6. DRAWING UP A COMPREHENSIVE SECURITY STRATEGY

> **CHAPTER 1.6** OF THE NEW PROTECTION MANUAL
DRAWING UP A GLOBAL SECURITY STRATEGY

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

> Recognise and analyse the protection strategies and tactics HRDs already use.

> Define a global strategy to protect the HRD workspace.

KEY MESSAGES

> HRDs and their organisations do not start from scratch when it comes to security issues. Invariably they already have ad-hoc deterrence and protection strategies to handle risks and threats.

> Not all strategies are able to cover all eventualities as they inevitably have gaps. Every single strategy (ad hoc or formal) needs to satisfy at least the "RASER" criteria: Responsiveness, Adaptability, Sustainability, Effectiveness, and Reversibility.

> A global security strategy aims to expand and maintain the HRD workspace (working on two axes: tolerance/acceptance of the work carried out by HRDs; and deterrence/persuasion of potential aggressors).

THE SESSION

⚠ **CHALLENGES THAT MAY ARISE DURING THE SESSION :**

→ This is a highly conceptual or "theoretical, western-style" module. If you are working with grass-root HRDs, who have direct experience but limited formal, conventional education, you might prefer to skip this session and go to **Chapter 5.8**.

→ Recognising and analysing ad hoc deterrence strategies and tactics already in place.

→ Respecting ad hoc strategies linked to cultural or religious beliefs, while stressing the need to adopt more targeted security and protection measures.

→ Getting participants to clearly understand the concept of "the HRD workspace".

→ Taking into account the specific protection needs that women HRDs and any other relevant social category of HRDs (for example, indigenous populations, LGBTI defenders, disabled defenders, etc.) may have in terms of strategies, security norms, etc., both for routine protocols and emergency procedures.

THE SESSION STEP BY STEP :

Time	Acc. time	Activity	Tool / method / materials
10´		**Introduction** • Objectives and structure of the session	Have the points ready on a flipchart (or PowerPoint slide) Use PI videos "Protection strategies" and "Security and protection objectives" for background info
30'	40'	**Ad-hoc deterrence strategies and tactics** • Identify security strategies and tactics. • Dealing with risk after carrying out an assessment	Flipchart with RASER criteria of effective security strategy
30´	70´	**The HRD socio-political workspace** • Definition of the HRD socio-political workspace • Security and the HRD workspace	Flipchart with the illustration of the two axes of the HRD workspace **(NPM, p.69)**
40´	110´	**Expanding the HRD workspace** (global security strategy)	Markers Cards
10´	120´	**Conclusion**	
		TIME KEEPING: CALCULATE 140´ (2 HOURS AND 20 MINUTES), INCLUDING A 20´ BREAK	

LEARNING ACTIVITIES

AD-HOC DETERRENCE STRATEGIES AND TACTICS, AND DEALING WITH RISK

After introducing the main concepts (see Tips for Facilitators, below), help participants identify the ad hoc deterrence strategies and tactics they use in their daily life.

Once you have listed the ad hoc strategies on a flip chart, introduce the six ways of dealing with risk ("accept, reduce, share, …"; **NPM, p.67**) in order to categorise the participants' ad-hoc strategies.

Depending on the time available, you may choose to analyse one or several of these strategies according to the RASER criteria (see RASER criteria for "analysing deterrence strategy"; **NPM, p.66**). Highlight to participants the potential harm that may stem from any of the strategies falling short of one or more elements of the criteria.

Conclude the activity by pointing out that when HRDs are threatened, stress levels rise and HRDs feel the need to act quickly. However, analysing strategies according to the five criteria will help them choose effective strategies based on a long-term perspective.

👍 → Base your introduction to the topic on the ideas covered in the NPM. The PI videos "Protection Strategies" and "Security and Protection Objectives" can be useful for preparing the introduction.

→ Individual HRDs, organisations and communities facing threats appeal to different ad hoc strategies

to deal with perceived risks. These strategies will vary according to several factors: environment (rural, urban); type of threat; available social, financial and legal resources; previous experiences; individual subjective perceptions of risk; etc. For a list of ad hoc strategies adopted by HRDs, with examples, see **NPM (pp.65-66)**.

→ Remind participants that most ad hoc strategies can be implemented immediately and are intended to achieve a short-term objective. As such, they are more akin to tactics than comprehensive response strategies.

→ As ad hoc strategies are deeply subjective, they might not respond to real needs at the individual or organisational level. Thus, HRDs must take care to ensure that they do not harm the wider group, especially if the strategies used cannot be reversed. You should point out the need to develop a long-term perspective on security strategies. In particular, if a security strategy is to be effective it should fulfil the RASER criteria.

→ To sum-up, when reflecting on security and protection, HRDs need to take into account both their own as well as other people's ad-hoc security strategies. However, it is key to strengthen the ones that are efficient while limiting the impact of those that may cause damage to other HRD colleagues.

👥 THE HRD SOCIO-POLITICAL WORKSPACE

Introduce the concept of "the HRD socio-political workspace **(NPM, pp.68-70)**. In particular, base your presentation on the definition that appears in the **NPM (p.68)**: "the variety of possible actions the defender can take at an acceptable (level of) personal risk". In other words, the limits of the socio-political workspace are defined by what an HRD considers to be acceptable or unacceptable consequences of her/his work. You may use, or adapt, the example given in the NPM to explain this idea.

Move on to explain the global security strategy **(NPM, pp.70-73)**. For this, use a flipchart with the relevant illustration taken from the NPM to explain the two axes of the HRD workspace (tolerance/acceptance & deterrence persuasion) .
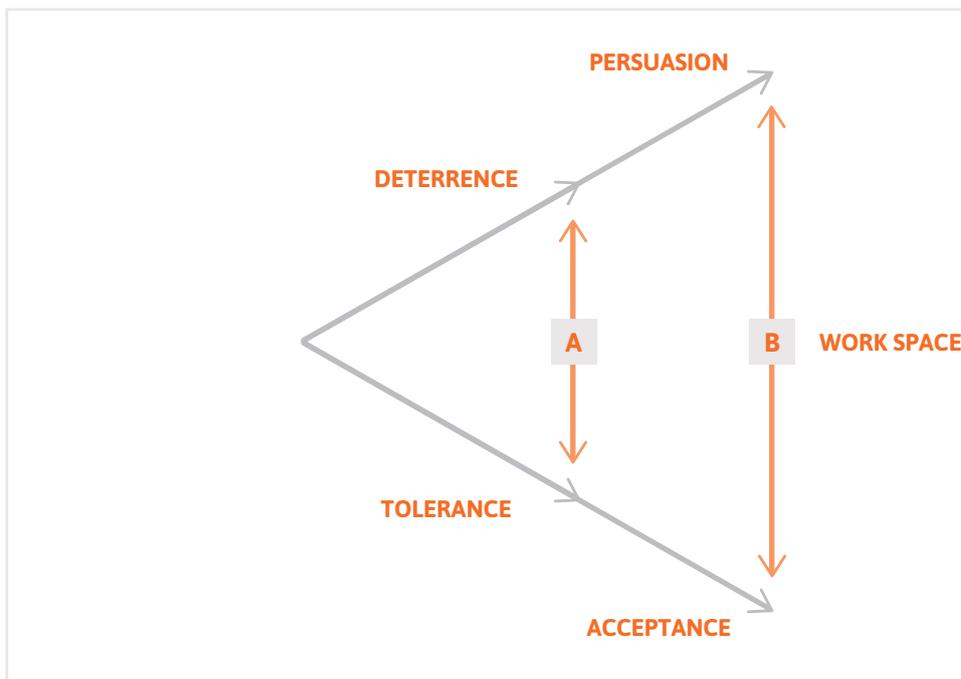
Conclude the section by explaining to participants that a global security strategy should include an advocacy dimension: actions in such a strategy should contribute to raising the political cost of attacks against HRDs and reducing the levels of impunity for potential aggressors.

→ The interests of powerful actors (e.g. government, security forces, opposition armed groups, multinational corporations, etc.) may be negatively affected by the daily activities of HRDs. However, it is important to remember that hostile power holders are complex actors: this means that they are not monolithic in their hostility against HRDs (e.g. some elements in the security forces may be committed to protecting defenders while others may be behind threats and aggressions).

→ If asked how the "acceptability" of risk can be measured, you should remind participants that it varies greatly between individuals and organisations (e.g. X reached their threshold after receiving one threatening phone call while Y only reached hers after her son was killed) The threshold also changes over time (e.g. two years ago, I did not care if I went to prison, but now I do). Thus, security strategies should expand and sustain the HRD workspace so that they can continue to be able to operate.

→ The illustration of the socio-political workspace (NPM) should help you explain that HRDs might work in a very reduced space, represented by situation "a", or in a broader space – situation "b". Ideally, the global security strategy should aim at moving HRDs from "a" to "b" by increasing tolerance, acceptance, deterrence and persuasion.

→ On the advocacy dimension of the global security strategy: it is key for HRDs to understand their position (workspace) and how to strengthen it (occupying the workspace) by influencing stakeholders and hostile actors.

ACTIVITY: EXPANDING THE HRD WORKSPACE (GLOBAL SECURITY STRATEGY)

The aim of the global security strategy is to expand the workspace by increasing all four of its parameters: tolerance, acceptance, deterrence and persuasion.

Divide participants into four groups (carry out the activity in the plenary if there are fewer than eight participants). Each group will be in charge of proposing a set of actions (min. 1, max. 3) intended to increase one of the parameters. Ask the groups to write down one action per card.

If the plenary group is homogenous, encourage participants to carry out the exercise for their own organisation/community. If it is heterogeneous or there is reluctance to do use a real case, propose a fictitious example (see Tips for Facilitators, below). Troubleshoot any misunderstandings about the exercise.

Return to plenary after 20 minutes of group discussion and use the remaining 20 minutes to ask groups to stick the cards with actions on the wall, grouped around each of the parameters. Let the groups briefly explain the reasons why they believe such actions could help gain tolerance and acceptance from potential aggressors or deter and persuade them. Encourage discussion between groups.

→ **Fictitious case:** You work for an environmental NGO that reports on the pollution of a village's water supply by a paper mill owned by a multinational corporation. The local management – which is also linked to powerful local political bosses – is overtly hostile to the reports published by the NGO. In a field visit two days ago, village leaders told you that there is a rumour that a local politician is planning to hire thugs to teach a "good lesson" to those environmentalists who "put local jobs at risk with their unfounded accusations".

→ When troubleshooting possible misunderstandings during the exercise, refer to the indications given for each workspace parameter in **NPM (pp.70-72)**.

CONCLUSION

Have participants recall the key elements of the session and clarify questions or concerns. Remind participants that a global security strategy does not invalidate ad hoc deterrence strategies and tactics already in place. The idea is to reinforce those that are effective, while trying to limit potentially harmful ones.

Relate this session to sessions 5.1 to 5.5 and explain how it builds on them. Stress the fact that HRDs will only be able to increase their workspace effectively if they have a clear understanding of: their working environment, the identity of the aggressors and their own capacities and vulnerabilities.

End by reminding participants that a global security strategy is intended to expand and maintain the HRD workspace (working on the axes of tolerance–acceptance and deterrence-persuasion). Support your remarks by showing the illustration of the two axes of the workspace again **(NPM, p.69)**.

📚 ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

> Van Brabant. Op. Cit. Chapter 3.2. (pp. 22-38).

> FLD. Op. Cit. Chapter 6.