



Peace & Conflict Impact Assessment (PCIA) and NGO Peacebuilding - Experiences from Kenya & Guatemala

A Briefing Paper

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Centre
-For-
Conflict
Research

I E P A D E S

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Glossary of Terms

| | |
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| CCR | Centre for Conflict Research |
| DfID | Department for International Development, UK |
| GDP | Gross domestic product |
| IA | International Alert |
| IDP | Internally displaced person |
| IEPADES | Instituto de Enseñanza para el Desarrollo Sostenible |
| KANU | Kenyan African National Union |
| MINUGUA | United Nations Verification Mission In Guatemala |
| NCCK | National Council of Churches, Kenya |
| NGO | Non-governmental organisation |
| NPI | Nairobi Peace Initiative |
| ODA | Overseas Development Association |
| OECD | Organisation for Security Cooperation in Europe |
| PCIA | Peace and Conflict Impact Assessment |
| UNDP | United Nations Development Programme |
| URNG | Unidad Revolucionaria Nacional Guatemalteca |

Executive Summary

This report summarises the key findings from two collaborative projects on NGO capacity building for conflict reduction and peacebuilding undertaken by International Alert (IA) and the Instituto de Enseñanza para el Desarrollo Sostenible (IEPADES) in Guatemala, and the Centre for Conflict Research (CCR) in Kenya, funded by DfID-CHAD and IA. The work particularly focussed on the development and validation of practical tools for conflict-sensitive development planning and monitoring. In both countries, the project included an assessment of the roles NGOs have played in promoting peace and justice in these countries, a facilitated self-assessment of the current programming practices by a selected group of NGOs, and the development and testing of innovative conflict analysis and planning methodologies for NGOs. Beyond this, the NGO consultations in both countries provided a wealth of lessons on the challenges of civil society peacebuilding from an indigenous perspective. The aim of this report is to put the results and learning from these projects into a wider perspective and to identify possible ways forward for supporting and developing the capacity of local peace actors.

1. Methodology and Key Concepts

Chapter one provides an outline of the methodology and key concepts used in the development of this programme. The aim was to develop tools for Peace and Conflict Impact Assessment (PCIA) that reflected the needs of local peacebuilding organisations and corresponded to their political and cultural context. For each country, this required mapping the peacebuilding community, identifying capacity building needs, drafting a relevant PCIA tool, and testing and validating it with selected local peacebuilding and development NGOs. It became clear during the course of the research, however, that supporting NGO peacebuilding requires a broader and more political approach than just providing and developing tools. Therefore, this report pays particular attention to the political context and the challenges of capacity building.

One important approach to the programme was also to ascertain how development actors in Kenya and Guatemala understand key terms such as development, conflict, peace and peacebuilding. This exercise, critical for an analysis of their practice, demonstrated that stakeholders have different understandings of their meaning. Each society has its own key terms to discuss matters of peace and conflict, which have been shaped by their specific historical, political, economic, social and religious context. PCIA can be a useful tool for formulating a participatory peacebuilding strategy as far as it is sensitive to different local visions of peace.

2. The contribution of civil society to peacebuilding in Kenya and Guatemala

Chapter two provides the context for the report by giving an overview of the Kenyan and Guatemalan conflicts, outlining the role of the international community and the development of civil society in each country, including the role of NGOs in peacebuilding.

Cycles of violence and peace: Until the Peace Accords were signed between 1994 and 1996, Guatemala had suffered thirty-six years of civil war characterised by state bias towards the interest of the elite, a lack of impunity and rule of law, and poverty and discrimination, particularly against the indigenous population. Although there has been no return to armed violence, the democratisation of society remains incomplete, significant social and economic problems continue, and criminal and domestic violence have escalated. Conversely, in Kenya, after years of relative political stability and prosperity until the 1980s, the consequences of single-party rule and mismanagement of the economy became increasingly felt and there has been a marked increase in violence since the first multi-party elections in 1992. Ethnic clashes, land and water conflicts, cattle rustling and criminality remain prevalent across the country.

The role of the international community: The role of the international community in Kenya and Guatemala are similar to the extent that there have been generous aid contributions towards poverty-reduction and socio-economic initiatives in both countries at different times over the past few decades. However, while this may have an indirect contribution to peacebuilding, there has been a lack of commitment in both countries towards any international political engagement at the national or local level in pushing for political reform or supporting peacebuilding initiatives.

The role of civil society: Since the transition from civil war to the new post-war situation in Guatemala, and the beginning of democratisation process in Kenya, new political and social space has opened for civil society. Civil society in Kenya and Guatemala is both large and active, however, the nature and background to its emergence in each country is based on very different historical, political, economic and social contexts. Nevertheless, while traditional development activities are still prominent, in both countries civil society organisations have played an important role in peacebuilding processes at the local and national levels.

NGOs in Kenya and Guatemala do also, despite their differences in nature or focus, face similar challenges. There are still limited numbers of NGOs in Kenya and Guatemala that represent broad-based social constituencies; dependence on low and unreliable resources from the donor community for advocacy, justice, peacebuilding and political reform remains a major challenge, and the lack of freedom from government pressure or control is a common, albeit different, experience for both Kenyan and Guatemalan NGOs.

3. Building Civil Society Capacity for Peace: conclusions & recommendations

Based on the mapping exercises and NGO consultations, chapter three presents the main lessons learned and conclusions on the challenges of building NGO capacity for peacebuilding in Kenya and Guatemala, and offers recommendations for future action.

Defining peacebuilding and gaining consensus

Both country case studies in Kenya and Guatemala point to the importance of establishing broad-based political dialogue, accompanied by an open public debate on the issues involved in peacebuilding. This is critical for building a common understanding of peacebuilding and gaining ownership of the difficult tasks ahead.

Recommendations:

- Encourage and sustain more dialogue between policy makers, academics, conflict resolution practitioners, business, religious and community leaders on the challenges of peacebuilding and conflict-sensitive development.
- Support national NGOs in encouraging and engaging in a public debate on conflict issues and peacebuilding.
- Organise grassroots consultations on peacebuilding and feed them back into policy-making processes.
- Support civil society actors in formulating clear peacebuilding strategies linked to the wider peace and conflict context and operationalising them in the field.

Enhancing programme effectiveness

Unclear mandates regarding peacebuilding, a lack of appropriate institutional structures to implement such work, the absence of access to tools to support analysis and planning capacity, and the difficulties in recruiting qualified staff were problems common to the NGOs in both Kenya and Guatemala.

Recommendations:

- *Institutional capacity.* Support individual organisations in finding the mandate, structures and procedures that enable their staff to undertake peacebuilding work safely, effectively and responsibly, while securing institutional synergies; undertake institutional assessments or facilitate self-assessments of NGOs' peacebuilding capacity and provide long-term advice and support for reform.

- *Analytical and planning capacity.* Provide organisations with frameworks and tools for conflict analysis and impact assessment; offer training in conflict analysis, planning techniques and conflict-sensitive project management; support an organisation's participation in information exchange, conferences and collaborative research projects.
- *Human capacity.* Offer customised training programmes for (prospective) NGO staff, including analytical skills, practical skills of working in conflict situations, mediation/facilitation, basic knowledge of security issues; develop specialised conflict analysis modules for training courses on mainstream development topics (e.g. agriculture, health, water, engineering).

Strengthening advocacy capacity

In both Kenya and Guatemala NGOs called for building better capacity in policy research, policy formulation, coalition-building and political advocacy. NGOs find it difficult to combine field-level development work with political advocacy in a politically repressive environment, as they risk jeopardising their ability to continue working with communities. Civil society actors are therefore looking for new ways to build political pressure at higher levels.

Recommendations:

- Support *multimandate organisations*, which seek to combine their programme work with advocacy, in identifying advocacy issues and opportunities for peacebuilding, developing policy agendas, building alliances, and effectively communicating their messages to policy makers.
- Enhance capacity for policy analysis and formulation as well as advocacy skills of *specialist research and advocacy organisations* ("think tanks") by deepening the understanding of advocacy within the democratic state, building the capacity to identify peace-related advocacy issues and explore a range of policy options on them, providing skills in communicating these messages in an effective way to policy makers and the wider public; the vision may be to foster independent, but not impartial, advocacy on specialist issues, ultimately enhancing the capacity of national societies to find peaceful solutions to their problems.
- Strengthen national *umbrella organisations* or peacebuilding platforms to become effective channels for communication and co-ordination between NGOs and develop common positions and activities around important peace issues, make them efficient interlocutors for the government and the international community.
- Develop effective links between Southern and *Northern* NGOs to bring peace issues on the international agenda and exert pressure at different levels.

Engaging with donors

In both Kenya and Guatemala, the area of peacebuilding has been subject to rapidly changing, and sometimes contradictory, funding trends. Funds come and go as political events, and as the status of peacebuilding as a buzz-word, changes. Both Guatemalan and Kenya NGOs reported

that funding for peacebuilding activities was increasingly short-term, output-orientated and project-based, providing little space for investment in capacity building.

Recommendations:

- Foster national and international processes of professionalising the field of peacebuilding by developing a distinct profile and setting standards through reflection and discussion among practitioners. This shall not only increase the quality of their work, but also help avoid peacebuilding being “mainstreamed away” from the donor agenda one day.
- Lobby donors to provide long-term, high-quality support to peacebuilding by a variety of social actors.

4. PCIA as a peacebuilding tool

Having examined the political context and priorities for enhancing NGO peacebuilding capacity, chapter four explores the potential of Peace and Conflict Assessment as a capacity building tool. At present, many organisations still face difficulties in building a systematic perspective on conflict or translating their in-depth knowledge of the conflict into long-term peacebuilding strategies. As a conflict analysis and planning tool, PCIA can play an important role in developing skills and capacity in this area. In particular, PCIA can contribute to enhancing NGO impact in the following ways:

- *Developing better understanding and operationalisation of peacebuilding* by supporting individual organisations and civil society as a whole to make specific links between their work and the peace and conflict context. Such a systematic approach can be a valuable learning and consensus-building exercise, which helps to identify shared perspectives and common issues to work on.
- *Enhancing management capacity* through the process of systematic conflict analysis to facilitate the development of sound peacebuilding objectives, strategies and monitoring processes.
- *Achieving political impact* by analysing the main (structural) obstacles to peacebuilding from a community point of view. This helps NGOs identify and prepare issues for national and international peace advocacy that really reflect the priorities of those most affected by conflict.

Lessons learned in using PCIA

Country-specific approaches: The issue of developing a generic PCIA tool versus customising PCIA to the specific external environment and internal capacities and procedures of individual organisations, was best addressed by moving away from the idea of PCIA as a single

methodology. Instead, a more user-friendly approach was applied by providing a structured set of planning and evaluation tools, which organisations can select from and put together according to their own priorities. This can enhance flexibility and adaptability to different contexts.

Focussing conflict analysis: To overcome the problem of organisations spending too much time on unwieldy macro-level analysis of little programming value it was recommended to include criteria in the PCIA toolbox. This helps organisations clarify the focus and level of conflict analysis in accordance to their specific planning needs and helps deal with the tension between simplicity and accuracy of the tool. This must involve supporting organisations in taking informed decisions on priorities rather than arriving at a shopping list of potential peacebuilding activities.

Project-cycle approach: In order to reflect the need for on-going monitoring, review and redesign of activities with stakeholder participation, a comprehensive PCIA toolbox should contain guidance on which parts of the analysis could be periodically reviewed and on how to structure such as process. In response to this, the report provides a sample framework of key principles and questions to ask throughout the project cycle.

Impact assessment: To overcome the challenge of balancing an elicitive and prescriptive approach to indicator development the final tools used in Kenya and Guatemala provided locally relevant guiding questions for eliciting conflict/peace indicators from communities, while also giving indicative indicator lists adapted to the specific country situation. NGOs appreciated that this approach provided additional perspectives on the conflict, while allowing them to use their own criteria for finally making programming decisions.

5. Conclusion

PCIA has a critical and empowering potential, which has not yet been fully realised. At present, it is mostly used for top-down planning, management and control processes, yet many possibilities still remain unexplored. PCIA skills should be handed over to Southern civil society organisations as part of capacity building in management and advocacy. Improving these skills whereby Southern organisations have stronger channels for influencing policy-making circles, is an area where Northern partner organisations can play an important complementary role.

Chapter One: Methodology and Key Concepts

1.1. Methodology of the pilot project

The aim of this programme was to develop practical tools for Peace and Conflict Impact Assessment (PCIA) that reflected the needs of local peacebuilding organisations and corresponded to their political and cultural context. For each country, this required:

- mapping the peacebuilding community, establishing good practice in conflict analysis and project management, and identifying capacity building needs
- drafting a PCIA tool that responded to the identified management, learning and advocacy needs
- testing and validating the tool with a selected group of peacebuilding and development NGOs

IEPADES and CCR are experienced peacebuilding organisations. As national lead agencies, with input from International Alert, they conducted most of the research and conceptual work for the project. They also hosted the NGO consultations and oversaw the testing of the tools. In both countries, the project began with drawing up a mapping report covering the current conflict situation, the international response to it, as well as providing a detailed overview of the role, priorities, and management practices of NGOs in the context of peacebuilding. Each mapping report is based on about 30-50 semi-structured interviews with experts, donors and NGO staff. The preliminary findings of the mapping report were fed back and further clarified at consultation meetings attended by around 20 NGOs each. Building on this material, CCR and IEPADES then drafted methodologies for participatory conflict analysis, planning and monitoring. While IEPADES developed an entirely new approach, CCR chose to customise an existing model to the specific situation of Kenya. In Kenya, the methodology was comprehensively discussed and adapted at another NGO meeting, while in Guatemala three selected NGOs undertook to test the new methodology over a period of several weeks.

During the course of the research, it became clear that supporting NGO peacebuilding requires a broader and more political approach than just providing tools. Therefore, this report pays particular attention to the political context and the challenge of capacity building.

What is Peace and Conflict Impact Assessment (PCIA)?

Peace and Conflict Impact Assessment (PCIA) is a planning and management tool that can assist development and humanitarian organisations in analysing situations of (potential) [and actual] conflict and identifying strategic opportunities for conflict prevention and peacebuilding. It can also be adapted for monitoring the impact of these activities. It thus provides an integrated approach to the main stages and levels of a development programme (Nyheim, Leonhardt & Gaigals, 2001).

International Alert's Approach to PCIA

International Alert views PCIA as a flexible methodology that uses local knowledge and experience to identify, better understand and monitor attitudes and behaviour that either augment or diminish the prospects for long-term peace. It seeks to place these in the context of informed structural analysis of the causes of violent conflict, triggering factors, conflict perspectives from relevant stakeholders and current institutional responses.

As an analytical tool for programme planners, practitioners and local partners, PCIA methodology can be used to enhance conceptual understandings, as well to facilitate processes for enhancing the capacity of local actors to engage in policy dialogue. PCIA uses both stakeholder analysis and qualitative inquiry to determine how and why opposing attitudes break into violent conflict at the release of certain triggers and to discover areas of consensus amongst disparate groups' perceptions of reality. The International Alert approach to PCIA inquiry typically addresses stakeholder attitudes to four core or "cluster" areas - economic reality, government, security and social/cultural identity. Responses are then evaluated systematically to:

1. identify the root causes of conflict, and conversely to understand what realistic opportunities for peace exist;
2. identify local peacebuilding capacities to ensure responses strengthen and support them;
3. develop strategic frameworks (at programme, national or regional levels) that promote coherent, coordinated policy and action in support of peacebuilding or conflict reduction goals;
4. assess, and mitigate, the potential negative consequences of development interventions in conflict or conflict-prone settings;
5. identify concrete opportunities for managing development interventions in a way that will assist peacebuilding objectives;
6. assess, and mitigate, the conflict risk to a specific external investment;
7. identify the implications of conflict responses on the ground for global policy development and implementation.

PCIA could be a broad-based approach that can be applied at each of the main stages of a development programme, from initial conflict mapping to strategic design, planning, implementation and evaluation. It is equally valuable for informing advocacy messages that aim for policy reform at the wider macro-, meso-regional and local levels.

1.2. Key concepts

One important approach of the programme was to ascertain how development actors in Kenya and Guatemala understand key terms such as development, conflict, peace and peacebuilding, as this is critical to an analysis of their practice. This brief exercise demonstrated the importance of situating these concepts within their respective historical, political and cultural contexts. It also became clear that stakeholders have different understandings of their meaning. In Guatemala, for example, conservative sectors of society use the term *peace* to denote the cessation of armed violence, while for large parts of civil society the idea of peace includes social justice and a transformation of the root causes of violence. Similarly, there are groups which define *development* solely in material terms, while indigenous and civil society actors stress issues such as participation, democracy, empowerment and a recognition of cultural plurality.

Central to this report is the concept of *peacebuilding*, as it describes the objective and activities of those groups working towards a just and non-violent transformation of their societies. In both Kenya and Guatemala, peacebuilding is a relatively new term, which has not yet spread widely beyond government, academic and civil society circles. Based on their experience with the Peace Accords, Guatemalan actors associate peacebuilding with the realisation that peace is a long-term process that needs to be nurtured, not a condition that automatically arises at the end of a violent conflict. They also stress that peacebuilding requires the involvement of multiple actors, actions and dynamics at multiple levels. In the Kenyan context, peacebuilding is mostly thought of as those activities that contribute to an enabling environment, in which the conflicting communities or parties can begin to focus on their differences and address the root causes of armed conflict. Beyond this focus on direct conflict resolution, there is also an appreciation of the long-term need to address the structural causes of conflict. This can involve strengthening national institutions, promoting human rights, supporting reintegration and rehabilitation of ex-combatants, and advancing equitable development.

The understandings of peacebuilding from Kenya and Guatemala are largely consistent with International Alert's (1998:29) own working definition of peacebuilding as "the employment of measures which consolidate peaceful relations and societal institutions in order to contribute to the creation of an environment which deters the emergence or the escalation of tensions which may lead to violent conflicts"¹. However, they raise a number of issues, which are worth spelling out:

¹ International Alert Code of Conduct 1998:29. In a more normative way, International Alert uses the related term "conflict transformation" in the sense of a "a process of profound change, transforming situations characterised by violence and fear, thereby creating an environment in which reconciliation, social justice and participative democracy can take root" (1998:3).

- There is no abstract, neutral or universal “peacebuilding vocabulary”. Each society has its own key terms to discuss matters of peace and conflict, which have been shaped by their specific historical, political, economic, social and religious context. For local people, these terms tend to evoke very specific experiences or visions of the future, which are often politically charged. This is an important point to consider in participatory PCIA analysis. Stakeholders may use the same terms, but associate contrasting memories, visions or demands with them.
- Peacebuilding remains a difficult concept to operationalise. While there is agreement on its general characteristics – a long-term inclusive process involving multiple actors at all levels of society, overcoming the root causes of conflict and fostering institutions and attitudes conducive to peace, resolving conflict issues -, it is clear that these broad aims and principles need to be translated to the specific conditions of each particular conflict. PCIA can be a useful tool for formulating a participatory peacebuilding strategy as far as it is sensitive to different local visions of peace.

Chapter Two: The contribution of civil society to peacebuilding in Kenya and Guatemala

2.1. Guatemala

2.1.1. Civil war and peace agreement

The civil war in Guatemala was one of the longest and bloodiest conflicts in Latin America². During the 36 years of war, more than 200,000 people died or disappeared and about 1.2 million lost their homes. The indigenous peoples of Guatemala, constituting about 50% of Guatemala's 11 million inhabitants and speaking 21 different languages, suffered disproportionately from the violence: about 83% of all victims were indigenous. The civil war unfolded since 1954 in the course of a series of US-backed right-wing military dictatorships. Since the 1970s, it was amplified by a general uprising of the marginalized indigenous communities, which thus became the main target of the new anti-insurgency strategies. Among the root causes of the Guatemalan civil war were (i) poverty and discrimination, particularly against the indigenous population, (ii) the orientation of the state towards the interests of the elite, (iii) impunity and the lack of a rule of law. Despite being a middle-income country (per capita income in 1998: \$ 1,639), Guatemala has a very high poverty quota of 75%, for Latin America an unusually high illiteracy rate of 45% and an extremely unequal distribution of land (2.5% of all farmers control 65% of arable land). The state's commitment to the welfare of all its citizens has been weak as expressed in an exceptionally low tax quote (in 1995 still at only 7.6% of GNP).

After more than 10 years of negotiation, the government of Guatemala and the URNG guerrillas were able to sign a series of Peace Accords between 1994 and 1996. An important facilitating factor was the global distension at the end of the Cold War. Elaborated with significant civil society input, the Peace Accords have the potential to provide a comprehensive framework for political and socio-economic reform. In particular, they cover human rights, refugees and IDPs, the rights of the indigenous population, agrarian and socio-economic reform, the structure of the state budget, the modernisation of the state institutions, and the future role of the army and civil society in a democratic society. Various commissions were created to monitor the implementation of the reforms, which thus far has been slow. Although there has been no return to armed violence, the democratisation of society remains incomplete, significant social and economic problems continue, and criminal and domestic violence have even escalated. A central problem is the weakness of the institutions set up to implement the accords, in comparison with the vested interests of the military, the ruling (right-wing) parties, the private sector and the landed oligarchy.

² Next to the reports produced by the IEPADES/IA country team, this section is based on Boschmann/Heinz 2000, Jonas 2000, Kurtenbach 1998, MINUGUA various reports 1998-2000, Schirmer 1998.

Of particular concern to many reformist forces is the absence of a comprehensive restructuring of the security forces, particularly the military, which represent one of the major strongholds of the old regime. Similarly, powerful interest groups among the old elites have been able to stall every attempt at a significant tax reform, which would allow more government spending on social issues. Although the present right-wing government party headed by the ex-dictator Rios Montt still pays lip service to the accords, controversial issues such as the redistribution of resources are delayed or addressed in a superficial, technocratic manner.

2.1.2. The international community: Paymasters without political involvement

In contrast to the active involvement of the United Nations and the “Friends of the Peace Process” (Mexico, Norway, Spain, US) in supporting the peace negotiations, the international community has since reduced its role to that of an interested observer. This political silence is surprising given the great willingness of the donor community to provide generous financial support to the Peace Accords. According to the OECD (2000), Guatemala received a total of about \$ 2.4 billion in development assistance between 1996 and 1999, which represents a significant increase compared to aid levels of about \$ 140 million p.a. in the early 1990s.

Only one month after the signature of the final peace agreement, international donors formed the Consultative Group in January 1997 to co-ordinate their aid. Since then, however, they have failed to use its potential influence to put pressure on the Guatemalan government to go ahead with reforms. Despite the wait-and-see tactics of the government, no donor has taken measures to link further financial support to significant progress in the implementation of the peace accords and the development of concrete concepts for socio-economic reform. The only joint donor initiative, led by the World Bank and UNDP, concerns the restructuring of the diverse social funds because of their perceived lack of efficiency and transparency. A useful role, however, is played by the UN observer mission MINUGUA, which monitors and reports on the implementation of the peace accords.

Despite the reluctance of the international community to become politically involved, funding policy shows a clear concern for addressing the socio-economic root causes and consequences of the civil war. More than 50% of all funds are earmarked for improving the social infrastructure (drinking water, education, primary health, social services), particularly in remote rural regions, where they are most likely to benefit the indigenous populations that have suffered most from the war. There is also some support for democratisation, decentralisation and civil society, although the latter is mostly directed at a few well-established organisations at the expense of building a broader, grassroots based democratic platform. Other areas of social reform are conspicuously missing from the international aid programme. Among them are the security sector, the tax system, land distribution and the rights of the indigenous population. Unsurprisingly, these are the areas where donors can expect most political resistance.

2.1.3. Rebuilding civil society after war and repression

Guatemala has a long tradition of social organisation, which goes back to the co-operative movement and the foundation of many NGOs and church-related community organisations in the 1960s. Since the 1970s, and particularly following the earthquake of 1976, an increasing number of international NGOs established themselves in Guatemala to support the indigenous social movement. From the late 1970s, these grassroots organisations, co-operatives and NGOs became one of the main targets of government repression. Thousands of grassroots leaders, activists and intellectuals were persecuted, disappeared or had to go into exile. Additionally, the civil war destabilised the social fabric of Guatemalan society, particularly because of the government targeting of indigenous communities, which traditionally had high levels of community organisation and strong local leadership. Despite many new initiatives, civil society is still suffering from this tremendous loss of leadership and organisational experience.

Nevertheless, civil society was able to play an important role in the peace negotiations between the government and the URNG. In an unprecedented process, all sectors of national civil society (with the exception of the employers' organisation) came together in the Civil Society Assembly (ASC), which was facilitated by the Catholic Church. Within this framework, civil society organisations could develop their own proposals relating to the official negotiation agenda. These proposals had to pass through an internal consensus-building process and were then presented to the negotiating parties. Although not playing a formal role, it is generally acknowledged that in this way a number of civil society concerns could be integrated into the final peace accords. In addition, organisations could build new relationships and coalitions through working together in the ASC on issues of general importance. This co-operation, although on a reduced scale, is now continuing, and activities are targeted on the Consultative Group, to inject civil society perspectives into donor policy. A major shortcoming of the peace process was the lack of inclusion of the wider population in the peace process, which was hardly aware of it. This may be one of the reasons why, with the lack of visible progress in the everyday lives of many, there is now widespread scepticism towards the political system in general.

Peacebuilding in Guatemala: How NGOs see their contribution

- Active participation in the peace negotiations, informing the public about the content of the Peace Accords and promoting their local and national implementation, implementing research and action programmes related to the Peace Accords.
- Dealing with the past: sensitisation of the population about the recommendations of the Historical Truth Commission, support of Rigoberta Menchu's court case against ex-militaries for genocide in Spain.
- Initiatives to transform the justice system and promote the rule of law, including support to a judicial investigation institute to combat impunity.

- Creation of spaces for debate on violence, particularly with the victims of the war, mental health professionals, and human rights organisations.
- Promoting and facilitating dialogue among the various sectors of society, developing legal proposals for a greater participation of civil society in political decision-making.
- Promoting women's role in peacebuilding, and sensitisation about their rights.
- Support to the peasant movement to influence political decisions.
- Support to returning refugees, and fulfilling basic needs of the population.

For many NGOs, the transition from civil war to the new post-war situation implied the need to fundamentally review their mandate, policy and programmes. During the height of the violence, those organisations that managed to survive mainly dedicated themselves to providing relief to the displaced and the victims of repression at the expense of long-term development activities. The Peace Accords opened new political and social space for NGO action. Guatemalan NGOs now work in the areas of local and regional development, providing assistance to specific population groups, women, education, human rights, cultural identity, peacebuilding and political advocacy. Promoting reform in the spirit of the Peace Accords is an important motive for many, which they pursue through development activities, popular education, grassroots empowerment and mobilisation as well as advocacy. Most progress has been achieved in the area of democratisation and contribution to public policy (advocacy), where some NGOs have been able to accompany and influence policy-making processes at government level. They are still few, however, and these have to broaden their social basis. On the other hand, particularly women and Maya organisations have been able to effectively articulate their interests and proposals and so raise the profile of these previously neglected issues. In the light of these positive developments, a major challenge for the NGO community currently comes from the outside, notably the generally low and unreliable resources provided by the donor community for civil society action in the areas of advocacy, justice, peace building and political reform. Particularly NGOs working in the area of peace building remarked that after a period of enthusiasm in the wake of the Peace Accords, funding for peace-related activities has noticeably decreased in recent times. This uncertain economic situation adds to the political pressure exercised by the government on NGO activism. Recently, there have again been cases of human rights and peace activists being “disappeared” by the security forces.

2.2. Kenya

2.2.1. Democratisation and “communal” violence

Governed by the Kenya African National Union (KANU) since its independence in 1963, Kenya enjoyed relative political stability and prosperity until the late 1980s³. Then, the consequences of single-party rule and the mismanagement of the economy became increasingly felt. In an instance

³ Next to the reports produced by the CCR/IA country team, this section is based on Lund et al. 2001, Mkutu 2001.

of rare co-ordination, Kenya's donors began to press for multi-partyism, democratic elections, and the liberalisation of the economy using aid conditionality. Since the first multi-party elections in 1992, there has been a marked increase in violence – ethnic clashes, land and water conflicts, cattle rustling, criminality – all over the country. It is estimated that between 1991 and 2000 several thousand Kenyans have died in political clashes alone, while some 400,000 people were displaced. Actual gains in terms of democratic rights and economic progress have remained small and were largely offset by the consequences of violence and instability. In addition, there is evidence that the government of Kenya has not acted decisively against violence or has even encouraged it in a number of cases.

There are two major conflict arenas in Kenya: 1) The arid and semi-arid northern parts of the country are characterised by violent competition for increasingly scarce natural resources such as pasture, water and livestock. Their pastoralist population has long been neglected by the central government, while the presence of rebel fighters and the influx of firearms from the war zones in neighbouring Somalia, Ethiopia, Sudan and Uganda has made conflict more lethal. Reflecting this culture of violence, cattle-rustling has turned from a traditional community ritual to a criminal commercial activity. Now involving large numbers of cattle and armed fighters, there is evidence that capital-based merchants fund and promote cattle raiding and then illegally trade the stolen cattle to Nairobi. 2) The dominant conflict pattern in the more developed and fertile regions of central Kenya, particularly the Rift Valley, and the Coast, is politically motivated ethnic clashes. Having seen large-scale resettlement and immigration, the clashes in these areas are mainly linked to competition for land, territory, and political constituencies between locals and immigrants. The fighting reached its apogee around the 1992 and 1997 multi-party elections and was followed by several “eruptions” during the following years. Besides being instrumental in bringing about the KANU election victory, in the long-term, violence contributed to the further concentration of land in the hands of a well-connected elite, which benefits from the displacement and emergency land sales of victimised farmers.

2.2.2. The international community and conflict in Kenya

Donors have played a largely ambiguous role in Kenya's democratisation and the subsequent violence. From the 1970s up to the late 1980s, Kenya was able to attract large inflows of international aid (annual average 1970: \$ 200 million, 1980s: \$ 600 million, 1990-1996: \$ 1 billion), which mainly supported the national development priorities of poverty reduction, education and health. This included support to politically motivated resettlement programmes (Rift Valley) as well as to government policies resulting in the political and economic marginalisation of vulnerable groups (e.g. pastoralists) (Mkutu 2001). Both policies have now become a source of communal conflict. Until today, most donors still regard poverty reduction as their principal contribution to reducing levels of violence in Kenya. From the 1990s, donors have increasingly added democratisation and economic liberalisation programmes to their aid packages. Donors see this as an indirect contribution to peacebuilding, too, as they expect that more open, transparent and

democratically controlled state institutions and a strong middle-class offer people more opportunities to resolve their conflicts in a peaceful way. Since then, aid conditionality has been repeatedly used to press the government for political and economic reform, especially multi-party elections, combating corruption, and privatising state-run industries. From 1997 to 2000, for example, IMF and the World Bank suspended important financial support to the government of Kenya for lack of progress in vital reforms. There are contrasting evaluations of aid conditionality: While some believe the international community was instrumental in what they regard as Kenya's democratisation, others point to the ensuing violence and political instability and suggest that the donor community adhered too much to its own blueprints and showed a lack of political judgement. In any case, ODA was decreasing markedly by the late 1990s with most bilateral donors dropping their aid levels to Kenya (% ODA of Kenyan GDP: 1991 12%, 1996 6.8%). This is mainly due to donor fatigue with the intractable political situation, and not the least to difficulties of operating in the country due to violence. Some bilateral donors additionally redirect their aid from government to non-governmental channels.

Donor support to peacebuilding partly emerges from the lessons learned in humanitarian assistance to IDPs, partly from their good governance, civil society and human rights policies. Although some local peacebuilding initiatives have received international donor funding, there is still a lack of clarity as to the meaning and operationalisation of this concept. In addition, donors are wary of "politicising aid" and being perceived as "working against the government" by funding potentially controversial peacebuilding projects. Some donors, however, are already asking NGO partners to demonstrate the "conflict sensitivity" in their funding applications. On the whole peace-related funding has not yet reached a level at which any meaningful impact at national level can be expected.

2.2.3 The role of civil society in promoting peacebuilding

One tangible result of the democratisation process in Kenya was the emergence of a large and diversified civil society alongside a free press. According to the NGO Council of Kenya, 1,347 NGOs were based in Kenya in 2000. They include not only NGOs with a traditional development focus, but also more politically oriented organisations such as lawyers' associations, human rights and democracy groups, women's advocacy groups, churches and dedicated conflict resolution organisations. There is no doubt that the presence of these organisations has contributed to a new openness in Kenyan politics and broadened the political discussion. However, it is still uncertain how far this upsurge in NGO activity will contribute to democratise Kenyan society at large, as only few of these organisations effectively represent broad constituencies, many depend on international funds and are indirectly, though rigidly, controlled by the government through registration and taxation policies (Lund et al. 2001).

Due to the tragic events of the last 10 years, NGOs in Kenya have acquired wide experience in dealing with violent conflict. Among the NGOs active in the field of conflict resolution and

peacebuilding, one can distinguish multi-mandate and specialised conflict resolution NGOs. For most large multi-mandate organisations such as Oxfam, World Vision, and the National Council of Churches. Kenya (NCCCK), conflict emerged as an issue from their long-standing engagement with communities (e.g. Oxfam's work with pastoralists in the North-East since the 1960s) or their provision of relief to the victims of recent political clashes (e.g. NCCCK relief programme in Rift Valley in 1990s). Applying a holistic development perspective, many of these organisations realised at some point that pervasive conflict represented a major obstacle to development in their regions of operation. They started their conflict resolution activities on an ad-hoc basis, but usually soon enlisted specialist organisations for collaboration. Kenya can also count on a professional and diversified group of specialist conflict resolution organisations, whose origins go back to the 1980s (arms and security issues) and 1990s (political violence). They include the Africa Peace Forum, the Centre for Conflict Research, the Centre for Conflict Resolution, the Inter-Africa Group, the Nairobi Peace Initiative (NPI), and Peace-Net. Their expertise includes conflict research, conflict resolution training, mediation and facilitation from grass-roots to high political levels, early warning, light weapons, and peace advocacy. Some offer these services all over the African continent (e.g. NPI), while others have a stronger focus on mobilising Kenyan society for peace (e.g. Peace-Net). Particularly fruitful has been their collaboration with larger multi-mandate NGOs, for whom they provide advisory, training, and backstopping services.

Peacebuilding in Kenya: How NGOs see their contribution

- Promoting democracy, good governance and human rights, advocacy and awareness raising around the Constitutional Review process.
- Long-term development activities to address the root causes of conflict through sustainable economic development, provision of education and health services.
- Relief and rehabilitation to the internally displaced victims of ethnic clashes, including resettlement.
- Conflict management training and problem-solving workshops with community leaders, women, youth and political decision-makers at various levels.
- Support to formal meetings between the elders of conflicting communities and large-scale peace conferences.
- Reconciliation work between hostile ethnic communities, using awareness raising and joint development activities.
- Support to cross-cutting community structures such as self-help committees, pastoral associations and peace committees.
- Engaging on land issues: land management, land reform, resettlement issues
- Peace education in schools.
- Conflict early warning and light weapons monitoring.

NGOs have made significant contributions to peacebuilding at local and national level. The most tangible results were achieved in rural communities, where NGOs catalysed the establishment of local peace structures. Bringing together traditional interest groups such as elders, youth and women, these peace forums or peace committees are particularly effective in reducing inter-clan warfare over natural resources or reviving relationships between hostile ethnic groups. Sometimes, they manage to involve local authorities and police and so create effective mechanisms for protecting the communities. They also play an important role in encouraging reflection among ordinary people about conflict, its causes and consequences, thus preventing their being instrumentalised by ambitious politicians. The main limitation to this approach has been the fact that many parameters for local conflict are set outside the direct reach of the communities (Lund et al. 2001). These include resource scarcity due to droughts and environmental degradation, warlords and irresponsible politicians with an interest in continuing the conflict as well as the communities' lack of leverage over self-sustaining rebel forces in their areas.

At national level, much NGO activity has focussed on the Constitutional Review. This is a negotiation process between the government and the opposition parties on changes to the constitution required to formalise the democratisation process. Issues include the role of the presidency, multi-partyism and the role of the state in economy and society. Many regard the Constitutional Review process as an important prerequisite for sustainably preventing further conflict in Kenya. As lead agency, the NCKK was first involved in facilitating this dialogue, thus averting violent confrontation between government and opposition supporters and ensuring civil society participation. Later, however, it has moved more towards a position of advocating for political reform and even held its own community consultations on key issues. While not necessarily reducing political controversy, it is believed that the active involvement of NGOs such as the NCKK and others in the Constitutional Review process has contributed to maintaining its high profile, creating a wider understanding of important issues and keeping its momentum while averting violent conflict.

Chapter Three: Building civil society capacity for peace

This section presents the main lessons learned and conclusions on building NGO capacity for peacebuilding in Kenya and Guatemala based on the mapping exercises and NGO consultations⁴. It first shows the main findings for each country and then draws some more general lessons and conclusions in a comparative perspective.

3.1. NGO capacities for peacebuilding in Guatemala

3.1.1 Peacebuilding mandate and policies

Among the national and international NGOs reviewed in Guatemala, all working in the areas of development, human rights, education and local capacity-building, only a few had an explicit peacebuilding mandate. There was great variety as to the targeted beneficiary groups, the priority issues to be addressed, the criteria for choosing a specific geographic area as well as the role the organisation saw for itself within the development process. These were largely determined by the organisation's general mission, its history as well as practical considerations. Asked specifically how far their work contributed to the implementation of the Peace Accords, only few organisations were able to or saw the necessity of making an explicit link. Most of them do, however, promote an agenda of liberating, broad-based change on the basis of social, economic and political reform, which is close to the spirit of the Peace Accords. Equally, by concentrating their work on the indigenous rural areas most affected by the war and specific activities such as preparing information material on the Peace Accords, promulgating the results of the Truth Commission, combatting impunity, strengthening the rule of law, and promoting rural reform, many organisations actually do work within the remit of the Peace Accords. Some felt, however, that their contributions were rather isolated and could benefit from a higher degree of co-ordination and synergy within civil society.

3.1.2. Structures

As Guatemalan NGOs regard peacebuilding as the ultimate outcome of their work rather than a separate, specialised activity, they usually do not have specialised peacebuilding units. Many organisations are structured along programmatic lines, which may include programmes with direct conflict relevance as well as more general development activities (e.g. IEPADES is involved in security sector reform as well as rural credit schemes). The more conflict-related programmes provide something like a natural focal point on these issues for the organisation.

⁴ In drafting this section, the authors drew on the framework for mainstreaming peacebuilding developed by Goodhand and Lewer (2001).

3.1.3. Conflict analysis and programming capacities

Most organisations indicated that they engaged in some form of strategic planning for a period of up to five years. It was recognised that such planning helped the organisation realise its mandate, enhance its efficiency and achieve higher impact through focussed action. Some NGOs acknowledged, however, that their organisational culture was still influenced by the activism of the constant emergency situation of the civil war, with little emphasis placed on developing a long-term vision, reflecting on experience and using it as the base for further planification. They felt that the value of strategic plans was limited given the need to undertake activities outside the organisation's core mandate in order to raise much-needed funds, the need to timely react to political processes and short-term funding commitments by donors. Regarding the strategic planning process, some organisations pointed to the necessity of involving more staff beneath management level in discussion and decision-making. Many also felt that they do not have an adequate institutional infrastructure to follow up the strategic plan and oversee its implementation.

– While context and stakeholder analysis are integral parts of their strategic planning process, NGOs did not mention the use of any specialist tools for conflict analysis.

Few organisations use evaluation as a tool for learning and enhancing their performance. In most cases, evaluation is undertaken at the demand of the donors within the framework of the annual plan of operation. Thereby, the focus tends to be on achieving concrete, measurable outputs. Few organisations practice participatory and continuous forms of evaluation, which could produce higher levels of staff commitment and learning. Evaluation indicators usually focus on short-term demonstrable results. There is, however, considerable variation in donor requirements. Some donors are flexible and encourage the organisation to develop indicators according to its own priorities and learning needs and to include a mixture of process and impact indicators. Others, particularly the larger donors, have strict bureaucratic requirements, which place considerable burden on NGO structures.

3.1.4. Working with others and advocacy

Guatemalan NGOs operate in a difficult political environment. Although civil society organisations have made significant progress in establishing a voice for themselves and influencing policy making, their formal participation in the political process is still very limited. The war-time rift between the conservative elite and many civil society organisations continues to exist, and the current government is generally suspicious of their activities. For NGOs, this means difficulties in receiving official registration, opposition to and obstruction of their work by local authorities, and even human rights violations against their staff.

Most of the organisations consulted see the need for higher levels of civil society co-operation in order to strengthen their influence on local and national policy making processes. However, there are many, particularly historical factors, which stand in the way of building stronger alliances. Most are linked to political divisions within civil society, which emerged during the civil war and are

partly exacerbated under the current circumstances. One of the major challenges for civil society, therefore, is to gain consensus and broad ownership on the concept of peacebuilding and develop stronger co-operative structures to pursue it.

3.1.5. Engaging with donors

Many NGOs in Guatemala have to cope with high levels of financial insecurity. Although funding civil society is a relatively low priority for international donors (only about 11.7% of aid to Guatemala is channelled through NGOs), Guatemalan NGOs depend strongly on international funds. This dependence is now discussed very critically within the NGO community, as many had the experience that donor support for their peacebuilding work quickly dried up after the enthusiasm and generosity of the early years of the Peace Accords. This experience has triggered an intensive debate among the Guatemalan NGO community on strengthening institutional capacities, reducing donor dependence and building self-sufficiency, as well as rebuilding relationships with the wider population and the government.

3.2. NGO capacities for peacebuilding in Kenya

3.2.1. Peacebuilding mandate and policies

Many relief and development NGOs in Kenya have shown extraordinary flexibility in responding to the issue of conflict, which in most cases does not belong to their traditional mandate. This absence of a clear mission or policies on conflict, however, has also meant that staff did not always receive sufficient guidance on critical questions, e.g. balancing humanitarian and political concerns. While some organisations are now developing specific conflict policies, others subordinate conflict to their general guidance principles, such as a justice or rights approach. It was felt that it was not yet sufficiently explored how such an approach could inform conflict resolution and peacebuilding work in practice.

3.2.2. Structures

Only some of the larger, internationally operating multi-mandate organisations have already set up specialist structures such as conflict advisors or dedicated task forces for supporting field staff in dealing with conflict. Yet these units are mainly located at headquarters level and are sometimes perceived as being somewhat removed from local issues and practicalities. Most NGOs therefore seek to enlist peacebuilding expertise from within Kenya. For this purpose, some organisations have built partnerships with specialist conflict resolution NGOs for training, backstopping or mediation/facilitation purposes. However, this cannot compensate entirely for the lack of qualified personnel and training opportunities for middle-level NGO staff.

3.2.3. Conflict analysis and programming capacities

Regarding programme and project management, most organisations observed that meeting standards of good development practice such as consultation, participation, inclusiveness, a

holistic approach and close co-operation with local institutions were important ingredients for successful peacebuilding work. Beyond this, however, it was realised that there was a need for more politically sensitive conflict analysis and its integration into project management. Some organisations approach this challenge by integrating a conflict perspective into their baseline studies, needs assessments or especially commissioned background reports. Such political judgements in project documents, however, are always highly sensitive. Other organisations are using or customising generic tools for conflict analysis, of which the Do No Harm tool as developed by the Local Capacities for Peace Project was the most widely adopted. Some organisations with a long-term local presence have community-focused specialist manuals, which take account of local conflict dynamics. - From another perspective, some organisations indicated that they integrated conflict-related risks to their work in their yearly or five-yearly strategic plans.

3.2.4. Working with others and advocacy

Relations between the NGO peacebuilding community and the government of Kenya are generally cool. This seems to be due to a lack of government understanding of the aims of peacebuilding, but also because of a sense of competition and possible threat to government institutions. Indeed, there are reports that peace committees at times take over functions of local government institutions. A clarification of respective roles and the building of trust are therefore required on both sides. For the time being, peacebuilding organisations work under a general atmosphere of mistrust, sometimes see their peace efforts obstructed, and even experience security threats to their staff.

NGOs tend to work quite independently from each other. One positive example of co-ordination, however, are the NGO committees in some regions of Kenya, which in certain circumstances have issued joint statements on sensitive issues such as security. In this way, they have been able to ensure that a specific NGO was not singled out and victimised by the government. In the aftermath of the 1992 and 1997 clashes, there were also attempts to build up national co-ordination bodies for peacebuilding, although in the short period of the study it was not possible to ascertain the scope and degree of support they enjoy. In general, however, there was the feeling that more could be done to bring the peacebuilding community together and establish it as a powerful interlocutor both for the government and international donors.

3.2.5. Engaging with donors

Both national and international peacebuilding organisations in Kenya mainly depend on external funding, which is usually granted on a project basis. This makes them strongly dependent on donor policies and funding trends, which endangers the sustainability of their engagement. Beyond this, a frequently mentioned issue was most donors' short funding cycles and focus on immediate, tangible results, which were inappropriate to the work of rebuilding trust and relationships between communities (see also Wachira 2001). In general, peacebuilding represents a relatively small part of overall aid allocations to Kenyan NGOs, which hampers any real impact.

3.3. Conclusions and recommendations on building civil society capacity for peace

Building on the Kenya and Guatemala case studies, this section aims to draw more general conclusions on the main challenges of building NGO peace capacity⁵ and offers some recommendations for future action.

3.3.1. Defining peacebuilding, gaining consensus and building broad ownership

The consultations in Guatemala and Kenya highlighted the lack of a broad-based consensus about the aims and tasks of peacebuilding. In Guatemala, the peace negotiations triggered intensive discussions among civil society on the causes of the civil war and the necessary preconditions for peace. However, it became clear that this process has not and could not come to an end with the signing of the Peace Accords. There are still substantial differences both among civil society as between civil society and other political actors as to characteristics of the post-war society to be constructed and the ways to lead there. Most importantly, the contents of the Peace Accords remain largely unknown to the rural and indigenous population. In Kenya, on the other hand, some NGOs deplored the absence of a national peace strategy that provided a general point of reference for government, donors and civil society to act on. Some expected the government to take on a more active role in developing and consulting such a strategy. - Both country cases point to the importance of broad-based political dialogue, accompanied by an open public debate on the issues involved in peacebuilding. This is critical to build a common understanding of peacebuilding and to gain ownership of the difficult tasks ahead.

Recommendations: Defining peacebuilding and gaining consensus

- Encourage and sustain more dialogue between policy makers, academics, conflict resolution practitioners, business, religious and community leaders on the challenges of peacebuilding.
- Support national NGOs in encouraging and engaging in a public debate on conflict issues and peacebuilding.
- Organise grassroots consultations on peacebuilding and feed them back into policy-making processes.
- Support civil society actors in formulating clear peacebuilding strategies linked to the wider peace and conflict context and operationalising them in the field.

3.3.2. Enhancing programme effectiveness

Enhancing programme effectiveness is a central issue for NGOs not only in order to achieve their set goals, but also to build a sound foundation for political advocacy. Policy makers are more

⁵ The term “capacity building” is used in the sense of enhancing an NGO’s effectiveness in setting and achieving realistic peacebuilding goals, both as an individual organisation and as part of civil society.

inclined to listen to NGOs with a reputation for doing good work on the ground, as this gives them more legitimacy as well as practical experience to share. The consultations in Guatemala and Kenya called attention to the following areas, which are critical to increasing the peacebuilding impact of NGO programmes and projects:

Institutional capacity

NGOs often operate with unclear mandates regarding peacebuilding. A lack of clarity on their own values and objectives can pose problems when organisations have to negotiate dilemmas of justice and peace, humanitarian need and political concerns, capacity building and rapid reaction, which are the daily currency of working in conflict situations. Identifying their own mission and approach is particularly a challenge for newer and smaller organisations, as they still need to gain experience in realising the implications of their choices.

Many organisations with a commitment to peacebuilding still have not been able to build the appropriate institutional structures to implement such work. The particular nature of peacebuilding, which involves both invisible, incremental, long-term work and rapid, high-risk, potentially high-impact interventions, poses challenges to every organisation. Structures to be reviewed include decision-making processes, the distribution of responsibility among the organisation, team composition, incentive systems, standards of operation and safety procedures. This can also mean changing organisational cultures to encourage field staff to take more responsibility for designing and adapting programmes that take better account of local (conflict) circumstances. Larger organisations have made positive experiences with establishing institutional focal points for promoting the idea of peacebuilding and providing support to field staff.

Analytical and planning capacity

There was consensus on the importance of conflict analysis and planning capacity to enable NGOs to become more proactive and strategic in their peacebuilding work. While setting clear peacebuilding objectives is critical for NGOs to enhance programme effectiveness, there is no blueprint for peacebuilding. It became clear that rather than ambitiously trying to “bring about peace”, NGOs should have an appreciation of the relation of their specific field of work to the wider peace and conflict picture, while maintaining an awareness of their limitations and positive and negative impact. Staff should not be intimidated by setting unrealistically high peacebuilding goals, but rather aim for realistic “good-enough” solutions (see also Ross 2001). There was great interest in tools to support this type of analysis and reflection among the NGOs consulted. Other organisations experimented with entering partnerships with local researchers, specialist organisations or external providers of specialist expertise to help them operationalise peacebuilding according to the specific needs of their client groups as well as their own mission and capacities.

Human capacity

In both countries, NGOs face difficulties in recruiting qualified staff, particularly with knowledge in the area of peacebuilding. For existing NGO staff at all levels, there is still a lack of affordable training opportunities tailored to the specific circumstances of their region.

Recommendations: Enhancing programme effectiveness

- *Institutional capacity*: Support individual organisations in finding the mandate, structures and procedures that enable their staff to undertake peacebuilding work safely, effectively and responsibly, while securing institutional synergies; undertake institutional assessments or facilitate self-assessments of NGOs' peacebuilding capacity and provide long-term advice and support for reform.
- *Analytical and planning capacity*: Provide organisations with frameworks and tools for conflict analysis and impact assessment; offer training in conflict analysis, planning techniques and conflict-sensitive project management; support an organisation's participation in information exchange, conferences and collaborative research projects.
- *Human capacity*: Offer customised training programmes for (prospective) NGO staff, including analytical skills, practical skills of working in conflict situations, mediation/facilitation, basic knowledge of security issues; develop specialised conflict analysis modules for training courses on mainstream development topics (e.g. agriculture, health, water, engineering).

3.3.3. Achieving political impact

The pilot studies showed that development and peacebuilding NGOs have the advantage of being able to ground advocacy in their practical work and experience with communities affected by conflict, which gives them particular legitimacy and credibility. This also means that they are most effective advocates on issues that are closely related to their programme work. From their particular knowledge of the local situation, for example, they are able to challenge specific government or donor programmes from a conflict perspective. However, NGOs often find it difficult to combine field-level development work with political advocacy in a politically repressive environment, as they risk jeopardising their ability to continue working with communities.

Although NGOs have been able to make important contributions to peacebuilding in their specific areas, these rarely added up to catalysing more comprehensive change at the national level. The major parameters for development and peace continue to be set by governments and international organisations. In Guatemala, this particularly concerned issues of taxation, social injustice and impunity, while in Kenya a central issue was the ambiguous role of the government in the democratisation process and the resulting violence. These issues are crucial for the success of any peacebuilding engagement, but outside the control of local communities, with whom NGOs have traditionally worked. Civil society actors are therefore looking for new ways to build up

political pressure at higher levels. This can take place directly via civil society and formal democratic action, as well as indirectly by lobbying the government's donors and the international community at large. In both countries, however, it was also felt that NGOs had not yet achieved sufficiently high levels of inter-agency co-ordination to have a significant impact on political processes at the national, regional and international level.

NGOs also found it challenging to engage in policy debate without becoming embroiled in day-to-day politics. The more profile an organisation gains, the higher is the risk that other political actors will try to draw it on their side or otherwise denounce it. This is a particular dilemma for organisations that already have to manoeuvre between different political actors to keep their development programmes running. Therefore, there was a call for building better capacity in policy research, policy formulation, coalition-building and political advocacy.

Recommendations: Strengthening advocacy capacity

- Support *multimandate organisations*, which seek to combine their programme work with advocacy, in identifying advocacy issues and opportunities for peacebuilding, developing policy agendas, building alliances, and effectively communicating their messages to policy makers.
- Enhance capacity for policy analysis and formulation as well as advocacy skills of *specialist research and advocacy organisations* ("think tanks") by deepening the understanding of advocacy within the democratic state, building the capacity to identify peace-related advocacy issues and explore a range of policy options on them, providing skills in communicating these messages in an effective way to policy makers and the wider public; the vision may be to foster independent, but not impartial, advocacy on specialist issues, ultimately enhancing the capacity of national societies to find peaceful solutions to their problems.
- Strengthen national *umbrella organisations* or peacebuilding platforms to become effective channels for communication and co-ordination between NGOs and develop common positions and activities around important peace issues, make them efficient interlocutors for the government and the international community.
- Develop effective links between Southern and *Northern NGOs* to bring peace issues on the international agenda and exert pressure at different levels.

3.3.4. Engaging with donors

In both Kenya and Guatemala, the area of peacebuilding has been subject to rapidly changing and sometimes contradictory funding trends. At certain historical moments such as the signature of the Guatemalan Peace Accords or election-related violence in Kenya, the donor community was willing to invest considerable resources in civil society peacebuilding. Some donors even encouraged the foundation of new peacebuilding organisations with little consideration for long-term sustainability issues. The status of peacebuilding as a buzz-word has sometimes also led to

the “old wine in new bottles”-phenomenon. This means that some organisations just renamed their traditional work – which they were already good at – as peacebuilding, partly to capture “fresh” donor money. Yet although there are often good arguments why agricultural extension services, credit schemes and better education can reduce tensions in the long-run, such approaches, particularly if they lack a fine-grained conflict analysis, are insufficient to tackle the problem. While one may say that development in conflict-affected countries should be informed by a peacebuilding agenda, there are a series of specific tasks (e.g. mediation, reconciliation), which require approaches and expertise different from that of traditional development actors.

As funding priorities move on, peacebuilding NGOs now find it increasingly difficult to secure high quality funding for long-term programmes and in particular for organisational development. Both Guatemalan and Kenyan NGOs reported that funding for peacebuilding activities was increasingly short-term and project-based, providing little space for investment in capacity building. They found this problematic as project-based funding places undue emphasis on measurable outputs and rarely corresponds to the long-term nature of peacebuilding. The emerging picture, that donors wished to “save on” capacity building, was corroborated by the trend to channel funds through a few, well established (and mostly Northern) NGOs. Smaller and younger organisations find it difficult to compete with them. It was noted that this trend towards concentrating funds on a few high-capacity organisations goes against the grain of the idea of fostering a diverse civil society representing a range of interests and perspectives. Rather than insisting on programme effectiveness (output orientation), donors should also consider how far their support has contributed to e.g. involving marginalised groups through their own organisations in national policy making processes (process orientation).

NGOs have responded to this crisis of funding in many innovative ways. Sourcing sustainable funding other than international aid has become a priority for many. Strategies range from charging membership fees, attracting charitable sponsors, and building endowment trusts to offering services at commercial rates. Yet given the difficult economic circumstances in most conflict-affected countries, funds raised in this way usually remain limited. International funding therefore remains crucial, if capacity building is going to succeed.

Recommendations: Engaging with donors

- Foster national and international processes of professionalising the field of peacebuilding by developing a distinct profile and setting standards through reflection and discussion among practitioners. This shall not only increase the quality of their work, but also help avoid peacebuilding being “mainstreamed away” from the donor agenda one day.
- Lobby donors to provide long-term, high-quality support to peacebuilding by a variety of social actors.

Chapter Four: PCIA as a peacebuilding tool

Having examined the political context and priorities for enhancing NGO peacebuilding capacity, the specific task of the collaborative research in Guatemala and Kenya was to explore the potential of Peace and Conflict Impact Assessment (PCIA) as a capacity building tool. This included establishing roles for PCIA according to the specific needs of NGOs in the two countries, finding appropriate formats by developing and testing pilot methodologies with local organisations, and identifying ways of providing effective support to organisations through PCIA. The central concern thereby was to increase the quality and effectiveness of civil society peacebuilding efforts.

4.1. PCIA and NGO capacity building

The pilot studies in Guatemala and Kenya showed that conflict analysis and (strategic) planning are major challenges for increasing civil society impact on peacebuilding. They are critical both for setting and achieving programme objectives as well as for influencing the wider political context. At present, many organisations still face difficulties in building a systematic perspective on conflict or translating their in-depth knowledge of the conflict into long-term peacebuilding strategies. As a conflict analysis and planning tool, PCIA can play an important role in developing skills and capacity in this area. In particular, PCIA can contribute to enhancing NGO impact in the following ways⁶:

Understanding and operationalising peacebuilding

As we have seen above, developing an understanding of and consensus on peacebuilding in a specific conflict context is important for both individual organisations and civil society as a whole to become effective forces for peace. PCIA can support both. It can help individual organisations in making explicit links between their work and the peace and conflict context, which includes spelling out potential positive and negative effects of their work. Such a systematic approach contributes to achieving a higher strategic impact in the long-run. In addition, it allows to better explain a proposed or chosen course of action towards other peace actors and donors. - Among civil society organisations, joint conflict analysis using PCIA tools can be a valuable learning and consensus-building exercise, which helps identify shared perspectives and common issues to work on.

Enhancing management capacity

It is useful to think of PCIA as an analytical tool and a participatory process. Both facilitate programme management. A systematic conflict analysis is a precondition for developing sound

⁶ For donors, participatory PCIA approaches can provide a framework for involving civil society in conflict-relevant decision-making processes regarding country strategies and programmes.

peacebuilding objectives and strategies and monitoring them. The process aspect of PCIA ensures that analysis and decision-making are carried out in an inclusive and participatory manner. This is extremely important in conflict situations, as it helps reduce mistrust, lack of ownership, and latent divisions and competition among beneficiaries, with which programmes otherwise have to struggle. More specifically, PCIA can bring a conflict perspective into country and project level context analysis, stakeholder consultation and strategic planning. PCIA also provides a framework for understanding and monitoring the conflict impact of an agency's work and identifying corrective action.

Achieving political impact

It is a familiar experience for NGOs to see their grassroots efforts at improving the lives of the poor made obsolete by decisions taken many miles away by national or international leaders. Some observers even say that NGOs find themselves in the "irrelevance trap", which means that they are tolerated as long as their work does not have any significant effects at the macro-level. The consultations in Guatemala and Kenya showed that NGOs committed to peacebuilding are particularly aware of this problem. This is because the success of peacebuilding is highly dependent on the parameters set by national and international structures and policies. Local reconciliation efforts are of little avail if economic liberalisation further deepens the differences between the rich and the poor or the government continues its discriminatory policies against minorities. It is the strength of PCIA to bring these structural conflict factors as much into the picture as the local peacebuilding opportunities. In this way, it is an important advocacy tool. By analysing the main (structural) obstacles to peacebuilding from a community point of view, NGOs can identify and prepare issues for national and international peace advocacy. PCIA can help to make sure that these issues really reflect the priorities of those most affected by the conflict. – From another perspective, advocacy organisations may use PCIA to involve donors and political decision-makers in a critical review of their policies and programmes.

Despite the overall positive evaluation of PCIA as a tool for NGO capacity building, there were also some reservations among the NGOs consulted. Some organisations were worried that a PCIA tool would just add to internal bureaucracy with little tangible benefit for programmes. Such as sometimes the Logframe, it could become an end in itself without staff internalising its deeper objectives. An emphasis on formal analysis via maps, tables and diagrams would additionally risk depoliticising and dehumanising the conflict while conveying the false impression of "being in control". Another concern was related to the possibility of PCIA being used by donors as another instrument of controlling NGOs. Used indiscriminately as a requirement for funding, PCIA could further stretch limited NGO administrative capacities with little impact on programme quality.

4.2. Lessons learned on using PCIA

The development, consultation and testing of PCIA methodologies in Kenya and Guatemala focused on PCIA as a tool for conflict-sensitive planning and evaluation. The specific suggestions resulting from this process were incorporated in the respective methodologies, which have been published separately (see project documentation below). What will be attempted here, is extracting the more general lessons learned on appropriate formats for PCIA and placing them within the framework of the international discussion. This shall provide guidance for future efforts at developing and refining conflict-sensitive resources for NGOs.

Country-specific approaches

The first issue arising was that of developing a generic PCIA tool vs. customising PCIA to the specific external environment and internal capacities and procedures of individual organisations. As the first approach was felt to be of little help at a local level and the second practically impossible within the remit of the project, a compromise was found. The research teams opted for country-specific approaches, which were to build on existing experience and approaches to planning and make the analytical tools relevant to the national conflict context. This meant developing separate tools for Kenya and Guatemala, which each combined familiar planning techniques with country-specific frameworks for conflict mapping and analysis. Suggested lists of indicators were tailor-made to the forms and causes of conflict characteristic for each country (e.g. peacemaking role of elders in Kenya, inequality and impunity in Guatemala). – To make PCIA even more user-friendly, it was proposed to move away from the idea of PCIA as a single methodology to providing a structured set of planning and evaluation tools, which organisations can select from and put together according to their own priorities. This could enhance flexibility and adaptability to different contexts.

Focussing conflict analysis

Regarding conflict analysis, the tests demonstrated the risk of organisations spending too much time on unwieldy macro-level analysis of little programming value. It was therefore recommended to include criteria in the PCIA toolbox, which can help organisations clarify the focus and level of conflict analysis in accordance to their specific planning needs. This was also seen as a way forward for dealing with the tension between simplicity and accuracy of the tool. Simplicity can be achieved by defining a distinct focus of analysis (i.e. the context and capacities, which are actually relevant for programme activities) and dealing with macro-issues in a more summary way (except macro-issues shall be made the special focus of an advocacy campaign). This specific context can then be examined in detail to make the analysis as accurate and locally relevant as possible. From there, the next challenge is supporting organisations to take informed decisions on priorities rather than arriving at a shopping-list of potentially useful peacebuilding activities. Given that there will rarely be the perfect way of doing something, this should also involve guiding

agencies in consciously considering the positive and negative implications of different courses of action.

Project-cycle approach

Experience with programme management underscored that conflict analysis and planning were not one-off activities, but needed to be integrated in a revolving process of monitoring, review, and redesign of activities with broad staff and stakeholder participation. A comprehensive PCIA toolbox should therefore contain guidance on which parts of the analysis are to be periodically reviewed and how to structure such a process.

4.3. PCIA in the project cycle

The NGO consultations generated a sense that PCIA could facilitate high-quality, fine-grained conflict analysis and participatory decision-making processes to help NGOs bring more clarity into their programming, recognise inevitable trade-offs and become more confident in their judgements. Thereby, PCIA should be more than a collection of checklists to be answered at specific stages within the project management cycle. It was rather felt that PCIA should provide a framework that allows stakeholders to take greater control of peacebuilding programming and provide space for different perspectives throughout the project cycle. In terms of analysis, central elements would be a structurally oriented conflict analysis combined with a comprehensive assessment of stakeholder needs and attitudes. Despite these high expectations, it was made clear that PCIA must be manageable also for smaller organisations with limited personnel and material resources.

The following outline summarises the main features of the analytical PCIA process as developed in the Kenyan and Guatemalan tools. It further incorporates results of the international discussion on good process in peacebuilding (Kraybill 2001). To encourage fresh thinking on planning and management issues, the vocabulary of Project Cycle Management was consciously avoided.

PCIA in the project cycle

General principles

When planning and managing a peacebuilding programme, you should keep the following principles in mind:

- Have your own organisation as well as your donors on board in all important decision-making processes.
- Involve local stakeholders.
- Provide space for different perspectives.
- Look for synergies and complementarity with others.

While setting up and sustaining a peacebuilding programme, the four tasks preparation, decision-making, implementation, review and evaluation need to be undertaken periodically. They may arise in the course of the so-called project cycle, but are more likely to overlap or occur simultaneously.

A. Preparation

1. Own organisation

- What are the mission and values of our organisation? What is important for us? What is our identity? How are we perceived by others?
- What is our peace vision? What changes do we look for? How do we want to bring them about?
- What are our capacities and limitations (human, material, financial resources, relationships, experience, concepts)? In what areas can we make a strong contribution? What can we realistically hope to achieve?
- What are others doing in the same area? How can we enhance communication and complementarity?

2. Stakeholders

- Who should be involved in the peacebuilding programme?
- Who would be the appropriate lead organisation? Who could sponsor the programme locally?
- How can different stakeholder groups best be involved in information-sharing and decision-making processes concerning the programme? What kinds of forums can be created or used?

3. Conflict analysis and problem identification

- Begin joint information gathering and conflict analysis with key stakeholders: How do stakeholders define the problem(s)? How do they explain them?
- What kind of process do stakeholders see most appropriate to tackle the problem(s)?

B. Decision-making

1. Clarify decision-making process

- Who shall participate in what decisions? How are decisions to be taken? Aim at involving all those in decision-making, who will be affected by them.

2. Define and prioritise objectives

- What shall the programme achieve given the conflict analysis, the existing work of others and the capacities and limitations of those participating in the programme?

3. Formulate a strategy

- How shall the objectives be achieved? Is it possible to combine several approaches? How can we collaborate with others?

- Consider whether the chosen objectives and strategies could have negative side effects on other conflicts in the area.

A. Implementation

This process varies widely from programme to programme. These are some helpful general principles:

- Agree on clear roles and responsibilities for all participants.
- Maintain financial accountability and transparency.
- Remain in communication with all stakeholders, create trust by frequently and carefully reporting back to them on process and achievements.
- Carefully monitor and, if necessary, intervene in conflicts, which emerge in relation to the peacebuilding programme.

D. Review and evaluation

1. Preparation

- Clarify purpose of review and evaluation process among programme team and stakeholders.
- Create forums and channels for information gathering and feed-back from different stakeholder groups.

2. Criteria and indicator definition

- Jointly identify monitoring and evaluation criteria (“what would we consider programme success in terms of peacebuilding?”)
- Agree on indicators (“what are the indicators that show us that our work is contributing to peacebuilding in this area/country?”)

3. Monitoring, learning and adjusting

- Periodically review assumptions and indicators.
- Document, share, and discuss monitoring results, implement necessary changes to the programme.

Indicators

There were different views within the programme team as to the utility of providing indicators for conflict analysis together with the PCIA tool. By offering indicator lists, PCIA risks to become too prescriptive and forestall creative local analysis. Such indicators are usually too blunt to fully capture the complexities of the local conflict or express a bias towards a specific analytical perspective. On the other hand, there is a great demand among NGOs for “ready-made” indicators, as without specialised training they find it difficult to identify meaningful peacebuilding indicators. Eventually, a compromise between elicitive and prescriptive approaches to indicator setting was

found. The final tools provided locally relevant guiding questions for eliciting a process as well as conflict/peace indicators from communities, while also giving indicative indicator lists adapted to the specific country situation. NGOs appreciated that this approach provided additional perspectives on the conflict, while allowing them to use their own criteria for finally making programming decisions.

Guiding questions for integrating local understandings of peace into indicator development (Guatemala)

- How is tolerance expressed in your community?
- What things and types of behaviour symbolise respect in your community?
- Who is taking decisions in the community and how?
- What specific changes do certain groups wish (e.g. women, youth, boys and girls, elders, disabled, war victims)?
- How do people prefer to express themselves? With what ways do they feel comfortable?
- What elements of your culture encourage processes of dialogue?
- How do people negotiate?

Chapter Five: Conclusion

PCIA has a critical and empowering potential, which has not yet fully been realised. At present, it is mostly used by donors for those types of top-down planning, management and control processes which are still common to most international assistance. In such a context, no revolutionary new insights and policies can be expected. Yet many possibilities still remain unexplored. One of them is precisely handing over PCIA skills to Southern civil society organisations as part of capacity building in management and advocacy. There is a clear need for more independent voices, who critically accompany the policies and practices of their own governments as well as those of donors in terms of their impact on conflict. But there is also the need for more channels for communicating these messages and ways of making them reverberate in policy-making circles. This is an area where Northern partner organisations can play an important complementary role.

Appendix I: Examples of structural conflict indicators from Kenya

1. Governance

- **Legitimate government and good governance**
- government legitimacy
- “power politics” or broad national consensus
- existence of constitutional abuses, abuses of power
- degree of administrative centralisation, strength of district, provincial, national, and regional mechanisms
- government management capacity (disparity, corruption)

Pluralism and participation

- popular approval of/disaffection with political leaders
- independence and political participation of civil society
- experience with representative, participatory government and democracy
- election procedures (fraud, voter intimidation)
- gender imbalance in political participation

Channels for conflict management

- independence/institutional bias of judiciary and police
- rule of law
- number of political prisoners
- freedom of expression
- history of state repression
- legitimacy or politisation of traditional authorities
- number of non-violent and violent protests
- presence of cross-cutting local or horizontal organisations (e.g. mixed schools)

Positive and negative international engagement

- shifts in external investment and assistance
- presence and interests of multinational firms
- regional trade networks in illegitimate goods
- political changes in neighbouring countries
- external support for opposition groups
- threat of intervention

2. Economics

Problems in managing transition and rapid change

- sweeping economic reforms
- rapid economic growth/decline
- technological revolutions negatively affecting some parts of the population (small scale particularly pollution)
- macro-economic instability

Widening socio-economic disparities

- trends in poverty, unemployment, inflation and food security
- trends in access to social security/welfare
- social stratification and income disparities
- unequal distribution of wealth between identity groups (ethnic, religious, regional etc.)

Competition over natural resources

- degree of population pressure on land
- land/water distribution
- agricultural failure
- pollution, environmental disaster
- number of court battles over land ownership
- ecological, economic and other threats to survival of a social group with common identity (the Ogiek)

3. Socio-cultural factors

- political exploitation of cultural and other differences
- historical rivalries and territorial disputes remembered
- cultural discrimination of minorities (e.g. language)
- independence and balance of media
- exclusionary nationalist/religious propaganda
- defamation of certain social groups in media and public discourse, influence of negative stereotypes on mutual perception

4. Security

- **legacy of violence**
 - history of unresolved armed conflict(micro level)
 - levels of violent crime, banditry and kidnapping
 - low-intensity political and ethnic violence
 - political assassinations
 - positive attitude towards violence in society

- **arms proliferation and irregular fighters**
 - growing illicit arms trade

Uncontrolled state armed forces

- number of human rights abuses
- popular support for/disillusionment with security apparatus

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International Alert, FEWER and Saferworld

New PCIA Manual Project

This new two-year programme, to be implemented in Kenya and Uganda from August 2002 will seek to develop and utilise a PCIA Resource Pack and Manual. The components of the project include:

- *The development of the resource manual*, which will offer a range of methodological options and approaches. Information will be provided on how different approaches have been used, and to what effect, in a multiplicity of situations, thus enabling practitioners to benefit from the experiences of a wide range of conflict situations. At least three chapters of the *resource manual* (chapters 1-3) will be developed during the first year of the programme.

- *The organisation of national applications in Kenya and Uganda*, which will involve the testing and review of up to three draft chapters. An in-country seminar and training workshop, attended by representatives from governments, local and international civil society organisations and the donor community, will thus be held in order to review the content of the draft chapters and test their applicability. In addition, the project's regional partners, the Africa Peace Forum (AFPO) and the Centre for Conflict Resolution (CECORE), will organise regular consultations with stakeholders from the regions to ensure that the modules in the resource manual remain relevant to the activities and needs at the local level.

- *The field-testing of the resource manual in Kenya and Uganda*, to examine the applicability of the modules on the ground against specific projects currently being designed, implemented or evaluated by local agencies, governments and/or international NGOs. The results of the field-testing will then feed into the revision of the resource manual

The practical output of this programme includes the development of practical resources and approaches to PCIA and conflict-sensitive development practice that are built upon local experience and capacity. Additionally, this programme will facilitate dialogue through consultations between southern NGOs and communities, their governments and donors, thus promoting the representation of civil society perspectives in development assistance programmes.

The project is managed by International Alert, FEWER and Saferworld from which more information is available.

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