

## Issues Paper 6

### From Structural Analysis to Structural Intervention

This document was authored in 2015 by Ms Anna Noonan and Professor Danielle Celermajer, University of Sydney for the project Enhancing Human Rights Protections in the Security Sector in the Asia Pacific. This project was run in partnership with the Centre for the Study of Human Rights at the University of Colombo and the Kathmandu School of Law. It may not be produced, in whole or part, without the explicit permission of the author.

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## ISSUES PAPER 6: FROM STRUCTURAL ANALYSIS TO STRUCTURAL INTERVENTION

### INTRODUCTION

In this *Issues Paper* we move from the research phases and associated findings of the project to the intervention that we designed. Here we look at what we actually *did* in partnership with the security organisations with which we were working.

In Chapter One we set out our Theory of Change and intervention design. Here we explain how we moved from a diverse body of inter-disciplinary conceptual and empirical research to a Theory of Change and how we translated the Theory of Change into an intervention design.

Chapter Two then describes the actual design of the activities that we undertook to effect organisational change. Again, in this chapter we seek to not simply set out the final decisions we made, but to explain the process that we went through to reach those decisions and the logics that we developed to reach them. We specifically look at how we developed the capacity building activities designed to assist the personnel within the security forces to identify the areas on which they would focus their organisational change activities and then develop projects to effect the changes they identified as most appropriate. Those who are interested in a deeper exploration of the practicalities of the intervention may wish to look at the manual, *Preventing Human Rights Violations A How-To Guide on Delivering A Prevention Program*.

## CHAPTER ONE: FROM RESEARCH TO A THEORY OF CHANGE TO AN INTERVENTION DESIGN

“Institutional reform gives human rights principles a tangible reality by embedding them throughout the institutional police culture: performance, evaluation, management, administration, financing, logistics, procurement and career advancement. Tools developed for institutional reform such as diagnostics of institutional weaknesses, data-gathering and analysis, merit-based performance evaluations, measures to assess impact of programs, leadership development and budgetary oversight are as important to police reform as they are to judicial reform or initiatives to improve customs, tax collection or other public services that the UN in general supports in its various ‘good governance’ projects. Police reform deserves no less rigor or consistent treatment.”<sup>1</sup>

### (i) From research to practice

The original design of the project envisaged a series of stages:

1. Research on the root causes of torture and best practice models for prevention;
2. The development of an intervention model to be agreed upon by the stakeholders;
3. Piloting of the intervention;
4. Evaluation of the project.

So far, we have set out some of our most important research findings, across a number of disciplinary approaches and drawing on the empirical research that we conducted in Nepal and Sri Lanka. We discovered a great deal about what we thought would not or had not worked. We had a complex multi-dimensional analysis of the root causes of torture. We appreciated that practices of torture are perpetuated and sustained through the processes, structures and cultures of security organisations and are sustained and reinforced by factors operating at the individual, cultural, community, legal, political and ideological levels. And we understood that organisational change is a complex business requiring a multi-dimensional strategy and commitment from people across the organisation. But what to *do* with all of this?

Translating this broad body of research into an intervention presented one of the most significant challenges of the project. Originally, when we commenced the project, we had envisaged that the capacity building we would conduct would comprise a modified form of training. Unlike other trainings it would draw on a situational and structural analysis of the root causes of torture. Nevertheless, the basic model we had in mind was one in which we would train trainers in this new approach. Once we had completed the research, however, we concluded that no matter how modified, the externally driven training model was not the right form for powerfully addressing situational factors. At best, it could talk about them. Our research indicated that what was required was an intervention that actually went to work on those situational factors – on the structures, processes and cultures in security organisations that created risks for torture occurring by incentivising, normalising, legitimising, authorising, permitting, motivating and creating opportunities for it to occur.

Drawing on the research discussed in *Issues Paper 5: Organisational and Normative Change in the Security Sector* and, in particular, the conclusion that successful prevention interventions require a robust Theory of Change, we brought the entire research team together to design a theory that flowed from our research and that could underpin the intervention.

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<sup>1</sup> William G. O’Neill, *Police Reform and Human Rights* (New York: Hurst, 2004), 6.

## **(ii) The Theory of Change**

This is the theory we devised:

1. Torture is the outcome of the operation of a system that comprises various levels and the components and dynamic of this system can be shifted through strategic intervention.
2. Certain identified actors within the system can intervene effectively and strategically to bring about those shifts.
3. They can do so most effectively if they have certain knowledge, attitudes, skills, resources and leadership capacities.
4. The project team can best facilitate the development of these capacities by providing them with structure and resources.

Each of these propositions implicitly references the body of research underpinning the theory. For example, the first proposition references the ecological and systemic model and the particular findings that we made about the different systemic factors that underpin the use of torture. The word strategic is included here to denote a recognition that in reality, interventions need to be chosen not simply on the basis of their effectiveness, but also on the basis of their feasibility. A *strategic* intervention will be one that is feasible under the existing conditions and that is likely to make a difference. Thus, for example, the research may indicate that altering the entire criminal justice system and political order would be a highly effective strategy, but because it would not be feasible, it is not strategic. Correlatively, it may be feasible to encourage a number of international actors to write letters of complaint to certain authorities about the behaviour of their police, but this action may be highly ineffective and thus not strategic.

The second proposition references the research on organisational change and the importance of change being driven from the inside, by leaders and figures who can both catalyse and sustain change and, who will be models for others. The reference to 'certain identified actors' indicates that a further analysis of the organisational structures and dynamics is required to work out who those change agents should be and from which parts of the organisation they are best drawn. The literature does indicate that it is important to embed them in the operational aspects of the organisations and not simply in human resources or other areas that are nominally responsible for human capacity building.<sup>2</sup>

The third proposition references the various strategies for addressing the organisational structures, processes and cultures that cause or perpetuate the use of torture. It indicates that bringing about change is not simply a matter of acquiring knowledge, but requires the knowledge, skills, attitudes, resources and capacities to shift structures, cultures and processes that create risks for torture occurring.

The final proposition refers to the type of capacities that are required to bring about organisational reform and the capacity building activities appropriate for this. Again, the types of resources and support that are required to develop such capacities is dependent on who the actors involved are the contexts in which they work and the activities they decide to undertake. How we worked through these questions is discussed in detail in the next chapter.

## **(iii) From research to intervention and the problems of scope**

In applying the Theory of Change of our own project, we faced a significant 'scope' problem. Our research had clearly indicated that the drivers of torture are located at a number of levels, including in the general cultural norms of the society in which security institutions operate in the political system, and in the criminal justice system. As such, an effective intervention that reflected our findings would have to address factors at each of those levels. Indeed, it was not our findings that indicated that the organisational level was the most important, but the scope of our project that required that this was the level at which we could work. In this sense, the feasibility dimension of what was, according to the Theory of Change, 'strategic' was established by to the scope of the project.

As discussed in *Issues Paper 5*, for example, our research strongly suggested that in order to change the cultures and behaviours operating in the security sector, one also had to work on shifting social attitudes more broadly. After all, as some of our interviewees and other observers pointed out, it is rather contradictory and unrealistic to expect law enforcement or security personnel to reject violence when, as members of society, they

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<sup>2</sup> Ontario Human Rights Commission, *Human rights and policing: creating and sustaining organizational change* (Toronto: Ontario Human Rights Commission, 2011), 25.

are surrounded by other social messages which reinforce its appropriateness. On the other, given the scope of this project, we were limited to working with security and law enforcement agencies and had not dedicated the resources, developed the expertise or established the relationships required to undertake a process of broader attitudinal change. Similarly, our research indicated that some of the most important causal factors for the use of torture lay at the level of legal and political institutions and actors. Most of these levels and actors lay beyond the scope of our project.

We have sought to respond to this scope constraint in two ways. First, by broadly disseminating our research, we hope that other actors, who are in a position to address the various other levels identified in our research, will take up our findings. Second, we designed our workshops in a way that provided space for the HRPFs to explore both how the factors at other levels influenced or shaped what happened within their organisations. From here, we invited them to explore how they might moderate that influence or even influence these external factors. In our empirical research, for example, we heard about particular individuals within security organisations who had resisted the political pressures that were so often identified as one of the causes of torture occurring. Subsequently, in one of our workshops in Nepal, a discussion was held amongst the HRPFs, led by a senior police officer, about the ways in which police at mid-rank positions could take more of a leadership role, even where they felt that higher authorities were pushing them to act in particular ways. We also used the workshops to explore how the HRPFs might use their position as leaders and public figures to alter the very societal attitudes that they felt constrained and shaped their own attitudes and actions. In this regard, we are fortunate enough to have at least one HRPF within our group who does have access to a wider target audience and he has been working to try and shift attitudes at the level of school teachers: his project is set out in further detail in Chapter Three of this *Issues Paper*.

We come back to the scope question in the final chapter, because it is one that any project is likely to face. For now, we return then to the project design that followed from this Theory of Change given our scope conditions and chosen focus.

#### **(iv) The components of the intervention**

The action or the intervention comprised eight steps.

##### **a) Identification of the Human Rights Protection Facilitators (HRPFs)**

The first step was to identify the personnel who would act as the facilitators of transformation. This was an extremely important step, as they would carry a great deal of responsibility for the success and sustainability of the project. In the case of this project and for reasons outlined in the last chapter, it was important that the security organisations chose, supported and affirmed the involvement of the HRPFs. In seeking their support in selecting these personnel, we set out the following characteristics. The HRPF should:

- Have an intimate knowledge and operational experience of the police or military and its staff;
- Have the support of senior and frontline staff;
- Have a professional orientation and values that are compatible with the security forces' and the EHRP project and action's mandate and goals;
- Display a history of leadership and effecting change;
- Have the capacity to employ motivational techniques such as persuasion, respect, authority, reinforcement, modeling, systemic problem solving, advocacy/brokerage;

We also set out some more context specific criteria including:

- Being a mid leadership level rank (DSP/SP level in the case of Nepal, ASP/Major level in the case of Sri Lanka);
- Not having a history of misconduct;
- Having an above-average reporting history;
- Having a history of/interest in employing a range of non-legalistic approaches; and,
- Including people located at the operational level (for example, working in police stations).

### **b) Preliminary workshops with the HRPFs and EHRP resource people**

The identified individuals were then invited to attend an initial workshop to discuss the challenges that can and do arise in implementing human rights principles. As set out in detail in the next chapter, this workshop introduced them to the approach of the project, and specifically to the conceptual framework and the idea that bringing about reform in their organisational settings constitutes a method for protecting human rights. This workshop also provided them with some skills and capacities to conduct a preliminary needs analysis within their own workplaces.

### **c) HRPFs go back in situ, consult and map the territory**

The next stage was for each of the HRPFs to work out what problems exist within their part of the organisation that create risks for torture occurring or that inhibit this practice and that they would be interested and able to work on. To do this, when the HRPFs returned to work, they were asked to conduct a 'needs/situational analysis' of their particular context through discussions with their colleagues, peers and juniors. The project team provided ongoing support at this stage. Part of the work at this stage was also to inform and enroll other personnel so that they would both be brought on board with the project that the HRPF designed and would have a sense of ownership and investment in building human rights capacities in the workplace.

### **d) Second workshop: Designing the projects**

The HRPFs attended a second, more intensive, workshop at which they designed their own project. They presented their initial needs analysis and, as we will discuss in detail in the next chapter, worked out a feasible SMART project that they could undertake once they return to their workplace. The key elements of the work at this stage were to:

- Identify the relevant causal factors of human rights violations in their particular context;
- Identify how those factors impact their people;
- Identify causes of the problem;
- Work out where they want to/can strategically intervene;
- Identify factors that are outside their sphere of influence;
- Formulate an action plan.

### **e) Implementation of the HRPF projects**

Following this, the HRPFs returned to their work environment to implement the project that they had designed, working with their colleagues, peers and juniors. The project team provided ongoing support and resourcing for their projects.

### **f) Evaluation of the HRPF projects**

Built into each project design is an evaluation framework and plan. Once the projects were completed the evaluation was carried out and fed back into the organisation and to the project team.

### **g) Overall evaluation**

A more global evaluation of the entire project will be carried out. This should include evaluation of the research, the translation from research to theory, the development of the intervention design, the translation of the design into actions, the workshops and the HRPF projects. By evaluating each of these stages participants, the project team and the organisational authorities will be able to reflect on the process and the action and to develop strategies for its modification and expansion following the end of the EHRP project.

## **h) Dissemination**

The final stage comprises dissemination and reflection with a wider audience. This includes this publication and those discussed in the introduction as well as a series of presentations, prepared by the HRPFs and the Associates for the international conference. This forum provides an opportunity for the security forces from Nepal and Sri Lanka to showcase the work they have been doing to their security organisations in the region so that it might be picked up as a possible model for use elsewhere in the region.

Those interested in establishing a project base on this model may wish to look at our publication, *Preventing Human Rights Violations: A How-To Guide on Delivering A Prevention Program*.

In the following chapter we discuss stages 2, 3 and 4, the workshops and the project design processes in detail. In the final section of the report we provide some preliminary discussion of the projects and early reflections on the overall project.



## CHAPTER TWO: TRANSITIONING THEORY TO PRACTICE – DESIGNING OUR ACTION

As already discussed, our research on the root causes of torture and effective strategies for organisational and normative change provided the foundation for a Theory of Change. Our research also established that the most effective way in which our project could contribute to the prevention of torture was by supporting the development and then piloting of a number of organisational change projects that would reduce the risks of the use of torture and strengthen the inhibiting factors within our target security organisations.

If we revisit the Theory of Change, however, what we see is that it did not describe *how* we should work with the security organisations to achieve these aims.

With our research findings in hand, the practical question then became 'how to design an intervention that builds on what we found, and that does this well?' What does it take for personnel in the security forces to develop and then implement organisational change strategies that will reduce the risks of torture?

Our research also indicated that traditional human rights training and education workshops would not achieve these more creative goals. Human rights training would certainly not be adequate to support participants' understanding of the need for, or bringing about structural change in their organisations. Designing an intervention that would achieve these goals required devising a new action logic from scratch and then, based on this action logic, developing original workshops and resources.

Several principles can be gleaned from the research that assisted us in developing this logic. To begin with, our analysis of effective interventions in the public health literature and the findings of our empirical research clearly pointed to the importance of authentic and active engagement from the security forces. Our Theory of Change thus established that key actors on the inside of security organisations should catalyse and lead change. The organisational change literature also emphasised the importance of working with leaders within organisations, but not necessarily the top level of leadership. Active engagement and a sense of ownership of the Action by the security forces themselves are also critical to affecting any kind of sustainable change. Further, from the review of existing approaches to prevention of torture (outlined in Chapter Two of *Issues Paper 1: International Legal Frameworks and Existing Approaches to Preventing Torture*), some of the most effective approaches, such as teaching the PEACE method of interrogation, required presenting security forces not only with didactic information about human rights, but also entailed supporting them to develop the practical skills they required to effectively do their jobs at the same time as respecting human rights.

Operationalising our Theory of Change into a set of concrete actions (and specifically the eight step Action outlined in Chapter One) required the integration of a number of findings and recommendations from our empirical and interdisciplinary research. How we undertook this integrative process at each stage of the intervention design is the subject of this chapter.

### **Step One: Identification of the Human Rights Protection Facilitators**

Each step had to be designed to meet our overall goal of developing organisational change projects that would reduce the risks of the use of torture. This included the first step of choosing the right people to act as our agents of change.

As set out in some detail in Chapter One, the project team established a number of selection criteria for our Human Rights Protection Facilitators. These criteria were designed to ensure that they would be people with the aptitudes and skills that would assist them to effect organisational change and would also be in a position to do so. The final decision over the selection of the HRPFs was, however, made by senior members of the security forces represented on our Reference Groups in each country.

Once selected, we led the Human Rights Protection Facilitators through a four-step process to familiarise them with our project and how they were going to be involved. This entailed:

- Introducing them to our overall project and enrolling them as partners in our Theory of Change,
- Providing them with some preparatory training and useful tools to conduct their own situational research;
- Guiding them through a process of using their own situational research to identify the risk or inhibiting factors for the use of torture in their workplaces and;
- Using basic project planning tools, guide them in developing projects of their own design to address those factors.

## **Step Two: A preliminary workshop led by the EHRP project team**

Our first encounter with the HRPFs took the form of a preliminary two-day workshop held in-country and led by the EHRP local and international teams alongside an expert military trainer from the Australian armed forces. The inclusion of senior leadership from the forces was also an important element of this, as of all workshops, to signal support from the top of the organisation.

The main objectives of this preliminary workshop were:

- To introduce the HRPFs to our EHRP team and overall project goals and to generate their excitement about our Action;
- To reposition the HRPFs as central to the success of the Action and affirm their roles as leaders and experts with whom we were seeking to collaborate to trial our approach;
- To share with the HRPFs the results of our research, to engage them as contributors to and participants in the conceptual framework we had developed to understand why and how the use of torture occurs within security forces, and most importantly, to work with them on how to address this situation;
- To prepare the HRPFs to each go back into their workplaces and 'map' the situational factors that may lead to human rights violations. This would then constitute the first step in designing their organisational change projects.

The first component of the preliminary workshop involved presenting our research on the root causes of torture within the security sector worldwide. We then introduced the HRPFs to the ecological model we ourselves had developed to gain a more insightful understanding of the systemic factors that create conditions under which torture may occur. To do this, we did not simply present our theory but sought to give them an experience of how the ecological model worked. In fact, more broadly, we ran the workshops using an experiential pedagogy so that the participants could come to the key concepts and idea through their own experience. We made this choice in part because the research indicates that this is a more effective pedagogy and in part to reinforce the message that the work that the HRPFs would do needed to emerge from their own understanding rather than following a program imposed by 'experts'.

In this exercise, we asked the HRPFs to consider a number of the examples of root causes of torture that had been identified in our empirical research and to categorise them under the six spheres of our ecological model (the individual, the organisation, the community, the law, politics and culture). The HRPFs were then asked to add their own examples to these categories based on either their own experiences or examples they had learned of through their work in the security forces. This approach was designed to have a twofold effect; to use our research to explain to the HRPFs how we arrived at this conceptual framework of understanding causality through a systemic lens, and more importantly, to create a comfortable environment in which the HRPFs could begin to focus more closely on the root causes of the use of torture within their own organisations in a non-accusatory way.

The next component of the preliminary workshop involved using a SWOT analysis to assist the HRPFs in reflecting on their own workplace practices, structures and processes. The SWOT analysis is a situational analysis or mapping tool commonly used in humanitarian and development sectors, which we thought would be useful in this setting. The HRPFs were each asked to identify at least three strengths and weaknesses of their own organisations in preventing torture. They were also asked to note down any opportunities they saw within their organisation to strengthen the inhibiting factors of torture and to also think about what internal or external threats that may prevent these opportunities from being pursued. By restricting the scope of this brainstorming exercise to the organisations in which the HRPFs worked, the SWOT analysis shifted the discussion from the high level of generality used in the ecological model exercise to a much more localised conversation about the everyday business of the HRPFs themselves in their workplaces. Many of their answers to the threats and weaknesses of their organisations to prevent the use of torture fitted into the more general categories of our ecological model; community, law, culture and politics, and not specifically on their own organisational environments. While we then had to make clear that addressing these factors would most likely be beyond the scope of our Project, this process provided us with a much deeper understanding of how these factors are experienced by the HRPFs what impact on their ability to adhere to human rights principles in their workplaces.

Using brightly coloured cards and working in small groups, the HRPFs completed each of the four categories of the SWOT. They then shared their insights with the workshop participants, while the workshop facilitators identified common themes across their responses. These SWOT analyses provided the EHRP team with a much more detailed and context-specific insight into the local conditions that produce torture in the HRPFs' own

organisations. As a consequence, both the HRPFs and particularly the facilitators had a clearer picture of what alternative strategies or opportunities the HRPFs themselves could see as being feasible within these localised contexts. Having now completed a SWOT analysis themselves, some for the first time, the HRPFs were now equipped with a practical tool that they could use to undertake the same situational analysis with their colleagues and peers (See Step 3).

As the final component to the preliminary workshop, we introduced the 'results oriented' method of project design that we had chosen to assist the HRPFs in designing their own organisational change projects. While there are many ways to plan projects, we decided to structure our Action on the 'results-oriented' approach. The reasoning behind this was to resist the temptation of simply mimicking common or traditional human rights-based activities (i.e. human rights training programs) and to discover through a process of logical reasoning and empirical research, what was actually required. In this case, this was achieved through undergoing the more lengthy process of analysing the information from the SWOT and problem trees to develop project plans that targeted the specific and sometimes less obvious problems experienced by the HRPFs in each of their local contexts.

Our results oriented approach to project design builds directly on the SWOT analysis. The SWOT provides a clear picture of the problem and the constraints and possibilities. The results-oriented approach then followed a systematic path for achieving feasible change using the SWOT as the starting point.

Specifically, this approach directs the people designing a project to start with an identified problem (from the SWOT) and then determine an objective for the project. It is from this objective that the project designer then moves to setting out a series of results or positive changes that when combined will achieve this objective. Only then do they devise the activities that they see as necessary to achieve these results. This extra layer of complexity and analysis encourages the project designer to break down the project into tangible and achievable steps. Working in this way may seem obvious, but the tendency (for both the security forces and for human rights programs) is for people to jump straight to the activities. Too often, however, we have not sufficiently thought about why we are choosing those activities, or if they are in fact the best ones to undertake. By requiring that they go through a longer and more thoughtful analytical process, the results oriented approach prevents the designer leaping to actions. It is more onerous but it leads to a more logical project design, and one that can more easily be evaluated. The process comprises using the SWOT analysis to identify the weakness that the HRPF needs or wants to address, setting out the causes of the weakness (using the problem tree discussed below), and then identifying which elements of these causal factors, or of the problem itself, can be altered or improved (organisational change). The first step of this process was the SWOT, as discussed above.

The SWOT provided the HRPFs with the identified weaknesses or problems in their workplace that create risks for torture occurring or that get in the way of their effectively preventing torture. The next step was to then delve more deeply into and map the causes and effects of those weaknesses or problems. The tool we chose to help them do this, and which was introduced at the conclusion of the preliminary workshop, was the "problem tree". The problem tree uses the conceptual idea of a tree and its roots and branches, where the roots represent the causal factors and the branches represent the effects of the problem. It also works as a visual template to help better map the various cause and effect relations of a specific problem. This tool assumes, as does our project logic, that the first step in addressing any systemic problem is a strong analysis of what is causing the problem.

In this way, the problem tree can assist in expanding our thinking about the causes of a seemingly impenetrable or impossible problem to find opportunities for change or improvement – either of the problem itself, or more likely, one of the factors causing this problem to exist. As a project design tool, the problem tree also establishes a strategic results-oriented planning process that, if followed properly, will ensure the HRPFs plan and design an achievable SMART project that addresses their identified problem. This will be discussed in Step 4.

### **Step Three: HRPFS go back in situ and map the territory**

The next step in our Action design was to ask each of the HRPFs to return to their workplaces and (to borrow a military term) "map their territory" over a period of two-three months. Having learned how to use the SWOT analysis tool, the HRPFs were asked to repeat the same process of mapping out the factors that they and their colleagues perceived as affecting their capacity to prevent torture.

Here is an excerpt from the HRPFs workbook that explains how to do one's own SWOT analyses:

*Using a SWOT analysis helps you to organise the information you have researched into four categories. Strengths and weaknesses relate specifically to the different aspects of your organisation that might encourage or inhibit protection of human rights and reduction in the use of violence. These strengths and weaknesses assess the state of your organisation now.*

*Opportunities and threats refer to both the possibilities for change (things that you think can be changed without too much difficulty within your organisation) and the threats that you might face if you were to try and instigate change in your organisation. These may be internal factors, such as lack of support from colleagues, or external factors such as funding or political interference.*

Many of the HRPFs undertook formal surveys within their workplaces; others conducted informal interviews or group conversations with their immediate peers to come up with their own SWOT analyses in preparation for the second workshop. Aside from its primary purpose of obtaining more detailed information from inside the HRPFs' workplaces, this task also aimed to generate interest about our Action from other members of HRPFs workplace. While not crucial at this stage of the project design, this early enrolment of other members of the HRPFs workplaces would hopefully be of assistance to them when implementing their projects.

Irrespective of the methods used to obtain this in situ analysis, all HRPFs were asked to bring their completed SWOT analysis to present at the next workshop. What the HRPFs perceived as weaknesses or threats to preventing torture within their organisations offered insight into both the indirect and sometimes direct root causes of this problem within their own organisations. Conversely, the strengths and opportunities identified by the HRPFs also provided an indication of what organisational strengths existed that the HRPFs could draw upon or what resources might be available, for example teamwork, good training facilities, sound knowledge of human rights principles.

#### **Step Four: Second Workshop – Designing the HRPF Projects**

After the completion of their SWOT analyses, the HRPFs reconvened for a second workshop. The primary objective of this workshop was to provide the HRPFs with skills and guidance in designing results-oriented projects that they would themselves undertake.

The HRPFs were asked to present their SWOT analyses to each other and the workshop facilitators and then to identify the specific problems they would work on. In selecting the problem, we asked them to consider two factors. First, they should identify a weakness in their organisation that directly linked to torture. Second, it should be a weakness or problem over which they thought they had some scope of influence. For example, political interference was commonly mentioned as a problem that contributed to the torture by security personnel. However, addressing political interference would most likely require complex interventions beyond the scope of one individual HRPF's sphere of influence, and most likely outside their organisational environment. In the context of our project design, if political influence was identified as a problem, then instead of seeking to stem the political interference per se, the HRPFs would be asked to identify what could be strengthened within their own workplaces to better resist or deflect the political interference and its impact on their workplaces. One example of this might be to improve the transparency and legitimacy of reward and punishment protocols within the HRPFs' workplaces to ensure that only those security personnel who meet set criteria (hopefully human-rights based) would receive rewards, not those who engage in, encourage or act upon political interference. The existence of improved reward and punishment protocols then acts as an organisationally based deterrent against political interference. In short, the workshop facilitators worked with the HRPFs to look for an organisational system, structure or process that either encourages the use of violence in their workplace or simply allows it to persist.

From this point, the HRPFs revisited the problem tree visual template that was introduced in the preliminary workshop. An example of a blank problem tree template and the steps to completing it are found in Figure 1.

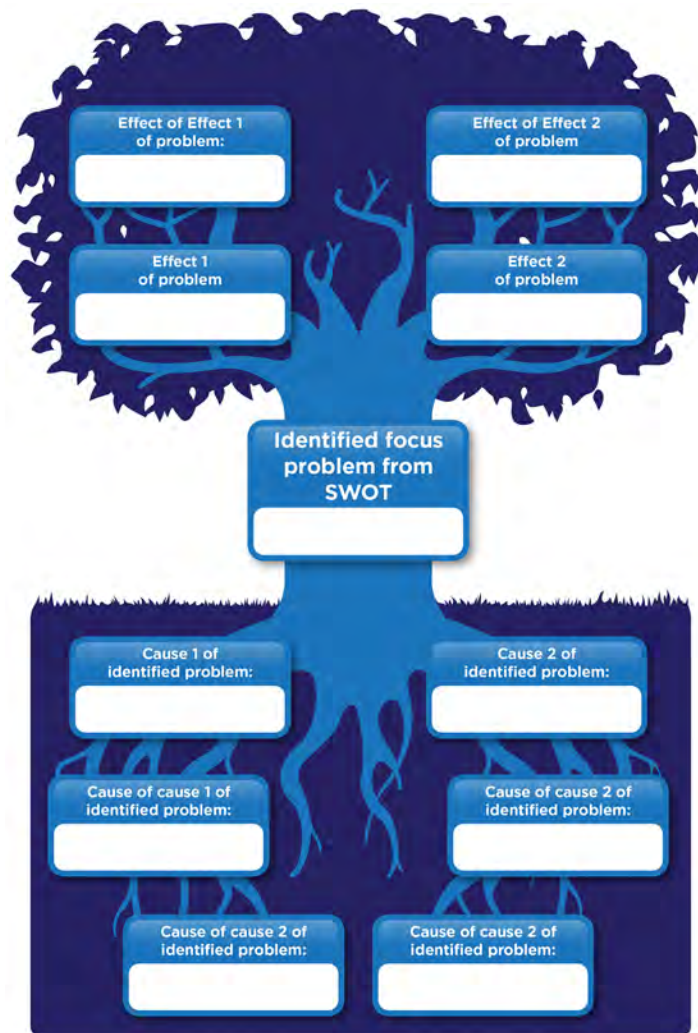


Figure 1: Example of a Problem Tree

### Creating a Problem Tree in Six Steps

1. The first step is to identify this problem and put it in the centre of the cause-effect diagram.
2. The second step is to draw a line upwards and list all of the negative effects that this problem has on the workplace, on you and on human rights in general.
3. Once you have at least three or four examples of the 'effects' of the problem, draw another line upwards from these examples to list the secondary, or deeper, effect that the problem has.
4. The fourth step is to then revisit the problem at the centre and draw lines downwards to the reason why this problem exists – the causes of the problem.
5. Once you have three or four examples of the cause, draw another line listing the deeper reasons that are behind the cause of the problem,
6. The final step is to think about which actions you might take, or what interventions you might design that can address and alter the causes of the problem, so it will no longer exist or will be reduced. You can show this on the problem tree by circling the "root/s" that you are going to address in your action.

When the cause and effect relationships of a problem are mapped out on a problem tree, it is easier to see why a particular weakness exists in the workplace. It is also easier to imagine what different types of interventions might be possible to help improve or change it. A comparative analogy we used in explaining this distinction between causes and effects to the HRPFs drew on the model of medical treatment – if you do not know what the cause of a presenting symptom is, you may treat the wrong problem or only treat its symptoms. If you treat the actual cause of the sickness, it is less likely to continue or to return quickly.

Thus the key purpose of using this problem tree tool was to steer the HRPFs towards the specific ‘root causes’ of their identified problem and focus the next steps in project design on addressing the causes of the problem, not the effects or other unrelated or partially related issues. When selecting which part of the ‘roots’ of the problem tree the HRPFs felt they could positively impact, they were encouraged to think carefully about what resources, personnel and skills would be available to assist them when building their project design.

Aside from also providing a wealth of empirical data about the HRPFs’ perceptions and insights into the risks or causal factors of torture and other forms of violence within their own workplaces and organisations, the problem tree also reinforced the message that the HRPFs were themselves the best sources of information and analysis about the inner workings of their own security forces. Following the research set out in Chapter One of *Issues Paper 5: Organisational and Normative Change in the Security Sector*, this process of eliciting information from the HRPFs themselves through the problem tree tool also adhered closely to the organisational change principles that the most sustainable organisational change is that which is informed by the very people who will be experiencing the change. It acknowledges that it is the HRPFs themselves who are best placed to decide what kinds of projects and changes will be best assimilated into their own organisations’ structures, systems or processes and importantly, what will be met with minimal resistance.

The HRPFs worked in small groups or independently to complete their problem trees. The workshop then progressed to the more pragmatic planning of their projects.

As mentioned above, the results oriented approach directs project planning away from being activity based. Instead it requires the project planner to decide upon an overall goal to which they hope their individual project will contribute. For example, the overarching goal of the HRPFs’ projects, and indeed our Action logic is the reduction of the use of torture within the security forces in Sri Lanka and Nepal. Thus, the first task for the HRPFs after completing the problem tree was to transform their ‘problem’ into an objective for their specific projects (something that is specific to their workplace or organisation).

This objective would contribute to this overall goal, at least do so in part. Establishing this required the HRPFs’ translating the central problem on their problem tree into a positive statement. For example, if the identified problem on their problem tree was the lack of clear incentives or rewards for security personnel to reject, discourage or prevent torture, then the objective would be the existence of clear incentive structures or rewards for security personnel who reject, discourage or prevent torture.

This objective determines the scope of the project. It is designed to contribute to, but not wholly achieve, the overall goal behind the project. The next step is to then think about what “results” would need to be evident in order to say this objective has been achieved. We can think of these results as the set of positive changes to the status quo that need to happen to ensure this objective is met. Understanding that organisational change might involve a combined strategy of changing attitudinal culture, implementing a new process or system, these results are usually diverse.

To use the above example, a clear incentive or reward program for security personnel might be characterised by the following results:

- Security personnel are interested in and aware of this new incentive program (i.e. there is a transparent process in place in the workplace that all personnel are aware of and know how to access)
- There is an approved incentive program that is accepted by the senior management of the workplace system in place to manage the incentive program (what are the incentives/rewards are and how do security personnel go about accessing these?)
- There is an action plan of how to ensure that the incentive program works and is sustained (i.e. how are the positive actions by security personnel monitored and documented to ensure the incentive program is effective)

The final step in the project design is to establish what activities or tasks need to take place to ensure each of the results above are achieved. Again, just as the results themselves reflect different components of a strategy, the activities required to achieve each of these results will also be different. This process aims to ensure that there is a logical link between each activity and the specific result towards which it is contributing.

This is quite distinct from other forms of human rights interventions that focus primarily on human rights education or information distribution as activities assumed (implicitly) to bring about the result of behavioural change.

Here is an excerpt from the HRPFs workbook that explains how to check there is a logical link in the project design:

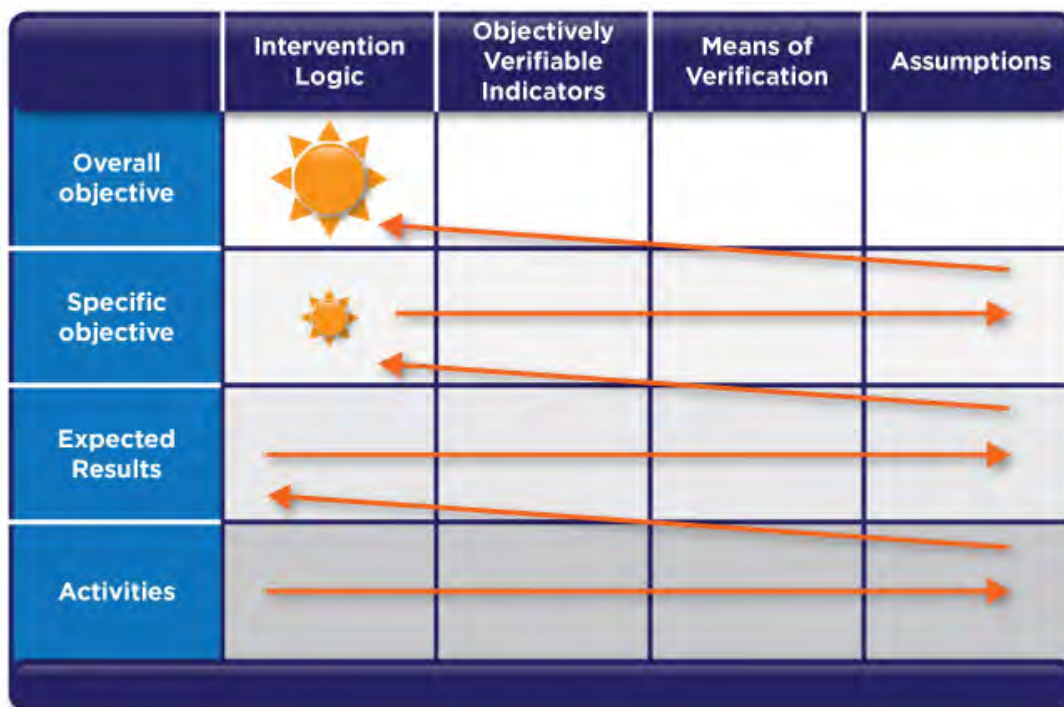


Figure 2: Links in Project Design

If you were to say it out loud, it might sound something like:

If I do Activity 4 successfully, which I will know if I have met the OVI for that activity and have the MOV for that activity as evidence, AND my assumptions about that activity were correct, then I can say that I have contributed to the Expected Result it is connected to.

If I achieve my Expected Result, which I will know because I have done my activities and because I have met the OVIs for my Expected Results (using the associated MOVs as evidence), then I can say that I have achieved my Specific Objective.

If I have met my Specific Objective, which I will know because I have achieved my Expected Results of this Specific Objective and because I have met the OVIs for my Specific Objective (using the associated MOVs as evidence) I can then say that my program has contributed to the Overall Goal.

For example, a human rights education project provides human rights education on the assumption that if security personnel are educated about human rights principles they will act in a more human rights-friendly way. The logic thus runs in the following way: if we conduct human rights education programs, then security personnel will be better informed about human rights and this will achieve the overall objective of improving human rights-based practices within the security forces. As one can see however, this intervention is based on an implicit assumption that lack of knowledge and information is the problem.

Many of the security personnel told us that they know about human rights principles and have received many training sessions on them both internally and externally by NGOs. Our research also confirmed that this was the case, as discussed in the training report *International Review: Current Approaches to Human Rights Training in the Law Enforcement and Security Sectors*.

They are also willing to incorporate this approach into their workplaces. However, the problem really lies in how to transfer this knowledge into the practical realities of their workplaces, particularly when their duties as security personnel and human rights appear to be somewhat incompatible. Thinking carefully about what the results of a project might be avoids jumping over assumptions about the appropriateness or effectiveness of a particular activity in favour of thinking more methodically about what results need to be achieved and only then working out how to achieve them.

Once a complete design had been established by each HRPF it was checked by the EHRP team to see that it conformed with the results-oriented approach we had used and also to the overall logic of our Action. Next the HRPFs began planning the specific logistical detail of their projects, including a stakeholder analysis of who would be involved in their projects (and who may not be), a timeline and action plan for activities to take place, and a budget projection for the cost of the project to be implemented. In some cases, their projects then needed to be approved by higher authorities in their organisations.

Each HRPF was provided with a small amount of funding with which their projects could be implemented.

We were acutely aware that all HRPFs' involvement in this Action was a task on top of their daily work and responsibilities. It was therefore important to make sure the HRPFs' projects were realistic and achievable with the resources and time available to them. As a final test, each HRPF was asked to check their project against the commonly used SMART set of criteria, popular in the humanitarian, public health and development sectors where resources and time are often as scarce. The SMART criteria are set out in Figure #.

If the answer was NO to any of the questions above, the HRPFs were recommended to work with the EHRP team to think of a smaller or a less complicated project that still addressed their problem, but in simpler way or on a smaller scale.

**SMART** stands for the following:

**S = Specific:** Is it specific to what I can do in my workplace?

**M = Measurable:** Can I calculate whether I am achieving the objective?

**A = Attainable:** Do I have the skills and resources to achieve this?

**R = Relevant:** Is my Action or project worthwhile and a priority for others?

**T = Time-bound:** Do I have the time to do it? When is the target end date?

The next two steps, and perhaps the most demanding for the HRPFs in terms of time and commitment, was the actual roll out of the activities designed by the HRPFs to achieve their results, and thus meet their individual project objectives. A period of six months was allocated for these projects to take place. The final phase at the conclusion of this six-month implementation period was an internally conducted evaluation and reflection by the HRPFs on the success of their projects according to their project plans, guided by our in-country project team. How the HRPFs and our EHRP project team undertook Steps 5 and 6 is detailed in the following chapter.

We also built into the project planning steps an evaluation plan component for each project. This was included to ensure that each HRPF had designed a project that could be individually evaluated, to allow for a strong feedback loop for the HRPF and the organisation about what worked and what could be changed. It was also included to initiate the first in a series of multi-tiered evaluations of our overall project, beginning with the success of the HRPFs according to their design (i.e. did the projects actually happen and were they successful?) and whether their project design did in fact address the weakness or problem within their organisation that inhibited the prevention of torture.

From this starting point, our evaluation then looked at whether the outcomes of the Action reflected what we had set out in our Theory of Change, thus testing whether the translation of the Theory of Change into the Action design was successful. Only by understanding whether each link in this process was designed and implemented successfully will we then be able to confirm that our experimental approach offers an effective alternative to traditional forms of human rights work between human rights professionals and security forces. This is set out in more detail in the conclusion.



Even at the outset, and as mentioned in Chapter One, designing a completely new Action that translated our Theory of Change into a logical intervention involved negotiating a number of anticipated challenges.

### **Experimenting with a new approach – anticipating the unexpected**

Despite both the empirical and theoretical research informing our Theory of Change, trialing a new approach to 'human rights' interventions with security forces required not only creativity and innovation. It also required our preparedness to break with tradition and try something new without any certainty that it would work, least of all work well. This involved a thorough trust and belief in our Theory of Change. It also meant upholding a strong commitment to our Action logic, while also balancing the need to incorporate feedback from the HRPFs and make adjustments to our implementation plan as we went along. This required a strong sense of teamwork and commitment from all workshop personnel, and the ability for the workshop facilitators to respond quickly and efficiently to unexpected interpretations of our logic, confusion or in the worst case resistance and dismissal of our Action design.

One way in which we catered for this was by spreading out our Action across two workshops with an independent HRPF-led activity in between. Collecting feedback from the HRPFs about both the content and delivery of the first workshop gave our EHRP team the time an opportunity to incorporate any feedback from the HRPFs about components of the workshop that were confusing, ineffective or difficult to understand. For example, it was clear after the first workshop that a number of the HRPFs were comfortable with receiving information in English, but were reluctant to speak in English, thus limiting the depth of discussion. Accordingly, interpreters were used in the later workshops. This is just one example of how our Action design pre-empted or at least catered for a number of potential hurdles or obstacles.

While it was possible to make adjustments to some of these more straightforward elements of our Action, the question of whether or not our Theory of Change and its translation into our Action logic would actually work was ever-present. This also meant relinquishing any expectations on behalf of the EHRP team that our project would be perfectly crafted and delivered, and recognising that what we were doing was piloting a potentially much longer and more developed exploration of a new methodology of human rights work with security forces. Accepting the inevitability of teething problems, mistakes and some failure or ineffectiveness was perhaps one of the greatest challenges of this process.

### **Maintaining integrity to our overall project goal**

Another complicating challenge was how to balance the integrity of what we saw as the goal of our project – to affect reduction of the use of torture by security forces - with another sustained commitment - to allow the HRPFs themselves to be the driving force behind their own projects. This balancing act required an Action design that was both structured enough to remain true to the overall goals of our own project, but yet flexible enough to allow the HRPFs to take the lead in identifying the particular paths they would pursue to bring about change within their organisations, even when their ideas or strategies did not align with what we as human rights professionals would traditionally consider legitimate or feasible.

An example of this tension can be seen in a project where the HRPF argued that one of causal factors of police violence was an expectation from the community that police officers will use violence against young drug users as a punishment for their addiction. In this case, part of the project design entailed working with the community to alter its attitudes. It would be foreseeable that a human rights professional might react to this process as an attempt to reposition of blame on community members, or to justify violence against young drug users. The balancing act for the EHRP team was to accept the impact of community pressure as a problem that needs to be addressed without condoning the use of violence by police personnel. The challenge is then to devise a strategy that addresses not only this community pressure but also the consequent use of violence by security personnel.

## **Redefining the position of security personnel as the ‘experts’**

Given that the success of our Action relied heavily on the active and voluntary participation of the HRPFs, one major challenge was establishing their role as ‘experts’ of their own field, and the role of the EHRP team as providing coaching or guidance to the HRPFs for them to carry out the Action. This involved a strategic move away from the traditionally assumed relationships of workshop personnel as the ‘experts’ in the room and the participants as either passive or partially involved when instructed to. While this might sound logical and straight forward, the act of undoing these relational dynamics for both the EHRP team and the HRPFs required constant attention and a resetting of expectations, particularly on the part of the HRPFs about the increased level of participation the Action expected from them.

This was a strong indicator of how accustomed both the security personnel and the workshop facilitators have become to the traditional style of workshop delivery, with the human rights professionals imparting information to a relatively passive audience.

What also required constant negotiation was the tension between resentment of the ‘fly-in fly out’ style of international engagement, whereby international experts arrive for a short period of time and tell the security forces what is or isn’t working in their own environments, combined with the competing need for the international team to establish our credibility. To negotiate this, we sought to strike a balance between ensuring that we explicitly drew on our distinct expertise as people who have worked in the field of human rights and organisational change while also validating the expertise of the participants through heavily participatory methodologies.

## **Overcoming the usual tensions between human rights and security**

A final and significant challenge was designing an Action that anticipated and actively sought to address and overcome the very real tensions between human rights professionals and security forces. On the one hand, these tensions are an outcome of the fact that human rights actors see security forces as some of the worst sites of human rights violations. On the other hand, security personnel often experience human rights actors as failing to appreciate that real-life application of human rights principles is not a simple matter of ‘doing the right thing’ and that human rights violations emerge for complex reasons. From their perspective in the everyday business of security work and law enforcement adhering to human rights principles is not always a simple matter of deciding to do so.

At one end of this spectrum, and as many of the HRPFs were quick to tell us, our invitation to them to participate in the HRPFs workshops was one of a long list of ‘human rights programs’ they had joined that actually provided little in the way of relevance or inspiration to the HRPFs themselves. These training programs, as we know, are frequently run by international agencies or facilitators with little knowledge or interest in learning about the lived realities of the HRPFs themselves. This appeared to have generated a substantial amount of skepticism or lack of genuine interest on behalf of the HRPFs, at least initially. We therefore had the task of proving to the HRPFs that our approach was in fact different and that we relied on their partnership and collaboration to experiment with it in the most optimal way.

Of course at the opposite end of this spectrum is a sense of distrust from the HRPFs towards any human rights professional regarding the real motives behind their presence. We needed to prove that we were not in fact there to obtain information about human rights violations that had been committed, condemn them as violators of human rights and re-iterate what human rights law requires of them. Given the current accusations of war crimes against the Sri Lanka military before the Human Rights Council coupled with the HRPFs’ awareness of the more common naming and shaming approach by human rights organisations, it was not unforeseeable that these tensions would be present and could easily escalate if the HRPFs felt they were being accused or interrogated.

Aware of these challenges and their potential to disrupt or divert our intentions, we established a series of overarching principles to guide both the design and particularly the implementation of our Action:

- To maintain the integrity of the overall goal of our project, we had to ensure that the Action design and implementation adhered to the Theory of Change developed from our research (as set out in Chapter One);
- To ensure authenticity and a sense of ownership by the security forces, the identification of opportunities for organisational must be generated by Human Rights Protection Facilitators themselves;
- To best facilitate this process, our role is providing the Human Rights Protection Facilitators with strategies, guidance and support, rather than instruction.

With these three principles set out before the actual implementation of the Action, we had a means to respond to unexpected events and reactions or doubts about the design and logic of our Action design. These principles helped us to revisit what our initial intentions were.

How we pre-empted some of these challenges in our Action design is set out below. Our reflections on the unanticipated challenges of implementing our Action design as well as about the flaws or major omissions of both the Action design and the way it was implemented are discussed in more detail in the conclusion.

## **Step Six: Meeting these Challenges through Our Action Design**

### **Resource - HPRFs Workbook**

Prior to the first workshop, a Human Rights Protection Facilitator Workbook was produced by the EHRP project team and translated into Sinhala and Nepali.

The Workbook served five functions:

- a) To provide the HPRFs with an overall written guide to the systematic approach underpinning the five phases of our Action design. This would allow them to see how these phases linked together to match our overall conceptual framework;
- b) To provide a written reference for the HPRFs to follow and to provide a resource so that they could revisit the concepts introduced or activity instructions given in the two workshops;
- c) To serve as a resource for the HPRFs to use themselves during the more independent components of the Action;
- d) To work as a step by step practical toolkit in how to translate the identification of an opportunity for organisational change into a simple project to accompany the second workshop;
- e) To serve as a written record for the HPRFs themselves and our EHRP project team to use in documenting the work that they undertook in identifying opportunities for organisational change in their workplaces and developing projects to address them and evaluating how effective this process was.

The Workbook also served two more abstract but important purposes. First, it acted as a common source of affirmation or reaffirmation of the links between our Theory of Change and the goals of the overall project and the HPRFs needs analyses and project designs. As the HPRFs' attention was progressively drawn to the specific nitty gritty of designing project activities and sketching out evaluation plans, the Workbook also allowed the in-country project teams working with the HPRFs to revisit the motivations for their projects, and if necessary realign their thinking with the importance of organisational change as an effective means of affecting the reduction of the use of torture in the security forces.

### **Choice of Workshop personnel**

The selection of the workshop personnel was of particular importance to establish from the outset a strong sense of mutual respect and trust between the HPRFs as representatives of the security forces and the EHRP team as human rights professionals. As such, senior members of the security forces in Nepal and Sri Lanka conducted a formal welcome and endorsement of the EHRP project and the selection of HPRFs as leaders within their organisations. The workshops were then facilitated by a combination of local and international EHRP team members, comprising the in-country research team who had already conducted country-specific research and members of the core EHRP project team responsible for the overall design of our project and this Action. This dual facilitation not only allowed for the convenient translation of complex or difficult terms from English into Sinhala or Nepali, but also to reinforce the importance of the Action being locally driven and contextually specific and not a replication of other international human rights training models. We found, and we would anticipate that this would be the case in many countries, that distrust of international actors can be a real impediment to developing the type of deeply collaboration required on a project of this type. As such, one of the key lessons for international actors is to work as facilitators and to be able to step back to allow local actors to take the lead. This may involve careful and sometimes difficult negotiations, especially where the international actors have a strong view about how a process ought to occur and where local conditions preclude a straightforward implementation of their vision.

An important addition to the list of workshop facilitators was a senior member of the Australian military with over 20 years of experience as a soldier in a number of armed conflicts worldwide, and as a military lawyer with experience acting in defense of members of the security forces accused of human rights violations. The role of this military resource person was to initiate a non-accusatory acceptance that human rights violations are a universal issue present in all security forces worldwide, and that these violations are by and large a product of a system. By establishing this as the groundwork for our future discussions, the military resource person's presence and discussion of ethical leadership reinforced the importance of the role of the HRPFs in leading the organisational change our Action is aiming to achieve.

A less explicit but nevertheless important role for the military resource person's involvement was to signal to the HRPFs' our acute self-awareness of the importance of moving away from the traditional dynamics of human rights professionals 'teaching' security personnel human rights principles. This in turn required communicating that achieving our aims required greater input and collaboration with security forces themselves and a clearly stated understanding that they and not us are best placed to know what will work within their organisation. Again, this required the EHRP team letting go of significant control over the process. It meant knowing that in order to effect sustainable and embedded change, we could not expect it to occur exactly according to our blueprints.

### **Repositioning the HRPFs as the experts, not the enemies**

Organising and presenting our empirical research to the HRPFs through the ecological model introduced the idea of thinking systemically about the root causes of torture. Our aim was to use this exercise at the beginning of our preliminary workshop to shift the focus away from naming and shaming of individuals in favour of asking the HRPFs themselves for their views and deepen insights into what our research had found. We also drew on findings from research conducted with other security forces so as to avoid any sense of targeted interrogation, accusation or exposure of the HRPFs themselves. Instead it asked the HRPFs to provide their own insights into the systemic causal factors that contribute to the occurrence of human rights violations within security forces and perhaps to draw comparisons between the empirical research and their own experience.

As such, the preliminary workshop repositioned the 'expertise' within the room from the EHRP workshop personnel to the HRPFs themselves as the people with the richest knowledge and understanding of how their own institutions and organisations work. Rather than creating an environment of information transmission from the EHRP team, the SWOT analysis and problem tree tools were used to actively engage the HRPFs and particularly at encouraging them to be also active users of our conceptual framework. These tools had a threefold effect.

First, the SWOT and problem tree tools required the HRPFs to provide their own authentic and expert knowledge of what structural and systemic weaknesses lead to the improper use of torture in their workplaces. Second, these tools assisted in obtaining information about possible root causes of torture in the HRPFs workplaces in a way that was non-invasive and not accusatory. Third, they provided a means for the EHRP team and the HRPFs themselves to obtain authentically produced empirical information about the root causes of torture in their localised settings. This information not only contributed to our wider body of research but also gave the HRPFs access to each other's experiences and the opportunity to identify opportunities for collaborative work, networking and sharing strategies long after the conclusion of the project.

Finally, the idea of having the HRPFs design and implement their own funded projects is another example of the level of trust and confidence the EHRP team had in the HRPFs to lead major components of the Action themselves. The pattern of holding a workshop and then requesting the HRPFs to undertake their own independent work (Steps 4 & 6) was a characteristic of our Action that was both ambitious and innovative, and that we hope instilled in the HRPFs a sense of genuine partnership quite opposed to their previous experiences of working with human rights professionals.

In the next *Issues Paper*, we look at the projects that the HRPFs actually developed and in *Issues Paper 8* at how we evaluated those projects.



