

Community based development projects in countries affected with  
violent internal conflicts: Sustaining and utilizing them for  
peacebuilding

by

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**To my parents, *Shrimati* Pabitra Khatri and *Shri* Dol Bahadur Khatri**

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## **ABSTRACT**

Some of the major developmental casualties in countries affected with violent internal conflicts (CAVICS) have been community based development projects. Carrying out development projects in such situations becomes difficult as continued violence diminishes extant capacities of local communities. Regenerating community capacity to sustain community based development projects and to reduce potential for further conflicts has remained a major concern of both practitioners and researchers.

The research notes similarities in terms of the rhetoric, nature, and goal of development and violent conflicts. Both are trying to address the structural violence, and both are conflictual. Given these similarities, there is a possibility that intervention for development can actually help reduce violent conflicts by altering the underlying structures. Drawing from the experiences of four CAVICS, this research extracts principles and practices through which community based development projects can be sustained in such countries. Projects that have achieved greater success espouse neutrality, transparency and flexibility in approach. They train staff to prepare to work in violent situations. They respect affected populations as full participants, listen to them and incorporate their voices in planning. They build on extant social capital. Such projects build both horizontal and vertical relationships by bringing people closer, thereby empowering them to participate fully in projects through various means.

Agencies operational in countries recently affected by violence, such as Nepal, have the advantage of learning from the experiences of other countries. Violent internal conflicts indicate failure of development efforts and impede subsequent development. Given this, violent conflicts have provided an opportunity for development agencies to revisit their programs and policies, and learn from mistakes.

## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

Some of the major developmental casualties in countries affected with violent internal conflicts<sup>1</sup> (CAVICs) have been community based development projects supported by international development agencies. The global community faces a crucial challenge of doing development in conditions of violent conflict and working for lasting peace (Adams and Bradbury 1995:4). The situation is alarming, given that at least one hundred countries were engaged in 163 violent internal conflicts in the post World War II era 1946-2001 (Gleditsch et al. 2002). In their survey of armed internal conflicts between 1995-2000, Gurr, Marshall and Khosla (2001) identified 52 major conflicts in 46 countries. Further, the location of most contemporary violent conflicts have been communities of ordinary people, and nine out of every ten human casualties of war have been civilians (Eade 1996:5). Violent internal conflicts have contributed to continued exclusion of the world's poor, which is manifest in displacement, life insecurity, and increased poverty. Further, the economies of the affected countries have slumped with scarce resources directed towards containing conflict.

Community development projects are “local schemes devised with the intention of promoting community action and community development” (Jary and Jary 1991:100). International development agencies promoting such projects emphasize strengthening the capacity of communities to achieve active citizen participation in project processes. However, doing so in communities in CAVICs becomes difficult as continued violence diminishes extant capacities of local communities. Civilians become increasingly vulnerable due to war related fatalities, casualties, displacement, threats, destruction, and the breaking up of their organizations. War generates a “new social reality for those affected by it and for agencies responding to it”, and “unpredictability and crisis become facts of life” (Adams and Bradbury 1995:28). Communities and other stakeholders involved are exposed to an unfamiliar set of

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<sup>1</sup> An armed conflict between the government of a country and internal opposition groups, with or without intervention from other states, and causing at least 25 battle related deaths in a single year (Gleditsch, Wallensteen, Eriksson, Sollenberg and Strand 2002:619).

circumstances during and after the conflict which renders them unable to carry out community based development projects. As violence increases, most development agencies react first by cutting back development programs (Agerbak 1996:29), only later to devise alternate development mechanisms. Regenerating community capacity to sustain community based development projects and to reduce further conflicts has remained a major concern of both development practitioners and researchers. CAVICs have a twofold challenge—to promote regular development and simultaneously “accommodate the additional burden of reconstruction and peace consolidation” (Castillo 2001:1967).

The present research builds on this premise and attempts to understand two issues related to community based development projects in CAVICs. The first concerns how international development agencies can help sustain community based development projects in CAVICs. The second explores how such development projects can support peacebuilding<sup>2</sup>.

Chapter II begins by discussing the concept of community capacity followed by how violent internal conflicts affect the overall community based development environment. It will also introduce the conceptual direction for the research. Chapter III discusses the methods of investigation. Chapter IV presents the findings. It draws from the experience of several CAVICs, particularly the cases of Cambodia, Guatemala, Somalia and Sri Lanka. Based on lessons learnt from these experiences, the research highlights principles and practices for regenerating community capacity for community based development projects in CAVICs. Further in this chapter, the research examines the application of such principles and practices in Nepal, in South Asia, where a seven year old Maoist led insurgency has brought community based development projects almost to a standstill. Finally, Chapter V draws conclusions including policy implications and future research priorities.

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<sup>2</sup> Peacebuilding is defined as “activities that contribute to institutional and infrastructure work related to longer term reconciliation and social integration activities” (Goodhand and Lewer 1999:71)



## CHAPTER II

### LITRERATURE REVIEW AND CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

#### *Construction of Community Capacity*

The concept of community as used by sociologists refers to a set of relationships among people, either within or beyond specific geographical boundaries. In the context of community based development projects, the term community signifies socioeconomic relationships among people residing within a particular locality who often depend on the same natural resources base for their livelihoods. By this definition, a group of households using and managing the same water point for their water needs, for example, is considered a community.

Relationships that can be found in communities are of varied nature. Pieterse (2001:64) points out that “local culture is not an uncontaminated space but a field criss-crossed by traces of migrants, travelers, traders, missionaries, colonizers, anthropologists.” As such, one can readily observe that any given community consists of family and kinship (*Gemeinschaft*) ties as well as those based on rationality and instrumentality (*Gesellschaft*). Relationships can be both mutually beneficial as well as conflictual. Communities have relationships not only among their members but also beyond their territorial boundaries, such as with the market, other communities, non governmental organizations (NGOs), government and international development agencies. These varied types of relationships combined with different forms of resources such as human, physical and financial capital available to the communities constitute the community capacity.

The idea of community capacity is based on the notion of social capital. Putnam (1993) has defined social capital as features of social organization such as networks of individuals or households, associated norms and trust that facilitate coordination and cooperation for future benefit. These civic networks, Putnam states, foster norms and reciprocity. Putman’s focus

on the horizontal orientation of social capital is expanded by Coleman to include vertical associations that can be characterized by hierarchy and an unequal distribution of power among members, and by North to include the sociopolitical environment that shapes norms and structures, such as the government, the political regime and the market (Grootaert and Bastelaer 2002:2-3). Based on these definitions of social capital Colletta and Cullen (2000) discern two dimensions of social capital—horizontal and vertical. They define social capital as the norms, values, and social relations that bond communities together, as well as the bridges between communal groups and the State. The horizontal dimension consists of relationships, networks, associations or the institutional structures operating within a given society that exist among equals or near equals. Relations resulting from differences in power or resource base between people and organizations that are spatially and hierarchically at different levels represent the vertical. This classification of social capital allows inclusion of stakeholders at multiple levels, such as government, market, and development actors that have a “direct impact on the social capital environment facing actors at the local level” (Colletta and Cullen 2000:11).

### *Community Capacity for War and Peace*

There are always a few people in communities who benefit from war related violence. However, the costs have to be borne by the entire citizenry. Anderson (1999:70) refers to these benefactors as one element of the ‘capacities for war’ in her analytical framework for assessing impact of aid on conflict. We explore her framework further. Warlords gain by looting relief supplies, taxing citizens or extorting through direct violence. Powerful people or those who possess skills sought by aid agencies benefit from the aid prompted by conflict related crisis (Anderson 1999: 14). Together with these ‘war entrepreneurs’, there are ‘dividers’ and ‘tensions’ which constitute the community capacity for war. Dividers may be historical and structural or recently created, external or internal, and may have narrow or broad potential of damage. Institutions that cause divisions and tensions include systems of discrimination and exclusion based on various socio-cultural attributes of people, their location or their political belief. Others are the armies, weapon markets, propaganda apparatus, etc. Just as a society possesses dividers, tensions and capacity for war, each

society has ‘connectors’ and ‘capacities for peace’. Connectors and capacities for peace could be long standing or newly created, inclusive or narrow, internal or external, and extant or potential. The institutions that may be good connectors are the local markets and infrastructures such as roads and telephones system that are utilized by both the contesting factions. In most violent conflicts, there are generally people on both sides of the contesting factions who believe in peace and are committed to ending violence. These people are important element of the capacity for peace.

### *Impact of Violent Conflicts on Community Capacity*

The capacity of local communities to organize for planning, implementing and operating community based development projects is severely diminished due to violent internal conflicts. Review of literature in the field of development in CAVICs suggests that the nature and quantity of the physical, political, financial, human and social capital available to the communities undergo several alterations during the time of conflict. Often the shift is against the well-being of local communities.

Marshall (2002a:67-68) discusses six categories of societal effects of violent conflicts—loss of human resources in terms of deaths, injuries and crimes; population dislocations; damage to societal networks; degradation of environmental quality; infrastructure damage and resource diversions; and diminished quality of life and non-reciprocal resource transfers such as capital outflows and brain drain. He (2002a:67) points out that the social relations “necessary for the proper and effective functioning of normative systems such as social co-operation, cohesion, coherence and co-ordination” are damaged at times of internal wars. Maynard (1997:203) finds contemporary wars affecting all levels of society through death, dislocation, famine and disease, and coinciding with failed economic, political, and social structures; and food insecurity. Adams and Bradbury (1995:9) note that civilians have become “not just incidental victims, but the main targets, of violence” in internal conflicts. Violent conflicts disrupt social security networks; transforms social relations; destroys infrastructure, production capacity, communications, markets and environmental resources.

Violent internal conflicts “weaken the social fabric” of a country in contrast to inter-state wars, where the social unity within a country may be enhanced (Colletta and Cullen 2000:3).

The authors discussed above provide a base for delineating the factors that diminish community capacity for planning, implementing and operating community based development projects in CAVICs. This is presented in Figure 2.1. First, there is a destruction of physical infrastructure such as bridges, schools, government buildings, power plants, etc. The rate of taking up newer development projects is also slowed down. Second, power shifts from existing to newer organizations as political adversaries are attacked. In some instances, insurgents capture territories and there is a state of dual governance. Third, there is a shift in financial resources available to these communities, both at the international and local level. Money is diverted to maintaining war. Development funds are underutilized. Revenues decrease, banks and credit systems are disrupted, and agricultural production decreases. Fourth, the existing human capital gets shattered as a result of forced displacement, brain drain, lowered self-esteem, war related fatalities, increased workload on women and children, and overall socio-psychological insecurity. Fifth, as a result of this degeneration in various forms of capital available to the communities, the social capital degenerates along with them. The society is no longer in a position to utilize individuals’ productive capacity in a secure environment. There is a breakdown of social relationships and of community organizations. Communities eventually lose the capacity to plan, implement and manage community based development projects because of such degeneration in the capital supporting them. Capacity for peace is simultaneously degenerated. This degeneration of community capacity shifts the focus of sociologists, either practicing or researching community based development projects in CAVICs, to investigate the interplay of community capacity with development and peacebuilding.

### *Development, Community Capacity and Relationship Building*

The human development perspective of the mid-1980s brought new understanding of development as capacitation and enlargement of people’s choices (Pieterse 2001:7). From

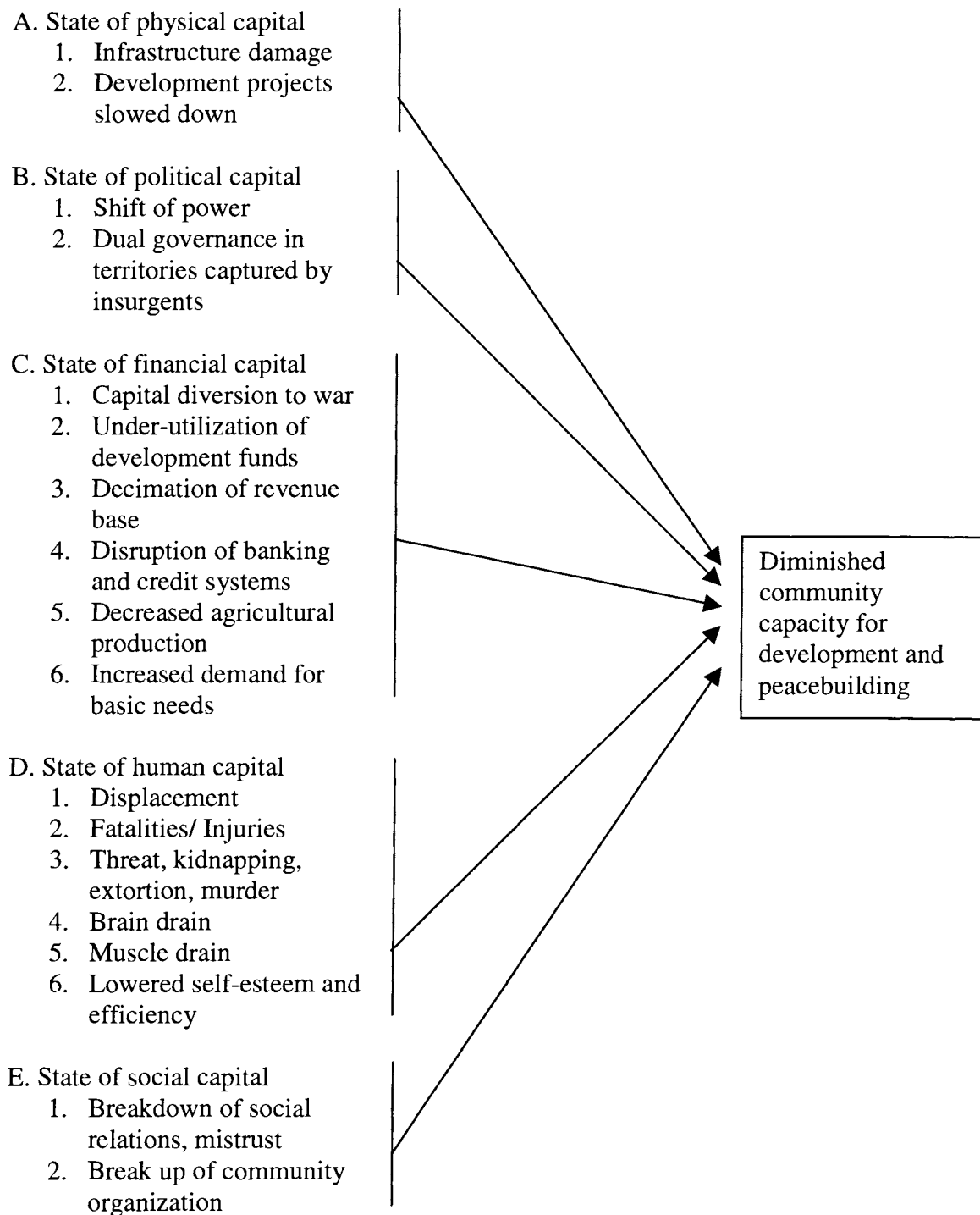


Figure 2.1: Factors Diminishing Community Capacity for Development and Peacebuilding in Communities Affected with Violent Internal Conflicts

this position, people are viewed as being “actively involved—given the opportunity—in shaping their own destiny, and not just as passive recipients of the cunning development programs” (Sen 2000:53). Since the mid-1980s, capacitation and empowerment approaches have featured prominently in most community based development projects in developing countries. As a result of this paradigmatic shift in the development approach, most international development agencies that are supporting community based development projects seek participation of local communities in the overall project cycle. Such is sought through strengthening the capacity of local communities and thus empowering them to plan, implement and manage development projects. Capacity strengthening measures include training, exchange visits, home visits, focus group discussions, participatory appraisals, one-on-one confidence building sessions, etc. In most cases, there are numerous formal partnerships, which involves various forms of horizontal and vertical relationship building—between community people, indigenous organizations, user groups of community based development projects, local NGOs, local private sector entrepreneurs, local government bodies, national NGOs, central government, international NGOs (INGOs), and multi-lateral development agencies such as the United Nations, World Bank and Asian Development Bank.

### *Peacebuilding, Community Capacity and Relationship Building*

The relationship building approach appears prominently in the peacebuilding literature, as well. Goodhand and Lewer (1999:70) highlight the need to build “social capital and local capacities” for agencies to be able to contribute to peacebuilding. Lederach (1999), whose work is most discussed, reflects across two decades of working for conflict transformation and peacebuilding. He points to three gaps—interdependence, justice and process-structure in prevalent peacebuilding frameworks. By the interdependence gap he refers to the need to build vertical as well as horizontal relationships before, during and after formal accords are signed. He proposes building horizontal and vertical capacities for a sustained peace. The emphasis at the horizontal level should be to work with counterparts and enemies. At the vertical level, the emphasis should be to develop relationships of respect and understanding

between higher levels of leadership with that of grassroots level, and vice versa. The notion of vertical capacity as espoused by Lederach implies that “if these relations are to foster legitimate genuine political capacities”, then they have to cover relations between various actors at multiple levels (Kumar 2001:186). Pointing to the justice gap, Lederach argues that much of contemporary peace processes have been negotiation-centric and seek to reduce direct violence rather than to address the root causes, i.e., the structural issues which give rise to violence in the first place. Agerbak (1996:27) notes:

The cause (of violent conflict) is not so much lack of resources, per se, as injustice: social, economic, and political structures, which maintain the dominance of an in-group at the center of power, over an out-group at the periphery, to the extent of denying the most basic economic, social and political rights.

Galtung (1996:40) has referred to such injustice as structural violence. He draws a distinction between direct, structural and cultural violence. He points out that direct violence is meant to offend the basic needs of others, while violence becomes structural when such offenses are institutionalized in social and economic practices such as exploitation and repression. When aspects of culture such as religion and language legitimize direct and structural violence, he argues, then the violence is distinguished as cultural. Finally, by referring to the process-structure gap, Lederach points to the need to understand peace as a process of change based on relationship building rather than an end target. Based on these arguments, Lederach (1999) uses the term conflict transformation rather than conflict resolution. His framework showing actors and approaches involved in peacebuilding is presented in figure 2.2. This model highlights a distinct vertical gap between various levels of actors, and thus the lack of useful relationships among them.

The target of such conflict transformation is to reduce or remove the root causes of direct or structural violence “through addressing needs and interests” (Davies 2002:109). This way, Davies argues, conflicts can be transformed from “violence to integrative efforts for sustainable development.” Such an approach provides the basic conditions required to enable stable, cooperative relations based on trust, both within and across groups.

Peacebuilding that is transformative and that addresses these shortcomings seeks to empower individuals, nurtures mutuality and community, and helps people to be “full participants in the decisions and environment that affect their lives” (Lederach 1995:21).

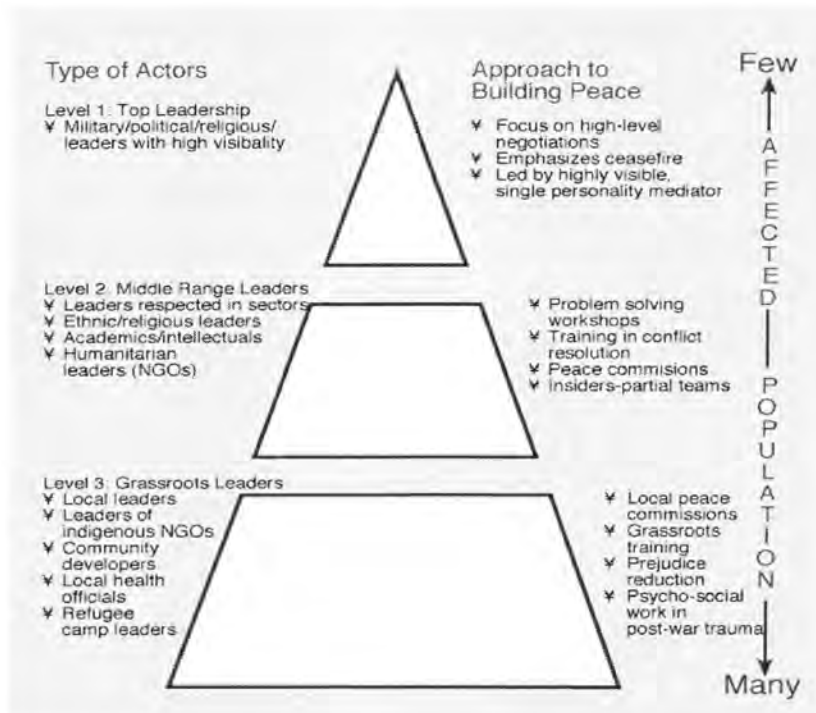


Fig 2.2: Actors and Peacebuilding Foci (Lederach 1999:29)

### *Regenerating Community Capacity- Intersection of Development and Peacebuilding*

In their study of violent conflict and transformation of social capital in CAVICs, Colletta and Cullen (2000:4) emphasize the need for restoring social capital for socioeconomic development in CAVICs. They argue that replenishing other forms of capital is not sufficient. This implies that a community devoid of social capital can hardly utilize the available physical, human or financial capital for its betterment. In this interpretation, regenerating social capital is, in essence, regenerating the community capacity. Regeneration



of social capital thus becomes a pre-condition for its own utilization, as well as for the utilization of other forms of capital available to communities in CAVICs.

Pugh (2000:1) contends that the aim of external actors has been to regenerate lives and livelihoods of communities worn out by violent conflicts. The term ‘regeneration’ signifies a self-sustaining process of “social, political and economic adjustment to conditions of relative peace” in which the people affected by violence “can begin to prioritize future goals beyond their immediate survival” (Pugh 2000:2). Varying terminologies are used in the discourse of development in CAVICs. Taking examples from the refugee repatriation literature, Hammond (1999) identifies several words that begin with a ‘re’ and argues that they are highly problematic. The word returnee, for example, implies that a person is returning to something familiar. For Hammond, use of words such as returnee, reintegration, reconstruction and rehabilitation convey value-laden ideas of agencies regarding how the affected people should lead their lives upon return. Her argument is that the operative principles should instead be ‘construction’, ‘creativity’, ‘innovation’ and ‘improvisation’. Use of the terms ‘regeneration’ should be viewed with this insight.

From the above discussions two points where development and peacebuilding clearly intersect can be discerned. First, we find a similarity in terms of the rhetoric, goals and nature of participants of both development and violent conflicts. Violent conflicts revolve around problems of “justice, empowerment and participation, all of which are the rhetoric of long-term development” (Adams and Bradbury 1995:12). Both violent conflicts and development challenge the status quo. People adopting direct violence are generally trying to tackle structural violence; that is, they are trying to “achieve changes in the underlying economic, cultural, social, and political structures affecting their lives” (Lederach 1999:31). In terms of its nature, like violent conflicts, development too is “conflictual, destabilizing, and subversive because it challenges established economic, social, or political power structures, which inhibit individuals and groups from pursuing their potential” (Bush and Opp 1999:187). Second, we note that strengthening the community capacity through horizontal and vertical relationship building is a basic requirement for both development and

peacebuilding. Given this emphasis on strengthening relationships, and the commonality found in the rhetoric, goals and nature, there is a possibility that intervention for development can actually help reduce the potential for violent conflicts. Working in a community affected with violent conflicts is a development challenge in unique conditions of a war-torn society (Stiefel 1998: 15) and has to do with “mending relations and restoring dignity, trust and faith” (Stiefel 1998:12). These intersections, then offer us the point of departure for exploring further our research questions.

Colletta and Cullen (2000:14) suggest building and integrating horizontal and vertical social capital for making the society more cohesive, reducing the society’s potential for conflict, and making the society capable of managing conflicts before they turn violent. Their model for societies with high and low levels of conflict is presented in Figure 2.3. According to this model, a society with a low level of social cohesion and a high level of conflict is characterized by exclusion, oppression by the state, inequity and inequality, corrupt and inefficient bureaucracy, and closedness. In contrast, a society with a high level of social cohesion and a low level of conflict is characterized by inclusion, access and equality of opportunity, efficient bureaucracy, and openness. The framework used by Lederach (1999:29), presented in Figure 2.2 and the framework used by Colletta and Cullen (2000:14) presented in Figure 2.3 give directions and substantiate the need, for regenerating community capacity in CAVICs for development and peacebuilding.

### *Human Agency and Structure*

From the standpoint of Giddens’ structuration theory, Galtung’s ‘structural violence’ can be viewed as a social phenomenon not external to social actors but “rules and resources produced and reproduced by actors in their practices” (Gordon 1998:648). If we can then conceivably alter these rules and resources, there is a possibility that we can influence the production of violent conflicts. The patterns of violence can be modified “through individual agency, which in turn is itself shaped by structural and institutional processes” (Goodhand and Hulme 1999:23). Regenerating community capacity through building relationships

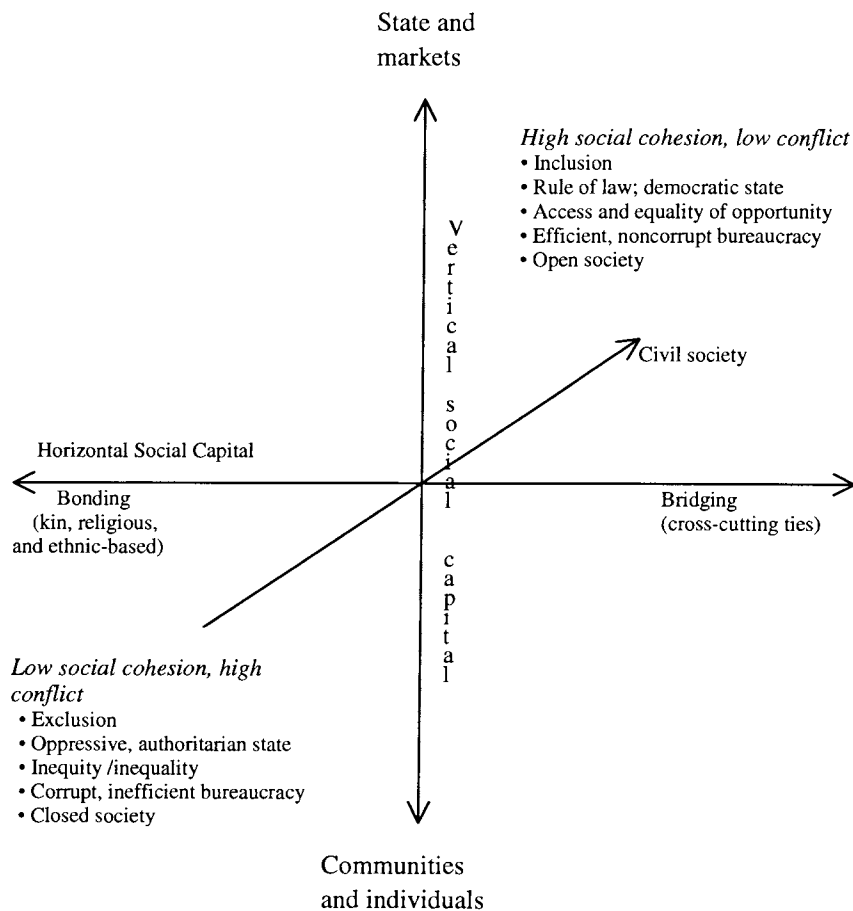


Fig. 2.3- Social Cohesion: Integration of Vertical and Horizontal Social Capital  
(Colletta and Cullen 2000:14)

between people is a major way to act on the individual agency and the structures of which the individual is a part. Such regeneration of community capacity is expected to provide an environment for community development, and diminish the potential for future conflict.

Using these frameworks, this research enters the domain of applied sociology, a sociology that focuses on “actionable or malleable social factors to a greater extent” than theoretical research; a sociology that is “rarely explicitly sociological” although sociology provides the theory and methods of study (Gordon 1998:500). The major task of this research then

becomes to determine the nature of appropriate principles and practices to regenerate capacity of communities in CAVICs. Figure 2.4 shows the conceptual macro-level model of the research. It shows the relationship between community capacity, development and peacebuilding. Development can have divergent consequences. It can reduce the potential of communities for conflict or exacerbate it. When development fails by becoming isolationist, and excludes people, it can provide the ingredients for violent conflicts. Such exclusion, when mixed with structural violence, may instigate violent conflicts. However, development that is inclusive of people and that seeks to empower them increases social cohesion and reduces the potential of the community for violence. Similarly, peacebuilding that focuses on reducing the interdependence, justice and process structure gaps provides a favorable environment for development.

The conceptual micro-level model shown in Figure 2.5 posits the nature of principles and practices that influence strengthening of community capacity in CAVICs. Strengthening community capacity includes (i) establishing trust and building social relationships (ii) restoring physical, financial and human capital (iii) reviving community institutions and organizations and (iv) empowering individuals and their organizations to plan, implement and manage community based development projects, and for peacebuilding. The principles and practices that strengthen community capacity are divided broadly in to three areas—basic principles, community participation and organizational capacity. Basic principles include transparency and neutrality. Community participation includes fostering trust, treating individuals as full participants with capabilities, utilizing extant forms of capital and encouraging participation. The abilities to integrate conflict management in to programs, to be development oriented, to be flexible in approach, and to make staff capable of working in conflict situations comprise the organizational capacity.

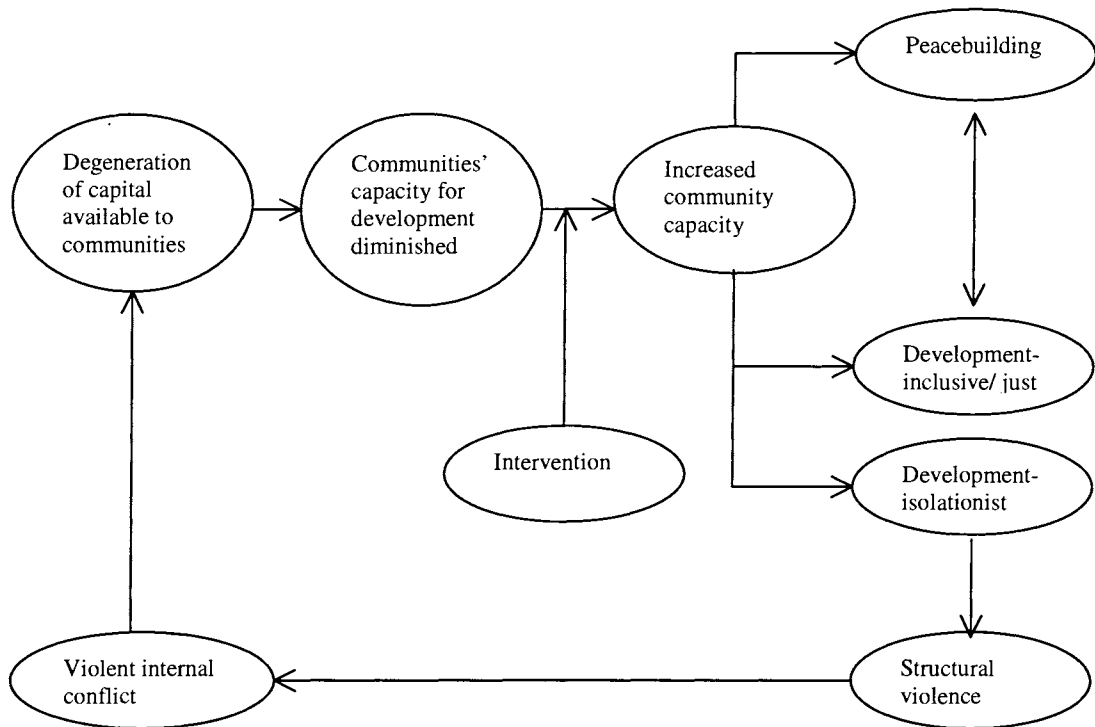


Figure 2.4: Macro-Level Model Showing Relationship Between Community Capacity, Development and Violent Internal Conflict

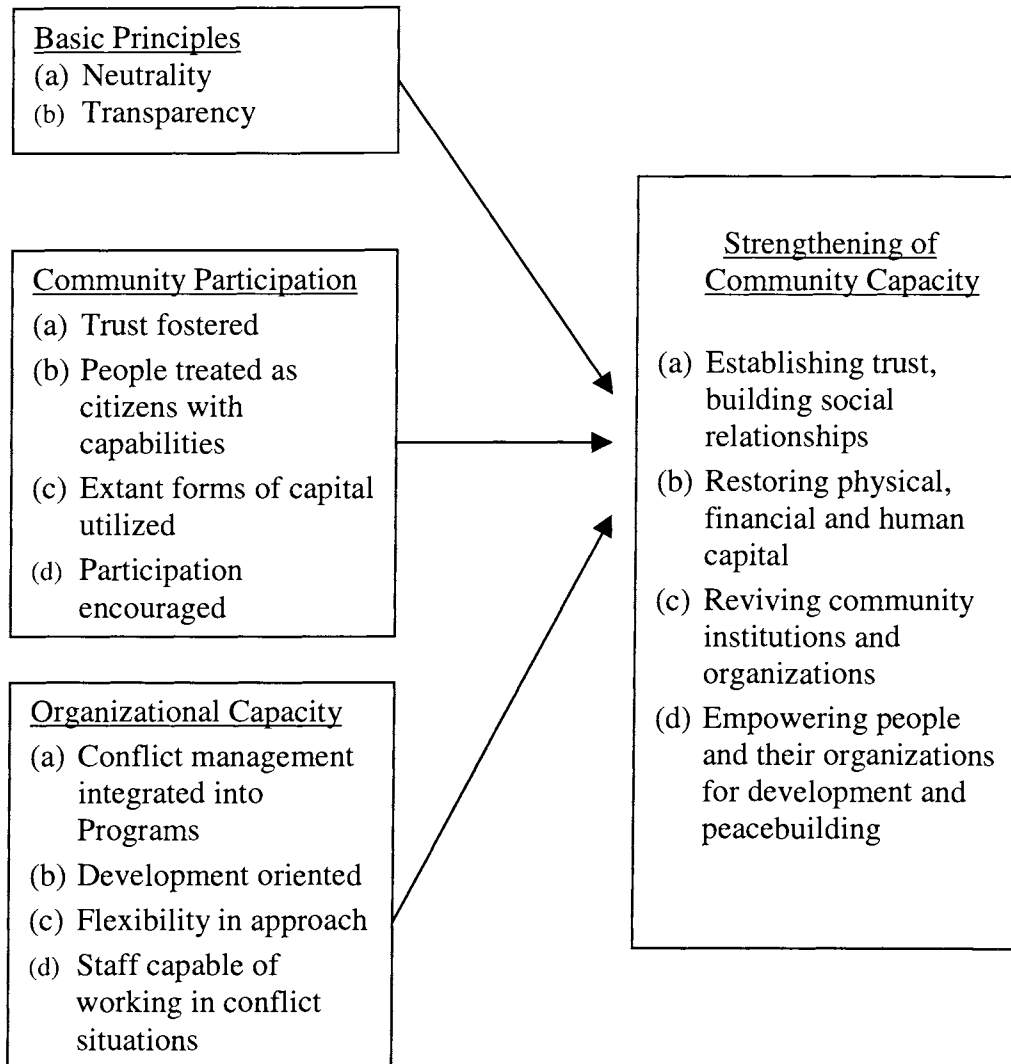


Figure 2.5: Micro-Level Model for Principles and Practices that Strengthen Capacity of Communities Affected with Violent Conflict

### CHAPTER III

#### METHODS OF INVESTIGATION

##### *Study Population*

Community based development projects in countries affected by violent conflict involve a host of stakeholders at different levels—individual, local, national and international, each with distinct roles and responsibilities. At the individual level are the people, who are active participants and beneficiaries of community based development efforts. At the local level are the indigenous organizations, user groups of community based development projects, local NGOs, insurgency groups, and local government bodies. At the national level are national NGOs and the central government. At the international level are international NGOs, multi-lateral development agencies such as the United Nations, World Bank and Asian Development Bank. The major sources of funding for community based development projects in CAVICs usually come from the actors at the international level.

Stakeholders that shape community based development operate at all levels, forming interdependent relationships among each other. The efforts made by different stakeholders at different levels in different locations ultimately need to reach the communities affected by conflicts. The study population consists of the stakeholders, with focus on international development agencies. The principal data sources are publications that discuss development and peacebuilding in CAVICs and documents of international development agencies.

##### *Selection of Countries and Cases*

The conflict dataset used for the selection of countries is that prepared by the International Peace Research Institute Oslo and Uppsala University (Gleditsch et al. 2002). While selecting the countries, the following criteria were set:

1. Countries where conflicts continue into, or began in, the 1980s. As noted earlier, this was the time when the capacitation concept gained prominence in the field of community development.
2. Countries where conflicts have lasted for at least twenty years. This has given the opportunity to assess involvement of development agencies over time in community based development projects.
3. Countries where the conflicts are/were war-like<sup>3</sup>. This allowed the research to focus on the worst cases of violence and on interventions in such situations.
4. Countries that have a significant number of community based development projects supported by international development agencies.
5. Countries that are low income or lower middle-income economies<sup>4</sup>.

Two other criteria of interest for this research were the stage of conflict and type of conflict.

*Stage of Conflict*, categorized for the purpose of this research as ongoing or settled. Where armed groups are engaged in direct violence such as killing, rape, extortion, abduction, thereby resulting to insecure and unstable conditions for community based development projects, the conflict is categorized as an ongoing conflict. Where such violence has generally ceased as a result of formal negotiation, and development environment is relatively secure and stable, the conflict has been referred to as settled.

*Types of Conflict*, categorized for the purpose of this research as ideological conflict or identity conflict. This categorization is based on the primary goal of the citizenry that is contesting with the establishment. Violent conflict where the primary goal of the contesting groups is to govern the country based on a particular political ideology, such as communism, monarchy, capitalism, etc., the conflict has been referred to as ideological. Here the citizenry

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<sup>3</sup> The PRIO/Uppsala dataset (Gleditsch et al.:2002) labels conflicts as being minor, intermediate or war-like in terms of number of battle related deaths. It considers a conflict to be at war level for the year when there have been at least 1000 such deaths in that year.

<sup>4</sup> The World Bank (2002a) defines low-income economies as having Gross National Income per capita of less than US\$ 745 and low middle-income economies between US\$ 746-2975.



involved in violence is not divided, at least in the early stages of conflict, in terms of particular socio-cultural attributes such as caste, ethnicity, tribe, religion or a language.

A violent conflict waged by a portion of the citizenry generally sharing the same socio-cultural attributes against the establishment that promotes another set of socio-cultural attributes, has been referred to as an identity conflict. In an identity conflict, the dominant theme is “ethnic, religious, tribal or linguistic differences” (Rupasinghe 1992:14). Such groups contest for devolution of power, for equitable access to resources and opportunities, and for an end to state hegemony that favors a particular socio-cultural group. At occasions they may demand to secede from the state.

Both criteria were used in the selection of four countries, namely, Cambodia, Somalia, Guatemala, and Sri Lanka (See Table 3.1). Cambodia witnessed over two decades of civil war between monarchial, capitalistic and various communist forces that were supported by China, USA and former Soviet Union at different time slices between 1967-1989. The state, particularly during Pol Pot’s rule (1975-1979), sponsored organized violence against citizens in experimentations based on communist ideology. The civil war ended in 1989 with the disintegration of Soviet Union. A formal Peace Treaty was signed in 1991. The conflict in Cambodia is categorized as *settled ideological*. The cold war ideological rivalry had its toll on Somalia, too. There, the regime of General Siad Barre overthrew a civilian regime in 1969 and began brutal repression of the citizens in yet another experimentation of ideology — the ideology of Soviet backed scientific socialism. In 1978, when the former Soviet Union decided to back rival Ethiopia in the Ogaden war between Somalia and Ethiopia, Barre changed his allegiance to the US, and waged a clan-based repression until 1991. A failed economy coupled with severe inter-clan fighting led to the end of the Barre regime in 1991. Although a famine struck post-Barre Somalia is today engaged in sporadic inter-clan fighting, given that the conflict’s seed was planted and nurtured by the cold war ideological rivalry, the conflict has been categorized as *ongoing ideological*.

In Guatemala, the indigenous Mayan population faced discrimination at the hands of non-indigenous Ladinos (Spanish-speaking) from colonial times. Although the indigenous

population constituted about half the population<sup>5</sup>, the Guatemalan state promoted only the Ladino culture and their interests. Ethnic differences were the basis for unfair distribution of resources (Colletta and Cullen 2000:56). Subsequently, insurgent groups waged a war against the Guatemalan state in the 1960s, adopting Marxist doctrines. Although led by disenfranchised Ladinos, the insurgency incorporated Mayan concerns, recruited large number of Mayans, and based themselves in the Mayan regions. What followed was a brutal conflict in which the government forces targeted the entire Mayan people living in areas from where the guerrillas operated. The war ended finally in 1996 when the Guatemalan government and the leftist guerrillas signed a formal accord to protect the rights of the indigenous population. Although waged by leftist forces, this war escalated on issues of identity, and as a response of one portion of the citizenry sharing common socio-cultural attributes who faced state sponsored injustice and exclusion. This is a case of a *settled identity* conflict.

In yet another identity conflict, in Sri Lanka, minority ethnic group of Tamils have been fighting since 1983 for a separate homeland to be established in the north and east of Sri Lanka, with a state that is controlled by majority Sinhalis. The ethnic tension in Sri Lanka dates back to the British colonial rule, continued through independence, and finally broke out to a violent conflict. The 1970s saw policies and legislation that favored the majority Sinhalis and excluded the minority Tamils- Ceylon was renamed Sri Lanka, Sinhali was named the official language, and their religion (Buddhism) given special protection. This led to the formation of Tamil militant groups like the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), which ultimately embarked on a secessionist movement. Several ceasefires and negotiations over the decades have been broken. Prospects for peace looked a little better in 2003, with a Norwegian brokered ceasefire holding for over a year. The conflict is categorized as an *ongoing ethnic* conflict.

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<sup>5</sup> The national census reports their population as 43% (World Bank 2003) but Mayans believe that they have been substantially undercounted. Padilla (1992) reports more than 50%, while some estimate the population to be as high as 65%.

The war in Nepal was waged by the Nepal Communist Party (Maoists) in 1996 with the target of replacing the constitutional monarchy by a communist republic. The Maoists have embedded concerns of identity tactfully in this war between the monarchical, parliamentary and Maoist forces. Nepal is a case of an *ongoing ideological* conflict.

Categorization of any conflict into definite types appear problematic given the dynamic nature of conflicts, as well as the means adopted by contesting factions to achieve their stated goals. An ideological conflict can get transformed into an identity conflict such as in Somalia, while warring factions fighting for identity can adopt ideological means such as in Guatemala. Conversely, issues of identity are charged by contesting factions to establish their ideology such as the Maoists of Nepal. Conflict dynamics also change when international governments enter the scene for their own interests. Somalia, Cambodia and Guatemala suffered from the cold war rivalry, while the Sri Lankan conflict took new turns after the Indian Peace Keeping Forces arrived.

Although slightly problematic, viewing conflict in terms of the ideology and identity elements entrenched in them helps understand the historical context and the structural causes of conflict. Understanding conflict requires knowing “how social structures shape the identities of individuals and vice versa” (Goodhand and Hulme 1999: 23). Such analysis allows examination of the basis of mistrust and hatred often rooted in oppressive structures. Working for development and peace in CAVICs involves building relationships of trust between people affected by violence. Hence, insights of the identity and ideological aspects of conflict better enable practitioners to devise appropriate interventions to repair relationships that have broken in different ways. Similarly, the distinction of conflicts as ongoing or settled is important for studying how community based development projects have been conducted during as well as after violent conflicts.

Two country case studies are from Asia, one is from Latin America, and one is from Africa. Table 3.2 gives the years of conflict, duration of conflict, stage of conflict, nature of conflict, and the economy of the country.

Table 3.1: Characteristics of countries selected

Basic nature of conflict	Stage of Conflict	
	Ongoing	Settled
Ideological	Somalia	Cambodia
Identity	Sri Lanka	Guatemala

Table 3.2: Description of the violence in countries selected

Country*	Years of violence	No. of Years	Stage	Basic/ Initial nature	Comty Dev Projects/ Int agencies	Economy
Cambodia	1967-89	23	Settled	Ideological	Present	Low Income
Guatemala	1965-95	31	Settled	Identity	Present	Low Middle Income
Somalia	1969-	34	Ongoing	Ideological	Present	Low Income
Sri Lanka	1983-	20	Ongoing	Identity	Present	Low Middle Income
Nepal	1996-	07 +	Ongoing	Ideological	Present	Low Income

\*War-like, low income or lower middle-income countries with significant community based development projects supported by international development agencies.

Following community based development projects were examined from the countries selected:

1. Sri Lanka: *Listening to the Displaced* project by Oxfam Sri Lanka and Save the Children Fund Sri Lanka.
2. Somalia: Supporting seed systems in Southern Somalia by Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO), Care (an international NGO) and other agencies.
3. Cambodia: Six rural development programs by various organizations---Oxfam, Krom Akphiwat Phum, United Nations Development Program(UNDP), Hun Sen Kraingyov

Development Centre, German Corporation for International Cooperation (GTZ), Partners for Development.

4. Guatemala: Western Altiplano Natural Resources Management Project by World Bank and Global Environment Fund.

Based on the experience and lessons learnt from these case studies, as well as other literature, the research highlights principles and practices applied for regenerating community capacity for development in CAVICs and, through this, for peacebuilding. The research then checks the application of such principles and practices to one specific country, Nepal. First, the interface between development and the Maoist-led People's War has been examined. Two recent agency documents of two major international agencies active in Nepal — the World Bank and the European Commission — have then been studied.

### *Questions Asked*

Three principal questions were asked in relation to the documents studied for the research:

- How have international development agencies' responded to conflict?
- What are the principles followed by agencies that have been helpful to regenerate community capacity?
- What are the practices followed by agencies that have been helpful to regenerate community capacity?

## CHAPTER IV

### FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

In chapter two, discussion of the literature and conceptual models concluded that regenerating community capacity was a fundamental requirement for both development and peacebuilding in CAVICs. In this chapter, we explore this further in terms of the principles and practices used by international development agencies engaged in community based development projects.

We begin by analyzing four case studies. In order to proceed with our investigation, we first examine a seed distribution program in Somalia. This is an example of an unsuccessful program where agencies have failed to strengthen local capabilities. Next, an innovative project *Listening to the Displaced* in Sri Lanka is examined. The project is an attempt to enable national and international agencies to hear the voices and assess the needs of the displaced. Then, experiences of six community based development programs in post-conflict Cambodia are reviewed. Finally, a program designed as part of the Guatemala Government's program of interventions in the implementation of the Peace Accords is analyzed.

Our analysis of development projects and experiences from these case studies is divided to two major sections. First the context of conflict in which the projects were launched is described. It also includes a short description of the project objectives. The second section in each case study deals with the practices and principles, that is, the factors that strengthen community capacity in CAVICs. The principles and practices that strengthen community capacity are divided broadly into three areas - basic principles, community participation and organizational capacity. Basic principles include transparency and neutrality. Community participation includes fostering trust, treating people as participants with capabilities, utilizing extant forms of capital and encouraging participation. The abilities to integrate conflict management in to programs, to be development oriented, to be flexible in approach, and to make staff capable of working in conflict situations comprise the organizational capacity.

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**Case I: Supporting Seed Systems in Southern Somalia**

FAO, CARE and Others (1991 to 2000)

Sources: Longley *et al.* (2001); Sperling and Longley (2002)

***Project Context***

During the final years (1988-1991) of his regime, dictator Siad Barre's army conducted cruel repression in southern Somalia against civilians. There thousands were displaced; mines laid; infrastructure destroyed; grain, seed stock, water pumps and livestock looted; and fertile pieces of lands forcefully reappropriated. Added to the crisis was the famine. As a result, agriculture production was suspended for at least one season in many parts of southern Somalia. When farmers returned, they found it difficult to reclaim their lands, suffered severe labor shortage, and found themselves totally deprived of their means of livelihood.

International development agencies responded with various relief and distribution programs to recover southern Somalia's agriculture from the market, security and famine 'shocks'. One such response has been distribution of cereal (mainly sorghum) and pulse (mainly maize) seeds. Some 2000 to 4000 metric tons of seed were distributed annually since 1991 by international NGOs in southern Somalia. In 2001, Longley, Jones, Hussein and Audi undertook a field level study to assess the impact of such seed distribution on the local farming systems. In terms of agricultural production Somalia is divided into pastoralism, agro-pastoralism and riverine farming. This study focuses on the farmers falling in the latter two categories, who hail from minority Rahanweyn and Bantu communities. These minority groups have been socially and politically marginalized. Important lessons from this project are in the area of community participation and capacity of organizations to work in ongoing conflicts.

## *Discussion*

### *(i) Community Participation*

*Ignored Extant System:* There existed an established local seed system in southern Somalia. Farmers saved their own seed except in conditions of drought or severe insecurity. In such situations, the off farm sources for seeds were local markets, other farmers and relief seed distributions. It was rarely the relief supplies alone. This implies that the primary source of off-farm seed was the existing social and economic networks. Cash transactions and gift exchange also played important roles. However, lack of cash or reciprocity in social relationships limited a household's capacity to access seeds. The research by Longley et al. shows that the problem is not of overall seed availability but rather of the means to access seeds at time of need. This is also demonstrated by the fact that even during the heightened crisis of 1991-2, the local seed market was able to transfer seed from certain surplus areas to certain deficit areas. Longley et al. also found that small local traders had elaborate seed storage systems suiting the local context, especially for protection against insects, which commercial suppliers did not possess. In order to satisfy relief agency seed standards, the suppliers procured freshly harvested grain. The local traders could not compete with the commercial suppliers and consequently their livelihoods have been adversely affected. The agencies failed to understand, support and develop the existing seed marketing system in the project area. The agencies played the role of providers rather than strengthening capacity of local systems.

*People treated as victims:* Such distribution has increased the vulnerability of farmers by promoting dependency, disrupting local markets and limiting crop diversity. The project highlights the tendency of development agencies to treat the affected population as helpless people rather than as full, effective participants.



(ii) *Organizational Capacity:*

*More Relief than Development Orientation:* The case demonstrates that agencies may feel comfortable with short-term and rigid relief interventions such as seed distributions. It also suggests that the structures of aid delivery may not allow more developmental, capacity building interventions. Even if seed were to be distributed, suggest Longley et al., it would have been effective only if small amounts of new varieties were injected to permit farmers to test and experiment them. Besides, sorghum and maize multiply at a fast rate and do not require continued seed supply for more than one or two seasons. The amount of seed required to plant sorghum is also low.

Agencies acquire seeds through calling tenders from commercial seed companies, often controlled by foreign agencies with profit motives. Decisions are made on the basis of availability and cost rather than quality. Reputed companies that can multiply and maintain large quantities of quality seed are unwilling to participate because of the market uncertainty. As a result, the agencies often end up purchasing low quality seeds. This shows that agencies determine projects according to what they can deliver rather than actual needs.

The study notes that although there is a growing recognition of farmers' vulnerability resulting from distribution programs, even development oriented projects tend to establish formal seed sector structures (such as seed multiplication schemes, seed processing and storage facilities and dissemination strategies), often without attempting to understand how farmer's or local seed systems operate.

*Staff Capability:* The case demonstrates that agencies operational in conflict areas often lack the expertise required to undertake detailed assessments needed to understand local systems.

Longley et al. propose a framework for understanding the strengths and weakness of existing seed systems and identifying appropriate interventions. The factors to be considered are demand, use and management of seed by farmers; supply of seeds by farmers, traders, and NGOs; social and economic dynamics of local seed supply such as markets, networks;

organizational capacities of NGOs; seed characteristics; and linkages within the seed sector and with other sectors. Other proposed interventions are facilitating farmers' access to seeds and addressing production constraints; testing and adopting effective pest control measures; making available air-tight containers to local petty traders to store seed; providing irrigation pumps through loan schemes. They also suggest adopting the seed voucher schemes successfully tested in Kenya and Uganda. In this scheme, poorer farmers are provided with vouchers, which have a pre-determined cash value. A fair is held where farmers with surplus seed and traders exchange seed with the vouchers. The vouchers are then redeemed. In this way, farmers can access seed of their choice and themselves judge the quality.

## **Case II: Sri Lanka, Project *Listening to the Displaced***

Oxfam Sri Lanka (1996-1998)

Source: Demusz (2000)

### *Project Context*

One of the most massive displacements of the Sri Lankan civil war occurred in 1995 when an estimated half a million Tamils were displaced from Jaffna to the Wanni region of Northern Sri Lanka. As a response, the international community carried out a large humanitarian relief operation to help the displaced. The relief support programs carried out by various international agencies in the Wanni region, however, had several drawbacks. Agencies supported communities in specific areas of their expertise rather than actual community needs. Their needs were rarely assessed and voices seldom incorporated by agencies in their planning.

Oxfam staff felt the need to address the shortcomings of the customary relief programs. The challenge was to understand how the displaced people prioritize their overall needs, and how such needs could be included in agency interventions. As a result, the *Listening to the Displaced* project was designed and implemented in the Wanni region from 1996 to 1998. The project's aim was listening to those affected by violent internal conflicts, assessing their

concerns, and incorporating their voices into programming in situations of violent conflict. Save the Children Fund joined the program in 1997.

## *Discussion*

### *(i) Community Participation*

Semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions were used at the early stage. Learning from these experiences, the project utilized extensive fieldwork at the later stage—a mixture of methods involving introduction, community overview, brainstorming, prioritizing, small group discussion, making presentations, drawing conclusions and team de-briefing—to enable participants to be involved. Both English and Tamil languages were used. The voices of the community members were systematically analyzed. An example is illustrated below:

*Voice:* “Our parents are willing to do any kind of labor job, but the people who live here say they (our parents) don’t have the skills to do them (Demusz 2000: 34).”

*Implication:* Unemployment problem, treatment of people as helpless.

*Analysis:* The following table illustrates how this voice was further probed:

<p><b>COPING MECHANISMS</b></p> <p><i>What are you doing about the problem?</i></p> <p>Agriculture laboring.</p>	<p><b>PEOPLE’S CAPACITIES</b></p> <p><i>What can you do about the problem?</i></p> <p>More farming.</p>
<p><b>PAST INTERVENTIONS</b></p> <p><i>What have others done about it?</i></p> <p>NGO gave ½ acre of land and seed for cultivation, but we did not know how to grow.</p>	<p><b>FUTURE INTERVENTIONS</b></p> <p><i>What can others do about it?</i></p> <p>Provide access to credit, irrigated land and agricultural inputs such as water pumps, fertilizers etc.</p>

The project had various outcomes. First, it could identify the changing needs for support of the participants—men and women, able and disabled, widows and orphans, etc. Second, the

project assessed the coping mechanisms and capacities at different levels. Many capacities for small-scale initiatives in agriculture, household production and trade, were discovered. Third, the project revealed the reasons for failures of past projects, and provided directions for future projects. For example, small projects that provided access to credit were suggested. Fourth, analysis of the overall results enabled better program planning by agencies. The major lesson learnt regarding community participation from this project is that participation of children, disabled, women and men belonging to all ages, ethnicities and abilities is necessary and possible while working in CAVICs.

*(ii) Organizational Capacity*

*Flexibility (Output vs. Process):* Projects like the *Listening to the Displaced* are more process oriented and often do not produce immediate tangible outputs. Also, in such projects people are required to voice their opinions throughout the project. It was Oxfam's experience that in conflict zones, the controlling forces may feel threatened if attempts are made to encourage people to speak up. At one stage, Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), the Tamil insurgent group, wanted agencies to implement programs that met basic needs of people rather than projects like the *Listening to the Displaced* project. This situation suggests a need to maintain a balance between being process driven and producing outputs.

*Staff Capability:* Most NGO staff have limited practical experience of research and participatory methodologies and need training for these. Demusz (2000) views that letting project staff conduct this kind of action research helps to build the capacity of the staff. Insecure conditions such as aerial bombing, cross fires and abductions do not allow field workers the required time to conduct their activities in CAVICs. This was a problem faced by Oxfam staff in many areas. In such cases, community meetings had to be organized after receiving consent from local authorities, either the government or insurgents. Without consent it would be difficult to get access to the communities, while when consent was received, there existed risk of getting access to selected communities and getting messages dictated to the villagers. Gaining consent of as many stakeholders as possible can be difficult but necessary. Besides, extreme care should be provided not to let either the government or

the insurgents feel that the project is favoring the other side. Conducting these kind of activities require well-trained staff in the field.

The project is a case of how voices of those affected by violence can be heard and incorporated in development projects. Although carried out amidst violent conflict mainly with the displaced, the lessons learnt could be equally useful for agencies working in post conflict situations.

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### **Case III: Rural Development Programs in Cambodia**

Oxfam, Krom Akphiwat Phum, United Nations Development Program (UNDP), Hun Sen Kraingyov Development Centre, German Development Agency (GTZ) and Partners for Development (1992-1997)

Sources: Charya et al. (1998), McAndrew et al. (1999), Colletta and Cullen (2000)

#### *Project Context*

Community capacity for development projects is reemerging in post conflict Cambodia. Though severely weakened by the civil war, various forms of social capital such as the pagoda, informal networks (rice- water- and plate sharing groups), associations (rice banks, funeral associations and water users group) are reviving. Pagodas are Buddhist associations in rural Cambodia that have played historically an important role in the village decision-making processes. Such a revival has been partly possible because of various community based development projects launched in Cambodia since 1992. These projects were basically of two types: schemes to provide villagers access to credits, and infrastructure projects such as drinking water, irrigation, roads, health posts to provide villagers basic services. These projects have community participation, decentralization, and poverty-reduction as project strategies.

Charya et al. assessed six community based development projects carried out in post conflict Cambodia including that of UNDP and GTZ. They examined four issues: distribution of project benefits, extent of community ownership of projects, activities that supported

program sustainability, and relationship between organizational structure and implementation. Their experience provides us important lessons for working in post-conflict communities, especially in the area of community participation such as balancing between process and output, generating participation, and focusing on extant capital.

## *Discussion*

### *(i) Community Participation*

Infrastructure projects such as roads, wells, schools and healthcare centers were found to benefit the project communities evenly. Road improvements, in particular, are helping to transform economic livelihoods of village communities. However, provision of irrigation canals was found to benefit better off villagers who had improved access to land and water pumps. Regarding credit activities, poor villagers who did not have the means to repay were left out. Charya et al. conclude that the strategy of reaching the poor through community based development projects were successful when participation in activities was limited to the poor, and when combined with infrastructure projects.

*Focus on Extant Capital:* Community ownership of projects was found to be strong where villagers had been clearly informed about the projects and where they participated in the decision making, and sharing benefits and costs of projects. There, participation also involved dialogue with villagers before implementation of activities for arranging division of responsibilities between different groups, to draw up a written contract for each group including responsibilities for maintenance, to collect funds for maintenance from villagers, and to train villagers in repair and maintenance.

Village Development Committees (VDC), which had a sense of ownership and responsibility for development were all in villages with active pagodas, or where the VDC members were either members of the pagoda or had close links with it. The study by Charya et al. shows that both the traditional institutions of pagoda and recent institution of VDC were able to co-operate with each other for community based development projects. Both these institutions are local, and the success of the projects lies in being able to utilize them. Agencies such as

the UNDP and GTZ have focused on participatory planning, and also have villagers involved in project selection through Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) methods.

*(ii) Organizational Capacity*

*Flexibility (Output vs. Process):* Some of the development projects studied by Charya et al. emphasized delivering direct material benefits while others focused on processes. Charya et al. contend that there are potential risks in pursuing either strategy without regard for the other. While an output oriented approach runs the risk of undermining sustainability, a total process orientation runs the risk of not generating benefits.

**Case IV: Guatemala-Western Altiplano Natural Resources Management Project**

World Bank/Global Environment Fund (2003- )

Sources: World Bank (2003), Colletta and Cullen (2000)

*Project Context*

Maize and beans are major subsistence crops of the Mayans who constitute approximately half the population of Guatemala. However only 3% of Guatemalans hold about 70% of the arable land where coffee, sugar, bananas and cardamom are grown for export. During the period of the civil war, the Mayans fought with the government and local plantation owners to regain their rights, in particular access to land. The Guatemalan war had its toll on the Mayans of the Western Altiplano, too. Social relations were eroded, inter-ethnic trust damaged and community organizations broken. The war ended in 1996 with signing of the Peace Accords, which state that in order to construct a lasting peace in Guatemala, rural poverty must be tackled. They call for a reduction in social inequities, increased participation of indigenous groups in economic growth, sustainable management of natural resources, and regular government dialogue with civil society on development of policy and legal instruments. Community organizations are now slowly reemerging in Guatemala.

The Western Altiplano area has majority indigenous (Mayan) population. There, the GDP per capita is one fifth of the national average. This proposed World Bank project has been designed to be a part of the Guatemala Government's program of interventions in the implementation of the Peace Accords in the Western Altiplano region. The project region consists of 95% indigenous population. The project goal is to alleviate rural poverty and improve management of natural resources in 54 municipalities. This is targeted to be done by increasing social capital in natural resource management through support to communities, organizations and local authorities. Important lessons in the area of basic principles and community participation can be discerned.

### *Discussion*

#### *(i) Basic Principle*

*Transparency:* The program aims to develop education materials in nine principal languages of the region. An information campaign with the aim of ensuring transparency and effective dissemination of the program objectives is incorporated in the project design.

#### *(ii) Community Participation*

*Focus on Extant Capital:* The major stakeholders in this project are about 850 Community Associations, *Instancias Locales* and World Bank. Associations are legally constituted groups of rural citizens with common interests. Their role in the project is to determine local priorities, develop subproject proposals and submit them to the municipalities. They will also implement, operate and maintain community development projects. The *Instancias Locales* are municipal-level forums represented by indigenous villages and communities, producer groups, and NGOs with a local presence, the municipal government, and local civil society bodies. Their role is to review, prioritize and approve subprojects in scheduled public meetings.

The World Bank's strategies involve creating ownership of project activities, strengthening local management capacity, decentralizing decisions and support systems responsive to local



demands and needs, providing all stakeholders with access to information, training and technical assistance. The project has put emphasis on strengthening existing organizations rather than creating new ones. It seeks to support pre-existing Community Associations by providing funds, technical assistance and training. The project also aims to strengthen municipalities and Associations in participatory planning and proposal development, and to provide assistance in obtaining legal status. Further, it aims to support municipalities, communities and local organizations in participatory planning, formulation and execution of local projects for the use and management of natural resources. For building local capacity, the project has devised activities such as (i) providing conflict resolution support for land and resource access conflicts (ii) providing technical assistance for improving marketing for green produce, forming networks between local and national farmers' organizations, exporters and international trade promotion groups (iii) training for municipal level social workers on participatory planning, environment management, organization development, marketing, non-farm income generation, informal saving and credit schemes (iv) exchange visit for local leaders and farmers.

### **Cross Case Analysis and Discussion**

Now we outline various principles and practices adopted by agencies based on a cross case analysis as well as other literature.

#### ***Principles and Practices***

##### ***(i) Basic Principles***

***(a) Neutrality:*** Neutrality in projects mainly implies the ability to work without any kind of bias towards any of the warring factions. More and more agencies working in CAVICs are adopting a “robust form of impartiality” (Slim 1997:10). It is important for an agency to make its organizational position known to the combatants in order to operate in the midst of war (Slim 1998:8) as done in the *Listening to the Displaced* Project in Sri Lanka. Given that insurgent groups such as the Maoists of Nepal often label aid agencies as “agents of

imperialist forces”, neutrality is difficult to maintain both in words and deeds. The *Listening to the Displaced* Project in Sri Lanka is a case which demonstrates that, although difficult, it is crucial to maintain neutrality while working in war zones.

*(b) Transparency:* In the cases of Sri Lanka, Cambodia and Guatemala, there is recognition that agencies working in communities in CAVICs need to hold themselves accountable to the communities where they work. Being accountable demands maintaining transparency about what is going on in the communities because of agency intervention. Methods practiced include developing education materials in local languages, conducting information campaigns to ensure effective dissemination of program objectives, and using simple and local language in writings and speech. Agencies can become more transparent by making information such as program documents (budget, expenditure, policies), project selection criteria and processes; and project related opportunities (representation, employment, training) publicly known. It is also important to make publicly known the decisions of community meetings.

## *(ii) Community Participation*

*(a) Fostering Trust:* One of the preconditions for enabling participation is building trust. There exists little trust in each other in communities affected by identity conflicts, such as the between Tamils and Sinhalis in Sri Lanka, and Mayans and Ladinos in Guatemala. It is likely that such communities have significant “ethnic, religious and political divisions around access to resources” (Lewer 2001). Marshall (2002b) points out that scars of identity conflicts take a longer time to heal than those of ideological conflicts. Even the name or physical appearance of a person is a constant reminder of wartime, and may become a source of mistrust and hatred. People’s ideologies may change, but ethnicities are tied to the social and physical appearance. This tendency could affect implementation of development projects, too. The *Listening to the Displaced* Project in Sri Lanka, for example, experienced bias in selection of locations and participants on the part of the project staff because of caste backgrounds. It is important for projects to put emphasis on fair representation of once rival groups in user committees; providing equal access to information, resources and benefits

irrespective of people's ethnicity; as well as improving relationships between individuals of different ethnicity through project related training.

*(b) People as Participants with Capabilities:* War affected populations often tend to be treated as victims and beneficiaries, not as people and actors (Sorenson 2001:6). Too often they are seen as "victims rather than human beings with various histories and backgrounds, ambition and resources" (Vincent 2001:9). The case of Somalia is an example. On the other hand, the ability to listen to the affected population was the major feature of the *Listening to the Displaced* Project in Sri Lanka. Treating people as human beings with capabilities is also necessary because the affected want to be heard, but have few forums in which to speak (Demusz 2000).

*(c) Utilizing Extant Capital:* There is no disagreement, at least in principle, among agencies engaged in relief or development activities that support to communities in CAVICs should be to regenerate community capacity to utilize various forms of extant capital. This is evident in the cases from Sri Lanka, Cambodia and Guatemala, too. Variations in practice could be noted, but at the beginning of the twenty first century, major agencies involved in community based development projects in CAVICs agree that development has to be inclusive of the marginalized section of the country. The approaches emphasize building relationships, strengthening local communities and organizations, and working with them in order to regenerate community capacity for development and peacebuilding.

Despite the breakdown in organizations, and rendering the social capital ineffective by violence, there exist some degree of social and other forms of capital that have survived violence. Cambodia is an example, where we note that despite the war, strong bonding social capital was found to exist in forms such as the pagoda. Although most agency documents advocate building on, supporting and working through local organizations, those in the field often end up strengthening one or two existing organizations while marginalizing others. Some even create new organizations because they feel the existing ones do not match their expectations. Internal actors who are the backbone to a lasting peace have regularly been marginalized (UNRISD and PSIS: 1994). Agencies may bring resources such as food,

medical supplies, money and expertise, but can weaken local potential and resilience (Large 2002).

Rather than creating new organizations, results would be better if development projects could build upon existing networks and organizations. Among the cases studied, in Cambodia we note that agencies have partnered with existing pagodas, while in Guatemala existing Community Associations are viewed as reliable partners. On the contrary, neglecting the local seed system has resulted in the failure of the Somalian project. Also, in several cases, organizations created with the support of external agencies have not been able to work as desired in attaining project objectives. In Rwanda, for example, such organizations failed because these efforts were “over funded, too rapidly created, artificially imposed and had poor information networks and accountability” (Colletta and Cullen 2000:99). In southern Sudan, “traditional mechanisms of kinship and self help” were neglected (Idris 1999). Large (2002) recognizes local ownership of projects as essential for breaking cycles of violence because local organizations have direct access to affected populations, knowledge of the local languages and the ability to gain people’s trust.

We can conclude from these experiences that international agencies operating in CAVICs should work to strengthen local and national NGOs. Local organizations have access to local population and need to be accountable to them. Such community based organizations and NGOs may lack experience in project management, and may need strengthening of their capacity by international agencies (Eade 1997:178).

*(d) Encouraging Participation:* We note that participation is a rather overused word in the discourse of community development. Very careful scrutiny is required when we enter the field of community based development projects in CAVICs. The simplest definition of participation would be full involvement of local people in planning, design and implementation of projects. Participation might be heavily emphasized in an agency’s planning documents, but hardly translate in the field (Gardner and Lewis 1996:126). If

participation is to be effective, it must be “a process initiated and based at the local level” (Mazur 1987:451).

Participation of community and local organizations is the source of success in the Sri Lankan and Cambodian projects. The Guatemalan project also aims to regenerate community participation. Lessons learnt regarding participation from the Sri Lankan project are that participation in projects in CAVICs is necessary and possible. It is also important to gain consent of as many stakeholders as possible for working in communities. In Cambodia, community ownership of projects was found to be strong where villagers had participated well. Villagers were clearly informed about the project steps and participation involved dialogue with villagers.

It is noted that decision-making at the local level is emphasized in projects. However, decision-making at the local level is a process that goes beyond mere participation in community meetings, being informed and signing contracts with agencies. True participation in decision-making processes can be attained when villagers are encouraged to speak up, and their voices permeate throughout the project stages. Another useful lesson learnt from the Cambodian experience is that development workers need to be cautious while seeking participation such as in calling meetings. Meetings there reminded villagers of the Pol Pot days, when villagers had to listen to political propaganda, not participate (Colleta and Cullen 2000: 97-98). Furthermore, community based development projects demand time and physical labor from the communities, which are already stressed. This necessitates project designs that utilize villagers' labor time efficiently.

Parakrama (2001:123-124) categorizes six levels of participation and capacity building, in ascending order of level of participation, in the context of civil war and internal displacement. They are top down, directed decentralization, directed devolutionary, limited participation, participation and full participation. He sees full participation as “the rare context in which transparency and accountability cut both ways, and in which the community organizations are in genuine partnership with the international agencies.” According to him,

conditions for attaining higher level of partnership are joint long-term stable funding; community friendly reporting and documentation systems; programs that are not limited to skill training but that also involve raising awareness regarding access to rights and services; mother tongue of the community as the language of interaction; full time employees accountable to program partners; programming eliminating the top down process and involving collaborative effort; and the relationship between partners seen as mutually beneficial. Parakrama further contends that most (humanitarian) aid agencies in Sri Lanka have operated within the first four levels without meeting the desired conditions. Agencies in Sri Lanka are not fully representative; and community organizations tend to represent elites with dominance of upper caste in the management team. He finds Oxfam demonstrating some characteristics of being at the fifth level, but argues that the program design, implementation and targeting remain agency functions.

### *(iii) Organizational Capacity*

*(a) Conflict Management -Integrated or Add-on:* Agencies such as the International Committee of the Red Cross, Save the Children Fund, Oxfam, Medicin sans Frontieres and Concern were all formed as a response to violent conflicts (Adams and Bradbury 1995:32). By the 1980s, development policy-makers were analyzing the impact of conflict on development processes. Developmental goals such as poverty reduction, environmental protection and good governance were presented not only as ends in themselves, but also as helping to lessen conflicts (Macrae 2001). Despite this development and subsequent recognition of the need for conflict to be brought to center stage, conflict is treated by many agencies still as an add-on in community based development projects. Conflict assessments during project inception and planning stage are not made effectively. Not enough input is made to analyze and map conflicts (Lewer 2001). Sophisticated situation analysis that could respond to the specificities of each situation in which agencies work is lacking (Atikson 2001). Agencies do not have a real understanding of the “social and historical fabric of communities they work with” (Lewer, Goodhand and Hulme 2001). Amongst various sociological issues such as gender, poverty and culture, conflict has received an ad-hoc

treatment. Unlike gender analysis or environmental impact assessment, there has been no equivalent analysis of conflict” (Bush and Opp 1999:186).

In such a setting, most organizations do not have the necessary instruments to respond to violent conflicts. Criticizing INGOs operating in Sudan for taking up of programs without making proper assessments of the social history of communities and offering “technical solutions for essentially political problems”, Idris (1999) contends that the capacity of agencies seeking to build peace is contingent on their ability to understand the underlying causes of conflict. Treating conflicts as a short-term problem also demonstrates failure of agencies “to appreciate the nature of the current wars which have proved to be durable and pervasive” (Adams and Bradbury 1995:28). The Sri Lankan project can be noted as an attempt to integrate conflict analysis prior to project selection.

The success of any development projects in CAVICs depends on the ability of project staff to determine the tensions, dividers and connectors, and analyze how each project activity will affect them (Anderson 1999). Such factors should be identified genuinely based on actual systems, actions and interactions in the project setting. Just as the impact of violence on development, the impact of development activities on communities’ capacities for both war and peace need in-depth exploration. Key questions to be asked while devising program logics and activities are: Will a project activity increase divisions and tensions? Or will it strengthen the connectors?

*(b) Relief and Development:* International agencies have been involved for a long time in development in CAVICs. As a result they have enhanced their ability to understand the links between relief and development, and to devise suitable policies. However, their capacity to “operationalize the policies remains low” (Stiefel 1998:21). Relief, development and peace are often overlapping without clear demarcation. There is a considerable confusion concerning the link between relief and development within agencies (Seaman 1994:33). There is a “crisis of theory” for development practice in CAVICs. Such crisis is situated in

the “so-called relief-development continuum—a debate which might be better described as the relief-development conundrum” (Slim 1997:9).

In her analysis of how development programs change and grow during the rise of insurgency, Agerbak (1996:29-30) distinguishes four stages- damage, crisis, consolidation and recovery. In the first stage, emerging violence causes the existing development program to be reduced and conflict overtakes programs. In the second stage, intensified violence creates a turning point when development is deferred and short- term relief programs are established. No long term planning is possible. The seed distribution in Somalia was one such response. During this stage, withdrawal by agencies may impart a negative message for communities where agency presence may be one of the few symbols of hope for the people affected by conflicts. In the third stage, Agerbak argues that over time conflict settles into a pattern and agencies gain experience. During this phase, programs acquire development characteristics and long term planning begins for humanitarian and relief activities. The Sri Lankan case can be viewed as a project in this phase, while the Somalian relief program continued to remain in the second. In the fourth stage, when a peace settlement is reached, violent conflicts scaled down, and situations returned to normalcy from emergency, external support tends to become more development oriented, such as in Cambodia and Guatemala. Here the task of recovery requires transformation from a relief approach to a longer-term development approach.

(c) *Flexibility and Balancing Process vs. Output*: In community based development projects in stable non-violent conditions, social mobilization and building local capacity (such as forming groups, training villagers on managerial and technical skills, seeking their participation in meetings) precedes the tangible output such as constructing a public latrine or an irrigation canal. Agencies have had a difficult time to pursuing this approach in CAVICs, and have varying views.

International Organization of Migration and USAID (2002), while documenting their experience in conducting the *Program for Strengthening Peace* in Colombia, note that it is more relevant to support developing processes than to support specific activities, even if the



latter is more attractive and tangible. Such process “empowers the human capital committed to a pro-active role” and opens up social, political and economic space by “constructing and consolidating social fabric” in project areas (IOM and USAID 2002:1). However, the Cambodian experience demonstrates that agencies need to strike a balance between producing outputs and being process oriented for projects to be accepted by the communities. A longer time spent in social mobilization contributes to building the managerial and technical skills required to plan, implement and monitor projects, but may frustrate communities that expect tangible outputs which ease their daily hardships. While an output oriented approach runs the risk of undermining sustainability, a total process orientation runs the risk of not generating benefits. In such cases, rebels get the opportunity to criticize development projects. For example, at one stage of the *Listening to the Displaced* Project in 1998, Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), the Tamil insurgent group, wanted agencies to implement programs that met obvious needs of people and produced tangible outputs, such as wells, roads, health care centers rather than projects like the *Listening to the Displaced* project that emphasized on the process.

Being flexible also implies adjusting to the changing situation in field. This is particularly important because conflict dynamics change frequently. Agencies working in CAVICs encounter situations that are unforeseen during the planning stage. The inability to delegate authority to field offices slows down projects, and often puts staff and the project at risk.

*(d) Staff Capability:* To better understand the local context, some agencies have begun localizing their staff. Given that expatriates rarely speak the local language and never understand the cultural context completely (Parakrama 2001), and come and go with unpredictable frequency resulting in losses to an agency’s institutional memory (Goodhand 2001), such localization has helped agencies to have better grasp of local reality. It has also helped to offset project costs.

Staff working in agencies often risk their lives to translate agency principles into practice in the field. To have projects operating implies having some staff present in the field, as well. An agency's effectiveness in carrying out projects in CAVICs relies on the quality of the staff

(Slim 1997:10). The experience of the Sri Lankan case was that most NGO staff have limited practical experience of research and participatory methodologies and needed to be trained. The Cambodian and Guatemalan projects also suggest the need for building staff capacity to work in conflict situations. Owing to the sensitivity of working in violence affected areas, staff of agencies and partners often require instruction in the type of behavior expected from them while in the field. Staff must learn to respect local culture and customs, live with the people and be positive role models. This also implies not being provocative in any manner. In some areas, carrying a factory produced water bottle, for example, might pronounce economic differences between the development worker and villagers. The Somalian case demonstrated that agencies often lack the expertise required to undertake detailed assessments needed to understand local systems. Agencies are often better prepared for short-term relief interventions such as emergency distributions or development projects in stable settings rather than more developmental, capacity building interventions. As such staff need to be trained in various behavioral and managerial aspects of working in communities caught in conflict.

### *Altering Rules and Resources of Violence*

The seed distribution in Somalia has not contributed to strengthening relationships between individuals, and to reducing the potential for conflict. On the contrary, such support may help to reproduce violence by reinforcing the rules and resources for war. The Sri Lankan project attempts to empower people affected by violence by working with them directly. It is an exemplar case given the insecurity involved, in working in war zones. It attempts to engage local people to articulate their developmental needs, which are in turn fed in to project planning. Such an approach of treating people as full participants gives them a sense of being a part of the citizenry and supports just development as well as just peace. It thereby helps alter the rules and resources that are responsible for violent conflicts. People's potential to engage in violent internal conflicts is reduced. Similarly the projects in post conflict Cambodia focus on engaging people in constructive dialogue and participation through various forms of partnership with their organizations such as the pagodas and

Community Associations, respectively. These community based development projects are helping communities to expand their vertical links with the outside world. Some projects are being successful and the rules and resources that tend to weaken social cohesion are being altered. The project processes have helped to empower people while the project outputs have served their basic needs. In Guatemala, the proposed project builds on similar strategies.

### *The Case of Nepal*

Next we examine the situation in Nepal, where a seven-year old (1996- ) Maoist-led insurgency has brought development projects almost to a standstill. We analyze the response, mainly by the World Bank and European Commission and the approaches they are taking. Before doing so, we examine the interface between development and insurgency in Nepal.

#### *Development failure and insurgency*

Amongst several reasons attributed to the birth and growth of the Maoist led insurgency in Nepal, the one that deserves significant attention is Nepal's failed development. It is now believed that development in Nepal has failed in the sense that it has been inherently isolationist, marked by socioeconomic and spatial exclusion of the majority Nepalese. The Nepal Human Development Report (United Nation's Development Program 2002:14) highlights four forms of disparities amongst Nepalese in terms of caste, ethnicity, gender and geography. For example, some caste groups have a Human Development Index (HDI)<sup>6</sup> level twice as much than the others. Life expectancy between different caste groups varies between 50.8 to 63.2 years while under-five Mortality Rate varies between 74.9 and 171.2. Level of human development amongst residents in rural areas, where over 80% of the population resides, is only two thirds of that among urban residents. The HDI growth rate in rural areas during 1996-2000 was almost half of that of the urban. Two of the development

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<sup>6</sup> Human Development Index (HDI) has been defined by UNDP as the measure of average achievement in basic human capabilities. It has three components: longevity, educational attainment, and a decent standard of living. These are measured respectively by life expectancy at birth, adult literacy, and per capita income.

regions, the Far-West and the Mid-West, where the Maoist insurgency is rife have HDI 18% and 14% below the national average, respectively. The HDI in the Far Western Mountains declined by 14.6% during 1996-2000. More specifically, economic growth has been concentrated in urban areas (World Bank 2002b:3) and many rural households have become “spatially disparate extended families” (Blaikie, Cameron and Seddon 2000: 1268).

As a result of such exclusionary development, powerlessness and dependency is increasing in Nepal’s periphery. In rural areas, the state apparatus is ill-functioning or non-existent. Rural poverty is aggravated by ethnic and social tensions, and the Maoists insurgents have exploited this vacuum (World Bank 2002b). Development failure has created an environment—poverty, inequality, discrimination and injustice—for the Maoist insurgency (Loocke and Philipson 2002). The Maoists were able to successfully infuse communist ideology into the developmental vacuum and establish their authority in the stateless parts of the country through violent means (KC 2002). The European Commission has identified poverty, uneven development, and inequality as root causes of the conflict in Nepal (Loocke and Philipson 2002:28) while the World Bank (2002b:4) forecasts that lasting peace will be difficult to achieve unless serious efforts are made to “address the poverty and exclusion that drive the conflict.”

### *Maoist response to aid*

The Maoists view foreign aid as “imperialist financial capital in disguise” and charge that huge amount of money is spent in rural Nepal in the name of NGOs and INGOs as parts of “the imperialist plan of checking the mounting crisis in oppressed nations from breaking into revolutionary upheavals” (Bhattarai 1998). At the grassroots level, this has translated in to criticism of agencies for their *pajero-culture*, *dollar farming* and talking rather than producing output.

## *Principles and Practice*

At present, agencies are struggling to tackle issues with standard developmental tools (Loocke and Philipson 2002: 28). Some approaches observed are:

### *(i) Basic Principles*

*Neutrality and Transparency:* Maintaining neutrality and transparency have been helpful in carrying out development projects in conflict-affected areas. A leader of a development agency and a NGO field worker reflect this in the following statements respectively:

We try to be neutral and offer to work with anyone willing to be our partners, as long as their interests are to help the poor. In some cases we have worked effectively with Maoists (Bhattarai 2001).

We put our entire budget, with even the smallest details of how much a bag of cement cost us, in charts up on the wall. When the Maoists come, we show them what we are doing and they don't disturb us (Bhattarai 2001).

Assessing European Commission projects in Nepal, Loocke and Philipson (2002:28) opine that the idea of neutrality and transparency is easy in theory but in practice means the staff on the ground are likely to be under continual suspicion. Similarly, full transparency tends to be more rhetoric than reality. For example, making agency budget and expenses public becomes a contentious issue for most agencies because it involves delicate issues of showing disproportionate incentives<sup>7</sup> paid to local, national and expatriate staff.

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<sup>7</sup> For example, in a rough estimate, the average cost of building a community drinking water system in Nepal would be equivalent to a month's salary of an expatriate director, a year's salary of a local director and 16 years' salary of a local field staff.

*(ii) Community Participation*

European Commission considers itself to be in an advantageous position because it already has entry points to work in the conflict affected areas. It also sees relationships on the ground built by its development projects pre-insurgency as valuable elements (Loocke and Philipson 2002:29). Local people in a district benefiting from one of its projects, for example, rallied behind the project when insurgents torched a project vehicle. Maoists there were forced to retract their position. Similarly, the World Bank (2002b) emphasizes “participatory community demand-driven methodology” to improve access to water and sanitation services, a methodology that it has built over the last decade working with local user groups. Both European Commission and the World Bank emphasize the need to include previously excluded castes, ethnic people and women in the organization as well as in project planning and processes.

*(iii) Organizational Capacity*

*Conflict Management -Integrated or Add-on:* For the first five years of the conflict, most agencies ignored the effect of insurgency in their policy and planning. Their documents during the period made only superficial or no reference to conflict. However between 2001-2003, as violence escalated enough to stall development projects, agencies have begun to consider the impact of conflict on their projects. Much of the conflict assessment is, however, not based on primary data, and very few agencies have a regular in-house conflict monitoring system (Seddon and Hussein 2000:18, 33).

*Relief or Development:* The responses and the approach taken by development agencies in Nepal show a similar pattern with the responses and approaches in other CAVICs. The pattern that development projects are following in Nepal has been as pointed out by Agerbak (1996) – damage, crisis, consolidation and recovery. As conflict escalated, agencies in Nepal reacted by withdrawing from conflict areas (Loocke and Philipson 2002:28). Development projects slowed down, and agencies restricted themselves to regional headquarters and the

capital, Kathmandu. Many ongoing projects withdrew their field staff and projects found it difficult to operate (Seddon and Hussein 2002:6). There was an environment of fear, as expressed by an NGO worker:

I was working as a social mobiliser, I really believed we could change Nepal by motivating people to be self-reliant. We had started seeing the transformation resulting from our work. Today, when I walk through villages, I see people cowering in fear. They are afraid to come out, afraid to speak, afraid to take the lead (Bhattarai 2001).

In April 2002, UNDP and GTZ, for example, suspended all support to one of their food-for-work projects in two insurgency-hit districts after rebels looted rice belonging to community working groups. Such withdrawals have exacerbated uneven development, one of the causes of the Maoist-led conflict. Development projects are now probably in the third stage, that of consolidation. Conflict has settled into a pattern, and agencies have gained experience. Long term planning and early conflict analysis is beginning. There was apprehension that development agencies would move out of Nepal entirely because of the insecurity. However this has not happened and foreign aid continues to flow in to Nepal although the ability to spend it has declined significantly.

*Flexibility:* Procedures for building local capacities in community based development projects are lengthy. This has given Maoists good space to criticize agencies while winning local sentiments. Maoists oppose projects involving social organization because they see them as threat to their own political mobilization (Loocke and Philipson 2002: 41). As a response, projects supported by Department of International Development (DFID) of UK have been asked to “fast track”, that is, accelerate project procedures to ensure that they increase their visibility on the ground (Seddon and Hussein 2002:6). The World Bank (2002b) has emphasized producing more outputs/results in programs, and the European Commission has assessed service provision more acceptable than building local capacity (Loocke and Philipson 2002).

Change in technical design of infrastructure projects has been one response for adapting to the changing dynamics of conflict. Some agencies working in the drinking water sector have

replaced iron fittings with polythene ones in project designs. This was a reaction to the ban on transporting iron fittings to areas affected by insurgency where Maoists confiscated iron fittings to make socket bombs.

*Staff Capability:* European Commission office in Nepal sees the need for staff to be properly trained in security, negotiation and conflict. It also finds its program development hampered by a delay between project submission and approval. Projects that were applicable at submission may become inappropriate when dynamics of conflict changed by the time the project is approved at headquarters in Europe. Such situations necessitate delegation of greater financial authority to local offices.



## **CHAPTER V**

### **CONCLUSIONS**

Community based development projects can be a viable means for building of relationships between community members and community groups (horizontal), and between community groups and external agencies (vertical). On the other hand, the appropriate way to sustain community based development projects in CAVICs is by building such relationships.

Regenerating social capital for community based development projects is primarily an issue of building relationships between participants of development; by forming their representative groups; partnering with such groups; and mobilizing the community through their groups to plan, devise and operate to achieve common project goals.

The process of building relationships for development should include individuals at all levels of the community irrespective of their caste, ethnicity, religion, geographic location, and gender. The process should be targeted at empowering them to have their voices heard and incorporated in project planning, providing them access to and control of resources, and including them in the decision making processes at all stages. When the task of building relationships for community based development projects is inclusive, equitable, and addresses the needs and interests of the population affected by violence, it not only supports community based development projects, but also helps lower community's potential for conflict. It supports transformative peace by reducing the interdependence, justice and process-structure gaps as espoused by Lederach, and helps reduce the structural violence as conceived by Galtung. Building of relationships is a matter of altering the behaviors and practices of the individuals and groups that constitute the community. One of the ways in which such behaviors and practices can be promoted is by engaging individuals and their organizations in community based development projects.

Community based development projects that have achieved greater success have the following features: they espouse neutrality, transparency and flexibility in approach; train staff to prepare to work in violence areas; treat the affected population as full participants

with capabilities rather than victims of violence, listen to them and incorporate their voices in planning; and build on extant social capital including local and national organizations. Such projects have been able to build both horizontal and vertical relationships by bringing in people closer, empowering them to participate in community based development projects through various means, and by partnering with their organizations. Our findings suggest that projects with such features can be helpful to sustain community based development projects and thus peacebuilding. This is irrespective of the stage of conflict, ongoing or settled. The research could find no substantial difference in practices or principles in terms of the type of conflict except that in CAVICs that have identity conflicts, the initial focus has to be more on removing the mistrust and hatred that emanate from the identity divide.

Agencies operational in countries recently affected by violence, such as Nepal, have the advantage of learning from the expertise in other CAVICs. Paradoxically, given that failed development contributes to violent conflicts, such conflicts have provided an opportunity for development agencies to revisit their programs and policies, and learn from their past mistakes. The crises created by violence have produced an environment to favor the reformers (World Bank 2002b), and correct the “deficient development experience” (Wood 2003). It has once again emphasized the need for agencies to bring resources to the grassroots level and improve development effectiveness (World Bank 2002b). Violent internal conflicts are indicators not just of “problems for development” but a “failure of development” (Stern 2003:ix).

There are two areas where agencies operating in CAVICs must increase their attention in order to work effectively. First, agencies need to give conflict an early and central position in their planning and policy. In-house capacity to analyze conflict and be responsive to the changing dynamics of conflict are necessary. Second, organizational capacity to operate in violent conflict situation needs to be strengthened. Staff need to be adequately trained to maintain principles and good practices in the field, while agencies need to work towards institutionalizing good practices with adequate research and resources.

### *Limitations of the Research*

This research has provided a framework and direction for sustaining community based development projects in CAVICs and utilizing them for peacebuilding, but is void of any primary field level observations. Field level explorations and interaction with stakeholders at various levels would have allowed deeper understanding of the responses, principles and practices adopted by agencies in CAVICs. This would have also allowed proposing more context specific measures. Field level explorations would include determining the impact of violent conflicts on the physical, political, financial, human and social capital. Some measurements would be quantitative, such as the extent of physical damage, the number of deaths, displaced, disabled, widowed, children, men and women enrolled as combatants, etc. Qualitative measures would be related to the type of bonding and bridging relationships, vertical contact with the world beyond the communities, the nature of relationships that existed prior to and after conflict, borrowing and lending practices, labor practices, participation of people in community groups, availability and use of services, etc. Further, it would also include exploring problems faced by communities in improving their livelihoods, coping mechanisms during violent conflicts, nature of capabilities on which such coping mechanisms operated, and past interventions by agencies.

### *Development Workers, Peace Entrepreneurs and War Entrepreneurs*

The research focuses more on the positive role of social capital for development and peacebuilding. Experience shows that social capital can be perverted. Contesting factions in violent internal conflicts (for example, warlords in Somalia, Khmer Rouge in Cambodia, Sinhalis and Tamils in Sri Lanka, Ladino elites and indigenous Mayans in Guatemala) may mobilize extant bonding social capital as means to achieve their own goals. Besides, when bridging and vertical ties are promoted by external agencies, there is a possibility for relations between people and such agencies becoming paternalistic. Relations readily become patron–client like, and dependent on market and aid related resources. Instead of creating self-sufficiency, which is one of the major goals of development projects, dependency is created.

Through development projects, agencies bring in resources to relatively resource-deficit communities. Resources come in varying social, economic and political forms—relief supplies, employment, contracts, training, basic infrastructure services, exchange visits, foreign trips, vehicle facilities, training allowances, leadership opportunities, etc. When such resources are brought into CAVICs, it affects conflicts in numerous ways. Depending on who benefits from project processes and outcomes and who does not, it strengthens either tensions or connectors between groups (Anderson 1999). It may attract theft, strengthen the war-time economy by freeing up local relief resources for the war effort, facilitate displacement of particular populations, undermine or reinforce coping strategies, and legitimize actions of warlords or people who support peace (Anderson 1999, Slim 1997). Viewed from this perspective, development is inherently problematic. Development needs to operate within a system of relationships created by resources flow. This makes development and peacebuilding based on principles of social and economic justice even more challenging. Development carries the power of aid, which becomes contested by both ‘peace entrepreneurs’ and ‘war entrepreneurs’. Thus, we can conclude that the challenge for development workers working in CAVICs is to be able to appreciate this interplay between development and conflict; and ensure that the power they carry does not corrupt themselves as well as those working for peace or war. They must take care that the instrumental relationships they create with the people and their organizations do not reinforce dependency, but rather help them build on their collective strengths towards self-sufficiency.

### *Potential Implications for Social Science Research*

Given the strong social embedding of violent conflicts and the array of newer social problems that they create, as well as the need for development to continue amidst conflict, this research prepares the ground for future research at specific levels of analysis. This in turn will help to explore the conflict-community development relationship further, suggest meaningful ways to maintain community based development projects amidst violent conflicts and mobilize them for peacebuilding. Relevant academic work in the Nepalese context is very limited and focuses more on secondary data. Hence, this research provides a base for

researchers interested in pursuing research in the field of Nepal's community development, now affected by violence.

### *Potential Policy Implications*

Violent conflicts impede community based development projects particularly because of the insecurity and uncertainty that they create, as well as the displacement and destruction involved. By drawing from experience of countries affected by violent internal conflicts, agencies in countries that are newer to violent conflicts could better plan and implement community based development projects.

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