

# Building Capacity for Peace and Unity

The Role of Local Government in Peacebuilding

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A joint publication of



With collaboration from



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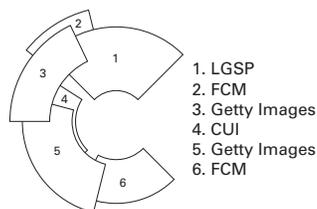
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# 1

## Introduction

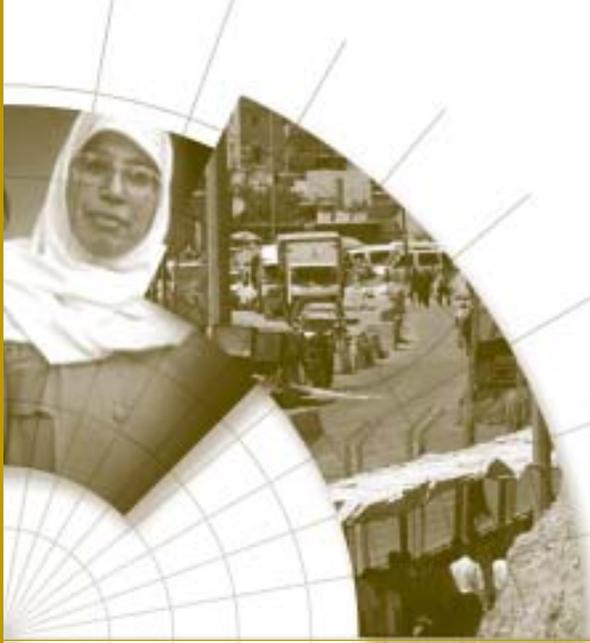
This document demonstrates how municipal governments can, and often do, serve as the cornerstone for building peace and managing conflict. It uses four case studies to illustrate the various ways municipal governments may contribute to peacebuilding and conflict management in the course of their conventional work, from the provision of basic health and social services to public safety, transportation, and local economic development (see Annex A).

It includes a Peace and Conflict Impact Assessment table (Annex B), to assist those seeking to enhance the potential peacebuilding impact of the work of municipal governments. This requires the systematic inclusion of Peace and Conflict Impact

Assessment (PCIA) into the design, implementation and evaluation of all municipal activities in conflict-prone areas. PCIA is a useful means of understanding and measuring peace and conflict impacts in a comprehensive or systematic way. While PCIA is relatively new, it is an extremely important process that helps ensure that initiatives do not aggravate violent conflict and, as far as possible, contribute to building peace within and between communities.

This publication seeks to remind local and international actors of the important role played by municipal governments in facilitating and promoting peacebuilding through their work in local level governance and service provision.





# 2

## Role of Local Government in Peacebuilding\*

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Municipal government plays a dual role: promoting the democratic process at the local level, and delivering basic local services. The scope of municipal government responsibilities in any given location varies a great deal and depends on the extent of decentralization of central government services, municipal population and revenue. The table in Annex A illustrates the range of responsibilities based on the example of municipal government in Canada.

### Characteristics of Effective Local Government

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Strong and effective municipal government is defined by six distinct characteristics that reflect its unique roles in democratic governance and service delivery. Each of these characteristics has significant implications for the role of local government in peacebuilding and conflict resolution:

**Legitimate leadership.** The legitimacy and credibility of a municipal government is intimately tied to a transparent and representative process of policy making by a council of democratically elected community leaders that enjoys legal

\* This section was written by Michel Fromojvic, with input by Kenneth Bush and Myn Garcia



recognition as an established corporate entity. In many cases, the tradition of strong local government pre-dates current forms of national government. As a result, mayors and senior elected officials are often respected, and trusted community leaders who are able to bridge divergent interests and ideas. In cases where national governments lack the capacity to reach local communities – or in cases of devolved or decentralized government, such as in the Philippines – municipal government is often the only functioning state presence at the local level. In the context of decentralization, municipal governments are mandated to perform certain devolved functions and/or deliver services.

### **Ability to touch the daily lives of citizens through improved delivery of services.**

An important characteristic of effective local government is its proximity to the recipients of the basic services it provides. Municipal government is well-recognized for its role in providing basic infrastructure such as drinking water, waste management, construction of latrines and public convenience facilities, recreational facilities and parks, and local roads. Decentralization of national government responsibilities has meant that local authorities have an increasingly important role to play in the delivery of basic social services, including primary and secondary schooling, early childhood education, public health care and social assistance.

**Close working relationship with communities and community organizations.** Their involvement in the delivery of basic services has provided municipal governments with a greater sensitivity to the unique needs of the individuals, families and communities within its jurisdiction. The focus on local-level service delivery has also strengthened working relations between municipal governments and community-based organizations and NGOs active at the local level. As a result, municipal governments are better able to respond to the basic needs of well-established, privileged communities and marginalized groups. This includes an increased capacity to develop constructive approaches to work with and develop an under-

standing of the informal sector. Partnerships between municipal government and community organizations have led to increased capacity and leadership within civil society, as well as opportunities for identifying new solutions to local challenges.

### **Participatory, transparent governance.**

Participatory governance provides the opportunity for all citizens, including marginalized groups, to become partners in government. It enables a decision-making framework for establishing policy priorities by fostering an environment of mutual learning and collaboration between government and civil society, which enhances government's capacity for openly engaging civil society in the decision-making process. It also promotes the inclusion of social issues into the decision-making process. Community empowerment reinforces civil society confidence in municipal government and creates a stronger sense of stakeholder responsibility for policy and development outcomes.

Opening up local government to popular participation and improving partnerships with civil society and the private sector fosters greater transparency and accountability in local government priority setting, budgeting and service delivery. This may be achieved, for example, through the preparation of participatory local development strategies and action plans.

**Strengthening public participation for peacebuilding.** Municipal governments play a crucial role in encouraging/harnessing/facilitating participation of various stakeholders in promoting peace including supporting local level, community-based peace initiatives involving peace advocates from the ground. Public participation and community-based mechanisms such as dialogues, consultations and public information campaigns may be effectively undertaken by municipal governments in partnership with peace advocates and peace bodies in the community, possibly even at the national and international spheres.

By working within such strategic partnerships (local, national and international), municipal governments may optimize their positive peacebuilding impacts.

**Focal point for facilitation and coordination of service delivery and decision-making.**

The management and delivery of services at the local level often crosses jurisdictional boundaries and cuts through lines of governmental responsibility. Solutions are being found through increased cooperation among neighboring governments and across levels of government. This can include alliance building for planning and programming, resource sharing and networking.

Strong local government is not only a means of delivering municipal services, but also a highly effective mechanism for ensuring that national policies and programs are appropriately tailored to local realities. Drawing on the capacities of municipal governments is an important way for national governments to touch local issues, be more aware of local needs and therefore be able to respond to local needs.

Municipalities are increasingly communicating with each other in order to better coordinate services and advocate for change at the national level. Associations of municipal governments serve to articulate locally defined concerns and provide an essential forum to disseminate good practices. These same associations are also beginning to develop their own programs that are delivered with and for the benefit of their members.

Coordination within municipal governments is also improving. Rather than relying on individual departments, municipal governments are beginning to tackle complex issues using integrated and holistic approaches. Inter-departmental cooperation and multi-sectoral responses have led to more coordinated development and more efficient and effective use of local resources. As a result, municipalities traditionally involved in basic service delivery, are better able to address complex social issues such as crime, drug addiction, homelessness, HIV/AIDS, and child prostitution. These new approaches have succeeded in defining and reaching specific target groups and designing services to meet the specific needs of these groups.



These unique characteristics are important factors in understanding the role of municipal government in peacebuilding, and the scope of work that exists in strengthening their role and effectiveness.

## Relevant Canadian Experience

Although Canada is not characterized by open intra-state violent conflict, the Canadian municipal government context exemplifies many effective practices and mechanisms relevant to peacebuilding. While Canadian municipalities are still learning and experimenting with many of these practices, they provide a foundation for contributing to peace and avoiding conflict.



Municipal government in Canada has two primary dimensions: democratic governance and service delivery. Local government in Canada reflects a basic democratic structure: the primary governing body is the municipal council whose members are elected by citizens to exercise the powers of the corporation on their behalf. Municipal staff is appointed and ensures the delivery of services. Political parties are generally not major players in local politics. Specific local interests are usually advanced by various citizens groups and business groups.

Canadian municipal governments have established credible, trusted, accountable and responsive systems of administration, budgeting, hiring, and procurement at the local level. Citizen participation has become an established feature of the local political landscape. Canadian municipalities in the process of preparing long range development plans now regularly put in place effective mechanisms that include citizens from diverse ethnic and socio-economic backgrounds. Similarly, citizens are able to acquire information concerning decisions affecting their immediate lives such as changes in land use and proposed construction projects. In many cases, citizens and community organizations are able to influence these decisions.

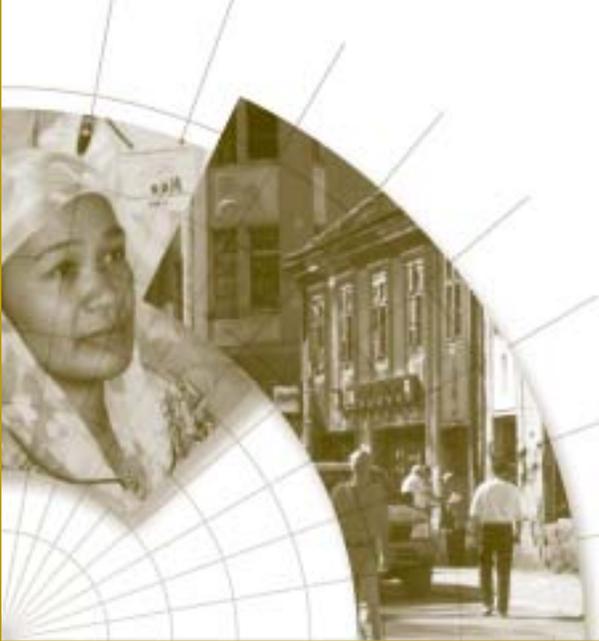
In the area of service delivery, residents of Canadian municipalities have come to rely and trust municipal systems that manage the delivery of basic services such as drinking water and garbage collection. Municipalities contribute to the physical fabric of civil society by providing roads, sidewalks, streetlights and bridges. They provide and regulate transportation systems, including urban transit, airports, harbors, taxi industries, and generally the movement of traffic as well as parking. Urban planning and the regulation of land use, industrial areas and economic development also fall within the municipal mandate. Similarly, locally-controlled public schooling systems deliver quality education accessible to all residents. Within this context, such municipal government activities might be seen as being relatively uncontroversial, if not technical. However, in cases of violent inter-group conflict, the politicization and mismanagement of these basic services (the privileging, favoring or exclusion of one group over another) can push tensions and non-violent conflict over the edge into a spiral of escalating violence.



Municipalities do much to ensure public safety and have a wide range of regulatory powers. Protective services include emergency services such as police, fire, and ambulance. Health services are geared to the prevention and control of communicable diseases, the availability of potable water and the maintenance of sanitary standards in the handling of food and the management of waste. In some parts of Canada, the provision of social services, such as the administration of social assistance, homes for the elderly, emergency shelters and public housing, is assigned or contracted to local governments by provincial governments. The principles of efficiency and accessibility that underpin Canadian municipal government delivery of such services are not, however, universal. Only when we turn our attention to other cases – especially those in violence-prone settings – can we begin to appreciate how the operationalization of these principles might in fact have a profound peacebuilding impact (as illustrated in the Bosnia & Herzegovina case study).

In Canada, the provision of child care and public transit by municipal governments may be seen to provide access to employment opportunities to individuals and groups who might otherwise be excluded. However, in violence-prone settings, the same services may create peacebuilding opportunities and incentives for groups in conflict to cooperate and share their benefits. Alternatively, they may increase competition and friction between groups over the distribution of their benefits. In Canada, municipalities strengthen new immigrant and refugee communities by increasing their access to employment and municipal services through language training, subsidized day care and public transit. Support to local economic development, community development initiatives and the development and management of subsidized housing cut across racial, ethnic, religious and socio-economic boundaries. The peacebuilding potential of similar programmes outside of Canada is considerable.

Not all these examples can be found in all Canadian municipalities. However, these and other initiatives suggest the importance of learning from, sharing, and adapting Canadian practices in local governance beyond the boundaries of Canada with a self-conscious awareness of their peacebuilding potential.



# 3

## Peace and Conflict Impact Assessment\*

Peace and Conflict Impact Assessment (PCIA) is a means of anticipating, monitoring, and evaluating the ways in which an intervention may affect or has affected the dynamics of peace or conflict in a conflict-prone region.

PCIA is a multi-faceted process, similar to Gender Analysis and Environmental Impact Assessment, which helps identify and understand the impact of an initiative on peace or conflict. PCIA can be used in a broad range of conflict-prone settings, i.e. places where there is a risk that non-violent conflict may turn or return violent. PCIA must be integrated into each stage of the project cycle –

design, implementation and evaluation – if it is to produce a comprehensive and accurate assessment of the peace and conflict impact.

PCIA is an extremely important and useful process that will help you ensure that initiatives you are working on do not aggravate violent conflict and, as far as possible, contribute to building peace within and between communities. From the perspective of peace and conflict impact, the way we do our work, is as important (sometimes more important) as the type of work we do.

\* This section was written by Kenneth Bush.

The following principles are intended to serve as a guide to Peace and Conflict Impact Assessments:

**PCIA is a process, not a tool.** While some people would like a ‘PCIA Tool Kit’ that can be applied anywhere, doing a PCIA will not make a difference unless it challenges and changes the way work is done in conflict zones. We may not have to do different work, but we will have to do our work differently. PCIA challenges us to fundamentally rethink our work.

**PCIA is not static.** PCIA is an on-going and dynamic approach taken before, during and after an intervention or project.

**PCIA must be transparent, shared and people focused.** The real experts of PCIA are the women, men, girls and boys living in conflict zones. If they are not centrally involved in peace and conflict analysis and interpretation, then PCIA will fail. If a community does not believe a PCIA is genuine or legitimate, if they believe that it is not in their interests or if they believe that it will be used to force unwanted decisions on them, they will most often reject the process and its outcomes.

**Building peace involves un-building the structures of violence.** Just as the removal of the structures of violence does not automatically bring peace, adding/ strengthening peace capacities does not automatically stop violence. Peacebuilders must strategically consider how to unbuild the structures of violence and build capacities for peace.

**PCIA helps understand the specific rather than the general.** PCIA helps us see and understand when, why and how a specific factor in a particular situation is likely to contribute to peace or violent conflict. For example, many believe that poverty leads to violent conflict. However, when we look closely at different cases we see that sometimes they appear related and sometimes they do not. PCIA helps to identify and understand the when, why and how poverty may be related to violent conflict.

**Look for both the peacebuilding impacts and the conflict-creating impacts.** When using PCIA, it is often easier to identify the conflict-creating impacts of development projects (e.g. health, education, water and sanitation, provision of public services projects). Violence, especially militarized violence<sup>1</sup>, always gets more attention than peace. For this reason, we need to improve our ability to



<sup>1</sup> **Militarized violence** conveys a more accurate sense of the nature of contemporary violent conflict than the word war. It includes: conventional military engagements between organized forces; abuses defined as dirty wars; control through terror and the manipulation of fear; systematic abuse of human rights; and a totalizing process by which all social, political, and economic problems come to be defined as military problems—and, as military problems, the most suitable response is deemed automatically to be the application of the weapons of war.

identify and strengthen the peacebuilding impacts of projects or initiatives. Simply labeling an initiative a peacebuilding project does not make it so.

**Neither development nor peacebuilding will create peace on its own.** Development and peacebuilding initiatives can make important contributions to peace and unity. However, on their own they will not create peace. Full, genuine and lasting peace requires substantive and on-going efforts by a wide range of actors (local, national, regional, international) in a broad range of activities (military, trade, development and humanitarian assistance, etc.).

**PCIA takes time.** Despite the time pressures that always affect the planning and implementation of a project or initiative, there needs to be time for genuine dialogue, learning and capacity-building. A rushed PCIA is most likely an ineffective PCIA.

## Key Areas of Peace or Conflict Impact

The key to a successful PCIA is asking the right questions, in the right context, at each stage in the project cycle. The framework provided in Annex B highlights five areas in which municipal government activities may have a peace (or conflict) impact:

- Conflict management capacities;
- Militarized violence and human security;
- Political structures and processes;
- Economic structures and processes; and
- Social empowerment.

Effective governance at the local level is a crucial component within each of these five key areas. These impact areas provide a framework for strengthening local governance capacity to build peace and dismantle the structures of violent conflict. The case studies in Section IV illustrate how this framework may be used to scan and analyze the peace and conflict impact of selected examples of municipal government projects in conflict-prone settings.

## Area 1

### Conflict Management Capacities

Conflict management capacities of local government might include their abilities to:

- 1) think about and identify peacebuilding challenges and opportunities;
- 2) restructure themselves to respond to peacebuilding challenges and opportunities; and
- 3) change how they work, to ensure that they are able to respond effectively and efficiently, in ways that have a concrete, positive peacebuilding impact, e.g. by improving fairness, equity, “even-handedness,” accountability and transparency.

Weak and inappropriate management practices have the potential to worsen or create conflict leading to the use of violence. Thus, one area addressed by PCIA is the capacity of local government to avoid or resolve violent conflict at the local level and to promote genuine, sustainable peace through formal and informal mechanisms and standard operating procedures used in the course of its day-to-day work.

An example of a hands-on role in peacebuilding is provided in the Philippines case study. Among other things, Local Government Units (LGUs) are being trained in peace negotiation, facilitation and dialogue skills. These skills are not intended to enable LGUs to negotiate peace agreements for the multiple violent conflicts afflicting the Philippines, but rather are meant to be used during the normal work of municipal governments. In conflict-prone settings, the work of municipal governments inevitably affects the dynamics of peace or conflict through the services they provide. For example, local authorities influence access to scarce land through land allocation, land use planning and land management. A transparent system of land use planning serves as a mechanism for preventing conflict. In the area of the provision of basic services, local governments incapable of expanding the delivery of basic infrastructure and services into traditionally marginalized and neglected areas may contribute to conflict created by socio-economic inequalities.

Local authorities are also in a good position to maintain ongoing communication with a network of community leaders and grassroots organizations. This can contribute to the timely mobilization of the resources needed to address potential violence at its earliest stage, such as opening lines of communication between and within groups that local government is mandated to represent.

For a municipal government to effectively manage conflict through the delivery of public goods and services, it must be trusted and legitimized by representative groups within a conflict-prone area. Thus, for example, legitimacy may be reflected in the ability of senior local elected officials – such as the mayor – to serve as a trusted third party who is able to create the neutral space for groups to identify, address and, possibly, resolve their immediate conflict.



Local-level law enforcement is a particularly important municipal governance issue in conflict-prone areas. A law enforcement agency, which is trusted and legitimized by the public may become the foundation for the transition from the conflict ridden post-conflict period to genuinely peaceful coexistence. A municipal government seen as unfair in its decision-making and corrupt in its delivery of services will not only fail to resolve local conflicts, it is likely to aggravate tensions leading to violent conflict.

## Area 2

### Militarized Violence and Human Security

This is defined by patterns and levels of conflict occurring within a municipality, directly and indirectly related to militarized violence, crime, rights abuses and corruption. It is reflected in the corresponding degree of fear and insecurity experienced by residents of a municipality, including physical and mental well-being and sense of individual and group identity.



Here, we need to remember that, because different groups in society experience different levels and types of violence, they may have different levels of insecurity and vulnerability, e.g. women, children, minority groups, returnees and other marginalized groups. The sources of threat and insecurity are militarised forces – which may include national armed forces, rebels, paramilitaries, war lords, militias, bandits, organized crime rings, vigilante groups and police – that use military weapons, structures, and tactics.

Municipal government has direct and indirect influence on the impacts of, and responses to violence and insecurity within its jurisdiction. For example, municipal governments are in a position to ensure that law enforcement strategies are fair as well as effective. This includes ensuring equal and fair access to justice through local police services and courts systems, in addition to the fair treatment of individuals who have been detained, arrested, or imprisoned. Municipal governments often provide emergency shelters and support

services for abused women and their children on an on-going basis. Under crisis and war-like conditions, similar services may be offered to displaced persons. At the level of long range planning, municipalities can implement policies that ensure the integration of principles of safety, justice and equity into urban design and service delivery.

### **Area 3**

#### **Political Structures and Processes**

Political structures and processes refer to the governance capacities of different levels of government as reflected in local decision-making, and the extent to which local elected officials and municipal government services are responsive to the needs of civil society, and the ability of civil society actors to participate in the political processes actively and constructively. This might be seen in: increased or decreased transparency, accountability, and participation in decisions affecting the public; the strengthening or weakening of the rule of law and representative government;

increased/decreased and more/less inclusive levels of participation in terms of geographic and sectoral group representation, especially the participation of women and other marginalized groups; the strengthening or weakening of the capacities of legitimate leaders; and the strengthening or weakening of anti-democratic forces.

In general, this will reflect a system of local governance that is built on the active and constructive participation of civil society in agenda setting and decision-making. At the simplest level, the legitimacy of political structures and processes can be measured in terms of the level of participation in local government elections. In the absence of meaningful civil society participation, local government loses its claim to legitimacy and corresponding responsibility to manage public resources and represent the interests of society as a whole. The effectiveness of political structures is determined by the degree to which policies are formulated and implemented justly and efficiently, including those concerning fair employment, provision of subsidies, procurement policies, corruption by elected officials and municipal staff.

If civil society is to grant legitimacy to municipal government, then the latter must play an active role in engaging civil society in local decision-making. Municipal governments that have succeeded in engaging the public have done so by demonstrating their commitment to genuine public participation in ways which are reflected in their budgets, the openness of their meetings and the effectiveness of mechanisms to integrate the public into agenda-setting and decision-making. Citizen engagement can also extend to opportunities for residents and community organizations to work with municipal government in the delivery of services.

Peacebuilding and conflict management are founded on the ability of a municipal government to successfully build an open and trusting relationship with its residents and the organizations and community leaders that represent different groups within the municipality.

## Area 4

### Economic Structures and Processes

This area of peace or conflict impact refers to the strengthening or weakening of the socio-economic structures and process in the municipality and the ability of municipal government to catalyze economic development at the local level. Equally important is the ability of government to ensure that the resulting benefits are shared amongst all citizens. Perceptions of how economic development is benefiting or disadvantaging different groups within society can serve as a catalyst for peace, or for conflict.

Most municipalities are typically responsible for delivering an extensive range of services related to stimulating local economic development. Most notable is the ability of municipalities to access financing or enter into partnerships with private sector organizations in order to invest in basic infrastructure and deliver associated services. Strategic investments in physical and social infrastructure may have a multiplier effect, which attracts further economic investment and expands community access to infrastructure and services.



Municipalities also play a role in promoting local economic development by engaging the local business community as a partner, and lobbying the other orders of government for programs and resources. The capacity of municipal government to influence local economic development is relevant in: (1) a violence-prone setting, as a means of preventing conflict; (2) in-conflict settings as a way of defusing violent flare-ups; and (3) post-conflict settings as a contribution to peacebuilding and the dismantling of some of the economic causes or irritants of violent conflict.

## Area 5

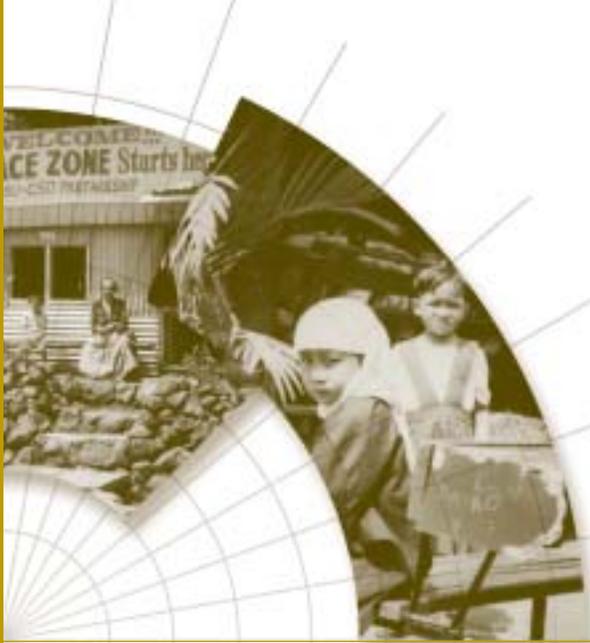
### Social Empowerment

This fifth area of peace or conflict impact encompasses the ability of local government to build a culture of peace, strengthen civil society and contribute to an environment characterized by empowerment, constructive social communication, tolerance, inclusiveness, justice, participation and respect. This includes nurturing the confidence and capacities of citizens, community organizations and local businesses to deal effectively and non-violently with the normal tensions generated by competition within civic and economic life. Other measures of social empowerment include the degree of local

ownership over peace processes; the level of participation by “marginalized” or “disempowered” groups in the process of peacebuilding, and the level and type of social interactions between groups within civil society.

Municipal government may contribute to social empowerment in a number of ways. When it is a legitimate and trusted institution, local elected officials are in a position to play an important leadership role in facilitating and coordinating the efforts of local actors to build civil society institutions. Social empowerment may be nurtured through the actions of municipal governments to address poverty, including the delivery of basic health and social services, and removing income-related barriers to employment such as public transit and daycare.





# 4

## Case Studies in Local Governance and Peacebuilding

The four following case studies highlight the contributions of municipal government to peacebuilding at the local level in three countries at different stages of violent conflict: the Philippines, the Palestinian Territories and Bosnia & Herzegovina. Each case study illustrates how the impact of every violent conflict is ultimately experienced locally, regardless of the factors that may have caused or sustained it. For this reason, the peacebuilding dimension of municipal government is as important as it is unavoidable.

In each of the four cases, municipal governments are legitimate authorities functioning at the local level with day-to-day responsibilities for local governance and service provision. What becomes clear is that effective and legitimate structures of governance are key factors in transforming and defusing violent conflict – just as ineffective and illegitimate structures of governance are key factors in pushing non-violent conflict into the realm of violence.

# Case Study 1

## Canada-Bosnia & Herzegovina Local and Cantonal Government Cooperation Programme (CBiHCP)\*

### ABSTRACT

*The militarized conflict that took place in Bosnia & Herzegovina between 1992 and 1995 crippled political and economic systems, destroyed infrastructure and, perhaps most tragically, tore at the social fabric of the country and its peoples. The 1995 Dayton Accord brought an end to the conflict and created a new structure for governing the country. Local governments are struggling to make sense of the new political and administrative structures created by the Accord, as well as manage the tenuous peace that currently exists. The Canada-Bosnia & Herzegovina Local and Cantonal Government Cooperation Program (CBiHCP) – managed by the Canadian Urban Institute (CUI) with funding from the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) – has been instrumental in assisting governments in the Tuzla Canton with improving their capacities to provide services to communities while building structures for peace and unity. This project is an excellent example of how development cooperation can contribute to fostering peace and unity in a post-conflict environment.*

### 1. Peacebuilding & Unity Context

Bosnia & Herzegovina (BiH) is a complex ethnic mosaic. In 1991, 44 percent of the population described themselves as Muslims, 31.5 percent as Serbs (Orthodox Christians) and just over 17 percent described themselves as Croats (Roman Catholics). The rest belonged to other identity groups, including 5.5 percent who declared themselves Yugoslavs. These descriptions hide the fact that before the conflict, one in every three marriages in BiH was a mixed marriage that crossed ethnic lines.

Prior to 1992, the majority of Muslims, also called Bosniaks, lived in cities and towns along side Serbs and Croats. The Serbian minority generally lived in rural areas and formed majorities in large areas of Bosnia. The Croat minority tended to live in areas closer to the Croatian border, although there were substantial Croatian communities in

\* This section was written by Kenneth Bush, Andrew Farncombe, Director of Programming, Canadian Urban Institute and Andrew Plunkett, Project Manager, Canadian Urban Institute

many towns of central Bosnia. Before the violence, religion did not seem to be the most important issue in people's lives; religious attachment has grown as religion is increasingly linked with membership in an ethnic-political group.

Over 250,000 people were killed in the militarized violence that swept through BiH between 1992 and 1995.<sup>2</sup> In a region populated by 4.4 million people, 2.5 million were terrorized and displaced from their homes. While all communities were touched directly by the violence, Muslims were overwhelmingly the largest group of victims. Not all groups were equally involved in using violence: according to a UN Commission, 90% of the crimes in BiH were the responsibility of Serb extremists, 6% by Croat extremists, and 4% by Muslim extremists.

**Ethnic cleansing** was a central feature of the conflict: an objective was to create "ethnically pure" Serb and Croat territories.

**Ethnic cleansing** included: illegal internment of the civilian population in concentration camps; torture; systematic rape; summary executions; appropriation and pillage of private property; systematic destruction of cultural and religious heritage; using civilians as human shields on the front lines and in minefields; mass starvation; degradation and humiliation; and more.



The militarized violence ended with the signing of the Dayton Accord in November 1995. By this time, much of the infrastructure in BiH was ravaged: there was no national bank or common currency that could be used across ethnic frontiers; rail connections were broken; over half of the buildings in the country were destroyed or damaged; an estimated 4 or 5 million unexploded land mines littered the countryside<sup>3</sup> and many industries had closed or, at best, were operating at minimum capacity.

The Dayton Accord created new structures for governing the country, providing for a single state for Bosnia and Herzegovina divided into two halves: (1) the Muslim-Croat Federation, with 51 percent of the territory, and (2) the Republika

Srpska (Serbian Republic), with 49 percent of the territory. Republika Srpska is primarily governed as a unitary entity, although there are 7 administrative regions. In the Muslim-Croat Federation, there are ten Cantons: 3 Muslim, 3 Croatian and 4 mixed. Ethnic segregation still exists despite efforts to encourage integration, particularly in mixed Cantons.

Post-conflict reconstruction in the region is highly political. At a political-economic level, the influx of large amounts of money and other resources at times reinforces the control of warlords and criminal economies that took root during the militarized conflict. At the community level, the perception that one community is benefiting disproportionately has aggravated inter-group relations. A long-term

2 Report to the United Nations by a Special Commission of Experts chaired by Cherif Bassiouni of De Paul University in Chicago. See Florence Hartmann, "Bosnia," in Roy Gutman and David Rieff (eds.) *Crimes of War: What the Public Should Know* (New York: WW Norton & Co., 1999), p. 56.

3 BHMIC (BiH Mine Action Centre) has described BiH as probably the most heavily mined country in Europe, following extensive use of landmines, especially antipersonnel mines, during the 1991-1995 war. A considerable quantity of unexploded ordnance (UXO) also affects the country. The BHMIC described the situation as "a threat which is generally low density and random in nature. The total area potentially affected is in the order of 4,000 square kilometers and the bulk of it still requires survey in order to determine the finite extent of the problem." By 30 April 2002, BHMIC had recorded 18,228 minefields. However, it estimates the probable total number to be 30,000, containing approximately one million mines. BHMIC also estimates that two million items of UXO are still unlocated. For a full description of the landmine problem, see "Mine Situation in BiH," [www.bhmic.org](http://www.bhmic.org), and "The Mine Problem," [www.bhmic.org/fed/opis.htm](http://www.bhmic.org/fed/opis.htm). The estimate of one million mines is based upon 307,000 records in the BHMIC database of mines planted by the Entity Armies. It is estimated the Armies laid 700,000 mines and an estimated 300,000 mines were laid by civilians without any reporting. "BHMIC Mine Action 2002," January 2002. [www.bhmic.org/bhmic/info/statistics/statistics\\_e.htm](http://www.bhmic.org/bhmic/info/statistics/statistics_e.htm)



challenge for the state-level government is making sense of the boundaries that divide the Moslem-Croat Federation and the Republika Srpska: current boundaries are the result of diplomatic negotiations and pressures, ethnic interests and the need to quickly create cease-fire lines between communities rather than divisions based on economic and administrative logic and priorities.

While on their own local authorities cannot bring about peace, they have a large role to play in establishing an environment of unity within and between different communities. A local government can have either a negative or positive impact on peace and unity, by virtue of the degree to which it exacerbates, or helps to close, gaps in inequality between different communities, ethnic groups, or socio-economic strata. Good governance at the

local level can help to build peace by nurturing a culture of unity, diversity, tolerance and fairness, and through pursuing equitable access to local government decision-making processes, services and resources.

The peace in Bosnia remains arguably fragile, policed by the Stabilization Force (SFOR) military units from NATO and other countries. The civil aspects of the Dayton Accord are monitored by the Office of the High Representative (OHR), while the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) organizes elections, and other international bodies provide humanitarian aid, assistance for reconstruction, and technical cooperation programming. There is great concern that if international peacekeepers were to leave, hostilities might start again.

## 2. Local Governance Context

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Long-term peace and stability in BiH depends to a significant degree on the effectiveness of sub-national government entities. This includes the Cantonal level of government, which was established in the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina under the 1995 Dayton Accord (the Republika Srpska does not have a cantonal level of government).

The Cantons are organized like the national government, with a Governor, a Prime Minister and sectoral ministers. More than any other level of government, cantons have benefited both from the decentralization of power from the State and the centralization of power from the municipal level. However, there remains a mixed reaction to the establishment of Cantons in the Federation. Many feel that this level of government was 'imposed' from outside, and as such, it has mixed

support among government officials. One of the main issues is that, while municipal governments were well established in Bosnia, there was little or no history of regional governance, and the fledgling cantonal administrations have demonstrated this with their share of growing pains.

Nevertheless, the Cantons appear to have the most important responsibilities of all four levels of government: they have taken over many of the major powers of local municipalities and have been given some authority previously exercised by the State itself. Cantonal responsibilities include the majority of powers in: education, culture, health, housing, communications, water systems, police, local economic development (including tourism development and regulation of local businesses), taxation (although personal income tax is a function of the two entities) and regulation of land use (including zoning).

Although on paper cantons are responsible for most local activities, there is a tradition of strong local government in BiH and municipalities are often still more directly relevant in the day-to-day lives of citizens. The powers left to municipalities by the Dayton Accord were somewhat undefined at first, and powers continue to vary, as each

cantonal government makes its own decisions about which responsibilities it delegates to municipalities. Most municipalities, however, are involved in: local planning; housing; fire protection; water and sewer services and humanitarian activities. Some municipal revenues are generated locally but most come from a proportion of Cantonal sales, payroll and profit taxes. The greatest difficulty in setting up effective governments is in the mixed cantons, where parallel organizations are developing alongside ethnically based political parties.

One of the greatest challenges for local governments in BiH is to make the decentralized governance system decreed by the Dayton Accord operational and effective. This will require: clarification of the division of responsibilities between the Federation, cantons and municipalities; promotion of inter-governmental cooperation; developing new systems for generating economic development and revenue; and establishing effective and up-to-date methods of delivering local services. Specifically, local authorities need to develop their understanding of the principles and practices, structures and processes for governing democratically within a market economy.

### 3. Project Description

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The Canada-Bosnia & Herzegovina Local and Cantonal Government Cooperation Programme (CBiHCP) is a capacity-building program aimed at improving urban management in the Tuzla Canton of BiH. It is funded by the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) and managed by the Canadian Urban Institute (CUI). Key project partners and participants include the Urban Institute of Tuzla (the primary implementing and coordinating partner), Tuzla Canton, the City of Tuzla and the other 12 municipalities in the Canton, the Economic Institute of Tuzla, the University of Tuzla, and civil society groups (NGOs, CBOs and private sector organizations) active in the Canton. While the primary beneficiaries are the Tuzla Canton and the 13 constituent municipalities (including the City of Tuzla), the CBiHCP is supporting the development of a model approach that could be used by other governments in both the Federation and Republika Srpska.

The project is aimed at promoting good governance in BiH, within the context of an emerging democratic system and market-based economy, by building the capabilities of local governments in strategic urban management. CBiHCP provides assistance to enable local governments to open

their decision making processes in developing and implementing plans for growth and development. The project is an important step towards tackling several challenges associated with **decentralization** and establishing an effective system of local governance, including:

- Helping to innovate ways to make the **decentralized** governance system decreed by the Dayton Accord operational and effective;
- Developing mechanisms for intergovernmental cooperation at the local level;
- Assisting with the transition at the local level to market-based economic systems and promotion of local economic development;
- Developing a better understanding of the principles and practices of governing democratically among local authorities (cantonal and municipal);
- Improving revenue generation opportunities for local governments;
- Establishing effective and up-to-date methods of delivering local services; and
- Finding ways to improve local decision making to take into account the strategic expenditure of limited resources to tackle the reconstruction of basic infrastructure and housing, and provide key social services.

The advantage of **decentralization** is that it allows decisions to be made at a local level by authorities that are sensitive to the interests and attitudes of the community they represent.

### **Project Location: Tuzla Canton and Municipality of Tuzla**

The Tuzla Canton in northeastern BiH has a population of approximately 580,000, including over 80,000 refugees who are mostly Muslims displaced from territory now under the jurisdiction of the Republika Srpska. Tuzla was an important industrial centre and site of the largest chemical industrial complex in the former Yugoslavia.

The municipality of Tuzla is the fourth largest city in BiH, with a population of 160,000 including 45,000 refugees. Prior to the conflict, the city was ethnically mixed with about 50 percent of the population Muslim and approximately equal numbers of Serbs and Croats. Today, as a result of the influx of displaced Muslims, over 70 percent of Tuzla's population is Muslim, about 17 percent is Croat and only 9 percent is Serb.<sup>4</sup>

The Tuzla cantonal government has a great amount of power on paper, but is only gradually developing the resources to properly undertake its new responsibilities. Many smaller communities in the canton are isolated and poor. Industrial production is slowly recovering after the conflict, though many plants have not reopened. The airport has reopened for peacekeeping purposes, but currently has very limited civilian use, and the rail connections are in the process of being re-established. There is a major housing shortage in many parts of the canton due to the numbers

of refugees. In the north, there is an unresolved border dispute with the Republika Srpska. Major government challenges include: economic development, water and waste systems, transportation and housing. Cantonal leaders put the modernization of administrative structures and resources and the establishment of clear and collaborative relationships with the Federation and local governments as high priorities.

### **Role of Local Government in the Project**

Strengthening local government is a central element of CBiHCP design. The project's intended impact is more transparent, accountable and efficient local government institutions in Tuzla Canton. The project is designed to achieve this through four anticipated outcomes:

- More effective, transparent and participatory planning processes in Tuzla Canton.
- Enhanced commitment of local government authorities in the Canton to democratic and participatory principles and practices in local governance, planning, and decision-making.
- Enhanced enabling environment for local government, civil society, and private sector partnerships for implementation of cantonal development plans.
- Increased and effective participation and voice by Tuzla Canton citizens in local governance and development planning processes.

<sup>4</sup> Data collected from the Spatial Plan for Tuzla Canton, Ministry of Physical Planning and Environmental Protection, Tuzla Canton, Bosnia and Herzegovina, 2003.

#### 4. Good Practices in Local Governance & Peacebuilding

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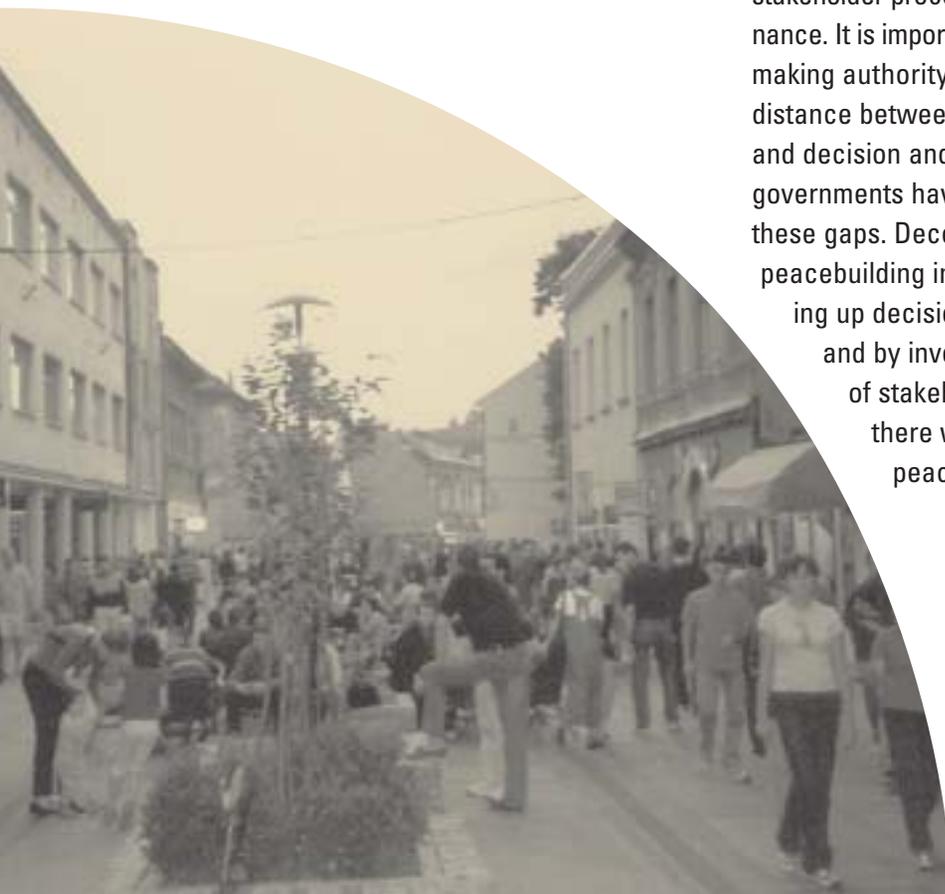
The CBIHCP has exemplified and/or contributed to good practice in linking local governance and peacebuilding in a number of important ways:

**Bringing government and basic service delivery closer to citizens.** The project is primarily about developing innovative ways to make the decentralized governance system operational and effective. This has included the promotion of public participation, greater transparency, and multi-stakeholder processes in local and regional governance. It is important to note that devolving decision-making authority to local levels decreases the distance between decision-maker and community, and decision and impact, and as such, local governments have a key role to play in closing these gaps. Decentralization will not promote peacebuilding in and of itself; however, by opening up decision-making to greater scrutiny, and by involving the public and a variety of stakeholders in government processes, there will exist a greater opportunity for peace through greater transparency.

**Modeling ideals through leadership at the local level.** The City of Tuzla has had a long tradition of inter-ethnic tolerance and cooperation, which is being put to the test by the arrival of thousands of embittered survivors of atrocities from places like Srebrenica.<sup>5</sup> While the cantonal government is firmly in the hands of a Bosniak party, relative to other cantons in BiH, Tuzla remains a model of inter-ethnic calm.

Leadership in the Tuzla region is based on core ideals, and this has been exemplified by the former mayor and governor of Tuzla, Selim Beslagic. During the first phase of the project, Beslagic came to power with support from all ethnic groups. His first objective was to see Tuzla become the model of a modern, tolerant, progressive municipality which would benefit from experience elsewhere and be a beacon for the rest of the country. The credibility and integrity of the Mayor inspired and mobilized citizens under very difficult circumstances. While Beslagic has led the way (as both Mayor and Governor of Tuzla) with his inter-ethnic platform, the project benefited from other inter-ethnic (in composition and orientation) partners, including the staff of the municipality and Urban Institute of Tuzla, both of which still consist of people from all ethnic groups.

<sup>5</sup> For an account of the “fall” of Srebrenica see Charles Lane, “Dateline Zagreb: The Fall of Srebrenica”, in Dat Nader Mousavizadeh, ed., *The Black Book of Bosnia; the Consequences of Appeasement* (New York: Basic Books, 1996), 116-124.



### **Supporting local leaders as champions.**

A champion is someone who, through moral influence, quiet diplomacy, public presence, or skillful negotiation and maneuvering, is able to positively affect the thinking and behaviour of groups and individuals. By changing individuals and groups, champions induce structural changes in economic, political, and social systems. A champion is usually someone who already has a positive profile in the community, who knows the rules of the game and wants change that contributes to peace and unity. Champions are particularly important in environments characterized by distrust, such as post-conflict settings. The CBiHCP has supported leadership development through targeted capacity development aimed at building the knowledge and skills of local officials in the principles of good governance, including participatory planning, strategic planning, and integrated approaches to complex local problems.

### **Local Champions: Selim Beslagic**

When he was elected Mayor of Tuzla in 1990, Selim Beslagic became the first democratically elected, non-nationalistic Mayor in Bosnia and Herzegovina in the post-communist era. His Social Democrat Party (SDP) formed a multi-ethnic government of moderates committed to free market development and political reform. During his term as Mayor, Beslagic was able to deflect the tide of ethnic-nationalism that swept through the former Yugoslavia during the conflict that followed its break-up in 1991. His policies have served as a benchmark of good governance, democracy and ethnic coexistence at the local level. His efforts to maintain peace and civility during the 1992-1995 aggression in Bosnia and Herzegovina led to the survival of his city as a bastion of tolerant and democratic relations among citizens, and has earned him international recognition and numerous awards, including a nomination for the Nobel Peace Prize. After serving as Mayor for ten years, he spent one term as Governor of the Tuzla Canton. Currently, Mr. Beslagic is a Member of Parliament for Bosnia and Herzegovina.



**Ensuring sustainability.** The CBiHCP tried to establish mechanisms to integrate project management structures into local decision-making processes in the Institute for Urbanism Tuzla, the Municipality of Tuzla and the Tuzla Canton. Local professionals and institutions are actively involved in the delivery of this project, which contributes to strengthening the capacity of local organizations. All project work is overseen by the Project Steering Committee, made up of representatives of all three levels of government in the Federation, as well as members of other Tuzla Canton agencies, international agencies, and non-governmental organizations. Local management support is provided by an Executive Committee, made up of members from all partner organizations, including the Urban Institute of Tuzla, University of Tuzla, and Tuzla Canton Ministry of Physical Planning and Environmental Protection. The executive committee meets every other week to design and review workplans and to monitor progress. Committee management and local ownership are examples of good practice because they ensure that the project is driven by local priorities and context, and contribute to long-term sustainability.

### **Organizing study tours and professional exchanges.**

The CBiHCP has made use of study tours (group learning sessions to other countries) and professional exchanges in the capacity development dimension of the project. Study tours and two-way professional exchanges can make important strategic and catalytic contributions to peace and unity by nurturing personal and professional relationships, thereby breaking down barriers created by conflict. Study tours remove people from the stresses of working and living in highly politicized and segregated environments. Individuals who might not otherwise meet are brought into a neutral environment of professional development and learning. In addition to study tours to Canada, the CBiHCP supported east-east study tours: an exchange with Hungary enabled BiH participants to learn more about Hungarian efforts to join the EU.

**Supporting community-based initiatives.** Also noteworthy in CBiHCP is the establishment of a local development fund: ten percent of the project budget has been set aside for a Fund to support local initiatives. The fund was established to provide seed funding to small-scale initiatives aimed at enhancing local governance, policymaking, and service delivery in Tuzla Canton. Through the strategic allocation of seed money, the fund is intended to build positive momentum and energies, increase local ownership of the project, promote sustainability of initiatives, reward innovative approaches to problem solving, and build the capacity of local groups to design and manage projects in a results-based manner.

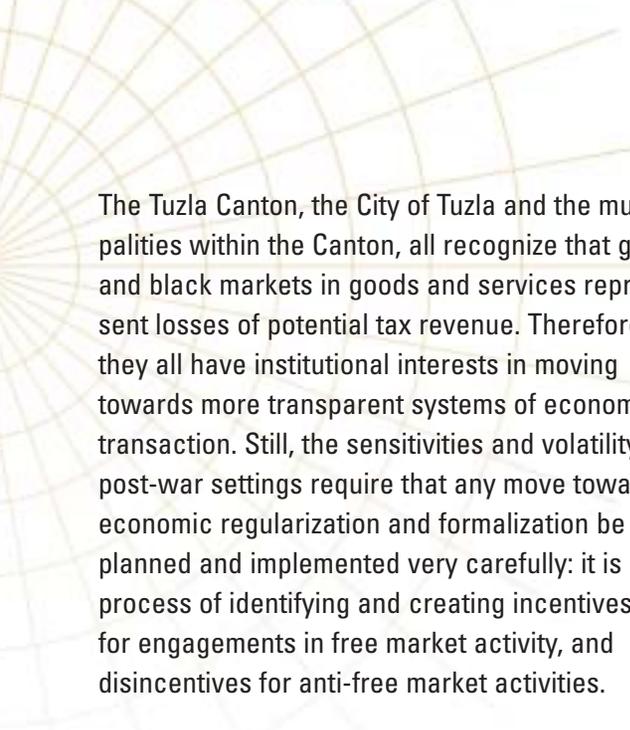


### **Sharing project experiences across BiH.**

Experiences from the CBiHCP are intended to serve as models and inspiration for other local governments in the Federation and Republika Srpska. The CBiHCP has made special efforts to bring professionals from the Republika Srpska as well as other cantons in the Federation into all of its outreach activities (training exercises, workshops, presentations, etc.). The CBiHCP is also working with the Bosnian Association of Urbanists, which draws its membership from both the Federation and Republika Srpska. The incorporation of Republika Srpska participants has created a new space within which they can imagine how such a project might be established in their political and social context. The inter-ethnic networks that evolved out of these events have created a pool of ideas, expertise and trust that may be harnessed and applied to replication efforts. However, potential replication of project experiences will require creative review and modification to suit local contexts.

### **Supporting transition to a free market economy.**

The CBiHCP has placed significant emphasis on supporting the transition towards a free market economy. In the immediate post-war context of BiH, there was very little interaction across entity borders other than one place in a de-mined field, the Arizona market between the Republika Srpska and the Federation. Unfortunately, while conflict itself had created an economic structure that provided goods and services to local populations, this structure was anything but a model of free market competition: it reinforced politico-military war lord fiefdoms and sustained a network of self-enriching middlemen. However, eight years after its establishment, there has been no significant confrontation between ethnic groups in the market. Notwithstanding the trade in black market goods, within the Arizona market lies a clue to rebuilding Bosnia's multi-ethnic society.



The Tuzla Canton, the City of Tuzla and the municipalities within the Canton, all recognize that gray and black markets in goods and services represent losses of potential tax revenue. Therefore, they all have institutional interests in moving towards more transparent systems of economic transaction. Still, the sensitivities and volatility of post-war settings require that any move towards economic regularization and formalization be planned and implemented very carefully: it is a process of identifying and creating incentives for engagements in free market activity, and disincentives for anti-free market activities.

CBiHCP suggests two mechanisms for working within systems struggling to overcome the legacy of dirty war economies: (1) relying on champions and (2) emphasizing public participation, particularly in strategic planning. As noted above, the CBiHCP benefited immensely from its champion in the Mayor of the City of Tuzla. In addition to cultivating governance capacities within civil society and creating opportunities for those capacities to be exercised, CBiHCP also supports efforts to increase public participation. This serves a monitoring function in the decision-making process, by increasing scrutiny and transparency in government processes, which helps keep officials accountable and increases investor confidence.

## 5. Lessons Learned

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### **Governance and peacebuilding initiatives take a long, long time.**

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No project that addresses or relies on the linking of governance and peacebuilding will work unless it is given time. Building a foundation of trust is a critical element of project success, and it takes time to develop trusting relationships between: project partners; partners and communities; governments; governments and civil society; civil society groups. A critical element of trust-building process is physical presence. Shifting in and out of a project site undercuts the ability to build deep-rooted trust. Long-term commitment is as important as physical presence: most residents in conflict-prone areas have seen humanitarian and development actors come and go, projects start and close. The people of BiH are perhaps more aware than other war-affected communities of the capriciousness of donor commitments (diplomatic, military, developmental, and humanitarian).

### **Decentralization requires sustained support.**

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The greatest challenge for local governments in BiH is to make the decentralized governance system decreed by the Dayton Accord operational and effective. The cantonal government has a great amount of power on paper but is only gradually developing the resources to properly undertake its responsibilities. Local authorities struggle with the difficult challenge of building local economies in order to deal with poverty and to improve the delivery of essential urban services. If they are to meet these challenges, local governments will have to make important changes in governance methods and modes of thinking.

### **Partnerships are important.**

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Tuzla has been able to capitalize on a variety of partnerships in its pursuit of improved local governance and development planning for the region. Because so many issues cross over jurisdictional boundaries, it is difficult if not impossible for municipalities to solve most problems on their own. Leadership and championship drive the process of development. Tuzla benefited from strong local leadership among elected officials, who championed and stewarded a difficult process of change in institutional practices and mindsets. This has allowed the region to emerge as a pioneer and model in local governance and local government management.

**Diversity of ethnicity is not a problem, but rather an opportunity.**

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The recent history of the Tuzla region has demonstrated that, with determination and focus, a multi-ethnic society can be united. It can work together to harness its different strengths toward common goals.

**Consolidated action plans based on a solid strategic plan can move forward development.**

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Tuzla placed an emphasis on first developing a comprehensive understanding of itself and its issues, second translating this understanding into consensus on the future through a solid strategic planning framework, and third through developing concrete plans of action on priority matters. This methodology has given local governments a tool to bring about change.

**We can learn from other places.**

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Tuzla has networked with cities and municipalities from around Europe and North America. This has allowed it to learn from and be inspired by the successes and failures of others.

**Listening and communicating is the beginning of solving problems.**

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Local governments in the Tuzla region took seriously the need to consult with and involve their citizens. This was an important first step in moving away from the old way of doing things and moving towards bringing in a new approach to tackling local problems.



**Citizens must have ownership or at least believe they have influence within the local government process.**

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Without citizens feeling they are part of determining their own path to the future, they cannot be expected to contribute to achieving that desired future.

**Elected officials must earn the trust of the citizenry.**

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Taxpayers are entitled to know exactly how their tax dollars are spent. For this to happen, the public must demand and be given transparency and accountability by local elected officials.

**Local governments can play a role in strengthening civil society.**

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Bosnia has had good experiences in recent years in harnessing the power of people through building and strengthening non-governmental and community-based organizations. A strong and active civil society can help local politicians to govern. Municipalities have it within their power to strengthen the voice and advocacy of their communities.

**Big problems seem insurmountable, but can be broken down into manageable segments.**

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Immediately after the conflict, the challenge of rebuilding and developing the Tuzla region was enormous. Prioritization of the problems to tackle first was difficult. And prospects for improving the quality of life seemed almost unattainable. The use of participatory strategic planning provided the mechanism for finding consensus among various players on these difficult trade-offs.

**The process of privatizing state-owned facilities must result in a dividend being paid back to communities.**

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This is especially true of industries that produce environmental or social externalities. For example, there is a need to find a model whereby the local authority receives royalty, compensation or revenue from any privatized industry that continues to pollute.

# Case Study 2

## Palestinian Municipal Management Programme (PMMP)\*

### ABSTRACT

*The ongoing violent confrontations between Israelis and Palestinians are having devastating social, economic and political effects in Palestinian society. Palestinian municipalities, the only order of government that is still functioning, face enormous challenges as they try to provide leadership and basic services to their constituents. The Palestinian Territories Municipal Management Programme (PMMP), managed by the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM) with funding from the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), is working with the Rafah municipality to build capacity and enhance public participation in municipal management. The PMMP is an example of a project that is making a positive contribution to the peace and unity environment, as well as an example of a project that is hindered and limited by a continuing conflict situation that it alone cannot stop.*

### 1. Peacebuilding & Unity Context

**Civilians** are the principal victims in the

ebb and flow of militarized violence in Israel, the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip and Palestinian Authority Territories. Conflict has been marked by attacks on civilians and civilian objects by both Israeli security forces and Palestinian armed groups. Over seven hundred Palestinian and two hundred Israeli children, women, and men civilians were killed in 2001, and some 16,000 Palestinians and 1,700 Israelis were injured<sup>6</sup>.

**Targeting civilians** is a breach of the laws of armed conflict: "The civilian population as such, as well as individual civilians, shall not be the object of attack. Acts or threats of violence the primary purpose of which is to spread terror among the civilian population is prohibited." *Protocol 1 Additional to the Geneva Conventions of 1949* (adopted June 1977). Israel has not ratified this Protocol, but, as customary law it is universally applicable regardless of ratification.

\* This section was written by Kenneth Bush, with input from the Middle-East Programme team at FCM.

<sup>6</sup> Human Rights Watch Annual Report 2001.

In response to the conflict situation, the Israeli army has taken a number of measures: imposing a strict closure on the Territories; restricting the mobility of goods and people; and refusing to transfer money owing to Palestinians. A network of over 20 fixed and mobile military check points on main roads has divided the Gaza Strip into three sections, preventing people and goods from moving freely within, and into and out of, Gaza. From a peace and **unity** perspective, closures cut constructive link-ages between Israelis and Palestinians and escalate tensions and extremism on both sides.

The economic consequences on the lives, livelihoods, and health of Palestinians have been devastating. The situation has reduced economic productivity and access to basic services and has increased production costs and unemployment. Poverty levels in the Gaza Strip have been traditionally high and the situation has seriously worsened since the start of the uprising. Palestinians who work in Israel have not been allowed to travel to work resulting in a sharp drop in the income level of many Palestinians. Real per capita income has dropped by at least 30% compared to 1994

**Unity because of Adversity:**

Because of Israeli closures, the municipality of Khan Yunis had no access to its landfill site. In response, the nearby community of Rafah opened its landfill site to Khan Yunis at no cost. The degree to which this contributed to increased unity and cooperation depends on whether such cooperation spilled over into other sectors and areas of activity.

levels. In the West Bank and Gaza, the number of poor (defined as those with a consumption of less than US \$2 per day) rose sharply from 0.6 million in September 2000 to 1.5 million by the end of 2001.

The World Bank estimates that it will take the Palestinian Authority (PA) several years to return to the pre-crisis level of economic activity and real per capita income. 80 percent of PA revenues come from indirect taxes on consumption. Since December 2000, Israel has refused to transfer to the PA funds that are collected by the Israeli Tax Administration but which accrue to the PA through the Revenue Clearance System. At the end of 2001, this was estimated at US \$ 507 million.

The violent confrontations have not only caused major economic problems but have also resulted in serious damage to economic assets, personal and public properties and infrastructure. Damage has been reported in all sectors: water, wastewater, solid waste, electricity, agriculture and roads. The destruction of infrastructure and services has led to a substantial increase in the cost of service delivery and, in many cases, to the break down in service delivery altogether. As the PA capacity for service provision is destroyed by systematic IDF attacks, civilian populations are increasingly dependent on support from social and charitable sub-organizations of extremist political-military groups. The support base and institutional strength of these groups are thus deepened, and the net result is anti-peace and anti-unity.



## 2. Local Governance Context

The development of effective public institutions was a major goal of the PA prior to the uprising, and a good deal of progress had been made in establishing institutional frameworks, increasing skills and capacity, clarifying legislative and legal frameworks, and strengthening financial systems. In addition, major progress had been made in strengthening local government institutions and services. The Palestinian Ministry of Local Government (MLG) has the mandate to establish a system of local government that not only

has the capacity to provide for its residents but is also transparent, accountable, and responsive. In addition, the MLG has been tasked with the responsibility of advancing administrative and financial decentralization as well as rebuilding infrastructure and services.

Unfortunately, the violent conflicts between Palestinian and Israeli entities have brought the Palestinian economy to almost a complete halt. Gains that have been achieved over the years are dwindling away. Palestinian institutions, including the police and the judiciary, are on the verge of collapse. Their capacity to provide public services and maintain development projects has been seriously curtailed. Basic services such as water supply, road networks, electricity grids, health and educational facilities have been disrupted or discontinued.

Local government continues to provide leadership and basic services to its population. Nevertheless, years of neglect and Israeli occupation have inundated **municipalities** in the Palestinian Territories with enormous challenges. Some of the constraints they face include lack of resources, high poverty levels, lack of skilled manpower, a growing refugee problem, poor information networks, a lack of basic infrastructure, a weak and unclear institutional structure and a high degree of central government control. Further aggravating the situation is the physical deterioration of the territories as well as the continuing political and economic uncertainty and instability that characterize the region.

Support should focus equally on the leadership roles of **municipalities** during the violence as after it. Leadership and management capacities during violent conflict, are not only useful in post-conflict settings, they are critical for nurturing the structures and processes that create peace.

## 3. Project Description

As part of the CIDA's on-going support to development in the Palestinian Territories, the Palestinian Municipal Management Project (PMMP) was developed in partnership with the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM) to help the MLG achieve its goals. Implemented by FCM's International Centre for Municipal Development (FCM-ICMD), PMMP aimed to improve the management capacity and enhance the level of public participation in municipal management, with a view to increasing the ability of municipalities in





the Palestinian Territories to provide for basic human needs. PMMP has focused on one municipality in particular, Rafah, in the Gaza Strip.

Project activities were delivered at three levels: the community, the municipality of Rafah and the MLG. Activities at all levels were interrelated to support and reinforce capacity-building and public participation initiatives. The community level component was designed to enhance linkages between community-based groups and the municipality, and to assist local groups in improving the quality of life in Rafah through the implementation of the Local Initiative Support Fund and development education activities. The municipal level component was designed to assist Rafah with improving its municipal management systems and

increasing public involvement in data management, strategic and long-term planning, solid waste and water management, institutional capacity-building and gender development. The MLG component was designed to increase the capacity of the Ministry to assist Palestinian municipalities in improving their municipal service delivery, disseminate best practices and coordinate training programs.

The implementation of the project started in 1998, and considerable strides were initially made, contributing to improved management capacity of Rafah municipality and increased levels of public participation. After the violent uprising in September 2000, the project faced a number of delays and was finally completed in June 2002.

Key activities of the PMMP include:

- *Establishing a data bank* and training decision-makers to ensure its effective use.
- *Preparing an official municipal plan*, including training of officials in Rafah as well as those from other municipalities.
- *Improving solid waste management*. Municipal staff was trained in the skills required to prepare and implement operational plans in solid waste management and obtain active public participation. This enhanced the municipal capacity to engage the public in waste management programs/ activities /awareness.
- *Environmental impact assessment (EIA) training*. Municipal officials were trained in EIA to enhance the capacity of municipal officials to consider and interpret the environmental impact of digging water wells.
- *Financial management and analysis training* for municipal officials to improve their capacity to prepare budgets and use accounting systems.
- *Leadership, management and capacity-building*. This involved: enhancing municipal senior managers' skills in identifying leadership training and strategic planning needs; improving leadership skills to strategically plan and manage; enhancing municipal and MLG officials' skills in preparing operational plans, assessing performance, developing policy documents and providing services; and developing policies, processes and plans to guide management processes.
- *Establishing a Local Initiatives Support Fund* to strengthen the capacity of local neighbourhood committees and linkages between community groups and the municipality, so as to improve services to the community and increase public participation.

## Project Location: Rafah Municipality

The City of Rafah was selected given Canada's long history of involvement in providing support to Palestinian refugees. Rafah is located at the southern end of the Gaza Strip, which gives it strategic importance. Over the past twenty years, the city has grown dramatically, both as a result of a large number of refugees and a high natural growth rate. Approximately 70 per cent of Rafah's residents live in refugee camps.

Rafah's proximity to the Mediterranean Sea, Gaza International Airport and the planned development of the Free Zone Industrial Estates provides for significant economic and social development potential. Yet, political uncertainty and the municipal government's inability to use existing resources hinder this potential. This situation is exacerbated by the presence of Israeli settlements and the land distribution under Palestinian and Israeli control, which make it difficult to have effective influence over resources and land use.

Like other Palestinian municipalities, **Rafah**

The impact of the last 18 months of violence on **Rafah** has been dramatic: 85% of the population is not able to pay municipal fees and charges; 86% of the population cannot pay electricity charges; and 45% of the population is without any source of income. (World Bank)

was faced with many challenges: increasing financial resources, reducing poverty, increasing skilled manpower, addressing the refugee problem, improving information



networks, developing basic infrastructure, strengthening institutional structures and decentralizing government systems.

A second phase of the project is now beginning, and will focus on both Rafah and Khan Yunis municipalities. Khan Yunis neighbors Rafah, and shares many demographic and economic indicators.

### Role of Local Government in the Project

Despite what may seem to be a daunting task, there is a strong political will to establish a system of local government in the PA that is both decentralized and democratic. The PMMP supports and reinforces existing political willingness by enhancing municipal management capacity and public participation in decision making.

PMMP is now in its second phase (2003-2006), which will build on the successes and lessons learned from phase I. PMMP is focused on the

role of municipalities in dealing with the current conflict situation as well as addressing the development priorities of their communities. The project's goal is to support peace and development initiatives to improve the quality of life and achieve sustainable communities in the Palestinian municipalities of Rafah and Khan Yunis. The intended outcomes of PMMP include:

- increased municipal capacity to design and implement local economic development programs and poverty reduction initiatives;
- increased accessibility to municipal services and infrastructure;
- community members, especially women, actively involved in reconstruction and in municipal affairs and decision-making;
- more effective municipal government in addressing emergencies; and
- increased capacity of MLG to support municipal government services and functions.

## 4. Good Practices in Local Governance & Peacebuilding

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The design and implementation of the PMMP presents a number of examples of good practices in the context of peacebuilding and unity:

**Emphasize devolution of power to the local level.** The project made considerable strides and contributed to improving the management capacity of Rafah municipality and increasing levels of public participation. In PMMP, all control, monitoring, and delivery rest at the municipal level.

**Build capacity and leadership abilities of local government.** Local government continues to provide leadership and basic services to its population, however, cash shortages and a lack of resources are increasingly crippling the capacity of municipalities to deliver services. In order to strengthen the municipality's leadership role, a core group of 22 municipal staff were trained to be agents of change and lead development efforts in Rafah. Training helped improve competencies, apply system thinking and strategic planning concepts to real issues, develop programs, policies, and solutions to address priority objectives and use the legislative and management tools available to better achieve a vision for their city and organization.

**Actively involve citizens in municipal planning and decision-making.** Ensuring effective and active cooperation with all stakeholders is a means of promoting accountability and monitoring cost-effective implementation. Public participation has been sought in data collection, the implementation of solid waste pilot projects, environmental impact assessments and the visioning exercises. Under PMMP, Rafah staff capacity to articulate their vision of the future and solicit community participation has improved. Rafah Strategic Directions 2015 was prepared and adopted by council to guide future development efforts, and in 1999, approximately 500 people from all sectors of the community participated in a series of public consultation meetings. The credibility and transparency of the community consultation process were ensured by communicating the results of the public consultations back to them.

The collection and use of data is very political and can therefore increase tensions: data can be used to monitor and control populations, to extract resources (e.g., through taxes) and to allocate public resources (creating fear in some groups that they may lose out). However, to the extent that the collection and use of data is participatory and transparent, while protecting rights of privacy, it can contribute to increased planning and decision-

making capacity as well as increased trust and accountability within and between state-like authorities and civil society.

**Support community ownership of development activities.** PMMP encouraged local ownership and empowerment of the community through the provision of funds to support local NGOs for small community service projects. Eight locally identified projects were implemented and completed in Rafah. The guidelines and the functioning of the Local Initiatives Support Fund have provided a useful model for community development initiatives that empower local institutions and foster linkages between key actors in communities.

**Support cooperation at different levels of government.** The Project is a combination of components at the municipal, community and ministry levels. Activities at all levels are interrelated to support and reinforce capacity-building and public participation initiatives. The incorporation of senior officials from other municipalities serves to increase the pool of ideas and inputs into the planning process, and, from a peace and unity perspective, may also strengthen personal and professional linkages in the Palestinian Territories, thereby contributing to solidarity and unity building between separated communities.

**Enable access to scarce resources.** Access to water is one of the most volatile and political issues in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict because of its scarcity and Israel's dependence on the subterranean water supply of the West Bank<sup>7</sup>. Conflict has been intertwined with water disputes, and occupation of the West Bank allows the Israeli state to control vital water supplies that originate in the West Bank but are consumed for the most part in Israel. In this context, Environmental Impact Assessment capacity, as developed in the PMMP, may contribute to ecological sustainability.

In addition to these good practices, the PMMP has also been successful in how it has:

- given Rafah's leaders and citizens tools and processes to respond to challenges and improve municipal governance, as well as physical and tangible products to demonstrate positive changes;
- capitalized on strong political will to support local government development and decentralization;

- made on-going investments in training and capacity-building; and
- been sensitive to local sensibilities by introducing new and progressive ideas that are relevant and applicable to local culture and conditions.

## 5. Lessons Learned

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The peace and conflict environment in Israel and the Palestinian territories is characterized by violent conflict that has escalated out of control. The impact on the capacity of local government to function effectively has been dramatic. The destruction of infrastructure and services has led to a substantial increase in the cost of service delivery and, in many cases, ultimately to the breakdown in service delivery altogether.



The protracted conflict has made it difficult to focus on long-term development objectives. Thus, the primary focus of the PMMP was initiating and implementing responsive emergency projects, while maintaining a vision and framework for longer-term capacity development. Peace and development objectives remain the framework for the PMMP. Support to Palestinian municipalities at this stage will prepare them to take a leadership role once the violence ends. Moreover, it will support their emergency and reconstruction efforts in the short-term (services, employment opportunities, etc.) as well as provide them with the capacity to plan for future development.

<sup>7</sup> For further information see: Miriam R. Lowi (1993). "Bridging the Divide: Transboundary Resource Disputes and the Case of West Bank Water," *International Security*, 18:1 (Summer), pp. 113-138 and Diane Raines Ward, *Water Wars: Drought, Flood, Folly & the Politics of Thirst* (London: Riverhead, 2003).

# Case Study 3

## Zones of Peace Project\*

### ABSTRACT

*Zones of Peace are part of the effort to halt armed hostilities in the Autonomous Region in search of Muslim Mindanao, the Philippines. They are also an effort to lay the groundwork for pluralism and dialogue at the local level and pursue a development agenda based on a community's own terms. The Zones of Peace project was designed to support the establishment of social spaces within which conflict-affected communities can identify and resolve problems in culturally appropriate non-violent ways. The project had two components: capacity-building and community-based planning. The utility of considering both components of the project is that it allows us to make the critical links between the support and cultivation of local peacebuilding resources on the one hand, and their application, on the other.*

*The material presented in this case study is drawn from a limited number of project documents and related materials. The central focus of the case study is a project proposal, rather than an actual project. While the case study follows the same format of the others in this collection, it illustrates how a peace and unity lens may be used to sift through and critically assess project proposals.*

### 1. Peacebuilding & Unity Context<sup>8</sup>

The socio-political context of the proposed sites for the Zones of Peace (ZOP) project reflects the complexity of the Philippine geography – an archipelago with differing concentrations of conflict and social organization, where even the history of peace negotiations is disjointed and diverse. Mindanao's Muslim (or Moro) and indigenous Lumad peoples, now outnumbered by majority Filipinos – the largely Christian descendants of 20th century settlers from the northern and central Philippines – are asserting rights to their traditional lands and to self-determination.

\* This section was written by Kenneth Bush, with input from Myn Garcia.

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The Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF) resorted to a war for independence in the 1970s, after Philippine President Ferdinand Marcos declared martial law. Meanwhile, a communist-led rebellion spread from the northern Philippines to **Mindanao**,

Many scholars argue that the **Mindanao** conflicts are not fueled by religious differences, though the Muslim and Christian vigilante groups appeared and attacked the other communities and places of worship. The economic and political deprivations of minorization (relative deprivations, loss of ancestral domains, militarization and Rights violations) are more often identified as underlying causes of the conflict. More recently, emphasis has been placed on the cultural dimension: competing world views, ways of life and values related to land ownership, governance and justice.

drawing in many majority Filipinos, particularly among the rural poor, and some Lumads into the New People's Army (NPA). Moro rebellion has been explained as a response to the

forcible annexation and consequent historical injustice by Islamicized ethno-linguistic groups in Mindanao.

September 1996 is a critical date on the path towards lasting peace in the Philippines because that was when the **Mindanao Peace Agreement** was signed between

former President Ramos and the Governor of in Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao. All previous attempts to negotiate an end to the 24 years of civil war – in which over 120,000 people died – had failed to define a sustainable settlement. After the Agreement, both the Government and local leaders seemed genuinely committed to post-conflict reconstruction for peace and development in Mindanao, especially in the Special Zone of Peace and Development (SZOPAD).

Like all **peace processes**, the government-MNLF process was distinctively creative in its design and implementation. The strategies the parties pursued in the four years of negotiations show a commendable approach to peacemaking — in their commitment to maintaining multiple channels of dialogue and communication, in their approach to institutionalising communication and negotiations and through the use of informal networks. The Ramos government's approach to negotiations (defined as the 'Six Paths to Peace') is an example of enormous international value in rhetorical intent and practice. Yet despite a negotiating process exemplary in so many ways, the resulting settlement has appeared vulnerable from the start. The much vaunted 'consensus and consultations' were largely limited to the negotiating parties, except for a few token efforts to communicate with civil society organizations. Thus both parties found it difficult to persuade a wider public of the wisdom of the deal when its terms were finally announced.

In mid-2000, full-scale war began again in Mindanao, fully destroying the ceasefires with the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) and **MNLF**.

The 1996 Peace Agreement should not have been expected to end violence in Mindanao. The **MNLF** was only one of several groups that had taken up arms against the Philippine government. The others included the MILF, the much smaller Abu Sayyaf and Islamic Command Council, as well as the left-wing New People's Army and Revolutionary People's Army. In these circumstances, an accord between the government and any single rebel group, however significant, was exclusionary by definition, and thus risked falling short of the disparate aspirations of both other armed Moro groups and unrepresented civil society organizations.

Militarized violence devastated already weakened levels of agricultural production, infrastructure, and economic development.



The Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM) has a population of about 2 million people. As of May 2000, 413,171 individuals from 60 towns and cities have been displaced. Its four component provinces are among the most depressed in the Philippines, with a 51% to 54% poverty incidence, according to 1991 data from the National Economic Development Authority. About 44% of the population is in the 1-14 years age bracket, and 56% of the population is in the 15-64 years age bracket. The average income of the region is approximately 60% of the national average. Only 6 out of ten ARMM residents aged 10 to 64 years enjoy functional literacy, compared to nine out of ten in the national capital region. The ARMM has the lowest life expectancy, percentage of high school graduates, primary and secondary enrolment rates, level of functional literacy, and proportion of population without improved access to water sources.

## 2. Local Governance Context

As of 2002, the Philippines are divided into approximately 79 provinces, 112 cities, 1496 municipalities and 41,944 baranguays. These provinces, cities and municipalities constitute the country's Local Government Units (LGUs).

LGUs were established as a result of the 1991 Local Government Code, which was intended to radically transform the country's highly centralized administrative and political systems. The Code transferred the delivery of a wide range of basic services to LGUs, affecting the health, social services, environment, agriculture, public works, education, tourism, telecommunications, and housing sectors. In addition to the increased delivery of services, LGUs were equipped with regulatory powers necessary to enforce legal provisions related to areas as diverse as environmental laws, food inspection, reclassification of agricultural lands, enforcement of national building codes, and land use and development control.

Another dimension of institutional reform was the inclusion of civil society in the decision-making process. The Code provided for NGOs and people's organizations (POs) to be represented on local development councils, local health boards and local school boards.

LGUs were also equipped with increased financial stability and autonomy and far greater administrative flexibility in addressing local challenges. Specifically, LGUs were provided powers of taxation, a higher proportion of national budgets and the ability to access commercial sources of financing and enter into partnerships with private sector interests.



Despite the wide-ranging nature of the reforms, local governance in the Philippines is faced with several challenges and limitations:

- Continued lack of financial resources at the local level, and continued dominance of central government in controlling resource allocation.
- Citizen participation has become a more regular feature of local governance, though the extent to which LGUs have developed partnerships with civil society organizations is still limited.
- There continue to be regular instances of corruption and graft at the local level, associated with inadequate systems of local accountability.

The Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao, better known as the ARMM, is a region located in the southern portion of Mindanao and includes the mainland provinces of Lanao del Sur, Maguindanao and the traditional island centers of Muslim economic, political and cultural activities: Sulu and Tawi-Tawi in the Sulu archipelago. Considered the 15th region of the Philippines, the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM) was created on November 6, 1990 by Republic Act 6734, which was later amended by RA 9054.

ARMM covers 94 municipalities, one city (Marawi) and five provinces (Maguindanao, Lanao Sur, Basilan, Sulu, Tawi-Tawi). It is administered by the Regional Autonomous Government. The national and local governments provide social and health services support in the region.

Civil society in Mindanao, like that in other regions, is a complicated terrain of networks, coalitions and political alignments. Varying orientations and interests compete for popular attention, loyalty and sources of funding. The inherent tensions among some of these groups are rooted in their divergent political orientations. At times they explode in what the non-governmental organization (NGO) community refers to as 'turfin', or the concern of one network to protect its line of work or 'turf'.

### 3. Project Description

The *Zones of Peace* project has two main components: (1) a six-month project to strengthen the ties between local government workers and the civil society so they can work together to sustain peace; and (2) support for local teams to develop a formal proposal to launch their own Zones of Peace. The principal organizations involved in this initiative were the CIDA funded Philippines-Canada Local Government Support Program (LGSP) and Community Organizing Multiversion (CoM) sa Mindanaw.

#### *What is a Zone of Peace?*

A Zone of Peace is loosely understood in this project to describe many kinds of endeavors, some partly community-initiated, arising from the concept of establishing a territory where everyone (refugees, former rebels and soldiers) can rebuild their lives in solidarity and relative peace.

Zones of Peace are geographical areas, ranging in size from the area covered by a neighborhood to that of a province, which community residents themselves declare off-limits to armed conflict. They are not, however, simply gun-free zones. Zones of Peace are actual and operational community-managed entities that are gaining ground all over the country. Based on terms and conditions set by the people themselves, they are maintained and reinforced by the community's sustained, creative expressions of commitment to peacebuilding, which are expressed and managed through community-based implementing structures.

Zones of Peace constitute a people-initiated, community-based response to the situation of raging armed conflict in the country. They contribute to build a constituency for peace at the grassroots level, and work to immediately relieve local communities, especially the civilian population, of the burden of war. Through Zones of Peace action, communities seek to create a social space in which to address and resolve community issues as well as to explore alternative modes of conflict resolution, in accordance with their local culture and traditions. The term Zone of Peace has also been used to describe UNDP-supported resettlement sites for families of former rebels belonging to the MNLF. In this case, Peace Zones have been accorded the status of 'special development areas', and as such, communities are treated as sites where roots of non-peace may be addressed through the implementation of development projects.

Despite the variation in understanding and use of the term Zones of Peace, there are basic parameters within which the concept should be located. Zones of Peace are:

- people-initiated responses to armed conflict
- locally-based and locally-focused
- a means of addressing immediate issues of militarized violence
- a foundation for pluralism and dialogue
- implemented by community-based structures
- empowering, giving communities the opportunity to make decisions that are affecting the community.

In the Philippines, there is both an awareness of and a place for Zones of Peace within national and local political cultures<sup>9</sup>.

9 To the point of having one of the best explanations of ZOPS articulated in national legislation: Explanatory Note to the Peace Zones Policy Act of 2000 by Rep. Jaime D. Jacob in the Eleventh Congress of the Republic of the Philippines (ENPZPA) [http://justpeace.net.ph/process/legal/le2000\\_1013\\_01.htm](http://justpeace.net.ph/process/legal/le2000_1013_01.htm)

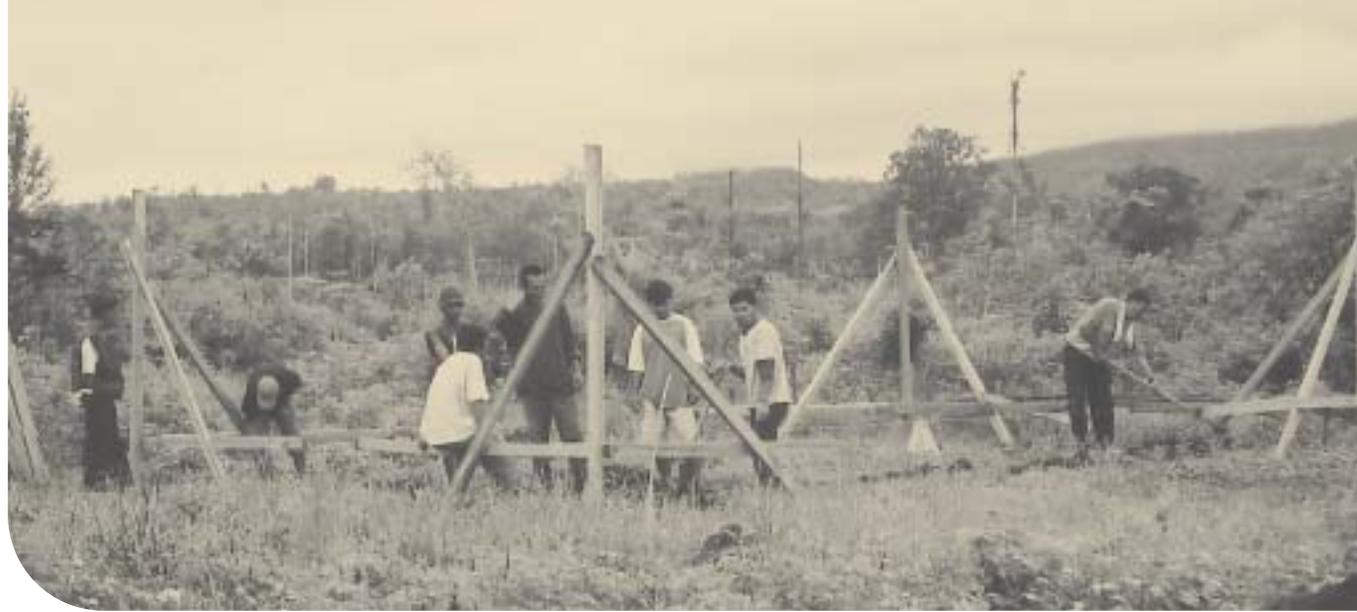
The objective of the Zones of Peace project is to strengthen LGU and civil society capacities for the promotion of peace and unity. Community organizing is an integral approach in the overall project strategy, as is the integration of gender equality.

The project proposal outlines four main stages for the project:

- 1) Community profiling of the Zones of Peace using Participatory Resource Appraisal
- 2) Zone of Peace development planning based on results of a profiling activity
- 3) Issue-based mobilization and implementation based on Zones of Peace development plans, including the implementation of pilot projects for peace and development
- 4) Monitoring and evaluation of the pilot projects and consolidation of peace and development initiatives

**The primary activities used include:**

- Capacity-Building Workshops – On-site workshops on Community Profiling, Participatory Resource Appraisal, Peace Zone/Barangay Development Planning and Project Development and Management to be participated in by Civil Society Organizations (NGO/PO leaders, Community Organizers). As its counterpart contribution to the project, CO Multiversity will field two trained Community Organizers who will



train local volunteers from the Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) in each peace zone. The proponent shall ensure that there is gender balance in the selection of the participants for the workshops.

- Mentoring/ Coaching – On-site individual and/or small group mentoring/coaching of each LGU on (1) the formulation and advocacy of local policies identified in the barangay development plans of the peace zones (ordinances and implementing guidelines); and, (2) monitoring and evaluation of projects/ action areas identified for initial implementation.

The first project component involves a series of pilot workshops in four of the nine towns in the ARMM affected by the war. The goal of the workshops is to establish and nurture long-term peace-building among local individuals and institutions, and to relocate peace as a significant cultural value in the people's sense of history and consciousness.

The second component of the project flows directly from the first: establishing Zones of Peace in six LGUs in which capacity-building workshops had been held. LGUs will be mentored in peace negotiations, facilitation and dialogue skills, to enable them to develop and strengthen Peace and Order Councils in their locality.

**Project Location: Balabagan, Kapatagan, Matanog, Datu Odin Sinsuat**

The specific project sites for launching Zones of Peace were four towns in the ARMM affected by the war: Balabagan, Kapatagan, Matanog and Datu Odin Sinsuat. Three of the four towns are contiguous and adjacent areas along the coast of Illana Bay. The Narciso Ramos Highway, scenes of several bloody and fierce battles during the “All-Out War” against the MILF in 2000, has been built through the towns as a main passageway. The economy in the area is largely agricultural,

with small trading and fishing businesses augmenting incomes. A handful of professionals and educated townspeople make up the leadership and local government workers.

Waves of migration have made these places politically fragile: people of different religions, histories and cultures have interacted for at least three generations now. The populations in the project sites include a majority of native Islamic tribes (Maranaos, Maguindanaos and Iranuns), as well as 10-40 percent migrants.

One of the sites, **Matanog**, is the heartland of the MILF struggle for self-rule. The rebels continue to have control over the biggest MILF stronghold. It is also the seat of highly religious ulama or Islamic spiritual leaders who believe in the potential of Islam as a force for change and peace.

### **Balabagan** keeps a fragile harmony

between its majority Muslim inhabitants and its Christian-Visayan migrants in balance, in large part because of the familial history of the town mayor. A blend of cultures makes the town progressive, though at the same time volatile. Most residents are supportive of the government,

The mayor of **Balabagan's** mother, a Christian with Cebuano roots, converted to Islam when she married the sultan's first-born son. Her marriage to a mixed-blooded Muslim sealed a reconciliation between two feuding clans, and therein, a fragile peace in Balabagan.



military peacekeeping forces and the political status quo rather than the MNLF or MILF. Balabagan has therefore been the target of rebel attacks and clashes since the 1960s.

**Kapatagan** is a classic disaster area: it suffered the most during the war as its predominantly Muslim population is perceived to be rebel supporters. It is also conflict-ridden by various unresolved ridos (blood feuds). Its mayor has kept a cautious stance vis-à-vis her defeated political opponent: the elections which brought her to office have been contested and her opponent, who owns the land on which the town hall is built, refuses to allow her to hold office there.

The experience of conflict in **Datu Odin Sinsuat** is quite unique: it was considered an oasis during the 2000 MILF – military war. Spillover effects from nearby clashes, including the stream of refugees and fugitive rebels as well as the soldiers' encampments, have been a burden for the town. Its inclusion along with disaster towns in the project could provide lessons for towns that have served as a sort of caregiver during and after violent conflict.

### **The Role of Local Government in the Project**

The objectives of the Zones of Peace project are focused on strengthening the capacity of LGUs and Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) in order to promote peace and unity. The project will do this by:

- enhancing the awareness and commitment of LGUs and CSOs to address peace and unity issues identified by residents of peace zones;
- mobilizing formal and non-formal structures and mechanisms within LGUs for addressing issues and coordinating policy support in declared peace zones; and
- consolidating LGU and CSO initiatives on peace and unity in declared peace zones in to sustainable and replicable programs.

## 4. Good Practices in Local Governance & Peacebuilding

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Good practices suggested below apply to project design rather than implementation.

### **Peacebuilding projects are people projects.**

Peacebuilding is not a mechanistic, linear exercise; it is organic, responsive and fundamentally creative. Thus, project proposals, which must frame their work in the language of the donor, often sit uneasily with the fluidity and unpredictability of peace work in conflict-prone areas. At best, proposal writing serves as an interesting and thought-provoking exercise that helps to map out a tiny portion of the project terrain. A critical assessment of the project proposal should spend less time guessing about objectives and outputs and more time on the quality and character of the individuals involved, i.e., What is their track record, demonstrated levels of commitment to peace, integrity and level of connectedness to the issues and communities?

**Respond to and harness aspirations for peace.** The planned capacity-building workshops may constitute a good practice insofar as they create the space within which communities can (1) define for themselves both the obstacles and the opportunities for peace in their community; (2) decide whether and how to move forward collectively; and (3) acquire useful and culturally appropriate skills that may be applied to the first two.

**Understanding people and context is essential to project success.** While we need monitoring tools, we also need an understanding of what has happened and why it has happened; we need reflection and learning. How can an individual maintain his or her commitment in the face of assassination threats and attempts, and other such daunting challenges and obstacles? The answers to these types of questions will tell us more about the potential success or failure of a project than the most sophisticated monitoring methodologies. This is essential for sound project management as well as project transferability.

**Prioritize the development of relationships which will sustain peace.** The Zones of Peace are designed to allow time to develop relationships between the project team and partner communities – relationships that can be consolidated in the six-month capacity-building exercises. Peacebuilding requires relationship-building, and cannot be successful without it.



### **Support champions at the local level.**

A champion is someone who, through moral influence, quiet diplomacy, public presence, or skillful negotiation and maneuvering, is able to positively affect the thinking and behaviour of groups and individuals. By changing individuals and groups, champions induce structural changes in economic, political, and social systems. A champion is usually someone who already has a positive profile in the community, who knows the rules of the game and wants change that contributes to peace and unity. Champions are particularly important in environments characterized by distrust, such as post-conflict settings. In most of the project sites in the Zones of Peace project, there is at least one individual who appears to be an essential champion for the project.

### **Mentor for Peace.** Mentoring requires trust.

Trust requires honesty. Honesty requires empathy. Empathy requires communication. Communication requires presence. These four characteristics serve as the four pillars of mentoring. Their presence does not guarantee success, but their absence does guarantee failure of a mentoring project.



# Case Study 4

## Gender, Peace and Development Project\*

### ABSTRACT

*The aim of the Gender, Peace and Development (GENPEACE) project is to facilitate the journey from conflict to peace in conflict-affected communities in the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao, the Philippines. Through peace literacy education and the establishment of community radio stations, the project has successfully built local capacity for and commitment to building structures of peace. As a result of the project, levels of community knowledge and participation in municipal affairs have increased notably. The GENPEACE project is an example of how to support and work with communities so that they come to own their own peace.*

**Note:** Sections 1 and 2 present the same contextual information provided in Case Study 3: Zones of Peace Project. If you have read the Peacebuilding & Unity Context and Local Government Context in Case Study 3 closely, you may want to move ahead to Section 3: Project Description.

### 1. Peacebuilding & Unity Context<sup>10</sup>

The socio-political context of the proposed sites for the Zones of Peace (ZOP) project reflects the complexity of the Philippine geography – an archipelago with differing concentrations of conflict and social organization, where even the history of peace negotiations is disjointed and diverse. Mindanao’s Muslim (or Moro) and indigenous Lumad peoples, now outnumbered by majority Filipinos – the largely Christian descendants of 20th century settlers from the northern and central Philippines – are asserting rights to their traditional lands and to self-determination.

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forcible annexation and consequent historical injustice by Islamicized ethno-linguistic groups in Mindanao.

September 1996 is a critical date on the path towards lasting peace in the Philippines because that was when the **Mindanao Peace Agreement** was signed between

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In mid-2000, full-scale war began again in Mindanao, fully destroying the ceasefires with the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) and **MNLF**. Militarized violence devastated already weakened levels of agricultural production, infrastructure, and economic development.

Like all **peace processes**, the government-MNLF process was distinctively creative in its design and implementation. The strategies the parties pursued in the four years of negotiations show a commendable approach to peacemaking — in their commitment to maintaining multiple channels of dialogue and communication, in their approach to institutionalising communication and negotiations and through the use of informal networks. The Ramos government's approach to negotiations (defined as the 'Six Paths to Peace') is an example of enormous international value in rhetorical intent and practice. Yet despite a negotiating process exemplary in so many ways, the resulting settlement has appeared vulnerable from the start. The much vaunted 'consensus and consultations' were largely limited to the negotiating parties, except for a few token efforts to communicate with civil society organizations. Thus both parties found it difficult to persuade a wider public of the wisdom of the deal when its terms were finally announced.

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15-64 years age bracket. The average income of the region is approximately 60% of the national average. Only 6 out of ten ARMM residents aged 10 to 64 years enjoy functional literacy, compared to nine out of ten in the national capital region. The ARMM has the lowest life expectancy, percentage of high school graduates, primary and secondary enrolment rates, level of functional literacy, and proportion of population without improved access to water sources.

## 2. Local Governance Context

As of 2002, the Philippines are divided into approximately 79 provinces, 112 cities, 1496 municipalities and 41,944 baranguays. These provinces, cities and municipalities constitute the country's Local Government Units (LGUs).

LGUs were established as a result of the 1991 Local Government Code, which was intended to radically transform the country's highly centralized administrative and political systems. The Code transferred the delivery of a wide range of basic services to LGUs, affecting the health, social services, environment, agriculture, public works, education, tourism, telecommunications, and housing sectors. In addition to the increased delivery of services, LGUs were equipped with regulatory powers necessary to enforce legal provisions related to areas as diverse as environmental laws, food inspection, reclassification of agricultural lands, enforcement of national building codes, and land use and development control.

Another dimension of institutional reform was the inclusion of civil society in the decision-making process. The Code provided for NGOs and people's organizations (POs) to be represented on local development councils, local health boards and local school boards.

LGUs were also equipped with increased financial stability and autonomy and far greater administrative flexibility in addressing local challenges. Specifically, LGUs were provided powers of taxation, a higher proportion of national budgets and the ability to access commercial sources of financing and enter into partnerships with private sector interests.



Despite the wide-ranging nature of the reforms, local governance in the Philippines is faced with several challenges and limitations:

- Continued lack of financial resources at the local level, and continued dominance of central government in controlling resource allocation.
- Citizen participation has become a more regular feature of local governance, though the extent to which LGUs have developed partnerships with civil society organizations is still limited.
- There continue to be regular instances of corruption and graft at the local level, associated with inadequate systems of local accountability.

The Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao, better known as the ARMM, is a region located in the southern portion of Mindanao and includes the mainland provinces of Lanao del Sur, Maguindanao and the traditional island centers of Muslim economic, political and cultural activities: Sulu and Tawi-Tawi in the Sulu archipelago. Considered the 15th region of the Philippines, the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM) was created on November 6, 1990 by Republic Act 6734, which was later amended by RA 9054.

ARMM covers 94 municipalities, one city (Marawi) and five provinces (Maguindanao, Lanao Sur, Basilan, Sulu, Tawi-Tawi). It is administered by the Regional Autonomous Government. The national and local governments provide social and health services support in the region.

Civil society in Mindanao, like that in other regions, is a complicated terrain of networks, coalitions and political alignments. Varying orientations and interests compete for popular attention, loyalty and sources of funding. The inherent tensions among some of these groups are rooted in their divergent political orientations. At times they explode in what the non-governmental organization (NGO) community refers to as 'turfing', or the concern of one network to protect its line of work or 'turf'.

### 3. Project Description

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The Gender, Peace and Development Project (GENPEACE) is aimed at promoting a culture of peace and gender development among the Tri-people (Christians, Muslims and indigenous Lumads) in areas affected by the Mindanao conflict. This is being achieved through peace literacy education and a joint education and communication initiative to install community radio stations. The project integrates gender in all of its activities, and is building the capacity of women leaders and peace promoters to integrate gender equality in their work.

Since May 1999, the GENPEACE project has been implemented by the Notre Dame Foundation for Charitable Activities-Women in Enterprise Development (NDFCAI-WED) and its partners Neighbours Population and Development Services, Inc. (NPDSI) and Sarang Bangun Foundation, Inc. (SBFI). The project is also being replicated in partnership with selected Peace and Development Councils (PDCs), in order to enhance its development impact throughout the southern Philippines.



## The objectives of the GENPEACE project are to:

- promote gender sensitive community-based peace education in conflict affected areas in Mindanao and build capacities of communities in developing and managing peace activities in their areas;
- mainstream non-formal education programs of functional literacy and continuing education into community-based actions plans through partnership and improved governance; and
- promote the use of community radio as a tool for enhancing community mobilization, collaborative actions, develop effective communications among the people, for peace promotion and community development.

## The GENPEACE project has two main project components:

- *Literacy and Peace Education.* Non-formal education classes are organized in communities, based on the needs of each community. The choice of the nature and kind of intervention is demand-driven: the community of learners identifies the type of classes to be organized. The classes may be functional literacy for

Developing an understanding of “owning conflict” is as important as developing the capacity of communities to “own peace”. Peacebuilding entails both the construction of the structures of peace and the deconstruction of the structures of violence. Thus, developing an understanding of how communities and governments own conflict, i.e., sustain conflict through attitudes, actions, non-actions etc., is an essential ingredient to peace and unity.

level 0 to 3 learners and/or continuing education for functionally literate out-of-school youth and adults. These classes are designed to raise critical awareness and consciousness for peacebuilding activities that are culture sensitive and relevant.

- *Installation of Community Radio.* **Community radio** stations are installed

in identified project sites. LGU’s act as a monetary counterpart for the purchase of the radio transmitter while the project provides other radio equipment and capacity-building training workshops. A Community Media Council of multi-sector membership is organized to manage, supervise and control the radio station. The station is designed to provide vital community news and information to the residents of the municipality. It also is used for regular report of education, literacy and training. Peace promotion and confidence building is regularly aired.

One thing that has been noticed about the GENPEACE project is the underdeveloped link or connection between the peace literacy classes and the **community radio** in the implementation of the project. For example, it is unclear how the radio project was used to launch distance learning programs, which may address the geographical challenge of reaching far-flung villages and encouraging communities to make more constructive use of radio.



In addition to these two components, the promotion of gender-sensitive peace education has been an integral part of project activities. The project has played a vital role in promoting gender-sensitive peace education in the identified project sites. This is being done by providing both women and men equal access to community-based education and other capacity-building activities. Social Mobilization activities were conducted at the very beginning of the project, to gain community support for the project, gain their input on focus and activities and explain why women are prime targets of the project. In Muslim communities, religious leaders are involved in areas where gender issues are considered sensitive.

## Project Location: Six municipalities in Mindanao

The **GENPEACE** project is located in a number of different sites across the southern Philippines: Sultan sa Barongis, Ipil, Busbus, Siocon, Malita and Lake Sebu. These sites were selected based on the following criteria:

An effective element in **GENPEACE** is the presence of effective community organizing from the onset. This makes a big difference in mobilizing the community and stimulating the interest of the different stakeholders to recognize the need to reflect on their prevailing situation and consequently not just own peace but own conflict as well.

- Established Peace and Literacy Councils
- High rates of illiteracy
- High need/ demand for the project
- Community readiness to take part in the project as full stakeholders
- Strategic geographic location
- LGU ability to provide financial counterpart funds

Though each of the project sites is unique, they share these characteristics, and others such as: previous history of conflict; high incidence of poverty; inadequate basic services and livelihood support mechanism such as water supply and electrification; low levels of participation in the development process by poor and marginalized sectors; patriarchal and warring leadership; and limited communication between local government

units and the displaced population on issues of governance. In most communities, unclear and fragmented LGU programs and services have led to deteriorating relationships leading to distrust and suspicion of government motives. Presence of military troops in the area caused apprehension and animosity among the civilian population. In some areas, isolation and discrimination of various tribes have caused great disparity.

**Sultan sa Barongis** is one of the areas in Central Mindanao that was affected by the armed conflict. It is characterized by a high incidence of poverty, illiteracy, inadequate delivery of basic services and limited participation of the poor in community affairs. The area is part of the Special Zone of Peace and Development (SZOPAD), and has been a center of contention between government and rebel forces. Inadequate delivery of basic services by government is a major factor contributing to under-developed schools, roads and bridges, health clinics, electric power and telecommunication. The situation is aggravated by rampant corruption, drug pushing, warring clans and family feuds.



The municipality of **Ipil** includes four barangays (Tinan, Bacalan, Logan and Dumandan), which are referred to as TIBALOD. These communities were chosen as a pilot area of the GENPEACE Project because of the Lumad population, however, because of the presence of Muslims and Christian migrants, TIBALOD are also tri-people.

**Busbus** is a community of mainly Tausug population, mixed with the Sama, Visayans and Bajau. The area is home to many MNLF and MILF combatants and some splinter groups. The years of armed conflict<sup>11</sup> and the continuing unstable peace conditions have left it impoverished, underdeveloped

<sup>11</sup> According to Amnesty International, military operations against Abu Sayyaf, a Muslim separatist armed group involved primarily in kidnapping for ransom, continued throughout the year mainly on Jolo and Basilan islands. In May 2001, group members kidnapped 17 Filipinos and three US citizens from a tourist resort in Palawan and transported them to Basilan. Amid further kidnappings, ransom payments and periodic releases, at least 15 hostages were reported murdered. By the end of 2001, two US citizens and a Filipina remained captive. There were reports of arbitrary arrests, extrajudicial executions and torture, by military and paramilitary personnel, of civilians suspected of being Abu Sayyaf members or sympathizers. This begs the question: *What is/ will be the impact of this situation on the project and vice versa?*



and alienated. Ongoing fighting between these groups and the government has forced families to flock to different evacuation centers. Widespread abject poverty is a major factor in the increased recruitment of civilians into the military component of the dissident groups, as government is corrupt and has failed to deliver basic services. Project implementation in Busbus has been a major problem because of the conflict between the Sarang Bangun Foundation and its community-based implementers.

The municipalities of **Siocon** (known by local residents as “Paraiso”), **Malita** and **Lake Sebu** are all isolated communities that remain under-developed.

**Sensitivities of Language**

By calling the town “**Siocon**” instead of “Paraiso,” is the project aggravating local sensitivities? In politically charged geographies, language and place names become part of the conflict. Consciousness about language and pronunciation is essential if trust is to be earned from communities.



**Role of Local Government in the Project**

While the project was not focused primarily on the role of local government, LGUs played a wide range of roles in project implementation. Most significant was the strong leadership provided by LGU Mayor and senior elected officials in ensuring local acceptance by championing the project. Moreover, champions within the LGU, i.e. Mayor, Vice Mayor, Budget Officer, enabled the Council to support the project and allocate the required budget to take it off the ground. LGUs were also instrumental in building strategic partnerships with community organizations. Follow-up institutional support was evident in facilitating the establishment of multi-stakeholder committees used to oversee Community Radio Stations and to launch local literacy classes. LGUs also provided direct monetary support for the purchase of the radio equipment as well as staff support to assist in project delivery.

**4. Good Practices in Local Governance & Peacebuilding**

**Support of local leaders as champions.** A champion is someone who, through moral influence, quiet diplomacy, public presence, or skillful negotiation and maneuvering, is able to positively affect the thinking and behaviour of groups and individuals. By changing individuals and groups, champions induce structural changes in economic, political, and social systems. A champion is

usually someone who already has a positive profile in the community, who knows the rules of the game and wants change that contributes to peace and unity. Champions are particularly important in environments characterized by distrust, such as post-conflict settings.

In most of the GENPEACE sites there was reference to an individual who appeared to be essential for catalyzing the project, e.g., Mayor and/or Vice Mayor. This was particularly demonstrated in Sultan sa Barongis, Siocon, Malita and Lake Sebu. The LGU of Sultan sa Barongis, led by a committed Mayor, also gave its full support to the GENPEACE Project. The Mayor of Siocon enthusiastically welcomed the project in his municipality, and appointed a local contact person to work in support of it. In Malita and Lake Sebu, Vice Mayors exerted a strong and positive influence in the LGU, convincing the Mayors and council members to take on the community radio project.

### **Focus on change at the municipal level.**

The GENPEACE Project is delivered at the scale of municipalities, as they present a suitable size and relative level of cohesion in which to achieve project results.



**Generating active community participation helps sustain results.** Measurable change has been noted in the levels of active participation and involvement in community assemblies gatherings by community members in all project sites. During recent village elections, there was also a drastic increase on the number of voters in the different project sites, as well as independent voting by peace literacy learners who used to be assisted by other persons in the polling precinct. Engaging peace literacy learners as broadcasters is a distinct feature of the radio station in Sultan sa Barongis, and another means of generating active community involvement in its own development.

One of most positive results of the project has been the emergence of People's Organizations in three project sites. These organizations are largely a product of capacity-building and resource development activities designed to develop and strengthen the institutional and staff capabilities of community-based organizations to design, manage, implement, monitor and evaluate projects. POs are now active partners of the LGUs that are able to source funds from funding agencies and implement community-based projects. Even once the GENPEACE project comes to an end, these POs will be able to lead and sustain community participation in municipal affairs.

### **Build multi-stakeholder partnerships.**

A multi-stakeholder approach, engaging government, donors/NGOs, civil society organizations and the local community, is a necessary ingredient for positive peace and unity. The resulting partnerships between these stakeholders, e.g. communities and their elected leaders, strengthens and empowers all parties involved. Of special note are the Community Media Councils, which have a multi-stakeholder membership, that play a crucial role in ensuring the sustainability of the community radio project beyond donor inputs. Also, the support of strong and active Peace and Order Councils, a local government body like the Municipal Peace and Development Task Force, increases legitimacy and sustainability.

**Facilitate local ownership through community-based initiatives.** Community participation and ownership are crucial aspects of long-term sustainability of both development impact and peace and unity impact. Social cohesion is strongest when majority of members consider themselves to be stakeholders in a particular activity and concern. Conversely, it is weakest when majority are alienated or 'stakeless'. The GENPEACE project emphasizes community demand-driven development needs. Communities are encouraged to identify needs relevant to them, and through intensive consultations, interventions are identified and focused on.

There is an increasing realization among the tri-people of Mindanao that development and progress is synonymous to peace. This is increasingly evident in the active participation of community-based stakeholders in the project; GENPEACE is a way to improve their communities while building peace and unity.

**Institutionalizing a neutral space helps build peace and unity.** The GENPEACE project created fora within which different communities and community stakeholders could meet each other on issues of concern or interest. This neutral inter-group space was immensely important for building relationships between groups, and bringing people from a place of self-interest to one where joint interests were the primary topic.

**Develop strategies to deconstruct structures of violence and construct structures of peace.** Building peace and unity demands that we desegregate the minds of formerly segregated peoples. Communities cannot desegregate until the idea of desegregation has taken root – not necessarily in every member of a community, but in enough individuals to develop a sustainable critical mass of interest in fundamental change. The community radio element of the GENPEACE project was an important means of educating communities for de-segregation. As an exercise

in non-formal education, community radio is flexible enough to explore topics (e.g., biography, geography) that have been divisive for communities. Desegregating the mind through educational activities has a positive impact on the dynamics of peace and unity. Community radio has been a key strategy for doing so in the GENPEACE project.

**Include ex-combatants.** The participation of the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF) ex-combatants in mainstream community development affairs through the GENPEACE Project was significant and important, in terms of both the deconstruction of structures of violence and the construction of structures of peace.

**Develop an understanding of the need to “own conflict” and “own peace”.** Given that peacebuilding entails both the construction of the structures of peace and the deconstruction of the structures of violence, it is essential to develop an understanding of the capacity of communities to “own conflict” as well as “own peace.” Understanding how communities and governments sustain conflict through attitudes, actions, non-actions, and etc., how they “own conflict”, is an essential ingredient to peace and unity.

## 5. Lessons Learned

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### **Weak LGU credibility is a key element of conflict**

All project sites were characterized by a history of conflict, due in part to the limitations of local government. Several factors limited local government credibility:

- **Inability to deliver basic services:** Unclear and fragmented LGU programs and service have led to deteriorating relationships leading to distrust and suspicion of government motives.
- **Exclusion of the population from governance:** Limited communication between local government units and the displaced population on issues of governance denied community members the opportunity to be part of participatory planning.
- **Corruption:** There are continued problems of corruption and lack of accountability at the local level.

The lack of credibility and the inability of local government to play an effective leadership role hinders progress towards peace and unity.

### **Media plays a vital role in building peace**

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Media plays a crucial role in the peace process, particularly radio, which has the greatest influence at the community level. Media sets the agenda for public debate, though it may not participate directly in negotiations. It plays an intermediary facilitator role and acts as a vehicle for information. Media practitioners' relationships with civil society (NGOs, people's organizations and rebel groups) affect coverage of the peace process.

In the Philippines, they have tended to see civil society groups as unimportant and hence not newsworthy. Their perceptions of these groups are shaped by their political conservatism, and they rarely consult NGOs for news related to their social development work. Moreover, media discussions on the peace process have virtually omitted civil society efforts at peace advocacy. The lack of media attention to the vital issues encompassed by the peace process has also contributed to popular misconceptions about the talks between the government and the MNLF, and a resurfacing of the age-old prejudices between Christians and Muslims.

A new breed of journalists appears to be emerging in the Philippines: men and women who advocate community journalism. This is supported and illustrated by the recent creation of the Center for Community Journalism and Development. This Centre aims to build capacities of local media to enable them to make the transformation from war correspondents to peace advocates, from sensational news journalists to investigative, development reporters and from adversaries of local government to critical partners for good governance. While such journalists are still challenged (and at times threatened) by the political powers within mainstream media, progress is evident. The Center for Media Freedom and Responsibility and the Philippine Center for Investigative Journalism are also supporting and promoting peace journalism in the Philippines.

# 5

## Conclusion

The starting point for a local governance framework for peacebuilding is the recognition that local government both affects, and is affected by, the dynamics of peace and conflict. However, while focusing on the role of local government, it is necessary to consider the vital roles of national and state/provincial governments, civil society and private sector organizations in building peace and deconstructing conflict.

The central objective of this document, and in particular the selected case studies, is to better understand how municipal governments can play a role in peacebuilding, and to learn how strengthening local government capacities in conflict-prone settings can avoid violence while contributing to

peace and unity. The five areas of potential peace or conflict impact – conflict management capacities; militarized violence and human security; political structures and processes; economic structures and processes; and social empowerment – (see Annex B) underscore the importance of building effective governance at the local level.

While this document is intended to demonstrate the importance of strengthening municipal government as an institutional mechanism to support peacebuilding and conflict resolution, it is also important to recognize that local government capacity-building and conflict resolution are not synonymous. Local government capacity-building is necessarily a long-term process intended to

enable municipal governments to prevent or mitigate the likelihood of violent conflict. The process of building local government capacity cannot alone address the underlying structural causes of violent conflict. However, the long-term effect of building strong local institutions is the capacity for municipal governments to respond quickly, to defuse potentially violent situations and to become partners in mobilizing peace resources before, during, and after violent conflict erupts.

# 6

## Annexes

# Annex A

**Table 1 – Municipal Government Responsibilities**

	Sector	Sub-Sector
<b>Social Development</b>	Health	Hospital capital – Public health
	Social Services	Social assistance – Subsidized daycare
	Housing	Social housing assistance – Accommodation improvements – Regulations
	Local Democracy	Public consultation and equity – Managing local elections
	Public Safety	Police – Fire protection – Ambulance services – Emergency response
	Recreation & Culture	Libraries/museums – Parks/playgrounds – Recreational activities – Arts programming – Community development
	<b>Environmental Sustainability</b>	Transportation
Environment		Air quality – Drinking water quality standards – Water supplies – Sewers and storm drains – Wastewater treatment – Garbage removal and disposal
Land Use Planning and Development		Planning and zoning by-laws – Preservation of agricultural land
<b>Economic Well-being</b>	Finances and Taxation	Property assessment – Preparation, approval and auditing of budgets – Borrowing approval
	Local Economic Development	Economic development – Community income generation – Poverty reduction programs

# Annex B

## Where to Look for Potential Peace or Conflict Impact?

AREAS OF POTENTIAL PEACE & CONFLICT IMPACT		EXPLANATION	EXAMPLES	
			PEACE IMPACT	CONFLICT IMPACT
1	Conflict Management Capacities	<p>Capacity of state or civil society to (1) manage and resolve conflict without the use of violence, or without the use of authority structures that support illegitimate violence; and (2) promote genuine and sustainable peace.</p> <p>Impact on capacity to identify and respond to peacebuilding opportunities and conflict – creating challenges. This might include formal mechanisms (dispute resolution boards; strengthening legal mechanisms) or more informal mechanisms (low-key meetings, community leader interventions, creating channels for local level dialogue).</p>	<p>1) Initiatives in conflict-prone areas that hire, train, and keep local personnel – especially in administrative, technical, and management positions – strengthen governance capacities of state &amp; societal institutions that deal with conflicts non-violently. Unfortunately, this is the technical and managerial capacity that flees when non-violent conflict turns or re-turns violent.</p> <p>2) Efforts by many organizations (international, governmental, and non-governmental) to include conflict resolution and peacebuilding workshops (and increasingly, PCIA) into their daily work is a substantive contribution to the development of capacities for peace.</p> <p>3) Initiatives that maintain effective outreach, public dialogue, or participatory activities help to keep stakeholders involved and build inter-group trust and understanding.</p>	<p>One of Kosovo's most experienced human rights activists who had been trained in Norway and Geneva had helped to establish a women's legal aid center in the 1990s. During the UN-driven reconstruction exercise she was reduced to a local employee of the OSCE to translate for international staff with a fraction of her experience. Officially, she was unable even to take testimony from victims. This reservoir of local talent should have been the centerpiece of the UN reconstruction strategy. However, the overall impact was a contribution to the incapacity rather than capacity of civil society to rebuild itself upon a foundation of tolerance and respect. (Guest 2000)</p>
			<p><b>SAMPLE INDICATORS*</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Number of conflicts in which governmental/ non-governmental bodies are involved as mediators, facilitators, negotiators, etc.</li> <li>Perception of local mediators and aggrieved parties that conflict can be resolved without use of violence</li> <li>Number conflict resolution workshops – and follow-up</li> </ul>	

\* (These indicators may or may not apply to specific cases. Quantitative and qualitative indicators should be developed. Communities should have complete latitude to identify indicators that make sense to them and their realities).

## Where to Look for Potential Peace or Conflict Impact?

AREAS OF POTENTIAL PEACE & CONFLICT IMPACT		EXPLANATION	EXAMPLES	
			PEACE IMPACT	CONFLICT IMPACT
2	Militarized Violence and Human Security	<p>Direct and indirect impact on (1) patterns and levels of violence by militarised forces; and (2) an individual's and community's sense of security or insecurity, including physical and mental well-being and sense of individual or group identity.</p> <p>Patterns of violence: Different groups in society experience different types and levels of violence and therefore have different levels of insecurity, e.g., women, children, minority groups, marginalized groups, and returnees.</p> <p>Militarized forces include rebels, paramilitaries, war lords, militias, bandits, organized crime rings, vigilante groups – when they use military weapons and structures.</p> <p>Community includes both resident populations and returning populations.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) The inclusion of ex-combatants in peace and reconstruction work in Nicaragua and parts of Mindanao were clear efforts to deconstruct the structures of militarized violence and to construct the structures of peace.</li> <li>2) In many cases, the negotiations for humanitarian ceasefires (e.g., National Immunization Days) have opened up communication channels that have later contributed directly to longer cease fires and even peace talks, as in Sri Lanka. (Bush 2000). In Somalia, the demand from the local population that their children be immunized led local leaders to de-mine roads to permit access for vaccination teams. Orders were issued to combatants that no weapons were to be displayed on the days of the immunization campaigns. Such initiatives have dampened militarized violence and increased human security.</li> </ol>	<p>Working with or through groups which use illegitimate violence and abuse human rights, e.g., protection of convoys, compounds and offices, or as middlemen for the provision of goods and services, is an obvious example of how an initiative can strengthen rule by force and violence (threatened and actual).</p>
		<b>SAMPLE INDICATORS*</b>		
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conflict-related deaths or injuries</li> <li>• Disappearances</li> <li>• Incidence of human rights abuses, including rape, sexual torture and violations of children's rights and effectiveness of official responses to reports of such violations</li> <li>• Levels of domestic violence</li> <li>• Number of riots or other uncontrolled expressions of dissent</li> <li>• Demonstrations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of displaced people</li> <li>• Rate and patterns of repatriation/ displacement</li> <li>• Arrests or detention without probable cause or warrant</li> <li>• Incommunicado detention</li> <li>• Cruel, unusual, or degrading treatment in detention</li> <li>• Inhumane conditions of detainment</li> <li>• Dependence on private security forces</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Perceptions of individual and collective security</li> <li>• Levels of criminality (effectiveness of state responses)</li> <li>• Number of small arms in circulation (e.g., black market price of an assault rifle)</li> <li>• Number of children, women and men involved in military activities</li> <li>• Level of food security</li> </ul>

\* (These indicators may or may not apply to specific cases. Quantitative and qualitative indicators should be developed. Communities should have complete latitude to identify indicators that make sense to them and their realities).

## Where to Look for Potential Peace or Conflict Impact?

AREAS OF POTENTIAL PEACE & CONFLICT IMPACT		EXPLANATION	EXAMPLES	
			PEACE IMPACT	CONFLICT IMPACT
3	Political Structures and Processes	<p>Impact on formal and informal political structures and processes. This could apply from the local municipal level through to the national level. It also refers to strengthening the governance capacities of different levels of government, and the capacities of civil society actors to actively and constructively participate in the political process.</p> <p>This might be evident in: the strengthening of the capacities of legitimate leaders (or reinforcing the rule of anti-democratic forces); increased (or decreased) transparency, accountability, and participation in decisions affecting the public; the strengthening or weakening of the rule of law and representative government.</p>	<p>1) In the late 1990s, the Group for Environmental Monitoring in South Africa undertook a far-reaching participatory, applied research project on the linkages between militarization and ecology. The positive peace impact was clear in (1) the word-for-word inclusion of its research and recommendations in government defense policy; and (2) the mobilization of non-English speaking peasants for the project enabled these groups to continue to express their concerns long after the project was finished, and to contribute to on-going dialogue with government on policies affecting their lives and livelihoods.</p> <p>2) Sustained efforts by local groups in the southern Philippines to create Zones of Peace are inspirational examples of how the mobilization of ideas and people can begin to restructure the political and military structures to create peace from the ground up – even in the midst of on-going violence.</p>	<p>The decision to accept the cheapest bid to rebuild a water tank in a rebel-controlled area of Country X in 2002 produced conflict-creating impacts. Because the project was undertaken by a rebel-controlled front company, workers were forced to work for free, tractor owners were forced to donate the use of their equipment. Funds that should have gone to pay for labour, equipment and material, seem to have become a significant financial contribution to the rebels. The project reinforced the anti-democratic rule of the rebel group, and had a further negative developmental impact when the water tank was washed out during the rainy season.</p> <p>The imposition of solutions by outside actors to the benefit of the imposing power, and the impoverishment of the recipient communities. For example: the imposition of inappropriate reforms or solutions by a central government in marginal or conflict-affected areas; the bankrupting of a country by conditions imposed by International Financial Institutions in countries (e.g. Argentina); or invasions such as the war in Iraq.</p>
			<b>SAMPLE INDICATORS*</b>	
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Freedom of speech/ media</li> <li>Presence of multi-communal political parties/ business groups/civil society organizations</li> <li>Free and fair elections (levels of participation in elections)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Levels of emergency rule in parts or all of the country</li> <li>Freedom of movement</li> <li>Public participation in, or influence on, the policy-making process</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Perceptions and evidence of corruption</li> <li>Popular perceptions that the political, legal, and security systems are fair, effective, and responsive – or not</li> </ul>

\* (These indicators may or may not apply to specific cases. Quantitative and qualitative indicators should be developed. Communities should have complete latitude to identify indicators that make sense to them and their realities).

## Where to Look for Potential Peace or Conflict Impact?

AREAS OF POTENTIAL PEACE & CONFLICT IMPACT		EXPLANATION	EXAMPLES	
			PEACE IMPACT	CONFLICT IMPACT
4	Economic Structures and Processes	<p>Impact on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>strengthening or weakening equitable socio-economic structures and processes;</li> <li>distortion/conversion of war economies;</li> <li>economic infrastructure;</li> <li>availability of scarce basic goods;</li> <li>availability of investment capital to create economic and employment alternatives to war-fighting;</li> <li>the stability of the banking system;</li> <li>increasing or decreasing the economic dependence on military (or military-related) employment;</li> <li>productivity and the equitable distribution of non-war/ peace benefits; training; income generation;</li> <li>production of commercial products or services;</li> <li>food insecurity;</li> <li>exploitation, generation, or distribution of resources, especially non-renewable resources and the material basis of economic sustenance or food security.</li> </ul>	<p>1) In Ethiopia, in the mid-1990s, water projects improved access of displaced pastoralists to water, and thus reduced a major source of conflict with local populations.</p> <p>2) In Somalia, in the early 1990s, shopkeepers and merchants supported violence and looting because their regular supplies of agricultural goods for their markets had been destroyed by the drought and clan conflict. In an attempt to resolve this problem, a development worker talked to a number of development agencies about implementing programmes which involved selling food aid to merchants on a regular basis, at stable prices, in order to reduce their dependence on looted supplies. The project encouraged merchants to apply pressure on the militias to limit their disruption, and to cut off a source of funding to the militias who used the merchants' payments to purchase more weapons. (Source: Natsios 1997)</p>	<p>Uneven distribution of public resources (jobs, water, pensions, etc.); payment of taxes to warrior organizations; discriminatory hiring practices; weakening private market forces by working through war economies.</p> <p>In the mid-1990s, many international actors sought to strengthen the economic security of Russia as a means of reducing instability in a country of war-prone regions. One particular area of activity was the re-writing of Russia's bankruptcy laws. By forcing companies that had been ignoring their creditors to finally pay their debts, the new legislation led to big increase in bankruptcies – which rose to 11,000 in 1999 from 4,300 in 1997. With weak, money-losing companies out of the market, analysts hoped that the Russian economy would become more competitive and robust. Instead, powerful politicians and businessmen (some with murky links to organized crime) often had their cronies named as court-appointed managers of troubled companies, allowing them to take over some of the firms and strip them of any prize assets, thereby contributing to economic insecurity, rather than security. (<i>Macleans</i>, 20 May 2002, p. 65)</p>
			<b>SAMPLE INDICATORS*</b>	
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Dependence on war economies (e.g., use of black market; reliance on (para) military employment)</li> <li>Number of jobs created in non-military related sectors</li> <li>Ratio of military expenditure to social expenditures by state</li> <li>Pre- versus post-conflict export and investment levels</li> <li>Level of economic control by local or national actors for local or national interests</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>National unemployment rate versus rate among vulnerable populations (ex-combatants, returnee and displaced populations, war-disabled, widows, youth, war-affected regions)</li> <li>Dependence on external assistance</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Availability of basic goods to all communities</li> <li>Personal savings rates</li> <li>Regional and national inflation rates</li> <li>Strength of foreign currency</li> <li>Number and size of new businesses</li> </ul>

\* (These indicators may or may not apply to specific cases. Quantitative and qualitative indicators should be developed. Communities should have complete latitude to identify indicators that make sense to them and their realities).

## Where to Look for Potential Peace or Conflict Impact?

AREAS OF POTENTIAL PEACE & CONFLICT IMPACT		EXPLANATION	EXAMPLES	
			PEACE IMPACT	CONFLICT IMPACT
5	Social Empowerment	Impact on creation of a culture of peace is characterized by constructive social communication, tolerance, inclusiveness, justice, participation, and respect. Confidence and capacity of all members of society, from the weakest to the strongest, to effectively overcome obstacles to a satisfying life.	<p>A project in Haiti to reconstruct the police force specifically recruited from communities which had suffered rights abuses, because it was felt that they were most sensitive to the need to protect and promote such rights.</p> <p>Mentoring relationships between urban planning professional across inter-group boundaries in Bosnia and Herzegovina supported the development of technical capacities as well as inter-group communication and understanding.</p>	<p>It is increasingly common to consult with communities before launching an initiative – sometimes this is the first and only time of contact. To the extent that these meetings accept and work through existing social power structures, they may reinforce social inequities and tensions. For example, authority structures which disempower women, or certain social or economic groups.</p>
			<b>SAMPLE INDICATORS*</b>	
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sense of local ownership over peace processes</li> <li>• Level of tolerance/ distrust within cultural, social, ethnic, political, religious organizations</li> <li>• Level and type of social interactions between groups</li> <li>• Level of inter-marriage</li> <li>• Level of bilingualism (where language is a political issue)</li> <li>• Level of participation by marginalized or disempowered groups (i.e., women, the poor, the disenfranchised)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of cross-cutting cultural or social organizations;</li> <li>• Inclusive/exclusive schooling system</li> <li>• Adult and children's perceptions of other groups/level of stereotyping; role of the media/ level of censorship</li> <li>• Level of trust between groups</li> <li>• Rejection of a gun culture/militarized culture (glorification of military violence)</li> <li>• Number of locally-initiated and run peacebuilding initiatives</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Level of dependence on outside support in conflict resolution and peacebuilding</li> <li>• Number of families dislocated by conflict</li> <li>• Number of families with at least one member who is missing</li> <li>• Levels of trauma within communities and degree to which it interferes with normal activities. Effectiveness of responses to this trauma.</li> <li>• Suicide rates (who? where? why?)</li> </ul>

\* (These indicators may or may not apply to specific cases. Quantitative and qualitative indicators should be developed. Communities should have complete latitude to identify indicators that make sense to them and their realities).

# 7

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