World Vision

Grassroots efforts

to prevent and resolve violence

ISBN 0-9750398-3-0
Grassroots efforts to prevent and resolve violence

Don Brandt (Editor), Rick Spruyt, Astrid Zacipa, Allen Harder, Dilhani Thantirimudalige, Bill Sterland and Taplima Muana

Published June 2005 by World Vision International Policy and Advocacy

www.globalempowerment.org

International Policy and Advocacy
World Vision House
Opal Drive
Fox Milne Milton Keynes MK15 0ZR
UK

Communications and Public Affairs
1 Vision Drive
Burwood East Vic 3151
Australia

International Liaison Office
6 chemin de la Tourelle
1209 Geneva
Switzerland

United Nations Liaison Office
222 East 48th Street
New York, NY 10017
USA

European Union Liaison Office
22 rue de Toulouse
B-1040 Brussels
Belgium

Copyediting, typesetting and layout: Joan Weber Laflamme, jml ediset
Printing: Color House Graphics
Coordination: Edna Valdez and Heather Elliott
Cover design: Friend Creative (Australia)

Front cover image from World Vision Bosnia:
Children in Bosnia learn about traffic safety from local police, in a peacebuilding activity designed both to improve police–community relations and to address road safety, a concern shared by different ethnic communities.

World Vision

Grassroots efforts

to prevent and resolve violence

a special report

WORLD VISION is a Christian relief and development partnership that serves more than 85 million people in nearly 100 countries. World Vision seeks to follow Christ's example by working with the poor and oppressed in the pursuit of justice and human transformation.

Children are often most vulnerable to the effects of poverty. World Vision works with each partner community to ensure that children are able to enjoy improved nutrition, health and education. Where children live in especially difficult circumstances, surviving on the streets, suffering in exploitative labour, or exposed to the abuse and trauma of conflict,World Vision works to restore hope and to bring justice.

World Vision recognises that poverty is not inevitable. Our Mission Statement calls us to challenge those unjust structures that constrain the poor in a world of false priorities, gross inequalities and distorted values. World Vision desires that all people be able to reach their God-given potential, and thus works for a world that no longer tolerates poverty.

Contents

A word about the authors

Don Brandt is Senior Researcher, Policy and Advocacy, World Vision International. He served as general editor of this report.

Allen Harder worked with World Vision Indonesia as Peacebuilding and Reconciliation Advisor. He developed programming and institutional capacity for incorporating peacebuilding initiatives into relief and development work. Allen was deeply involved in mainstreaming Local Capacities for Peace/Do No Harm into World Vision offices in the Asian/Pacific Region.

Taplima Muana is the Child Protection Co-ordinator in World Vision Sierra Leone. His interest in conflict resolution, peace, development and security issues stems from his status as a refugee in Guinea. Taplima helped manage the projects described in the case study he authored.

Matthew J. O. Scott is Senior Policy Adviser, Peacebuilding and Emergencies, World Vision International.

Rick Spruyt is Civil Society Programme Manager in World Vision Kosovo. He has worked with humanitarian NGOs and Geneva-based UN agencies in community development.

Bill Sterland conducted consultancies throughout the Balkan region in capacity building, research, training and project development. An experienced development researcher, particularly in the field of civil society, he is the author of the most comprehensive study on civil society development in Bosnia and Herzegovina, *Serving the Community.*

Dilhani Thantirimudalige is Communications Co-ordinator with World Vision Sri Lanka. She has a wealth of experience living and working in rural communities. Before joining World Vision, Dilhani served as a sub-editor for a weekend newspaper in Colombo and continues to contribute articles to the local newspapers.

Astrid Zacipa is Corporate Communications Co-ordinator with World Vision Colombia. During her career as teacher, researcher and author, she has maintained a strong interest in children as peacebuilders. Among her writings in English is "Colombia's Children: Agents of a New Culture of Peace" (with Sandra Botero) in *Children and Peacebuilding: Experiences and Perspectives*, a World Vision discussion paper (2002).

Foreword
Inspired by greatness: Why the grassroots matter

Matthew J. O. Scott

Like music fans going weak-kneed in front of their favourite rock star, I have to confess that I was awed and dumbstruck when I met two young women whose grassroots peacebuilding efforts are analysed in this report. The common threads in their personalities and in their work are deeply instructive for peacebuilders everywhere.

When I met Fatmire Feka at a family picnic just outside Pristina in 2002, she was a loud, rough-housing, gangly 13 year old. While she and some of her friends bounced a volleyball around the farm's tree grove, I asked Fatmire what gave her the conviction to start a children's peace movement in Kosovo. In incredibly lucid English, Fatmire gave the answer that is recorded in this report: "the violence that is destroying us must end." She had two unshakeable convictions: that violent conflict is intrinsically wrong, and that she could do something about it. She was grateful that World Vision was helping her start something and was excited that other young Albanians, Serbs, Roma and other traditionally divided groups in her community shared her convictions.

I found a similarly arresting enthusiasm in the person of Mayerly Sanchez when I met her at the UN General Assembly Special Session for Children in 2002. World Vision had arranged for Mayerly to attend the conference and deliver a speech to delegates at the final session. Having turned 18 only a few months earlier, Mayerly had rotated off the leadership team of the Colombian National Children's Peacebuilders' Movement, but the bracing zeal of her experiences working for peace in Colombia with thousands of other children came through in her words. Her speech sent shivers down my spine.

Fatmire's and Mayerly's seemingly boundless passion for peace is tempered by a worldly wise street sense well beyond their years. Neither is particularly convinced that what she is doing is anything special. Instead, each seems in no doubt that what she has done is the only and the obvious course of action. Jesus once said that there is no greater love than to lay down one's life for one's friends (Jn 15:13). Both Mayerly and Fatmire had experienced armed conflict in their communities for most of their lives. Instead of submitting to the inevitability of violence, however, they risked their own lives to spread peace. They mobilised others their age to agree that "it does not have to be this way." As peace activists, these women are role models for all of us.

The governmental, United Nations and civil society delegates attending an international conference on conflict prevention at UN Headquarters in July 2005 would do well to emulate Fatmire and Mayerly. Their efforts and the other peacebuilding projects documented here have a great deal to tell us. Common threads include:

- *Courageous youth.* It is an oft-used cliche that children (or youth) are the future, but this is only half true. Children are also the present. The violence, or peacemaking, that youth observe adults modelling now will help determine how those youth respond to violence both now and in the future. While their idealism may appear naive to adults, the ability of

children to speak the truth plainly can cut through layers of political rhetoric. Without having to worry about preoccupations like job security or political correctness, the Colombian and Kosovar children and child-based organisations documented here happily crossed lines of social divisions and found new ways of relating that adults had never contemplated.

- *Innovative partnerships.* Civil society organisations are so small they have no choice but to partner. The partnerships documented here are between civil society organisations and both public and private sectors. No part of society has a monopoly on peace, but it is certainly true that unless civil society and community-based organisations are involved, governmental efforts to bring peace are doomed to fail. Often, governmental peace efforts flounder when they fail to connect with the grassroots. On the other hand, civil society organisations cannot work without community trust, earned through transparency and accountability.

  Some government officials may distrust civil society representatives, even seeing them as subversive or uncontrollable. But most of the projects in this report unlocked new, productive, and cooperative relationships with local and provincial government officials and even international financial institutions; instead of undermining it, grassroots peacebuilding efforts often affirmed the state's role. The activities documented in Bosnia-Herzegovina and Indonesia are a study in empowerment. Empowered people are engaged citizens, active promoters of fairness and justice. Governments that are receptive to grassroots peace efforts win from the peacebuilding activities of community-based organisations and NGOs by inheriting an educated, peaceful, motivated and engaged citizenry.

- *Developmental peacebuilding.* Many of the projects featured in this report had a peacebuilding impact precisely by concentrating on something else. For Sierra Leone, Sri Lanka and Bosnia-Herzegovina, it was another activity – such as education, sports and traffic safety, respectively – that allowed World Vision's project partners slowly to unravel the fabric of violence that had settled over their communities. The Colombian National Children's Peacebuilders Movement did things the other way around, with its deliberate focus on peace yielding other community benefits: promoting children's rights, democratic participation and a campaign against sexual abuse. But whether development projects (road safety, sports, education and literacy, etc.) have peaceful side effects or whether peace projects promote development, peace and development proved to be symbiotic friends.

  Cynics may well comment: "How will sending child combatants to school in Sierra Leone stand up against endemic conflict?" "Colombian child peacebuilders are mere drops in an ocean of violence." "How can Tamil children meeting Sinhalese youth through sports amount to more than a tiny oasis in an endless desert of war?" If the efforts of World Vision alone are reaching 80,000 Sierra Leonean youth, 12,000 Colombian child peacebuilders and 1,200 Sri Lankan "peace athletes," one can only imagine the broader impact we know that thousands of other grassroots peacebuilders are having around the world.

This report does not overlook the shortfalls, and shortcomings, of World Vision's peacebuilding activities. There are no magic formulas. Rick Spruyt from World Vision Kosovo explains in his chapter:

> Building peace is about creating space and developing relationships in the face of a complex set of dynamics and time frames. The peacebuilder has to be flexible and to be able to recognise and respond to emerging predicaments and opportunities. A peacebuilding project is usually neither discrete or concrete. It is not measurable by units of activity bounded by time and completion of tasks, as in the more traditional project. . . . Peacebuilding activities must always be in the moment, so to speak, responding to what

is happening on the ground. They must connect empirical reality to the idealist vision for change.

Civil society peace efforts are no panacea, but they are indispensable – not sufficient, but necessary. Grassroots peacebuilders have proven over and over that conflict is not inevitable and that development and peace are complementary, not competitive. From Bosnia to Colombia to Sri Lanka courageous and unarmed civilians – often children and youth – are subverting the power of the gun simply by talking to their neighbours. From Kosovo to Indonesia to Sierra Leone ordinary people are building peace by risking their own lives to save others from the curse of conflict.

On the eve of the first global civil society conference on preventing violent conflict, being hosted by the UN, this report is intended to stimulate debate about the power and possibility of grassroots peacebuilders to make a lasting difference. Rick Spruyt tells us: "Although the role of a peacebuilder . . . is to . . . empower people to deal with conflict in non-violent ways, peacebuilding is clearly a preventive function." World Vision's experience building peace in six selected projects on four different continents is neither an exhaustive study nor a totally representative cross section. Yet it shows demonstrably the power and potential for peace and conflict prevention when governments, regional organisations international financial institutions, and the UN support grassroots peacebuilding efforts.

Introduction

Don Brandt

The peacebuilding experiences presented in this report were gathered from six countries where World Vision works: Serbia and Montenegro (Kosovo), Colombia, Indonesia, Sri Lanka, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Sierra Leone.

The contributions of this report to understanding of peacebuilding and conflict prevention are fourfold. First, stories told here are about local and specific peacebuilding efforts, unlike most published reports, which tend to cast broad views over large areas – states or large territories therein, world regions and even the globe.[1] Second, these narratives are written by people "on the ground," folk who have seen firsthand and close up the challenges that peacebuilders face. Third, World Vision is a child-focused organisation, so this report emphasises peacebuilding efforts that involve children, and through children, communities. Last, as a development organisation, World Vision is primarily interested in encouraging within communities conditions that reduce the violence and the demand for small arms and light weapons that plague too many communities worldwide.[2]

"Peacebuilding in Kosovo" tells of both a personal journey and an organisational effort to build peace in a land where ethnic strife predominates. The chapter describes how quickly reconciliation efforts may disappear in the wake of renewed hostilities that emerge from centuries-old hatred. Yet even in the wreckage left in the wake of the ethnic violence of March 2004, even though peace may seem ephemeral, reasons to hope remain. Two achievements on the difficult road to peace in Kosovo are the Mitrovica Council for Peace and Tolerance and the Kids for Peace Clubs.

"Going beyond the limits of dreams" is a narrative of hope in the midst of Colombia's civil war. Featured are Nasly and Alexander, two youth leaders in the Peacebuilders' Movement. With over 12,000 members, this movement encourages young people to take an active role in communities where they live, always working towards ways to advance reconciliation and peace. By assuming civic responsibilities, Peacebuilders also furnishes youths with opportunities to take part in their own development.

"The chrysalis: World Vision Indonesia's transformation towards quality conflict-sensitive and advocacy-sensitive programming" describes the significant change in the mission of World Vision Indonesia following the chaotic social, economic and political situation in the country between late 1997 and 2000. Among other changes, the organisation rapidly began to engage in peacebuilding and advocacy work. Detailed examples are drawn from peacebuilding efforts in North Maluku and Central Sulawesi, two regions besieged with religious conflict in recent years. Included in this chapter is an appendix that explains the advocacy strategy of World Vision Indonesia.

The cease fire between the Government of Sri Lanka and the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) presented a remarkable opportunity to initiate peacebuilding programmes in Tamil, Sinhala, Muslim and mixed ethnic communities. As related

in "Peacebuilding efforts in Sri Lanka," World Vision focused on developing a "culture of peace" through art and sports programmes. As young people met and intermingled, they learned to value diversity and contributions of different ethnic groups.

The vicious 1992–95 war in Bosnia and Herzegovina left the country economically, politically and socially shattered. Building bridges among ethnic groups has proven to be a particularly arduous task. "Dissolving barriers through confidence building: Parent Teacher Associations and Police Community Initiatives" describes peacebuilding at the local level made possible by addressing common concems, empowerment of citizens and capacity building of community-based organisations.

"Training and education for peace in Sierra Leone" describes a risk-taking, innovative programme with the goal of rehabilitating and reintegrating war-affected youth into communities. The originality of the programme may be seen by its "clients" – young people, both those who were combatants and those who didn't take up weapons; community responsibility and management; and joint provision and operation by a non-profit organisation and a for-profit company. Its success may be seen in the number of youth reached – over 80,000 – and the acknowledged contribution of the programme to national peacebuilding.

Notes

[1] For more local peacebuilding cases, see Mary Ann Cejka and Thomas Bamat, eds., *Artisans of Peace: Grassroots Peacemaking among Christian Communities* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books), 2003.

[2] For an earlier World Vision publication on reducing small arms and light weapons on the "demand" side, see Tibebe Eshete and Siobhan O'Reilly-Calthrop, *Silent Revolution: The Role of Community Development in Reducing the Demand for Small Arms*, Working Paper No. 3 (Monrovia, CA: World Vision International, September 2000). Also available online at the www.justice-and-peace.org website (see "Reports" under "Peace & Conflict").

Peacebuilding in Kosovo

Rick Spruyt

Introduction

World Vision Kosovo set out on a difficult journey five years ago when, inspired by the vision of an 11–year-old girl, the organisation determined to promote peace in this tiny province of the former Yugoslavia. The objective was straightforward: treat all people with respect regardless of faith, tradition, gender, race or ethnic background. This wasn't easy to do. In the late 1990s Kosovo became a household word. Much like Bosnia, it is now irrevocably associated with unrest and hatred. The depth and breadth of that hatred in some quarters is almost incomprehensible to anyone not reared in these environments. The hatred that seethes is rooted in centuries of clashes, wars and manoeuvring of empires.

Much understanding can be derived from a study of the history, but the facts are insufficient by themselves. They are also subject to endless interpretation. Some cite events in a single time line, as though every incident built upon the one before it in a single and straight stress fracture back through the ages. Others cite the politicisation of divisions at key points, such as the expansion of Slav Christian states in the nineteenth century and when Slobodan Milosevic rose to power in the late 1980s.

Whether hatred evolved organically from events or has been fuelled by self-serving power brokers throughout history, it is the appropriation of historical details by individuals that is important. The larger history of events has become personal history. Albanians or Serbs might appear to be describing some terrible event that befell them or their family. Listeners might ask if that was during the NATO bombing in the spring of 1999 or in the prior decade of escalating problems, only to learn that the event transpired decades and even centuries earlier. History has become deeply personal.

For those whose currency is hatred and suspicion, Kosovo is a bank without locks and safes. What members of an ethnic group did a century ago does not exist only in the past. It is license for present and future retribution. Present-day descendants of those who committed the act may never have raised a hand against anyone, but they are culpable for the sins of their ancestors – especially if the other group is stirred by articulate hatemongers with something to gain.

Bombing Serbia by NATO forces in 1999 involved 33,000 sorties using about 1,000 airplanes and 14,000 bombs and missiles. NATO was victorious in less than three months, and decisively so. But when the United Nations and the European Union stepped into Kosovo afterward, they found a landscape physically and emotionally shattered. As David Fromkin, professor of history and international relations at Boston University notes in his book *Kosovo Crossing*, "The Kosovo war is one of those episodes in which achieving peace goals, especially over the long run, is likely to prove more elusive and complex than was the achievement of war goals."[1] Those with a stake in the reconstruction and development of the province like to point to the infusion of aid that followed the

war. People of Kosovo, on the other hand, are expected to appreciate the international community as their saviour while accepting the status quo that holds them in a state of political and economic stalemate.

This is where World Vision Kosovo has inserted itself in a bid to counteract the cycle of violence and the polarisation of ethnic groups. World Vision programmes are aimed specifically at unifying members of civil society from all ethnic groups, including those in smaller, lesser-known communities. An important component of promoting values of tolerance and peaceful co-existence is a focus on children. The objective is to enable youth to construct a future of their own choosing.

Background

Kosovo is a small territory in the centre of the Balkan Peninsula. It borders Macedonia, Albania, Serbia and Montenegro and is made up of 30 municipalities. Kosovo's ethnic distribution is 88 per cent Albanian and 7 per cent Kosovo Serbs. Other ethnic groups make up for the remaining 5 per cent, consisting mainly of Muslim-Bosniacs, Romas and Turks.

Citizens in Kosovo need support in their efforts to build a more inclusive and democratic society that respects the fundamental rights of all communities, regardless of ethnic origin. The increased participation of all citizens in public life and the establishment of inter-ethnic relations based on trust and tolerance are critical to forming a foundation for lasting peace and democratisation in Kosovo.

Kosovo's recent history has been marred by aggressively nationalist politicians who have expanded their power by promoting hatred and xenophobia. This, combined with more than four decades under an authoritarian system, has denied citizens of the poorest region of the former Yugoslavia, especially the ethnic minorities, involvement in participatory governance.

In the late 1970s and 1980s Kosovo's Serbian population complained that ethnic Serbs and other minorities, such as Turks and Roma, were subjected to harassment, intimidation and violence by extremist members of the ethnic Albanian majority. In the 1990s a strong Serbian military presence in Kosovo, justified by the need to fight "Albanian secessionists," committed ongoing human rights abuses which eventually led to the war of 1998–99.[2]

Acting on humanitarian grounds, NATO-led forces expelled Serbian forces from the province and installed the multinational KFOR (Kosovo Force), which was responsible for maintaining security. The United Nations Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) was set up as an interim administration to run the international protectorate while the issue of Kosovo's final status was put on hold indefinitely. UNMIK adopted a "standards before status" policy whereby the question of final status would not be dealt with until security standards were met ensuring respect for minority groups and peaceful co-existence within Kosovo.

Unfortunately, the optimism for economic development and prosperity following the arrival of the international community in Kosovo in 1999 has all but faded. Five years later the situation has barely improved. The economy is stagnant, and unemployment is one of the highest in Europe at 44 per cent (39 per cent among males and 58 per cent among females)[3]. With the uncertainty of the current political situation the hope for change is slim. "Given that just about a third of the population is under the age of 14, the job crisis facing a future generation of Kosovans is even more alarming."[4]

After five years of relative calm in Kosovo since the end of the war, violent clashes between ethnic groups erupted on 17 and 18 March 2004, resulting in the widespread destruction of Serbian homes and Orthodox monasteries. The violence emphasised the importance of enabling the people of Kosovo to improve inter-ethnic relations as a means to developing lasting stability. World Vision has always recognised that guiding the people of Kosovo through this process is vital to normalising the social situation and creating and maintaining stability.

World Vision Kosovo's approach to peacebuilding

During the period directly after the war, World Vision Kosovo's work focused mainly on relief, with large-scale aid efforts serving the internally displaced and others suffering from the effects of conflict. In this initial postwar phase World Vision Kosovo ran community stabilisation programmes. Starting with relief projects involving all community groups aimed at trauma healing, tolerance building and participatory education, World Vision Kosovo built a good relationship base in a number of communities where it would start development projects at a later stage.

Relief efforts were gradually transitioned into development programmes, out of which World Vision Kosovo's peacebuilding programme was started. The development phase aimed at strengthening and enhancing the capacity of key stakeholders. By building and strengthening community networks and developing conflict-resolution strategies, World Vision encouraged ethnic Albanians, Serbs and other minority groups to take a more active role in building a peaceful and tolerant society.

Building peace is about creating space and developing relationships in the face of a complex set of dynamics and time frames. The peacebuilder has to be flexible and to be able to recognise and respond to emerging predicaments and opportunities. A peacebuilding project is usually neither discrete nor concrete. It is not measurable by units of activity bounded by time and completion of tasks, as in the more traditional project. Progress is difficult to quantify. Results and outcomes are not so tangible. A peacebuilder must attempt to observe the degree of change in trust, communication, transparency and the general lessening of tensions among stakeholders. For instance, a story accelerates through the communities about a terrible event. Do the ethnic parties immediately cry foul or do they call for an explanation? Peacebuilding activities must always be in the moment, so to speak, responding to what is happening on the ground. They must connect empirical reality to the idealist vision for change.

World Vision Kosovo utilised the local capacities for peace (LCP) methodology developed by the Collaborative for Development Activities (CDA) for World Vision staff and the communities in which the organisation works. LCP's "do no harm" assessment was conducted in target areas to ensure that programme activities did not exacerbate conflict and that wherever possible they contributed to improved inter-ethnic relations. Through a "do no harm" assessment, World Vision staff identified community-level "dividers" and "connectors," analysed their interaction with programme activities and adjusted implementation strategy as needed to encourage a positive impact. Examples of peacebuilding projects include:

- Establishment of a Council for Peace and Tolerance (CPT) in the divided city of Mitrovica;
- Community Mediation project funded by the Swiss government;
- Interfaith Peace Forum project funded by the United States Institute of Peace;
- CPT replication project in the southern municipality of Rahovec/Orahovac funded by a private Swiss donor.

The role of peacebuilder

In Kosovo the situation is erratic. The general mood can shift quickly from relative calm to sharp anger, resulting in violent outbursts and rioting such as that seen in March 2004 across Kosovo. When word broke out that three Albanian children had drowned after being driven into a river by a Serbian youth with a large dog (a claim later officially denied), Albanian mobs took to the streets in protest. "Within hours the province was immersed in anti-Serb and anti-UN rioting and had regressed to levels of violence not seen since 1999. By 18 March the violence mutated into the ethnic cleansing of entire minority villages and neighbourhoods."[5] After a five-year period of relative calm in Kosovo, the violence in March 2004 resulted in the deaths of 19 people and left nearly 900 injured. More than 30 Serbian Orthodox monasteries and churches across the province were damaged or destroyed, and roughly 4,500 people were displaced.[6]

This unprecedented and unexpected blow-up was to prove a major setback to World Vision's peace-

building work. Tension levels returned to a post-war high. Emotionally charged accusations flew from both sides but particularly from Serbs against Albanians. Confidence was being destroyed. In the next week all organisational activities came to a halt while the security situation was assessed. The abrupt change in the social climate of Kosovo cut deep into the heart of World Vision's work to reduce hostilities and encourage focus on common interests versus common differences.

It is in exactly such a sensitive, volatile and emotionally charged environment that peacebuilders have to employ their understanding of the cultural and social values of each group in order to anticipate responses. Albanians are family focused; they possess strong and admirable loyalty to "their own kind." Yet, the intense closeness to their own poses a subtle alienation from "the other." This extends to both known others and outsiders. As an international aid worker in Kosovo, I experienced this first-hand. Although benefitting from warm and genuine friendliness when among Albanians, friendship rarely extended beyond a certain point with co-workers and friends. Only a prolonged investment of time and energy brought about the possibility of being really accepted and fully trusted.

The intractable nature of cultures

The family unit is very important among Albanians. The ingrained sense of loyalty common to Albanians starts there and extends outward into the wider ethnic community. Ethnic conflict reinforces bonds starting in the wider unit and feeding back down to the family. Ethnic identity is also reinforced by perceived and real outside threats; when the attacker's rationale is clothed in another ethnic and religious garb, like Serbian Orthodox nationalism, the attack is perceived to be on the very core of the embattled value system. Extreme loyalty exacerbated by a decade of oppression under apartheid-like Serb governance from 1989 to 1999 translated into extreme, albeit repressed, resentment. The history and the context explain the severe reaction seen in March 2004.

March riots in Mitrovica flamed into province-wide violence, pushing the security situation near the breaking point and bringing even the strong and well-organised body of NATO security forces nearly to its knees. The spark was a simple rumour. The tinder was the tensions, anxiety and anger among the Albanian population and the unchanging economic situation and uncertain political future.

Although the role of a peacebuilder is to create relationships and empower people to deal with conflict in non-violent ways, peacebuilding is clearly a preventive function. But peacebuilders have an important role to play in addressing the causes of conflict after an incident has taken place. What does this mean? Peacebuilding deals with the so-called soft issues of conflict, such as confronting the reasons for negative attitudes, stereotypes and opinions between conflicting parties. In other words, peacebuilding deals with the human issues.

In Kosovo this has meant initiating dialogue between parties who would normally be very reluctant to convene. It means fostering trust among them and helping them to develop mutually supportive relationships that combat the spread of false information. A rumour can be quashed with a simple phone call to a trusted contact on the "other" side. People investigate the validity of wild claims that would otherwise incite fear and instigate violence. Such rumours often prove to be baseless, as was the case in March 2004. The process begins by identifying members of civil society who have access to both the grassroots population and politicians. The targets are doctors, lawyers, school directors and religious leaders, among others. They can influence those at grassroots levels and advocate with politicians and power brokers. They are thus uniquely positioned to campaign for positive change in their communities.

Peacebuilding disciplines

Peacebuilding turns on relationships. Peacebuilders promote values, especially those related

to responsible living and wise decision making. As stakeholders are identified, it is important to become closely involved, to tune in to their perspectives and to feel their pain and anger. Peacebuilders learn to understand their interests and to hear their concerns. This requires a willingness to leave comfort zones and invest in relationships. In Kosovo, peacebuilding involves listening over countless cups of tea and Turkish coffee. People are eager to express their points of view. But amid the extreme views and strident opinions are openings. If trust has been earned, then the conversation can be steered toward how difficult and painful issues can be addressed. Time and good listening skills can create opportunities to offer guidance and alternative ideas.

The challenge is to get close while not becoming absorbed by one side. Each side's claims and grievances can be persuasive. Yet the claims invariably contradict one another. I quickly learned that it is necessary to manage time wisely. Meeting with conflicting parties in close succession is unwise. Processing their stories of distress and anger takes time. Whoever is second on the list of meetings will never receive a thorough hearing.

It is wise to take time out between meetings to process and filter the information. Peacebuilders must maintain enough emotional distance to sustain a balanced view, to be able to filter out exaggerated claims and bias, while remaining compassionately committed to people's entitlement to peace whatever their sins. A 31–year-old Serb, born and raised in Prishtina and jailed in the mid 1990s for opposing the Milosevic regime, offered me this perspective on the complexities of the situation between Serbs and Albanians in Kosovo: "We are all guilty, and we are all victims."

Mitrovica's Council for Peace and Tolerance (CPT)

Throughout, World Vision has found promoting peace in this ethnically broken society to be profoundly difficult. At the same time, there have been achievements. Those have been made possible through the strong relationships developed with local communities and their leaders.

Mitrovica, a city divided since the end of the conflict in 1999, is widely regarded as the "hot spot" in Kosovo. It is divided along ethnic lines by the River Ibar and connected by two bridges, the main one named the Friendship Bridge. On the south bank lives an Albanian population of around 90,000; north of the river live an estimated 20,000 Serbs. Accurate population figures for Mitrovica have yet to be recorded. Additional ethnic minority groups living in the city are Bosniacs, Ashkali, Roma and Turks.

The division came at the war's end when Serbs retreated to the north and Albanians to the south. French KFOR troops man strict security checkpoints at all connecting points to keep Serbs and Albanians apart and maintain the peace. It is a simple but temporary solution to a complex problem.

World Vision began its peacebuilding work in Kosovo in October 2000 with the founding of the CPT. This voluntary association of 19 citizens represents the three religious affiliations (Orthodox, Muslim and Catholic) and the five ethnic groups that constitute the social fabric of Mitrovica. It is the only group of its kind in the city, formed out of common concerns for promoting and building values of trust, security and enhanced quality of life for all citizens. As Nexhat Ugljanin, a Bosnian and current president of the CPT, states:

> The CPT, as a group of individuals wanting to improve the situation in Mitrovica, is working to re-establish contact among ethnic groups and mend the relationship breaks that keep this city divided. . . . It is the wish of people living here to have a stable and tolerant society. It is our role as civil society leaders and citizens of Mitrovica to encourage that process . . . by modelling those values as a group and by publicly calling on others to do the same.

In the wake of the war members or any one group have no shortage of justified grievances against members of other ethnic communities. Yet they have unselfishly set these aside to work towards the common good. The council attended a strategic-planning workshop sponsored and facilitated by

World Vision in Caux, Switzerland, exactly one year after its inception. Members received training in team building and conflict resolution. They discussed peace-related and tolerance-building activities to implement within Mitrovica and surrounding communities and agreed to a joint declaration. A press conference held immediately after the workshop signalled the CPT's readiness to take publicly the controversial stand of setting aside ethnic differences and working side by side.

With World Vision's support the CPT organised multi-ethnic children's outreaches and civic-education seminars. It established communication links not only among ethnic groups but also with NATO, UNMIK, OSCE, the Mitrovica Municipal Assembly and numerous local and international NGOs. A CPT member travelled to New York to present the council's work at a UN peace conference in September 2002.

The CPT is now a locally registered NGO and has assumed self-leadership with ongoing support from the World Vision Kosovo staff. It continues to mobilise the community and to promote values aimed at building confidence among Mitrovica's ethnic groups.

The CPT agreed to launch its first advocacy project in 2003. The Mitrovica Week of Peace culminated on the UN International Day of Peace, 21 September. The CPT developed, drafted and submitted its first project proposal to the German Marshall Fund for this project. It was approved, and the project was a great success.

Based on the success of the CPT, World Vision is implementing similar multi-ethnic projects around Kosovo to develop and strengthen civil society, build confidence and promote active participation of minority groups in public life.

Kids for Peace clubs

With 30 per cent of its 1.9 million inhabitants under the age of 16, Kosovo is a young and emerging society.[7] One of the major challenges in World Vision's peacebuilding efforts is to reach the young, who will play a serious role in any social progress. The Kids for Peace programme was established to promote peace and understanding among elementary and middle-school youth across the province.

Shortly after the war in 1999 World Vision reconstructed houses and provided basic needs to the internally displaced. Staff developed a close relationship with the Feka family who, like so many, had not only lost most of their possessions but also were missing their two oldest children, a son and a daughter, aged 17 and 19, respectively. A daughter, Fatmire, then 11, a middle child of the remaining eight children, was mentored along a path of forgiving the wrongs done to her family. It is a story best told in her own words:

> When I returned to my home after the war . . . I hated all Serbs for the bad things they had done. However, I quickly realised that hating them wasn't right. It wasn't good for our future! I thought to myself, "The violence that is destroying us must end. The pain needs to stop!"

Fatmire's strongest desire became to work for peace and healing among her peers before they absorb and manifest the hatred ingrained in the majority of adults. She suggested clubs for children. Her suggestion led to the World Vision Kids for Peace project in September 2002. The programme, which supports the rapidly burgeoning children's peace movement and includes fourteen clubs, Serbian and Albanian, involves a total of 362 children aged 10 to15. Their first joint activity was a winter camp in January 2003, where leaders from each club sat together and laid out their future plans for their clubs.

The clubs facilitate interaction among children and young people from all ethnic groups. They support initiatives designed by children for children. The clubs help the children of Kosovo to understand the gravity of their divided communities and to educate them in new roles to implement change and instil hope and vision for a different future.

Activities illustrate the importance of choices. They learn that they can actually influence the future of

their society by making right choices. They are encouraged to think about and act upon the problems that lead to ethnic tensions and ethnically motivated crimes. They see themselves as partners for peace in their own communities. There is a careful balance of teaching and games and activities. The clubs are places where children's needs and ideas are heard. Children plan and participate in their own development.

A recent summer camp at a seaside resort in neighbouring Montenegro yielded significant results. Young people cultivated relationships across ethnic divides that would have been impossible in their own communities. In a neutral setting they were given the chance to see beyond ethnic differences. The event, partly funded by the Eagle Down Foundation and implemented in partnership with World Vision offices in Bosnia and Kosovo, consisted of workshops and games introducing the young participants, aged 11 to 16, to concepts of identity, tolerance, differences and similarities, peace education and strategic planning.[8] It brought together Serb and Albanian youth from Kosovo and youth from Bosnia, who learned one another's traditions, shared experiences and struggled happily to communicate in one another's languages.

The young people initiated strategy sessions to plan future activities. One was the Kosovo Cleaning Day, the idea of the founder of the Kids for Peace clubs, Fatmire Feka, now 16. On 9 October 2004, all members of Kids for Peace clubs participated in a Kosovo-wide activity to clean up the rubbish littering the streets of their communities. UNMIK police and Danish KFOR troops provided security and logistical support while 362 children initiated and carried out the clean up. Local media covered the event. The children signed a letter urging the provincial government to make stronger efforts to enforce environmental regulations in Kosovo. This letter was presented to a government representative the following day at a party held for the 102 children who constitute the leadership of the Kids for Peace clubs.

In a region where ethnic diversity and ethnic conflict go hand in hand, one of the main challenges is to combat and reverse the process of stereotyping and dehumanising of other people groups. If children in Kosovo are left to make sense of their environment by themselves, the seeds for future social conflict will grow. The children will be drawn into currents of thought and behaviour that will ensure recurring violence. The Kids for Peace clubs are an attempt to break this cycle of violence.

While children witness xenophobia firsthand in their own villages, schools and households, the

PHOTO: WORLD VISION KOSOVO

A joint Kids for Peace celebration with 350 children in Brezovica, Kosovo.

clubs offer an alternative. They teach the consequences of violence and expand the range of choices for dealing with conflict in non-violent ways. By broadening their world views and equipping them with problem-solving tools, children receive the chance to adopt an attitude of not tolerating intolerance.

Personal perspective and afterword

Since arriving in Kosovo in February 2004, I characterise my life and work here as a turn on a roller coaster. It has not been an easy ride. There have been flashes of promise and cautious breakthroughs. The environment has always been tense and at times dangerous.

As the son of missionaries, I was raised in four countries and travelled extensively in both developed and developing areas of the world. I was exposed to racial and social diversity from an early age and educated in international institutions, after which I worked for several international organisations and firms. Throughout my childhood and youth I knew nothing other than the acceptance of, and appreciation for, human differences. Growing up in a home of Christian values I learned from an early age that the one important and unifying factor in a world of such incredible diversity is that we are all created by a loving God. We are all designed in God's image. Variety of race, culture and tradition is a reflection of God's creativity and love of diversity.

From these values and convictions I draw hope and strength in working to build the foundations for peaceful co-existence among groups of people harbouring so much hatred and resentment for each other in this tiny province of Kosovo. By living out and modelling these convictions, I am given the opportunity to promote what I believe to be the life that God intends. In addition, I have developed a new-found sense of appreciation for things I previously took for granted. I am increasingly conscious of the significance and responsibility – at the individual and the group levels – to live out the values as instructed by a loving God for our own good.

The conflict in Kosovo is both unique and familiar. It is distinctive, due to the specific characteristics of the province's physical and social geography. It is familiar because Kosovo represents communal or sectarian clashes and warfare the world over. Through relief, rehabilitation and development programmes, World Vision learned that sustainable development is impossible without reconciliation and peacebuilding. In Kosovo, distrust and hatred between ethnic Albanians and Serbs are centuries old. Yet the fear and loathing of the "other" may be seen in Bosnia, Macedonia, Turkey, Rwanda, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Sri Lanka and so many other countries. Peacebuilding lessons learned in Kosovo are applicable to this specific piece of earth, but much of the Kosovo experience is also transferable to other war-torn places as well.

Notes

[1] David Fromkin, *Kosovo Crossing: The Reality of American Intervention in the Balkans* (New York: Simon and Shuster), 1999.

[2] Human Rights Watch, "Under Orders – War Crimes in Kosovo" (October 2001), chap. 2.

[3] UNDP, *The Rise of the Citizen: Challenges and Choices*, UNDP Human Development Report (Kosovo, 2004), 133.

[4] Ibid., 78.

[5] International Crisis Group (ICG), "Collapse in Kosovo," ICG Report no. 155 (22 April 2004), 1.

[6] Ibid., 2.

[7] Estimates from the Statistical Office of Kosovo.

[8] The Eagle Down Foundation was set up by former World Vision Peacebuilding Project Manager Rudy Scholaert. It is a fund intended to support children's peacebuilding movements. For more information, visit www.eagledown.org.

Going beyond the limits of dreams

Astrid Zacipa

Introduction

Nasly Cubillos, a 17-year-old resident of the impoverished Aguablanca District in Cali, Colombia, found herself in front of an auditorium filled with over 3,000 people during Barcelona Forum 2004. Nasly was a member of Foro de las Culturas (Forum of the Cultures) along with other youth who represented their communities and countries in Latin America. How could a girl in her circumstances manage to get here? Nasly was part of a process that began seven years ago in Colombia called Movimiento de Gestores de Paz (Peacebuilders' Movement) and strongly promoted in communities where World Vision works.

Nasly has been with the Peacebuilders' Movement since 1996, since she was nine years old. She was involved in the entire children's mobilisation process in Colombia, including activities that promoted "votes" by children in favour of peace and children's rights, peace marches and the Peace Manifest 2000. Nasly also participated in the prioritisation of campaign goals associated with A World Fit for Children. The government subsequently endorsed this crusade – which became the beginning of the Global Children's Movement.

Nasly is acutely aware of social problems in her country, and she is committed to transforming the current situation of deeply held hostilities into goodwill. For example, Nasly directs part of a development programme for children 6 to 12 years of age in her neighbourhood. These children participate in training courses on various topics related to citizenship, children's rights and peacebuilding, as well as engage in art and sports activities.

Recently, Nasly and other adolescents experienced an academic training process conducted by World Vision Colombia in partnership with the International Center for Education and Human Development (CINDE) and the National Pedagogical University. This certification programme, known as Empowerment and Participation of Children and Adolescents: Foundation for Human Development, allows youth, after graduation, to broaden their work skills and qualify as one of 48 young leaders to promote development through peace in their communities.

Always active, in February 2004 Nasly finished studies in software design offered by SENA (National Service of Learning), a government institution. Now she is taking courses in nursing techniques. Nasly's has big dreams – to build a hospital that will provide free health care for the most needy children.

Advances of the Peacebuilders' Movement

The Peacebuilders' Movement strengthens peacebuilding, citizenship and the participation of children and youth in their communities. Its members consider young people as indispensable elements in processes of human transformation and sustainability. In 1996 they began their work as part of the National Children's Peace Movement of Colombia

with a gathering of some 200 boys and girls from various organisations in search of ways to bring about an end to conflict. One accomplishment of the Peacebuilders' Movement was the promotion and first "vote" on the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. About 2.7 million children from across Colombia voted for the human right to life and peace.

Subsequently, the Peace Children's and Youth's Peacebuilders Movement merged. Today it is known simply as the Peacebuilders' Movement. Its objective is to mobilise people to support peace activities and campaigns, to gain recognition of children and youth as legitimate social actors and to verify implementation of articles 12, 13, 14, 15 and 29 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child that was ratified by Colombia in 1991 (see Appendix).

Who belongs to the Peacebuilders' Movement?

Currently, over 12,000 children and youth associated with World Vision's community development programmes are members of Peacebuilders.[1] Most are between 8 and 14 years old, although ages range from 4 to 24. The oldest Peacebuilders have been active since they were very young, but they are no longer leaders of the movement. Peacebuilders come from various ethnic groups, religions, ages and regions of the country. All Peacebuilders are united in a common goal: to contribute to building a culture of peace.

The Peacebuilders' Movement is internationally recognised. Members have participated in such prominent events as the Special Children's Session in the United Nations Headquarters in New York in 2002, the Thematic Social World Forum in Cartagena in 2002, the Barcelona Forum 2004 and various campaigns promoting children's participation.

At the national level Peacebuilders have sponsored two national and six regional conferences with representatives from different groups. Participants drew up a 10–year strategic plan to reinforce local and national avenues for child and youth involvement in development activities with adults and other young people.

Peacebuilders' Manifesto

The Second National Peacebuilders' Conference produced this manifesto:

> We children and youth Peacebuilders, sponsored by World Vision, after sharing our lives, experiences and ideas for five days of diligent, positive work, want to make public the following document in which we declare:

We reject:

- Every action or omission that deprives minors of their rights and freedoms, and disrupts their physical and psychological development;
- Government neglect of our families in all basic needs (health, education, employment, housing);
- Every form of child and adolescent sexual exploitation (prostitution, pornography, manipulation);
- Every kind of racial, regional, cultural, gender, religious and ideological discrimination; and
- Ignorance of youth movements on the part of society or social institutions.

We propose:

- Holding referendums to allow us to participate directly in the creation of laws and regulations;
- Implementation and respect for the 1997 Youth Law;
- That the Government guarantee employment to heads of households;
- The establishment of micro-enterprises based on the skills and aptitudes of young people so that they may become productive adults;
- Keeping children from armed conflict through state protection mechanism; and.
- Rethinking education policy so as to ensure quality teaching and teachers.

Finally, we Peacebuilders pledge to:

Work every day on building the peace, founded on Christian values.

Promote in our communities leadership, solidarity, unity, respect, love, perseverance, friendship, responsibility, justice and – most importantly – a true culture of peace in which we all are champions of the radical change needed by the country.

A culture of peace is founded on values, attitudes, behaviours and lifestyles that make for non-violence and respect for the fundamental rights of all, especially those of children. The culture of peace depends on acceptance of others, their right to be different and the right to peaceful existence in their communities. We build by rejecting violence and fostering a new kind of social coexistence that transforms values and respect for human rights into laws, habits, standards and customs.

Voices of hope

At the Barcelona Forum 2004 Nasly delivered the message of Colombian children suffering as a result of armed conflict, abuse and exploitation. She spoke of young people who lack educational alternatives or better ways to use their free time and who opt for gangs, crime or drugs. Nasly's proposal, chiefly directed at adults, insists on equality of opportunity, especially for children who live in slums or marginalised areas. Nasly and other youth want to be seen as active participants in the ongoing creation of a more just and peaceful society.

As a spokesperson for Latin American children, Nasly proposed that people work at both local and global levels. She desires to put into action all capacities to transform threats and difficulties into challenges that will lead to solidarity, co-operation and growth. To Nasly and other Peacebuilders:

PHOTO: WORLD VISION COLOMBIA

Girls participating in a workshop in the diploma course Participation and Empowerment of Children and Adolescents.

Nasly urged her audience to provide opportunities for children and young people to participate in peacebuilding activities.

A fundamental component in a Culture of Peace is the participation of the communities in solutions to conflicts. For this reason, the Children and Youth Peacebuilders' Movement has promoted the teaching and promotion of a Culture of Peace, through the processes carried out with children and youth, since we too are participants of this process.

As one of the leaders of Peacebuilders, Nasly knows firsthand the needs of her community and also recognises its potential to meet those needs. She works on promoting and implementing children's rights, promoting the holistic development of children through workshops and activities that encourage physical and mental health care. Organising dance, theatre and art displays in streets, she encourages young people to take advantage of public spaces that municipalities make available for community events.

An innovative programme of World Vision Colombia is to promote peace through sports by holding Regional Olympics for Peace. A National Olympics for Peace in 2001 attracted hundreds of children from community development projects, including Alexander Trochez. Alexander, an indigenous boy who was 13 at the time, was chosen to represent his community in volleyball.

From that time, Alexander has been a standard-bearer for Peacebuilders. He is not only involved

in sports but also actively participates in various activities of Peacebuilders. Alexander now shares his experiences and knowledge as a peace promoter with around 60 children, young people and adults. He encourages his classmates to engage in peacebuilding. Like Nasly, Alexander is one of 48 young people certified in the Empowerment and Participation of Children and Adolescents: Foundation for Human Development course. And like Nasly, he was chosen as a representative to the Barcelona Forum 2004.

Many of the recent changes Alexander has experienced have been a result of his ties with the Peacebuilders. When he took part in the Regional Olympics, Alexander was going through one of the most difficult times of his life. His father's legal problems resulted in a prison sentence, filling Alexander with resentment and shame. He was neither willing nor able to forgive his father. As part of his participation in reflections, retreats and workshops with members of the Peacebuilders' Movement, Alexander overcame his animosity, forgave his father and has helped to strengthen relations among other members of his family.

Once a shy boy, Alexander now conducts himself with confidence, joy and self-assurance in leadership roles among his family and community. Alexander has kept the simplicity that was always part of his character while serving as a model to those who know him. His thinking has also changed. Alexander no longer sees himself as a child who waits for the adults to make decisions for him. He profits from opportunities and intentionally tries to build a positive present and future for himself and those who look to him for leadership. Alexander learned that adults and children alike share great abilities and values. Together they can create a better world.

This is not to say that life for Alexander is easy. He gets up early every day with his mother and younger brother and works on the farm before going to school. He says about walking to the fields, "I take the time to behold nature, the birds, plants and little animals, as well the place where the birds rest in their nests." He was born into a family with deep beliefs with which he strongly identifies: "I have understood that for God there is nothing impossible and that the same is true for us." Alexander distributes his time among his household chores, school and the Peacebuilders' Movement, where he prepares workshops, meetings and activities for children and young people of his community.

"In my spare time, I practice an instrument. Right now, I am just starting to learn to play the guitar. I also like to read the Bible because it contains very nice stories and has much information about how to be a good person. We can go to this book when we have troubles to help find effective solutions. I always say that the guest of honour in every activity is God," says Alexander. "In addition, I know a little about handicraft skills, such as making packs, woodcarving and ceramics. I also make many different clay figurines."

Since he was a small boy, Alexander dreamed of becoming like community leaders who direct projects to help everyone. When he joined Peacebuilders, that dream started to become a reality. As Alexander developed emotional, physical, spiritual and intellectual strength, he grew certain that in time he would completely fulfil his dream.

Participating in peacebuilding

Like Alexander, most children and young people of Guambía, a mountain village in southeastern Colombia, work in the fields. From an early age they are taught by parents and family members to till and care for the land. This is their livelihood. In some cases this has caused youth to neglect and even to abandon their studies. Peacebuilders' conversations and constant follow-up with parents have been promoting and strengthening the notion that young people should stay in school to prepare for a better future.

Alexander's goal for this year is to encourage others to participate in Peacebuilders. For him, a full life means playing to the fullest the role each person has in society – including each youth or child – sharing feelings and opinions regarding

issues and taking actions accordingly. Alexander urges young people to embrace their roles in life, and like him, engage in the work of peacebuilding.

This concept of children's participation reflects the challenge defined by Keith Griffin and Terry McKinley, as

> an activity that enhances human potential and enables people to have more control over their lives; it also promotes productivity, creativity and efficiency, as well as consensus and social cohesion. To speak of child and youth participation is to speak of the challenge of the people and governments to allow children's and young people's voices to be heard and to act on their expectations. They are the ones who can allow us to see those new heavens and new earths we long for.[2]

This implies opening up spaces in our daily lives – in our family, work, school and neighbourhood – so that children and youth can freely express themselves. Young people should have an influence in developing positive values at the individual level, promoting human dignity and building a just and equitable society.

The first sphere of action of Peacebuilders is the family, the most important place in the life of a child. Here children and young people engage in initial socialisation; this is where a system of solidarity, fundamental to the entire society, is learned. The family represents the primary space for the formation of values, human, social and cultural capital, and citizenship. Peacebuilders work to strengthen relations within the family and are mediators in cases of conflict.

Within families, Peacebuilders foster values of solidarity, tolerance, equality and respect. These values encourage family members to accept cultural, ethnic and religious diversity in society. Peacebuilders begin development of creativity, intellectual abilities and skills in the family. Here youth can begin to project themselves as emerging leaders of the country. Beginning with their families, they help build democratic and equitable communities that, it is to be hoped, can someday contribute to the eradication of poverty and misery, to abolition of injustice and to establishment of a culture of human rights.

In campaigns at the community or local level Peacebuilders' Good Relations Campaign promotes respect and tolerance as a source of unity and opportunity for growth of interpersonal relations within families. For example, as a result of Alexander's father's absence from home, Alexander has grown closer to his mother, whom he also considers a friend. She accompanies him and supports his activities, and she actively participates in community life. Nasly's situation is similar. Her single mother shares Nasly's dreams and helps her fulfil them.

School should enhance socialisation. School is the second environment in which Peacebuilders fulfil their role as promoters of the change they expect will build a better nation. School gives children opportunities to exercise leadership by allowing them to represent the child and youth community in student government. Student government provides participation and decision-making within the student community, where young people consider initiatives of other students, educators, administrators and parents.

At social and political levels, Peacebuilders have taken advantage of the openness of Colombia's government. Peacebuilder leaders arrived at the Youth Council Meetings as spokespeople from various youth sectors to contribute to guiding, planning and evaluating social programmes that directly involve young people. In addition, Peacebuilders staff local and regional boards that review, evaluate and monitor the execution of public child and youth policies. Adults have begun to trust Peacebuilders. Nasly and Alexander, as well as other children and young people in each city where the Peacebuilders' Movement is established, take part in local government commissions that oversee administration and monitoring of projects.

News media have begun to recognise the work of Peacebuilders and have invited representatives to special programmes dealing with childhood and youth, allowing their spontaneous, lively voices

to convey messages of peace to children, youth and adults in many areas. For example, in Guambia, the Peacebuilders' Movement supports local government's attempts to eradicate illegal crops and implement a reforestation programme that combines soil restoration with timber and traditional crop cultivation. Adults serve as advisors, while enthusiastic children and young people execute their own ideas and proposals.

Children and youth have taken the reins in the Peacebuilders' Movement. Young people are now the ones who propose meeting agendas and organise, convene and mobilise other children and youth in developing programmes.

Recreation through play

Children's play provides the foundation in which human beings first learn to feel, express, communicate and produce primary emotions, such as joy, excitement and sadness. Play transcends recreation, free time, leisure and sports. Play helps children (and adults) develop themselves by learning, thinking and feeling.

Play is one of the methodological and pedagogical tools used to facilitate the holistic development and potential of Peacebuilders. The Peacebuilders' curriculum employs play as a means to teach fundamental principles, encouraging amusement, joy, joking and other happy activities.

This pedagogical model is continually enhanced by children themselves as it encourages interventions based on relationships and understanding young people. The model conceives of children and youth as people engaged in the construction of their lives, with ideals, frustrations and diversions that lead to their identity. The model rests on the assumption that young people realise and develop their personhood through activities such as sports, art, ecological awareness, values workshops and personal, social and spiritual formation. All these actions and behaviours fortify the capabilities of children and young people.

This principle was the central theoretical theme developed through the certification programme attended by Nasly, Alexander and 46 other Peacebuilder leaders. This programme provided an opportunity for them to continue development of attitudes about life and social responsibilities as citizens.

Nasly, Alexander and the other Peacebuilder leaders understand that participation is a process. Leaders serve their fellow humans and help them grow. Adults provide invaluable support in the achievement of their objectives. Play is a key motivating element during meetings and facilitates learning. Children understand that they are not finished products; *all* people need to keep learning and growing.

The value of childhood

> When children's right to participation is recognised, we are imparting learning that will bear fruit in a participatory, open and democratic society. When we open up venues for opinion, criticism or defence of their points of view, we generate in children processes of appropriation that are aware of a sense of belonging and personal and collective commitment, at the same time we facilitate recognition and respect of differences in thinking.[3]

This reflection was used in the formation of Peacebuilders. And this concern was reflected in processes for training top-notch leaders.

Nasly's and Alexander's certificate from the National Pedagogical University acknowledges their accomplishments. They were recognised for efforts they made in travelling from their homes to Bogotá to take part in different workshops. Both were applauded as outstanding leaders who used the tools they received to implement programmes in their communities. Their certification is also a vote of confidence in their representation, both in Barcelona and national and international venues, of thousands of children and young people in Colombia who dream and work to build a more just society.

"When dreams are drawn up and built, combining knowledge, experiences, efforts and resources, we continue on to the end towards the building of a culture of peace," said World Vision Colombia Director Edgar Flórez, in a speech he gave at Alexander's graduation, because "the models of citizenship, where God's will is fulfilled, are found in the children."

The struggle of life in Colombia

A report by the National Statistics Administration Department stated that 66 per cent of Colombians live below the poverty line. In a population of 44 million people, more than 29 million lack enough resources to meet basic needs. The official unemployment rate is about 22 per cent, further accentuating the picture of poverty and despair. Colombian society has deep structural inequalities, described eloquently by Colombia's great poets, songwriters and novelists, such as the Nobel Prize–winning writer Gabriel Garcia Marquez. Among the most critical needs for the future well-being of Colombia's poorest today is access to quality educational services.

Added to these conditions is the problem of forced displacement within Colombia. Families forced to leave their farms have flocked to urban areas, expanding the poverty belts around cities such as Montería, Cali, Bucaramanga, Barranquilla and Bogotá. Most of these transplanted families eke out a living by sporadically working at whatever jobs are available at the moment or by selling various items on city streets. Violence and personal attacks against individuals, including murder and robbery, are epidemic in these poor communities – a direct result of the lack of economic alternatives. Children and youth often bear the brunt. For example, over 57 per cent of children do not receive elementary education because they are forced to help support their families. And 10 per cent of the children combine school with some type of work.

Nasly, Alexander and the other 18 million Colombian children live in a country that continues to face a critical situation with respect to human rights. The UNHCR in 2004 reported violations of the right to life, integrity, personal freedom of due process and legal guarantees, independence and impartiality of justice, respect of private life and privacy, as well as fundamental liberties of movement, residence, opinion and expression and political rights. Armed conflict, in particular the behaviour of illegally armed actors, had a negative impact on human rights and exacerbated the conditions and limited resources at the state's disposal for effectively responding to problems. Economic, social and cultural rights continued to be affected by the great gap in distribution of wealth, extreme poverty, social exclusion and social injustice.

Children continue to be victims of hostage taking, recruiting, anti-personnel mines, displacement, indiscriminate attacks and acts of terrorism perpetrated by illegally armed groups. The Free Country Foundation reported that as of September 2003, 243 minors were abducted. Human Rights Watch reported that more than 14,000 youth were in the ranks of irregular armed groups; that is, one out of every four members of such groups is a youth.

Conclusion: Accomplishments of the Peacebuilders' Movement

What began as a youth Bible study club has today become the Peacebuilders' Movement, a stable setting for the exercise of children's rights in Colombia. Because the Peacebuilders' Movement recognises the potential of children and adolescents, it favours the holistic development of participants through personal and collective formation in areas such as culture, sports and art. This enables children and youth to construct a life model for themselves that reflects co-existence and to reconstruct values including peace and cultural awareness.

Peacebuilders have provided tools for empowerment and participation for young people, helping them to recognise and reclaim their contribution to society as citizens. Through a chain of activities engaging children of all ages, the Peacebuilders' Movement reinforces personal dignity, community values and Christian principles.

The Peacebuilders' Movement strives to break down poverty structures entrapping communities by contributing to the social inclusion and mobilisation that helps to overcome socio-economic, regional, gender, age, ethnic and cultural obstacles. This has made it possible to reduce some risks and to promote healthy life styles and living skills. Children and youth are primary recipients of training in health, emergency preparedness and children's rights. These young people become agents of this knowledge in their own communities. Such formative processes have enabled Peacebuilder participants to recognise the political, social, economic and cultural dynamics of their communities. The Peacebuilders' Movement assists children and youth in confronting situations such as displacement, child involvement in armed conflict, sexual exploitation, child abuse, child labour, violation of children's rights and other dilemmas.

Peacebuilders have begun to go beyond the borders of affiliated communities, reaching places never imagined at national and international levels. The model is being used to establish youth associations in schools, neighbourhoods and communities where Peacebuilders work to strengthen democracy, participation and the exercise of citizenship.

Appendix
Convention of the Rights of the Child, Articles 12–15 and 29.

(The entire convention is available online.)

Article 12

1. States Parties shall assure to the child who is capable of forming his or her own views the right to express those views freely in all matters affecting the child, the views of the child being given due weight in accordance with the age and maturity of the child.

2. For this purpose, the child shall in particular be provided the opportunity to be heard in any judicial and administrative proceedings affecting the child, either directly, or through a representative or an appropriate body, in a manner consistent with the procedural rules of national law.

Article 13

1. The child shall have the right to freedom of expression; this right shall include freedom to seek, receive and impart information and ideas of all kinds, regardless of frontiers, either orally, in writing or in print, in the form of art, or through any other media of the child's choice.

2. The exercise of this right may be subject to certain restrictions, but these shall only be such as are provided by law and are necessary:

(a) For respect of the rights or reputations of others; or

(b) For the protection of national security or of public order (ordre public), or of public health or morals.

Article 14

1. States Parties shall respect the right of the child to freedom of thought, conscience and religion.

2. States Parties shall respect the rights and duties of the parents and, when applicable, legal guardians, to provide direction to the child in the exercise of his or her right in a manner consistent with the evolving capacities of the child.

3. Freedom to manifest one's religion or beliefs may be subject only to such limitations as are prescribed by law and are necessary to protect public safety, order, health or morals, or the fundamental rights and freedoms of others.

Article 15

1. States Parties recognize the rights of the child to freedom of association and to freedom of peaceful assembly.

2. No restrictions may be placed on the exercise of these rights other than those imposed in conformity with the law and which are necessary in a democratic society in the interests of national security or public safety, public order (ordre public), the protection of public health or morals or the protection of the rights and freedoms of others.

Article 29

1. States Parties agree that the education of the child shall be directed to:

(a) The development of the child's personality, talents and mental and physical abilities to their fullest potential;

(b) The development of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, and for the principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations;

(c) The development of respect for the child's parents, his or her own cultural identity, language and values, for the national values of the country in which the child is living, the country from which he or she may originate, and for civilizations different from his or her own;

(d) The preparation of the child for responsible life in a free society, in the spirit of understanding, peace, tolerance, equality of sexes, and friendship among all peoples, ethnic, national and religious groups and persons of indigenous origin;

(e) The development of respect for the natural environment.

2. No part of the present article or article 28 shall be construed so as to interfere with the liberty of individuals and bodies to establish and direct educational institutions, subject always to the observance of the principle set forth in paragraph 1 of the present article and to the requirements that the education given in such institutions shall conform to such minimum standards as may be laid down by the State.

Notes

[1] Area Development Programme (ADPs) is World Vision's term for large-scale community development; several communities usually constitute a single ADP.

[2] Keith Griffin and Terry McKinley, *Implementing a Human Development Strategy* (New York: Macmillan, 1994).

[3] World Vision Colombia, "El Desarrollo del Niño y el Niño en el Desarrollo," *Evaluation Report* (1989), 7.

The chrysalis: World Vision Indonesia's transformation towards quality conflict-sensitive and advocacy-sensitive programming

Allen Harder

Introduction

World Vision is one of the older international NGOs in Indonesia, having begun operations in 1961 as a small Christian agency addressing poverty needs of a largely Christian rural constituency. Today, World Vision Indonesia is a progressive, multifaceted agency with the capacity to implement cross-cutting, emergency assistance and long-term community development as well as a recognised advocate of children's rights in Indonesia.

World Vision's scope grew in response to Indonesia's economic, social and political crisis, beginning in 1997 with a nation-wide drought and economic "meltdown." Traditional, staid community development NGOs were transformed into highly responsive organisations delivering quality programming with a wide array of donors in a climate of crisis and urgency. World Vision Indonesia went a step further when strategic decisions were made in 1999–2000 to incorporate peacebuilding and advocacy strategies in all of its work. These decisions came as a response to the threat of increasing communal conflict in which World Vision committed to be a reconciling agent promoting children's rights and participation in all its programmes and projects.

To document this transformation in World Vision Indonesia two key programme areas are assessed: emergency response and rehabilitation in North Maluku, and conflict-sensitive community development in Central Sulawesi. As children are the longest-suffering victims of injustice and violence, a brief review of World Vision's child-focused advocacy strategy is included. World Vision faces the challenge of being a faith-based organisation belonging to a minority responding to religion-based conflicts. The organisation found a way forward by doing solid, quality programming based on a clear set of core values. Concurrently, the organisation has strategically positioned itself as a "third party neutral" humanitarian assistance and community development partner. As a learning organisation, World Vision responds first to human need in times of crisis, while being accountable to numerous significant stakeholders, that is, the people with whom the organisation works and also the donor community, the government, and World Vision's supporting constituency. World Vision Indonesia is making an important contribution to building civil society's capacity to mitigate conflict and address social justice issues before they escalate into violence, and to recover and stabilise in the aftermath of open conflict.

Background

More than three decades of the authoritarian Suharto regime left both Indonesian and international NGOs unprepared for the social and political crisis that followed his downfall. Discussion of ethnic, religious, racial, ideological and socio-economic class differences was rigorously suppressed. Even news of internal conflicts frequently disrupting security in the regions was strictly suppressed. The inability to openly build civil society capacity to deal with differences and conflict contributed to an increasingly volatile cauldron of public unease. Human rights work was elusive because the regime was a master of the art of illusion, coercion and both overt and subtle suppression.[1] Close surveillance of social organisations discouraged "stepping over the line" into human rights, resiliency and advocacy work, especially for large agencies. In fact, the government tended to treat with suspicion NGOs stepping across what it considered to be the line of humanitarian assistance.[2]

Half a decade before the demise of Suharto, national human rights and NGO activists were already accurately predicting what would happen when the lid came off with the downfall of Suharto in May 1998. Communal conflict, both ethnic and religion based, separatist movements and extremist religious movements mushroomed in the climate of instability, while Indonesians grappled with growing public expectations for political reform and democracy. The public at all levels of society lost trust in national and state institutions as corruption escalated, destabilisation appeared to become normative, and some key actors of Suharto's New Order Government began their return to power. An overwhelming sense of anarchy and disintegration was looming.

Yet in spite of the gloom, a deep swell of political awareness and maturation at the community level began transforming the landscape in spite of games being played in the corridors of the elites.

In the aftermath of communal conflicts communities took charge of their own situations and began the slow steps toward stabilisation, reconciliation and rehabilitation. The international community played a significant role. At the national level democratisation began to take hold. In 2004 an orderly, unprecedented direct presidential election demonstrated that the age of party power politics was coming to an end and that Indonesia's people had had enough of the old. This tumultuous period spawned a whole new generation of peacebuilders and moderate elites committed to the development and maturation of civil society. Many were trained in projects with a peacebuilding orientation. Intense support from international agencies and NGOs assisted them to grapple with the aftermath and to set a course for a new and better future in which differences could be dealt with non-violently. The nature of Indonesian conflicts is complex and runs deep, and options for dealing with them require discerning analysis and sensitive, thoughtful programming.[3]

Responding to humanitarian crisis and communities at risk

Numerous crises sweeping through Indonesia between 1997 and 2004 were a mixture of natural calamities (droughts, earthquakes) and manmade calamities, including economic meltdown and localised, open communal conflict. World Vision Indonesia's first venture into major emergency humanitarian assistance was a drought response in 1997 in the far-eastern province of Papua (then Irian Jaya). The agency's community development workers were reporting widespread hunger in the remote Baliem Valley, in which 350 people were reported to have died. While the Indonesian government was inclined to ignore the emergency (the area is a base for a number of groups seeking an independent identity), World Vision's concerted media campaign brought the region's plight to public and international attention, and the flow of drought relief began.[4]

Next, responding in West Timor to humanitarian needs of refugees originating from newly independent East Timor introduced many community development NGOs to large-scale emergency relief. Under the harsh lights of international scrutiny the Indonesian government was compelled, for the first time, to develop a capacity to co-ordinate and implement major emergency relief programmes.

Poor co-ordination and planning among the major players – UN agencies, NGOs and the government – led to numerous mistakes and resulted in significant stresses on the local population. The refugee communities had significant East Timor militia elements embedded in them, intent on continuing their struggle against the newly formed government while riding on the coat tails of their alliance with the Indonesian military. Refugees were stretching to the limits already insufficient resources of the local population, generating further internal tensions and conflicts. Large emergency relief programmes, most implemented by NGOs whose main experience in Indonesia was community development,[5] were operating in a highly volatile context.

World Vision was operating a large community development programme in West Timor well before the crisis. With the assistance of the World Vision International Partnership's emergency programming expertise, World Vision Indonesia began learning to manage a major relief operation and a community development programme in the same location in a context of rising tensions. Other NGOs with experience in West Timor were on the same steep learning curve.

As ethnic conflict erupted in West Kalimantan in 1998–99, and Christian-Muslim conflicts in Maluku and North Maluku erupted in mid- to late 1999, World Vision Indonesia became aware of a potential for unmanageable conflict in virtually all of its 28 Area Development Programmes (ADPs). With ADPs located in the conflict areas in West Timor, West Kalimantan, North Maluku and Central Sulawesi at stake, World Vision became very concerned about its capacity to deal with these conflicts. Recommendations of a 1999 national conflict assessment in the World Vision programme areas called for a deliberate strategy to address conflict. Conflicts threatened major disruptions in these community development areas, heightening the urgency to mitigate risks and develop alternatives.

While World Vision International was developing a global peacebuilding mandate and strategy, the World Vision Indonesia national office decided to establish a peacebuilding unit in mid-2000 to design and implement peacebuilding strategies.[6] Traditional approaches to emergency relief and community development in conflict areas were found wanting. New approaches were needed. An innovative assessment-and-planning methodology called Local Capacities for Peace/Do No Harm (LCP/DNH) emerged in the late 1990s. World Vision International was involved with the development and testing of this tool and adopted it as its main strategy for improving programme design and implementation in conflict-sensitive areas. World Vision Indonesia was among the first national offices to implement LCP/DNH both for emergency humanitarian assistance and to pioneer its use for community development in conflict-sensitive areas.

Local Capacities for Peace/Do No Harm: A summary

In 1994 many leading emergency humanitarian assistance NGOs, among them World Vision, realised that their assistance programmes in areas of serious conflict more often than not contributed to a worsening of the conflict. Even though assistance projects were meeting their goals, the agencies wanted to know why their interventions so frequently added to the troubles of the people they were seeking to help. A four-year field-based collaborative process contributed to the Local Capacities for Peace/Do No Harm assessment tool.[7] Key elements of the LCP/DNH assessment tool are described by Dr. William O. Lowrey, director for peacebuilding for World Vision International:

> The LCP analysis begins with the context of the conflict, but focuses primarily on the local context where the particular aid program is operating. An analysis is done of the dividers and sources of tensions that are evident in the local context. Then consideration is given to the natural connectors that people have in the community and the local capacity for peace. This recognises that most people, even in conflict zones, are engaged in normal, peaceful activities, and have indigenous capacities for resolving conflicts and connecting people in constructive ways. In the midst of the dividers and connectors

comes an aid programme. Every element of that programme, including the resources that are transferred and the staff who manage the programme, interacts with the dividers and connectors. The impact of this aid on the dividers and connectors determines if harm will be done or capacities for peace will be strengthened. Where negative impact occurs or can be predicted, options are considered and programmes are redesigned. This method of analysis focuses on ultimate impact rather than immediate inputs and maintains a focus on quality programming that will contribute to a more peaceful society and long-term transformational development.[8]

A five-step process guides an LCP/DNH assessment:

1. Understanding the *context of conflict*: destructive conflicts are identified; a mapping of key parties, their interests and positions is completed; and the root causes and history of conflict is described.
2. Analysing *dividers/sources of tensions* and *connectors/local capacities for peace* among identity groups: utilises five descriptive categories that include systems/institutions, attitudes/actions, shared/different values/interests, shared/different experiences and symbols/occasions to disaggregate data and arrive at a relatively complete picture.
3. Describing the *aid programme*: mandate, headquarters and donors values/guidelines. The why? where? what? when? with whom? for whom? by whom? and how? of standard programme design.
4. Analysing the *aid programme's impact* on dividers/tensions and connectors/local capacities for peace: actual and potential effects of a programme's design, its activities, its resource inputs or its personnel on increasing or decreasing dividers/tensions, supporting or undermining connectors/local capacities for peace.
5. Developing *programme options for programme design/redesign and implementation*: meeting programme objectives while reducing dividers/tensions and enhancing connectors/local capacities for peace. Ascertain that redesign options avoid negative impacts on dividers or connectors to ensure that the programme "does no harm."[9]

The LCP/DNH tool has made a significant contribution to World Vision Indonesia's programme quality in dealing with conflict and advocacy. As a conflict-sensitive "quality programming tool," it assures that programmes "do no harm," at the least, and that they build on and build up local capacities for peace.

Note on conflict-sensitive quality programming

Good quality programmes and projects frequently fall short of their potential, do harm, or even fail to improve the social situation of people in the community, in spite of meeting their delivery objectives. Conventional DME (design, monitoring and evaluation) strategies usually do not consider three social-impact variables which are crucial to conflict-sensitive programming:

1. The quality of relationships between significant identity groups in the community;
2. The impact on those relationships of resources to be introduced into the community, or conversely, the impact of accessing local resources; and
3. The impact of the agency's implementation strategy on those relationships.[10]

Every community has various identity groups – identified by ethnicity, religion and clan – and may be characterised by relationships such as those defined as dominance/subjectivity, insider/outsider and economic class, which can experience an increase in tensions when outside resources are introduced and/or when an agency employs local resources. Each component of the programme cycle – preliminary assessments, programme design, implementation, monitoring, evaluation, reflection and transition[11] – requires special attention when a preliminary LCP/DNH assessment indicates significant conflicts or underlying tensions. Disciplined attention to social impact constitutes quality, conflict-sensitive

programming when options are identified and applied to mitigate conflict or potential conflict and support local capacities for peace.

Cases studies for quality conflict-sensitive and advocacy-sensitive programming

The following two cases assess quality programme design, implementation and evaluation, providing the basis for integrating peacebuilding and advocacy as cross-cutting strategies into humanitarian assistance and community development programmes. The principles of World Vision Indonesia, as a faith-based organisation working at positioning itself as a "third party impartial" while implementing programmes in the context of religion-based conflict, are then extracted out of the assessment.

Approaches to conflict-sensitive humanitarian assistance, North Maluku

Conflict engulfed North Maluku Province in the nine months between October 1999 and June 2000.[12] The province was divided into homogenous Christian and Muslim enclaves. About 207,000 people were displaced and scattered throughout North Maluku.[13] Many left their communities to seek refuge in one of the communal enclaves. An additional 25,000 to 50,000 fled to Sulawesi and elsewhere outside the province.

The conflict's intensity left people in a state of disbelief. How could people who prided themselves for their hospitality, honour and ethnic cohesion be left with such a legacy: 3,000 to 5,000 dead, numerous villages and towns partially or totally destroyed, including homes, businesses, health centres, schools, mosques and churches. About 2,000 classrooms were lost in the destruction.[14] For a year after the hostilities subsided, the economic, social and government infrastructure was crippled, and communities were left largely dysfunctional. Transportation and communication infrastructure between enclave communities had collapsed – and for the first two years ethno-geographic boundaries held firm.

PHOTO: WORLD VISION INDONESIA

Peacebuilding through development in Maluku. Christian and Muslim mothers and children take a drawing break during a health education session.

Before the conflict, World Vision Indonesia was implementing a community development programme (ADP) on the east coast of the island of North Halmahera, North Maluku. The organisation directed assistance largely to the island's Christian majority, unaware that this could be contributing to tensions brewing under the placid surface. The area is rich in agricultural production and famous for its copra, nutmeg, cloves and cocoa. During the country's economic crisis the area prospered on direct export earnings. The area also enjoyed a national reputation for harmonious relations between its Muslim and Christian inhabitants, who have close ethnic affiliations. They speak the same language and live by similar traditional values; many families incorporate adherents of both faiths. Yet hostilities grew to be so intense that Muslims and Christians were driven to separate identity poles for self-preservation. The ensuing legacy of distrust, fear, vengeance and extremism would require very delicately balanced programming. Perceived imbalanced assistance in previous programmes would need to be overcome. World Vision Indonesia's goal was not only to avoid doing further harm to social relations but also to design a programme that would redress underlying tensions and help local families become more resilient.

In-depth analysis revealed complex origins and dynamics of the conflict. Nested in the macro-conflict were three separate poles of conflict in three different communities, each with its own characteristics and dynamics. One was based on increasing Christian-Islamic polarisation; one

was essentially ethnic and political in character; and the third, in the provincial capital Ternate, was focused on a struggle for power within the house of sultans in the newly formed province of North Maluku. World Vision's former community development programme had been in the heart of what had become the Christian enclave in the centre of the conflict. Ternate had become an exclusive Muslim enclave. World Vision established emergency relief operations in each of these areas, and each would require a distinct approach.

The humanitarian relief team entered the city of Ternate well before hostilities in North Halmahera abated. An early and rapid LCP/DNH assessment determined that all relief projects and activities would require utmost sensitivity to relationships among the various groups in the conflict. Goals to use relief aid to bridge alienated communities, to reduce tensions and to support reconciliation initiatives were formulated early on. World Vision proceeded to position itself as an impartial third party[15] and worked to maintain balance in its relationships with all stakeholders: affected communities, other NGOs and international agencies, the government and the security forces. Each phase of the programming cycle was assessed using the LCP/DNH lens.

In the four years since the emergency/rehabilitation response began, World Vision Indonesia implemented integrated projects in emergency food, sanitation distribution, health and education. The organisation also mobilised kit distributions and training for roofing, housing, fishing and carpentry. Other initiatives included seeds and tools, community infrastructure rehabilitation, women's peace initiatives, peacebuilding through children's education, children's activities, and a peace and tolerance magazine initiative through schools and teacher training. In total, projects valued at more than US$7 million were implemented, with multiple donors.[16] Through insights gained from using LCP/DNH, World Vision was able to:

- Incorporate LCP/DNH into all aspects of its programme design and implementation;
- Establish credibility and earn the trust of both sides in the conflict;
- Involve beneficiary communities in assessment and redesign of programs benefiting them;
- Incorporate programme strategies to use assistance to bring both sides together to work toward community rehabilitation together;
- Maintain a no-weapons policy in all activity areas, including food distribution sites;
- Build communication bridges by presenting information impartially, testing and reinterpreting rumours, moving freely without escorts between conflict zones, representing each side in a positive light when dealing with the other;
- Create neutral space in which post-conflict communities can attend trainings and meet and work on resolving differences and healing their relationships;
- Provide opportunities for World Vision interfaith field staff teams to demonstrate the possibility of diverse communities living and working together;
- Strengthen local networks of religious and community leaders who provide moral authority in support of peace;
- Leverage donors to amend project contracts to ensure the "do no harm" principle based on solid LCP/DNH analysis;
- Develop and model collaborative rather than competitive working relationships with international agencies (UNDP, UNICEF) and international NGOs in the province;
- Design a contiguous transition programme from emergency relief through community rehabilitation to civil society projects focused on peacebuilding;
- Develop models of quality conflict-sensitive programming for other programme areas.

World Vision Indonesia's approach has strengthened communities that were left dysfunctional after the conflict; they are now working together to rebuild their futures. Its approach has had a lasting impact on its staff, who have internalised LCP/DNH concepts as they saw their emergency-relief and community-rehabilitation activities make a long-term contribution to building interfaith and inter-ethnic peaceable communities.

Approaches to Conflict-sensitive Community Development, Banggai, Central Sulawesi

By early 2000 the Province of Central Sulawesi was embroiled in bitter communal conflict pitting Muslims and Christians against each other. In 2004 tensions remained high, with frequent outbreaks of violence. Concentrated in the District of Poso, the conflict left several thousand dead, thousands of displaced persons of both religions, and whole communities, including the district capital, disrupted. In the neighbouring District of Banggai, World Vision's ADP anxiously watched developments. Many indications pointed to potential for the warfare to spread into its programme area. About 13 per cent of its population is Christian, with significant concentrations along the border area with the District of Poso. Even though local Muslims and Christians had evolved a balanced, peaceable way of life – many families were mixed, and they shared the same language and customs – an influx of outsiders threatened to sharpen differences. At times tensions ran high but except for a number of localised incidents, open conflict was kept at bay.

As the conflict in Poso was beginning to escalate, a large World Vision relief project responding to an earthquake in 1999 had raised tensions with local Muslim leaders, some of whom perceived that World Vision had a hidden agenda of indirect proselytisation. While the community development programme was targeting mainly Christians, the relief programme aimed to help people of both faiths, and many Muslims were assisted. Preliminary assessments showed rising tensions in the community development programme related to World Vision's focus on distributing its resources mainly to Christian beneficiaries. Distrust among Muslim neighbours over World Vision's long-term agenda was also apparent. The ADP manager and World Vision senior leadership assessed the risk to be high and considered approaches to mitigate the risk. Two innovative approaches were chosen: training in interfaith dialogue and establishing an LCP/DNH Centre of Learning. Both approaches would have a significant impact on transforming World Vision as a responsive, learning agency dedicated to quality programming.

Training and interfaith dialogue

World Vision effectively positioned itself as a trusted actor in conflict mitigation and interfaith dialogue by sponsoring two significant events at the district leadership level. In 2001, elections for district regent threatened to escalate into open conflict. The ADP manager, who had good relationships in government, invited government, community and religious leaders for a three-day Empowerment for Reconciliation training (mediation and negotiation skills). It is acknowledged locally that this training helped to defuse election-related tensions. The election period went by peacefully.

In August 2002 the ADP sponsored an interfaith dialogue seminar with the theme "Pluralism, Conflict and Peace." This event brought together religious leaders in order to establish more open understanding among Muslims, Christians, and World Vision. Through this training the ADP established new levels of understanding and trust with senior Muslim community leaders and put World Vision in a position to mitigate tensions that had been developing and to open the community development programme to adherents of all faiths. These training events also were among the first done in World Vision Indonesia programme areas. Their success supported a growing commitment to do similar training activities in other programme areas.

The LCP/DNH Centre of Learning

In early 2001 an LCP/DNH Centre of Learning (CoL) was established in the Banggai ADP. According to the project proposal:

> The purpose of the CoL is to provide a field based learning environment for modelling the LCP framework and researching impact and lessons learned. . . . The two ultimate goals of the CoL involve transformation at two levels. First in the way WV (agency and staff) think about and interpret the work that they do in conflict areas and how this way of thinking transfers to project design and implementation. The second (more difficult to measure) impact that is sought is genuine

improvement in community relations leading to decreased risk of violent ethno-political identity conflicts.

The sub-district bordering the volatile District of Poso was chosen for concentrated attention. In the course of three years, three LCP/DNH assessments were conducted. A full-time LCP/DNH coordinator was appointed to build capacity, both within the organisation and in collaborating self-help groups and among community leaders. Assessments identified significant sources of tension between Muslims and Christians. Most tensions related to a sense in the Islamic community that they were being excluded from the program, to discomfort with World Vision's Christian identity and a perception of its having ulterior motives, and to differing food and alcohol-related practices. These tensions, if not managed well, had the potential to escalate into open conflict. Secondary issues were settler/indigenous dynamics and inter-clan conflicts. The ADP took recommendations from the assessments seriously and made strategic programme changes in order to be more overtly inclusive in its approach. As decision-making for field projects ultimately rested with the community-based self-help groups, an important dissemination campaign was undertaken to communicate that World Vision is an inclusive, non-proselytising organisation that serves people of all faiths.

ADP Banggai's programme design changes addressed both issues of benefit distribution and issues of perception and symbolism.[17] In LCP/DNH terms, these are the two mechanisms through which aid can affect conflict, especially when benefit disparities overlap with and reinforce existing lines of conflict. The emerging LCP-related social-change processes described by community leaders during an evaluation of the CoL demonstrate significant links to the WVI Transformational Development Framework:

- "Transformed relationships" – relating to increased collaboration between community members of different religious backgrounds;
- "Transformed systems and structures" – relating to increased access of Muslim community members to the ADP system, including leadership, and its benefits;
- "Caring for others" – Relating to changing mutual perceptions between community members of different religious backgrounds, and willingness to share ADP benefits;
- "Emergence of hope" – Relating to increased confidence in addressing community-based conflict;
- "Social sustainability" – Relating to mitigating the risk of doing harm through development activities, and to building community resilience against conflict trends pressuring from the outside.[18]

In addition to ADP-wide changes, several self-help groups or individuals developed their own peace-promoting activities at local levels, originating from their use of standard LCP/DNH practises of strengthening connectors:

- Redesigning infrastructure projects, such as water piping, road maintenance and bridge building so that the whole community was involved in decision-making and receiving benefits;
- Sponsoring community-wide arts and sports events that bring people of all faiths together in a common experience;
- Implementing the "Safari Ramadhan," an interfaith children's holiday that involves joint celebration activities in a community that had experienced high levels of religious tensions;
- Facilitating teacher exchanges, with Hindu or Muslim teachers invited for the first time to teach Christian children.[19]

Community members also articulated uses for LCP/DNH that go well beyond the intended purposes of the tool. For example, they have used LCP as a mediation tool, and ideas akin to early warning and conflict prevention through community dialogue have emerged.

Through the work of the LCP Centre of Learning, ADP Banggai was able to:

- Accomplish design changes based on solid assessment which transformed its interaction with social forces affected by its programme and effectively to sensitise its staff members to their impact on those forces;
- Build capacity in the self-help groups and among community leaders to make simple

but accurate assessments, to plan project activities to mitigate conflict and enhance local capacities for peace, and to empower them to implement project decisions; and

- Influence World Vision Indonesia and other national offices in the Asia Pacific region by disseminating lessons learned to support World Vision's goal of mainstreaming LCP/DNH throughout the organisation.

Approaches to child-focused advocacy programming at the national level

In 2004 a large number of Indonesian children were still living in a state of risk, exacerbated by conflict,[20] even though in 1990 the Government of Indonesia had ratified the UN Convention on the Rights of Children (CRC). In spite of an implementation role given to the National CRC Co-ordinating Ministry within the Ministry of Social Affairs, few significant changes occurred on the ground in the overall situation for children at risk. Children have been the principal victims of communal conflict sweeping Indonesia since 1998. Data about child deaths attributed to conflict are not yet available. Between 1999 and 2003 the number of internally displaced persons jumped from 350,000 to about 1.6 million. Of these, an estimated 75 per cent were women and children.[21] Even though use of child soldiers has not been considered significant in most of Indonesia's conflicts, in the Maluku conflicts children featured as combatants. Frequent reports tell of children adept at making and using homemade weapons.[22]

Post-conflict trauma accompanies the daily life of a significant number of these children. Only after the fall of Suharto was a great deal of concern raised by child psychologists about impacts on children of communal violence and ensuing instability and about a perceived spread of a culture of violence seeping through the social fabric.[23] Before then, raising such issues would have been considered a betrayal of loyalty to the state. Child psychologists became worried that this generation of Indonesian children would become "a lost generation."[24]

Raising advocacy issues became safer after the fall of Suharto, as public discourse and press freedom became more commonplace. This new-found freedom created space for World Vision Indonesia to begin developing a programmatic, child-centred approach to advocacy in keeping with its mandate as a child-focused organisation. Success of the Papua food-crisis advocacy encouraged senior management to consider a more active advocacy strategy. The need to hire large numbers of Muslims to staff humanitarian response projects in Muslim areas also contributed to World Vision Indonesia's transformation toward collaborative advocacy based on strategic positioning "in between" on behalf of the poor and marginalised, regardless of their identity.[25] Rather than pursuing an explicit, frontal-campaign approach to advocacy that would put the organisation in an adversarial position, senior management chose a more implicit, collaborative approach through dialogue and community capacity building.[26]

Giving voice to the poor and disadvantaged, to children and to their communities, constitutes the main working mechanisms in advocacy. World Vision Indonesia is engaged at three levels to promote its child-focused advocacy strategy:

1. *Government of Indonesia* – through formal dialogue, monitoring the implementation of government policy related to children, preparing submissions to the government as a part of NGO and international agency consortia, and negotiating/lobbying the government at the local level, ADPs are expected to become a partner of local agencies and a reference point for government to improve the quality of life for children.
2. *Community Based Organisations, NGOs/International Agencies* – through dialogue, monitoring, collaborating on initiatives, becoming partners of local NGOs focusing on advocacy, self-help groups sponsored by ADPs will, in the future, be trained to implement child advocacy activities.
3. *Churches* – through co-operative efforts to raise awareness of child advocacy issues and implement initiatives.[27]

Key principles

Establishing and maintaining impartiality is key to strategic positioning and conflict-sensitive and advocacy-sensitive programming for a faith-based organisation belonging to the religious minority and working in a context of religion-based conflict. This rigorous and disciplined practice requires thoughtful and careful programming at the most detailed implementation level. In addition to the five strategic processes adopted by World Vision International for peacebuilding, emergency assistance and HIV/AIDS programming – creating a culture of good governance; transforming relationships; working in coalitions impacting beyond commonly recognised boundaries; enhancing community capacities that generate hope; and developing sustainable livelihoods with just distribution of resources.[28] A number of principles based on World Vision Indonesia's experience are emerging:

1. *Child-centred focus:*
   - Drawing attention to the "preferred future" of children and the communities that nurture them;
   - Focusing all programme goals and objectives on promoting quality of life for children;
   - Drawing attention to controversial advocacy-related issues by assessing their impact on children and reporting what World Vision Indonesia is doing to address them.
2. *Credibility, trust and accountability:*
   - Demonstrating high regard and respect for all identity groups in a community regardless of ethnicity, religion, social status, political affiliation, background or history;
   - Creating safe places where people with differences and groups in conflict can meet on neutral ground;
   - "We do what we say we will do; we mean what we say."
   - Rigorously applying the same standards in all situations;
   - Providing equal access to all potential recipients;
   - Being perceived to be balanced, fair and impartial – if not always neutral;
   - Demonstrating organisational values in the lives and work of staff;
   - Being accountable to all stakeholders as an agency that learns, responds appropriately, and asks stakeholders, "How did we do?"
   - Providing assurances to all stakeholders of a commitment to "do no harm," even when rigour, efficiency and the application of principles and high standards are called for.
3. *Transparency, openness:*
   - Being clear about World Vision's identity as a faith-based organisation and its purpose as a non-proselytising humanitarian service agency with local government and religious leaders and the community as a whole – there can be no hidden agenda;
   - Articulating clearly purpose, goals and objectives and sharing them with all stakeholders;
   - Involving all stakeholders in monitoring, evaluation and reporting.
4. *Community-first sustainability:*
   - Demonstrating genuine commitment to the poor, marginalised and disenfranchised;
   - Demonstrating that the beneficiary community is the subject, not the object, of assistance – the good of the community precedes the good of the organisation;
   - Responding to the community on its own terms;
   - Implementing structures which empower the community to build its own desired future, and committing resources to achieve that future;
   - Building civil society with capacity to achieve well-being, peace and justice;
   - Participating fully in the life and work of the community.
5. *Collaboration and co-operation:*
   - Considering all identity groups and their organisations that share World Vision's programmatic goals and objectives as worthy collaborating partners and not just objects or beneficiaries;
   - Nurturing co-ordination and co-operation – reducing competition, mistrust, enhancing

collaboration among NGOs, the government and its agencies, and community based organisations – and entering into collaborative, accountable relationships to achieve common goals;
- Considering donors as collaborating partners and fostering collaborative relationships among donor agencies and with NGOs;
- Maintaining appropriate, open liaison at all levels – community leaders, local and provincial government, military and police, NGOs and donors.

6. *Quality conflict-sensitive and advocacy-sensitive programming:*
   - Explicitly articulating and demonstrating a strategy to "do no harm" and to build "local capacities for peace."
   - Rigorously using the LCP/DNH framework to ensure that programmes reduce tensions and the potential for violence and enhance connectivity and the potential for peace, that optimal options are identified, and that programme and project redesign occurs when necessary;
   - Incorporating peacebuilding and advocacy strategies and activities into ongoing programme and project objectives and activities – implicit peacebuilding and advocacy is sometimes more effective for empowerment and capacity building at the grassroots than explicit strategies;
   - Designing programmes that are holistic, integrative, and responsive to community needs and aspirations.

7. *Mainstreaming:*
   - Fostering an organisational culture that internalises principles of strategic positioning, does no harm, promotes peacebuilding and advocacy – all project designs are expected to exhibit awareness of these strategies and incorporate strategies and activities to achieve them;
   - Creating organisational structures accountable to these principles;
   - Incorporating these principles into organisational strategic documents.[29]

Conclusion

Establishing and maintaining impartiality is a disciplined and total exercise. A faith-based development, relief and advocacy agency needs to have within its organisational mandate the philosophy and the mechanisms to allow this to happen. Sometimes tensions arise as an NGO maintains its internal integrity while respecting the worthiness of people with whom the organisation works – not an easy task. Organisations are made up of people, and people fail. Not everyone holds true to his or her highest values. Yet, when a conflicted community perceives that an agency is upholding and implementing these key principles, the agency "earns" the privilege to be a "third party impartial," to deliver assistance programs with the confidence that they will have a long-term, empowering, life-giving impact. Trust and credibility are "social capital." Once achieved, they must be preciously guarded. Social capital can absorb some failures, but nothing can be taken for granted.

This chapter recorded the transformation of World Vision Indonesia into a learning, responsive and accountable agency competent to deliver complex aid programmes in difficult situations. It has described how World Vision's two principal strategies – strategic positioning and quality conflict-sensitive and advocacy-sensitive programming – have been allies in making World Vision one of the leading humanitarian assistance and community development agencies in Indonesia. World Vision's identity as a Christian, faith-based NGO has received people's loyalty only because it has followed principles of solid programming, transparency, trust building, collaboration, impartiality and high regard for persons of other faiths. World Vision's commitment to building community capacity and to providing resources to achieve communities' aspirations has allowed it the privilege of brokering the rehabilitation of post-conflict communities and of being both an eyewitness and a source of sustainable transformational development in conflict-sensitive communities.

Appendix 1: The national context: Background to the human rights dilemma and the context of conflict during the Suharto era

Suharto's New Order Government successfully kept the Indonesian public in the dark about regionalised turmoil, particularly in Aceh, Papua, and West Kalimantan. The aftermath of the mid-1999 East Timor referendum for independence changed that. In the debacle following East Timor's independence, the role of the Indonesian military and its local militias attracted worldwide attention. With the flow of over 250,000 refugees, conflict threatened to spread into neighbouring West Timor Province. For the first time international agencies and NGOs were confronted with major refugee and internally displaced people movements and accompanying humanitarian crisis in this region. The veil covering ethnic conflicts between native Dayak and settler Madurese in West Kalimantan 1998 was lifted with the fall of the New Order Government, and humanitarian agencies were compelled to respond to the unfolding humanitarian crisis. Religion-based conflicts then erupted in Maluku in early 1999, North Maluku in late 1999, and escalated in Poso, Central Sulawesi in 2000. The war in Aceh and secessionist struggles in Papua were ongoing throughout this period. In all, about 1.6 million internally displaced persons required emergency assistance.

Prohibition of public discourse on differences, including training in creatively dealing with differences and conflict, and the thick veil of secrecy covering internal conflicts left Indonesians totally unprepared to deal with the humanitarian crisis and with the aftermath of trauma and destroyed communities. Child psychologists, trainers in conflict resolution, trauma counsellors, and media specialists, among others, looked to outside assistance to develop the competencies needed. Indonesians were left wondering what had happened to their cherished values of and international reputation for social harmony and mutual respect.[30]

This period also saw the rise of extremist Islamic organisations, among them the Indonesia-based Jemaah Islamiyah, which was willing to use violent means to achieve its goal of creating a pan-regional strict Islamic state covering southern Philippines, southern Thailand, Malaysia and Indonesia. Some of these organisations fomented violent acts against targets perceived to be Christian and to represent Western interests. In Indonesia, majority Christian areas were specially targeted. Numerous smaller extremist groups kept their agenda on the plate of national consciousness through use of violent actions. Even though the majority, Indonesian moderates, maintained their insistence on a pluralistic, secular state, the extremist minority committed to using violence as a means of achieving its goals kept Indonesians off balance.

Causes of conflict and communal violence in Indonesia are complex, and the key players are often hidden. Root causes can be traced to social and economic disparity, shifting ratios between Muslims and Christians and between ethnic groups, with disparate social and economic values converging to create tinderboxes during a time when Indonesia was experiencing a major political and social transition. Such conflicts have tended to be horizontal in nature. Furthermore, a long and aggravated history of economic and political exploitation and internal migration policies that upset religious and ethnic balances have stirred secessionist aspirations at a time when the government is embarking on a process of regional autonomy and decentralisation. Such conflicts have tended to be more vertical and deep-rooted in character. Proximate causes of current conflicts can be traced to competing interests jockeying for power, influence and economic positioning, which are being played out in some of the most vulnerable areas. Particularly vulnerable are those regions where ethnic and/or religious ratios are, or are becoming, equalised, or where there are rapid changes in ratios.

Appendix 2: World Vision Indonesia's advocacy strategy

In World Vision Indonesia a concerted advocacy strategy began emerging after 1999. It focused primarily on children's rights and child protection, based on World Vision International's transformational development and advocacy standards and on the Government of Indonesia's Child Protection legislation.[31] World Vision Indonesia's policy and planning documents for 2003–4 posit eight domains of change with and on behalf of children.[32] Four focus on the transformation of the child, and four on community transformation:

1. *Child survival*: incorporates children's access to health services, clean water, food and household security and adequate nutrition.
2. *Child development*: incorporates developmental aspects – access to 12 years of public education, life-skills development, and values related to personal, interpersonal, environmental and spiritual relationships.
3. *Child protection*: incorporates efforts to protect children's legal rights, freedom and the future – focusing on the child's legal identity, protection from exploitation and trafficking, and creating an environment safe for children.
4. *Child participation*: places children in the centre of development as subjects of their own transformational development.
5. *Community empowerment*: ascertains community capacity to manage the development process, underlying a commitment to involve the community at each level for sustainable development.
6. *Transformed systems and structures/advocacy*: affirms that advocacy is integral to transformational development when focused on systems, structures and policy – fulfilling the rights of the child is the focus of World Vision's ministry.
7. *Transformed relationships*: underscores the importance of social relationships as the basis sustainable, child-focused development processes in which there is an emergence of care for one another, the emergence of hope and the emergence of spiritual values guiding the relationships.
8. *Partnering the poor and the non-poor*: positions World Vision to form alliances between those in need and those in a position to assist by fostering a sense of social responsibility and equitable distribution of resources.

Advocacy is "a process that involves activities intended to bring about positive and sustainable changes in policies, structures and practices affecting the poor and vulnerable children, their parents and communities."[33] World Vision Indonesia's advocacy focus is on child protection aimed at "improved child protection in all WV Indonesia's ministry area through improvement of community's understanding, awareness, and concern to the rights of children, and created child protection monitoring system in all projects."[34] The Child Protection Act of the Indonesian government states: "Child Protection is all forms of activities that guarantee and protect children and their rights to optimally live, grow, develop, and participate as their human dignity and get the protection from any violence and discrimination." It requires that children be safeguarded against all forms of abuse, neglect and exploitation, covering issues such as special care for refugee children, torture, abuses in the criminal-justice system, involvement in armed conflict, child labour, drug abuse and sexual exploitation. It is required at the family, community, local, national, and global levels to ensure that the needs of children are met, that their rights are respected, and that they are not subjected to physical abuse and neglect, emotional or psychological abuse and neglect, or sexual abuse and exploitation. It involves an understanding of the nature of children and their needs and rights.[35]

World Vision Indonesia's child protection programme planning strategy for 2004–7 indicates three critical success standards that address critical needs:

1. *Legal identity:* as children's legal identity is based on an official birth certificate, the goal is to achieve total coverage as a basis for a hopeful future for the child.

2. *Child exploitation:* as an unacceptable number of children are experiencing exploitation, efforts will focus on the issues of minimum age for employment (while differentiating child labour and child work), the worst forms of child labour (including commercial sex workers and child soldiers), and child trafficking.
3. *Safe environment:* as domestic and community violence, child neglect, vulnerability of girl children, and disadvantages facing orphans and children with disabilities are still prevalent, efforts will focus on building capacity in the community and in children to recognise and articulate risks and incidents.

This action plan is based on principles found in World Vision Indonesia's Child Protection Policy,[36] the Government of Indonesia's Child Protection Act, and the UN's CRC. Implementation mechanisms at the field level include World Vision's guidelines for situational analysis on children, requiring all ADPs to incorporate child-protection activities in their programme design,[37] and the formation and training of child-protection forums at the community level. ADP managers are expected to report incidents requiring a response to the national office, which takes the next steps. A situational report on issues facing children is expected in project reports. Submitting these reports to local, regional and national government bodies constitutes a significant component of advocacy.

World Vision Indonesia considers collaboration and building capacity to be the most effective advocacy mechanisms. Giving voice to the poor and disadvantaged, to children and to their communities, constitutes the main working mechanisms. The child-protection forums are the principal vehicle of this mechanism.

Several one-time advocacy initiatives through the printed media have been introduced, and explorations of expanding this channel have begun. Contributing to regional advocacy initiatives is co-ordinated with the regional co-ordinator.

Under its growing child-focused programming and advocacy mandate, World Vision Indonesia has accomplished numerous advocacy-related initiatives:

1. *Awareness raising and dialogue*
   - To commemorate its fortieth anniversary in 2000, a four-volume Indonesian-language rendition of the UN Convention on the Rights of Children in a children's magazine format named *HAK (Rights)* was commissioned and distributed through national child-protection agencies.
   - In collaboration with a leading Indonesian newspaper, *Kompas*, World Vision published articles on children and development to highlight children's rights and protection issues, hosted a number of public forums on the topic and published a book of essays on the topic.
2. *Collaboration and networking*
   - World Vision Indonesia has become a leader in the National Children's Day at local, regional and national levels.
   - World Vision Indonesia has become an active participant in dialogues with the National Committee on Child Protection (non-governmental) to influence policy and implementation of policy.
   - World Vision Indonesia was a founding member of a national network of Christian-based agencies on child rights and advocacy.
3. *Grant funded programming focusing on education*
   - An Education Safety Net programme, implemented through the Ministry of Education, is intended to improve educational standards, access for marginalised children, and introduce children's rights issues.
   - A Peacebuilding through Children's Education programme in post-conflict North Maluku focuses on creating communities that are safe for children and on providing opportunities for post-conflict rehabilitation.
   - A *Peace and Tolerance Magazine* project in North Maluku, focused on children in grades 4–6, encourages children to develop life skills for peaceable living and

teachers to become active promoters of peace focused on children.

- A Building Teacher Capacities for Peace project in North Maluku trains teachers in methods of child-centred, interactive teaching focusing on creating safe, happy classrooms.
- A Kids and Conflict curriculum project produced a five-session training module to help children and their teachers develop skills, knowledge and plans to resolve conflict issues.

4. *Mainstreaming and policy*
   - World Vision Indonesia has implemented a Child Protection Policy.
   - World Vision Indonesia has given advocacy significant profile in annual strategic and corporate planning and policy documents.
   - World Vision Indonesia has mandated that child protection and children's rights are integrated into all programme designs.

World Vision Indonesia's approach to advocacy can be summed into three principal strategies.

1. Mandating advocacy-related strategies, objectives and activities in ongoing project and programme designs.
2. Strategically positioning itself to play an intermediary role in contexts where there has been conflict or where there is potential for violence.
3. Working in collaborative and co-operative arrangements with other agencies to strengthen the chosen advocacy position of coalitions; giving a voice to – or strengthening the voice of – community groups to advocate on their own behalf.

Notes

[1] Conversations with the late Yap Thiam Hien, the "grandfather" of Indonesian human rights lawyers, Jakarta, 1984.

[2] Interview with James Tumbuan, World Vision Indonesia director, August 2004.

[3] For a more complete statement on this period, see Appendix 1.

[4] Interviews with James Tumbuan, national director, and Grace Hukom, Technical Support Unit coordinator, August 2004.

[5] Many of these agencies were managing sophisticated emergency programmes elsewhere in the world, and they put their extensive resources to work to build capacity in their Indonesia-based operations.

[6] The author was attached to the peacebuilding unit as senior advisor for peacebuilding and reconciliation.

[7] See Mary B. Anderson; *Do No Harm: How Aid Can Support Peace – or War*, The Collaborative for Development Action, Local Capacities for Peace Project (Boulder, CO: Lynne Riener, 1999).

[8] Taken from an unpublished summary document by William O. Lowrey, *Local Capacities for Peace (LCP)*.

[9] Adapted from Mary B. Anderson, ed., *Options for Aid in Conflict: Lessons from Field Experience* (Cambridge, MA: The Collaborative for Development Action, 2000).

[10] This section is fully developed in Allen Harder, "LCP/DNH for Conflict-Sensitive Quality Programming: Application to the DME Program Cycle," a chapter on applying LCP to community development to be published in 2005 by World Vision Asia Pacific. The chapter is based on the work of the World Vision Indonesia peacebuilding unit.

[11] These seven components are a part of the World Vision DME module. Jonathan Flower, "LEAP for Quality: Learning through Evaluation with Accountability and Planning: World Vision's Approach to Design Monitoring and Evaluation: World Vision Development Resources," Draft 4.0, October 2004.

[12] This section is based on several unpublished conflict assessments by the author and on his involvement as an advisor to the North Maluku Emergency/Rehabilitation Program.

[13] PMI (Ternate), Indonesian Red Cross, November 2000 figures.

[14] North Maluku Department of Education.

[15] The word *impartial* is used instead of *neutral* – neutrality implies objectivity. In spite of the best intentions, neutrality is not possible; each agency has its unique mandate, values, style of operation, and staff with varying levels of commitment.

[16] A comprehensive review of the World Vision's North Maluku programming can be found in *Final Report: Documentation Project on Programs Conducted in North Maluku*, Indo Pacific Reputation Management Consultants, July 2004 (available from World Vision Indonesia).

[17] The discussion following is adapted from Michelle Garred and Allen Harder, LCP *Centre of Learning, Phase I FY01–FY03 Evaluation Report*, March 2004.

[18] See World Vision International, Transformational Development Core Documents, January 2003.

[19] Focus-group discussions with community leaders, November 2003.

[20] This chapter was written before the 2004 Asian tsunami and doesn't include children at risk due to tsunami-related deaths of relatives and community destruction.

[21] In the Malukus, 364,000 (75 per cent) of 485,000 IDPs were women and children (*Jakarta Post*, 19 August 2001).

[22] Interview with a senior education official from a university in Ambon City destroyed in the conflict (name withheld).

[23] Discussions with Frieda Manungsong, a child psychologist with the University of Indonesia Crisis Centre, 2003.

[24] "Political Interests Hamper Traumatised Children's Recovery," *Jakarta Post*, 7 October 2000, 5. The same issue carried several articles on children traumatised by violent conflict in Indonesia.

[25] Interview with Hendro Suwito, communications manager for World Vision Indonesia, August 2004.

[26] World Vision Indonesia has frequently been criticised for not taking a more confrontational stance like advocacy-focused NGOs. However, World Vision's work in local communities opens up more effective avenues through community empowerment (interview with James Tumbuan, World Vision Indonesia national director).

[27] Many of these strategies and mechanisms are just getting under way in 2004–5.

[28] "Transformational Development Core Documents," World Vision International, January 2003. These principles and strategic processes are integrated to World Vision's core values: "We are Christian; we are committed to the poor; we value people; we are stewards; we are partners; we are responsive."

[29] Beginning in 2002, World Vision Indonesia has incorporated these principles into its annual corporate planning and strategy documents, with the expectation that all programmes and projects will strive to achieve these expectations.

[30] The late Soedarto, a senior World Vision Indonesia leader who was a key person in the implementation of the peacebuilding programme, summarised well a common public sentiment in a comment to the author during his hiring interview (July 2000): "During Suharto's era we all thought we were living in a paradise. What has happened to it? We see it totally differently now."

[31] World Vision International's Vision Statement provides the mandate for World Vision Indonesia's focus on children. "Our vision for every child, life in all its fullness; our prayer for every heart, the will to make it so."

[32] The discussion following has been put together from several 2003 unpublished corporate policy and planning documents.

[33] Defined at a September 2004 World Vision advocacy seminar at the Asia Pacific regional level from a workshop report by Asteria Aritonang, World Vision Indonesia's child-protection co-ordinator, September 2004.

[34] *Unifying Goal 2004–2007*, Child Protection Strategic Plan.

[35] *WV Child Protection Resource Manual* (April 2001).

[36] The Child Protection Policy is directed to all staff, board member, consultants, volunteers and sponsors in order to protect children from potential practices and incidents that could bring them harm. It also raises awareness about child-protection issues. All the above must sign an affidavit before being in contact with children in World Vision project areas.

[37] About 50 per cent of ADPs with complete programme designs have now incorporated child-advocacy activities (Asteria Aritonang, workshop report, September 2004).

Peacebuilding efforts in Sri Lanka

Dilhani Thantirimudalige

Introduction

The Sri Lankan government and Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) have been engaged in peace negotiations at different periods of time over the past ten years. Most times international delegates have facilitated these negotiations. However, more often than not one of the parties refused to compromise its stand. Further, strong pressures from various extreme political hard-liners against certain demands have made things even worse for the struggling peace process to move ahead.

A new government led by Prime Minister Ranil Wickramasinghe was elected in December 2001. The main focus of the new government was on a peace settlement. In February 2002 a cease-fire agreement was signed between the LTTE and the government. Following the cease-fire agreement the two parties were able to sit at one table for negotiation. After six rounds of talks in April 2003 the LTTE withdrew from the table.

Subsequently, in April 2004, a parliamentary election was held and the country's leadership was handed over to President Chandrika Kumaratunga's coalition government. In spite of the Norwegian government efforts, and international interest in Sri Lanka's peace negotiations, the LTTE and the government have not met for further negotiation "talks" since 2003.

Yet out of the wreckage caused by the tsunami, there is hope that the government and the LTTE will join together in relief efforts that might lead to a peace accord. Most Lankans desire a lasting settlement. The need for both parties to meet for talks on issues related to a permanent settlement is evident. This would create a foreground to meet the nation's needs in a unified manner.

Meanwhile, the National Peace Council of Sri Lanka, using the national media, launched huge campaigns for peace among groups of all ethnic and religious backgrounds stressing how important it is to be able to cohabit in a multi-ethnic land. The agency has been able to promote many initiatives through public lectures and television talk shows.

Since the declaration of a cease fire in Sri Lanka in February 2002, schools in the nation have expressed the desire for peace as a topic for essays, competitions, drawings and cultural events. People from all walks in life are excited about the prospects of peace in their country, including youth and children. This enthusiasm has been seen as scores of people have made pilgrimages to the north and east from the south and central hills. The general feeling was expressed this way: "Finally, after 20 years, the barricades are open and we feel our children and families are safe. There is a sense of security, so we can enjoy travel, go sightseeing and worship in ancient temples."

Background

During Sri Lanka's recent history, generations of children and adolescents were exposed to extensive war–related events. The country's civil war lasted more than two decades, shredding the national economy and bringing untold misery and deep fear to thousands of people in all parts of the country. As destructive as the December 2004 tsunami was, the armed conflict in Sri Lanka since 1983 represents the most devastating, dangerous and all-encompassing factor affecting the lives of children and women. Many children in Sri Lanka have witnessed the death or disappearance of family members and friends during the war. Although accurate data is not available, it is estimated that more than 500,000 children are directly or indirectly affected by the conflict in Sri Lanka.

As a result of the war, thousands of people left the country. Others harbour bitter memories of living throughout most of their lives as internally displaced people in welfare centres. The war maimed the nation's potential work force. Thousands fell into poverty after being forced to leave their villages of birth. While agriculture is the main means of livelihood for people in Sri Lanka, the lack of opportunity for earning a steady income has brought frustration among youth. Deficiencies in health facilities and medical care, scarcity of opportunities for education and difficulties in achieving a decent living are even more frustrating for people who have returned to Sri Lanka after exile.

In human costs war took its toll in death, injury, homelessness, social and economic deprivation, fear and insecurity. Socio-political costs are also high. Basic human rights violations deprived people of civil and political rights, leaving in their wake a culture of violence.

Large-scale massacres recurred time after time since the ethnic riots of 1957, breeding deep hatred and anger among victims. This environment of hostility and hard-heartedness among men, women and children has resulted in a culture of combat and violence. Since the civil war erupted in the mid-1980s, at least 65,000 Lankans have lost their lives.

Pervasive insecurity affects the entire population in the country. According to the latest Sri Lankan profile reports and facts sheets, well over 130,000 households had family members serving as combatants in the war, bringing an ever-present fear of death to their lives. War deprived civilians of basic civic rights, such as freely voting for governments of their choice. Although NGOs have directed considerable attention to relieving malnutrition and health needs in the country's north and east, psychological needs following chronic violence are poorly understood by the majority of government agencies and NGOs.

Surveys conducted by the University of Sri Jayawardenapura, together with other research institutes, indicate that more than half (58 per cent) of children had missed school because of the conflict, particularly in the eastern districts (91 per cent, compared to 16 per cent in other areas). The average length of disruption for these children was one to five months, according to a study conducted from 1993 to 1996.

From the moment barricades opened and temporary barbed fences were removed in February 2002, civilians celebrated while soldiers reunited with family. Young rebel soldiers were able to marry, go to the movies and travel the country. Without a shadow of doubt, the moment the guns became silent, all ethnic groups rejoiced.

Peacebuilding

Initiatives

In Sri Lanka NGOs were engaged in peacebuilding efforts as early as the 1990s. However opportunities for peacebuilding increased after the cease fire. As an international NGO working in southern Sri Lanka, as well as many areas of the north and east, World Vision Lanka found itself in

a politically delicate position. For this reason World Vision did not intentionally get involved in any grassroots-level peacebuilding activities before 2002. Yet after 20 years of relief and rehabilitation work in many districts of the country World Vision Lanka cultivated a good rapport with all communities, helping them understand that World Vision's role as a humanitarian organisation involves reaching out to hurting people in all ethnic groups and religious persuasions.

In 2000 World Vision Lanka gave serious thought to peacebuilding initiatives as part of the organisation's operations in the country. As a result, 30 participants, all Area Development Programme (ADP) managers[1] and some key staff, attended a four-day seminar organised by the National Integrated Program Unit. The project was undertaken by the Ministry of Ethnic Affairs and National Integration to gain understanding of the conflict in the country. At the end of this seminar World Vision Lanka management appointed a peace steering committee. No further move was undertaken until late that year when World Vision International organised training sessions for local capacities for peace.[2]

Rationale

As an organisation World Vision's work focuses on child development. This emphasis helped World Vision Lanka to come to grips with the fact that children are most vulnerable in any conflict situation, because they are both innocent and powerless. Children can be easily manipulated and are vulnerable to deprivation of basic services that are disrupted during conflicts. In the last analysis, children suffer most because they trust and depend on adults for their survival.

The need for peace among individuals, families and communities is of utmost importance in the current context in Sri Lanka. World Vision Lanka initiated a pilot project involving six ADPs to "test out" methodologies for building local capacities for peace. These ADPs are Eastern, Potuvil, Kebithigollawa, Mannar, Ambagamuwa and Willuwa.

Programming

The six ADP teams were interested in initiating peace programmes in their respective areas because they were working with communities battered by the effects of war and finding it difficult to get over the trauma of conflict. This situation presented a very good place to demonstrate that people from all over the country were hurt in the same manner. Unless they met and shared grievances – and reconciled – these people would live and die with hatred in their hearts and minds.

Communities in the East, Potuvil and Mannar, are mostly ethnic Tamils. Kebitigollawa is considered a border area, where Sinhala people are the majority. While Willuwa is comprised of people from all groups, Sinhala, Tamil and Muslim, the majority in Ambagamuwa are Tamil estate workers with a few Sinhala communities.

At the start-up phase World Vision provided training to children, youth and peace "mobilisers" (motivators) in these six ADPs. Topics such as conflict resolution, the culture of peace and unity in diversity were touched on as a way to approach concepts of peacebuilding discussed by the staff. The arts, including music and dance, were incorporated to promote local cultural values that have links to both the Sinhala and Tamil people. Children returned to their communities and began peace committees in their respective villages.

Programmes for different age groups were organised around themes such as Peace and Kids, Peace and Teens, and Peace and Youth. Through these programmes World Vision Lanka strengthened community commitments for peace activities recognised by the national-level network.

Peacebuilding needs to be an integral part of ADPs in years to come because children are the future of any nation. World Vision Lanka made every effort to obtain views and feelings of children regarding the current conflict in the country. Their opinions were taken into consideration in building "trust relationships" among people of diverse ethnic and religious backgrounds, a value that had sharply deteriorated over the many years of war in Sri Lanka.

ADPs formed peace associations in their respective communities, involving children and youth leaders trained in World Vision peace camps. Project goals and purposes were clearly defined by World Vision Lanka with facilitators and staff, who were directly involved before beginning the peace projects. World Vision Lanka wanted the ADPs to become a recognised community resource for non-violent methods of conflict resolution, including traditional methods based in the Sinhalese and Tamil cultures. World Vision also wished to conduct peace–promoting activities through drama, essays, graphic arts and rhetoric. The Alliance for Peace and Integration, now known as the Centre for Peacebuilding and Reconciliation, includes expert psychologists and political analysts who were facilitators of the peace programmes conducted by World Vision. They are now involved in conflict resolution.

World Vision Sri Lanka completed one year of raising awareness, training and workshops for building a culture of peace among communities including children. Through these programmes, children's perceptions changed about ethnic divisions. They now appreciate diversity in their communities. Programmes focused on drawing out ideas for peacebuilding at the grassroots levels were able to help children identify problems and find solutions. Through these programmes World Vision Lanka always encouraged people in communities, including children, to build on their own skills. Peacebuilding helped everyone to think differently. Without an attitude change, peace cannot be understood. And without peace it is difficult to expect transformation to take place in a multi-ethnic country such as Sri Lanka.

PHOTO: WORLD VISION SRI LANKA

Sports for peace was a very effective peacebuilding activity in Sri Lanka.

Positive results

More recently World Vision Lanka organised a Sports for Peace programme, involving all ADP youth and children peace promoters. About 1,200 participants from 21 communities, including Vavniya, Killinochchi and Madhu rehabilitation ADP programmes, took part in the Sports for Peace programme, which mostly involved children and youth under 30 years of age in different venues in the northern, southern and western provinces.

Participants were divided into four groups, each group with more than 300 people, from six ADPs. Representatives were chosen at the ADP level according to their involvement in promoting peace in their communities. Many mobilisers were part of this group. All participants, irrespective of language, ethnicity or religion, were grouped into teams for games such as volleyball, netball and cricket. Young people were excited to meet in this manner and to have enough time to get to know each other.

"This must be what peace is like," said Krishnakumari (age 25), a mobiliser in Ambagamuwa ADP who was selected for the final match in the netball game. "This is the first time I have played a game with youth from different districts in the country."

"We do not need the media to promote peace, if we have sports meets of this manner," said Nandana Kumara (age 27), a mobiliser from Horowpathana ADP. She participated on the Sports for Peace volleyball team and is an active peace promoter in his community.

"Sports for Peace is a very effective breakthrough to create a culture of peace," said Eashna (age 22) of Paddipalai ADP. "Through this programme our team was able to travel to

many places in the country, which would have been impossible otherwise."

Jayaweera Kumaratunga (age 27), a medical pensioner of the Sri Lanka army who was maimed on the battlefield, said, "Soldiers do not chase after civilians, but those who come to fight with us carry weapons. I never had anything against the Tamils. This sports meet helped me to find new Tamil friends."

"The cease fire has definitely created a huge difference in our lives. We would never have had an opportunity to have a sports meet where the Sinhalese and Tamils played group games like this if it were not for the cease fire and World Vision," said Sivamadhi (age 24), from the Wellaweli ADP in the East.

Sports for Peace is a new approach towards building peace and unity from the ruins of the culture of violence and hatred that prevailed in Sri Lanka for nearly 20 years, affecting two generations of people in the country. Those who gave their views on the Sports for Peace programme had all been directly affected by the war as children or teenagers during the height of conflict.

Future programmes

The terrible loss of life and destruction of infrastructure, ironically, have presented abundant opportunities for reconciliation and peace. The opposite may also occur as competition for domestic and international resources may reinforce ethnic, religious and political barriers and end the tenuous cease-fire. Prior to the December 2004 tsunami, the peacebuilding officer in World Vision Lanka, together with the regional peacebuilding coordinator of Asia, had drawn up a new strategy for taking further steps in the peacebuilding programme. The goal and approach are to initiate and integrate child-focused peacebuilding into World Vision Lanka development and relief programmes. The intention is to support the growth of a culture of peace at the grassroots and to facilitate opportunities for influence in the broader society. The larger goal is that World Vision will seek to make peacebuilding one of the organisation's core competencies and to serve the country as a lead agency in promoting peace.

In addition to promoting peace within their own communities, the peace associations were linked to one another to form networks. Inter-community network events are planned well into the future and are anticipated to include the following:

- Inter-ethnic peace camps for children and youth;
- Inter-ethnic exchange visits allowing peace association members to visit villages previously considered to be behind enemy lines; and
- Joint work projects based on shared cultural traditions and exchange of labour.

Scheduling these activities will be postponed due to tsunami relief-and-reconstruction efforts that are taking place in so many communities where World Vision Lanka works.

Closing

After more than two decades of war, most Lankans are anxious for peace – perhaps none more so than children and youth. The December 2001 truce between government and LTTE forces provided opportunities for public agencies and private organisations to initiate peacebuilding programmes. While World Vision's initiatives did not begin until 2002, the groundwork was laid in 2000 during seminars for managers and other key staff. Promotion of conflict mitigation and peacebuilding efforts are important to World Vision Lanka as the organisation works throughout most of the country, including areas where Tamils are the majority ethnic group.

As a child-focused organisation, World Vision's peace programmes are directed towards young people. The ripple effect, though, permeates entire communities. Initial programmes trained children and youth peace motivators, who then returned to their communities to start peace committees.

Programmes were subsequently organised for different age groups. Peace associations brought Tamil and Sinhalese young people together in peace camps and Sports for Peace programmes. World Vision is now developing strategies to support a culture of peace as one of the organisation's core competencies.

Notes

[1] ADP is World Vision's term for large-scale community development.

[2] For a description of local capacities for peace, see Allen Harder, "The Chrysalis: World Vision Indonesia's Transformation towards Quality Conflict-sensitive and Advocacy-sensitive Programming," in this volume.

Dissolving barriers through confidence building: Parent Teacher Associations and Police Community Initiatives in Bosnia and Herzegovina

Bill Sterland

Introduction

The legacy of 40 years of authoritarian rule in the former Yugoslavia and absence of an independent civil society, plus fear and suspicion among citizens exacerbated by the 1992–95 war, continue to have a disempowering effect on the people of Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH).[1] Towards World Vision BiH's goals of equity, poverty reduction and social development in the country, World Vision developed the Parent Teacher Associations and Police Community Initiatives (PTA/PCI) project.

The project made an important contribution towards these objectives using a flexible, participatory approach that sought to facilitate rather than impose a collective approach to solving communal problems.

In some communities that participated in this project, there were clear signs of a thaw in relations between police and community members (especially children); increased responsiveness of social institutions, particularly schools and police forces; empowerment of individuals and groups previously excluded from decision making; improved relations between young people and community authorities; and inter-ethnic co-operation.

Evaluation clearly showed that PTA/PCI members attributed their own sense of purpose, enthusiasm, self-confidence, determination and belief in the problem solving and planning process to the capacity building support they received. Yet despite achieving self-organisation and varying abilities to mobilise community resources, PTA/PCIs need more self-confidence to consolidate their position in the community, maintain momentum and address evolving change and emerging needs. While they are committed to the future, they are unsure how to develop long-term programmes.

Background

BiH's commendable formation of a democratic government, transition to a market economy and widespread institutional reform since 1995 have

The report on which this chapter is based was produced with the financial assistance of the European Commission, which funded the project, including the external evaluation that provided the information for this chapter. The views expressed are those of World Vision BiH and in no way reflect the official opinion of the European Commission.

had little impact on the ability of individuals and groups at the grassroots to participate in society and influence their own social and economic development. Government bodies and social institutions remain ill informed and unresponsive to the needs of the people they serve. Democratic processes are weak, inhibiting citizens from organising to exercise their right to advocate for change or to hold the authorities accountable. Women in particular have not been participating in public life or in the decision-making process since the war ended.

At the local level there exists a lack of contact, productive dialogue and co-operation between parents and schools concerning the education and well-being of children. Schools continue to function according to outdated top-down, non-participatory structures, despite ongoing reforms in curricula, management and teaching methods in both BiH entities. In such a set-up, little regard is given to voices of either children or parents, and teachers receive little encouragement to experiment or improve their pedagogical practices.

Lack of trust, continuing animosity among ethnic communities, increasing incidence of crime – including human trafficking, drug dealing and the sale of illegal arms – notoriously dangerous roads and the pervasive threat of landmines left over from the war make security and personal safety a major concern in many communities. Yet police forces are insufficiently responsive to communities' security concerns. Nor do citizens take responsibility for their own safety through local initiatives or by holding security forces accountable for their actions. Unpleasant memories of life in the former Yugoslavia and three terrible years of war have made people highly suspicious of the police, considering them an organ of repression and state control rather than a community resource with which citizens could co-operate to solve mutual problems.

Project objectives

The PTA/PCI project began in May 2002. The intent of the project was to create conditions that would support the process of confidence building among groups of people, encourage dialogue and social cohesion and foster civic participation. Specific objectives were to:

1. Build support and trust between people and local institutions, especially school authorities and the police.
2. Empower people to participate in the decision-making process in the community and beyond and to use their own resources for problem solving.
3. Encourage police and local authorities to provide more effective and accountable responses to communities' security concerns.
4. Build the confidence of parents to participate in school life and influence the education of their children.
5. Build tolerance and co-operation among ethnic groups.

To achieve these aims, World Vision BiH employed four regional teams of three field workers each to introduce PTA/PCI projects to 32 locations over two years.[2] Most of the efforts of World Vision staff involved training and working with community volunteers, who then assumed PTA leadership roles. At the same time, World Vision helped form in each community a PCI unit, which included police officers and community leaders, for advancing security and safety.

World Vision BiH supported PTAs and PCIs in several ways. It facilitated regular group meetings, particularly in the early phases of the project; donated seed money, typically 1,000 KM (500 *euros*); and helped in networking with NGOs and gaining access to authorities, both in the local community and at higher levels. World Vision also offered assistance and advice in mobilising local material and financial support, as well as in facilitating access to donors outside the community.

To create wider synergies World Vision BiH advocated for reforms or improved public services from cantonal and national governments based on the combined needs and interests of its project locations. Where an appropriate response was made by a PTA/PCI, such as launching a regional public-information campaign, World Vision BiH provided

small financial assistance with the production of publicity materials. The PTA/PCI project was subsequently extended for two months, providing additional networking support to all 32 groups.

Project approach

The methodology used in the PTA/PCI project was based on a participatory approach that World Vision BiH tested in a pilot project in Brčko District in 1999–2000. Central to this methodology is the principle that social development in a community is best achieved by empowering local people to make choices in their lives and to influence the direction of community change. This approach entails promoting continuous dialogue in the community, forming partnerships, encouraging self-reliance and strengthening the ability to organise in order to exert collective strength.

Thus, each PTA and PCI group received six months' intensive capacity building support during the start-up phase. Capacity building centred on a series of participatory training and action workshops in which each group was encouraged to articulate its vision for the community, develop a strategic plan and produce a series of proposals. World Vision BiH attempted to limit its role to introducing new methods and tools for joint work, facilitating groups and guiding participants towards making plans that could be achieved by using locally available resources. Hands-on assistance gradually gave way to less specific advice during subsequent visits in the project cycle.[3]

This non-invasive approach was a step-by-step process geared to stimulate attitudinal and behavioural changes. End results were not determined – and could not be forecast – as they were based on the evolving needs and interests of project participants. Accordingly, the PTA/PCI project did not predict concrete results based on specific activities. Rather, the participatory approach was aimed at enabling communities to establish autonomous, viable community organisations that would enable members to achieve effective participation in decision-making processes in their own lives and in the lives of people whom they represent.

Results

The project initially tried to establish two community groups, PTA and PCI, in each place where common interests were identified. Despite initial support from local communities, this generally was not achieved in the form originally planned. World Vision BiH reported that in the project's first year it was extremely difficult to build capacity and maintain regular support for individual PCIs. PCI members, drawn from local police, public authorities and government institutions, found it very difficult to negotiate regular meetings that were convenient to all stakeholders. Participants struggled to convert their analyses of community problems into concrete plans. A common comment was that the nature of the PCI task was "too abstract." Members were unable to establish priorities and goals for community development from among the large number and wide variety of seemingly equally urgent needs. At the same time, funds invested by World Vision in each location were earmarked for PTAs. While these resources were relatively small, contributions that were a significant stimulus for starting PTAs were not available to PCIs.

Because of this difficulty, World Vision BiH brought PCIs and PTAs together early in the first year. As a result, in all locations these groups became transformed into small, voluntary, community-based organisations (CBOs) that focused on improving conditions in and around the school. They represented the wider interests of the community to varying degrees, depending upon the particular interests represented by PCI members. Of special note is that police officers were present in most CBOs. In such cases these organisations created a crucial link between the community, especially children, and the police, which in many locations greatly improved relations between the two.

Learning from experience, World Vision BiH encouraged the formation of joint PTA/PCIs from the start of capacity building in the second round of locations. PTA/PCIs were successfully established as small informal voluntary CBOs that possessed basic organisational capacities. Each had a regular membership of between 15 and 25 parents

and teachers with a handful of police officers and community representatives. CBOs held regular meetings and operated in smaller groups on specific tasks and activities in a more intensive manner. Advice and encouragement of World Vision staff during the first year of work was a major incentive for PTA/PCIs to self-organise. In the second year, meetings with World Vision BiH staff were reduced from one or two times a week to fortnightly sessions.

World Vision's capacity building process resulted in each PTA/PCI's shared vision for its community. The visions were described in a strategic plan and a series of project concepts, representing the agreed results of the CBOs' own work, based on their analyses of their needs. These documents are generally the only written records that these organisations possess. Yet an indication of the success of the capacity building process is that in workshops all participants were able to give a clear expression of their organisation's mission or purpose. While different aspects of the PTA/PCIs work were emphasised within each group, in all cases there was broad agreement on their main activities and whom the groups represented.

Each PTA/PCI group had a co-ordinator who effectively organised meetings, kept members informed and gave overall direction to activities. At the same time, PTA/PCIs followed a more or less ad hoc process of planning and implementation, guided by their strategic plans and techniques learned during capacity building. While PTA/PCIs remained in the early stages of the pioneer stage of organisational development,[4] their work was propelled by charisma, enthusiasm, creativity and close, familiar relationships within the group. There was shared responsibility, little hierarchy and no strict divisions of labour.

Workshops clearly showed that PTA/PCI members attributed their own sense of purpose, enthusiasm, self-confidence, determination and belief in the problem-solving and planning process to the capacity building support they received. In different ways members described how they were initially sceptical or pessimistic about the project. They were aware of a general inertia and sense of demoralisation in their communities, as well as a lack of co-operation between citizens and the absence of organised and co-ordinated work towards improving the community. Participants described workshop training as a liberating process of learning to see afresh what was happening around them, of learning to work in teams towards solving problems and of understanding how they could collectively influence this process. In Poćulica the group described this process of empowerment as an awakening within the group. In Ustikolina the interview and workshop participants stated that capacity building helped them understand that they could collectively solve problems in their community.

PTA/PCIs succeeded in converting a significant proportion of initial plans into concrete activities, carried out directly by themselves or by the school or the police force. In most cases these activities entailed the direct inclusion of community members outside the PTA/PCIs or the support of the local community in the form of services, material and financial assistance.

In Poćulica the PTA/PCI secured a place in the local school for the play centre. While mobilising 50 parents and community members to assist in renovating the space, the CBO raised funds and material assistance from private companies for the provision of toys, educational materials and furniture. About 20 volunteer parents, who would run the centre, were trained in educational techniques by a local child-education agency. The centre opened in May 2003 and established itself as the site for the new first-year class in the school system and as an optional play centre for younger children out of term time. The centre fulfilled the criterion of providing the necessary conditions for education for six to seven year olds, which will oblige the Ministry of Education in Central Bosnia Canton to provide finance for a full-time teacher.

In Bratunac the PTA/PCI concentrated on a programme to raise awareness of the dangers of drugs among young people in an area where dealers from nearby Serbia regularly target children and youth. The programme included a peer-education component in which schoolteachers, local police and health professionals trained young people to be peer counsellors. At the same time,

the PTA/PCI and peer counsellors organised a variety of sporting and recreational activities for young people. Drug-awareness publications were produced for young people and adults in the community.

In Srbac a round table on how young people may usefully spend their free time was attended by representatives of most local institutions, as well as many schoolchildren. This event led to the PTA/PCI's support for forming a youth club for school-aged children. In a municipality of about 20,000 people, there are no recreational facilities for children and youth. The municipality promised to provide an out-of-school space, while the school and PTA/PCI members are actively assisting and supervising the activities of children.

In Ustikolina the PTA/PCI benefitted from a government fund, Odraz, for underdeveloped areas. Five projects of varying sizes were presented to Odraz for improvements to the school and its surroundings, all of which were approved. In 2004 work began on the renovation of the school playground for sports, relaxation and teaching purposes. The project included fencing the playground, planting a garden area, asphalting the sports area and the providing sports equipment. Local firms were contracted for construction tasks, while the bulk of the remaining work was to be done by parents, teachers and schoolchildren.

In these early activities World Vision BiH staff often served as mediators and facilitators with official institutions, especially those located beyond the borders of the municipality. This was because PTA/PCI participants were not often included directly in negotiations that enabled or enhanced local activities. The programme that set up the first school traffic patrols in Ustikolina was secured by World Vision.

Many activities undertaken by PTA/PCIs had the necessary attributes for achieving sustainability. Initial inputs of finance, labour and other material support produced benefits that could be maintained or repeated by existing local institutional structures at little or no extra cost to the community, or by the mobilisation of voluntary sources of support from community stakeholders. The play centre in Poćulica, for example, became an integral part of the local school. Regardless of whether the Ministry of Education will continue supplying a professional teacher, the core of volunteer parents should be able to transfer their child-care and educational skills and experiences to a new generation of parents. In the same way, peer education in Bratunac will be formally instituted into the class for general studies. New peer educators can be trained each year at little or no cost using both the community experts engaged in the initial education of educators and peer educators themselves. Indeed, this project already plans to train an increased number of schoolchildren in the school year.

Towards dissolving barriers

Between people and local institutions, especially school authorities and the police

A tentative conclusion from fieldwork data is that there is increased confidence among the local communities with regard to local police services in most locations, but that there is little evidence to suggest greater confidence in other authorities. In particular, confidence in the police is increased among children, who were identified overwhelmingly by all PTA/PCIs as the main beneficiaries of the project. The main (proxy) indicator for confidence in the police is the number of activities carried out by or with the police to promote child safety and security. This applied to road safety, landmine awareness and anti-drug education. These indicators were fulfilled to the greatest extent in Ustikolina and Poćulica where, prior to the project, there had been no co-operation between the police service and the local schools. In Ustikolina the school is located on a busy highway, and parents identified improved road safety as a major community need. Police and other PTA/PCI members drew attention to the fact that, despite the 18 local police officers being widely recognised in this small municipality of 3,000, the community retained a distrust of the police and misconstrued its purpose as one of repression and control. Very low crime rates and the absence of other major security concerns reduced the need for regular contact with the police. People in general

did not understand the police mandate to promote community safety as well as to fight crime. The deputy police chief noted that some children were clearly afraid of police officers, a fact he attributed to the negative influence of mistrustful parents.

In the first nine months of the project in Ustikolina, police organised two open days for children aged between 7 and 11 years to meet policemen, look around the police station and learn about all aspects of its work. Police also conducted traffic education with seven year olds, as well as assisted colleagues from nearby Goražde in the running of a special course for 12 children to train them to run school traffic patrols in the coming school year. These actions are planned to be repeated and extended in the future, with the full support of the school's management and the local police chief.

In Poćulica parents and teachers had similar concerns for traffic safety as their counterparts in Ustikolina, but they were also concerned about ethnic tension and landmine awareness. The village was severely affected in the war by ethnic conflict between neighbours, leaving this Bošniak village separated from an adjacent Croat settlement by a long 100–metre wide mine field and an invisible wall of mutual suspicion and distrust. Added to this, the village lies in an area where there is a high incidence of crime, particularly theft, prostitution and trafficking of women.

Relations between police and the community were ambiguous and mixed. Parents and teachers stress that relations have been good for some time; police and World Vision suggested that the area is characterised by mistrust of security forces. Police state that the war created a general lack of communication within communities that had a negative effect on the public's relations with the police. At the same time, a multi-ethnic police force seems to be lowering the levels of distrust.

PHOTO: WORLD VISION BIH

Children participate in road safety training given by local police.

In the first year of the project in Poćulica police officers carried out two sessions on landmine awareness for 65 pupils aged seven to nine years. The police also showed a film on road safety and conducted two role-play educational workshops on traffic awareness ("Little Policeman") to a total of 120 children between 7 and 11 years of age. The police distributed promotional material to drivers within the immediate vicinity. In the second year the police carried out similar activities on at least six occasions.

World Vision BiH worked directly with the Ministry of the Interior in Central Bosnia Canton to promote the work of eight local PTA/PCIs. In a step-by-step approach that gradually introduced local police officers from all eight PCIs, the project stimulated a canton-wide police campaign for public safety, including anti-drugs information and a strategy for making the police service more accessible. The deputy chief in nearby Vitez explained how this has led to the police station introducing an "open door" policy with the station being open to the public once every week.

Teachers say that the close co-operation established with police in the project "Little Policeman" greatly increased children's trust in police forces, as well as having increased children's own self-confidence. Parents were aware of all police activities in the school and expressed their increased satisfaction with the police force's approach to the public. Parents added that their children looked up to the police officers and saw them as role models. For their part, police officers said that the whole project has given them increased access to the local community, including other schools in the area that followed the examples of Poćulica and other PTA/PCIs. Police officers expressed the belief that public confidence in the police is growing slowly. In particular, they

consider that the "open door" policy has a positive effect on the public's readiness to co-operate with the police.

There is no evidence that confidence in the police improved in Srbac and Bratunac in the Republika Srpska (RS), despite the readiness of local police to increase co-operation with the school and the local community. There are two reasons for this. In the RS, police service is centralised under the Ministry of the Interior. A policy of police education in schools was implemented before the PTA/PCI project began. Local police in both towns held two sessions on public safety in the local school at the beginning of the school year. Second, Srbac and Bratunac are located in isolated regions, and the town centres and schools do not lie near any major roads. The PTA/PCIs did not identify road safety as an important issue, and so that successful initiative could not be replicated here.

In Bratunac, anti-drug education was a dominant theme in the PTA/PCI. The CBO organised a community round table on drug dependency and subsequently launched a programme for peer educators. Both these events provided an opportunity for increased police participation with children. The round table included representatives from the municipality, the health service and a number of local NGOs. A local doctor, the police and various members of the teaching staff took part in the education of peer educators. Unfortunately, these forms of community participation were not sufficient to produce greater confidence from members of the public.

PTA/PCI activities in Bratunac and Srbac represent major efforts on the part of adults to confer responsibility to children within structured settings and to allow children a say in their own social development. The sincerity of these efforts was confirmed by the voluntary presence of a number of 13 and 14 year olds at the evaluation workshops in these locations. The responses of these students indicated not only a high degree of self-confidence but also a positive attitude and growing confidence towards their schools and schoolteachers.

Between police and local authorities, and communities' security concerns

The increased number of police visits to schools, and the inclusion of police officers in a variety of community actions to raise awareness of dangers to children, were clear indicators of a greater responsiveness on the part of police to public safety concerns. The PTA/PCI project facilitated security forces to undertake work for which they were already prepared rather than stimulating a new approach to policing in the community. Contrary to the perceptions of many citizens, police throughout BiH in the postwar period have undergone a steady but thorough process of reform that has included internal democratisation, rationalisation of human resources and the reformulating of their purpose from that of an organ of state control to one of community service for crime prevention and social protection. In the eight postwar years before the replacement of the UN International Police Task Force by the European Union Police Mission (EUPM) in 2003, all police forces in BiH undertook numerous training sessions on community policing, based on practices in the United States and Western Europe. All police forces associated with the PTA/PCI project have officers that passed these trainings. In all locations police officers were very clear that their job included co-operation with the local community in preventing crime; education of the public about the dangers of drugs, alcohol, and landmines; road safety; and assisting in the creation of social trust between citizens.

Yet individual officers and local stations were hindered in putting their training into practice for a number of institutional reasons. And in both the Croat-Muslim Federation (the Federation) and the RS a lack of strategy and the required material and financial support from the relevant ministries of the interior remained a powerful disincentive to local forces. Police officers in Bratunac complained that they were subject to constant orders from "on high" to establish various forms of communication and co-operation with the public, but they had neither sufficient staff nor the financial resources to cover the extra work. The sum total of equipment in the newly formed department

for co-ordination with the public[5] with three permanent staff is one telephone and one typewriter. EUPM encourages a community approach, but a perceived lack of coherence in its own strategy and approach is confusing police officers; for many, the EUPM is at best an irrelevance and at worst a hindrance.

Police faced with existing suspicion from the public often lack access to the local community. World Vision reports that school principals have often been unwilling to allow police into their schools. This was a particular problem in Ustikolina, resolved early on owing to the pressure of the PTA/PCI. UN International Police Task Force training prepared police officers only in theory. A common initial problem encountered was that police forces do not know what work with the community means in practice. Individual officers had problems adopting an approach that was acceptable and understandable for small children. The PTA/PCI project provided police officers access to the public, particularly children, and allowed them an opportunity to put their community police theory into practice and the time to build their own confidence, as well as the trust of those with whom they worked.

Police on the ground benefitted from gains in responsiveness made by the project at the wider institutional level as a result of advocacy by World Vision BiH staff at ministries of the interior. World Vision played an important part in stimulating police-run information and advocacy campaigns, resulting in a wider recognition of the police mandate (Bosnia-Podrinje), increased public access to police stations (Central Bosnia) and an anti-drug leaflet campaign in the RS.

The most impressive results at this institutional level were achieved in Sarajevo Canton. In three project locations in the canton, police officers were involved in a variety of educational activities with children on various issues relating to children welfare, such as youth delinquency, rights of the child in relation to the law, domestic violence, drugs and prostitution and trafficking. During 2003 World Vision BiH staff worked with the Ministry of the Interior, with the co-operation of EUPM and a number of local NGOs, to raise awareness of these issues and the public demand for an increased response from the police service. In January 2004 the Ministry of the Interior announced the implementation of a new permanent programme of police education in all primary and secondary schools in the Sarajevo area. At the same time, the ministry made a commitment to provide all schools with a regular police patrol during the school year. Apart from World Vision support for printing several information leaflets and posters, this programme was supported entirely by the cantonal Ministry of the Interior.

Between community members and decision-making processes

All PTA/PCIs have succeeded in marshalling community participation and resources for major projects. The government fund Odraz approved grants to all five projects in Ustikolina on the condition that they include community participation. For example, renovation and re-equipping of the school canteen over the summer of 2004 included decoration of the walls by schoolchildren, general painting by parents and teachers, making curtains by parents and fitting shelves by a parent and local carpenter. The project to develop a small school agricultural plot for teaching includes a provision that fresh vegetables will be grown for the school canteen. The PTA/PCI project will involve parents, teachers, children, a local agricultural co-operative and an international agricultural NGO in initial ground preparation and site protection, while all cultivation will be carried out by children with their teachers.

As mentioned earlier, PTA/PCIs have not been entirely successful in communicating with the broader community, and in general they have yet to include other community stakeholders in their actual planning process. This is not surprising, considering the newness of all project groups, whether established in the first or second year of the project. Yet efforts to achieve more inclusive planning would increase PTA/PCIs capacities in terms of skills and experience available to them, support their legitimacy in the community and possibly improve access, through new contacts

and collective strength, to outside sources of material and financial support.

Opportunities for co-operation with other groups vary greatly depending on local circumstances. In Bratunac the PTA/PCI is beginning to investigate ways of establishing regular education within normal classes for children with special needs[6] with an NGO from the neighbouring town of Srebrenica. This initiative, however, is the exception. Although representatives of two NGOs were included in the round table on drug awareness, the PTA/PCI has not managed to establish effective, regular working relations with these organisations. Police officers reported that, independently of the PTA/PCI project "Schools without Drugs," three local NGOs requested their help with anti-drug education for young people. In all three cases the police felt unable to respond to these requests owing to lack of time. Since then, no move has been made to include these NGOs in the work of the PTA/PCI.

In Poćulica, while there are no NGOs in the immediate vicinity, the neighbouring towns of Vitez and Zenica are home to a significant number of NGOs that deal with child and youth rights, gender issues and community development. While some of these organisations were included by World Vision BiH in early needs analysis and networking in preparation for the project as a whole in this region, the Poćulica PTA/PCI has not been in regular contact with any of these NGOs.

Opportunities for non-government co-operation in Ustikolina and Srbac are severely restricted owing to their geographical isolation and the low level of civic activity in their respective communities.

Lack of effective networking with other community organisations is a potential hindrance to PTA/PCIs initiating advocacy campaigns. The importance of networking was shown a campaign by the PTA/PCI in Srbac to exert pressure on the local authorities to restrict opening hours of the town's many bars and to enforce the law regarding not serving minors alcoholic beverages. This campaign was in support of the town's newly founded youth club and gathered the support of the various social services represented at the round table on the use of children's free time.

In Poćulica the PTA/PCI launched a number of advocacy campaigns that attest to the potential of CBOs to achieve wider participation of the community in the decision-making process. Two campaigns, joined by the school management with the Ministry of Education in Central Bosnia Canton, resulted in the renovating of the floor in the school sports hall and the installation of central heating. Another campaign for the provision of basic community amenities resulted in the public post and telecommunications company installing the community's first public telephone and post box outside the school gates.

Of particular note was an action to persuade the cantonal government to install "sleeping policemen" (speed bumps) outside the school to regulate traffic speeds. Project success rested largely on the efforts of the extracurricular school club for democracy, whose members, inspired by the PTA/PCI, collected 500 signatures of support. Children also undertook a study of the traffic dangers outside the school in co-operation with the police and the municipality. The PTA/PCI and the school submitted the petition to the local authority, which has since applied pressure at the cantonal Ministry of the Interior.

Poćulica PTA/PCI is also continuing to lobby local authorities with a long-standing demand for the local electricity supplier to remove a power sub-station from the school playground to a safer site. In addition, the CBO is campaigning for regular rubbish removal from the school and surrounding houses, for which it has collected local contributions.

Among ethnic groups

One of the PTA/PCI project objectives was to build tolerance and co-operation among ethnic groups. Yet World Vision BiH reported that at the start of the project the need for increased co-operation among BiH's three main ethnic groups was not always an issue of importance in local communities. For example, Srbac, as the name

suggests, has always had an overwhelmingly Serb population. Neither the community nor World Vision staff considered relations between the municipality's 90 per cent plus Serbs and 4 per cent Bošniaks to be a problem.

More surprisingly, in Bratunac, a town notorious for severe ethnic cleansing of the local Bošniak minority, relations between Bošniak returnees to the neighbouring villages and the Serb majority appeared to be normal and co-operative. Indeed, the PTA/PCI counted two Bošniak parents among its members. Both insisted that ethnic relations were not an issue as far as the work of the PTA/PCI was concerned. The low number of Bošniak children relative to Serb children attending the school (42 of 760) reflects the present dominance of the Serbian population in the municipality. This was emphasised by the absence of Bošniaks in holding positions of responsibility and authority. The inclusion of the two parents in the PTA/PCI represents a rare opportunity for Bošniak representation and participation in Bratunac community life.

In many other PTA/PCI project locations, including Poćulica and Ustikolina, the war split once ethnically mixed municipalities into smaller homogenous communities. Generally, contacts with their former neighbours remain severed. In Ustikolina, on the other hand, World Vision mediation with the PTA/PCI in Serb dominated Foča/Serbinje near the inter-entity line resulted in more contacts between group members. The all-Serbian membership of the Foča PTA/PCI has organised landmine awareness training for a satellite village school attended only by Bošniak returnees, whose playground is the site of a minefield.

In Poćulica, an urgent need for the local community, identified by the PTA/PCI, was the re-establishment of normal relations, co-operation and trust between the Bošniak and Croat populations. Despite writing project proposals to institute a space in the school where children of both ethnic groups may come together for recreation and teaching, contacts with the Croat school in neighbouring Dubravica were minimal. Teaching staff and parents of both schools said that they would like to see greater contact between the schools for the sake of their children. Despite an expressed wish to restore relations with the Dubravica school down the road, however, the project has done little to restore relations. Nevertheless, the volunteer child care-givers who work in the Poćulica play centre became connected with another World Vision PTA/PCI location. Such social cross-fertilisation was not unusual among PTA/PCI projects. This interaction further indicates that the project has, in certain cases, achieved the objective for building tolerance and co-operation among ethnic groups.

Inter-school and inter-ethnic co-operation were achieved to a greater degree in Ustikolina. The school organised three-party sports events with two more schools in the World Vision project, including a Serb school in Foča/Srbinje across the entity line. This contact was unthinkable before the PTA/PCI project began. In addition, PTA/PCI members from these three locations are gradually establishing more regular contacts by participating at one another's meetings.

In the Spring of 2003, after completing training for pre-school education, World Vision BiH arranged for the Bošniak volunteers in Poćulica to receive certificates of competence from a Croatian teacher from another neighbouring village, Busovača. This teacher was a member of a World Vision PTA/PCI in the Busovača secondary school that contained both Bošniak and Croatian members. The school was actually two institutions under one roof. Until the arrival of World Vision, no organisation had worked with both schools, and no common activities were held between either the pupils or staff of the schools.

By the time of the Busovača teacher's visit to Poćulica, the PTA/PCI had organised a series of workshops with an equal number of Bošniak and Croat eight to ten year olds. Another remarkable development was the formation of joint parent, teacher and student councils for both schools as a result of the activism of PTA/PCI members. Initial contact by the Croat teacher with the Poćulica PTA/PCI started a process of tentative co-operation between the two schools. This resulted in the joint attendance at a 2004 national conference of PTAs

in Sarajevo, at which the Bošniak representatives from Poćulica and Croat representatives from Busovača and Dubravica met together for the first time in ten years.

At the local level, World Vision teams facilitated contacts between communities, often across obdurate ethno-political divides. For example, the World Vision ADP[7] in Tuzla enabled contact between PTA/PCIs in Bratunac in the RS and Kiseljak in the Federation. These two schools agreed to combine their expertise on an anti-drug campaign and youth delinquency programme. A joint sports meeting between the two schools was planned in early autumn 2004, in which schoolchildren from Bratunac made the trip to Kiseljak. For most children this will be a first visit to the Federation and will represent a major step towards restoring confidence of parents and children from both BiH entities.

Sustainability limitations identified

The PTA/PCI project highlighted the need to develop local support organisations that can provide a bridge between communities and higher levels of authority as well as a point of contact between individual PTA/PCIs. These organisations could be tasked with leading advocacy campaigns, providing information and disseminating best practices, identifying financial resources and facilitating resource sharing between PTA/PCIs, and providing training. It is inappropriate and unsustainable in the long-term for this support role to be vested in an external development agency, such as World Vision.

If *sustainability* is defined as organisational robustness, internal cohesion and strong leadership, however, it is doubtful that many PTA/PCIs at present possess the capacities for self-sustainability. Despite achieving self-organisation and varying abilities to mobilise community resources, a PTA/PCI needs these capacities to consolidate its position in the community, maintain momentum and address evolving change and emerging needs. To date, PTA/PCIs do not have the self-confidence to carry on their work completely independently of World Vision. All CBOs are committed to the future, but they are unsure how to develop long-term programmes.

For example, PTA/PCIs established no system for reflecting on their work, learning lessons and adapting their practices or project ideas accordingly. Each PTA/PCI would benefit from developing routine monitoring and evaluation of the organisation, its projects and life in the community. Of the four communities sampled in the project review, only Poćulica PTA/PCI recorded discussions from regular meetings. In PTA/PCI workshops, participants noted that the time-line exercise was the first time members considered the life of the CBO in its entirety as well as an overview of its achievements to date.

While community perception of police has clearly improved, greater PCI inclusion and motivation would enhance the opportunities for PTA/PCIs to build stronger, more lasting and more productive links with local authorities and institutions. These bonds are essential for providing institutional and material conditions necessary for success.

PTA/PCIs have not created strong, regular and equal relations with many institutional stakeholders, particularly outside the local community. This is difficult to do, as BiH largely retains a culture of deference towards authority and government. Moreover, state authorities are often unresponsive, lack transparency and have insufficient capacity, particularly in terms of staff numbers and time, to engage with communities. PTA/PCIs would benefit from advocacy training as well as coaching for running meetings and public presentation. World Vision BiH should endeavour to include PTA/PCI members in all negotiations the organisation holds with governments, international agencies and donors, and allow these CBOs to take the lead role in conducting meetings.

Communication was essential to maintain support for activities and ensure the recruitment of new members, but PTA/PCIs often did not communicate sufficiently with the wider community. They were making successful efforts to gain media coverage

of their activities but did little to engage their neighbours actively in their work. PTA/PCI members insisted that information about their activities was disseminated through informal community networks and meetings held with other more formal school bodies, such as parent councils. But parent councils met infrequently and could not compensate for more structured ways of informing people and gathering information and support.

Leadership within PTA/PCIs also required mentoring. All PTA/PCIs had at least one highly enthusiastic person who took on the role of leader and was acting as the prime motivator and organiser. These individuals could benefit from mentoring and encouragement to enable them to take over from World Vision the role of facilitator for the development of PTA/PCI internal capacities and new practices. Selected PTA/PCI members could be offered both leadership training and workshop training in facilitation techniques and approaches. Recognising the need for continuing mentoring and capacity building to achieve full sustainability, World Vision BiH was actively pursuing resources to provide leadership training.

Conclusions

The project succeeded in establishing viable school-based community organisations that draw their strength primarily from the active participation of teachers and parents and are focused on the improvement of the school environment. These groups gained legitimacy in the community and built capacity by the inclusion of the community, including police officers. Consequently, all PTA/PCI groups formulated strategic goals that embraced elements of community development.

The project's PTA/PCIs or school-based CBOs, possess basic capacities that are adequate for their early stage of organisational development. World Vision BiH's non-invasive, step-by-step and participatory approach to capacity building empowered PTA/PCIs to develop their identity and purpose, teamwork and internal co-ordination, and planning skills and strategic thinking. At the same time the approach stimulated and fostered creativity, enthusiasm, a sense of personal self-worth, close personal relationships and informality. All these attributes were key motivating forces for PTA/PCIs.

Yet, in the long term, the sustainability of PTA/PCIs is in doubt. These CBOs lack a number of essential capacities. Addressing these issues related to sustainability is the next challenge for World Vision BiH.

- PTA/PCI membership in general did not represent the variety of institutional interests in the community. Membership should be widened to increase access to the full range of community support and resources.
- PTA/PCIs rarely established regular, productive relationships with governmental authorities themselves, especially with those agencies beyond the local community. PTA/PCIs relied on the networks World Vision built during the project's life.
- At the other end of the scale, the active support PTA/PCIs received from ordinary members of the community remained low. PTA/PCIs should develop mechanisms and procedures for informing and communicating with parents and the general public on a regular basis.
- PTA/PCIs are not monitoring and evaluating their work and have no system for instituting practical learning into the organisation.

Still, PTA/PCIs had considerable success in mobilising local resources for the implementation of practical activities that address real needs in the school or local community. Many of these activities have the potential to achieve sustainability because they were successfully embedded within the existing institutional structures of the school or local police force.

Progress was made towards achieving all of the project objectives. In particular, PTA/PCIs proved an effective means by which ordinary members of the community, particularly women, could participate in the decision-making process. Local police forces made advances in responding to the safety needs of the community, especially those

concerning children. World Vision advocacy on behalf of PTA/PCIs beyond the community had not only created pressure for a corresponding response from ministries of the interior but had also supplied cantonal and entity police forces with the information and tools necessary to carry out public education campaigns that respond to the security concerns of the general public.

Parents took more active interest in school life and the education of their children. More important, schools proved to be more responsive to children's needs and interests. Teachers communicated in a less directive manner and sought the active co-operation of their pupils, while many were also beginning to adopt interactive methodologies in the classroom. Principals supported teachers' efforts by setting appropriate policy and facilitating the work of PTA/PCIs.

By promoting an inclusive, community-led approach to social development, the PTA/PCI project made small but significant advances towards achieving greater representation for groups that are either discriminated against or excluded in the community. Where ethnic intolerance remained, there was evidence that PTA/PCIs had the potential to re-establish dialogue and co-operation among antagonistic national groups. In places where ethnic tensions were already defused, PTA/PCIs offered a forum for the active inclusion of minority voices.

The PTA/PCI project lasted too short a time and was too limited in its coverage to achieve long-term impacts of increased democracy and tolerance, either in local communities or in BiH generally. The democratic attitudes and social cohesion engendered in the PTA/PCI project will only become norms of community and institutional life through appropriate organisational strengthening of PTA/PCIs for sustainability and with greater co-ordination of their activities within and across communities over an extended period of time.

Notes

[1] BiH comprises two semi-autonomous units: the Croat-Muslim Federation or the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, primarily inhabited by Bošniaks (Muslims) and Croats (Roman Catholics), and the Serb Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina or Republika Srpska, an area largely populated by ethnic Serbs (Orthodox).

[2] The four regional teams were based in Sarajevo, Zenica, Tuzla and Banja Luka.

[3] As the project was only 2½ years in duration, only the first 16 locations included in year one have benefitted from a second year's support.

[4] A common view is that organisations pass through three stages of development: pioneer, differentiated and integrated phases (see Allan Kaplan, *Development Practitioners and Social Process: Artists of the Invisible* [London: Pluto Press, 2002]).

[5] RS Ministry of Interior policy obliges all police stations to open offices for co-ordination with the public for increasing the safety of the public.

[6] In BiH there is no formal provision for integrating children with special needs into regular school. These children are often institutionalised or even excluded from schooling and regular contact with their more conventionally able peers.

[7] ADP (Area Development Programme) is a World Vision term for large-scale community development.

Training and education for peace in Sierra Leone

Taplima Muana

Introduction

The prolonged conflict in Sierra Leone left the country in shambles. Much of the physical infrastructure, including bridges, roads, schools, health centres and private houses, was demolished. Lives of all Sierra Leoneans were disrupted; many people were severely traumatised psychologically and emotionally. Youth were no exception. Along with everyone else, they were raped, brutalised, and suffered loss of homes, limbs and lives. Young people were also perpetuators of atrocities, serving as combatants with government, paramilitary and rebel forces.

When the war ended, programmes targeting rehabilitation and reintegration of youth had to be rapidly implemented to help assure lasting peace. One of the most successful programmes was also one of the most innovative. The Youth Reintegration Training and Education for Peace (YRTEP) programme involved a partnership of two institutions – World Vision Sierra Leone, an NGO, and Management Systems International (MSI), a for-profit company. The overall result was outstanding. In less than four years, almost 80,000 youth from all parts of the country participated in YRTEP. To quote an initial evaluation:

> There is no way to quantifiably measure the impact of YRTEP's rapid implementation and direct involvement of tens of thousands of youth. . . . YRTEP met an immediate need and helped Sierra Leoneans secure peace in their country. . . . YRTEP got youth off the street and engaged them in something that was meaningful and beneficial for the community. (Hansen, Nenon and Wolf 2002, 31)

Background

Sierra Leone has been politically unstable since independence from British colonial rule in 1961. Instability resulted in several military coups and a repressive one-party rule that culminated in the insurgency by the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) from 1991 to 2001. Led by a former corporal in the Sierra Leone army, Foday Sankoh, RUF controlled much of the country, including Kono district, the main diamond-producing area. RUF combatants were mainly young people who were forcibly conscripted and inducted into a culture of violence. Recruits were forced to commit deliberate acts of sexual and physical violence, including murder, rape and arson, as a means to alienate them from their home communities.

RUF became allied to the Armed Forces Ruling Council (AFRC), a military junta that overthrew the democratically elected government of President Ahmed Tejan Kabbah in May 1997. The RUF-AFRC coalition ruled Sierra Leone briefly until ousted in February 1998 by a combined force of ECOMOG[1] troops and counter-insurgency militiamen loyal to the government. The rebel coalition regrouped in redoubts in the eastern section of

the country. From there the rebel forces launched a fierce and bloody counter-offensive, overrunning much of the country, including the western area and several districts in the capital, Freetown.

The peace treaty signed between the government and RUF in Lome, Togo, in July 1999 collapsed in May 2000. The accord was breached by RUF when the rebels captured and disarmed large columns of UN peacekeepers. The rapid turn of events that followed led to the capture of Foday Sankoh in May 2000. The disarmament process that had began in September 1999 under the UN Armed Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL) was accelerated so successfully that it was completed by December 2001. In concert with UNAMSIL, President Kabbah declared the war over in January 2002.

Yet the security situation in the country remains very delicate. Large numbers of former combatants in the 18–25 year old range are unemployed. They are deeply suspicious of a post-conflict government that has failed to provide services and employment for untrained government, militia and rebel soldiers. At the height of the insurgency, after it became obvious that many troops were openly engaging in the insurgency against the government, President Kabbah had disbanded the Sierra Leone army. After disarmament, former soldiers were not wholly incorporated into the new army. With the help of an international team of trainers, the government is working on reconstituting the security forces to assure that they are committed to protecting the country's constitution. The army and police are gradually assuming their national security roles, spurred on by the rapid drawdown of UNAMSIL forces.

The need for UNMASIL continues, though, as Sierra Leone remains politically fragile. Moreover, the chronic political instability in West Africa may affect Sierra Leone's economic and political recovery. The Liberian disarmament has not been an unqualified success, and lasting peace is not assured. Cote d'Ivoire is still in political crisis, divided between the government in the south and the rebels in the north. Peace is tenuous in Guinea-Bissau, where a military coup removed President Kumba Yala in September 2003. Guineans went to the polls in December 2003 and re-elected ailing President Lansana Conte. If Conte has to step down due to poor health, political instability is likely. Peace is far from assured in the sub-region, and a restive population of former young combatants has yet to be fully engaged in life-enrichment activities.

The Programme

About two years before fighting stopped, World Vision Sierra Leone was awarded a peacebuilding grant by USAID.[2] The programme that the grant supported became YRTEP.

YRTEP was unique in several ways:

1. The programme was implemented while much of the country was still in conflict. YRTEP targeted both former combatants and war-affected youth, unlike the demobilisation, disarmament and reintegration programme supported by the Government of Sierra Leone and the World Bank that targeted only former combatants.
2. The programme operated through local communities, not de-commissioning camps.
3. A non-profit organisation, World Vision Sierra Leone, and a for-profit company, MSI, jointly managed YRTEP.
4. The programme was designed on the premise that it would be owned by the community and operated through volunteerism. This was a departure from a dependency syndrome, after years of war, by which people expected government agencies to initiate and carry out plans and projects that affected their communities.

Goal and purpose

The goal of the YRTEP was to help Sierra Leone attain sustainable peace by reintegrating war-torn populations, especially ex-combatants and war-affected youth, into local communities and by promoting self-reliance. With over 80 per cent of the fighting forces composed mainly of youth, the social reintegration of former combatants into Sierra

Leone proved to be a difficult challenge. Rebel combatants had committed atrocities to their neighbours, family members, friends and communities. Yet World Vision Sierra Leone believed that it was crucial to reintegrate youth, especially former combatants, into communities to achieve a lasting peace in Sierra Leone.

To be successful, reintegration programmes would have to provide employment or sources of livelihood for disarmed fighters. Despite massive foreign assistance following the war, Sierra Leone remained an extremely poor country and could not readily provide training and jobs for former combatants. Then, too, there was the likelihood that many former combatants would be tempted to cross over into neighbouring conflict zones and join militia or rebel forces there. An additional factor was youth impropriety and delinquency; prior to the conflict years, poorly educated and unemployed youth were associated with crimes related to robbery, theft and drug abuse.

Assignment of responsibilities

At the operational level, different roles and responsibilities were assigned to the agencies charged with managing YRTEP. MSI was accountable for design, production of modules and training of master trainers (MTs). The MTs, in turn, trained the learning facilitators (LFs), who did the actual teaching. Training of LFs lasted for a period of four weeks, and LFs had to be literate (at least at a junior secondary school level). World Vision Sierra Leone's responsibilities included:

- mobilising and sensitising communities;
- facilitating formation of community management committees (CMCs);
- identifying and selecting learning facilitators and participants;
- pre-positioning training materials;
- monitoring and supervising training; and
- creating linkages for communities/groups to other service providers.

Training curricula

The YRTEP course was designed to achieve three main objectives: literacy training, civic education, with specific focus on peacebuilding, and gender empowerment. Instruction was based on materials presented through five modules. Participants met two or three days per week. Each module was completed in six to eight weeks, and the entire course of five modules took about six to ten months to finish. The modules focused on the following specific development goals:

Module 1: "Who am I?" – Self-discovery and reconciliation, plus exploring and income-generation options.

Module 2: "Healing mind, body and spirit" – Review of various concepts relating to stress, trauma and the dangers of drug abuse.

Module 3: "Our environment" – The impact of the war on natural resources and the conservation of those natural resources.

Module 4: "Health and well-being" – Awareness of issues such as sexually transmitted infections (STIs) including HIV/AIDS, other common diseases, family planning and use of traditional and Western medicines.

Module 5: "Democracy, good governance and conflict management" – Brief background of politics in Sierra Leone, governance, democracy and conflict management.

Results

Geographical and demographical coverage

YRTEP was launched in March 2000. By June 2004, YRTEP reached all 149 chiefdoms in Sierra Leone through 3,450 CMCs. In addition, the complementing STEP (Skills Training and Employment Promotion) programme has been active in the diamond-mining communities of Kenema district and Tongo Fields since April 2002.[3] By June 2004, the number of YRTEP participants was 79,760, including 7,040 LFs and 72,720 participants.[4] In Kenema, Kono and Kailahun districts alone (known as the 3Ks), the programme targeted 7,480 youth, 680 LFs and 6,800 participants. Outside the 3Ks, 72,480 beneficiaries were reached. By June 2004 the YRTEP programme had completed

23 "rounds" of training on the five modules, with the last round taught in Tongo Fields.

Community management

CMCs were a key to the success of YRTEP/STEP. World Vision Sierra Leone was responsible for facilitating the formation of the CMCs. Each CMC, comprising a maximum of 10 members, was elected democratically in a community meeting that followed an explanation of YRTEP, what the programme hoped to achieve and the need for community leadership and participation (sensitisation process). CMCs were composed of ex-combatants, women and youth leaders, religious leaders and local authorities.

Formation of a CMC was the first step in deciding whether a YRTEP programme would be implemented. Other criteria included community acceptance of the CMC and a proven record of CMC members' sincerity and willingness to serve the community voluntarily. Competition among CMCs was often keen because community people recognised that illiterate, unskilled youth living purposeless lives in their communities constituted a threat to peace and security. CMCs and learning facilitators picked participants for the YRTEP learning modules. The CMCs also selected youths for apprenticeship skills training in the STEP programme. CMCs were also responsible for providing facilities for instruction, storage for programme materials and general oversight of activities at the community level.

PHOTO: WORLD VISION SIERRA LEONE

YRTEP/STEP helped young men return to their farms.

In the STEP programme, the criteria used for the selection of communities included population density, estimates of the number of ex-combatants, number of former YRTEP participants, amount of war-damaged infrastructure, significant agricultural activity and community enthusiasm.

Target audience

For both STEP and the YRTEP, the target audience was youth. *Youth* in the Sierra Leone context implies anyone who is post-puberty, between adolescence and middle age, physically active and normally not gainfully employed. While most programme participants ranged in age from the late teens through the twenties, some were in their late thirties and early forties. The variance in age brackets is accounted for by the long years of war in the country, which effectively deprived most young people of normal social and psycho-social growth. Although STEP targeted mainly youth in its skills-training programmes, most micro-credit loans in the agricultural sector were granted to women-headed households.

Given that armed conflict lasted eleven years in Sierra Leone, most youth were war affected, many as combatants. Neither YRTEP nor STEP distinguished former rebels and paramilitary fighters from other war-affected youth. To do so would have greatly reduced the number of ex-combatants, many of whom felt stigmatised and hesitated to return to their home communities for fear of reprisals. Undoubtedly, before the first module ended, participants knew who were former soldiers and other combatants. Yet, one purpose of the programme was mutual reconciliation and acceptance made possible by the forgiveness of perpetrators of violence by their victims in those communities.

Outcome

An independent evaluation by the OTI in August 2002 generally gave YRTEP high marks.[5] Perhaps the most favourable statement was that "YRTEP can and should be replicated" (Hansen, Nenon and Wolf 2002, 38). The programme was extended for another two

years, working with an additional 31,020 participants and LFs. Similarly, STEP was commended for taking advantage of the activism of youths in rebuilding their communities. A root cause of the war – the lack of economic opportunities for a largely marginalised and disenfranchised youth population – was partly addressed by STEP. An intangible context to foster true reintegration was provided as victims worked alongside former perpetrators towards a common goal of rehabilitating damaged community infrastructure. YRTEP partners included the CMCs, other community-based organisations, NGOs, government and UN agencies and the World Bank. Much of YRTEP's success is surely due to the entrepreneurial innovativeness and risks taken by both World Vision Sierra Leone and OTI. The how, why and where decisions were ground-breaking and effective, although the training modules were effectively adapted from other successful models. Programme objectives and planning processes were undertaken with close attention to the following key questions:

- *How:* through an OTI/World Vision Sierra Leone partnership of a for-profit company and a non-profit organisation;
- *Why:* to help achieve sustainable peace through literacy training and civic education (behavioural change) that targeted youth. In three and one-half years, more than 70,000 former combatants and other war-affected youth were reintegrated into society.
- *Where:* in war-torn communities with shared oversight and decision making by community people.

The impact or success of YRTEP was well summarised in the August 2002 evaluation:

> There is no way to quantifiably measure the impact of YRTEP's rapid implementation and direct involvement of tens of thousands of youths. However, several well-placed observers who watched the war-to-peace transition believe that YRTEP met an immediate need and helped Sierra Leoneans secure peace in their country. Repeatedly, it was expressed that YRTEP got youth off the street and engaged them in something that was meaningful and beneficial for the community. It also resulted in quicker behavioral changes and less hostility as ex-combatants re-oriented themselves to community norms and values. In addition to the direct impact on the participants, the existence of the program clearly made other community members more optimistic. The enormity of the program suggests that this had a widespread impact, which would not have happened if there had not been such emphasis on responding quickly and on reaching so many people. (Hansen, Nenon and Wolf 2002, 31)

YRTEP clearly met and exceeded most of its major objectives in 2002. The approval of follow-on YRTEP and STEP grants was almost a foregone conclusion.

Challenges

As with any programme, particularly new and innovative ones, it is unrealistic to expect that everything will go well. The 2002 evaluation outlined some difficulties, most of which appear to have been reduced or corrected.[6]

From OTI:

- Curricula were generally "stimulating" but largely non-participatory;
- Parts of the curricula were not appropriate to the audience and needed to be customised to suit participants;
- Curricula were often too rigid and/or not easily understood by the LFs;
- While principal objectives in the civic education modules were met, a satisfactory degree of literacy training was not achieved.

From World Vision Sierra Leone:

- Communities tended to view YRTEP as World Vision's programme, not theirs. It was difficult for some people to accept concepts of community ownership and volunteerism, because they had become accustomed to hand-outs and the delivery approach to assis-

tance while they lived in refugee/displaced persons camps.

- Little networking and integration of YRTEP were done with other NGOs and community-based organisations. Therefore people who participated in YRTEP greatly relied on World Vision Sierra Leone for support to kick-start their activities.
- The complementary STEP programme covered 25 chiefdoms while YRTEP covered all the 149 chiefdoms in the country.

Other observations:

- World Vision Sierra Leone staff often felt like menial functionaries, providing mundane services to "superiors" in charge of curricula and instruction. World Vision personnel were not sufficiently made aware of the timing and sequencing of modules. They experienced difficulties in monitoring the quality of training, delivery of methodology and depth covered in the modules. Training of additional World Vision staff as MTs would have helped avoid most of these problems.
- A basic service provided by World Vision Sierra Leone was logistical support. At times, World Vision staff were blamed for not getting materials to instruction sites when roads were impassable or very insecure.
- Participants expressed frustration with a "lack of closure" after completing months of instruction. Probably most of these disappointments were due to insufficient preparation for actually using or integrating lessons learned from classes into the community or everyday life (Hansen, Nenon and Wolf 2002, 27). Access to resources (local and external) was limited after years of devastation. Raising awareness in youths about their potential without necessarily providing basic opportunities for them to use the knowledge acquired from the training was potentially inflammatory.
- Irregular visits to project sites. Due to the high number of participant sites (3,636), it was very difficult to visit training sites on a regular basis.

Conclusion

The YRTEP programme and its related STEP programme in Sierra Leone were innovative and successful endeavours. The programmes were resourceful and imaginative in the way they were implemented and managed, whom they targeted and where they operated. Success was demonstrated by the number of youth supported, nearly 80,000. Reaching such a high number of youth including former combatants, with curricula on basic education, behavioural change (YRTEP) and job training and creation (STEP) should help consolidate post-conflict gains of community reintegration and training. This should greatly help Sierra Leone achieve sustainable peace.

Notes

[1] ECOMOG is the Monitoring Group of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS).

[2] The initial grant, from March 2000 to February 2002, was through USAID's Office of Transition Initiatives (OTI). From 2002 to September 2004, a subsequent grant was administrated directly by the USAID office in Freetown.

[3] Like YRTEP, STEP's main target audience is youth, and both encouraged community service. STEP, however, strongly emphasised job training while YRTEP's emphasis was on civic education to foster behavioural change. Carpentry, bricklaying, cassava processing and tie-dyeing were the main skills taught in the STEP programme.

[4] LFs tended to be the more motivated and better educated participants who were chosen as instructors. They received a month's training from MTs on the OTI staff. Compensation for LFs was a small stipend of eleven thousand Leones monthly.

[5] A thorough evaluation was done for two Office of Transition Initiatives' (OTI) programmes in Sierra Leone in 2002, just over two years after the programmes began. A good evaluation may become the basis for a continuing or modified grant through a country's USAID office.

[6] The final evaluation for the YRTEP and STEP programmes was not done at the time this chapter was written. Statements about corrective measures were made by World Vision staff with intimate knowledge of these programmes.

References

Art Hansen, Julie Nenon and Joy Wolf. 2002. "Final evaluation of the Office of Transition Initiatives' program in Sierra Leone: Final report." CARE and Creative Associates International. August.

World Vision Sierra Leone. 2001. "Civil society support and Youth Reintegration Training and Education for Peace Program: Annual report, 1 January–31 December 2001." For OTI. February.

World Vision Sierra Leone. 2003a. "Youth Reintegration Training and Education for Peace: FY02 narrative report, 1 October 2001–30 September 2002." For USAID. March.

World Vision Sierra Leone. 2003b. "Youth Reintegration Training and Education for Peace Program: Bi-annual narrative report, 1 October 2002–31 March 2003." For USAID. April.

World Vision Sierra Leone. 2004a. "Youth Reintegration Training and Education for Peace Program: Bi-annual narrative report, 1 October 2003–31 March 2004." For USAID. March.

World Vision Sierra Leone. 2004b. "Skills Training and Employment Promotion Program – STEP: Bi-annual narrative report, 1 January 2004–30 June 2004." For USAID. June.