harassing them. In one group of young men in Kagiso, everyone had had violent run-ins with the police. These often took the form of disciplining but were also part of corrupt schemes of the police, engaged in networks of organized drug dealing in which the young men were either customers or street-level runners. Likewise, in the inner-city streets of Johannesburg police harassed undocumented immigrants and sex workers to make them leave – but importantly, also to extort money and sex. While different in each of these settings, police actions and practices were characterized by legitimized impunity; they, the police, became the heroic defenders of post-apartheid South Africa.

In summary, while human rights organizations focus on the violations, the impunity and the institutionalized violence against young people, sex workers and migrants, most South Africans and police see a difficult but legitimate defense against morally, economically and socially destructive forces in a legitimate post-apartheid state. This 'battle' takes place in urban areas around the country, mostly legitimized and often extortionate.

Monrovia:

Post-war policing and corruption
In Monrovia, for both officers and residents police corruption has become an endemic way of coping with institutional incapacity. Such absence of trust affects the poor doubly as they are disproportionately victims of corrupt police practices and unable to pay for legal redress.

Policing in Liberia is marred by corruption. Although the country's police capacity has come a long way since the ending of the devastating war in 2003, the poverty-stricken society is still unable to combat police corruption. The police institution is perceived to be one of the most corrupt institutions in the country, which has resulted in the public turning away from official justice structures and seeking out alternative justice mechanisms.

Between 1989 and 2003 Liberia suffered two devastating civil wars. The wars left the country in ruins, destroyed the social infrastructure and eroded all trust between citizens and (state) authorities, especially the Liberian National Police (LNP). Since the war, the Liberian security sector has undergone a comprehensive reform process with help from the United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL). Additionally, the President promised to fight corruption. The country does have less corruption now than immediately after and during the war, but the development towards a corruption-free security sector appears to have run out of steam, despite the establishment of the Liberian Anti-Corruption Commission (LACC) in 2004. LACC investigations have yet to lead to a prosecution of a corrupt official, and their many billboards hovering above the city's main roads, encouraging citizens to stop turning a blind eye to corruption, serve as a constant reminder of the absence of efficient anti-corruption initiatives.

Police corruption is evident throughout the country, and although most citizens' interactions with the police are characterized by payment of bribes, the corruption affects the poor disproportionately. In the streets of Monrovia, officers solicit bribes from (often poor) taxi drivers. When called upon to solve crimes police usually demand money. Also, subsequent stages of an investigation will cost more money. This has led to a situation where the poor seldom bother to report crimes committed in their communities, and justice is perceived to belong to those who can afford it.

Ranging from traffic corruption to rumors of embezzlement by the police commissioner, corruption is framed as one of the biggest challenges facing the LNP. This is especially felt in the urban poor community of Sam Doe. Sam Doe community hosts about 50.000 inhabitants, most of whom are new to Monrovia. Residents complain about the absence of the police in helping solve crime. Furthermore, young men working on the streets as vendors or drivers (of taxis, motorcycles and tuk-tuks) complain that police often target them for bribes. Violence is always present in these encounters. The young men are perceived as the harbingers of violence from the civil war and the police are perceived as corrupt and serving only their own interests. On occasions, this has led to violent outbursts between young men and police.

The lack of convictions of police officers on corruption charges contributes to a persistent culture of impunity. UNMIL has been engaged in a drawdown over the past 18 months or so, and its departure is likely to be complete in a few months' time. Now seems like a crucial moment for combatting corruption and for the police institution to put a big effort into regaining the trust of the Liberian people.

The Global Alliance and police collaboration:

The Global Alliance engages with documenting the effects of state-based violence on the urban poor, but simultaneously attempts to collaborate with law enforcement agencies, and especially with the police, to prevent torture and CIDTP in urban settings. Lessons learned from these attempts are:

- *Partnerships are fragile*: It takes time to nurture sustainable partnerships with the police, especially in contexts marked by insecurity and rapid political change. In these contexts, police agents rarely occupy the same position in the same local area for long, and agendas for police reform are often shaped by external donor agencies. Although collaboration with external institutions is important, it does not necessarily improve local, community-based partnerships with the police.

- *The significance of political will*: Collaboration with the police is dependent on the political will to create a space for promoting human rights among law enforcement officials. If police officers are legally mandated to employ extraordinary levels of violence to enforce particular social orders, then 'backdoor ways' of establishing informal relations with the police become more effective for addressing the relationship between human rights and policing.

- *The significance of trust building:* Residents in poor, urban neighborhoods often lack trust in the police. Hence, collaboration with the police must be sensitive to issues of community suspicion, and must focus on enhancing social relations between community members and the police.

- **Barriers and advantages to collaboration must be addressed:** Often, it is not clearly communicated what police can gain from collaborating with civil society organizations, and vice versa. Here, the focus must be directed towards understanding the source of the tensions between upholding human rights standards and doing effective law enforcement.

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What is the Global Alliance?

The Global Alliance is a strategic alliance between likeminded civil society organizations working towards building a global alliance of communities against torture and urban violence. This we do through country-based as well as collaborative research and knowledge generating projects across partners, focusing on countering authority-based violence in poor, urban neighbourhoods.

The Global Alliance is built on three core principles for partnership; equality, transparency and mutual responsibility. It is also essential to the Global Alliance that the local experience; findings and learnings are linked to the global agenda of addressing prevention as well as the (right to) rehabilitation for victims of torture and violence. These local engagements are the real driver of generating knowledge and evidence based arguments when shaping the global agenda. Apart from undertaking project activities in the four countries of Liberia, South Africa, the Philippines and Denmark, the Global Alliance also carries out:

- Monitoring across the different sites,

- Generate knowledge about different forms of interventions and contexts,

- Complement local advocacy on violence prevention with global initiatives

The Theory of Change of the Global Alliance is that if we as partners work systematically with community-led approaches towards the prevention of violence, through dedicated partnerships in different countries, then the Global Alliance will be able to produce knowledge and models to the benefit of target groups (at-risk groups and communities) and for local and global advocacy purposes.

Besides the knowledge generation and advocacy focus of the alliance, the ambition is to lay the foundation for a new approach to local and global partnerships, through constant reflection on internal dynamics (including power differences) as a potential for learning and organizational development as individual partners and as an alliance. This work is driven by the realization; that only by building partnerships from the bottom up, including partners in poor, urban neighbourhoods, can we hope to change the agenda global towards focusing on everyday forms of authority-based violence in poor, urban neighbourhoods.

The Global Alliance consists of four partner organizations from four different countries:

CSVR - The Centre for the Study of Violence and Reconciliation, South Africa;
www.csvr.org.za

Balay Rehabilitation Center, the Philippines;
www.balayph.net

LAPS – Liberia Association of Psychosocial Services, Liberia;
www.lapsliberia.com

DIGNITY – Danish Institute Against Torture, Denmark;
www.dignityinstitute.com

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