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peacebuilding**
*Connections and
synergies*

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Contents

3 Time to address the “glocality of peace”

Niklas Eklöv and Tore Samuelsson

4 THINKING AND ACTING “GLOCAL”

Churches help change arms trade

Joseph Dube and Jonathan Frerichs

7 LPI'S NEW HORN OF AFRICA REGIONAL PROGRAMME

Bridging the local with the regional

Hannah Tsadik and Lidet Tadesse Shiferaw

10 ARAUCA, COLOMBIA

Persistent work gives hope for peace

*Héctor Fabián Rodríguez Muñoz and
Andrea Villarreal Calpa*

13 A journey of healing and reconciliation

Eva Palmqvist

16 Local to global protection – not one without the other

Peter Sjöberg

19 OCCUPIED PALESTINIAN TERRITORIES

Gap between local and external perception of needs

Rafael Eguiguren and Luna Saadeh

23 Business as usual or entangled in conflict

Joakim Wohlfeil

26 COMMERCIAL ACTORS IN BURMA/MYANMAR

Responsible investors or ruthless spoilers?

Kjell-Åke Nordquist

29 BEER – AN AGENT OF PEACE?

The paradox of Heineken in the Congo

Jason Miklian and Peer Schouten

32 Peacebuilding News

35 Reviews and Resources

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The tricky role-play

“**THINK GLOBALLY AND ACT LOCALLY**”. In many contexts this phrase is heard quite frequently, and to some extent it is true and relevant. But sometimes it is even more important to “think locally and act globally” in order to avoid top-down attitudes and efforts that are neither anchored in nor respectful to local realities.

There are frequent examples of external actors stepping into a local context, often with the best intention: a wish to help, to contribute to development and/or peace. But it should be remembered that different actors have different roles in various situations. People, even in a vulnerable situation, most probably are fully capable of making their own decisions and planning their own future. They should be listened to with respect and with a sensitive ear. They are the ones who know best what kind of assistance would fulfil their needs.

To define which actor should have which role at which level is no easy task. This issue of **New Routes**, produced jointly by the Life & Peace Institute and the Church of Sweden, does not present any quick solutions but aims to give food for thought and reflection on this topic.

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Time to address the “glocality of peace”

“There was a palpable sense of positive momentum. The source of progress was a global-local majority of governments and civil society organisations from Europe, sub-Saharan Africa, the Caribbean, Latin America and the Pacific ...”

This quote from one of the articles captures the feeling of success when local and global actors get together and get the priorities right. This example is related to control of global arms trade, one of the “glocal” achievements in the recent year.

There is no shortage of good intentions when it comes to peacebuilding. Local difficulties in terms of security, violence and armed conflict are often drivers of actions higher up and of international engagement. Covered by ambitious media, and not least social media, incidents and human needs trigger action in the upper rooms, be they national, regional or the “international community”.

New instruments or policies are often put in place from the top to mitigate or resolve problems on the ground. It is, for instance, reported that the African Union has got more than 200 legislative and policy frameworks, many related to peace and security, but has limited human resources and capacity to implement them.¹ Civil society and NGOs are also good at formulating policies and recommendations, often top down or top to top. This may, on the surface seem like a good, rapid response mechanism. What happens on the ground is dealt with responsibly by people with power in different ways. But is it the right way? Is it based on the right input and analysis? Is it effective or just selective?

The starting point in the planning of this thematic issue about the “glocality” of peace was several sets of new research, analysis and (peer) reflection, particularly by Church of Sweden (CoS) but also by the Life & Peace Institute (LPI), which presents new findings from a comprehensive project mapping of peacebuilding in the Horn of Africa. Many of the findings point in the same direction: there is a need for better locally owned analyses on the ground and one should not put the cart before the horse in terms of action and new policies.

The international department of Church of Sweden is engaged in a long term project called Local to Global

Protection (L2GP), together with DanChurchAid, which has generated a number of case studies on local protection practices in crisis situations. The latest study from Palestine, covered in this issue of New Routes, speaks about a “profound gap between the international protection practices and the local understanding of protection”.

In another policy study, CoS and partners, among them Swedish Diakonia and the University of Gothenburg, have looked at dilemmas of business in conflict and post-conflict areas. There is no way to reflect on this without considering the interface between local and global realities. The thought-provoking examples reported here are from the brewer Heineken-Bralima in DRC and the oil company Total in Myanmar.

Perhaps the most striking example of the need to think and act “glocal” is the story about the development of the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) and the Ecumenical Campaign for a Strong and Effective ATT, which was launched in the World Council of Churches in 2011. The outcome is a success story which shows the great advocacy potential when local perspectives on global problems, such as the irresponsible arms trade, are voiced in a coordinated and consistent manner both in national capitals and at the international level of UN negotiations.

Among the additional contributions to the reflections around the “glocality” theme is an article on a peer review process engaging two of Church of Sweden’s partner organisations, the Trauma Healing and Reconciliation Programme in Liberia and the Institute for Healing of Memories in South Africa. Also, from Colombia a global partner, the Lutheran World Federation/Department of World Service, reports about the important local, national and international connections between conflict and peace in the region of Arauca.

As longstanding partners in the area of peacebuilding, CoS and the LPI have in this edition of New Routes collated a number of examples of the “glocal-

ity of peace”. The ambition is to create greater awareness of local peacebuilding and protection practices and the connections to policy development and decision-making at the national and international level.

We see a growing need to better understand the interrelatedness between the global and the local, to address conflict transformation and peacebuilding with “glocal” perspectives and approaches. This is particularly important during the current negotiations on a post-2015 global development framework. It has become evident in the work with the Millennium Development Goals that local and global peace and security issues have to be addressed in order to achieve local and global development.

Being organisations based in Sweden, we also want to use the momentum of 2014 as a “year of peace”² to influence both the national and international policy agenda towards conflict prevention, human security and peacebuilding.

It is crucial to create complementarities and synergies between peacebuilding actors at the local, national and international level, to link decision-makers with practitioners, and to acknowledge peace as a prerequisite to sustainable development. 

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¹ Mehari Taddele Maru, The African Union, a potential driver of regional change, New Routes no. 4/2012

² 14 August 2014 marks the 200th anniversary of peace within Sweden’s borders. This date commemorates the cease-fire agreement in the Norwegian town of Moss in 1814, which ended the conflict between Sweden and Norway.

After ten years of advocacy and months of uncertainty about the outcome of negotiations, a majority of the UN General Assembly voted in favour of an Arms Trade Treaty in March 2013. Among the many advocacy actors was the World Council of Churches, which, through local member churches in many countries and a united voice at the UN, bore witness to the need for the treaty and helped pave the way for its adoption.

Thinking and acting “glocal”

Churches help change arms trade

Joseph Dube and Jonathan Frerichs

“The people of the world need this treaty,” a Kenyan delegate told a packed United Nations conference. “The time for the Arms Trade Treaty is now.” World governments were listening closely. So were hundreds of NGOs, people’s delegates of sorts, including from churches.

The “now” in question was the diplomatic equivalent of a World Cup football shoot-out. Seconds away from adoption, the world’s first Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) had just been blocked. Negotiations at the UN headquarters were in overtime after two intensive weeks. In fact, it had taken ten years to get to this night.

Kenya, speaking for 12 countries, said the ATT should go to the UN General Assembly for a vote. Those 12 countries included the United States, the world’s biggest arms trader. For years the US government had been opposing the treaty, and it rarely welcomes national security decisions by the General Assembly. Yet here, both positions had changed. Ivory Coast spoke for 15 West African states saying they knew from bitter experience how necessary the treaty was. Mexico proposed that it be adopted without a vote and five others agreed.

There was a palpable sense of positive momentum. The source of progress was a global-local majority of governments and civil society organisations from Europe, sub-Saharan Africa, the Caribbean, Latin America and the Pacific. Major players wanted to weaken the treaty, but there was *glocal* momentum to strengthen it.

Eight months earlier at the original ATT Diplomatic Conference, another last-minute intervention – by the US – stopped the treaty in its tracks. Other arms-producing countries, including China, Russia and India, had quickly joined the move to defer action despite a month of talks.

As the new treaty struggled to be born at the UN that night of 28 March 2013, a sense of betrayal was also in the air – betrayal of what many saw as a historic moment to advance the common good. The eleventh-hour move to block the treaty was the second time Iran, Syria and North Korea had done so that day. They cited the treaty’s failure to prohibit arms transfers to occupation forces and to insurgents. Iran noted that the treaty recognised an individual right to own arms because of US pressure, but ignored the right of whole peoples to self-determination and protection.

Local voices in a global arena

The ups and downs of these deliberations were shared by churches around the world. Churches are not strangers to armed conflicts. Parishioners and priests live the daily fears and hopes of their communities wherever the trade in deadly weapons is regulated poorly or not regulated at all. What is more, churches from some communities had gained the confidence to bring local voices into the international arena. Such is the basis for the Ecumenical Campaign for a Strong and Effective Arms Trade Treaty, which was launched in the World Council of Churches (WCC) in 2011¹.

Again and again in the ATT process, churches brought testimonies about local life to reinforce the need for global arms trade controls: South Sudan is all too familiar with conflicts exacerbated by illicit weapons. Early in 2012, in a dispute over cattle theft, 6,000 young fighters from one ethnic group raided the territory of another group. “The attackers were from an ethnic group that just went through a disarmament process two years ago”, Joy Kwaje, par-

liamentarian and long-time church women’s leader, told the WCC. “Now they have brand-new guns. They killed about 600 people. Where does one get new guns for 6,000 young men?”

In neighbouring Uganda, the churches collaborate to solve similar problems. “We lobby as churches for governments to stop the illegal international arms trade and at the same time to conscientise the public in communities at risk”, says Fr. Silvester Arinaitwe, General Secretary of the Uganda Joint Christian Council.

Eastern Democratic Republic of Congo is awash with illegal weapons. Gynaecologist Dr Irene Tchangou works at a hospital where nearly half of the 2,600 patients in 2011 were cases of gender-based violence used as a weapon of war. “Gender-based armed violence increases mortality and morbidity, diseases, family breakdowns and the collapse of social structures – the same effects as military weapons”, she says. All survivors need medical care. 75 percent need psychological care. Tchangou says her work is sustained by her Christian faith.

Such stories show that ATT negotiations matter for people around the world. The Sudan story demonstrates that the treaty must include small arms and light weapons, plus international assistance. The Uganda and Congo stories add human rights criteria and the dimensions of socio-economic development and gender-based violence.

Weaker than hoped, stronger than expected

Three days after the drama at the UN, described above, at the next meeting of the General Assembly, 153 countries voted to adopt the ATT. In the preceding months, the Ecumenical Campaign for a

Strong and Effective Arms Trade Treaty had contacted nearly one-third of them, 47 governments, most of them several times. Three states voted against the treaty and 23 abstained.

One measure of the ATT vote was that half of the 40 states abstaining in years of lesser votes had finally chosen sides, joining states in favour of an ATT. That group of fence-sitters included the US and Russia. The price of their support was a treaty that was weaker than the majority of governments wanted. Yet, in an era when international peace and security is hobbled by unilateral misadventures and multilateral dysfunction, the ATT is stronger and more comprehensive than many expected.

The ATT begins to bridge an enormous gap in international responsibilities. The new treaty requires arms exporters who have never had to answer to anyone to account for the first time whether the arms they supply could be used to facilitate serious violations of international human rights law or international humanitarian law.

In the year since the ATT was adopted, 118 states have signed the treaty and 13 states have ratified it. The current ecumenical campaign focus is on encouraging governments to sign and ratify the treaty so that it can be implemented and begin to save lives.

The WCC built the Ecumenical Campaign by mobilising a cross-section of its 349 member churches in 140 countries to do local-global advocacy. Campaign members also came from a cross-section of the states negotiating the ATT: 21 states affected by unregulated arms trading, 10 arms-exporting states, and 9 states which are small importers of arms. This is a strategic, cross-regional basis for advocacy work.

On that basis the campaign mobilised national and international advocacy and lobbying. There were many members but one goal: churches reaching governments with a unified message about treaty provisions to save lives and protect communities.

'Human scope' focus for churches

When the Executive Committee of the WCC set policies on the arms trade, the focus was on what the campaign called the "human scope" of the ATT.² The WCC first endorsed an ATT in 2005.³ The new policy said the human impact



PHOTO: NIKLAS EKLOV

The purpose of the Ecumenical Campaign for a Strong and Effective Arms Trade Treaty (ATT), launched by the World Council of Churches (WCC), is to bring personal testimonies together that demonstrate the human consequences of the arms trade and the direct impact that conventional weapons have on the lives of people around the world. Jonathan Frerichs, WCC, and Sara San Martin, Ecumenical Studies Centre (Mexico), in front of the ATT Campaign poster at the 10th WCC Assembly in Busan, South Korea, November 2013.

of the treaty would depend on the provisions outlined below. The ATT must:

- include small arms and light weapons (guns and other portable weapons), ammunition, parts and components;
- deny arms transfers where there is a substantial risk of serious violations of International Humanitarian Law and International Human Rights Law; when arms transfers could impair socioeconomic development; and when arms are likely to be used in gender-based violence;
- include measures for survivor assistance;
- provide for future revisions of the treaty, for example, to cover new types of weapons; and
- negotiate using UN procedures whereby a large majority can achieve consensus after comprehensive negotiations.⁴

For many arms-exporting states, such provisions were unwelcome. For church campaigners, the new statement opened doors to church leadership.

The treaty that was finally agreed included all the provisions, to varying degrees, except victim assistance. Ammunition is in the treaty, but less strongly than most ATT supporters wanted. The socio-economic criterion is mentioned, but only in the preamble. The procedural concern is reflected in encouragement of joint statements during negotiations and in the referral to a General Assembly vote.

The human-scope approach worked to bridge a North-South divide in ATT negotiations. On one side are populations heavily affected by the illicit arms trade, whose voice may not be heard in ATT negotiations and whose governments need assistance to implement such a treaty. On the other side are the largest arms manufacturers, those who benefit financially from the arms trade, and big powers with influence over the negotiations.⁵

Connecting constituency and strategy

The Ecumenical ATT Campaign was present in countries on both sides of this di-

vide, so constituency was connected with strategy in two stages. First, campaign members engaged in a North-South dialogue to explore the divide when planning campaign and lobby actions. Then, findings were put to use. The WCC made a special request that campaigners contact the US embassy in their country. Churches were to urge the US, with its relatively high arms export standards, to make common cause on the ATT with countries most heavily affected by the lack of global standards. Churches in at least nine countries took action (Democratic Republic of Congo, Sierra Leone, South Africa, Brazil, Mexico, Republic of Korea, Norway, France and Germany). For most, it was the first such contact with a US embassy. Their outreach was later cited by US diplomats. It provided a basis for church representatives to stress the necessity of including ammunition in the treaty. Meanwhile, a bloc of African states met the US delegation with the same concern.

To make the most of churches' potential, the ATT Ecumenical Campaign used "stereo advocacy". The purpose was for governments to hear the same advocacy messages from national church representatives in their capitals as from international ecumenical representatives at the UN. "Stereo advocacy" was employed in the lead-up, during and after the major UN meetings on the ATT. Messages shared in national capitals were echoed in New York, and vice versa.

Delegations of church leaders and campaigners testified about the effects of illicit arms trading in their countries. They linked their stories with WCC policy. The ecumenical delegations at the UN were led by the Moderator of the WCC, the Rev. Dr. Walter Altman, a member church leader from Brazil, Father Sylvester Arinaitwe, head of the Uganda Joint Christian Council, and Rev Karin Wiborg, head of the Christian Council of Sweden. These leaders lobbied states supportive of the ATT as well as states skeptical of it.

Widely shared success

The ATT campaign was a widely shared success. Churches were able to reach government representatives in-person at home, while the WCC at the UN made a collective contribution. Their efforts were part of a larger push by civil society groups, including many within the Control Arms coalition. All govern-

ments at the ATT negotiations were aware of civil society efforts and many welcomed them. The Ecumenical Campaign benefitted greatly from expertise and information shared by NGOs and collaborated actively with other Control Arms members.

There was also cooperation with religious bodies. When it looked as if ammunition would be excluded from the treaty, the World Council of Churches, World Evangelical Alliance, Pax Christi International and Caritas International in consultation with the Holy See issued a joint statement and held a press conference calling for the inclusion of ammunition. Such steps amplified what civil society and states were saying.

The campaign's core activity was for all members to pursue contacts and follow-up meetings with foreign ministry officials. Much more was done, however. Among hundreds of examples from seven continents, here is a sample: Australia included on-line campaigning and direct mail. Brazil had hundreds of local religious leaders – Christian, Buddhist, Jewish and others – sign the ATT Interfaith Declaration⁶. German church representatives joined NGOs to lobby the European Parliament using a church report on German arms exports to "Arab Spring" countries. Mexico mobilised 15 minority churches repeatedly and helped get 35,000 people to petition President Obama to control weapons exports to Mexico. Nigerian church leaders met with the governor of the troubled Plateau State emphasising the need for an ATT. South Korean members made repeated contact with government officials, also with Amnesty International. 26 churches in the Sierra Leone Council of Churches monitored government arms control efforts. Sweden co-sponsored a 'die-in' for the ATT in Stockholm, and the Church of Sweden Archbishop Anders Wejryd blogged, did national media appearances, contacted four government ministries and signed the ATT Interfaith Declaration together with all bishops. In Uganda, 15,000 pilgrims carried ATT banners during an Easter-time "Way of the Cross" procession in Kampala.

The Ecumenical Campaign's capacity was enhanced through support and accompaniment from the Church of Norway Council on Ecumenical and International Relations and by a similar partnership with the Church of Swe-

den. As a result, campaign leadership, regional planning and capacity building were strengthened. Meanwhile, church membership and national participation grew through campaign outreach and church interest.

The ATT campaign came in for considerable attention at the 10th WCC Assembly in Busan, South Korea, in late 2013. Its way of working was profiled in workshops, an exhibit and in speeches by leading officials. The Assembly statement on "The Way of Just Peace" urges member churches to seek ratifications, monitor implementation and press their governments to voluntarily include weapon types not covered by the treaty.

"This long-overdue act of international governance means that people in many parts of the world who live in fear for their lives will eventually be safer", the WCC General Secretary, Rev. Dr Olav Fykse Tveit, said when the ATT was adopted. "From Syria to the Democratic Republic of Congo, from Sudan to Colombia, our prayers will continue for people afflicted by violence and injustice. With them, we all need weapons to be controlled, given up and melted down into useful implements. So we will also pray and work for the new Arms Trade Treaty to come into effect, for states to live up to their treaty obligations and for the need to strengthen the rule of law in the years ahead." 

- 1 <http://www.oikoumene.org/en/resources/documents/executive-committee/2012-02/statement-on-the-need-for-a-strong-and-effective-arms-trade-treaty>
- 2 http://armstreatynow.org/fileadmin/user_upload/ATT/Site_PDFs/ATTbrochure-2ndEd-EN.pdf
- 3 <http://www.oikoumene.org/en/resources/documents/executive-committee/geneva-september-2005/statement-on-small-arms.html>
- 4 <http://www.oikoumene.org/en/resources/documents/executive-committee/bossey-february-2012/statement-on-the-need-for-a-strong-and-effective-arms-trade-treaty.html>
- 5 <http://attmonitor.posterous.com/a-short-and-easy-arms-trade-treaty-or-a-focus#more>
- 6 <http://speakout.controlarms.org/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2013/02/InterfaithDeclarationATT.pdf>

The gap between the elegant halls, where decision-makers meet to discuss the prospect of peace, and the simple dwellings in areas tormented by conflict is vast.

The distance between decisions and reality is in itself an impediment to sustainable peace and development. With the intention of reducing the gap, the Life & Peace Institute is initiating a Horn of Africa Regional Programme, where “local” can meet with “regional” in fruitful collaboration

LPI's new Horn of Africa Regional Programme

Bridging the local with the regional

Hannah Tsadik and Lidet Tadesse Shiferaw

We live and work in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia – a political and diplomatic hub of the African continent. The city hosts the headquarters of the African Union (AU) and is the seat of key offices of the sub-regional body Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) and multiple UN agencies including the headquarters of the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (ECA). Decision-makers and movers and shakers from all over the world pass through this city on a regular basis to determine the future of the African continent, a fact the inhabitants of Addis primarily feel in the form of increased traffic congestion.

Usually the deliberations take place in luxurious halls under high decorum or over drinks in private lounges of fancy hotels – but almost always behind closed doors. Citizens and those that are directly affected by these decisions learn of the outcomes through communiqués, statements and resolutions. The distance between decision-makers and citizens is particularly striking when one is physically approximate to these seats of power, but for all intents and purposes, feels as far removed as someone on the other side of the world. Nothing is more illustrative of this contrast between decision-making and events on the ground than receiving an incident report from our Somalia team while attending a high level meeting at a luxury hotel in Addis.

Of course, Addis is not unique in this regard; similar dynamics play out in Brussels, New York or anywhere else where power is centered. Setting aside violent and nonviolent popular movements and revolutions in which the masses take matters into their own hands, decision-making has been and

continues to be the privilege of the powerful few. This state of affairs becomes particularly acute in situations of violent conflict when leaders meet to decide on peace- and security issues, usually at a location far away from the conflict scene. Though there are practical reasons for the actual distance between the conflict scene and the negotiation table, it also seems to be symbolic of the detachment between the subjects of violence and the objects of decision-making.

Local experiences in policy work

For over 25 years, the Life & Peace Institute (LPI) has focused its energies and resources on supporting local conflict transformation processes in the Horn of Africa and Great Lakes Region. It has engaged with local communities affected by conflicts and has supported them in building upon their own mechanisms to resolve conflicts in a process known as bottom-up peacebuilding

Over these years of supporting grassroots peacebuilding at the local level, LPI has learned many lessons, from which two observations stand out and call for deeper reflection. The first is that, despite the resilience, resourcefulness and capacities of these local communities to address conflicts being played out in their environs, their experience of the effects and causes of these conflicts do not reach decision makers in a systematic fashion. Moreover, their innovative solutions to overcome their hardships also fail to adequately reach decision makers. Hence, the perspectives of those most affected by conflict are rarely reflected in the decisions that most affect their lives.

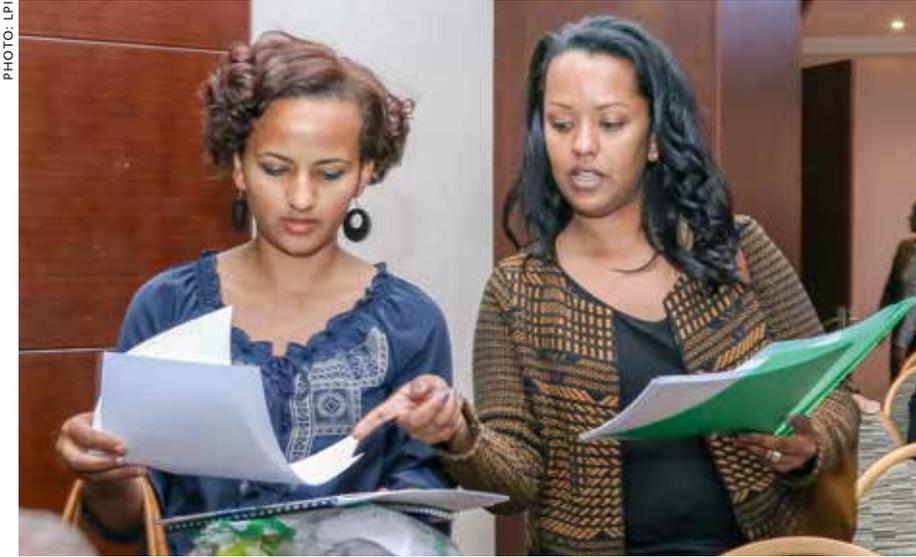
Secondly, LPI has learned that “local conflicts” in the Horn of Africa (HoA)

are rarely local; they are often inter-linked in nature and trans-boundary in effect. The HoA is a regional security complex in which causes, factors, actors and effects of conflict, but also peace, function as a system, unconstrained by national boundaries, administrative hierarchies or thematic disciplines.

These two realisations have propelled LPI to ask: What can be done to bring the local realities and experiences that LPI has been privileged to encounter into the beautiful meeting halls in Addis? Who and what can be the bridge? What spaces and processes would facilitate an interface between local experiences and decision-making at higher levels? And most importantly, would we see other types of policies and decisions if the interface was there? Would policies and decisions be more attuned to the realities of everyday people if the gap was reduced?

To answer those important questions in a systematic and concerted way, LPI embarked on designing a regional programme for the Horn of Africa, with the vision of enriching policies and actions at the regional level with diverse perspectives, experiences and evidence that emerge from different levels of a conflict. While the overall goal of the programme was clear, the critical details of how best to go about such an amazingly ambitious endeavour, with whom, when and where to start certainly were not.

Nonetheless, for those of us who were working on the design of the regional programme, it was clear that the programme had to build on the lessons learned and best practices of other organisations and innovate from there. But to our surprise, the information



After one year of mapping exercises, Lidet Tadesse Shiferaw (left) and Hannah Tsadik (right) find that a closer linking is needed between local realities and decision making bodies, as well as a regional peacebuilding programme with perspectives from different levels of a conflict.

that we needed was not readily available or documented.

In order to bridge this knowledge gap, LPI conducted a study that mapped 140 actors (non-governmental, governmental and inter-governmental) who stated that they engaged in regional peacebuilding in the Horn of Africa. From November 2012 to November 2013, LPI reviewed previous and current initiatives – especially those that linked grassroots work to policy engagement – and travelled to Djibouti, Ethiopia, Kenya and Uganda to learn.

The study generated a lot of knowledge which has shaped our thinking and our regional programming. The complete report of our findings and LPI's recommendation for ways forward will soon be shared in a separate publication, but below are some of our findings on what peacebuilding actors are doing in linking local experiences to policy.

Linking local perspectives to regional policy

While many organisations do try to lift the lessons and experiences from grassroots peacebuilding to policy circles through advocacy, most of these efforts target local or national level policy makers and sometimes donors. Only a few organisations do regional level advocacy, and even fewer organisations link their grassroots peacebuilding work to regional policy through regional bodies – the AU or IGAD.

Many of the organisations interviewed were interested in engaging with

the AU and IGAD, and acknowledged that these bodies could potentially facilitate more civil society involvement in countries where the activities of civil society are legally curtailed. However, the organisations are unsure of how to go about useful engagement with regional bodies and do not know what the appropriate mechanisms are. Grassroots organisations in particular admitted to being intimidated by the AU's bureaucracy and lacking the networks or understanding of policy circles to engage with decision makers in these regional organisations.

Sharing best practices, many organisations stressed local ownership and participation as key ingredients to success. Further, many highlighted the importance of, and need for, networks in order to combine the emphasis on local needs with the ability to engage at the regional level. Many organisations called specifically for civil society networks to be built across the region in order to achieve more leverage within regional bodies, so as to be able to contribute to regional policies.

What these findings indicate is that there is limited civil society driven work that links grassroots peacebuilding to regional peacebuilding. Of course restrictive legal frameworks in some countries and lack of know-how and resources to engage in regional advocacy are contributing factors that explain the missing link between local and the regional peacebuilding in the Horn of Africa. But the general tendency among

civil society to assume a role of “naming and shaming” or act as “watchdog” of government and intergovernmental authorities' activities is also a factor that explains the lack of constructive engagement between civil society and policy makers in the HoA.

While confrontational advocacy is an understandable and even necessary approach at times, it is not the only approach to advocacy. In fact, where the power gap between governmental/inter-governmental actors and civil society is wide, as in the Horn, a confrontational approach may be futile in getting one's message across.

In addition to adopting a collaborative attitude towards work with governmental/intergovernmental actors, civil society organisations (CSOs) should locate their niche in regional peacebuilding. Unfortunately, peacebuilding actors, especially those in geographic and/or operational proximity to conflict zones are often overwhelmed by emerging needs that require immediate responses, and therefore rarely have the chance to lift their proverbial eyes to see how their peace efforts add up to the “regional peace”, writ large.

Coordination among peacebuilding actors (governmental, intergovernmental and civil society), or the lack thereof, was one theme that stood out in the findings of the study. This is a mechanism that, if effectively conducted, can serve the purpose of lifting local perspectives to regional policy making circles. While regional intergovernmental bodies – the AU and IGAD – need to improve their formal channels of interaction with CSOs, the findings of the study reveal that there is also a lack of civil-society led, open, inclusive and structured spaces that foster or support the interaction between civil society and regional policy makers.

“Local to regional” – a collaborative policy project

The findings of the mapping study did not exhaustively answer the questions we were grappling with, but the lack of clear answers to our questions has in fact inspired us to be innovative. As the Bohemian-Austrian author Rainer Maria Rilke once wrote in a letter: “Be patient toward all that is unsolved in your heart and try to love the questions themselves, like locked rooms and like books that are now written in a very foreign tongue. Do

not now seek the answers, which cannot be given you because you would not be able to live them. And the point is, to live everything. Live the questions now. Perhaps you will then gradually, without noticing it, live along some distant day into the answer” (1903).

Indeed, the lack of answers has encouraged us to initiate a *collaborative policy project* in 2014 with the overall objective of enriching regional policy making processes with local perspectives, lived experiences, solid evidence and expertise. It will do so by supporting civil society organisations and academia to conduct policy-targeted research and analysis.

While several policy advocacy strategies start with a civil society issue and lobby to put it on the agenda of policy makers, this pilot initiative is innovative in that it will adopt a *convergence-based advocacy* strategy where policy dilemmas of relevance to *both* civil society and regional policy makers (IGAD/AU) will be identified.

The benefit of starting from issues where the political will of policy makers *and* the interest of civil society organisations meet is two-fold. On the one hand, it will minimise the amount of energy, effort and resources mobilised to generate political will (the interest of policy makers). On the other hand, it will also increase the likelihood of policy recommendations being implemented in the

end, since decision makers have a vested interest in the issues at hand.

The pilot initiative will work with civil society organisations and academic/research institutes to first collect evidence and conduct joint analysis on identified policy questions in order to draw up policy options for the consideration of the AU and IGAD. By linking analysis and local perspectives to national and regional policy, the initiative will enhance the role that local organisations and academics play in regional policy making.

Moreover, based on our observation and the findings of the mapping that suggest a need for more open, participatory and structured spaces conducive for interaction between civil society at different levels and regional decision makers in the Horn, LPI will facilitate a Horn of Africa Policy Forum (HoAPF). The HoAPF will serve as a platform where representatives of communities affected by local conflict, civil society peacebuilding organisations, academia and policy makers come together to discuss interlinked conflicts in the Horn and the effectiveness of current regional policies as well as to develop alternative policies that will promote durable peace in the region.

Therefore, by supporting civil society organisations to frame their analysis as policy questions and recommendations, and assisting academic institutions to

produce policy-focused research, the initiative aspires to amplify the input of local organisations in regional policy processes.

Conclusion

As one of the early organisations championing and supporting bottom-up peacebuilding approaches, LPI has taken it upon itself to explore existing, or to forge novel, means of linking local peacebuilding experiences to regional peacebuilding policies in the Horn of Africa. In order to effectively address the peacebuilding needs in the Horn, peacebuilding responses should be *coordinated and “strategic”*: holistic, inclusive, multi-level and geared towards short-term as well as long-term needs. It is based on this understanding that that we have launched the Collaborative Policy Project under LPI’s Regional Programme for the Horn. Through this project and its main component – the Horn of Africa Policy Forum – LPI envisions furthering its mission of supporting nonviolent local conflict transformation and intends to build on its 25 years of experience and commitment to peacebuilding work in the Horn of Africa and the Great Lakes Region. We do hope our journey will result in positive contributions to peacebuilding in the Horn and will serve as a stepping stone for future programmes and projects in this area. 🌿



PHOTO: AHMAD MAHMOUD/IRIN

Ruins of the Parliament building in Mogadishu. The distance between decision-making sessions in luxurious hotels in capital cities like Addis Ababa and events on the ground in nearby conflict-stricken areas in many cases seems extreme. The gap is particularly obvious when incidents in, for example, Somalia are reported during conference deliberations behind more or less closed doors.

For more than 20 years Arauca, Colombia, has been the scene of armed conflict and its consequences in terms of the violation of human rights and international humanitarian law. With the presence of the Lutheran World Federation/Department of World Service in the country, people get support in organizing and creating alliances that make a difference. The efforts reach out to different levels of society and encompass a variety of sectors in the society.

Arauca, Colombia

Persistent work gives hope for peace

Héctor Fabián Rodríguez Muñoz and Andrea Villareal Calpa

As many analysts have indicated, national elites have failed to generate a national project that represents the interests of Colombia's diverse social sectors. Its social and political system excludes many, a crucial factor behind the extension of the armed conflict in time and space. This exclusion appears as a common denominator at the root of the violence in the country, and the department Arauca in eastern Colombia is no exception. 4,000 out of its 270,000 inhabitants belong to indigenous communities living in jungle areas. Social policies are proposed and carried out without effective civil society participation and without attention to the true causes of problematic issues associated with the inequitable redistribution of resources and wealth. This leads to an increase in poverty, limiting access to fundamental rights and negatively affecting the exercise of freedom, dignity and autonomy.

In this territory, some 15 years ago, people discovered an alternative to the system of exclusion in diverse forms of association and organization. The effort of peasants, indigenous people, students, women and small merchants led to the creation of social organizations whose representatives pointed to the effects of discrimination and inequality, made their opposition to them evident, and resisted. The aim was to demand respect for their rights.

Over the past decade, however, leaders of social organizations have been victims of the violence that the country and this region face. Hundreds of them were arrested arbitrarily. They were victims of threats, murders, disappearances, displacement, accusations of criminal behavior and torture. Fear subjugated the remaining leaders and

their communities. Public protest was not a viable response, so silence became a form of self-protection. Mistrust grew even among peasants from neighboring settlements whose families had grown up together, as did the restrictions of moving about freely, exercising solidarity, and utilizing mechanisms for social inclusion. With all this came the weakening of the social fabric and the unraveling of the social movement.

Accompaniment of social organizations

It is in this complex reality that the Lutheran World Federation/Department for World Service (LWF/DWS) in Colombia has been present since the end of 2006. Its mission is to accompany and strengthen the vulnerable population affected by the conflict, by the violation of human rights and international humanitarian law, and by natural disasters. Its work is inspired by the principle of Christian service or *diaconía* and is rooted in a humanitarian imperative.

For the past years the LWF/DWS has been accompanying human rights organizations, a peasants' association and the Association of Town Councils and Traditional Indigenous Authorities of Arauca. The work can be described succinctly as integral defense of human rights and of the right to permanent stay in the territory.

The experience with these partners is characterized by the development of a strategy of holistic action that can be understood in the form of a pyramid. At its base is the empowerment of local communities. Over time leaders have been overcoming their fears. They have managed to strengthen their capacities and reestablish linkages, to promote development alternatives aimed at social

well-being, equity, justice and the protection of the environment. They have promoted public awareness of human rights and ways to demand them, and of mechanisms for protection. They have promoted civic participation in appropriate spaces, denounced injustices, and demanded a coherent government response to people's needs and problems. They have forged alliances with other regional and national movements, and promoted initiatives for sustainable development.

Peacebuilding through empowerment

The encounter between social organizations and the LWF/DWS is a permanent wager in favor of peace, supported by concrete social action that addresses the structural roots of poverty and the effects of the armed conflict. The empowerment referred to above is undoubtedly a decisive factor that gives the most vulnerable sectors of the population the opportunity to participate in transformations that lead to peace.

The lessons learned in this regard indicate that the strengthening of communities contributes to building peace if the organizations acquire greater recognition and backing. Measures also need to be taken to reduce the risks of stigmatization, persecution, threats, isolation and the loss of leadership. Efforts to strengthen communities are successful if and when the local organizations develop skills and strategies for sustainable action, manage to generate resources and minimize dependencies, design regional proposals and unite with other organizations to promote viable alternatives. Community strengthening contributes to peace if the organizations grow in their ability to engage and enter

into dialogue with diverse actors and are fortified to continue advancing toward the realization of their objectives.

The present exercise in empowerment in Arauca also aims to discover local forms of nonviolent conflict transformation, and to promote local leadership for the participation and integration of communities, groups and sectors that have been historically marginalized. It seeks to contribute to the promotion of historical memory and reconciliation, the recuperation of victims through their enhanced resilience, and participation in the creation of a culture of peace.

Connections at all levels

On the steps of the aforementioned pyramid, rising above its base, is action for a form of political empowerment, even in the highly complex conflict in Arauca. It aims to confront the profound or structural causes of social inequities through capacities for peace. It involves the structuring of social and political mechanisms leading to concrete results that benefit society as a whole.

It would have been impossible to achieve what has been achieved to date if the actions of the LWF/DWS had not taken into account the communication between local, regional, national and international levels. The leaders of the local organizations have, for example, simple methods for communicating well with all of their members, even those who live in faraway rural areas.

‘These organizations’ leaders have slowly regained trust and they exercise leadership taking into account the grassroots communities. They meet more frequently and use methods like bulletins, booklets, videos, newspapers, publications, and internet-page messages among other means to publicize their proposals and to foster networking.

Local organizations have also increased their capacity for advocacy. They enter into dialogue with authorities at all levels. They have formed political agendas based on what they call *Pliegos de Petición* (lists of petitions) which serve as a set of issues they want to discuss with the local, department-level or national government. The principal issues have to do with land tenure and productivity, corporate social responsibility in the face of the effects of oil extraction, the workings of the justice system, access to human rights, and peacebuilding.

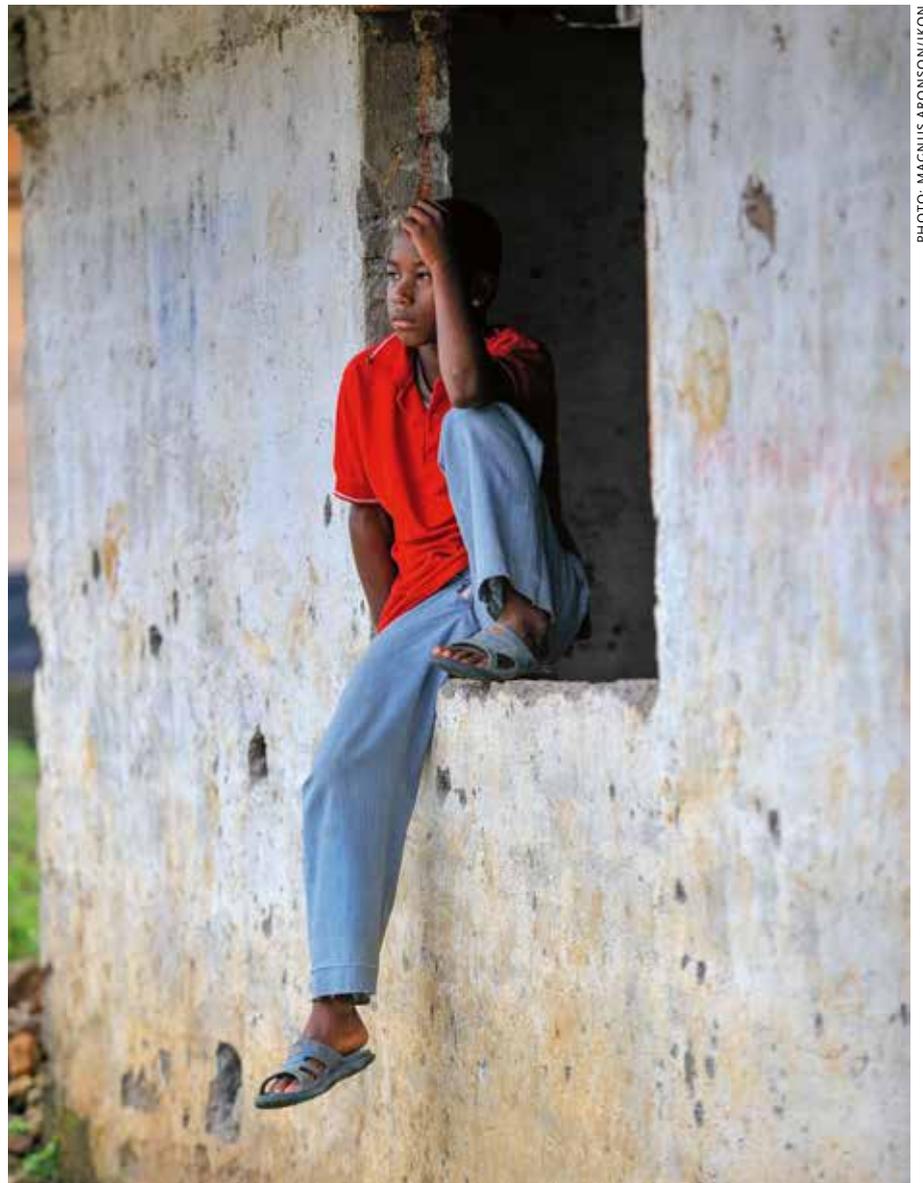


PHOTO: MAGNUS ARONSON/KON

The civil war in Colombia strikes hard especially against poor people in the countryside. Uneducated young people are approached by the armed groups with false promises of a better future with money and food.

In its work the LWF/DWS has created alliances with other organizations, such as *Humanidad Vigente*, an association of lawyers that works with a focus on vulnerable leaders and populations that have been affected by the armed conflict. Their contribution consists in organizing, collecting and publishing the documents that make up the *planes de vida*, or comprehensive “life plans” of indigenous communities that up until now have been filed away – thereby promoting awareness of them, implementation and advocacy.

The LWF/DWS has also created an alliance with the Catholic Church, specifically with *Pastoral Social*, the social ministry entity in charge of, among other things, accompanying the communities in the recovery of their rights. Thanks to this cooperative relationship,

there is an annual Campaign for Peace and links to a Human Rights Observatory that collects and publishes information daily on human rights violations throughout the department. The latter creates awareness of the grave situation the communities face, and monthly and trimonthly publications reach as far as the national level. There is also dialogue with civil authorities and the police to obtain guarantees of people’s rights.

Alliances with grassroots organizations

Related to the alliances mentioned above, each of the social organizations that has received support and backing from the LWF/DWS has increased its own alliances with organizations at the national level, like grassroots civic organizations,

a women's association, a lawyers' collective, a network of alternative media, a radio station and the Colombian Association of Popular Press, and a radio station. They share lessons learned, come together around advocacy strategies, make petitions to the government, inform and advise the grassroots communities, and educate about similarities and differences with other regions. Above all they formulate political agendas that generally support a voice for minority populations, and promote their proposals in institutional spaces for the formulation of public policy.

Some examples of such initiatives are in order: the Peasant Association of Arauca (ACA) is in dialogue with different national entities to disseminate and make known its proposal for the creation of a Peasant Reserve Zone, which will allow peasants to determine the kind of development they wish to promote, together with advantages and conditions needed to achieve it. ACA participated actively in the national agrarian strike. It is a member of the Roundtable of Civic and Popular Organizations and the related National Agriculture and Livestock Roundtable for Dialogue and Agreement. A youth member participates in the National Agro-ecology School that was founded with the support of the UN's Food and Agriculture Organization, the Assembly of the National Association of Peasant Reserve Zones, and the Agrarian University of Havana. The school aims to create a national agro-ecological network and to seek funding to carry out a land study through a signed agreement between the Colombian Institute for Rural Development and the United Nations Development Program.

The Joel Sierra Foundation for Human Rights and the Regional Young Student Association started a leadership school for youth and women. They have participated in studies linked to events promoted by national lawyers' organizations for the effective recognition of human rights and international humanitarian law. Finally, they denounce abuses, make public declarations, and promote legal defense in cases involving communities and leaders victimized by actions of the police – three of which are currently under review by the Inter-American Court of Human Rights.

In a complementary fashion, there has been a steady increase in the capacity for advocacy among representatives



PHOTO: LWF/DWS

Women are a population group with a high degree of vulnerability and exposure to the effects of the armed conflict. Community strengthening and empowerment helps them to organize themselves and engage with other actors in their efforts to achieve peace.

of partner organizations. This is seen in lobbying with functionaries for the aforementioned lists of petitions. The representatives have an ever growing awareness of the need for commitment from government officials in order to gain respect for their rights. For this reason they have increased their activity vis-à-vis the regional and national government, managing to establish significant and effective dialogues with the Ministry of the Interior and Justice, the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, the offices of the Attorney General and the Public Prosecutor, and the Vice-Presidency of the Republic.

Results of hard work

In order to achieve these goals it was necessary to utilize all existing mechanisms. For example, as a result of determined efforts and social mobilization, the President of the Republic and the Minister of the Interior agreed to issue a special decree, thus reactivating the Inter-institutional Commission for permanent dialogue between the state, the oil companies and the communities on human dignity and the defense of life, human rights and a permanent right to stay in the territory.

At a high level, the LWF/DWS, in alliance with some of these social movements and platforms, supports partners through communication and advocacy. The latter is aimed at increasing the number of relevant responses from competent authorities and increasing the

visibility of the processes that partners are engaged in to support indigenous, Afro-Colombian and peasant populations in the defense and promotion of their livelihoods and their territory. This work is amplified internationally through interaction with UN agencies, international NGOs, the ACT Forum, the Embassy of Sweden, the European Union, the Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection Department of the European Commission, and the cooperation of the Church of Sweden.

In conclusion, the actions carried out by LWF/DWS in alliance with the social organizations of Arauca pursue alternatives and opportunities for peace, despite the polarization and stigmatization that so often become consolidated in a context of prolonged armed conflict. It is necessary to continue advancing in the creation and strengthening of these spaces in order to achieve greater societal understanding and to construct appropriate strategies for lasting results like sustainable peace.

The LWF/DWS will continue to support the peace initiatives that partners set forth, considering that the dynamics in the context will systematically influence their development. Continuous analysis will be required for the development of the program and the priority of strengthening partner capacities to deal with conflicts, design proposals and promote positive change. 🌿

Translated from Spanish by Tom Bamat

They have different backgrounds but experiences of conflict and a vision for peace, healing and reconciliation in common. During two weeks, representatives from two of Church of Sweden's partner organisations working with healing and reconciliation in Liberia and South Africa, respectively, met in a peer review process of sharing and learning.

A journey of healing and reconciliation

Eva Palmqvist

During two weeks in May and June 2013, Church of Sweden had the privilege to join its partner organisations, the Institute for Healing of Memories (IHOM) in South Africa, and the Trauma Healing and Reconciliation Programme (THRP) of the Lutheran Church in Liberia, on a journey of learning and experience sharing in the form of a peer review process. The peer review process was used to promote mutual learning, as the two organisations visited each other and looked at each other's work and methods from their respective perspectives. The process had several components, including document review, self-assessment, peer review and concluded with a workshop in Cape Town, South Africa.

The journey took us geographically across the African continent, to Liberia and South Africa, each country with its own history. It was also an inner journey, as we shared our reflections and experiences of promoting healing and reconciliation, trust and understanding, justice and peace. From different backgrounds, continents, countries and contexts, we met and connected through our identity as human beings. Struck by our commonalities and inspired by the power of sharing, we learned more about both ourselves and each other. This article will focus on some of the lessons learned of this exchange from the perspective of Church of Sweden.

The seed to the peer review process originated from a growing understanding by the Church of Sweden of the need to take stock of the qualitative experience, knowledge and methods that our international partners have in the area of peacebuilding and reconciliation. Furthering peace and reconciliation is identified as a core mission for the Church of Sweden, and peace and reconciliation is given priority as a specific policy area in the strategic plan for

Church of Sweden's international work 2014-2017. However, many times we had been humbled in the interaction with our international partners and realised that we have a lot to learn.

In dialogues with two of Church of Sweden's longstanding partner organisations in Africa, the Trauma Healing and Reconciliation Programme in Liberia and the Institute for Healing of Memories in South Africa, the seed found fertile ground and started to sprout. Our common basis for the peer review process was the belief that sharing and discussing between partner organisations could contribute to increased learning and understanding of different ways of working with healing, reconciliation and peacebuilding and initiate the formulation of new questions to address. In short, we embarked on this journey with the aim of learning more from one another by physically visiting, seeing, listening, discussing and reviewing the practical work on healing, reconciliation and peacebuilding in Liberia and South Africa.

The peer review journey started in Liberia, where a team from Church of Sweden and IHOM met with, listened to and interacted with staff of THRP, and undertook field visits to projects in and around Monrovia. Thereafter a team from THRP in Liberia and a team from Church of Sweden visited South Africa to meet with and learn from IHOM. This also included field visits to provide insights into the projects and practical work of IHOM.

Different contexts, similar aim

In Liberia and South Africa, the contexts have influenced the ways and methods of promoting peace, healing and reconciliation. THRP and IHOM are both organisations that were founded as a response to violence and suffering. The history and context of Liberia and South

Africa are different, as well as the two organisations' ways of working. At the same time they are united in the aim of spearheading peaceful and just development in their respective countries.

In Liberia, the first civil war broke out in 1989. Two years later, in 1991, the Lutheran Church initiated trauma healing and reconciliation activities, which included training of pastors, lay leaders and health workers. The Trauma Healing and Reconciliation Programme was officially established in 1998. Its mission is to empower people through training in peacebuilding and reconciliatory practices for the promotion of peace, reconciliation and healing in Liberia. THRP aims at contributing to peacebuilding through strengthening communities and civic structures. The work includes training in conflict transformation and mediation, psycho-social counselling and recreational activities. Among the target groups are community leaders, traditional and religious leaders, security personnel, local government officials, women's groups, students and youth groups, as well as ex-combatants. When the second civil war ended in 2003, the people of Liberia had experienced fourteen years of war and violence. As THRP emphasises, there is still need for healing and reconciliation if the country is to experience real peace and sustainable development.¹

In South Africa, the Institute for Healing of Memories was established in 1998, two years after South Africa's Truth and Reconciliation Commission held its first hearings about the events of the apartheid years. As IHOM explains it: "It was clear that only a fraction of all South Africans would have the opportunity to tell their story before the Commission. It was felt by many that additional platforms were needed to enable all those who wished to share

their experiences and be heard compassionately.”² The founder and Director of IHOM, Father Michael Lapsley, Anglican priest and anti-apartheid activist, led the development of “healing of memories workshops”, which ran in parallel to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission as an additional means of providing support to victims and survivors of apartheid violence.

The mission of IHOM is to contribute to the healing journey of individuals, communities and nations. Among its commitments is “redeeming the past by celebrating that which is life giving and laying to rest that which is destructive.”³ In the workshops facilitated by IHOM, people from different ethnic groups, religions and social backgrounds are enabled to reach a better understanding of themselves and each other. Originally focusing on national reconciliation, the workshops are now used in varying contexts and with different groups, including people infected and affected by HIV/AIDS, refugees and immigrants, prisoners and ex-combatants. IHOM also carries out other programmes, for example the Restoring Humanity Project, focusing on the situation of youth in South Africa.⁴

Having got to know each other’s histories and entry points, the two organisations started discovering both differences and similarities in their ways of working, the challenges they faced and their possibilities ahead. By being present in each other’s realities, they established an environment conducive to sharing and learning, characterised by curiosity, eagerness to understand more and generosity in giving advice. A few of the many topics elaborated on are described below.

The power of sharing stories

In both the Liberian and South African experiences, as expressed by THRP and IHOM, the value and power of sharing, listening to and acknowledging each and everyone’s story should not be underestimated. This is an important key to healing, reconciliation and peacebuilding at different levels of society.

THRP shared its experiences of psycho-social counselling, for which it often uses the method of an open circle where all participants are equal and able to share their stories and their pain. “To hear other people’s stories gives strength to the participants”, a staff member of THRP emphasised.

During a field visit to a community outside Cape Town, one of the youth who participated in a project which includes exchanges between different communities, concluded: “It was good to share our stories, sad stories, with others [from different communities]. It has restored our confidence, which is now high.”

A clear message from the South African and Liberian participants of the peer review is that healing and reconciliation is not about class or colour. Through our pain we can connect as human beings, if we dare to share our experiences, something that requires a safe space. An important part of this process is to let go of the destructive past. THRP and IHOM shared their experiences of using different symbolic acts of letting go of painful memories, for example washing one’s hands, putting one’s hands on the wall to “stick” the pain there, or burning pieces of paper where what is considered destructive has been written down. By confronting the past and by sharing it with others, reconciliation and mutual understanding can be promoted.

At the same time, the complexity of reconciliation, as well as justice, were elaborated on in the many lively discussions between the Liberians and South Africans. This was for example illustrated with the story of a Liberian woman, who was the only survivor of a massacre during the war and one day saw one of the perpetrators pass through her village but decided not to identify the person. The story gave rise to several questions: Does reconciliation require that justice has been done? Justice according to whom? Is healing and reconciliation possible without confronting and punishing the perpetrator? The discussions also highlighted the fact that there is no clear-cut divide between victims and perpetrators, but we are, as IHOM points out, all capable of being both victims and victimisers.

Connecting the individual, community and national level

The work of THRP and IHOM illustrates that by starting at the individual level, focusing on our individual stories and need of healing, prerequisites for reconciliation and peacebuilding at community and national level are created. Again we are reminded that reconciliation processes have to take root at the individual and community level, that peacebuilding has to come from

the ground up.⁵ Healing, reconciliation and peace cannot be achieved in a sustainable way, unless the whole society, with its different actors at all levels, is involved in the conflict transformation. National reconciliation processes will most likely not be sustainable unless there are corresponding processes, commitment and ongoing peace initiatives at the community level.

In this way both IHOM and THRP have had and have important roles to complement and strengthen the national truth and reconciliation processes in their respective countries. Both organisations work at and relate to different levels of society and exemplify the importance of bringing these levels together. THRP has, for example, contributed with its knowledge and experience to the Ministry of Education in Liberia by taking part in a commission tasked with the development of a psycho-social support curriculum. The methodology of IHOM has been shared and used not only in different parts of South Africa, but also in many other countries, including USA, Germany, East Timor, Uganda and Zimbabwe. The director of IHOM, Father Michael Lapsley, is a respected international advocate for healing and reconciliation and is often in demand to run workshops around the globe.⁶

Identifying and addressing the obstacles

The work of organisations like IHOM and THRP requires a long-term perspective, persistence and patience. There are no “quick fixes”. Instead, there are internal as well as external obstacles to identify and address. Sometimes people hesitate to deal with the past and to embark on the journey of healing and reconciliation. One important aspect when promoting this journey is to build trust between individuals and groups, which is often time-consuming. An example of this is THRP’s unique work together with security agencies, where security personnel and law enforcement officers have participated in trainings in psycho-social support, peaceful conflict resolution, human rights, security ethics and public confidence. In a meeting with security personnel during one of the field visits in Liberia, security staff shared their experiences of improved trust between citizens and the security sector.

In both South Africa and Liberia the aspect of economic justice was brought



The Lutheran Church of Liberia has chosen not to let war or evil have the last word. In its Trauma Healing and Reconciliation Programme the church has chosen to commemorate the suffering and violence, to address the psychosocial wounds of war and to rebuild confidence and practical coexistence. Many members of the choir are survivors or relatives of the 600 people who were massacred here in St. Peter's Church in Monrovia in 1990.

out as a crucial component and prerequisite for sustainable peace. The two countries have different levels of economic development and national GDP figures. At the same time, economic disparities and gaps between rich and poor are clearly visible and were identified by the South African as well as Liberian participants as obstacles to the restoration of trust and social cohesion, to reconciliation and peacebuilding. This also illustrates the importance of including aspects of justice when working for peace, as highlighted by the work of the World Council of Churches to promote "Just Peace" at different levels and areas in society.⁷

A way forward in partnership

The peer review and exchange between THRP in Liberia and IHOM in South Africa was a unique experience for Church of Sweden. To be part of the rich discussions and sharing between the two organisations and their competent and committed staff was inspiring and instructive to say the least. The uniqueness of this journey was also due to the connection that evolved between the

Liberians, South Africans and Swedes. Despite our many differences, we were united in sharing our experiences as human beings in need of healing and reconciliation.

Many lessons were learned regarding the peer review process and its design. Church of Sweden was challenged to be peer reviewed as well, something which would probably be stimulating and worthwhile. Among the positive outcomes of the peer review is also that the two organisations have decided to continue sharing and learning in a more systematic way and have submitted a joint application to Church of Sweden, which aims at strengthening their cooperation and work to promote healing, reconciliation and sustainable peace.

To conclude, during one of the field visits a community member in Liberia illustrated how words have to be closely intertwined with actions to become real. His statement was short and clear, but the message well-grounded and challenging: "Revenge never lasts. The act of forgiving brings everlasting happiness." 🌿

- 1 For further information about the Lutheran Church in Liberia and its Trauma Healing and Reconciliation Programme, please refer to its website <http://lcl-thrp.com/>
- 2 <http://www.healing-memories.org/about/history>
- 3 <http://www.healing-memories.org/about/mission>
- 4 For further information about the Institute for Healing of Memories, please refer to its website <http://www.healing-memories.org/>
- 5 For further discussions and articles highlighting this theme, see New Routes number 4 2013: "Peace From the Ground Up".
- 6 See also the review on p. 38 in this New Routes issue.
- 7 World Council of Churches, 2011: An Ecumenical Call to Just Peace, http://www.overcomingviolence.org/fileadmin/dov/files/iepc/resources/ECJustPeace_English.pdf

Among the most crucial findings from the studies within the Local to Global Protection project are two somewhat contradictory elements. One is that in natural disasters and complex emergencies, people at risk themselves take the lead in providing their own 'protection'. Another observation is that although being crucial for survival, such self-protection alone rarely fills the dignity, safety and security needs of affected people. An inclusive process is important to bridge the gap between local and external protection actors.

Local to global protection – not one without the other

Peter Sjöberg

In government controlled parts of south-east Myanmar, a Christian family deliberately chooses to travel with Buddhist friends. In another part of Myanmar, survivors after Cyclone Nargis organise and orchestrate their own survival for weeks before they see the first traces of outside assistance. In Zimbabwe a family is trying to mitigate the negative effects of a violent political situation by demonstrating their sympathies for a protection approach rather than their political convictions. These are some examples of protection strategies applied by vulnerable people to cope with life threatening circumstances for themselves and their communities. This article presents the protection challenges and coping strategies from a community perspective given what is perceived as the limited support of humanitarian agencies for local initiatives.

Although external support in humanitarian crises in many cases remains indispensable, the fact that people themselves possess valuable resources for protection and survival in disaster-struck areas deserves more serious scrutiny and acknowledgement. Missing out on experiences and perceptions of the affected communities themselves in the process of analysis may impact on the relevance and effectiveness of the strategies adopted by humanitarian agencies when planning and implementing their interventions. With the ambition to evoke this dimension and reinforce the perspective of local perceptions in humanitarian agencies' responses, the Local to Global Protection (L2GP) project

was initiated to document and promote the protection strategies of vulnerable communities.

Since 2010, the L2GP project has undertaken research in Burma/Myanmar, Sudan, South Sudan and Zimbabwe, documenting how people living in situations of natural disaster and/or armed conflict take the lead in protecting themselves and their communities. Complemented by ongoing research in Palestine and Syria, the L2GP project wants to add an often overlooked dimension to the debate on protection, with the aim to enable locally led responses and place local agencies at the centre of planning and implementation of protection initiatives. The L2GP research examines how affected communities define the concept of protection and how they view the roles of others, including the state, non-state actors, community-based organisations and national and international aid agencies. Are they seen as protection actors or sources of threat – or a combination of both?

Participatory approaches – what is in a word?

Few, if any, would argue against the claim that interventions can be enriched by understanding and including local self-protection initiatives. However, applying active participation in the sense of locally led protection initiatives as promoted by the L2GP project is different from more traditional participatory approaches mostly perceived by vulnerable communities as of more limited, consultative nature. The L2GP research,

so far, shows that affected communities, to the extent they have been targeted by external protection activities, experience that they are rarely consulted in a meaningful sense in the design of such activities. This is problematic, because external interventions that fail to recognise and support local efforts may not only fail to support valuable actions but may inadvertently undermine existing coping mechanisms and disempower local communities.

A need for external agencies to meet donor and headquarter priorities and requirements may override and undermine a truly participatory approach and be one reason why protection initiatives by external agencies have often been either unknown or perceived as relatively unimportant by people at risk. In contexts such as armed conflict-affected southeastern Burma/Myanmar, Syria or Palestine, where the state in question is perceived by many as the main agent of abuses, there is a particularly high risk that external and local agencies, respectively, take on very different approaches. A more inclusive participatory process could help to mitigate such a gap.

In such highly politicised and insecure environments, local understandings of protection are often at variance with – or extend beyond – how the term is understood by international agencies. Whereas affected communities in such situations have no other option than trying to find ways of surviving and mitigating concrete physical and psychological threats to their survival, international humanitarian actors often

find themselves preoccupied with the basic struggle of trying to ensure that their assistance is getting to the most vulnerable group in a fair and non-discriminating manner.

Another phenomenon that may hamper an inclusive and participatory approach is that most media coverage, along with agencies' own fundraising efforts, tends to promote international interventions over local action. The perpetuation of such stereotypical perceptions of 'saviours' and 'victims' must be challenged and addressed.

External interventions could encompass local perspectives and priorities at the very least through allowing for a more inclusive and participatory approach, enabling locally led protection responses. Adding to the benefits of a participatory approach, reinforcing self-protection activities helps to build 'social capital' and develop intercommunity bonds, trust and credibility, which is crucial for sustainable solutions.

External initiatives perceived as less important

Findings from the action research undertaken by the L2GP project have highlighted the vast number of initiatives undertaken by the affected communities themselves and also revealed discrepancies in responses by external agencies with regard to meeting and reinforcing local protection and survival strategies. A paper summarising the initiative and synthesising key findings from the first five studies of the L2GP project was published by the Overseas Development Institute's Humanitarian Policy Group in February 2012¹. The paper suggests that people living in conflict-affected areas consider initiatives by external actors as less important than the initiatives they themselves have undertaken. In some of the L2GP studies, such as Zimbabwe and South Sudan, it became apparent just how intimately linked livelihoods and protection are for people at risk. Research in Sudan and Zimbabwe reveals that priorities by the local community, such as informal rights and traditions, and psychological and spiritual needs, are seen as at least as important as formal rights and physical needs.

It is essential to note that, as is also illustrated in the research by the L2GP project, while self-protection strategies may be crucial for survival, they rarely provide the degree of safety, security and

dignity that people need. Furthermore, some local protection activities expose people to further risk (e.g. labour migration from Burma/Myanmar to Thailand). In situations of armed conflict and natural disaster, displaced and other vulnerable people often face terrible dilemmas, including having to make impossible trade-offs between different risks (e.g. farmers cultivating fields known to be landmine-infested, or exposed to bombing, in order to produce food, or family members exposed to risks of trafficking in order to generate income). Sometimes, individual rights are superseded by family or community needs, as is often the case with the kind of protection offered within customary law and other traditional justice systems. For these and other reasons, the initiatives of local agencies cannot and should never be regarded as a substitute for the protection responsibilities of national authorities or – when that fails – international actors.

Based on its findings, the L2GP project shows that, while it is important to devote sufficient resources to assist communities suffering from various crises, it is also essential to pursue an approach which recognizes the need to find a better balance between external and internal views and actions. Unfortunately, this dimension is often given a lower priority, as it may not fit well with the priorities and established responses by humanitarian agencies. Through documenting and promoting

the priorities, perceptions and values expressed by local communities, the L2GP initiative aims to improve protection through an analysis process that encompasses activities undertaken by affected communities themselves, as well as advocating for external actors to place the agency and understandings of local communities at the very centre of externally driven responses.

Enriching the discussion on protection

What are then the achievements and contributions by the L2GP project so far? Obviously, the L2GP research has succeeded in documenting and disseminating information on a dimension receiving modest attention in the protection debate. With an approach and a message capturing the interest of national and international humanitarian actors, this has provided the L2GP initiative with access to arenas where the discussion and debate on protection is pursued. A review of the L2GP project was conducted by an independent consultant in 2013 and confirms that it is relevant research associated with high quality and with a focus on addressing gaps in knowledge and understanding among humanitarian agencies. It has inspired and enriched the discussion on protection issues at the global level, as supported by the fact that the research has prompted invitations to seminars and round table discussions. Discus-



PHOTO: JASON GUTIERREZ/IRIN

A woman rides her bicycle to work in Myanmar's second biggest city, Mandalay. If a national cease-fire comes into being in 2014, economic, political and social changes are likely to take place in Burma/Myanmar.

sions, mainly pursued at national and international policy and decision making levels, have confirmed the importance of the L2GP emphasis on documenting and promoting the perception of women, men, girls and boys living in disaster-struck areas. However, despite the positive response from humanitarian agencies at the international level, challenges have surfaced with regard to how to realise the relevant L2GP findings within the present aid structure.

As the independent review showed, transferring the findings from the L2GP research into planning and implementation of activities has proven challenging, but positive prospects can be distinguished. There has been at least one concrete and encouraging example of the findings of the research being employed in the planning of activities. Thus, an essential message is that such implementation carries a promise from an operational perspective and offers experiences valuable for implementation in other humanitarian crises. It should be kept in mind though that for the findings of the research to be implemented on a broader scale, the message needs to be taken forward and translated into action through an inclusive and realistic approach guided by the motive to act on the right incentives. With these considerations in mind,

the review underscored that the main contribution of the L2GP project so far is to have informed and inspired the debate within the humanitarian community, particularly with regard to the Responsibility to Protect norm.

The challenging next step

By bringing local dimensions to the national and global level policy and decision making circles, it is possible to explore together the challenges identified in order for external actors to engage better and more meaningfully with locally rooted protection priorities and activities. The different actors should be wary of the often misleading and exaggerated assumptions about the importance of mainstream humanitarian action held by many aid professionals. At the same time, some agencies have very legitimate concerns regarding humanitarian principles and rights-based programming and are reluctant to engage with the protection role of armed groups, customary law and local systems of religious and spiritual belief. Part of the dialogue is also about openly discussing the understandable concerns that engaging with self-protection may threaten the institutional control and institutional interests of agencies and donors.

An obvious but also challenging next step is to translate the L2GP research

findings into approaches and practical guidance which may inform the design and implementation of actual protection activities. Trying to inspire and change humanitarian policy and practice in the field of protection, the L2GP initiative is committed to lead in the process of implementing the research findings and doing so in close cooperation with other actors – be they small local groups, NGOs or major UN agencies. As the L2GP project continues down this path, it will be with a clear focus in mind: work to improve the protection, survival and recovery of all people affected by crisis. 🌿

This article is an updated compilation of earlier reports within the L2GP project as well as excerpts from the Overseas Development Institute (HPN Paper 72) and World Disasters Report 2012 (<http://www.scribd.com/doc/110400112/World-Disasters-Report-2012>) by Nils Carstensen and Ashley South.

For more information and free download of ODI/HPN paper and L2GP reports, see www.local2global.info

1 HPN Paper 72: <http://www.odi.org.uk/events/2798-hpn-network-paper-local-global-protection-myanmar-burma-sudan-south-sudan-zimbabwe>



PHOTO: EAPPI

The Occupied Territory of Palestine is a context where the state is perceived by many as the main agent of abuses. After one of numerous house demolitions, here in Beit Hanina, Israeli soldiers stand waiting at the house, while Palestinian family members hastily remove their belongings.

“We need freedom, not blankets!” These five words could summarise the views of many inhabitants in the Occupied Palestinian Territories. The gap between local people’s and external actors’ understanding of the situation needs to be urgently bridged. International actors should focus more on the root causes of the threats as opposed to limiting themselves to humanitarian and survival issues.

Occupied Palestinian Territories

Gap between local and external perception of needs

Rafael Eguiguren and Luna Saadeh

People working in humanitarian contexts often tend to develop an intuitive feeling that the international idea of protection – no matter how well intended – does not correspond to the local priorities. What is less obvious with intuition alone is the real scope of this mismatch and its practical consequences. The Local to Global Protection (L2GP¹) initiative in the Occupied Palestinian Territories (oPt) has attempted to address this issue through in-depth individual discussions and focus groups with 522 Palestinians (287 women and 235 men) in East Jerusalem, the West Bank (Area C) and the Gaza Strip. Whereas some findings offer valuable information to improve the existing operational mechanisms, others put into question the strategic priorities of international actors and unveil a profound gap between the international protection practice and the local understanding of protection.

The main mandate of the L2GP initiative is to try to capture the vision of local communities and in particular their perception of protection needs, coping strategies and how external actors can offer better protection. In this regard, two elements stand out as the most general and robust in the oPt study: firstly, how practically all interviewees in the different Palestinian communities declare that the main threat they face is the Israeli occupation, perceiving this problem as more important than any other threat, and secondly, the perception that international actors, while doing some valuable work, are not directing their efforts correctly. As a corollary of this perception, the main “protection response”

they expect from international actors is a clear focus on the enforcement of international law and humanitarian law and, more specifically, a sustained call for the end of the occupation, end of the blockade in Gaza, end of demolitions, displacement, illegal settlements, etc. The following quote illustrates a very general perception among most Palestinians interviewed:

“I don’t understand why the international actors do what they do. They come here with aid and development projects, but that is not effective and that is not their place. It is not effective, because the problem here is not a specific crisis, but a long-standing occupation. You have to realise that with the present logic, they can do projects for a thousand years and nothing will change. Our people will still suffer the same deprivation, with one additional problem: every day counts to make it worse. When I say it is not their place, I mean a very simple thing: there is wide international consensus about the illegality of the occupation, so please stop giving us blankets, and do the right thing by holding Israel accountable” (woman, Ramallah, West Bank).

In this regard, the most important recommendation at a general level is for external actors to demand accountability from Israel under international law, in particular conformity to UN resolutions and application of the Fourth Geneva Convention of 1949 and the Additional Protocols of 1977 in the framework of

International Humanitarian Law.² This recommendation reaches every actor, including international humanitarian NGOs, as from this perspective, the focus on the advocacy work at home becomes a necessary line of work that needs to be strengthened to accompany the humanitarian efforts in the field.

International support avoiding its core obligations

The fact that international actors appear to perceive themselves as bearers of a much more limited responsibility, restricted to the survival, resilience and mitigation aspects of protection, entails a very important gap between the local perception of protection and the practice of international actors. This gap is by no means a theoretical abstraction, but a core issue with significant consequences that demand analysis.

Starting with the most simple elements, it may look surprising that, even though the oPt are proportionately one of the highest recipients of development and humanitarian aid in the world,³ the overwhelming majority of the interviewees feel that they are not protected. In this regard, it is easily observable that the large amount of investment and initiatives in the oPt do not match with the expected results.

How is this mismatch possible? To understand this phenomenon, it is necessary to acquire a better comprehension of the distribution of protection support. *Figure A* on p. 20 shows schematically the three dimensions of protection that are needed in order to achieve real protection.

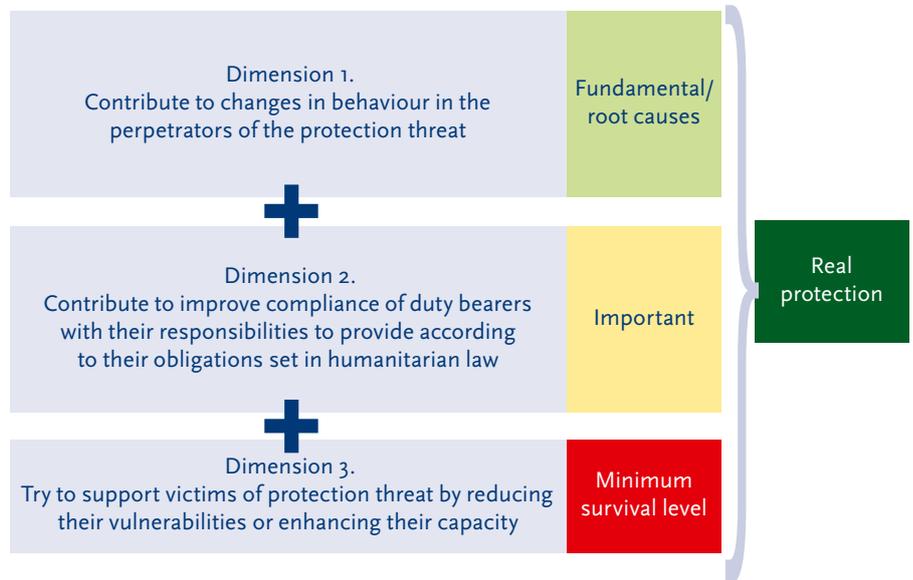
Figure A. The three dimensions of protection (represented in relation with their real impact in providing real protection)

A sustainable and effective protection in the context of a man-made threat needs to involve support in three different dimensions. *Dimension 1* looks at ways of stopping the threat itself, at the root causes. For example, this can be done by international NGOs through advocacy and awareness campaigns at home to influence citizens and governments, by adopting clear stands about agreed international decisions and law in international fora, etc. *Dimension 2* looks at a secondary but also important factor: the minimum obligations defined by humanitarian law that an occupying country has towards the territory occupied and its citizens⁴. Finally, *Dimension 3* looks at survival, resilience and mitigation initiatives. These are marginal in their impact on protection by comparison to dimensions 1 and 2 and unsustainable as long as 1 and 2 are not solved. Their importance derives from their capacity to address urgent matters but do not substitute the obligation to act in 1 and 2.

More than survival and resilience

In contrast, *Figure B* below shows in a simplistic manner the actual distribution of protection initiatives in the oPt. The humanitarian actors concentrate their efforts on Dimension 3 with a mix of good and bad results, whereas Dimensions 1 and 2 seem to be considered outside their scope or marginal. Even though there are other, secondary factors, the small proportion of Dimension 3 in the overall contribution to achieve real protection suffices to explain the lack of satisfactory protection results in the oPt.

The fact that the word *protection* is generally used without



paying specific attention to this breakdown explains to a large extent the gap in understanding between local communities in Palestine and international actors. This has the following important consequences:

The international norm is the understanding of protection as restricted to its dimension of survival and resilience. The practice of considering exclusively survival and mitigation strategies as protection has become so established and normal that the other two dimensions are regularly considered political and therefore perceived as beyond the mandate of external actors. However, whereas the solution of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is indeed political, the application of humanitarian law and human rights in the oPt and to Palestinian citizens is a very different matter, as these are based on wide international consensus and by definition falls within the responsibility of every protection

actor⁵. In this regard, the existing gap in the interpretation of protection is not only between local communities and international practice but also between the international practice and the minimum legal standards that international actors have committed to.

Furthermore, evaluations of protection initiatives take as their exclusive reference the protection initiatives included in the above-mentioned third dimension and not the overall framework of protection. Consequently, protection results appear to be within acceptable ranges, when the real situation is that the analysis shows only a partial picture that renders invisible the failure to implement the real and sustainable solutions included in dimensions 1 and 2. This invisibility facilitates unaccountability and plays a fundamental role in the perception of the general public opinion and taxpayers, who remain unaware of the unacceptable protection

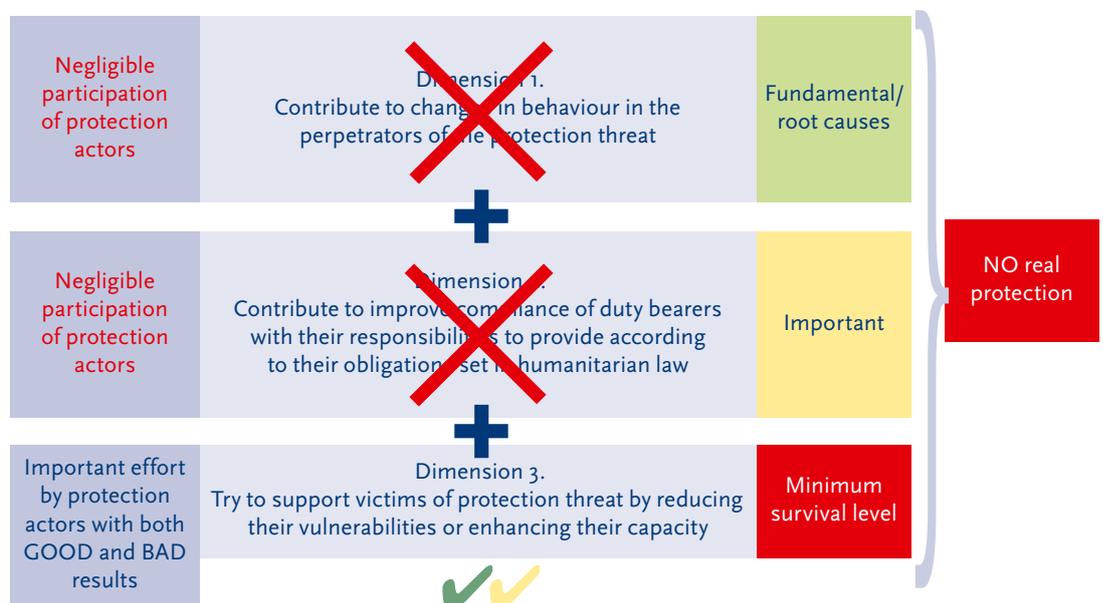


Figure B. The three dimensions of protection: Distribution of efforts from protection actors in oPt

breaches and of the very limited levels of protection offered.

In turn, this contributes to entrenching the status quo and to the still ongoing occupation which has lasted for 65 years according to Palestinian perceptions or 47 years following the present international perception – a staggering duration for what should have been a transitory situation in either case. Taking the whole scheme in Figure A as a reference would at least make the real situation clearer and enhance transparency and accountability. For this to happen, there is a need for humanitarian actors to break the practice of understanding protection as a concept that exclusively involves survival and resilience support and shift to a comprehensive interpretation that makes actors accountable on all the dimensions of protection.

Conclusions and recommendations

The study has also identified a group of operational recommendations that aim at improving the present humanitarian aid mechanisms so as to increase their effectiveness. These are the most important:

1. *Need for higher investment in more detailed identification processes.* External actors have acquired a good understanding of the humanitarian issues at the general level in the oPt. However, the study points to a degree of heterogeneity that often makes this general knowledge insufficient to properly target humanitarian needs. It is not only that protection problems and contexts are different in East Jerusalem, the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, but threats vary depend-

ing on the specific community. Often, even what appears to be a common issue adopts different forms in different communities when the analysis is more detailed. In this context, identification processes that stay at a general level or blanket approaches have high probabilities of failure. A larger investment in time and resources in the identification processes, reaching the level of the specific communities, is necessary.

2. *Need to better understand and support existing assets and practices.* External actors tend to focus exclusively on “needs” and not on “assets” or “positive local practices”, and as a result, identification processes remain incomplete. Identification and programming processes should broaden their perspective and aim at identifying and understanding local assets and strategies in order to obtain a complete overview that includes not only problems to be addressed but also local initiatives to be supported or complemented. This study constitutes a general attempt at identifying local strategies, but identification processes should look at the specific situation in each community. See the suggested change of approach in Figure C.

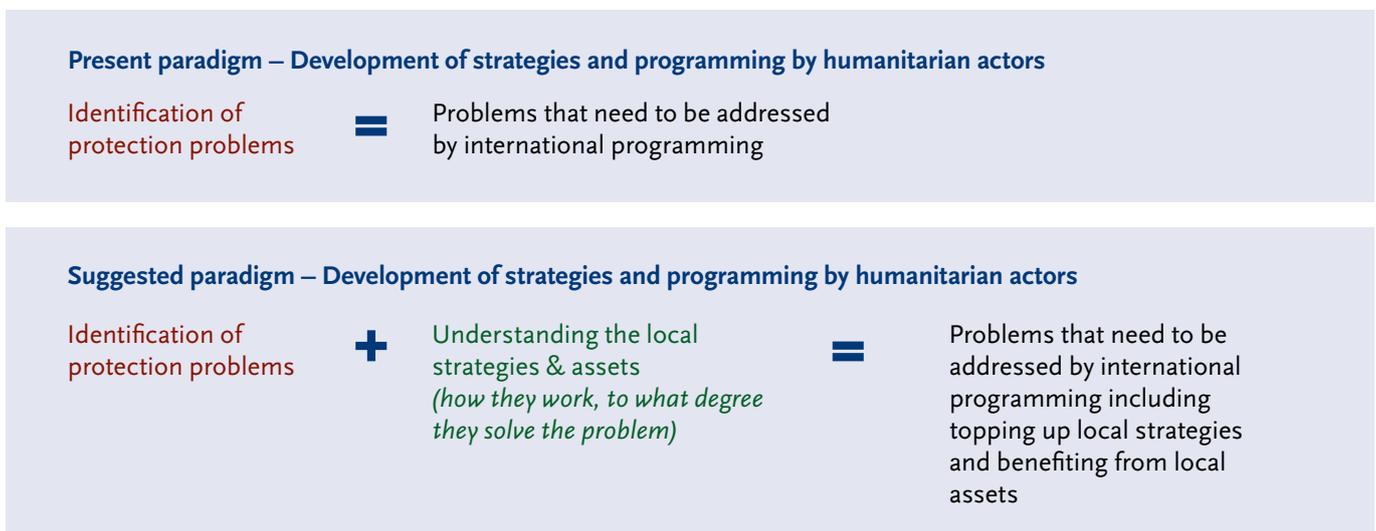
3. *Need for results-based systems to understand which approaches work better and why.* After decades of interventions in Palestine, there is still a weak understanding among protection agencies – both international and national – of what works and what does not and why. Understanding change and implementing successful approaches towards adopting evidence-based decisions requires the

existence of internal monitoring systems within every international actor, with less emphasis on activity-oriented programmes and a renewed focus on the monitoring of results to understand what works and what does not. In addition, lessons learnt should be better documented and better transmitted inside agencies, especially taking into account the difficulty in institutional learning created by the turnover of staff in the international agencies.

4. *Need for real gender mainstreaming.* In spite of the favourable rhetoric towards gender equality, both local and international external interventions are gender blind when dealing with general protection challenges, and gender mainstreaming is rare in programmes and projects. The study shows important differences based on gender in all dimensions. These can only be properly identified at programme level and addressed if gender-sensitive analyses, tools and approaches are in place and taken seriously. The existence of some specific projects addressing women’s needs is positive but not a substitute for gender mainstreaming and for a comprehensive understanding of every protection problem through a gender-sensitive vision. This change in approach would involve many other specific changes, for example, the need to involve men in gender-related awareness and not exclusively women, as both are actors of change.

5. *Need for a more strategic linkage between relief, rehabilitation and development, as well as with advocacy initiatives.* External aid has short-term cycles and short-term

Figure C. Identification aims: from just needs to needs, assets and local strategies



goals that are inadequate in the framework of a protracted crisis. The aspects of relief, rehabilitation and development should be part of long-term goals that also involve advocacy as a complementary component in a long-term strategy.

6. Need to enhance local capacity building and leadership. The study shows a general concern by local communities for the sustainability of the interventions, especially taking into account the prolonged unstable situation in the three areas. In this context, local capacity building is a priority in order to improve the situation when external interventions end.

Four main needs were expressed in the three areas: a) developing leadership, especially among the youth; b) building capacity in resource management; c) building capacity for local practitioners and researchers to ensure that the community's voice is reflected and strengthened in practice, policy and research; d) facilitate community access to information. Many interviewees mentioned the need to better understand the international organisations and their mandate. The majority of women mentioned the lack of information they have about the projects in their area and the organisations working there. Access to information not only forms a major aspect of capacity building but also contributes to a more balanced and fair relationship between those to be protected and the protection actors.

7. Need to strengthen the existing local committees and coalitions or support the development of new ones. Addressing the magnitude of the challenges requires not only individual skills but also collective capacity. In particular it is necessary: a) to ensure the participation of the local communities as real partners in identifying the approach and tools of implementation of the different projects through the establishment of civilian committees to help in decision making regarding the community needs, if an intervention is feasible, how should it be carried out, etc; b) to enhance the existing human rights and women's rights coalitions so these become more effective lobbying bodies; c) to empower and strengthen the capacity of NGOs working in Area C in order to increase their ability to support the community.

8. Need to improve basic infrastructure, particularly in Area C. Despite the imposed restrictions in Area C, efforts can be di-

rected in several directions. Those most generally suggested among respondents are: a) advocacy: an international campaign to support the right to improvement of the infrastructure in Area C; b) improve the internal conditions of the schools and health centres; c) establish playgrounds and libraries for children and youth; d) implement the law regarding disabilities so that public places can be easily accessed by everybody.

9. Need to improve coordination of the multilateral response to humanitarian crises both among donors and with the Local Aid Coordination Secretariat of Palestine, the Social Protection Committee, and the Ministry of Planning.

In conclusion, the improvement of international support mechanisms in the oPt, following the community-based suggested recommendations, can contribute to mitigating some of the immediate suffering. However, it should be clear to all actors that the vast majority of the international effort is exclusively concentrated on the least effective and least sustainable aspects of the protection needs in the oPt. Evading the root causes of vulnerability in the oPt has become such a normal practice that acts fulfilling core international obligations are perceived as "political" or "partisan". After half a century of occupation, despite the international consensus condemning it, the main protection response that Palestinians expect from international actors is a clear focus on the enforcement of international law and humanitarian law. The continuation of the present "mitigation approach" not only falls short of providing a satisfactory solution but even risks becoming a contributive factor to a longer and, from an Israeli perspective, more manageable occupation. 

- 3 See for example: Report from the Commission to the European Parliament and Council. Annual Report 2013 on the European Union's Development and external assistance policies and their implementation in 2012. See also OECD and DAC Development Aid statistics <http://www.oecd.org/dac/stats/aid-at-a-glance.htm>
- 4 For example, the Fourth Geneva Convention requires occupying powers such as Israel to protect the well-being of civilian populations under their control.
- 5 In addition to humanitarian law, for example, the Humanitarian Charter, one of the most respected documents of consensus among humanitarian actors, states: "... we affirm the primacy of the humanitarian imperative: that action should be taken to prevent or alleviate human suffering arising out of disaster or conflict, and that nothing should override this principle ..." It also declares: "The right to life with dignity entails more than physical well-being; it demands respect for the whole person, including the values and beliefs of individuals and affected communities, and respect for their human rights". Finally the declaration asserts: "Though the achievement of the standards depends on a range of factors, many of which may be beyond our control, we commit ourselves to attempt consistently to achieve them and we expect to be held to account accordingly". For quotes, see <http://www.spherehandbook.org/en/the-humanitarian-charter/>.

1 L2GP is an initiative to achieve a better understanding of protection challenges, coping strategies and solutions from a community perspective so as to improve the effectiveness of external humanitarian actors (both national and international). Following previous L2GP projects in Burma/Myanmar, Sudan, South Sudan and Zimbabwe, L2GP has focused its last study on the Occupied Palestinian Territories (oPt). More information on L2GP can be found here <http://www.local2global.info>

2 <http://www.icrc.org/eng/war-and-law/treaties-customary-law/geneva-conventions/index.jsp>

A commercial company establishing operation in a conflict area, in search of land for infrastructure, subcontractors, security services and relations to local authorities all too often finds itself unintentionally engaged in the conflict. This phenomenon has given rise to a new concept, Commercial Conflict Dependent Actor, recently studied and analysed in a project described in this article.

Business as usual or entangled in conflict

Joakim Wohlfeil

– Let me be open with you.

The local manager looks me straight in the eyes when I ask about the relation to their security consultants. We are in the air-conditioned local facilities of a large international mining company. The strictly sealed area leaves the conflict-torn reality of Central Africa outside the high fences topped with barbed wire and surveyed by heavily armed guards with an unmistakably military approach. The same guards have recently been involved in killings of local citizens without any legal consequences.

– When we established our operation, we tried to do everything by the book but ran into problems everywhere with authorities, militias and corrupt policemen. When we raised the issue with the central government, they recommended us those consultants. Things got better, until we realised that we were actually paying some of the same people who used to cause us trouble. They are dangerous people, and this relation has instead turned into a constant threat to us, but frankly, now we are stuck in the trap and don't know how to get out.¹

The situation of the local manager illustrates the type of dilemmas that gave rise to the CCDA project (www.cdda.se), when companies, for commercial reasons establishing themselves in a conflict region, realise how easily they can be dragged into the conflict itself. The project was funded by the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida) in 2012-2013. It was implemented by Diakonia (lead agency), the Church of Sweden, the School of Global Studies and the School of Business, Economics and Law at the University of

Gothenburg. Connected to the project was a reference team with representation by experts, investors and the export industry. Case studies were commissioned for the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), Burma/Myanmar, Colombia and the Occupied Palestinian Territories (oPt). The studies were also followed up by local workshops in Burma/Myanmar and DRC.

The concept Commercial Conflict Dependent Actor refers to an actor, a group of actors or an entire sector, which has based or adapted its actions to an armed conflict in such a way as to benefit financially from it. A CCDA frequently poses a threat to any com-

mercial company, NGO or government actor trying to establish normal business operation or humanitarian or development work. A CCDA may exist during the active phase of an armed conflict as well as in a post-conflict situation.

The following parameters can be used for the identification of CCDAs; they:

- have little interest in the development towards a non-conflict situation;
- benefit financially from the conflict situation;
- have an interest in prolonging or maintaining the conflict;



PHOTO: DIAKONIA/AIDA BURNETT-CARGILL

The French company Veolia is engaged in a partly illegal tramway project in Jerusalem. Veolia has been internationally criticised for its engagement in the project, which is built partly on occupied land, connecting illegal Israeli settlements with western Jerusalem. The company has also published job advertisements that in practice exclude Palestinian applicants.

- have an interest in prolonging or maintaining a distorted market;
- benefit from the lack of free competition;
- have an interest in preventing the rule of civil law.

Case studies within the project have shown that conflict dependence can be a relevant indicator of high-risk actors. CCDAs are found in a variety of settings, such as rebel groups, private security companies and state security forces in the DRC, state representatives/former military leaders in Burma/Myanmar, state-connected conflict actors in Colombia, industrial zone projects in the oPt, and the smuggling tunnel industry in the occupied Gaza-strip.

In the last the years, however, a number of companies have experienced severe financial losses, security problems and brand erosion in conflict areas.

One of the most significant findings was that even governmental institutions can contribute to the creation of CCDAs. In the case of the industrial zones on the occupied West Bank, they were established with the goal of supporting the development of the Palestinian economy. But as their aim is not to address the main issue but to seek solutions adapted to the distorted business reality under the occupation, their activities prevent rather than encourage a normal market economy. This example shows that the need for conflict sensitivity and analysis of conflict dependence does not only concern commercial companies and NGOs/CSOs but also governmental bodies.

Unintentional conflict involvement

The dialogue between the CSO/NGO community and commercial actors has for many years been hampered by a degree of suspicion from both sides regarding motives and agendas. In many cases, one party by default assumes that the other actor's interests are opposed to

its own. Even if this in some cases may be true, assumptions like this have created a rift that has hampered constructive cooperation in areas where both commercial companies and NGOs are present and could have benefitted from each other's experiences and networks.

But a significant shift can be noticed, as the global development in several areas has made it possible for business and NGOs/CSOs to find common ground in conflict or post-conflict areas. The evolving international standards, through guidelines like those of the OECD, the UN Global Compact and, since 2011, the Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights: Implementing the United Nations 'Protect, Respect and Remedy' Framework, have boosted the development of sustainable business initiatives from both governments, industry and investors.

In the last ten years, however, a number of companies, sometimes with a high profile in their sustainability work, have experienced severe financial losses, security problems and brand erosion in conflict areas due to a lack of relevant context analysis, a lack of understanding of conflict dynamics, a lack of relevant legal analysis, or unexpected changes in the local or regional context. Commercial projects, with no intention to become involved in an ongoing conflict have been drawn into situations where international companies with well-known brands² have been seen as taking sides or supporting conflict actors.

There are many situations where there is a sliding scale into conflict dependency.

In many cases it is obvious that the companies seldom initiated the problematic situation with the intention to engage in the conflict. Rather they tried to solve problems related to the normal establishment of operations, like finding land for infrastructure, engaging subcontractors, buying services, building relations with relevant authorities, and related activities. But instead, after a longer or shorter period of time, they found themselves engaged in the lo-

cal conflict itself. Once involved with a conflict actor, a company might find itself in a relationship that is literally impossible to end without sustainable risk for future business and, in some cases, even physical risks for the employees.³ Although there has been a significant development in guidelines for responsible business, these primarily deal with corruption, the environment and human rights, while the conflict perspective still needs to be further developed. This is especially the case regarding analyses of how to relate to existing actors in a conflict context and how to avoid unintentional involvement in, or association with parties to, the conflict.

The risk of involvement with actors in a conflict is certainly not a problem for the business community only. Any NGO involved in humanitarian or development operations also faces the problem of who to relate to in a conflict context, as do intergovernmental organisations and state actors. As an example, international NGOs and intergovernmental organisations make up 80 per cent of the security service market in the Kivu regions in the eastern DRC. This region is known for the blurred lines between security service providers, the military, illegal actors and in some cases even mercenaries.

Thus, ahead of the CCDA-project it was clear that improved methods of analysing actors in conflict areas would be relevant and beneficial for commercial companies, NGOs as well as state actors.

A sliding scale between normality and conflict dependency

In most situations analysed in the project, the CCDA is an existing party in the local context presenting a danger to any company, NGO or state actor who has the ambition to start an operation. This would lead to the conclusion that an actor establishing itself in a country will improve the local situation by not strengthening the CCDAs and also decrease its own risk exposure by identifying and avoiding the local CCDAs.

An important insight, however, which was emphasised by the seminar participants from local civil society, academics and business, is that there are many situations where there is a sliding scale into conflict dependency. They exposed scenarios where an existing or externally established business had first adapted, then benefitted, and finally grown into

different levels of dependency on the conflict situation. In terms of situations where a business actor risked turning into a CCDA, relations with the security sector were identified as particularly problematic.

An observation from the field seminars in Burma/Myanmar and DRC also highlighted the existence of situations without a clean cut distinction between regular commercial (or other external) actors and commercial conflict dependent actors. As mentioned above, studies in Gaza and the West Bank also showed that governments in some cases contribute to the development of conflict dependent structures.

“The tunnel industry was established as the only possible way to cope with the blockade of Gaza.”

A rule with exceptions

The project has shown that the level of conflict dependency of potential partners or stakeholders can serve as a useful complementary parameter for actors wishing to establish operations in an area affected by conflict. This allows for a better understanding of which actors may present a potential danger to the operations, regardless of whether they are commercial, humanitarian or political. A conflict dependent actor in the majority of cases also indicates an interest to preserve, or even escalate the conflict situation. This implies that the actor will have an interest in preventing the move to a peaceful situation with a working civil administration.

Taking the perspective of the possibilities for peace, security and civil law to contribute to general financial development, we will find another area where the understanding of conflict dependency can present a valuable complement to other analyses.

In a typical situation, the conflict dependent actor will not benefit from increased prosperity of the population and financial development of the society. As the conflict dependent actors have based their position on the distortion of a conflict-affected market, any sign of return to normality would be perceived

as a threat. Thus, a conflict dependent actor will generally not benefit from a development towards peace, the rule of law, anti-corruption efforts, border control, taxation and other institutions of a working state, as they work against the possible main sources of income of the CCDA. These are the same parameters that guarantee the majority of commercial companies and investors the preferred working conditions, including an end to violence, a regulated market, security, free competition and possibly also financial expansion.

However, an exception from this pattern is shown in the field study from Gaza. It pointed out that a CCDA could establish itself on other grounds than self-interest. The owners of the smuggling tunnels into the Gaza strip had, in many cases, made heavy investments into building the tunnels, and once established, they could clearly be considered a CCDA. However, the study also pointed out that the tunnel industry was established as the only possible way to cope with the blockade of Gaza for anyone within business relating to trade. This indicated that a return to normality, i.e. a situation without a blockade, in many cases would be preferred by tunnel owners, as it would allow them to return to normal trade routes.

Conclusions

Findings relevant for international frameworks and tools:

- *It is critical to raise awareness of the wider legal implications for companies active in areas of armed conflict.* Whereas international law applies to states, companies must be aware that international humanitarian law applies, in addition to international human rights law, in situations of armed conflicts.
- *There is a need to improve practical tools for corporate responsibility.* While the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights provide clarity on what corporate responsibility is, there is still a need to provide the same clarity on how this can be translated into practice.

Key lessons from the case studies

- *Increased transparency is key for building mutual trust between businesses and local stakeholders.* Transparency is as important in the general context of transnational corporations (TNCs) globally as it is in conflict-affected areas specifically.

The lack of adequate transparency, such as country-by-country reporting, deprives people of the means for demanding accountability from both states and TNCs.

- *Corporate responsibility may not be realistic in certain extreme situations.* In cases of military rule or areas controlled by rebel groups, as the cases of Burma/Myanmar and the DRC illustrate, the question arises whether responsible business practice to any meaningful extent is possible. Some argue that investments in such situations are impossible without legitimising (or perceived as legitimising) one of the parties to the conflict.
- *Check the track-record of potential partners in more than one country.* A company may have a good reputation and track-record in one country but violate established international standards in another. It is therefore crucial to verify a prospective national business partner's track-record on a global level.
- *There is need for more inter-sectoral dialogue between businesses, civil society and governments.* The challenges encountered in conflict-affected areas are similar for the business and the development communities, despite their different objectives. While businesses and investors provide much-needed capital and boost job creation, the development community has built a broad network among local stakeholders. Finding a common language is critical in order to benefit from each other's comparative advantages. 🌿

Sources where not otherwise specifically stated: www.cdda.se

- 1 The conversation is based on a real interview during a study by the author but has been anonymised to protect the source.
- 2 <http://www.diakonia.se/Documents/Diakonia/Publications/Reports/081021-Illegal-ground-Mul-T-lock-Assa-Abloy.pdf>
- 3 <http://www.diakonia.se/Documents/Diakonia/Publications/Reports/2012-A-lot-of-gold-a-lot-of-trouble.pdf>

With Burma/Myanmar opening up for foreign investments, numerous companies see a new market with new possibilities, but many are unaware of the risk of getting involved in or becoming dependent on military influence and protection, thus becoming so-called Commercial Conflict Dependent Actors. Potential commercial actors need to ask themselves if responsible investment is possible in existing circumstances.

Commercial actors in Burma/Myanmar

Responsible investors or ruthless spoilers?

Kjell-Åke Nordquist

When Myanmar – or Burma as the country was called until 1989 when the military government officially changed the name – opened up for international investors just a few years ago, it was labelled “the last untouched market” of size. This gave a Klondike-like nerve to a lot of international companies entering the country, companies who wanted to be the first and best placed business actors in an emerging business landscape. Such a development is in itself a sign of potential risks – for the national economy, the government concerned, the population supposed to benefit from economic activity, and the companies themselves.

But is business business, and only business? Businesses represent resources that change hands, and are therefore important, both directly and indirectly for development. They become – by definition – part of the distribution of resources and therefore of power in a society. If that society happens to be in internal or external conflict, companies that want to do serious business, can find themselves ending up in an environment that is not only a “production site” or a “market” but also a “conflict zone”. If so, they face the risk of being linked to one or the other side in a conflict, and that would be a day-to-day challenge from an operational point of view, as well as a potentially negative legacy for the company, in the long run.

This article is about Commercial Conflict Dependent Actors (CCDAs) and the possibility to make responsible investments in conflict-ridden countries.

CCDAs are companies that in one way or another benefit commercially from an on-going armed conflict, directly or indirectly, in a country where the company operates. The risk of becoming a CCDA is a reality for companies in unstable countries. The concept as such may not be well-known, but its concrete implications are:

- skewed local markets and threat exposure from perceived “enemies”
- customer dissatisfaction
- reduced capacity to deliver, due to conflict restraints
- reduced resource base for employees/raw materials/services
- de facto support to actors that risk violating human rights principles

The assumption here is that becoming a CCDA – something a great number of companies have experienced, in particular when reaching out to new markets – is not compatible with responsible investment abroad. As an example we have chosen to analyse Burma/Myanmar.

Decades of military control

The Union of Burma – or Myanmar today – is a country with close to 60 million inhabitants, and a geography of contrasting conditions (from the Indian Ocean to the Himalayan peaks), and with borders with five countries (India, Bangladesh, China, Laos, and Thailand). It is a bridge between South and South-East Asia, a part of the world that will most likely gain in global interest and relevance in the coming years. Following the British colonial presence,

established in the 19th century, the Union of Burma gained independence in 1948. It was a constitutional federation based on a multitude of ethnic minorities beside the Burman, relating to seven ethnic states (Chin, Kachin, Shan, Karen, Karenni, Mon, and Rakhine (Arakan)).

A military coup in 1962, led by General Ne Win, set the constitution aside and replaced it with a socialist, army-based government which lasted until 1988. At that time a military group, which later named itself the State Law and Order Restoration Council (SLORC), took power. The military control of politics and the economy has since then continued to be exercised under different acronyms for decades. It was not until 2007 and the elevation of Mr. Thein Sein as Prime Minister that a gradual and step-wise change of attitude towards both the ethnic minorities and fundamental democratic values could be observed on the part of the government. This process also included legislation aimed at inviting international investors.

At the time of writing, there is still no national cease-fire between the government and the national minorities’ armed groups. Over the years, successive governments have signed cease-fires with different minority groups, through separate agreements. Some last, others are broken. There is a real chance in 2014 that an agreement over a nation-wide cease-fire can be signed. If both parties deliver on the agreement, it will be a basis for economic as well as political and social changes.

Military influence on the economy

The economic isolation that the military governments of Myanmar have experienced in relation to the United States (USA) and the European Union (EU) has brought in a number of Chinese and South East Asian (not the least Singaporean) companies, and with them some financial tycoons, into various sectors of Myanmar. Minerals, timber, and diamonds are well-known examples, besides the narco-trafficking.

Every international company needs a national, Myanmar, company as a partner for operating in the country. A large majority of international companies have as a consequence of this, signed partnerships with military-owned businesses in Myanmar, mainly for the reason that the only stable partner to be trusted in a longer perspective is a military one.

Military interests are dominant in the economic life of Myanmar, from the individual commander's interest on a regional level to the national and institutional level. In the process of making the country more attractive to

international investment, this creates a spectrum of situations which raise some serious questions and issues in relation to whether an international company in practice can avoid becoming a CCDA in Myanmar today. Is responsible investment possible, and under what conditions would a company be a CCDA, when investing in Myanmar, given this complexity?

In the case of Myanmar, there are at least three different situations that can illustrate how companies become CCDAs.

1. A company plans and initiates economic activity under the conditions that it obtains military presence and protection in its area of operation.
2. A company exploits the unregulated state of affairs that is caused by protracted armed conflict in a region and therefore is able to undertake financial activity with impunity, in violation of national and international law.
3. A company undertakes economic activity based on its own capacity, including security capacity to a lim-

ited extent, but is reliant on the benevolence and appreciation of the government and the military for the work of the company.

The military of Myanmar is, in light of its tight hold on all institutions of power in society (the parliament, the army and the financial system), in a certain way ever-present, although this presence has different characteristics in different spheres of society, from active on-the-ground work to formal control of immaterial resources.

While the EU and the USA as of spring 2013 have ended sanctions on the general level against Burma/Myanmar, some specific targeted sanctions remain against individuals and certain companies. In this context, the Union of Myanmar Economic Holdings (UMEH) and Myanmar Economic Corporation (MEC) are particularly interesting.¹ These two major conglomerates of companies are both run and controlled by the military through the Ministry of Defence. UMEH is directly under army control and is therefore not part of, for instance, the recent ease of



PHOTO: AP PHOTO/ROBERT HORN

Burmese employees of the French oil company Total lay a controversial gas pipeline from the Andaman Sea to Thailand, Monday, Nov. 11, 1996 in Kanbauk, southeastern Burma. Burmese democracy groups and rebels have voiced opposition towards the pipeline saying it will provide cash for Burma's military regime.

sanctions by the USA. The company's shares are to 40 per cent owned by the Directorate of Defence Procurement, and 60 per cent are owned by active and veteran defence personnel, including the previous SLORC junta. UMEH is tax-exempt (both commercial and profit taxes). Its areas of operation include banking, tourism, real estate, metals/jade, and transportation. It has exclusive ability to secure preferential contracts with foreign firms and is the largest indigenous company in the country.²

A case in point

Following the Myanmar government's non-recognition of the 1990 elections – which resulted in a strong victory for the National League for Democracy led by Aung San Suu Kyi – Western countries, as well as the EU, initiated economic sanctions against Myanmar. At the same time, companies with activities in the country were permitted to continue to be active there. Among those companies were Total (France), Premier Oil (UK), and Unocal (USA), all in the energy (oil and gas) sector.

In 1992, Total signed a Production Sharing Contract (PSC) with Myanmar Oil and Gas Enterprise (MOGE, a government-owned energy company) for the Yadana gas field, in the capacity of operator within a consortium of companies. This PSC included the construction of a 63 kilometer on-shore pipeline in southern Myanmar through the Mon and Karen state into Thailand, a part of the project that became a major issue of contention for years to come. Construction at the drilling site – the fields M5 and M6 south of the shores of Myanmar – as well as the pipe-line were finalised in 1998. The field was initially estimated to have a 30-year life-span following its commercial production start in 2000.

Total and the Consortium have benefitted on different levels from dealing with the military and military governments of Myanmar. By expanding its activities in Burma/Myanmar during a period when the country was exposed to international sanctions, which made competition from other companies either forbidden or unethical, Total exploited the conflict behaviour of the Government of Myanmar to its own benefit. The reason for the sanctions, i.e. human rights abuses in connection with the government's refusal to accept the

election results, became a *de facto* basis for unfriendly competitive behaviour on the part of Total against other companies. Also, by agreeing with MOGE on the PSC, Total agreed with the only company entitled to deal with energy exploration (it was created out of the nationalisation of Burma Petroleum in the 1960s), and thus it was an agreement with the state, at the time a military dictatorship. There is no formal or other way around this conclusion. Total holds that MOGE built the Yadana pipe-line, and thus, the company has benefitted from MOGE's involvement. Without a pipe-line, no gas project with Thailand. Finally, since forced labour was practiced in Myanmar, and many other countries, when the PSC was signed between Total and MOGE, Total had good reasons to expect such practices to be utilised.

For the future

It is not obvious that Total's experience of dealing with Myanmar authorities since the 1990s is an asset in the future. Other companies and international actors will adopt a questioning attitude toward the company's activities during the sanction years. This is not to say that other companies, being in the energy sector or elsewhere, would not have acted in the same way, had they initially been in the shoes of Total. But in hindsight the assessment may still be this.

Secondly, the same is true also for the emerging new authorities and rulers in Myanmar. Today's generation of military professionals and policy-makers will probably rule for a long time, but when a younger generation takes over, their view of Total and other companies that cooperated with the old regime – a regime that more and more business people and public persons try to distance themselves from as the freedom of speech is increasingly exercised – may be hesitant, to say the least.

Thirdly, the ordinary citizen of Myanmar, and in particular members of the Mon and Karen ethnic minorities, may also share the view that Total and its consortium members belong to a category of companies that act/acted like those predatory companies from China or from Myanmar, which under the cover of army protection and armed conflict looted the northern regions of the country of valuable gems, timber and gold. No serious company on an international level wants to be grouped

together with this category of companies, whose owners are often on international sanction lists and associated with corruption scandals and cronyism.

Unwanted conflict exposure is a business risk for many companies. Serious companies with respect for human rights and sustainable operations are always better equipped to deal with such exposure, due to their reputation and communication leverage. In the end it may be a matter of life or death, also for the company, to take a stand.

Against this perspective, the operations of Total during the sanction years in Myanmar appear even more questionable, from a moral but also from a long-term business perspective.

Troublesome but not hopeless

Responsible investment requires the same approach that responsible development cooperation does: long-term commitment based on mutually agreed operative principles and goals of mutual interest. The Klondike-like atmosphere alluded to in the introduction goes in all respects against such an approach. This is not to say that the case of Myanmar is lost, but the start has been troublesome. But as the country changes, new possibilities will open up, some of which were not foreseen by anyone, and therefore the relative influence of the military in economic life will be reduced.

A national cease-fire and a reduced formal and informal grip by the military over Myanmar's economic life will successively create conditions that will make responsible – from a humanitarian, human rights, and financially and ethically sound perspective – investment possible. As long as armed conflicts are going on in various parts of the country, it is only an unrealistic wish to believe that international finance will be able to steer away from the national implications of these conflicts. After a cease-fire, it is time to identify what conditions there are for upholding globally accepted principles of international investment and operations. 🌿

1 <http://www.treasury.gov/resource-center/sanctions/Programs/pages/burma.aspx>

2 Neihshial; http://www.idsa.in/jidsastra-tegiccomments/TheEconomicConsequencesofMilitaryRuleinMyanmar_NNeihshial_280108

Doing business in the Democratic Republic of Congo would seem to be more challenging than rewarding. Still, the Dutch company Heineken, through its subsidiary Bralima, is thriving, and does not only wet people's whistles with beer but also provides secure employment to thousands. This article discusses whether Bralima's impact is only positive in this conflict-affected fragile state, or whether it also has negative aspects.

Beer – an agent of peace?

The paradox of Heineken in the Congo

Jason Miklian and Peer Schouten

As the sun goes down in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), the sound of tropical birds and insects is slowly overtaken by the groaning hums of an army of small Chinese-made generators. They each light up a few light bulbs and a transistor, creating the much-valued ambiance for which Congo is well-known – an ambiance that is consistently lubricated with fair amounts of Congo's finest beer, the eternal leader Primus. Sweet-voiced Lingala phrases and guitar riffs from the blown speakers pay playful homage to the bliss that the beer has brought the country. As the melodies bounce off the faintly illuminated hand-painted Primus ads all over the country, they form a pleasant multisensory immersion into Congo's soul. Just like you can get a Coca-Cola everywhere in the world, so you can get a Primus everywhere in Congo. In addition to its contracts with celebrity singers, the brewery has exclusive deals with 68,857 bars in Congo, which carry Primus-branded tables, chairs, and ashtrays. Hand-painted signs for Primus seem to paper every surface in the DRC, making Bralima's slogan *Toujours Leader!* ('Always the Leader!') into the most-read phrase in the country.

While nothing can ruin tonight except for the failure of the generator, tomorrow is another day of troubles for entrepreneurs in the Congo, which ranks 181st out of 185 countries in the World Bank's Doing Business project¹. There is hardly any infrastructure to speak of, corruption is rife, and much of the east of the country is plagued by tides of unrest sparked by a disturbing choreography of rebels and predatory security forces.

According to an increasingly dominant development paradigm of the United Nations (UN), it is bad for Congo that Congo is bad for business. Over the past few years, many departments of the international behemoth have argued that corporations have a fundamental role to play in building peace and development in volatile environments. As such, the UN is increasingly partnering up with multinational corporations to uphold and spread the values for which it stands, as are international development organisations.

Brewing benefits?

Bralima – part of the Dutch Heineken Group – is the brewer of not only Primus but a host of other beers and soft drinks (including Coca Cola). It can serve as an example of the way businesses can contribute to peace and development in the Congo. That Heineken aims to actively do so is reflected in the Heineken group's adage "brewing a better future". The brewery Bralima was founded in 1923 and is one of the few companies that have maintained a presence throughout the turbulent history of the country, brewing Primus for Belgian colonials, Mobutu's Zairian elite, and the many factions part of what came to be known as "Africa's First World War". According to a 2012 corporate brochure, in 2011, Bralima made USD 384 million through its nearly seventy thousand retail locations throughout the country. Through its Foundation, Bralima has been responsible for hundreds of thousands USD worth of vast development projects with such titles as "Operation Peace in the DRC" and "Investing in

the Well-Being of the Congolese People". And as the largest company in the country, it supplies secure employment to thousands of people.

War or no war, Bralima – with a towering market share of roughly 70 per cent – has been able to continue contributing to peace and development in the Congo. Today, it has been in the country for more than 90 years and its 2012 corporate social responsibility report² (published April 2013) fills the reader with hope, giving the impression that doing business in Congo is truly win-win. As Sylvain Malanda, Bralima's Congolese communications manager, puts it: "The government is helping us a lot. Congo is open for business!"

We set out to find out how Heineken has been able to maintain such a remarkable enterprise running despite the vast challenges of operating in the DRC. How has the corporation been able to increase profits given that the rest of Congo has progressively disintegrated to the extent that some Congo experts argue the country doesn't even exist? How is it possible that during one of the world's fiercest conflicts, the Heineken subsidiary "did not stop producing during the conflict and has experienced an upswing in sales", as the New York Times reported³? How is it possible to operate in the Congo without becoming entangled with the plethora of conflict actors that prey on anyone with money in the country?

We found that it's not all a matter of painting the façade of crumbling walls with the happy colors of the Primus logo. While today's emphasis on economic opening and corporate social respon-

sibility means that many international organisations actively encourage corporations into conflict markets, when the Bralima's battered beer trucks hit dusty Congo roads in search of both profit and peace, Heineken's Congolese subsidiary deals with three different kinds of conflict actors: rebels, and security forces – both public and private.

Checkpoint economy

In large parts of eastern Congo, it is rebels – usually unemployed youth with makeshift weapons or renegade Congolese soldiers – who control market access. Anyone driving through eastern Congo quickly becomes familiar with the choreography of checkpoints. They are often just a wooden log or frayed rope thrown across a muddy red jeep trail, perhaps with a shack nearby sheltering a couple of guys holding Kalashnikovs. The checkpoints are the primary revenue source for local armed groups, more than enough to fund insurgencies in a country where many earn less than a dollar a day and used AK-47s cost under USD 75.

With no alternate routes available, even a single checkpoint can bring in at least USD 700,000 per year, according to a 2008 UN Group of Experts report⁴. Checkpoints formed a pivotal source of revenue for rebels during the two wars (1996-1997 and 1998-2003) that devastated the Congo. During the Second Congo War, RCD-Goma (Rally for Congolese Democracy-Goma) occupied eastern Congo, and had territorial control over the cities Kisangani and Bukavu, where two of Bralima's breweries are located. While they occupied eastern Congo, RCD-Goma's forces engaged in brutal human rights abuses.

Despite the widely condemned rebel occupation that became part of the International Criminal Court prosecution of Laurent Nkunda as a war criminal, beer kept flowing from Bralima's breweries. As the *New York Times* reported⁵, “[i]n 2004, the plant in Bukavu, with a capacity of 300,000 hectoliters, had a sales volume of 220,000 hectoliters, despite its location in a rebel-controlled area”. While the war ravaged much of Congo's infrastructure, the continuation of Bralima's operations was taken as a given, as indicated by the cynical dictum in Congo that “you can bomb a hospital, but not Bralima”. In practice, however, such popular beliefs are not enough to stave off rebels. The report



PHOTO: PEER SCHOUTEN

Blockades seemingly everywhere, at times stationed every 500 yards. They can generate almost a million dollars a year for each of the largest rebel groups. This road block outside of Goma, North Kivu, is constituted of former M23 forces who have disbanded to form their own outfit.

of the Lutundula Commission⁶ for the Congolese National Assembly, which was commissioned to investigate fraudulent contracts signed during the Congo Wars, describes in detail the “protocol agreements” that were allegedly drawn up between Bralima and RCD-Goma rebels during the period 1998-2003.

While the Congo Wars formally ended, the checkpoint economy is still very much alive, with the rebel group M23 a major player in the blockade racket. M23 was formed by members of CNDP, a previous rebel group, that were unsatisfied with a 2009 peace deal that integrated eastern rebels into the Congolese army. The group fought for greater autonomy in parts of North Kivu province. The UN sanctioned M23 late 2012, accusing it of deadly rampages in an attempt to intimidate its way to power. Longtime Rwandan-Congolese rebel general Bosco Ntaganda, currently at the International Criminal Court on charges of war crimes, rape, and use of child soldiers, is one of M23's founders.

A Rwandan calling himself Mr Damien, “tax collector” for M23, said that he oversees operations at the Bunagana, Kibati, and Kiwanja checkpoints. As matter-of-factly as if discussing tolls on a national highway, Damien explained that he charges \$38 for a van to pass, \$300 for a medium-sized goods truck,

and \$700 for a fuel tanker, handing out official-looking receipts for payment. These three checkpoints bring in enough money to purchase much of M23's weapons, pay salaries and bribes, and even occasionally dole out social aid to eastern Congo's poor.

Mr Damien insisted that everyone pays – including Bralima's logistics subcontractors that have to pass through rebel occupied territory to deliver Primus beer to some of the thousands of retail locations. Drivers leaving for rebel areas are given extra cash to cover these payments, a security officer at one of Bralima's main distribution depots in eastern Congo told us. By the time the bottles reach their remote village destinations, prices can be four times the USD1 they cost in Kinshasa.

We took Damien's numbers and multiplied them by the thousands of trips per year that Bralima runs through rebel-held regions. According to our calculations, Bralima distributors could be paying upward of USD one million a year to rebel groups. When we presented Heineken with our figures, John-Paul Schuirink, financial communications manager, said that due to the complexity of the situation in the DRC and the use of local distributors, the amount and the payments were difficult for Heineken to verify. Schuirink said that in response to our inquiry, the company was investigat-

ing and had “immediately suspended all payment of third party distributor invoices in the area”. However, Primus tax receipts that we have obtained from M23 dated September 2013 suggest that the payments have already resumed.⁷

Public and private security forces

Heineken’s subsidiary secures its DRC operations by contracting a mix of public and private security forces, with the whole of Bralima’s infrastructure – its six breweries and its many distribution depots – secured by a mix of private security companies and officers of the Congolese National Police.

While it has become standard practice for multinationals to contract private security companies irrespective of where in the world they operate, it is often difficult to ascertain what kind of security one is actually buying. One private security company that works for Bralima is called Top S.I.G, a subsidiary of Saracen International according to a corporate presentation by one of Saracen’s founders. Paradoxically, while Top S.I.G allegedly makes it possible for business to operate in the Congo and as such supports the UN’s goal of attaining peace and development through business, the UN has condemned Saracen for transgressing a UN embargo on military training and supplies to Somalia. The Heineken Group is, through its subsidiary’s engagement with Top S.I.G, entangled with conflict actors, illustrating the risks involved in using transnational private security companies.

Besides private security companies, Bralima also contracts Congolese state security forces for all its DRC operations. As private security companies are not allowed to carry firearms, different forms of institutionalised cooperation exist with the National Congolese Police (PNC). The PNC is either directly hired by someone seeking security, or is part of a service package provided by a private security company. In the first case, police agents are hired as static guards providing physical security; in the latter, police agents are part of mobile intervention teams of the private security company that are deployed on alarms.

These arrangements are driven by a situation that was created during the Congolese conflict. During the second Congo War, individuals in the police force created by President Kabila, created a “Brigade de Garde”, a special section

of the police that would protect businesses in the still conflict-laden eastern DRC. This proved such a success that in 2002 this service was converted into an institutionalised for-fee guarding service. Currently, thousands of PNC agents are used as guards for private clients and immense amounts of money circulate inside this for-fee police force. Bralima uses the PNC for all its operations and the Naval Forces (part of the Congolese Armed Forces) for its Bukavu and Goma sites. The Congolese Naval Forces – as other FARDC units – have a long track record of human rights abuses.

In a state where official security forces are prone to human rights abuses, handing over trespassers or thieves to those security forces can implicate companies themselves in abuses. This is illustrated by a recent event involving Bralima in Bukavu. On 16 November, 2005, a private security guard working for Bralima arrested a civilian suspected of theft, kept him in a trunk before handing him over to the Congolese intelligence service. The UN reports⁸ that 40 soldiers then took the suspect to the home of the military commander in charge, where the suspect was tortured to make him confess his crime, before being transferred to Goma’s prison.

Brewing a better future?

According to the new consensus among Western donors, corporations are supposed to contribute to peace and development in volatile environments, amongst other things by generating taxes, creating employment, and producing surplus wealth that translates into demand for services. Businesses are happy to echo this idea, not least because it legitimises their expansion into new untapped consumer and producer markets. However, in order to tap the Congo market and flood it with Primus and other beverages, Heineken’s subsidiary flirts with the boundaries of the permissible.

This raises the question: how far should corporations go to contribute to development? International NGOs and governments have spent the better part of six decades attempting to import poverty reduction and economic development to the most vulnerable parts of the Global South, and to say that the record is mixed is putting it kindly. Adding a trickle-down profit motive atop this schematic in an effort to right the ship can seem like passing the buck, but fits

with the liberal peacebuilding rationale of economic exchange and liberalisation that has been codified amongst the international community’s most important players. But these policies are untested and unproven within fragile countries, which is why both academics and activists are increasingly concerned that they are exacerbating many of the greatest pressures that today’s global poor face. While doubling down on the strategy might please the business community in the short term, securing the dash for unexplored market share may just mean that anything – even beer – will end up entrenching the world’s most violent and despotic warlords in the name of economic opening. 🌿

This article appeared as a blog post in November 2013 and is uploaded on <http://matsutas.wordpress.com/2013/11/08/blood-beer-or-brewing-benefits-the-paradox-of-heineken-in-the-congo-a-guest-post-by-jason-miklian-and-peer-schouten/> It is also inspired by, and takes portions from, the report ‘Brewing Security? Heineken’s engagement with commercial conflict-dependent actors in the Eastern DRC’ (<http://www.cdda.se/wp-content/uploads/CCDA-Report-Heineken-DRC.pdf>) and the article ‘Fluid Markets’ that appeared in Foreign Policy (http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2013/09/03/fluid_markets_heineken_congo_conflict)

- 1 www.doingbusiness.org/rankings
- 2 www.theheinekencompany.com/age-gate?tab=sustainability&returnurl=%2fsustainability%2freporting?tab=sustainability
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- 7 From article in Foreign Policy, 3 Sept 2013. See: www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2013/09/03/fluid_markets_heineken_congo_conflict
- 8 <http://reliefweb.int/report/democratic-republic-congo/rdc-la-situation-des-droits-de-lhomme-en-d%C3%A9cembre>

Peacebuilding News

The Church of Sweden (CoS) and the Life & Peace Institute (LPI) are both active in the area of peacebuilding in a variety of ways. The CoS is engaged from the perspective of being a national Evangelical Lutheran Church and a specialised agency for international development work and a member of the global ACT Alliance. The LPI is an international ecumenical centre for peace and conflict transformation. Below follows a selection of news from the activities of the CoS and the LPI, respectively.

News from Life & Peace Institute

DRC

UN Special Envoy meets LPI

Following a consultation in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, between civil society organisations and the UN Special Envoy, Mary Robinson, members of the UN-team visited LPI and partners in eastern DRC. The focus of the meeting was on how civil society can contribute to the peace process in DRC and the Great Lakes Region.

LPI provided the Special Envoy with a policy brief developed by different local civil society actors. The office of the Special Envoy was recommended to facilitate a holistic and participatory land reform process with the inclusion of different communities, and accounting for the existence of regional security destabilisers. Peacebuilding should not only focus on areas of military engagement but should include longer term conflict transformation processes. Particular attention should be paid to land, power and identity-related dimensions

of conflict in the Great Lakes Region.

Ms. Robinson has shown special interest in supporting long-term, bottom-up processes and in augmenting the dialogue between her office and LPI in the coming months.

Sudan

Dialogue project mitigates violence

Sudanese universities mirror the diversity of Sudan by bringing together students from diverse socio-economic, ethnic, political and religious backgrounds. In Khartoum, LPI is supporting partners in the implementation of a Sustained Dialogue (SD) project with students at the University of Khartoum and Ahfad University for Women. Over the course of the academic year, 100 students from diverse backgrounds meet together for a process of dialogue and action in order to prevent divisive issues from escalating into violence on the two university campuses.

Following exchanges between LPI's partners in Sudan and Ethiopia, LPI supports its partners to build on the experience of their neighbour whilst ensuring that the SD process is relevant and adapted to the Sudanese context.

New analysis method

"Outcome harvesting" in the Horn

LPI's Regional Horn of Africa Programme has linked up with Ricardo Wilson-Grau, an external evaluation specialist renowned for applying innovative solutions to complex challenges. Based on Wilson-Grau's foundational work on the Retrospective Outcome Harvesting approach, LPI has developed and launched a pilot system for harvesting and analysing outcomes of its policy and advocacy work conducted through the Regional Programme.

As an evolution of LPI's practice of planning, monitoring, evaluation and learning, the integration of Outcome Harvesting will help LPI and its partners monitor and evaluate changes in external actors and contexts as they emerge, providing on-going and real-time learning to improve LPI's support to conflict transformation.

DRC

Research on disarmament

LPI is currently engaged in a new research project which explores how LPI and its partners can contribute to the disengagement of Congolese armed groups in the territories of Uvira and Fizi in South Kivu.

The work LPI is doing with its partners ADEPAE and RIO in this area is one part of the project to support four community-based structures (CCIs) in the transformation of conflicts across



Students at Afhad University for Women engaged in Sustained Dialogue.

PHOTO: LPI



Collection of arms at a centre for demobilised soldiers in Nyamunyoni, DRC.

these territories. In order to do this, the CCIs will establish committees of negotiators (CNs) who will work to sensitise members of armed groups through processes of dialogue and mediation.

This is part of wider stabilisation and peace efforts in eastern DRC, which include a new plan for the

disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration (DDR) of combatants. The sensitisation of combatants is the first phase, and the CN will work closely with the government and other international implementing bodies to achieve this.

The research project will focus upon four principal areas: the dynamics

of Congolese armed groups, former attempts at DDR in eastern DRC, LPI and its partners' approach to armed group disengagement, and an exploration of a combined approach involving an integration of conflict transformation strategies with other national and international efforts.

Renowned peace fellow joins LPI board

Dr Mohammed Abu-Nimer has been appointed member of LPI's Board of Directors. Since 2013 he has been a member of LPI's International Advisory Council. Dr Abu-Nimer is the Director of the Peacebuilding and Development Institute and the Director of the Conflict Resolution Skills Institute at American University, Washington DC. He is also the founder and Director of the Salam: Peacebuilding and Justice Institute, which collaborates with conflict resolution practitioners, religious leaders and academics to bridge the differences between Muslim and non-Muslim communities and encourage peacebuilding. He is the co-founder and co-editor of the Journal of Peacebuilding and Development.

News from Church of Sweden international department

Ecumenical peace consultation in Sweden

The churches in Sweden have been engaged in the global ecumenical work for peace in a number of ways. They participated in the World Council of Churches' (WCC) Decade to Overcome Violence, in the International Ecumenical Peace Convocation in Kingston, Jamaica, in 2011, and in the 10th WCC General Assembly in Busan, South Korea, with the theme "God of Life, lead us to Justice and Peace". The Busan Assembly adopted a statement on the Way to Just Peace (Statement on the Way of Just Peace, Document No. PIC 02.4, WCC), which outlines a number of advocacy areas that should be in focus for an ecumenical engagement for peace from 2014 and onwards.

The members of the WCC in Sweden – the Church of Sweden, the Christian Council of Sweden and the Uniting Church in Sweden – contribute to this

work by co-hosting an international ecumenical consultation on advocacy for peace in the town of Sigtuna, 1-5 December. The consultation aims at providing an ecumenical forum for reflection, sharing of experiences, capacity building and networking on advocacy for peace to make a concrete contribution to the "WCC Pilgrimage of Justice and Peace".

Peace & Reconciliation a prioritised policy area

In the Church of Sweden's strategic plan for 2014-2017, Peace & Reconciliation is one of the five prioritised policy areas for the international work of the church. The other four policy areas are Pastoral Development, Sustainable Livelihood, Gender Equality and Health. The strategic plan includes a new vision statement: Our vision is life in the Kingdom of God, a healed creation and humanity in community, justice, freedom and peace.

The work within the Peace & Reconciliation area will be implemented together with national and international partners in a number of country programmes and in a programme for global policy dialogue, covering the advocacy work for just peace in relation to decision-makers in Sweden, the EU and the UN.

Spirituality – a children's right?

The Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan and the Holy Land has conducted a successful "Pilgrimage Project" to help children, both Muslims and Christians from the occupied Palestinian territories, to access the sacred places in Jerusalem and Jericho. The accompaniment project, supported by the Church of Sweden, has created a lot of interest and goodwill and has highlighted children's rights not only to their own identity, culture, religion and a peaceful childhood, but also to spiritual development.



Swedish Archbishop Anders Wejryd visiting Bishop Samuel Azariah, Raiwind Diocese, Pakistan. Children from Church of Pakistan's schools in Lahore performed a programme of dance and music, dressed in folk costumes from the whole country.

High risks for civil society

In many parts of the world, the work of civil society is becoming increasingly dangerous. Civil society organisations speak out about social injustice and are often forced to put their own staff at risk to defend the human rights of others. Why? Because they believe that protecting the freedoms that constitute a democracy are worth fighting for.

Two development organisations, ACT Alliance and CIDSE, have presented a new study, "Space for civil society: how to protect and expand an enabling environment", which looks at the situation in Colombia, Zimbabwe, Rwanda and Malawi.

In relation to the new study, Church of Sweden, as a member of the ACT Alliance, was instrumental in organising a side event at the 25th Regular Session of the UN Human Rights Council in Geneva on 13 March, 2014, together with ACT Alliance, CIDSE and the Permanent Mission of Sweden. The side event "Enabling Space for Civil Society Organisations" included presentations from Mr. Maina Kiai, the UN Special Rapporteur on the rights to freedom of assembly and association, and partners from Colombia and Zimbabwe.

Humanitarian work recognised by Sida

In December 2013, the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida) announced that

the Church of Sweden is one of 11 civil society organisations working in the humanitarian sector with which Sida will enter into a strategic partnership. By creating a mechanism for more predictable funding, Sida aims at more long term and effective humanitarian support. The Church of Sweden is very pleased to be one of Sida's long term humanitarian partners, taking this as an acknowledgment of its humanitarian work that has a psychosocial focus and approach.

Archbishop Wejryd visits Pakistan

Invited by Bishop Samuel Azariah of the Diocese of Raiwind, Church of Pakistan, the Swedish Archbishop Anders Wejryd led a delegation to Pakistan 18-24 February, 2014. The aim was above all to meet and show solidarity with the Christians who live in a vulnerable minority situation. The Church of Pakistan is the result of the union of four denominations: Anglicans, Methodists, Lutherans and Presbyterians (Scottish), which took place in 1970. It is the second largest church in the country after the Roman Catholic Church.

The delegation made pastoral visits to congregations and schools in the Diocese of Raiwind and met with the Governor of Punjab and the Human Rights Commission in Lahore. The delegation also visited a shia muslim madrasa (a higher educational institution for future imams) and participated

in many interesting meetings devoted to dialogue on the importance of inter-religious tolerance, conflict transformation and peaceful coexistence.

International festival "Världens fest"

The international festival "Världens fest" (World Feast) seeks to inspire and engage the Church of Sweden on global issues. The festival is the Church of Sweden's regular gathering focused on international work, which this year was held in Karlstad, a town in southwest Sweden, 30 May – 1 June. The overarching goal of Världens fest 2014 was to highlight the Church of Sweden's solidarity with the worldwide church, with a focus on the Church of Sweden's international mission. Världens fest is a meeting place for employees, elected representatives and international parish groups and brings together many international partners for seminars, dialogues, services and concerts.

Swedish Theological Institute in Jerusalem – a vital source of inspiration

The Swedish Theological Institute in Jerusalem is an important resource hub for the Church of Sweden and its international partners. It provides a conducive learning environment, supporting religious and cultural plurality, conflict analysis and peace and reconciliation dialogue. A recent initiative is a tailor-made course for church leaders from Asia, Africa and Latin America, and representatives from regional ecumenical organisations, on leadership, theology, interreligious dialogue, peacebuilding and conflict transformation. A new course is planned for 18-29 November, 2014.

Regional position papers on sustainable and just peace

Two new position papers on sustainable and just peace in Zimbabwe and in, and between, Sudan and South Sudan were recently published on the Church of Sweden website. Similar position papers for Colombia and Israel and Palestine, as well as a number of thematic position papers, have been produced earlier.

Reviews and resources

Too much of God?

Gods and Arms. On Religion and Armed Conflict. Edited by Kjell-Åke Nordquist. Pickwick Publications, 2013

The protracted Israeli-Palestinian conflict is difficult enough to solve in itself. With parties on both sides claiming to have not only divine support, but as a matter of fact acting on behalf of God, all their violence is then seen as justified in their own eyes. "There is too much of God in Jerusalem", a friend once told me. Maybe. Or too little? The terrestrial interpreters of the divine intentions and plans may have got hold of the wrong end of the stick.

The anthology *Gods and Arms* presents a number of national case studies, dealing with Colombia (Camilo Torres, Catholicism and Marxism), Sri Lanka (interreligious peace efforts in the aftermath of the war), Rwanda (perpetrators' religious explanations of their roles in the genocide) and the mediation attempts by the Anglican Church in Jerusalem during the decades before the foundation of the State of Israel.

The introductory chapter, written by the well-known Dr R. Scott Appleby at the Kroc Institute, USA, examines religion, fundamentalism and conflict. It contains a warning both against painting religion in totally negative colours and idealising it without realising its potential to subordinate human life to a higher good. He could also have mentioned equivalent dangers with political ideologies.

Three chapters deal in different ways with cosmic wars, God's wars, i.e., when the ultimate reason for the war is no longer territory or power but ideology. Relevant examples are apocalyptic speculations among evangelical Christians (read Armageddon theology by Göran Gunner, chapter 3) and the Global Jihadi War, carried not only by moral absolutism but by a belief in the sacred struggle (Mark Juergensmeyer, chapter 2).

For a long period there was a common understanding among many scholars that with the modernisation project, religion would fade away. With a slow beginning in the 1980s, however, it became more and more obvious that religion had made a comeback in the form of political religiosity in Christianity and Judaism as well as in Islam, Hinduism and Sikhism. The common and triggering cause is the modernisation itself and its carrier, the nation-state.

In a concluding chapter, the editor himself shows that religious involvement in conflicts over government has increased from 1989 to 2010. With the development of the international legal system it is today "easier" to morally justify war within a Christian 'just war' tradition than it is from the perspective of international law. That may be one of the reasons for the World Council of Churches to aim for a 'just peace' doctrine instead.

In the end, peace researchers should perhaps devote their energy less to studies of wars and violent conflicts and more to studies of peacemaking. Inspired by Jürgen Habermas, they might even start to "develop more of peaceful theologies ... as a stable foundation for peaceful interreligious and intercultural relations".

Bernt Jonsson

Executive Director at LPI 1990-99

Important, controversial book about a pivotal moment in the Somali crisis

Clan Cleansing in Somalia: The Ruinous Legacy of 1991, by Lidwien Kapteijns. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2013

In this book, Kapteijns explores how in 1990-91 an armed movement aimed at overthrowing the dictatorship of Siyad Barre morphed into a brutal campaign of ethnic cleansing that plunged Somalia into decades of war and state collapse. Though Kapteijns concludes that the shift in tactics by the United Somali Congress (USC) was driven by political leaders manipulating chauvinistic clan narratives for their own parochial purposes, the body of evidence she marshals also points to a disturbing susceptibility of Somali society circa 1990 not only to embrace clannish hate narratives but to act on them with shocking violence. Kapteijns' conclusions line up with findings from many other zones of ethnic violence, namely, that ethnic/clan cleavages and hatreds were not primordial, but were hardened by years of divide and rule tactics, and then set aflame by power-seeking political and militia figures, whose indifference to the terrible human costs of their tactics makes the utter lack of accountability for their actions even harder to accept.

Kapteijns' book is at once important, controversial, unusual, and flawed. It is important because it addresses a pivotal moment in the Somali crisis, the period in 1990-91 when the direction of the country hung in the balance, and ultimately swung down an utterly destructive path. It also confronts openly the critical question of clan cleansing as an objective of the fighting in 1991, and the powerful taboo in Somali circles over naming names and holding perpetrators to account for the crimes against humanity that occurred in those years.

This also contributes to the controversy surrounding the book. Kapteijns directly confronts and exposes the raw clannish rhetoric and reasoning of the era. The evidence she draws upon to depict strategies of clan cleansing will shock and offend some Somali readers, while others will object on the grounds that the book's reopening of the deep wounds and hate narratives of the era risks re-igniting clan tensions at a time when Somalis are trying to overcome old divisions.

The most vigorous criticisms, however, have already appeared on the internet and condemn the book as a partisan attack on one clan, the Hawiye, which emerged victorious in the capital Mogadishu in 1991. The criticism that the author "chose sides" is not entirely warranted, if one reads the text carefully, but is rooted in the author's choice of time period to study. By focusing on 1990-91, Kapteijns steps directly into an ongoing Somali war over history and grievances. As in many other post-war settings, a critical dimension of historical grievance narratives is all about when one begins the story. Kapteijns' focus on the 1990-91 period highlights the Hawiye campaign against Darood citizens. Hawiye leaders, by dint of their privileged position of power in the armed liberation movement in 1990 and their capture of the capital, are held responsible for the clan cleansing which engulfed Mogadishu, while the Darood masses are portrayed in that narrow time period as victims. Kapteijns holds leaders of all clans accountable for communal violence, but points out that the chauvinistic

clan ideology of the victorious Hawiye leaders had far greater long-term consequences and hence bears greater scrutiny.

The book has its share of flaws. The design of the book does not provide a clear introduction to the Somali crisis for a general reader, making much of the text difficult for non-Somali specialists to follow. Analytically, some of the claims in the book are open to contestation or at least refinement. The claim, for instance, that weak social groups in southern Somalia joined in the anti-Darood purge is only partially true – the vast majority of those communities lacked weapons and were the principal victims of repeated looting and assaults by both Hawiye and Darood militias. But the author's overall message – that critical decisions made by the USC leadership to turn a liberation movement into a campaign of clan cleansing propelled Somalia into a period of war and division from which it is only now emerging – is an important claim that needs to be explored and considered seriously, not dismissed as an attack on one clan.

The big question arising from this book should not be the parochial debate over which clan suffered most and which is most culpable. The focus should be the enduring and troubling question of the lack of any accountability for crimes against humanity that occurred in Somalia – under the Barre regime, in 1991–92, and most recently in the 2011 Somali famine which claimed 260,000 lives.

This review is also published in a forthcoming issue of the Journal of Modern African Studies, www.journals.cambridge.org/moa

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When local ownership and external intervention meet

Is Local Beautiful? Peacebuilding between International Interventions and Locally Led Initiatives. Edited by Sara Hellmüller and Martina Santschi. Springer Briefs in Environment, Security, Development and Peace. Peace and Security Studies, 11, 2014

Over the past few years, confusion has persisted regarding the possibility of sustainable implementation of initiatives in the field of local ownership as well as its role in peacebuilding, especially in interaction with external intervention. How to define local ownership, what local ownership implies in practice, and how to promote it through external intervention remain complex questions of debate.

During its Annual Conference 2012, the organisation Swiss Peace engaged in this debate. *Is Local Beautiful?* is the result of the stimulating and critical reflections shared by multiple practitioners and policy-makers to finally clarify the potential of local initiatives in the work for peace. Far from having the ambition to provide ultimate answers, this publication rather offers singular, refreshing perspectives on the implications and challenges of local ownership and examines the balance between international interventions and locally led initiatives.

In the first part of the publication, the reader finds three main conceptual contributions, which raise critical questions about the concept of local ownership and also propose alternatives. The communitarian approach promoted by Hellmül-

ler is noteworthy, as it defines the local level as a starting point, on which external interventions should be based and designed. Marco Pfister, from his side, presents the tremendous challenges faced by international peacebuilding actors when attempting to put the concept into practice, e.g. the difficulty of defining the local, or dealing with the asymmetric power relationships between local actors and third party interveners. To tackle these difficulties, the author advocates a shift from the concept of ownership to the alternative idea of inclusiveness, but doing so opens a new conceptual debate.

In the second part, four case studies bring colour to the theoretical first part. We could highlight, among others, Santschi's rich presentation of the local justice and conflict resolution mechanisms in South Sudan and a last chapter by Rachel Gasser and Ja Nan Lahtaw on the successful cooperation between local organisations and Swiss Peace in Burma/Myanmar.

Is Local Beautiful? will undoubtedly thrill practitioners, policy makers and students seeking a better understanding of the debate on local ownership. However, I would particularly recommend this publication to readers with high expectations, keen to see their, maybe preconceived, ideas being challenged by rich reflections.

Flavie Bertouille
Intern, LPI Programme Unit

Global civil engagements

NGOs. A New History of Transnational Civil Society, by Thomas Davies. London: Hurst, 2013

While the title of the book makes reference to NGOs, the sub-title reveals that the focus is actually on international NGOs (INGOs). The analysis traces global alliances from the mid-18th century, when religious orders, charities, missionary societies, merchant associations, fraternal societies and scientific bodies were the first forms of transnationally operating institutions. Since then, with the anti-slavery campaign, the labour movement, the Socialist International, feminist mobilization for emancipation and the peace movement, a number of important players emerged. But the author also records multiple other INGOs operating in other fields, including the arts, communication, education, exploration, trading, indigenous rights, lifesaving, prison reform, republicanism, standardization and vaccination.

At the beginning of the 20th century, INGOs already numbered in the hundreds, with many engaged in intercontinental activities and some with millions of members (with the Red Cross emerging as one of the most prominent and lasting examples). They influenced national and international policy and contributed to the institutionalization of global governance bodies. Two world wars undermined as well as strengthened the formation and operations of INGOs: "Just as globalization and fragmentation in general terms have tended to exist in a dialectical relationship, so too have liberal transnational civil society actors and illiberal forms of mobilization, whether internationalism and nationalism before the First World War, or 'global justice' activism and religious intolerance in the contemporary era" (p. 176).

The reconstruction after the war provided not only space for recovery but offered new opportunities in the formation of further global initiatives. The destructive impact of the

two world wars was “counterbalanced by the facilitation of organizational expansion beyond Europe and in response to the conflict’s consequences” (p. 178). The author estimates that, at the beginning of the new millennium, the number of INGOs was approximately a hundred times larger than a century ago. At times, these INGOs have had a considerable impact, contributing “towards developments varying from the creation of the Internet to the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court” (p. 178).

Far from seeing those forms of transnational organizations and their engagements as a cure for everything, the author concludes with a cautious note: “[T]hose who argue that ‘another world is possible’ need to consider the failures of their predecessors to build such alternatives. Liberal internationalists seeking to reform the international system ... were to find not only that their alternatives were to be crushed by the system to which they were opposed, but also that their efforts were to worsen the already unpleasant externalities of the normal operation of the international system and of capitalist economic relations, which in turn set back transnational civil society” (p. 182).

Or, one is tempted to add, gave birth to other forms of internationalism with an agenda to counteract such initiatives. Transnational civil society, after all, is not by definition something noble. It is a form of organization, which can have very different meanings and goals. As the author concludes: “[T]his volume has highlighted the importance not only of exploring the apparent achievements ... but also the failures of transnational civil society, from which as much may be learned” (p. 182).

Henning Melber

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The two Sudan states Independent, yet dependent

Masters of War. The role of Elites in Sudan's Communal Conflicts, by Johan Brosché. Report No. 102, Department of Peace and Conflict Research, Uppsala University, 2014

A poisonous thorn in our hearts, Sudan and South Sudan's bitter and incomplete divorce, by James Copnall. Hurst, 2014

These are two quite different, fresh approaches to conflict and peace in the two Sudan states. Both bring us across the borders and behind the doors, as the authors account for findings, echo people’s voices and draw conclusions. Each of them has engaged with hundreds of people in Sudan and South Sudan over the past years, one as a researcher and the other as a journalist. The reader meets these people both in direct quotes and indirectly.

Johan Brosché takes a traditional, yet innovative, academic route in his PhD thesis in which he attempts to explain why communal conflicts become extremely violent, with thousands killed, in Darfur and Greater Upper Nile, but not in Eastern Sudan. This, according to Brosché, is due to interactions between central and local elites. The study also shows why the regimes act in a more partial way in some geographical areas than others. His approach and findings are very useful for prevention, management and transforma-

tion of communal conflicts, not just in the Sudans.

James Copnall, who spent the years 2009-2012 as a BBC correspondent in Sudan and South Sudan, employs a journalistic approach and introduces the reader to all sorts of people “from politicians to barefoot cow-herders, along with superstar singers and Darfuri tea ladies”. The book is an excellent resource for those who wish to find out what happened as Sudan became two Sudans in 2011. And especially after ...

The chapter headings may not sound too exciting, but get behind the seven dry “labels” and enjoy an educational, although frustrating, trip. In the final chapter – the most important – about the relationship between the two countries, the author refers to a popular image from West Africa describing Mali and Guinea as “two lungs in the same body”. Copnall suggests that Sudan and South Sudan are even more inter-dependent than the West African pair. In the tamazuj, the eleven states on the border, there are more than 13 million people depending on their neighbours. An afterword, signed February 2014, provides the latest update in this story, which is certainly “to be continued”.

Tore Samuelsson

Communications Director
Life & Peace Institute

Continuity and change in South Sudan chiefship

Dealing with Government in South Sudan. Histories of Chiefship, Community and State, by Cherry Leonardi. James Currey, 2013

This book examines local patterns of state formation and how traditional authorities have interacted with state government before the independence of South Sudan in 2011. The author argues that the relation between traditional and state authority, ever since the mid-nineteenth century, has been that of mutual constitution and that traditional authority in South Sudan has been misunderstood by many to be a non state institution. The book has three main chronological parts and is based on research and fieldwork 2004-2008 in and around three major cities of today’s South Sudan: Yei, Juba and Rumbek. The research area is urban and peri-urban with cultural heterogeneity. In these urban centres, the internal “frontier zone” between traditional and state authority is described as mobile over time. Chiefship is defined as the institutionalised expression of the frontier itself.

The book traces two paths: one shows the continuities in the role of the chiefs since the mid-nineteenth century. The other demonstrates the change: it is the story of how these men, defined by their relationship with a predatory state, came to be increasingly central to definitions of community, law and tradition.

The years 1840-1920 were a period of migration, and local identities were centred on clan or lineage rather than ethnic origins. The people were agro-pastoralists and lived in dispersed and largely autonomous territorial or herding units, governed by family heads and elders. Through reliance on wider forms of religious and spiritual authority and these family heads and elders were capable of mobilising and overcoming crises or undertaking military action – a kind of stateless society but with hierarchies. Early traders from Egypt established a network of stations, zara’ib (Arabic for a thorn-fenced enclosure, fortified military camp or station).

Settlements developed and land was cultivated around the zara'ib to produce food for the traders, holy men, soldiers and their slaves in the zara'ib. Ivory was the focus of trade as well as captured slaves, who were sent for export to the Khartoum slave market, used in the Egyptian army or placed as servants or wives in the zara'ibs. The satellite populations around the zara'ib sought the protection of the traders, and the relations between them were mediated by individual interpreters and trading agents, described as chiefs.

The period 1920-1950 was characterised by British colonial administration. Chiefships became institutionalised in courts, and an important role for the chief was to mediate in conflicts by negotiating settlements and compensation. There were different kinds of authorities, and the government chiefs of the colonial era never acquired the moral authority of spiritual leaders such as the chief of the rain, the master of the fishing spear and the lord of the lands. The colonial government ruled by relying heavily on these chiefs, which ultimately led to the instability of the colonial state. The chiefs compromised their authority by abusing their control of land, labour and taxation.

1956-2010 was a period of urbanisation and civil war. Sudan became independent in 1956. The government in Sudan became a centralising and authoritarian regime which promoted islamisation and arabisation in the South. The towns remained the centres of state power. For people, it was a struggle to understand the role of chiefs during the long periods of civil war. On the one hand, these years were characterised by the destruction of the "social fabric", but on the other hand, the chiefs were needed even more during this period to ensure the safety of persons and the security of property by negotiating for protection.

If you have an academic interest in political science and a passion for Sudan, you will enjoy reading about the symbiosis of traditional authorities and state building. Some paragraphs based on interviews are really lively, and you can almost hear the respondent as you read the text.

Anna-Maria Sandström

*Regional Representative for the Horn of Africa
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The regional-global nexus of legitimacy and threat

Legitimacy, Peace Operations and Global-Regional Security. The African Union-United Nations Partnership in Darfur, by Linnéa Gelot. Routledge, 2012

The attention given to the crisis in Darfur has rapidly decreased in the last years, with the region going from being a priority on the world agenda to an object of very little attention. Still, this spring, the war in Darfur 'celebrates' its 11th birthday. Lately the fighting has intensified and in 2013 more than 1,000 people were killed. A crucial dimension to grasp in order to understand the situation in Darfur is peacekeeping. To do this, Gelot provides an excellent study of peacekeeping in Darfur by examining the cooperation between the African Union (AU) and the United Nations (UN). Peacekeeping in Darfur is a gross failure when it comes to stopping the conflict and protecting civilians, but successful in providing aid to millions of Darfurians.

This book provides profound information on Darfur but is not restricted to this case. It also provides a very valuable

contribution to the increasingly important topic of cooperation between global and regional organisations. To study this question from the perspective of Darfur is ideal as the case displays intricate interlinkages between the most important regional (AU) and global (UN) organisations for peacekeeping in Africa.

Gelot studies the regional-global nexus from an international legitimacy perspective, which enables us to rethink this relationship. A starting point for this book is that just as a state's legitimacy depends on its ability to counter threats, international organisations – such as the AU and UN – are dependent on their ability to solve threats in order to enhance their legitimacy. For a state this is primarily carried out through the police system, whereas peacekeeping operations constitute a means for inter-governmental organisations to build their legitimacy. In Darfur, the AU depended on the UN to increase its legitimacy as a world player, whereas the UN depended on the AU to enhance its validity to act in Darfur, especially in relation to the prevailing "African solutions to African problems" argument.

To understand the complex interplay between organisations at different levels is particularly important from a multilateralism perspective. We need to know which organisations – and in what combination – that are most suitable to a particular task. This book offers profound insights into this difficult issue and I highly recommend people interested in governance, legitimacy, peacekeeping, and security, to read it. Furthermore, the book builds on an intrinsic knowledge about the case of Darfur and is also very useful for people interested in this war. This is particularly so, as we need to rethink the Darfur crisis, which does not seem as if it will be solved in the near future, but rather appears increasingly protracted.

Johan Brosché

Assistant Professor

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To reconcile and move on

Redeeming the Past. My Journey from Freedom Fighter to Healer, by Michael Lapsley with Stephen Karakashian. WWC, Orbis books. Mary Knoll, New York, 2012

On 28 April, 1990, Fr Michael Lapsley opened a letter which contained a bomb. A few months earlier Nelson Mandela had been released from prison and the ANC was unbanned. Nevertheless, he directly understood that he had been attacked by the apartheid regime. The bomb took away his hands and one of his eyes. In this book, Fr Michael Lapsley tells a story about moving on without becoming bitter.

The book has three levels: first Fr Lapsley's own life, which in itself is fascinating. Already at the age of seventeen he joined the Society of the Sacred Mission in Australia. Seven years later, after ordination, he was transferred to South Africa. Having been a rather naive person, he later became a member of the ANC. This is a theme right through the book: the tension between his Christian faith and the fight for social and political justice. One example is the conflict with Archbishop Desmond Tutu, regarding whether or not an Anglican priest could be member of a political party.

Another dominant perspective is the reconciliation process. Michael Lapsley discusses thoroughly the relation between reconciliation and reparation. He criticises white South Africans

for not having taken the reconciliation process seriously. He is even more critical of the former President, F. W. de Klerk, claiming that he never admitted that apartheid was an unjust system.

A third level of the narrative deals with the founding of the Institute for Healing of Memories. From a modest beginning, it has developed a method that today is used in solving conflicts all over the world. Testimonies from people having participated in workshops in different contexts worldwide are interwoven with the story. This gives the reader a deeper understanding of the methodology.

The highlight of the book is that it goes beyond the story about Fr Michael Lapsley and his life. More than anything else it carries a message about the possibility to deal with traumatic memories and come out as a whole and healed person.

Anders Göransson

Honorary Lecturer at the University of KwaZulu-Natal,
South Africa

Berghof Foundation

Useful publications on conflict transformation

Do you want an accessible read to get an introduction or catch up on some of the core terms related to conflict transformation? Have a look at *Berghof Glossary on Conflict Transformation. 20 notions for theory and practice* (Berghof Foundation, 2012). This booklet examines 20 of the core terms in conflict transformation, such as conflict, dialogue, gender, reflective practice etc., defines and discusses the concepts on a few pages and provides some suggestions for further reading and resources. Its small format makes it perfect to bring when travelling.

When you want to get deeper into the issues and debates, it is time to turn to *Advancing Conflict Transformation. The Berghof Handbook II*, edited by Austin, Fischer and Giessmann (Barbara Budrich Publishers, 2011). This is a heavy primer to keep at your desk, and its weight comes not only from the more than 550 pages but also from the wealth of experience that has been gathered since the first edition of the Handbook was published in 2004.

The book is comprised of 20 articles that are structured around five thematic sections. Section I presents conceptual approaches and challenges for conflict transformation. Section II looks at ways to enhance capacity and practices: third party intervention and inside approaches. Section III discusses the scope of different actors and levels in creating space for transforming conflicts. Section IV examines how to sustain transitions from war to peace. The final section is dedicated to evaluation and critical self-reflection.

The Handbook presents a systematic and thorough overview of the current state-of-the-art of conflict transformation, with contributions from academics and practitioners who are at the forefront of their fields. It is warmly recommended to everyone with an interest in the field of conflict transformation.

As John Paul Lederach puts it in the foreword, "Advancing Conflict Transformation has integrated three decades of practice and theory and will be looked back upon thirty years from now as a foundational account of the field. I plan to keep it close at hand".

Worth looking into are also two other of Berghof's recent publications: *Peace Infrastructure: Assessing Concept and Practice*, edited by Unger, Lundström, Planta and Austin

(*Berghof Handbook Dialogue Series No. 10*, 2013) and *Dealing with the Past in the Western Balkans. Initiatives for Peacebuilding and Transitional Justice in Bosnia-Herzegovina, Serbia and Croatia*, edited by Fischer and Petrovi-Zeimer (Berghof Report No. 18, 2013).

All publications are available online: www.berghof-foundation.org/en/publications/publications

Jenny Svanberg

Programme Director

Life & Peace Institute

Discuss peacebuilding – enjoy ice cream

Jesus, Bombs, and Ice Cream: DVD and Study Guide: Building a More Peaceful World, by Shane Claiborne, Ben Cohen & friends. Zonderwan Publishers, 2013

The Christian activist Shane Claiborne, author of the Irresistible Revolution, and Jesus for President, has teamed up with Ben Cohen, co-founder of Ben & Jerry's Ice Cream, and created a group study guide called "Jesus, Bombs & Ice Cream". What unites the authors is their belief that the world would be a better place if there were "fewer bombs and much more ice cream for everyone". Another common point of departure is their conviction that the violence that this world is trapped in is not to be seen as a given fact, but something that can be changed. Such change starts with dreams and hopes of a better world, but also requires people to challenge established lifestyles and government priorities. Moreover, the authors provide practical tools for peace and nonviolence.

The group study guide comprises a participants' guide and a DVD with material for six one-hour sessions. It starts off with a short introduction presenting the theme through Bible verses, theological perspectives and examples from church history. Then follows video teaching, including testimonials, visual art and music. The rest of the time is for group discussion – and for fellowship around big bowls of ice cream. There are also individual assignments and topics for reflection for in-between the sessions.

Although this study guide might seem to present a too simplistic or idealistic approach, there is value in the combination of philosophical, theological and practical questioning of the state of affairs in our world. Themes that are covered are: military spending, global arms trade, disarmament, peace and reconciliation. The idea is not that you should agree on everything (you won't) but to take time together with others to reflect on, imagine and discuss the thought-provoking facts concerning the global expenditure on arms and military security, as well as to be inspired by personal testimonies, music, poetry and video-clips suggesting alternatives to violence.

The study guide is primarily made for an American audience but has a global message which can easily be transferred to other national settings and used for group studies in churches, universities or at work places by anyone interested in the practice of peacebuilding (and ice cream!). A full-fledged teaser is available on www.youtube.com

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During the 10th Assembly of the World Council of Churches in Busan, South Korea, in November 2013, the participants placed colored ribbons of peace with messages and prayers for peace on the iron fence along the military demarcation line, adding to the thousands of ribbons and prayers already on the fence.

Let us share such initiatives for peace, like lighthouses that illuminate the nights of the tyrannies and dictatorships.

Let us pray with the Christians, who have the courage to attach colorful ribbons with prayers, wishes and messages for a suffering people at a border fence.

Prayer is a weapon in hands that are empty.

<http://maisondelapaix-normandie.org/en/2013/11/ribbons-of-peace-for-the-korean-people/>



PHOTO: NIKLAS EKLOV

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