How Civilians Survive Violence:
A Preliminary Inventory

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Note to the Reader

There will always be mass violence. There will always be horrific times when we "outsiders" cannot shield civilians despite our avowed responsibility to protect them. Millions died amid internal conflicts in the last 15 years, and there is absolutely no guarantee that the next 15 years will be any better. That is the starting point of this paper: *our* capacity to protect is very much in doubt. Even when we do "save" civilians it is very often only because they saved themselves first—surviving violence by their wits and wiles for months or years, and then running a deadly gauntlet to reach our camps or safe havens.

Many observers note the critical importance of civilian self-protection, but it appears there have been very few systematic attempts to inventory their tactics and strategies. By and large we "appreciate" civilians' remarkable capacity for self-preservation but do not act upon it. This preliminary inventory cites protections that civilians the world over have learned time and again as they survive and serve others alone amid violence. Some types of actions cited here have alone saved millions of lives.

This document has three sections: local safety, local sustenance, and local services. Life-critical *sustenance* and *services* are an inseparable part of this because civilians often see them as central to their security, often take physical risks to obtain them, and often die in far greater numbers from the collapse of such elemental things than from direct physical violence. The biggest killers amid conflict are not guns or blades but malnutrition and disease—which at times can be anticipated and prepared for.

Each section begins with conventional local efforts to *engage* dangerous actors and *influence* events. These good efforts have limits "🚫". (In 2009, the ICRC interviewed four thousand people in eight war-torn countries. When asked what civilians living in areas of armed conflict need the most, only 3% chose "to influence decisions that affect them."[1]) Each section then progresses toward the less conventional actions that civilians attempt. They are often efforts to survive the actors and events that they cannot influence. These too have limits—but tend to be deliberate, balanced, sequenced calculations by the people themselves.

Many of these actions have at time received ad-hoc support by outside agencies, and many others could be supported by well-situated agencies that hire certain additional expertise. (This is the subject of another Cuny Center paper, *Preparedness Support*, describing how qualified aid agencies can in some situations help brace beneficiaries, local staff and partners for violence while working under the gun.) **This document does not urge the support of any particular action; as an inventory it only illustrates what civilians at times do.** Self-protection is not a panacea, nor is it easy to support. Yet of all protections, those for physical safety as well as life-critical sustenance and services depicted here will be the last ones standing because they rely on the abilities of the very people who are left standing alone as violence shuts the world out.

This inventory is not comprehensive and the taxonomy used is just one of many plausible ways to organize this discussion. Much here could be debated and rearranged, but the big picture is this: *we often lack the capacity to protect, they often learn this*

capacity on their own, and we can at times help them with this lethal learning curve.

How Civilians Survive Violence

PHYSICAL SAFETY

Accommodation[†]

Formal engagement

Influence violent powers and events through organized focus on

Good governance, rule of law, human rights, autonomy, etc.
Conflict mediation, negotiation, reconciliation, prevention, etc.
Complaint, lobbying, advocacy, media, etc.
Protest, nonviolent action
   Open opposition as long as possible
   When open opposition too dangerous and accommodation not
   deemed possible

     - **Disengage**
     - Transition underground: political struggle
     - Transition underground: political and armed struggle
     - Transition back: very common to continue probing for
       reengagement and a formal end to violence

> Formal engagement can involve civil society activism, appeal to duty-bearers, forms of dialogue and expression, etc.
> Locally based early warning at times trigger such engagement.

> Engaging may ultimately prove ineffective or too dangerous.

> Disengaging, going underground (whether armed or not) can be a fundamental act of protection, but carries obvious risks.

Traditional engagement

Customary processes for justice and peace
Custom law
Traditional authorities/arbiters of law
Traditional processes for redress, restitution, intergroup mediation, etc.
This spills over into many social norms (like public shunning as sanction or deterrent), religious rites (for reconciliation that ends blood feuds or for forgiveness that brings those with blood on their hands back into the community fold), etc.

Non-formal engagement

Persuade threatening powers that populace is compliant[◊]
Comply with demands for intelligence, manpower and material, etc**.**
   Bend to the breaking point
   Do not overtly organize, speak out or act out
If compliance becomes too harmful to oneself or endangers others,
 locals often fake or exaggerate their cooperation:
   Delay, deceit, misreporting, underperforming, selective obedience,
   etc.
Find ways to flatter power's vanity; tout "party line"

Persuade threatening powers that one is helpful or harmless
Find ways to make yourself valuable or indispensable to your abusers
Feign passivity or stupidity

> Millions survive by managing unequal power relations in non-formal ways, probing for tradeoffs and exemptions to violence and oppression.

> ◊ This means compliance in the pragmatic, not partisan, sense. Civilians try to keep concessions survivable while preserving some autonomy and dignity.
> Family and village-level efforts to engage power-holders tend to be non-formal and localized, far below more official domains in which governments and civil society "engage" each other. They may have little to do with

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[†] Accommodation here means an effort, ranging from engagement to appeasement, to contain dangerous situations and improve physical safety.

Present threatening powers with a false identity Fake identity documents; alter accent, attire, mannerisms, etc.	civic processes between citizens and duty-bearers redressing grievances within the rule of law. Instead, *they occur between unequal parties, with the weaker calculating which concessions are the least harmful.* Feigned (partial) submission is often seen as a way of being at once compliant *and* defiant.
🚫	At the breaking point, locals often disengage from and avoid abusive powers. Outsiders promoting civil society or nonviolent action might urge locals to "speak truth to power", not fully recognizing the dangers of continued engagement.

Persuade followers to remain nonaligned and peaceful
     Leaders engage those in populace most at risk of being cowed, incited, attracted, or feeling no choice but to "take sides in a conflict"
         Counter belligerent fear or hate propaganda, slanderous myths, etc.
         Dampen ardor of young males about real nature of war and warriors
         Provide young males outlets (both real and symbolic) for a sense of duty, manhood, respect, honor that might be luring them to violence
         Address *safety* and life-critical *sustenance* and *services* so as to reduce the push/pull forces that can lead to desperate enlistment, premature flight, or preemptive attacks on others
     Make an exaggerated show of self-policing
	Such self-policing requires social mobilization—communication of persuasive information—to reinforce a community identity against violence.
	
	 Psychological and material forces stoking conscription can at times be reduced. This is conflict management where people live, work and sleep.
	
	 🚫 Nonalignment or nonviolence may prove unrealistic or even dangerous.

Cut deals with threatening powers, most often for
     Recognition of neutrality / inviolability of a designated site or sanctuary (a peace community or zone, hospital, church, etc.)
     Separation of combatants from civilians
     Reprieve from conscription
     Time-limited reprieve to get inoculations, evacuate specified vulnerable groups, etc.
     Waiver of "taxes"
     Freedom of movement
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     Note: Civilians might assure this deal-making with a payment
	Dominant powers and social blocs are not monolithic. Persecuted civilians often find useful ties to well-placed moderates, sympathizers (or pragmatic opportunists). This creates opportunities to eke out "humanitarian space".
	
	 🚫 Such engagement poses risks. At times, a "good deal" is not being killed in return for cash, food, conscripts and intelligence. This lends more fuel to the conflict.

Avoidance

Mobilization and preparation

Mobilization (requires a mindset)
     Trusted influentials among the populace turn peoples' thinking toward more vigilance and planning
     "Go & see" visits to, or "come & tell" survivor testimonials from, adjacent areas of conflict provide proof or persuasion of certain protection risks or opportunities
     "Bamboo telegraphs" (local systems of gathering news the world over) provide convincement of the need (or not) to mobilize
     Culture, experience, and trusted influentials mix in ethereal ways to
	Millions save their lives by physically avoiding violence. Their tactics and strategies become safer and more effective with increased experience.
	
	 It is *abnormal* for people to plan their own displacement, especially if habit, instinct and simple cues fail to detect that violence has reached a dangerous new threshold. For this reason,

persuade civilians that they have the cultivable capacities to survive	mental readiness is as vital as tactical preparedness. Credible leaders and facts can alter a mindset of complacency or denial and clear the way for serious planning. Chance favors the prepared mind.

Preparation (requires a skill set)

Certain crisis skill sets are continually reinvented across cultures and epochs. Here is an incomplete and imperfect listing**:**

    Information
    Communication
    Safe sites
    Safe movement
    Threat response

- *These skill sets comprise hundreds of **optional** tactics. They also are the building blocks of strategies like community policing, warning and flight. Though not the focus of this document, such skill sets also undergird civilian efforts in analogous situations, whether that of civil society brutally forced underground, or communities learning skills and making plans in advance of natural disaster. All these efforts reveal civilian inclinations and mastery in the face of deadly threats.* 🚫

(side notes:)

Whether civilians respond to danger by staying or going; whether they react at a community, household or individual level; whether in response to machetes or monsoons, raids or rains—preparation always matters and certain strategies and tactics consistently seem to apply. Preparedness is largely about shortening the deadly learning curve.

Many of the <u>optional</u> tactics listed below entail risk. On a case-by-case basis, people must decide the greater risk: getting systematically prepared for violence—or not?

Skills and tactics by which communities avoid violence

Information

Information gathering

Radio: public service broadcasts
    Incident bulletins warning of areas to avoid; moderates urging calm, dispelling rumors, etc.; lost persons tracing hour; skits on situational awareness; commentary on the purpose of aid or peacekeeping missions; features on preparing ORS treatment, food security tips, contents of a flight kit; etc.
Other mass media (print, cassettes, video) from leaders conveying calm or solidarity or instructions, etc., if advisable
Discreet word-of-mouth networks
    Classic grapevine or "bamboo telegraph"
    Paid informants
    Family member in armed group learns about its intentions and strategies, impending operations, death lists, etc.
    Travelers' networks, especially merchants
Discreet observation
    Monitor belligerents' preparations, movements, placement of landmines, etc.)
"Go & see" visits; "come & tell" survivor testimonials.
Tapping groups with extraterritorial scope and mobility (national NGOs, INGOs, missionaries, etc.). 🚫
Commercially available radio scanners
Public domain satellite imagery (like Google Earth) confirm damage to Infrastructure, aid route planning, etc.
Short and long-range patrolling or scouting.

(side notes:)

Nothing is more essential to civilians amid violence than timely and accurate information. With it they may be forewarned of violence. They get life-saving advice, whether to quickly act or stay calmly in place. They learn of economic opportunity (labor, barter, lending, remittance). Information brought to those who are "cut off" brings comfort. It gets word of their suffering to the outside world. It enables the coordination required for what is often the safest asymmetrical response to violence: dispersed networks.

Public service broadcasts can have limits and risks. Stations can be shut down; staff harmed. Seemingly benign messages on political/military situations can have unintended consequences. Word of a distribution can lead predators to their prey. Content needs to be carefully considered, and plans for mobile or remote broadcasting perhaps prepared.

Track or spoor recognition

Information assessment
    Awareness of *priority* threat indicators
        Shifts in military behavior—changes in command, strength, and
        morale; alterations in patrol; movement of fresh equipment and
        supply; unusual intelligence activity; increases in garrison size,
        upgrading of roads or extension of outposts; laying more mines, etc.
        Shifts in political behavior—many indicators, but most often: rise of
        powers with dangerous backgrounds, passage of restrictive laws,
        vilification of supposed "enemies", clamp down on media and civil
        society, etc.
    Cross-verify reports from varied sources
        Access first-hand accounts deemed reliable from conflict areas
        Access sources of news deemed reliable for interpretation of events

Information protection
    Compartmentalization and need-to-know protocols
    Simple codes and other ways to reduce eavesdropping
    Cover stories
    Avoid infiltration
        Protocols to evaluate or interdict transients or newcomers
        Passwords to determine "friend or foe" when encountering others
        If apolitical informants spy due to intimidation or desperate need,
        consider if the threats they face can be lowered
        Populations segmented into close-knit groups are well-suited   to
        detect attempted infiltration

Disinformation
    Deterrent rumors of powerful patronage, rampant STDs, etc.
    Alternated time and/or place of market, school, and worship activities
    Fake documents, misleading communiqués, bogus landmine markers,
    false trail signs, and other ruses to keep civilians out of harm's way
    False impression that properties are abandoned, pillaged or
    uninhabitable

Communication
    Paths of communication
        <u>Lines</u>: kinship lines are most confidential communication nets
        <u>Circles</u>: concentric circles of trusted contacts
        <u>Cells</u>: nonhierarchical network with strict compartments
        <u>Relays</u>: cross-factional cooperation; requires discreet "hand-off"
        <u>Wired in</u>: outside watchdog groups wire warning in; need nexus
        with local communication networks
        <u>Wired out</u>: alarm wired out to trigger prevention or intervention [†]
    Compartmentalization and need-to-know protocols
    Various forms of radio
        Basic operation
        Ways to avoid eavesdropping and jamming
    Operation of other telecom platforms, if feasible
        Internet, sat phone, mobile phone, Flickr, Twitter, Ushahidi, etc
    Off-the-grid mobile power sources (hand crank, foot pedal, truck battery

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Civilians need quick verification of micro-level events more than analysis of macro-level trends based on math and computer models. They need ongoing real-time facts about threats and must push that awareness from the edge of their residences as far out as possible.

Outsiders can save lives by listening to civilians, then by sharing advice and experience (often based on lessons learned by *other civilians* in other conflicts.)

Outsiders may help bolster local information strategies and structures—and if deemed risky, STOP THERE, leaving locals to draw their own conclusions and take their own actions.

Chain of reporting that interlaces a safety net with a social web is particularly strong.

Any ICT platform intended to aid local warning (are many now emerging) must be plugged into a willing and organized local response. If it is not, it may be as unhelpful as a blind airdrop onto an unprepared drop zone.

† Alarm wired out often includes coordination with external responders (police, army, peacekeepers) that synchronizes first response by locals with follow-on response by outsiders.

pods, electricity kiosks, etc.) for telecom
Low-tech signaling (line-of-sight or range-of-hearing in relays: mirror,
 shuttered light, flags, fires, whistles, foghorn, burning tires, etc.)
Courier systems
Broken communication: families agree upon a specific newspaper and
 day of the month in which they can discreetly post their location if they
 have become hopelessly separated

Safe sites
Optimal locations; sites often chosen on basis of
   Secure ingress and secondary egress
   Reasonable access to life-critical sustenance
Optimal site formations
   <u>Consolidated</u>: when deterrence and communal action are priority
   <u>Dispersed</u>: when low-profile evasion is priority
   <u>Networked</u>: when low-profile and occasional communal action are
    priority
Observation or listening posts (along likely ground or air approaches)
Perimeter alert (manned but perhaps enhanced with tripwire alarms);
 concentric rings and relays
   Simple system of spotters and runners
Dogs for home alert and deterrence; perimeter tracking, etc.
Variable-range patrols (interdiction is an option decided by community)
Blast walls, trenches, pits, tunnels, caves, and bunkers
Improvised secondary/night shelters
Concealment; traceless encampment, crop colors and canopies that are
 less noticeable from the air
Avoid creating visible paths to settlement
Avoid being followed to settlement
Discipline with light, cook smoke, and noise (human and animal)
Discreet daily access to foraging, firewood, water, etc.
Early warning / response—evacuation plans practiced
 [See: "Community policing"]

Safe movement
Advance relocation of slow-moving elderly or infirm
Optimal travel group size, formation, and composition
   Larger if aim is deterrence, smaller if aim is evasion
   May include males or armed individuals if aim is deterrence
Route selection
   Longer, more difficult route is often chosen
   Small party scouting of routes, especially just prior to transit
   Routes used on a frequent basis (commuting to work or sleep
    locations) are alternated
Cached food and medical supplies en route
Skills for living off the land (acquiring minimum of food, water, shelter)
Stolen or counterfeited forms, cards, and stamps for
   False identity that reduces harassment or harm
   False "safe passage" documents
Agreed-upon locations to reunite (rally points for individuals, families
 and subgroups)

Most often, movement through dangerous territory, whether amid evacuation or repatriation, is organized by civilians themselves.

Map and grid coordinate reading and other forms of orienteering
Off-road travel and night travel
    Day travel often includes cash for bribes
Practice traversing difficult terrain
Take advantage of inclement weather to move
Blend in the terrain and avoid being tracked
Noise discipline (silence, hand signals)
Use the escape services of experienced smugglers/traffickers
Landmine clues; retracing steps; marking, warning and informing
Mobile phones to call in support
Recognize layout of ambush and blocking points typical to combatants

Threat response *(reaction "on contact")*
Lightweight evacuation supplies at the ready
Rehearsed response to varied forms of bombardment or incoming fire
Automatic sound alarm (megaphone, pyrotechnics, etc.) to disorient,
 delay, or deter lightly-armed night raiders
Early warning / response—evacuation plans practiced
 [See: "Community policing"]
Broken evacuation: fall back dispersal and regrouping plans (down to
 family level)
Evading infantry sweeps or encirclement
Rapid and semi-rapid hiding practices (nesting in ground cover or
 climbing trees; building blinds, spider holes, covers, camouflage, etc.)
Delaying, decoying, or diverting hostile pursuit
Recognizing and reacting to ambush sites
Extrication from mined areas
Skill in first aid and simple surgical fixes

Community policing—early warning—early response
(Draws on many of the building block skill sets cited above)
  Rudimentary patrolling, monitoring, reporting, community liaison, on-
  the-spot mediation, etc.:
  Codes of conduct
  Several models:
    Unarmed neighborhood watches, concerned citizen groups, crime
    prevention committees, and volunteer community police, etc.
    Analogous situations: *unarmed* civilian auxiliaries to undergrounds
    and resistance groups
  Different purposes / responses:
    Warning wired to conflict prevention mechanisms, civil society and
    "duty bearers"
    Warning wired up and out to "rescuers"
    Warning wired to community [tripwire: See "Community flight"]
    Warning wired to armed community members (home defense)
    or armed patrons [see "Arming"]

Community policing has a very long history, elements of which can be found in most traditions across the world. UNHCR and aid NGOs have fostered it in many conflict settings.

The ability of such groups must be matched to the threats they are policing against. Outsiders at times think such action entails whistles and wearing tee-shirts; or fences and white flags. In reality, they often need upgraded skills for coping not just with lawlessness—but with war.

Warning wired to external duty-bearers or rescuers too rarely yields an effective response.

Community flight
  Unplanned flight
  Planned flight—triggered by attack and early warning tripwire
  Planned flight—preemptive self-displacement, absent an direct attack

Many suffer human and material losses in *unplanned* flight—and, if they could "go back in time," would surely plan ahead. This affirms the whole concept of

(The last two draw on many of the building block skill sets cited above)	preparedness support.
	Planned flight does not denigrate civilians or aid belligerents. It can help civilians retain some control and deny belligerents conscripts and contraband.
------------ *Note: Within such efforts by communities to avoid violence (above) can be nested efforts by or on behalf of at-risk <u>individuals</u> to avoid violence (below).*	Many choose to stay in place despite great physical risks. The reason is that in flight one can lose many existing securities—and be exposed to new dangers.

Skills and tactics by which individuals avoid violence

Women
   Discuss locations and situations to avoid
        Situational awareness/planned threat response: homes, fields, roads
   Consolidate housing, within cultural norms and economic dictates
    (Might deter smaller assaults in which GBV is opportunistic)
        Family home extensions or community compounds
   Disperse or hide housing, within cultural norms and economic dictates
    (Might foil larger assaults in which GBV is strategic)
   Men take on women's work roles inasmuch as cultural norms and work
    needs allow
   Reduce nonessential movement
   Optimal travel group size, formation, and composition (See above)
   Deterrent escorts while in transit
   Optimize or alter resource gathering to lessen exposure to danger
        Build water points at closer or more optimal locations
        Increase water catchment
        Buy firewood; use less wood (cook stoves, food w/ less cook time)
   Shift towards livelihoods that lessen exposure to danger
   Women's microenterprise mobile telephony doubles as communications
    net for safety purposes
   Change appearance
        Dress and walk as a male or an old woman
        Cut hair to resemble a male
        Hold someone's baby so as to appear not a virgin
        Be unattractive—dirty one's face, wear foul-smelling clothes;
         persuade attacker one is menstruating, has a rash, etc.
   Fabricate rumors of rampant STDs
   Sexual relationships with male "protectors"
   Stockpile post-exposure prophylaxis (PEP) kits to neutralize HIV
    infection and pregnancy resulting from rape
   Discuss dilemmas of sexual violence so as to reduce *secondary assault*
    visited upon victims: social rejection, economic marginalization, etc.
        Discuss any culturally grounded ways to reduce stigma
        Prepare local nets to immediately assist victims of sexual violence
   Prepare community contacts/nets for widows
   Women participate in community policing, support peacekeeper
    operations, inform the design of camp layout, etc., thereby reducing
    incidence of gender-based violence

Gender-based violence occurs in differing contexts each of which shape steps for avoidance. GBV attempted by a few lightly armed me might be foiled by communal work and housing arrangements. But GBV attempted by larger armed groups opportunistically amid attacks on the community calls for women's precautions nested within larger community preparedness.

Women may bring unique advantages to diffusing tense situations and (re)building trust across factions	
Children	Much is known about the unique vulnerabilities *and capacities* of women and children in conflict. Their experiences as conscripts, voluntary or not, prove their ability to partake in violence—which in turn prove their tactical ability to prepare for and avoid violence.

Children

Preemptively relocate to safer areas, often with kin

Develop situational awareness; discuss situations and locations to avoid

    Learn the habits of recruiters, traffickers, etc.

Discourage nonessential movement; discuss smart movement

School as a safety focal point:

    Use safe movement practices in transiting home and school

    Teachers impart basic safety messages at school

    Waive school fees to keep more children in school and out of danger

    Add income generation into school to keep more children attending

Establish alternative sites:

    Hidden classrooms, worship services, sleeping shelters, etc.

Agree upon what to do and where to meet if separated

Make identification bracelets for infants and children, if advisable

Prepare community contacts/nets to do temporary adoption

Discuss the purpose of peace operations in the region and of mandates that they may have to protect children

Raise landmine awareness

Discuss dilemmas of abduction

    Discuss forced soldiering and killing, mental and spiritual survival, family and community forgiveness, escape, etc**.**

Young (military-age) men

If duties like travel to market expose men to suspicion, conscription, etc., women may take their place

Communication net to warn of recruitment sweeps

Fein disability; appear unsuitable for conscription

Men dress as women

Elderly & infirm

Preemptively relocate vulnerable or slow-moving individuals

Elders with previous crisis experience advise others on ways of improving safety and attaining life-critical sustenance

Older men and women at times hold social stature that enables them to intercede and diffuse violence

Exposed leaders, service providers, activists

Though physically alone, raise profile (if advisable) in media, in the advocacy of local and global civil society, INGOs, etc.

Conversely, lower profile (if advisable)

    Lay low, blend in

    Low-profile operations [see Life-Critical Services]

Seek backing of powerful patrons

Safe houses (single or network) and alternate sleeping quarters

Alternate identity documents

Adequate communications at residence

Standard precautions for movement/commuting

Use the escape services of experienced smugglers/traffickers

Exposed leaders include those in formal public or institutional structures (elected officials, civil society figures), professionals like doctors, teachers, religious leaders, or others who stand up for their people. Outside support of such dynamic leaders fosters their self-awareness, skills and activism and often contributes to positive change in society and governance.

Self-awareness and activism can, however, also increase leaders' vulnerability. Engagement means exposure. Outsiders do

Proactive information-collection on threats such as bogus arrest warrants, road blocks, death lists, etc. 🚫	not often foresee unintended consequences; we seldom help leaders brace for reprisal. Yet with a false sense of security in our presence and imprimatur, they delay preparation for their own survival.	

Affinity Groups

Protective social units and networks

Stay together, pull together

Plan for keeping the group intact in the face of pending violence
Plan for regrouping if involuntarily separated by violence
Plan for staying linked even while *voluntarily* separated (a very common method of pursuing safety, sustenance, and services)
Plan for safety of exposed leaders who are lynchpins of affinity groups
Resist the fear and hate mongering that demagogues use to fabricate new affinity groups based on violence toward others; friends/neighbors *across the new communal divide* agree to risk sheltering one another
Reinforce spiritual strength, solidarity, and dignity
Collaborate for safety
Primordial groups and networks of affinity provide safe refuge when governments, institutions and society are polarized or atomized by mass violence
Collaborate for sustenance
This social architecture undergirds innumerable strategies for obtaining and sharing life-critical sustenance
Collaborate for services
These units and networks are distribution pathways for life-critical services and the primal motivation to serve others regardless of risk 🚫

Affinity groups save the lives of millions. They become safer and more effective with increased experience.

Affinity groups are households, social nets, customary subgroups and communities apart from formal state or institutional structures. Such social units and networks are often as important to survival as material resources; often civilians' first asylum, first line of protection.

Many survivors attest that, more than anything else, spiritual strength and sense of solidarity enabled them to endure.

Kin relations and social ties can exclude marginal groups. They may condone discrimination by gender, age, faith, caste, etc.

Such affinity groups may even foster communal violence, a risk that any outside agency must be aware of and avoid.

IDPs forced into cities, urbanites forced into the countryside, and returnees back from long absences often do not benefit from such relations or ties.

Useful ties to patronage powers

Patrons intercede with threatening powers

Church, mosque, monastery, etc. provides buffer
Business sector and threatening powers foster calm for profit's sake

Seek patronage—perhaps for a price

Activate or create these lines of support
Partial list: appeal or censure based on cultural norms of obligation; intermarry into patron lines; curry favor with threatening power, etc.
Seek safety
Patron provides life-saving armed deterrence. The trade-off might

Patron's motives based on social unit or social contract can range from altruistic to paternalistic and calculated. Benevolence may be principled—or conditional.

For civilians who may otherwise face violence alone, a potential patron does not need to be pretty. Patrons can be self-aggrandizing, unelected, autocratic—and can exact a price for their support. It is a calculation that belongs to the civilians themselves.

be obligation to support the patron's armed activity
Seek sustenance
    Patron provides life-critical sustenance to those in need. As in a
      classic lord-serf relationship, trade-off might be deeper indebtedness
Seek services
    Patron provides or pays for life-critical services 🚫
	Proximity to power is inequitable—some in society have more useful ties than others.
	Quid pro quo for winning patronage might be too harmful.
	Affiliation with the power may change to liability.

	Armed Groups	

Safety through arms
Note: this document emphasizes *alternatives* to armed action
    Civilians carry personal arms
    Civilians lay landmines outside their communities
    Communities form self-defense groups †
    Civilians or communities gain protection through payment, liaison, or
      allegiance with an armed group
	† Geneva Conventions state "Civil defense organizations have humanitarian tasks… that must be respected and protected. They are intended to protect the civilian population against the dangers of hostilities… and to ensure the conditions necessary for its survival [such as] warning, evacuations, shelters, rescue, public services, etc. .. . … the carrying of light individual weapons by civilian personnel for the purpose of maintaining order and for self-defense [is] not considered a harmful act." [2]

🚫	Armed activity carries obvious deadly risks.

LIFE-CRITICAL SUSTENANCE [a]

	Vital Influences	

Policies, institutions, and processes		

Engage forces that affect access to assets and choice of strategies
   Advocate government support for land tenure, food and agricultural
    subsidies, labor standards, etc.
   Protest harmful private banking practices
   Use traditional mechanisms to resolve dispute over resources
   Challenge customs disallowing to women to accrue wealth or property
   Reach accommodation with rival communities in resource disputes
   Appeal to authorities about land grabbing
   Demand police protect roads and markets
   Cut deals with threatening powers to remove restrictions on livelihood
   Use personal ties to win exemption from illicit taxation
   Make deals with middlemen who can assume risks of market activity
    (i.e. black marketers, or entrepreneurs from a non-persecuted group; can
    include doing business with the "enemy"- a fairly common type of social
    "capital" or "bridging")

> Emergency livelihood studies reveal a lot about *formal* and *informal* environments that often govern civilian choices amid conflict. Much has little to do with technical aspects of food production or income generation. Measures cited here are *only a limited sampling*.

> As law and order decline, such engagement very often proves ineffective or too dangerous.

	Conservation and Cushioning	

Household consumption and expenditure		

Adjust to reduced production, income, and market access
   Alter consumption
      Eat fewer meals, watered-down meals (this might include deliberate
       unequal impacts per age and gender)
      Turn to foods that are or more safely attainable or affordable
      Inventive recipes and processes for food preparation
      Greater reliance on foraged foods and medicines
      Keep children malnourished to qualify for to feeding programs
   Reduce expenditure
      Buy cheaper items or forgo nonessential purchases
      Sell/trade high-value foods for larger quantity of cheaper foods
      Send household members to eat elsewhere
      Triage spending cuts outside of food security (i.e. education, etc.)
   Delay expenditure
      Purchase on credit
   Reduce investment
      Postpone deferrable improvements on real property
      Purchase fewer inputs (fertilizer, veterinary care, etc.)
      Forgo terracing, weeding, etc. when too dangerous
   Other adjustments

> Household adjustments can *delay more dangerous choices*. Those cited here are only a limited sampling.

> There are limits to what can squeezed from household-level asset management.
>
> There are longer-term costs to financial and human capital in some of these measures.

> Humanitarians may view cuts and conservation as retrograde. Our focus is **forward** on '*post* conflict', '*developmental* relief' and 'early *recovery*'. We may be aware that the future might hold more violence, yet still promote development-type activity as being "protective" because it restores production, inventory, and income—thus a "cushion" against more shocks.

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[a] This refers not to "barely making a living" but to barely staying alive. Data overwhelmingly shows that during conflict, direct violence is far less of a risk than the indirect effects of violence such as the collapse of *life-critical sustenance* and *services*. Only 0.4% of the millions of deaths across DR Congo from were attributed directly to violence. In conflicts the world over, the majority die **preventable** deaths due to the disruptions caused by violence (which to some extent can be anticipated and **prepared** for). This means millions die away from the shooting.

Recycle resources of every kind
Conserve water and wood (efficient stoves, food w/ less cook time)
Sell assets for food
Pool assets and spread out risk within affinity groups
Postpone or accelerate marriages depending upon the dowry delayed
 or accrued; new couples postpone living independently

Attempt to rebuild cushion of production and income
As conditions may allow, attempt typical development activity to help
 rebuild a life-critical buffer, most especially in terms of food security

> But amid chronic instability, our efforts to help locals restore livelihoods and assets as they existed prior to conflict might be a *maladapted* response. People may be better served by "conflict-resistant" livelihood strategies and assets—ones that withstand a slide **backward**.

Additional Strategies and Assets

Adjust income activity
Change time of work
  Do more agricultural work at night
Change location of work
  Move services from store front to back room
  Make sale of wares mobile or discreet
Change currency of work
  Move from unstable paper currency to barter items

Subsistence agriculture (*and gardening*)
Farming and animal husbandry for self-sufficiency, though not
 necessarily full autarky
Agricultural methods like dibble sticking, hoe farming, slash and burn,
 shifting cultivation, intensive gardening, etc.

> This activity saves the lives of millions. It becomes safer and more effective with increased experience.

> Subsistence farming and gardening tend to be more "conflict-resistant" because they do not rely on systems or inputs disrupted by conflict like cash transactions, markets, trucking, storage, fertilizer, veterinary services, and more. Subsistence is also a tactical step: non-market sustenance is acquired at scattered and discreet locations, reducing the incidence of predation.

Foraging
Forage for food items
  Gathering, hunting, fishing
Forage for natural products that are marketable
Salvage foods left in fields, valuables left in conflict zones (may or may
 not belong to the salvager)

> This activity saves the lives of millions. It becomes safer and more effective with increased experience. It is also more effective when people are still in customary areas about which they are most knowledgeable.

Diversifying or substituting
Rental or day/wage labor arrangements that free one up from ownership
 Note: Ownership ties one to a place (like a farm), to a process (like marketing),

and to visible assets—all of which are vulnerable amid violence Livelihood and marketing that entail less exposure to risky travel Shorter harvest cycle crops that improves the chance of getting food out of the ground and sold or cached more quickly Livestock that is more mobile Livestock that is hardier; more adapted to ecology where one is fleeing Livestock that is less 'unappealing' to looters New seed stocks adapted to ecology where one is fleeing Service skills, especially those meeting needs actually spurred by conflict, that pose a portable and profitable interim livelihood Remote and diverse locales, new caching techniques, livestock holdings that are more difficult targets	Civilians often seek livelihood alternatives that both meet their minimum needs and also are less exposed or inviting, are elusive or quickly mobile, are well-adapted to new conditions, and may capitalize on economic needs generated by conflict.

Emergency movement
 Shorter-term commuting
  The "commute" may be predicated upon safety in a shadow
   settlement or aid camp at night and movement to work sites by day.
   The commute may be daily or much less frequent, as dictated by
   agricultural cycle and safety concerns
 Deliberate flight / evacuation / displacement
	These activities save the lives of millions. They become safer and more effective with increased experience.

Emergency separation Able-bodied family members leave the home area to pursue earnings that can be sent back to the family Able-bodied family members stay behind and continue working and watching the family's assets, while the other members are sent to safer or better-provisioned locales	

Social networks
 Social norms and structures of:
  Shared resources
  Shared financial risk
  Collective laboring
  Hosting traditions
  Kinship exchange / reciprocity processes
  Indigenous social welfare mechanisms (for more "institutional"
   mechanisms see section on Life-Critical Services)
	These networks save the lives of millions and become more effective with increased experience.
	
	These networks become exhausted under prolonged stress, especially without advance planning.

Money networks
 Personal borrowing
 Commercial borrowing (banks, merchants)
 Locally pooled money for conflict-induced emergencies
 Remittances
  Remittance systems are protected against disruption by
   Identifying fallback cash transfer agents
   Planning alternate carrier/courier systems
   Rebuild communications, as in mobile phone systems
   Identifying default remittance destinations
   Keeping necessary documents
   Finding proxies to do transactions
	These activities save the lives of millions. They become safer and more effective with increased experience.
	
	Remittances exceed all private flows of investment and official development assistance and are countercyclical in that diasporas give more just when aid agencies, donors, and investors withdraw due to imminent crisis.
	
	Borrowing may be a maladapted response if it leads to harmful indebtedness.

External relief [For locally led relief, see section Life-Critical Services]	This activity saves the lives of millions—*when civilians can access it*. Sometimes *they must first* survive alone for months or years and then run a deadly gauntlet to reach foreign aid.
	External relief becomes a maladapted response if it leads to debilitating dependency. Foreign relief operations frequently shut down in the face of danger when they are most needed.
Pay offs Pay fees, fines, taxes, or bribes in order to pursue livelihood activities unmolested	Buying off local enforcers assures the survival of many. Buying off local enforcers can leech war mobilization policy. Strategies to strip civilian assets (food, labor, supply) are sapped when, for a bribe, soldiers or political cadres *do not* enforce demands for contraband and conscripts. This means less fuel for conflict.
	Another view holds that pay offs can reinforce the violence and corruption afflicting a society. This would hold true when extortion benefits a violent spoiler as opposed to a simple unpaid soldier.
Shadow & Coping economies • *All the above arguably are actions in the coping economy. More are cited below. There are many ways to frame this. Wartime economies operate at varied connected levels with varied but overlapping actors. The tipping point between licit and illicit, or sustainable and unsustainable, is often unclear. Never—even in a failed state—has everything failed. Economic functions get reinvented; every need gets commoditized. Some profit while others more downstream stay barefoot—but alive. As used here, "petty" means subsistence level and "larger-scale" refers to something more syndicated and profitable.* Marginal production: crafts, bricks, charcoal, etc. $\Rightarrow$ grain alcohol Registration for relief aid $\Rightarrow$ multiple (bogus) registrations Consumption of relief aid $\Rightarrow$ unauthorized sale of relief aid Petty, small-scale resource extraction $\Rightarrow$ larger-scale resource extraction Petty, small-scale smuggling $\Rightarrow$ larger-scale smuggling Petty trade in undeclared (cross-border) goods $\Rightarrow$ larger-scale trade Hoarding $\Rightarrow$ price speculation and rate gouging Petty corruption $\Rightarrow$ larger-scale corruption Begging $\Rightarrow$ Prostitution; exposure to STDs/AIDS $\Rightarrow$ Cultivation of outlawed products (poppy, etc.) $\Rightarrow$ Drug dealing Violent exploitation $\Rightarrow$ Protection rackets	These activities save the lives of millions. They become safer and more effective with increased experience. Wartime economy experts often stress that distinctions should be made between those who violently profit from conflict and those trying to survive amid it. This distinction is rarely found in the aid community which takes a rather "hands off" view of the shadow and coping economies. But as Fred Cuny noted, "In many situations, understanding and manipulating market forces can be far more important and effective than classic relief operations." [3] Some of these actions are illicit or innately harmful to oneself or others, others can *become* maladapted to the point of harm. They are indicated by "$\Rightarrow$" here.

⇒ Armed checkpoint taxation ⇒ Compulsory labor	

Remote & cross-border markets
    Organize jungle or bush markets or trading sites
    Commute cross border to safe markets

	Strip and Transfer Assets [b]	

Redeeming
    Collect debts or rent due
    Withdraw savings, loans, or shares locked up in an enterprise
	🚫	Anything withdrawn/divested can later be re-deposited and reinvested.

		Unless done carefully, such action can affect the solvency of institutions and stir panic.
Caching Food surpluses (esp. salted, smoked, or dried foods), medicines, shelter sheeting, seed stock, cash, documents, and valuables hidden near probable flight routes and rally points		

Liquidating
    Assets are converted into portable or concealable currency such as small amounts of gold, silver, or jewelry
    Assets are converted (whether sold, pawned, or put up as collateral) for cash that is mailed, wired, or electronically transferred to safe repositories or to first responders in one's affinity network
	🚫	Amid violence, physical assets can be a liability. So too, *in countless ways survival can be bought*. Liquidating assets is thus an extremely common tactic. Indeed, civilians often liquidate the commodities that aid agencies give them for the sake of safety, mobility, and discretionary pay-offs.

		The predatory instincts of buyers can be aroused by "distress sales" (a hallmark of forced removal) resulting in prices depressed by having a lot of the same kinds of possessions and properties on the market at the same time.
Dismantling Strip, bury, sell or haul roofing and other building materials		Civilians often save such material for reuse and avoid a future rebuilding expense.
Temporarily forfeiting In anticipation of needing to flee, civilians secure any documentation (titles, deeds, birth certificates, identity cards, etc.) that will later help them reclaim their land or fixed properties		In conflicts around the globe civilians cede their land and fixed properties with every intention of reacquiring them someday. Cases of ethnic cleansing that forever change the demography of land ownership are rare. More common challenges for a returnee are squatters or confused title status due to oral agreements, challenges in claiming inheritance, or other

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[b] Today's "emergency livelihoods" discourse stresses that overt ownership of assets can *increase* one's vulnerability. Thus in many "conflicts" (often better described as asset-stripping enterprises), civilians try to strip first, converting or transferring their assets. Affinity groups usually serve as "first responders" amid crises. Transferring assets to this support network has multiple benefits. First, it protects family wealth. Second, it removes resources that actually invite attack and harm. Third, it keeps that wealth out of the hands of criminals and belligerents, giving less encouragement and strength to their asset stripping; less fuel for the fire. Fourth, it puts those resources into the hands of trusted first responders, strengthening that network. This is vital because such nets often become exhausted, thus requiring displaced persons to make dangerous secondary and tertiary flights.

	problems that could have been anticipated.

Scorching
 	
 Dissuade belligerents, violent marauders, or squatters by damaging or destroying one's own property. This is done after:
 	
      a feasible level of stripping, dismantling, and salvaging, and
      alternate arrangements for safety, sustenance, and shelter
 	
 Dissuade belligerents, violent marauders, or squatters by creating the impression that property is *uninhabitable*. This might be done by fabricating:
	Civilians who perceive that their properties are drawing violence closer to them will at times destroy them. The fact (or the appearance) of having already been burned out and looted sometimes prevents deeper harm to life and livelihood.

bogus landmine markers (known only to the community), the illusion of poisoned wells or water points, rumors of curses (potent in many places) or diseases, the fiction of armed backers, etc	Destruction of key assets and voluntary displacement carry clear challenges and risks.

LIFE-CRITICAL SERVICES [c]

	Conventional Service Delivery	

Conventional staff security
    Acceptance
    Protection
    Deterrence
		Local providers of relief or welfare services have often survived due to these strategies.

		Yet this "security triangle" of strategies frequently fails to safeguard them. Though outside agencies often assume otherwise, local providers are guaranteed neither local acceptance nor enhanced protection because of their ties and knowledge. Being local can even create risks.

Conventional engagement to win access
    Negotiate, advocate, attempt media pressure to win consent for work
    Tap protective social units and networks
    Tap ties to threatening powers
    Make tolerable pay-offs
		These strategies, though often successful, have their limits.

	Low-profile Service Delivery	
When conventional service delivery becomes too dangerous, local providers sometimes adopt tactics of anonymity and avoidance in order to continue helping their people. Sometimes, as our local staff or partners, they even do this with our support when we are forced to pull out and work through them remotely. Locally led low profile service delivery has won praise in several settings. The challenges it faces stem not from the strategy per se, but from the tactics chosen. Such work can be safer and more efficient; such operations can have both a low profile and popular acceptance.		These activities save the lives of millions. They become safer and more effective with increased experience.
		Foreign agencies outsource risky work to local staff or partners via "remote management". Tactics for low-profile service delivery such as cited here can help that work become safer.
		Clearly, low-profile work can be labeled subversive, and local providers do often try to assure their security by being wholly transparent with and subordinate to parties in a conflict. This document deals instead with those times when openness will either get them killed or end any meaningful aid. In such situations, they must be able to survive violence before they can serve amid it.

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[c] This refers to services addressing killers like disease and malnutrition. Data overwhelmingly shows that during conflict, direct violence is far less of a risk than the indirect effects of violence such as the collapse of *life-critical sustenance* and *services*. Only 0.4% of the millions of deaths across DR Congo from were attributed directly to violence. In conflicts the world over, the majority die **preventable** deaths due to the disruptions caused by violence (which to some extent can be anticipated and **prepared** for). This means millions die away from the shooting.

Information

Information gathering

Awareness of *priority* threat indicators

Shifts in military behavior—changes in command, strength, and morale; alterations in patrol; movement of fresh equipment and supply; unusual intelligence activity; increases in garrison size, upgrading of roads or extension of outposts; laying more mines, etc.

Shifts in political behavior—many indicators, but most often: rise of powers with dangerous backgrounds, passage of restrictive laws, vilification of supposed "enemies", clamp down on media and civil society, etc.

Shifts in treatment of aid workers— increased surveillance or harassment of service delivery, changes in the application or interpretation of law as it affects such work

Discreet word-of-mouth networks

Social units and networks

Paid informants

Close coordination with trusted influentials among the populace on security updates, needs assessments, details of upcoming distributions or services, monitoring and evaluation

Commercially available radio scanners

Public domain satellite imagery (like Google Earth) confirm damage to Infrastructure, aid route planning, etc.

Discreet observation

Foster constant situational awareness in every worker

Information assessment (and 'actionability')

Cross-verify reports from varied sources

Access first-hand accounts deemed reliable from conflict areas

Access sources of news deemed reliable for interpretation of events

Anticipate the scenario(s) which an assessment might yield; *proactively* consider and build staff consensus for actionable response(s) even before a critical threshold is crossed

Information protection

Compartmentalization

Need-to-know protocols; physical separation of certain information, operations and staff

Be aware of surveillance; take steps to co-opt or avoid it

Document safety

Burn rubbish; have most sensitive exchanges in person rather than on paper; minimize paper trails on projects, purchases, etc., watch for signs of illicit entry or tampering at offices; computers under lock and key; password access; files encrypted, file backups stored off-site; removable media; clean disk security; anti-virus and firewall software; etc.

Safeguard identities of staff and beneficiaries

Confidentiality:

for work with victims of abuse and sources of sensitive information

As Macrae and Leader say, accurate information on conflict is "a precondition for effective and principled humanitarian action." [4]

Safeguarding information is especially important in aid agencies that politically sensitive activity such as human rights, civil society, good governance, rule of law, ending impunity, and social justice.

Mary Anderson notes "strategies for delivering aid secretly thwart thieves' need for knowledge." [5]

Phillipe Le Billon adds "keeping the time and location of delivery secret can reduce opportunity for looting. Risks can be displaced by publicly announcing a food convoy in a different location." [6]

Cover stories
Avoid infiltration
  Be aware of predatory efforts to learn/abuse operational details,
   or political efforts to discredit the organization
  Do more detailed vetting of possible new hires
  If apolitical informants act due to intimidation or desperate need,
   consider if the threats they face can be lowered
  Base hiring decisions partly on affinity ties—family, tribal, party or
   other connections—while retaining checks on abuse

Disinformation
Distributions or services onto a mobile or irregular or unannounced
 basis with advance notice limited to the parties needed to assure its
 effectiveness
Manipulate information such as planting errant reports, fake rumors,
 forged documents, maps with misleading marks, or phony radio orders

Communication
A layered mix of low-to-high tech communications, as appropriate
Prioritize equipment that is suitable for a discreet and mobile workplace
 and train on it far enough in advance
Simple sources of power off the electrical grid
Need-to-know only protocols
Keep communications undetected, undeciphered, or deniable
Flat, cell-based contact networks apt for a discrete and dispersed
 workplace
  The most effective networks are often built on groups of affinity

Safe movement
Replace recognizable vehicles with private or commercial transport and
 alternate the chosen transport
Replace vehicles with pack animals for off-track travel
Route selection
  Longer, more difficult route is often chosen
  Routes used on a frequent basis (workers' commute, delivery routes)
  are alternated
  Small party scouting of routes, especially just prior to transit
Cache supplies closer to intended distribution or service sites so that
 transit to these sites is less of a logistical or security challenge
Master off-road travel and night travel
  Includes traversing difficult terrain; taking advantage of inclement
   weather to move
  Take full advantage of surprise and *initiative*; of choosing when,
   where, and how to move and keeping dangerous groups off-balance
Use multi-faction networks "to orchestrate *relays* where goods,
 equipment, sensitive information, cash or medical cases are handed off
 from one cell or staff member to another… so as to get safely from one
 place to another." [7] This enables service "reach" across a landscape of
 patchwork loyalties.
Mobile phones to call in support

Threat response

    Automatic response to varied forms of bombardment or incoming fire
    Skill in first aid and simple surgical fixes

Threats at a "workplace"

    "Workplace" can be downsized and a workforce dispersed. Response
     thus may focus more on evasive measures for individuals than on
     evacuation plans for entire organizations [See *Deconstruction*]
    Fallback plans for when a portion of operating network is compromised
    Lightweight evacuation supplies at the ready
    Protocols for destroying records, moving or disabling equipment, etc
    Anticipate confiscation of financial assets—have back up plans ready

Threats during movement (beyond the Safe movement options cited above)

    Recognizing and reacting to ambush sites
    Recognizing and reacting to mined areas
    Evasive driving techniques
    Delaying, decoying, or diverting hostile pursuit

Threats on contact with aid recipients

    Build strong coordination with trusted influentials in the populace
       Such coordination does not require public visibility
    Select location least likely to draw unwanted attention
    Select commodities least likely to draw unwanted attention

> Classic "truck and chuck" forays can risk unsafe, inefficient, inequitable distribution of aid. The ground should be better prepared for such hit and run aid.

Deconstruction (Safe sites)

Downgrade identity

    Stop branding; furl flags and remove magnetic sign logos when wise
    Ditch or falsify identification
    Obscure agency's paper (and funding) trail
    Have media outreach, but operations leave no footprint
    Through intermediary, inform belligerents of general mission, so as to
     convey respect and avert misjudgments about the mission
    Reveal agency's identity only at distribution or service times
    Give all credit for their work to "more acceptable" partners
    Discreetly co-locate with another, more accepted entity
    Work under pseudonyms or take on the appearance of a different type of
     organization
    "Partial disclosure" of their work to trusted, influential actors only
    Go into periods of "hibernation"
    Publicly close an agency then quietly reconstitute it with no legal
     personality or authorization
    Publicly conduct programs that belligerents will tolerate, while privately
     aiding groups most at risk

> All of these tactics of selective transparency have been used in Iraq—some by UN and major aid agencies through their local proxies

> We often equate presence with "visibility", and transparency with "acceptability". But there are many shades between visible and invisible, thus more choices than these false dichotomies would imply. Also, historical analogies show overwhelmingly that overt visibility is not needed by a movement to ensure its acceptance from and coordination with a population

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Downsize infrastructure

    Shift from offices to homes; from warehouses to innocuous buildings
    Rotate "office" locations
    Use portable gear for computing (laptops?) and communications
     (sat-phones?)
    Conversely, adopt/adapt simpler, cheaper technologies
    Replace expensive standing motor pool with an assemblage of porters,
     pack animals, carts, or contracted or private motor vehicles to provide

> The main attraction and objective of attacks on aid often is its *properties* not its personnel. The prime targets are offices, motor pools and warehouses. Fortunately, these features of our aid "footprint" can be downsized, dispersed, or done away with.

ad-hoc transport that can get a distribution done and then melt away	

Disperse, monetize, or outsource supplies
    Cache equipment and supplies
    Scatter warehouses
    Aim for last minute local acquisition and quick distribution so that
     supplies do not sit for long
    Break large distributions into smaller ones
    Use cash transfers, commodity coupons, or promissory note systems in
     lieu of commodities
    Monetize commodities with merchants
    Outsource supply distribution
	Careful protocols make cash a more elusive target than commodities. Practice shows cash is used wisely by recipients and can stimulate local markets
	
	Voucher, coupon, and outsourcing arrangements with merchants reduce aid's logistical tail and turn shops into "aid warehouses". To the extent that practices are privatized and localized, aid operations may become more conflict resistant

Disperse staff
    Small groups independently work and resources themselves—but also
     converge for scaled up joint action
    Need-to-know protocols might have staff aware of the identities of only
     a limited number of colleagues
    Prepare staff mentally for arrest, imprisonment, and physical abuse
	In Iraq "a wide range of [service providers employ an] in-house network of cells or individuals that work independently when staff mobility is poor, but interdependently when it improves" [8] Moreover, the collapse of one cell does not compromise the whole network.
	
	Staff dispersal is not just a matter of physical geography but social geography as well; not just an issue of their safety but *also* of leveraging the trust they exercise within varied segments of the populace. This refers again to networks of affinity. Trust is the password to access, especially in conflicts that are communally, militarily, or geographically fragmented.

Disperse beneficiaries
    Discourage consolidation of beneficiary populations, especially if it has
     not yet occurred and is not absolutely warranted for safety purposes
	i.e. Both WFP and CARE have decentralized operations when the threats of attack and looting existed, dispersing beneficiaries, convoys, and distribution areas.[9]
	
	Experience shows dispersion of beneficiaries can at times be managed and sustained, as it promotes more local integration and self-sufficiency. Efforts toward autonomy create wise economies that may offset whatever is lost in classic camp "economy of scale".

Delegate work
    Identify entities that might be in a stronger position to do service
     delivery and seek a partnership or transfer of responsibility. In past
    conflicts, the more capable entity often proved to be
        mosques, in Iraq
        clan-based networks, in Somalia
        private contractors, in Uganda
        civil society groups, in the Philippines
        community-based organizations, in El Salvador
        welfare wings of a reliable armed party in Eritrea and Burma
	Service providers in the mold of an "aid" or "welfare" agency need to know their limits—and the relative strengths of other possible vehicles for service delivery.

ENDNOTES

[1] *Our World. Views From the Field, Summary Report: Afghanistan, Colombia, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Georgia, Haiti, Lebanon, Liberia, and the Philippines*, Ipsos/ICRC, Geneva, November, 2009; pp. 45-46.

[2] Additional Protocol I, Section I, item 7, Part IV, *Geneva Convention Relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War*, Convention IV of 12 August 1949.

[3] Karen Kwaitkowski, *Jay Garner's Missing Link*, LewRockwell.com; April 14, 2003. Found at w.lewrockwell.printthis.clickability.com

[4] Joanna Macrae and Nicholas Leader, *Shifting Sands: The Search for 'Coherence' between Political and Humanitarian Responses to Complex Emergencies*, Humanitarian Policy Group, Overseas Development Institute, HPG Report 8, August 2000; p. 45.

[5] Mary B. Anderson and Marshall Wallace, "Challenges for Food Aid in Conflict Situations", *Hunger Notes*, found at w.world hunger.org/articles/global/armedconflict/ Anderson.htm; p. 2.

[6] Philippe Le Billon (with Joanna Macrae, Nick Leader and Roger East), *The Political Economy of War: What Relief Agencies Need to Know*, Humanitarian Practice Network, <u>Network Paper</u> 33, July 2000; p. 35.

[7] Greg Hansen, *Briefing Paper #2: Operational Modalities in Iraq,* one of a series of briefing papers on NGOs' and others' humanitarian operational modalities in Iraq, NGO Coordination Committee in Iraq, January 2008; p. 3.

[8] Greg Hansen, *Briefing Paper #2: Operational Modalities in Iraq,* one of a series of briefing papers on NGOs' and others' humanitarian operational modalities in Iraq, NGO Coordination Committee in Iraq, January 2008; p. 4.

[9] Susanne Jaspars, *Solidarity and Soup Kitchens: A Review of Principles and Practice for Food Distribution in Conflict*, Overseas Development Institute, Humanitarian Policy Group Report 7, August, 2000; esp. pages 3, 8, 12, 25, 27 and 37.