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Mobilizing Knowledge for Post-Conflict Management and Development at the Local Level



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Advisory Report

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Preface

Over the past decades the world has witnessed many outbursts of internal violence. Some have featured for weeks or months in the international media; others have hardly attracted any attention at all. But whether publicized or not, internal conflicts are affecting more and more people--a trend which is not expected to change in the near future.

As a complement to ongoing research pertaining to conflict theory, conflict prevention and early warning systems, RAWOO is focusing on the peace processes at local or community level which follow the conclusion of peace accords. Rather than seeing internal armed conflict only as hampering development, the Council realizes that such conflicts often have deep historical roots and often result from resistance to oppression, exploitation and inequality. In most cases, the end of armed confrontation--whether by the signing of a peace accord or the installation of a new government--does not always mean that the underlying causes have been removed. It is therefore of utmost importance that during the period that follows armed conflict, the underlying causes of the conflict are addressed and, where possible, eliminated. The challenge for RAWOO has been to explore the possible contribution that research can make towards achieving sustainable peace and development at the local level.

The present report examines the role of knowledge relevant to development and conflict management in the wake of armed confrontation. It explores the question of which knowledge is needed from the South's point of view. It also examines methodologies and approaches which may help to make research more relevant for development purposes. Based on extensive consultations with parties in the South (mediators, academics, politicians, indigenous leaders, and representatives of non-government organizations) and Northern specialists, the Council concludes that there is a clearly felt need--as well as broad support and commitment--for a long-term programme of multi-disciplinary international cooperation under the title 'Knowledge for post-conflict management and development'.

The proposed programme is needs-based and user-oriented, involves many parties from outside the research community, and assigns a central place to the exchange of knowledge and sharing of experiences between different regions. In post-conflict societies, such a programme should be able to bridge the gap between the academic research community, which is usually located mainly in the capital, and the actors at local level who must deal with the practical aspects of the post-conflict peace process. South-South-North cooperation and exchange should foster a mutual learning process and should help people to analyze their situation from new perspectives. It is hoped that Dutch researchers and organizations will bring relevant experience to the research activities at national and local levels in the post-conflict countries involved, as well as to the international comparative exchanges which the programme envisages.

Over the past year the Council has discussed in great detail the issue of research partnerships between Southern and Northern countries. It is well aware of the major challenges these partnerships pose. The Council has facilitated the establishment of joint research programmes in Ghana and the Philippines. A methodology has been developed to guarantee that researchers and other stakeholders in the South define their own agendas for research, capacity-building and institutional development, and that these agendas in turn form the basis for cooperation with researchers from the Netherlands. It turns out that building trust among

partners is one of the main prerequisites for such cooperation, as is the establishment of appropriate organizational structures.

Developing a long-term programme of international cooperation to study post-armed-conflict issues involves all the challenges the Council has met before, and more. It is with the delicate situation of post-conflict societies in mind that the Council proposes that the programme be preceded by a two-year programming phase to further develop the research agenda and the organizational structure. The Council envisages to involve Bangladesh and Guatemala into this programming phase, as the situations there seem well suited. The methodology required will have to be inclusive, bottom-up and substantive. It will have to facilitate dialogue and cooperation between stakeholders who may still be antagonistic to each other. Developing such methodology will therefore be a major challenge of the coming phase. But drawing the various stakeholders into the process of setting agendas and later into the research process itself can also have very beneficial effects on the peace process in general. In time, the programme may therefore be extended to involve other countries and regions as well.

The Council would like to thank the members of RAWOO's Conflict and Development Working Group. Special thanks are owed to its chair, Dr Meghna Guhathakurta, and to Dr. Michael van Walt van Praag. The Council appreciates the input of everyone who has been involved in preparing the present report. This includes the participants in the various meetings held in the Netherlands and the many people in Bangladesh and Guatemala who have shared their views with the mission teams. The trust and commitment to the RAWOO initiative which has been expressed by a number of key persons is also highly appreciated.

The Council hopes that the proposed programme will succeed in mobilizing knowledge that is useful for post-conflict management and development, and to do so in a way that helps actors at the local level to rebuild their lives and livelihoods, to manage the process of transforming war-torn societies, and to overcome obstacles to lasting peace. The Council expects that the experiences gained at the local level will provide meaningful insights for the international community's policies for consolidating peace. The Council hopes that the relevant Dutch government ministries will approve the proposed programme and provide the funds needed for the two-year phase of preparation, and later for the programme itself.

G.H.O van Maanen
Chairman, RAWOO

Executive Summary

This report examines the need for research and capacity-building in post-armed-conflict societies. It focuses on peace processes at the local, or community, level, as these are often ignored by policy-makers as well as researchers. The report has been prepared for the Dutch government, at the Council's own initiative.

RAWOO invited experienced persons from four regions that are emerging from situations of armed conflict to take part in an expert meeting in The Hague in December 1998 and to share their views on the contribution that research might make to relieving the difficult task of rebuilding and transforming societies torn apart by armed conflict. The participants considered which kinds of research could be useful in this regard and by whom it could best be carried out. Participants pointed out that local actors need to be involved in determining the research priorities. They also stressed the importance of building local capacity for generating new knowledge and accessing existing knowledge, and the importance of drawing lessons from comparative exchanges which can serve as valuable input for both policy and practice. RAWOO subsequently sent missions to Bangladesh and Guatemala to discuss the issue in more depth with a wide variety of people, including indigenous leaders and representatives of academia, government, human rights organizations, women's organizations, and the church.

The Council concludes that there is an urgent need for research in post-armed-conflict societies, provided the term 'research' is broadly defined to mean acquiring and developing knowledge and providing access to it. Knowledge, including information on experience gained in other regions of the world, is sorely lacking with respect to issues that are of crucial importance to the achievement of lasting peace and the prevention of a recurrence of conflict. This is true with respect to the knowledge that stakeholders need in order to cope with the situation at the local level, as well as to the knowledge that policy-makers in the Netherlands and elsewhere need in order to play a constructive role, for example as donors.

Research capacity at the national academic level varies greatly between the countries in question, but research tends to be rather theoretical. There is a gap between the academic research community, largely located in the capital cities, and the organizations at grassroots level that are dealing with practical problems. The latter lack the capacity to undertake research or access existing knowledge. Bridging the gap between scientists and practitioners in a way which leads to research results being used, can add value to activities which up to now have more often been theoretically oriented or concerned with problems at the national level.

RAWOO believes that if research is to be of maximum benefit to users in the South, the research agendas must be set by stakeholders in the South. This is certainly true in the case of research in post-armed-conflict situations. Several important areas of research have already been identified in the course of the investigations conducted by RAWOO in Bangladesh and Guatemala. In Bangladesh there is a broad consensus regarding research priorities. The main issues identified there are the land and forestry issue and the settler issue. In Guatemala the issue of the ownership and use of land is also high on the priority list, as are the issues of pluri-culturalism, decentralization and participation. Interviewees in both countries identified a number of issues that transcend all other issues, such as gender relations and the position and rights of indigenous populations. They also stressed such problems as the continued presence of the military and the high levels of violence. These

preliminary broad agendas for research need to be elaborated and made more specific by the stakeholders in the countries in question. The mission teams found the various actors in the peace process to be quite willing to become involved in guiding the research effort in this way.

Following a period of armed conflict, the situation is extremely sensitive and volatile. This means that the process of setting agendas and conducting research must be handled with extreme care and with understanding of the local situation. But RAWOO believes that even the process itself, if properly approached, could have a beneficial impact on post-armed-conflict societies. It is therefore essential to develop new working methods and to create learning environments that are specifically designed to stimulate constructive dialogue and good working relationships among the often antagonistic stakeholders in post-armed-conflict situations. When people--due to their perceived enmities or conflicting interests--do not otherwise engage in constructive dialogue, ways must be found that enable them to address the root causes of conflict which are inhibiting full implementation of a peace accord and the necessary transformation of society. Both in Bangladesh and in Guatemala the role of the international donor community is felt to be crucial; donor countries and organizations can play a decisive role in persuading or pressuring reluctant parties to faithfully implement agreements.

RAWOO proposes that the Dutch government fund the development of a long-term, multi-disciplinary programme of international cooperation, the object of which will be to generate and mobilize knowledge for maintaining peace and fostering development in the wake of armed conflict. The programme will be designed to help stakeholders at the local level to express their needs for knowledge, to develop their own research capacity, and to learn from similar situations in other countries. It will also ensure that policy-makers at the international level learn from the knowledge of actors at local levels.

Before this long-term programme can begin, a two-year programming phase is needed to plan an agenda of activities for generating, exchanging and disseminating knowledge on the sensitive core issues affecting the peace process. This requires an innovative, inclusive, bottom-up, participatory process which brings together major stakeholders (parties to the conflict, researchers, local leaders, policy-makers, and representatives of NGOs and community-based organizations) to discuss sensitive issues of central importance to the peace process. During the two-year phase, appropriate organizational structures and management procedures will be established. The Council envisages a two-pronged organizational structure, with local programme groups (LPGs) and an international programme group (IPG).

The Council proposes to take responsibility for the two-year programme-development phase and to start this phase in two countries: Bangladesh (Chittagong Hill Tracts) and Guatemala. Here a small group of persons will be selected who are broadly acceptable and have the trust of all stakeholders. These persons will be asked to create a local programme group representing all major stakeholders. The local programme groups will be RAWOO's partners in the programme-development phase and will continue the agenda-setting process which the Council set in motion through the expert meeting and the subsequent missions.

RAWOO will set up an international programme group (IPG) made up of experts from the countries involved and from other (mainly Southern) countries. This body will facilitate the comparative perspective and the transfer of relevant information and knowledge to the local

programme groups. It will also offer a forum outside the countries in question where issues can be discussed which are still too sensitive to discuss locally.

The two-year programming phase will result in a detailed proposal for a long-term programme called 'Knowledge for post-conflict management and development'. An appropriate organizational and management structure will also be proposed. The Council explicitly asks the government to acknowledge that embarkation on the two-year programming phase will create the expectation that the substantive programme which follows will be funded as well.

1. Introduction

1.1. About conflicts

In most societies conflicts are a common feature of everyday life. They range from conflicts arising over the allocation of resources, to conflicts based on rivalry between different ethnic, linguistic and/or religious groups, and even to class conflict. The effect of conflicts on society varies and can be either positive or negative.

Generally, conflicts do not create great disturbances or upheavals in the way a society functions. Indeed, conflict is sometimes perceived as taking a society to a higher plane. This is the case with class struggle, with democratic challenges to despotism, and with women's challenges to patriarchy and fundamentalism, for example. But it is also fair to say that certain less intense conflicts can result in economic and social stagnation, which in turn can accelerate and intensify conflicts.

It is when the element of violence dominates and overwhelms such situations, often manifesting itself in armed conflict, that the normal day-to-day functioning of a society is threatened. The nature of armed conflict has features which greatly affect processes of democratization, the formation of civil society, the conduct of good governance, and the ethnic and gender relations embedded in a society. This is precisely why it has become imperative to look at conflict situations in a broader social context.

Situations of armed conflict, whether internal or between states, interfere with or destroy altogether the normal conduct of statecraft or governance. This is precisely why protracted armed conflict can cause great damage and harm to individual psyches and/or to the institutions and practices of democracy and civil society. This is especially true in cases where war is waged against a particular ethnic or religious group or segment of the population. Socio-cultural values such as tolerance and justice are undermined, resulting in the general undermining of democratic norms.

This process has a gender dimension. The mobilization of young men and their conscription into armies fuel the mechanisms of a militarized society. Women during wartime are often left behind to tend to the day-to-day affairs of the family and the state. In this sense they form the last vestiges of civil society. Their peculiar position in times of armed conflict has had a dual effect on the perception of their role in conflict situations. On the one hand, they are made targets of the opposition forces. Rape or even the threat of rape is used as an instrument of war—an attempt to dismantle even people's last attempts to survive with dignity. At the same time, however, women in conflict situations may possess immunity as 'political innocents'. This enables them to move more freely in the marketplace, and gives them greater access to officials and more scope for taking care of their children and family. This last feature has often placed women in a privileged position from which they can negotiate peace between the conflicting parties or even develop alliances across social and political boundaries. The potential of this position is usually not recognized by official peace-makers, however.

The cessation of hostilities negotiated through a peace accord is a first step towards normalizing the situation and restoring governance and democratic practices to war-torn regions. But the cessation of hostilities is by no means the natural or inevitable outcome of having reached an accord. Much will depend on how trauma and inter-factional rivalry are dealt with, on how local development needs are addressed, and on how institutional capacity-

building takes place in the post-conflict situation. If renewed conflict is to be avoided and sustainable peace is to be ensured, it is therefore crucial that the post-conflict situation receive attention. This area is thus the focus of RAWOO's intervention strategy.

It has been seen, however, that peace accords reached between belligerents often evade or fail to address the issues that have been at the core of the conflict, for example disputes over distribution of land and other resources, or policies of ethnic or religious discrimination. But if such issues are bypassed, the roots of the conflict will continue to fester beneath the surface, thus endangering any peace-building process. It is essential therefore to address such issues as early as possible in the process of restoration. Research—i.e., the generation and transmission of knowledge—is an important tool by which this can be achieved. It is equally important to establish creative mechanisms and innovative strategies that involve major stakeholders in the process while taking into account the sensitive nature of the situation and the fact that the various parties may not yet trust each other.

Post-conflict situations also bring home to us the fact that understanding of other cultures and social structures—which helps us to overcome their 'otherness'—should form part and parcel of any interventionist strategy, whether the objective be primarily development or peace-building. Conflict situations often involve differences in the way that problems are perceived or the dominance of one set of perceptions over others. The need for a system of communication which can bridge such differences through dialogue, comparative examples and information-sharing, should be emphasized. Only with good communication can major stakeholders enter into a process of setting agendas that are really inclusive.

It is with these notions in mind that RAWOO has set out to systematically explore the possibilities for a sensitive, innovative, long-term strategy which could help to establish sustainable peace in regions recovering from conflict. The importance of such a strategy cannot be understated in a world where the processes of nation-building are in continual flux and are constantly being reviewed and redefined in various ways.

1.2. Background, points of departure and objectives

RAWOO first raised the issue of conflict and development in its advisory report to the Netherlands government dated July 1995, 'A medium-term perspective on research for development; research needs and Dutch research capacity'. The former Council identified the issue of development, conflict and security as a major new research area requiring attention¹. Together with the foreign ministry's department for development cooperation, RAWOO held a series of lectures which examined case studies of internal conflict. These were preceded by a general lecture on the causes of such conflicts. A separate workshop was held to discuss the implications for research and policy. One of the conclusions was that further research is required, above all in order to strengthen local capacities for preventing, managing and resolving conflicts.

The present Council decided to further explore the field of intra-state conflict and development in order to see whether an advisory report for the Netherlands government on future research would be appropriate.

A preliminary inquiry showed that the issue is clearly on the agenda of Dutch policy-makers. Conflict prevention, conflict containment and peace-building are all policy goals of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. They are pursued in an integrative way, development

¹ Report Medium-term Perspective, p. 30.

cooperation being one of the instruments. Initiatives to enhance peace processes focus not only on political leaders, but on civil society as well. The need for long-term involvement and long-term support in post-conflict situations is underscored by the Ministry: the signing of peace accords does not automatically lead to sustainable peace².

A first review of research funded from Dutch sources showed that the research school CERES and the Netherlands Institute of International Relations 'Clingendael' have developed research programmes which aim to contribute to a general theory of conflict by constructing and testing models of the causes of escalation and the possibilities for prevention and intervention. Comparative research methods are used to discover patterns of conditions and key factors. The department of development cooperation supports Clingendael's research on specific prevention mechanisms and the development of early warning systems³. Quite a number of Dutch scientists are involved in research projects on conflict.

Points of departure

The Council felt that a complementary contribution could be made in this field if RAWOO would adopt the following points of departure:

- the Southern perspective, which would be provided by having Council members from the South and by explicitly eliciting and examining Southern views;
- a focus on 'post-armed-conflict' situations. These offer an opportunity for research that can contribute to the enhancement of peaceful development. The stakeholders in such situations can be encouraged to work together to prevent new or renewed tensions that could lead to violent conflict;
- a focus on causes and on the resolution of conflicts at the local/community level. Politicians often focus on the 'big players' in conflicts, but the local level is critical for efforts at prevention. A more people-oriented approach is needed which takes specific groups (women, the poor) into account. As people will have to continue to live together, the resolution of conflicts at the micro-level, for instance around the use of land or water, is very relevant;
- a focus on the relationship between conflict and development.

RAWOO formed a working group to plan and undertake activities in preparation for drafting recommendations for the Dutch government regarding future research. (*See Annex 1.*)

Objectives

Against this background, the purpose of the present report is: (1) to examine the research issues and needs related to post-conflict management and development; (2) to set out the major policy directions for a long-term programme of multi-disciplinary international cooperation that will generate and mobilize knowledge in this area; (3) to propose a two-year programme development phase that will be conducted under the responsibility of RAWOO.

The present report has been written for the Dutch government. The Council hopes that it will result in the government's commitment to the approach which RAWOO recommends for generating and disseminating knowledge that will foster development in post-conflict societies. This commitment is needed if RAWOO is to conduct the follow-up activities required for establishing a long-term international programme.

² Begroting Buitenlandse Zaken 1999, p.18/19; Begroting Buitenlandse Zaken 2000, p. 28/29.

³ Research grants are also given to international institutes such as the International Peace Academy and the United Nations Research Institute for Social Development, UNRISD.

1.3. Working method

To understand which research is needed, the Council first held an expert meeting on 8 and 9 December 1998 under the title 'Post-Conflict Development'. The meeting brought together experts, primarily from countries in the South that have undergone or are undergoing periods of recovery, reconciliation and reconstruction following the conclusion of agreements to end violent conflicts. The experts were people who have acquired special understanding of the processes of peace-making and reconstruction. Some had held positions of leadership in peace talks and had been personally involved in post-conflict processes. For purposes of discussion at the expert meeting, the Council selected four cases from among the countries and regions which have undergone violent conflict in the recent past. Each was at a different stage of post-conflict recovery. The four cases were Guatemala, South Africa, the Chittagong Hill Tracts of Bangladesh, and Bougainville in Papua New Guinea. This approach was taken in order to encourage an exchange of experiences and an effective exploration of the lessons to be learned. Each case was represented by three or four persons of different backgrounds, including mediators, scientists, and representatives of parties to the conflict and organizations involved in the issues. Government officials were not invited at this stage since in some of the cases their presence would have still been too sensitive.

Much care was taken to create an atmosphere of openness and trust. Ample time was devoted to gaining an understanding of the issues and problems related to each post-conflict situation. On the basis of this understanding, the usefulness of various kinds of research and capacity-building were explored. The approach used to identify research needs was a practical one: how can research contribute to a better understanding of the issues, and to more effective policies, management and action? Three principal questions were posed:

1. Can research contribute to the understanding of post-conflict situations and, if so, what kind of research is most helpful and by whom should it be undertaken?
2. Can research in affected countries and regions contribute to their process of recovery and the consolidation of a lasting peace and, if so, what kind of research is most helpful and by whom should it be undertaken?
3. What is the capacity in the affected regions for undertaking the desired research? How can the capacity be developed where it is needed and what useful role can development agencies and donor countries play in this regard?

The outcomes of this first examination of post-conflict issues and research needs (see section 2.1) were discussed with civil servants of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs who are engaged in conflict prevention and peace-building. The Ministry, being also one of the stakeholders in post-conflict policy and research, was invited to comment on the conclusions reached by the expert meeting and to react to RAWOO's emphasis on identifying the Southern demand for research. The foreign ministry officials expressed considerable interest in RAWOO's development of a research focus on post-conflict peace-building, especially in the areas of importance to Dutch policy-making. They also supported the emphasis on local processes and local capacities for peaceful development, while recognizing the importance of comparative study.

The expert meeting was a first step towards identifying the research and capacity-building which is needed in this area. Two missions were organized, to the Chittagong Hill Tracts of Bangladesh in May 1999 and to Guatemala in August of the same year. The purpose of the missions was to verify and further explore the conclusions reached at the expert meeting, to

assess the need for further agenda-setting in those regions, and to identify organizations and individuals who could be involved in a future RAWOO initiative there. Bangladesh and Guatemala were chosen for this phase because they were at a stage in a peace process which was especially suitable for articulating needs. The mission teams interviewed persons from many different backgrounds: politicians and political activists, diplomats, lawyers, researchers and other academics, indigenous leaders from various ethnic groups, and representatives of NGOs, church-based organizations, women's groups, and international organizations. The teams gained detailed insight into local needs for research and capacity strengthening as well as an understanding of the main issues which have to be addressed and the different perspectives on these issues. As a result, preliminary, broad agendas for research have been suggested which can provide a starting point for a more extended RAWOO initiative.

A second meeting was held with civil servants from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in order to discuss a draft of the present report. Members of RAWOO's Conflict and Development Working Group presented and discussed RAWOO's proposal for a long-term programme. There was considerable interest in the Council's initiative. Suggestions and comments on the draft text have been incorporated into the report.

Chapter 2 summarizes the outcomes and recommendations of the expert meeting on post-conflict development that was held in The Hague in December 1998 (section 2.1). Section 2.2 summarizes the reports and conclusions of the missions sent to Bangladesh and Guatemala in May and August 1999, respectively.

Chapter 3 synthesizes the conclusions reached with respect to the nature of the problems faced in the wake of armed conflict, the contributions which research could make to the consolidation of peace in such areas, and the capacity-building needs that have been identified.

Chapter 4 presents RAWOO's proposed way forward: the development of a long-term, multidisciplinary programme of international cooperation under the title 'Knowledge for post-conflict management and development' which would respond to local needs for knowledge and to the international communities' need for greater understanding of post-conflict situations and their relation to development. Section 4.1 outlines the characteristics of the proposed programme, including its focus and two-pronged organizational structure. Before the programme can be implemented, a two-year phase of programme development is needed, for which RAWOO proposes to take responsibility. The specifics of this phase are elaborated in section 4.2.

2. Exploration of issues and research needs

2.1. Outcomes of the expert meeting on post-conflict development

The two-day expert meeting on post-conflict development brought together people from the South who are or have been involved in intra-state conflicts in different capacities: as mediators, representatives of one of the parties, human rights specialists, practitioners in conflict resolution or legal aid, or researchers. Together with a small number of Northern (mainly Dutch) participants, these experts discussed the background of the conflicts and the main issues presently faced in their respective countries (Guatemala, Bangladesh, Papua New Guinea and South Africa). Subsequently, they discussed how current or new research might contribute to addressing these issues. The approach used for identifying the need for new knowledge was a practical one. The object was to foster a just and lasting peace through better understanding among stakeholders, better policies, and better governance, management and action. The post-armed-conflict situations in the four case studies had each reached a different stage. This stimulated the exchange of knowledge, experiences and ideas, which participants found very valuable.

The expert meeting covered much ground. Many issues of general relevance in situations following armed conflict were identified and debated. These included issues related to the processes of negotiation and peace-building, and problems of implementation of peace agreements, democracy-building, reconciliation and healing. Development issues were also discussed and recommendations were made for future action. Capacity-building in general was identified as an important need; the capacities of state, local government and communities for dealing with conflicts needs to be strengthened. Special emphasis was placed on building up the capacities of leaders at the local level.

Participants agreed that the existence of a peace agreement does not guarantee sustainable peace. The causes of conflict may not have been adequately addressed, and segments of society may have been left out of the negotiation process. Structural causes of intra-state tensions--such as authoritarian rule, exclusion of minorities, socio-economic deprivation, and a lack of state capacity for conflict management--need to be dealt with. This might require a fundamental transformation of society. Conflict is often related to the social and economic inequality of marginalized groups, which often have a distinct ethnic identity. The new development and reconstruction efforts which are often initiated after peace agreements are reached require that these marginalized groups take part in decision-making. Empowerment of local groups involves, among other things, improving their access to knowledge.

It was concluded that in the case of *Guatemala*, even though most of the peace agreements have been implemented, there are still two important shortcomings. The first is the agreement on indigenous peoples and identity rights. Reform in this area has not yet gone far enough, although indigenous leadership has been strengthened and scope has been created for indigenous movements and women's movements. The indigenous population still needs help to understand the processes by which authority and identity are established and the ways in which communities can be empowered. Research is needed on the process of building up indigenous leadership.

The second agreement that is not yet fully implemented is related to socio-economic and agricultural development. The expert group agreed that indigenous people must be given private ownership of the land. A class of indigenous landowners needs to be established as counterparts to the large landowners. With the problem of land ownership and tenure thus

largely unresolved, there is a need for research on how agricultural and ecological policies should be implemented, especially where ecology laws in protected areas are in conflict with the way indigenous peoples use the land. Research is needed on current conflicts over land tenure, and on mechanisms for involving the communities. Proper research should also be conducted on the psychological healing required in the communities. Participatory research would be more appropriate here than pure academic research.

The expert meeting found that the December 1997 peace agreement for the *Chittagong Hill Tracts of Bangladesh* leaves crucial issues unresolved. The agreement does not mention the transfer of Bengali settlers to the plains, although a verbal promise was made to this effect. Many Bengali families remain in the hill tracts with the help of daily rations and other government assistance. The Indian government had signed an agreement regarding the return of refugees, but problems arose when the refugees found their former lands occupied by Bengali settlers.

Until the partition of British India in 1947, land rights were determined by the 1900 CHT Regulation Act, which gave exclusive ownership to the indigenous people. The different ways that the various groups dealt with land rights issues were never documented, however. Since these issues are sure to arise during any settlement of land disputes, there is a need for study and documentation of these traditional land rights.

Research is also needed to determine the development programmes which local people think are necessary. This is all the more important now that donor agencies and oil and gas companies are waiting to go in. There is need for psychological rehabilitation as well, but there are no institutional mechanisms to deal with these problems. Research can play a useful role here.

After ten years of civil war, peace negotiations in *Bougainville* (Papua New Guinea) are still underway. The last agreement reached, the Lincoln Agreement (1998), does not address certain vital issues. The expert meeting found this to be especially worrying since the incentive for the peace agreement came from the people themselves—in a bottom-up effort. The difficulty now is how to incorporate the grassroots needs into a constitution. The people want the freedom to choose on the question of autonomy. They feel the provincial government arrangement under PNG was negotiated without their involvement.

Research on how the agenda for negotiations was drawn up in a bottom-up way could be useful for others who will be opening negotiations in the near future. The process of reconciliation has started in Bougainville: villagers are sitting down together holding reconciliation ceremonies and discussing compensation. But logistical support and transport are needed to bring people together for the meetings and consultations that will facilitate the reconciliation process. Many problems have to be addressed, including the problem of land acquisition by the military and by multinational mining companies, and issues related to land rights and tenure.

South Africa is the furthest in the peace process. On the basis of in-depth experience with crisis resolution and conflict management in Africa, the expert meeting identified four structural causes of intra-state crisis: authoritarian rule, exclusion of minorities, socio-economic deprivation and inequity, and a weak state without the capacity it needs for conflict management. These are structural conditions that give rise to violence. The peace agreement in South Africa deals adequately with the authoritarian regime although the process of transformation and transition towards democracy will take a long time. The exclusion of

minorities has been dealt with through the creation of a government of national unity in which minorities are proportionally represented. Nevertheless, some tensions remain in this area. Socio-economic deprivation has not been dealt with. The free-market policy adopted by the government has resulted in the poor getting poorer. Accompanied by rising unemployment, this threatens the fragile democracy. There is a widespread problem of crime in South Africa, caused partly by socio-economic deprivation and inequity. The state's lack of capacity for conflict management has not been dealt with.

The logical remedy is capacity-building, especially at the level of local government and non-government organizations. NGOs at the community-level need the capacity to generate and access knowledge to stimulate local peace processes.

The participants in the expert meeting concluded that research can contribute to a better understanding of post-armed-conflict situations in general, and can offer useful insights into the process of recovery and transformation. They arrived at the following conclusions with respect to research:

1. The concept of research is best understood in the broader sense of increasing knowledge: generating new knowledge, increasing access to existing knowledge, and fostering the exchange and communication of knowledge. Viewed in this way, the concept also includes strengthening the capacity for increasing knowledge.
2. Participants identified a particular need for action-oriented research which responds to local initiatives and local development needs.
3. Participants felt that the *process* of identifying needs is very important: local actors need to be involved in determining the areas in which research is needed, and special attention should be given to the factor of gender. They also stressed that the results of research have to be made accessible to all groups.
4. Participants stressed the importance of examining local research capacity. There is often a lack of capacity. The capacity that does exist may not be geared to meeting the needs of post-armed-conflict societies. Also, there is a need to link the academic debate to the practitioners. Local actors need to be empowered to undertake new research and to access existing knowledge.
5. The participants agreed on the importance of exchanging knowledge and sharing experiences, be it through documents, symposia or direct contact. The knowledge needed is location-specific; it differs from country to country as each situation is unique. But similarities do exist, and experience gained in a specific location can be very relevant to other situations as well. Comparison and learning from others can provide valuable inputs for policy and practice. Participants suggested several possible subjects for such exchanges: negotiation processes, 'truth and reconciliation' processes, autonomy issues, cease-fires, and customary land rights and laws.

All in all, the participants concluded that research is relevant if the right path is followed: research must be oriented to policy and practice; various local actors must be involved in setting research agendas; local research capacities must be enhanced; and comparative exchanges should be encouraged to help shape local solutions. Many participants wished to engage in follow-up activities as a group. One specific aim could be to facilitate constructive exchanges and comparison on specific issues.

An extensive report of the meeting was drafted and sent to the participants for their comments. A more concise summary has been prepared for external use (*see Annex 2*).

2.2. Findings of the identification missions

Two missions took place, to the Chittagong Hill Tracts of Bangladesh in May 1999, and to Guatemala in August of the same year. The purpose of the missions was threefold: to verify and further explore the conclusions reached by the expert meeting; to assess the need for further agenda-setting in the two regions; and to identify organizations and individuals who could be involved in future RAWOO initiatives in each region.

Mission to Bangladesh

In Bangladesh, the RAWOO team spoke with 37 people of different backgrounds: politicians and political activists, diplomats, lawyers, academics and researchers, indigenous leaders from various ethnic groups, and representatives of NGOs, church-based organizations, women's groups, and international organizations.

In December 1997, after more than two decades of armed struggle, a peace agreement was signed by the government of Bangladesh and the Parbattya Chattagram Jana Samhati Samiti (PCJSS), which had been demanding autonomy in this hilly region of south-east Bangladesh. The agreement has left a number of issues unresolved, however. Among them are the land rights of the indigenous and non-indigenous inhabitants of the region, the Bengali settlers who have been transferred from the plains to the hill tracts in an effort to defuse the insurgency, and the modes and mechanisms by which power will be transferred to the autonomous regional administration. A regional council was set up under the terms of the agreement. It is currently chaired by the PCJSS leader, Shantu Larma.

The post-armed-conflict situation is characterized by many uncertainties, tensions and diverging interests--between the national government and the regional council, between larger ethnic groups and smaller ethnic groups, between rival factions in the leadership, and between the indigenous groups and the Bengali settlers within local communities. In the Chittagong Hill Tracts there is general distrust--of the national government's strategies for developing the region, and of the continuing presence of the military. These parties are thought to be interested only in exploiting the rich resources of the region, which include timber, oil, and tourism. There is a general feeling among the indigenous people that they should be consulted in the decision-making related to the peace process and to development policies.

Two things are foremost on people's minds: the problems that are being encountered as the peace accord is implemented, and the need to improve living conditions by strengthening the economic base and improving education. There was a general consensus regarding research priorities. The main issues identified were:

1. Land and forestry issues. Land is central to the lifestyle and economic existence of the indigenous population. Under their customary law, the land of the hill tracts is owned and can be used by all the people. But many indigenous people do not have a title to land that is recognized by Bangladeshi courts, while many Bengali settlers have obtained official papers showing private ownership. This property issue must be resolved before any meaningful development can take place in the region; the issue calls for thorough investigation. The government has also claimed land for a forestry reserve and other purposes, for example to lease to oil companies and to allow housing to be built for the armed forces. The conflicts

regarding land ownership are central to the problems between the hill people and the Bengali settlers, and also between the hill residents and the refugees who are returning from years of exile in India.

2. The settler issue. There are many Bengali settlers in the Chittagong Hill Tracts, among them a large group sent there for political reasons. Many of these settlers are living in clustered villages and remain dependent on government support. During the long armed conflict, the army often incited riots between the Bengali settlers and the hill people. The PCJSS has therefore always demanded that the settlers be relocated or encouraged to relocate outside the region with government support. The written agreement contains no such provisions although assurances to this effect were given to the JSS by the prime minister at the time the agreement was signed. Donors often try to gloss over the problem, maintaining that donor policy should benefit the indigenous population and the settlers equally. Little is known about the local perceptions of this problem. The relations between old and new Bengali settlers and the indigenous hill population have never been studied sufficiently even though they are crucial to an understanding of how renewed conflict can be avoided and peaceful coexistence assured.

The above issues also hinge on related factors, such as the presence and withdrawal of the military, problems related to the implementation of the peace accord, the development of a longer-term vision for the region, and the need for rethinking donor policies regarding post-conflict situations. There are also areas of research that cut across all research topics. These include the position and rights of indigenous peoples, their participation in decision-making, and gender relations.

For the short term, scholars, activists and practitioners all expressed a preference for action-oriented research, although a number of scholars said that long-term fundamental research on specific themes is also needed. Almost everyone said it is important to use and develop local research capacity by enlisting local talent and expertise.

Only a short time has elapsed since the signing of the peace agreement, so the situation in the region is still highly sensitive and volatile. It was felt that under these circumstances innovative strategies are needed that will help the administration of research to run smoothly. Several suggestions were made:

- Government institutions should not be relied upon.
- The research should not be administered centrally but should involve diverse research organizations and individuals. The only condition is that local people trust them.
- South-South and North-South collaboration should be encouraged for the sake of capacity-building. Lessons need to be learned from similar situations involving indigenous populations elsewhere.

Many people welcomed the initiative taken by RAWOO, especially its emphasis on the need for the affected people themselves to set the agenda and to carry out the necessary work. People from different parts of the Chittagong Hill Tracts and from different backgrounds expressed interest in follow-up activities.

Mission to Guatemala

In Guatemala the RAWOO team interviewed 33 persons from different backgrounds: from government, international organizations, church-based organizations, research institutions, national and local NGOs, and foreign diplomatic missions. The mission identified serious problems in the implementation of the peace agreements which have ended 36 years of

violent conflict. The main victims of these problems are the indigenous Mayan population of western Guatemala. (Some people interviewed referred to a process of 'ethnic cleansing' carried out against the Mayans by the army and its local operators, including the PAC, civil defence patrols. Between 150,000 and 300,000 men and women--mostly indigenous Mayans--have died and/or disappeared.)

Guatemala is currently undergoing a very difficult transition: from armed conflict to a state of peace, and from authoritarian rule--dominated by the armed forces--to democratic, civilian governance. There was considerable consensus among the people interviewed that a thorough reform of the state and its institutions is needed alongside the political, social and economic reform. This is fully recognized in the peace accords, but the highly polarized nature of Guatemalan society makes the implementation of the reforms a difficult and slow process. Two issues that cut right across boundaries of state, political, economic and social reform were repeatedly drawn to the mission's attention: the need to transform Guatemala into a pluralist society in which the indigenous Mayan identity and that of other ethnic groups will be fully recognized, and the need for gender equality.

Foremost on the minds of many people interviewed is the issue of inter-ethnic relations and the need to develop a pluri-cultural society in Guatemala. This is considered fundamental and essential for the advancement of the peace process and the maintenance of a lasting peace. Racism and discrimination are deeply ingrained in Guatemalan society. Indigenous people and women are victims of discrimination, both institutional and personal. A central component of the peace accords deals with recognition of the distinct identity of the Mayan peoples (who constitute a large majority of the population) and their right to maintain and develop their own languages, culture and way of life. This also includes recognition of the indigenous political and legal systems.

Women and girls have suffered and continue to suffer from discrimination, violence (including domestic violence) and exploitation in addition to being discriminated against for belonging to particular ethnic groups or communities. Access to education is lower among women and therefore also the incidence of bilingualism, which is essential for social, political and economic participation outside the home community. Effective exercise of political and social citizenship is a crucial issue for women, and the women's movement is making women and their organizations better able to overcome the institutional and social barriers to participation. But the movement faces serious opposition from the conservative, male-dominated society, in both the Ladino and the indigenous communities.

During the interviews, respondents identified a number of areas of research as most desired. High on the list of priorities were:

1. The issue of pluri-culturalism. How can a multi-ethnic society be created which respects the distinctness of the various ethnic and linguistic groups making up Guatemala and which gives each group the autonomy it needs to ensure the fullest participation of its members? The political, social and judicial systems of the indigenous peoples as well as their approach to conflict resolution need to be researched, as do ways to integrate these into the framework of a pluri-cultural state.
2. Gender issues. Research in other fields should contain a clear gender component, but the issue also merits separate research in the context of the efforts of the civil society to build a more democratic and just Guatemalan society.

3. Issues of participation and decentralization. Many issues related to state-building and reform and thus central to the transition process could use new impetus, insights and creative approaches. The Guatemalan electoral system holds no appeal for the poor and indigenous population. The system of government is highly centralized and its organs are physically concentrated in the capital city while at the same time remaining weak. Outside the capital the decentralization agenda is widely supported; in some municipalities there is a genuine effort to involve indigenous communities and women in decision-making.

4. Local people's ideas and perspectives on the issues of violence and reconciliation. These views are not known at all and need to be incorporated into decision-making processes.

5. Issues of land ownership and use, also brought forward at the expert meeting, were identified as important topics for research.

The mission also explored the present research capacity in Guatemala. Researchers seem to operate in isolation and rarely maintain contact with the users and potential users of their research. The existing research capacity is considerable but virtually all research institutions and scholars are found in the capital city, a fact which strongly affects and limits the nature and outcome of the research produced. They do not focus on problems felt at the community level. There are few young, female or indigenous researchers, and applied research is rare. Knowledge that is generated is not effectively shared or disseminated. At the other end of the spectrum are NGOs, community-based organizations, women's organizations, etc. Some engage in research and produce useful publications. Many lack the capacity to generate research that is relevant to their constituents' needs; relations with the research community are poor. It seems also that too much research is donor-driven, a situation which leads to duplication of research in some areas and lack of attention to other areas.

In Guatemala many indigenous leaders and researchers expressed a keen interest in learning from the experiences of other post-conflict communities. Comparative analysis within a Central American context was felt to be useful as well. Institutions and individuals expressed a desire to cooperate with RAWOO.

3. Synthesis

3.1. Understanding the issues and problems related to post-armed-conflict situations

The conclusion of peace agreements between belligerents is often mistakenly perceived to herald the end of a conflict and related problems. Interested third parties frequently turn their attention elsewhere at this point. Yet experience shows that problems and disputes connected to the implementation or non-implementation of agreements can be very severe and can even lead to renewed violent conflict. This is especially the case when disagreement revolves around issues related to the root causes of the armed conflict and when peace agreements have left important issues unaddressed. For this reason, the period following armed conflict is critical to the restoration and consolidation of peace in war-torn regions.

The expert meeting identified many issues which are of general relevance to peace processes. The negotiation process itself is important. Who sits at the table? What incentives are there for going to the table? Whose needs and interests have been identified? Peace agreements may deal with political and military issues, but fail to mention such social problems as poverty, poor healthcare, alcohol abuse, violence and gender discrimination. Political sensitivities may result in crucial issues being removed from a peace agreement. Yet all these issues have to be addressed if peace is to be maintained. The implementation of peace agreements can also often be problematic.

The current situations in Bangladesh and Guatemala vividly illustrate the volatility of post-conflict situations. In the Chittagong Hill Tracts tensions are mounting once again because people do not perceive sufficient tangible benefits from the conclusion of the peace accords. The government of Bangladesh is dragging its feet and, in some instances, going back on commitments it made at the time of the signing of the peace accords with the JSS. Key issues related to the root causes of the armed conflict --the continued presence of unwelcome Bengali Muslim settlers in the hill tracts and land dispossession among the indigenous Jummas—are still left largely unaddressed.

In Guatemala, the initial stage of implementing the peace accords has been effectively completed. The cease-fire has taken place and the guerrilla forces have been demobilized and re-integrated. But the implementation of key reforms prescribed by the accords is proving difficult, and the problems are likely to deepen. Transformation of the role of the armed forces, the recognition of indigenous rights, and political, judicial and social reform are all encountering determined resistance from vested interests.

In both cases, high levels of violence—sometimes politically motivated but more often in the nature of common crime--have the proponents of the peace process very worried. Not only does the violence pose a real threat to the security of ordinary persons, it also provides a pretext for the military to retain their dominant role in society. The problematic role of the military and the problem of violence are found in many post-conflict societies, as is the problem of frustrated youth.

Peace in Guatemala was concluded between the government then in power and the 'rebel' movement, the Unidad Revolucionaria Nacional Guatemalteca (URNG). Under leadership of the Catholic Church there was broad participation in the process leading up to the signing of the peace accords. Yet, the 'ownership' of the accords is perceived to be held by the political party then in power and the URNG, and not by the Guatemalan state and the civil society. This is certainly true in the case of implementation.

In Bangladesh there was no role for civil society in the negotiation process which led to the peace accord, and today there is strong opposition to those accords both on a national level from the opposition BNP party and on a local level from the small but determined UDF in the Chittagong Hill Tracts.

Broad ownership of and participation in the peace process, especially after an agreement has been concluded, is crucial to the success of the process. Continued marginalization or perceived marginalization of groups, especially those affected by the conflict, holds the seeds for renewed discontent and conflict.

There is an unmistakable sense of urgency about these and similar problems. Government leaders, bureaucrats, the military and business leaders are—at least in the two cases examined more closely by RAWOO—at best reluctant to fully implement the peace accords, as this could reduce their influence or their hold on power. Even the best peace agreements, such as the Guatemala accords, are meaningless in the face of powerful resistance to their implementation. Confidence in the peace process must be restored quickly if the dynamics of conflict are not slowly but steadily to gain the upper hand once again.

Both in Bangladesh and in Guatemala the role of the international donor community is crucial. Those in favour of the implementation of the peace accords all point to the decisive role which donor countries and organizations can play in persuading or pressuring reluctant parties to faithfully implement the agreements. In Guatemala the World Bank, the IMF, the EU, the US and many other donor governments are actively involved in the promotion of reform programmes, and their activities and funds do have an important impact. But the focus of their actions is the reform of the judicial system and, as a result, certain other areas in need of reform are neglected. Some critics believe that too much attention and too many resources are directed towards the fulfilment of a narrow objective. This can threaten the success of the broader and more comprehensive agenda of the peace accords. They believe the international community should adopt a more integrated and comprehensive approach.

In Bangladesh, the donor community was not adequately prepared to deal with the implementation phase. They were pressured by the government to support its agenda for the Chittagong Hill Tracts, and had difficulty assessing what the needs and aspirations of the indigenous Jumma people were. Here too, supporters of the peace process believe the donor countries and agencies hold the key to the implementation of the accords: they argue that after demobilization of the JSS military wing, the only reason for the government and other vested interests to continue to implement the peace accords could be the incentives created by the donor community, on which the government is highly dependent.

The period following armed conflict is very volatile. It requires serious attention and well-conceived, comprehensive and coordinated policies on all sides: on the side of the parties to the conflict and civil society in the country in question, and on the side of the international community—especially the community of donors.

3.2. Research for consolidation of the post-conflict peace process

The conclusions reached at the expert meeting and by the mission teams that visited Bangladesh and Guatemala leave no doubt about the need for research in the broadest sense of the word—that is, to improve knowledge (by generating new knowledge, increasing access to existing knowledge, and exchanging and disseminating knowledge). Many leaders representing different stakeholders feel they have insufficient knowledge and information to

make the kinds of decisions required to effectuate the necessary post-conflict transformation. They also point to the lack of capacity for undertaking the required research. Internationally, the need for research is being identified in terms of developing understanding of the dynamics of post-conflict societies and the policies that are capable of consolidating peace and preventing renewed conflict.

Post-armed-conflict situations present a uniquely difficult set of circumstances for undertaking research. Tensions are typically high, facilities deficient, capacities low, and the focus of attention is on responding to immediate needs, not on research which could produce some benefit in the distant future.

At the local level, the message is clear: research --the generation and mobilization of knowledge--is seen as necessary, but only if its outcome is accessible and practically applicable to today's real problems. The sense of urgency cannot be overemphasized. There is a great danger to miss the brief opportunity for real change that follows the conclusion of peace accords.

Many persons interviewed by the RAWOO mission teams stressed the need for local, micro-level research that could have an impact on local decision-making. The need for strategic research at the macro level was also recognized, especially by persons confronted with the task of realizing societal, political and governmental reform.

Given the special circumstances of post-conflict situations, research must be undertaken in a manner that is helpful first and foremost to the people and society directly affected by the conflict. The process of agenda-setting and the research itself must be designed in such a way that they provide tangible benefits to stakeholders. Thus, the process is as important as the substance and outcome of research (see 3.3.).

Research efforts can be beneficial to local actors and to national decision-makers as well as to the international community if they respond directly to locally felt needs and at the same time lift the subject matter above the level of the local agenda. The latter can be achieved by drawing from experiences of other communities and countries with similar problems, thus introducing comparative perspectives to the research. This recommendation from the expert meeting was supported in the subsequent missions.

Research capacity is typically low in societies shattered by armed conflict. Although Guatemala has prestigious institutions that conduct academic research, community-based organizations and leaders complain that they have no access to it or that it is not relevant to their needs. Academics complain that their research is not given much importance by decision-makers at the national level. Both in Bangladesh and in Guatemala, the capacity for research at the local level is minimal at best.

These mission findings confirm the more general recommendation of the expert meeting, which stressed the crucial importance of examining local research capacity. The focus should be on empowering and building up the capacity of NGOs, community-based organizations, and research institutions and individuals at the local level, as well as on facilitating communication between stakeholders and researchers at different levels.

3.3. Development of appropriate working methods

The challenge will be to develop a methodology and process for agenda-setting and research that can meet the demands of the uniquely difficult situation of post-armed-conflict

situations. It should address locally relevant, even pivotal, issues which may well be unique to a particular situation, while at the same time drawing lessons which can also be useful for understanding and responding to needs elsewhere. The comparative dimension of research can be present in the form of an environment for learning from each other's experiences. Either North-South or South-South cooperation can provide an appropriate context for introducing this comparative element.

The processes of agenda-setting and research have to ensure that the activities themselves are beneficial to the war-torn societies and the stakeholders participating in the exercise. In post-conflict situations where hostile stakeholders are not communicating with each other, a process which brings them together to discuss and tackle critical issues can constitute a significant benefit. A non-threatening environment must be created before such dialogue and cooperation can take place. When people--due to their perceived enmities or conflicting interests--do not otherwise engage in constructive dialogue, ways must be found that enable them to address the root causes of conflict which are inhibiting full implementation of a peace accord and the necessary transformation of society.

Creating the learning environment which can make this discussion and research possible is a delicate task. It will require discretion, diplomacy, cultural sensitivity and the establishment of trust among all parties concerned. It is important to be inclusive in this process, for exclusion foments distrust and the perpetuation of enmity. Similarly, the process must be transparent and accessible. Precisely which process and environment can provide the necessary conditions for dialogues oriented to problem-solving will very much depend on the specific circumstances of each situation. Nevertheless, there are lessons to be learned from the development of such methodology and processes--lessons which could well have relevance for stakeholders elsewhere, within a national context as well as at an international level.

4. Towards a ‘Knowledge for post-conflict management and development’ programme

The exploration carried out by RAWOO has revealed a need for research and capacity-building in regions that are emerging from armed conflicts, thus justifying a RAWOO focus in this area. In the course of its investigations, RAWOO has gained deeper insight into the needs of the people most directly affected by or involved in post-armed-conflict processes. RAWOO has also gained understanding of the volatile nature of peace processes and the many sensitivities that must be acknowledged in these situations. In the two countries to which RAWOO sent missions, its teams found stakeholders eager to work together in the peace process and to embark upon research that could be of direct benefit to that process. The teams also explored ways to provide much-needed support for local research.

In light of its findings, the Council now proposes the development of a long-term programme of multi-disciplinary international cooperation, the object of which will be to generate and mobilize knowledge for the post-armed-conflict peace process.

The Council envisages a programme which combines a local and national approach with comparative analysis and exchanges. The programme will operate on two levels simultaneously: (1) the local and national levels in post-armed-conflict societies, where knowledge will be generated and mobilized, and (2) the international level, where lessons will be drawn from local knowledge and the insights gained through exchanges and comparative analysis.

The proposed programme will target:

- *the post-conflict societies themselves*
Stakeholders in post-conflict societies need knowledge which can be effectively applied 1) to respond to pressing local needs, including the need for people to rebuild their lives and livelihoods; 2) to manage the transformation of war-torn societies; and 3) to overcome the obstacles to peace.
- *the international community, including donor countries and agencies*
Policy-makers need greater insight into the dynamics and problems of post-armed-conflict societies if they are to develop policies that contribute meaningfully to a consolidation of peace.

In section 4.1 the characteristics of the proposed programme are outlined with respect to the focus and the envisaged two-pronged organizational structure. Before the programme can be implemented, a two-year phase of programme development is needed. RAWOO proposes to take responsibility for this phase and to start activities in Bangladesh (Chittagong Hill Tracts) and Guatemala. The specifics of this phase are elaborated in section 4.2.

Guatemala and the Chittagong Hill Tracts of Bangladesh have been selected to be the pilot regions for the RAWOO initiative because the situation in these countries appears to be particularly ripe and well suited for it. In the expert meeting the situations in four places were examined: the Chittagong Hill Tracts of Bangladesh, Bougainville in Papua New Guinea, Guatemala, and South Africa. All four have recently emerged from serious, violent internal armed conflict, but Bangladesh and Guatemala have both reached a stage where needs are being articulated. In Bougainville the process is not yet ripe enough for research programming: the region is in the middle of political negotiation processes, and a lasting

agreement has not yet been formulated and adopted. South Africa is the furthest in the peace process and the process of transformation. Already it has a very significant research capacity and extensive research programmes that are, to a large extent, practice-oriented. Although at this initial stage only Guatemala and Bangladesh have been selected for programme development, expert participants from South Africa and Bougainville should continue to be involved at least on the international level, so that the RAWOO initiative and all its participants can benefit from the experience gained in those regions, and so that they, in turn, can benefit from the processes to be developed in Bangladesh and Guatemala.

4.1. Programme characteristics: focus and organizational structure

Programme focus

On the basis of its findings, the Council has developed a specific approach which is well suited to post-conflict situations. This approach is:

- needs-based and user-oriented,
- broad and flexible, and
- process-oriented;

and is designed:

- to involve different stakeholders, and
- to stimulate constructive, comparative exchanges.

The focus of the programme is different from most research programmes. The programme offers:

- an alternative approach to research which is expected to generate benefits.

Needs-based and user-oriented

The proposed programme will be driven by the users of the knowledge to be generated, with a special focus on users at the local level, women, and indigenous groups, all of whom are currently largely marginalized. It will be designed to bridge the gap between the generation of knowledge (research), and the application of knowledge (action). The RAWOO missions to Bangladesh and Guatemala identified urgent and compelling issues which require further elaboration and then translation into a programme of activities. Some of the issues raised were specific to the particular situation or region, while others reflected shared problems and concerns relevant to post-conflict situations in general.

Broad and flexible support

Support will be given for strategic and action-oriented research carried out by researchers in the academic community and in grassroots NGOs, local community organizations, and indigenous and women's movements. Support is needed especially for non-mainstream research and non-partisan research. Under the proposed programme, research capacity--including access to existing knowledge--will be enhanced, especially at the local level. Careful attention must also be given to the coordination of research, to communication between researchers and the people who will use the knowledge generated, and to the capacity for accessing existing knowledge and disseminating new knowledge. This support will be provided by means of South-South and North-South cooperation.

Broad stakeholder involvement

The proposed programme will be inclusive and highly participatory, and will involve most stakeholders at the local and national levels. These will include NGOs, community-based organizations, women's organizations, local community leaders, indigenous leaders, national

political leaders, and academics. In some cases international organizations may also be included. The programme will, of necessity, involve the participation of organizations and persons who are antagonistic to each other. This is the special challenge of setting up such a programme in a post-armed-conflict situation. Appropriate working methods will need to be developed both for the process of agenda-setting and for the research programme itself. This will mean dialogue and consultation, taking into consideration the often highly polarized and tense situation in post-conflict settings.

Stimulation of constructive, comparative exchanges

Creating an environment in which stakeholders from different regions can learn from each other can be of immense value for people working on the ground as well as for policy-makers. A comparative element can help people analyze their situations from new perspectives and can encourage the development of creative solutions. The proposed programme will be structured in such a manner as to ensure that local actors and policy-makers abroad can benefit from both the process and the outcome of the research programme. Both groups will benefit from the lessons learned and insights gained at the local and national levels, from the comparative analysis of local and national experiences and from the exchanges at international level which enable them to maximize the opportunities to learn from each other's experiences⁴. These exchanges need not be restricted to South-South exchanges (within and outside the region), but will include North-South exchanges any time that these are relevant and beneficial. Likewise, the expertise and input of Dutch researchers, NGOs and individuals with capacities for peace-building and reconciliation will be called upon where relevant.

Process approach

The proposed programme will focus much attention on developing innovative processes and methodologies specifically suited to post-armed-conflict situations. The core of the programme's method will be to facilitate dialogue and cooperation between the principal stakeholders, including stakeholders who are antagonistic to each other. The process of discussing agendas and research plans, like the process of actually conducting joint research, can be immensely beneficial to the process of securing peace and achieving transformation in conflict-torn societies. Methodologies for setting agendas and conducting research in polarized situations could also be useful outside the specific location in which they were developed and first applied. This calls for the careful and deliberate development of a programme which will evolve and could be extended to new locations.

Alternative approach

Whereas most research programmes are driven by the research community, by government or donors, the RAWOO initiative is driven by the needs of local stakeholders and will involve leaders at grassroots and community level as well as academic research institutions. As a result, much greater use will be made of the knowledge generated, mainly because it can be expected to be of direct and tangible benefit to the people affected by armed conflict.

At present, most research is focused at the national level, is carried out by a small number of people centred in the principal cities, and has a distinct urban bias. The results are

⁴ Experience gained in Bangladesh with the incorporation of indigenous legal systems, customary law and traditional leadership systems, could, for example, provide useful models for Guatemalans who are struggling with this same issue but without the benefit of previous experience. Exchanges of information related to shared concerns, such as the problematic role of the military in post-conflict societies and the prevalence of violence, can be very valuable as well.

consequently often predictable and tend to reinforce rather than counteract existing biases. At the local rural level, NGOs and community actors are also engaged in their own research, which is often politically motivated and not taken seriously at the national level. Their research is further limited by a lack of capacity. The RAWOO initiative aims to bridge the gap between these and other groups of actors; to develop communication, dialogue and cooperation among them; and to increase their capacity to generate, use and disseminate relevant knowledge.

Dialogue focused on agenda-setting and research is less threatening than other forms of dialogue between potential antagonists and creates a long-term process with outcomes that have multiplying effects. Both the process and the knowledge generated should contribute significantly to the peace processes in the pilot regions and to our understanding of post-conflict societies and conflict transformation in general.

Organizational structure

A programme designed along the lines indicated above requires an adequate organizational and management structure. The programme's approach combines a local focus with a focus on comparative analysis and identification of shared concerns. For this reason RAWOO proposes a two-pronged organizational structure. The object is to stimulate mutually beneficial interaction between an international programme group (IPG) and local/national programme groups (LPGs) in two or more countries. This interaction will encourage the development of a learning environment in which knowledge and experience are shared, in both South-South and North-South exchanges.

- Local programme groups (LPGs) will consist of researchers and other persons with credibility in various sectors who together represent most of the major stakeholders. These groups will discuss and decide on working methods and priorities, and will set the agenda for follow-up activities involving research, capacity-building and exchanges.
- The international programme group (IPG) will primarily be a South-South exchange group. It will consist of experts from the countries involved and from other Southern countries, and will also have input from relevant participants from the North. The IPG will monitor the LPGs, while the LPGs provide the IPG with the input from the ground level and national level from which participants can draw lessons and gain a deeper understanding of post-armed-conflict societies. The IPG will also discuss issues that are found too sensitive to discuss in the regions. The results of such discussion can be helpful to the LPGs, however, as will be the consequent availability of informed outsiders who can facilitate processes at local levels. The IPG can help to organize activities that enhance the learning environment at the local level: for example, exchanges and workshops for purposes of comparison, and workshops on methodology.

4.2. Programme development phase

The Council proposes to precede the programme with a two-year development phase in order to:

- further specify the research agendas,
- develop the most appropriate organizational structure, and
- develop and test a methodology which is suited to the particular sensitivities of post-armed-conflict situations.

The Council proposes to start by developing the programme in two countries: Bangladesh and Guatemala. The RAWOO missions have shown that there will be sufficient support in these countries for initiating the programme. The missions have also identified key persons to

carry forward the process. RAWOO will consider extending the programme to other regions of the South that are emerging from situations of armed conflict, but will initially develop the programme only in the two pilot regions.

Setting the research agenda

Although the expert meeting and the missions to Bangladesh and Guatemala have already resulted in local stakeholders identifying a number of important topics for research (see chapter 2), a process of prioritization and concrete agenda-setting now needs to take place in each pilot region. The topics selected for research may well be different in the two regions since they will depend on local needs and priorities.

The methodology chosen by the LPGs is likely to involve extensive consultations with stakeholders at the local level but also at the national level. It may also involve input from and exchange of knowledge and experience with other persons from the broader region. (For example, indigenous leaders from the Philippines may be asked to participate in discussions within the Bangladeshi LPG, and to share what they have learned about developing autonomous structures or curbing post-conflict violence.) The methodology will be regularly evaluated using procedures to which everyone has agreed in advance. In this way corrections, modifications and even important changes can be decided upon and made in the course of the two-year programming phase.

Organizational structure

On the basis of its initial investigation, RAWOO is proposing an overall structure for the research programme (see section 4.1). This now needs to be refined and tested with the full participation of stakeholders at local and international levels. The precise composition of the LPGs and of the IPG is an issue of considerable importance and sensitivity: for these groups to function well it is essential that their members come to trust and respect one another, a requirement that is by no means easy to fill in societies traumatized by recent, vivid memories of armed conflict.

In each pilot country, a local programme group (LPG) will be created. RAWOO will initially select a small group of persons in each region who have appropriate credentials and are widely acceptable. These persons will have to be selected carefully to ensure that they can work together and will be trusted by all stakeholders. The RAWOO missions made initial assessments in this regard and have provided some names. These persons, on behalf of RAWOO, will put together an LPG in each pilot country that represents all major stakeholders and is balanced in terms of gender and ethnic composition.

During the two-year programming phase, the LPGs, together with a RAWOO representative, will work out a method and then draw up an agenda of activities for research, capacity-building and exchanges. In consultation with RAWOO, each LPG will then appoint one or more of its members to coordinate the group's activities. Funds will be provided which enable the LPG, in consultation with RAWOO, to ask an existing institution to perform administrative and logistical tasks for the LPG itself, for the coordinators, and for the researchers involved in the programme.

In addition to the processes in the pilot regions themselves, RAWOO will put together an international programme group (IPG) which will meet regularly in the Netherlands. The group will include persons involved in the processes in the two pilot areas, persons involved in peace processes in South Africa and Bougainville, members of RAWOO's Conflict and

Development Working Group, and other persons who can bring relevant knowledge and field experience to the group discussions.

Innovative methodology

A major challenge of the programming phase will be to set in motion an inclusive, bottom-up, highly participatory process which is specifically suited to post-armed-conflict situations. It is the intention of RAWOO, together with the stakeholders in the pilot regions, to develop an innovative methodology which itself will contribute to the peace process and to reconciliation by bringing together sometimes antagonistic stakeholders and helping them to constructively address crucial issues affecting the peace process.

At the end of the two-year programming phase, all the participants involved in the process at all levels will have helped to devise and test a process for developing research programmes and setting agendas in post-armed-conflict regions. The process will have the following features:

- *inclusive*: the process will involve most stakeholders, including those antagonistic to each other.
- *bottom-up*: the process will be user-driven, responsive to local needs, and designed to ensure equal participation of the stakeholders involved, in particular women and indigenous communities.
- *substantive*: the process will set in motion a constructive dialogue on issues of central importance to the peace process and to reconciliation among stakeholders.

At the end of this two-year process, RAWOO will present a comprehensive proposal for a long-term programme of activities in the chosen countries. A set of user-driven research agendas and programmes will be proposed for the chosen regions, together with a plan for locally appropriate organizational and management structures. Care will be taken to set up the programmes in such a way as to ensure the continuing involvement of various actors, including the academic research communities, the grassroots NGOs, local government, women, and indigenous leaders. In addition, the proposal will describe what is needed in terms of capacity-building and institutional development and will propose activities to respond to these needs.

The role of RAWOO

It is RAWOO's mandate to develop innovative research programmes, such as the one envisioned here, which build bridges between the needs of societies and the development of scientific knowledge.

RAWOO will be responsible for the two-year development phase and will work in close cooperation with overseas partners. The members of RAWOO's Conflict and Development Working Group will actively participate in this phase, both at the local level (in observer or advisory capacities) and at the international level in the IPG. The RAWOO Secretariat will be responsible for the financial administration of the project and will give practical assistance to the Working Group and the IPG.

At the end of the two-year programming phase, RAWOO will submit to the Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs a comprehensive proposal for a long-term research programme, as discussed earlier in this section. This means that RAWOO is asking the Ministry not only for financial support for the programming phase, but also for a long-term commitment to the research programme itself. Embarkation on the two-year programming phase will inevitably

and justifiably create the expectation that the substantive programme which follows will also be funded.

Annex 1

Composition of RAWOO's Conflict and Development Working Group

Dr M. Guhathakurta, member of RAWOO, Department of International Relations, University of Dhaka (*Chair*)

Dr J. de Milliano, member of RAWOO, Médecins sans Frontières (until April 1998)

Dr J.M. Richters, member of RAWOO, Department of Women and Health Care, Leiden University Medical Centre

Ms S. Montaña Virreira, member of RAWOO, ECLAC-Chile

Dr M. van Walt van Praag, member of RAWOO, former General Secretary of the Unrepresented Nations and Peoples Organization, UNPO

Ms M. Veldhuis, RAWOO Secretariat (*Secretary*)

Annex 2

Summary of the expert meeting ‘Post-Conflict Development’

Held in The Hague, the Netherlands, on 8 and 9 December 1998

Organized by RAWOO, Netherlands Development Assistance Research Council

Report compiled by Erica Zwaan

Introduction

The purpose of the expert meeting ‘Post-Conflict Development’ was to understand the needs, agendas, views and priorities of the communities in the South that have undergone or are undergoing a period of recovery, reconciliation and reconstruction following the conclusion of an agreement to end violent conflict. To this end RAWOO brought together experts, especially from affected countries and regions in the South, who have developed a special understanding of the processes of peace-making and reconstruction following a violent conflict. The intention was to stimulate discussion about the needs and problems of post-conflict periods, and of the role that development cooperation and donor countries and agencies play in the process. The participants were encouraged to express what they think is needed in terms of research, training and other forms of capacity-building. The experts who were invited to participate from the North took part mainly to increase their understanding, to ask pertinent questions, and to stimulate constructive dialogue.

A brief discussion paper was prepared for the meeting to assist the participants with their own preparations. Three principal questions were posed:

1. Can research contribute to the understanding of post-conflict situations and, if so, what kind of research is most helpful and by whom should it be undertaken?
2. Can research in affected countries and regions contribute to the process of recovery and consolidation of a lasting peace and, if so, what kind of research is most helpful and by whom should it be undertaken?
3. What is the capacity in the affected regions to undertake the desired research? How can the capacity be developed where needed and what useful role can development agencies and donor countries play in this regard?

The results of the meeting were to be used by RAWOO to prepare recommendations to the Netherlands Government regarding priorities for research and capacity-building in the area of conflict and development, with special emphasis on post-conflict situations in the developing world.

Below is a summary of the cases presented at the expert meeting and the subsequent discussion.

The case of Guatemala

The war in Guatemala started 36 years ago when, following a democratic revolution, steps were taken in the direction of land reform. The process was reversed by a US-imposed coup, which saw the revolution as a beachhead for communism in Central America. Since

then, Guatemala has seen a succession of military regimes take power, either through coups or through 'democratic' means. By the end of the 60s and early 70s, Central America was the stage for a protected industrialization process under the US Alliance for Progress programme.

In the mid 70s, the free market economic model failed and the economy declined. The earthquake of 1976 put Guatemala on the international map and created an opportunity for political mobilization. Systematic repression began in 1978, with the leaders of the popular movements among the first to be hit. The success of the Nicaraguan revolution encouraged people to wage popular campaigns and insurrections. However, unlike the movement in Nicaragua, the Guatemalan revolution was not supported by other countries. The war was fought between non-indigenous leaderships, even though the combatants on both sides were indigenous. Non-indigenous people also concluded the negotiations, which started with the Oslo Accords of 1990. It is important to realize what the incentives were to go to the negotiating table. In the case of Guatemala there was pressure from the US (which wished to expand its market) as well as the realization by the insurgents that there was no armed way forward.

Until the peace accords, the large majority of the population, the Mayans, had been considered an ethnic or cultural group. With the accords, the Mayans were considered 'indigenous peoples', making them a majority for the first time. They dropped their claim for separate nationhood and opted to be part of a multicultural society. To this end, constitutional change was needed to accommodate their demands for self-determination. Although the perspective should have been that of the people trying to define their identity in a new society, the discussion instead focused on autonomy, which was seen by many as leading to potential rupture of the state. This left the real underlying issues of governance and resource control unaddressed. The accords were discussed over a long period and under four successive governments. Human rights and indigenous peoples' rights were on the agenda, but the Mayans were never present at the negotiating table. Nor were socio-economic issues discussed at the negotiating table. The result is that the government does not have an economic development plan. The several plans for economic development that do exist have been drafted by large international financial institutions.

There are mechanisms in place to oversee the implementation of the peace agreement: the UN mission and the Committee of Friends of Peace in Guatemala. This committee of donors, which monitors the observance of the agreement and offers aid only under this condition, has proven to be a powerful tool for applying pressure.

Although most of the accords are being implemented today, two important ones are not being implemented fully. The first is the agreement on indigenous peoples and identity rights. Although indigenous leadership has been strengthened and scope has been created for indigenous and women's movements, reform in this area has not yet gone far enough. The indigenous population still needs help to understand the processes by which authority and identity are established and the ways in which communities can be empowered. *Research is needed on the process of building up indigenous leadership.* Other areas requiring research include the *protection and development of indigenous language.*

The second agreement that is not yet fully implemented is related to socio-economic and agricultural development. Although the agreement itself is flawed it should be implemented to the extent that indigenous people must be given private ownership of the land. Land reform should be accompanied by a plan for development, since conflicts can be truly resolved only

through a combination of democracy and development. (Economic development can take place even under a dictatorial regime). A class of indigenous landowners needs to be established as counterparts to the large landowners. With the problem of land ownership and tenure thus largely unresolved, there is *a need for research on the implementation of agricultural and ecological policies*, especially where ecology laws in protected areas are in conflict with the way indigenous peoples use the land. *Research is also needed on current conflicts over land tenure, and on mechanisms for involving the communities.* Participatory research would be more appropriate here than pure academic research.

Bringing the various parties together after the signing of the accords has proven difficult because of the ongoing presence and influence of the military. The government is still very autocratic, which makes negotiations difficult. The key issue that needs to be looked at is the transition to democracy and the rule of law. This means that the underlying issues, like the ownership of the land, have to be addressed. Modernization of the rule of law is vital to ensure that the underlying issues are addressed. *Research is needed on the modernization of the system of justice and its application at the local level.* There is also need for *the study of law—including customary law—at the municipal, regional and national levels.*

The national process of ‘truth and reconciliation’ and the healing process in the communities are hampered by the role the military continues to play in organized crime. Unless the military recognizes its mistakes and apologizes, there can be no reconciliation. The perpetrators of human rights violations can be treated with sympathy only after they have stopped being perpetrators. A parallel process of truth-telling has been initiated by the churches at community level. But the *culture of violence in society* is hardly being addressed at all. The *psychological healing required in the communities* also receives little attention. Neither issue has been properly studied. Coupled to the need to know what happened is the need to *document the histories*, but for security reasons there is a problem of what to do with the information.

It is not easy to identify research needs since each of the many groups involved has different needs. There is a *need for both academic and action-oriented research.* In order to make the best use of the available human resources, expertise and knowledge, there is a *need to rebuild the local research institutions.* There is also a *need to survey the research already done and to translate this academic debate into a popular discussion.*

An exchange of knowledge and experience for purposes of comparison is considered vital, but *this comparative exchange needs to be facilitated.* With respect to the Guatemalan case, specific areas of interest for this kind of exchange include *land rights and laws, and truth and reconciliation processes*

The case of the Chittagong Hill Tracts in Bangladesh

Before becoming a part of the British Indian Empire, the Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT) were a Chakma Kingdom consisting of ten indigenous peoples, each with its own distinctive dialect, culture, customs and rituals. In 1900 the CHT Regulation Act was promulgated, creating a general administrative structure in which the traditional circle of chiefs was preserved. The Act ensured that the tribal people would collectively own all the land of the CHT. Until the partition of British India in 1947, land rights in the CHT were reserved for the indigenous hill people. In 1947 the CHT was made part of Pakistan. The hill people, who as non-Muslims would have preferred to be included in India, were not consulted. Muslim administrators and a police force were appointed to the hills and a provincial council system replaced the traditional system of three chiefs. In 1960 a hydro-electric plant was built, submerging 40

per cent of the flatlands. Many indigenous people were displaced and fled to the hills or to India. In 1962 the CHT's status as tribal area was abolished, and with it the land rights for the hills. Indigenous leaders' demands for regional autonomy and traditional land rights were not heard at the Constitutional Assembly of Bangladesh in 1972. The Bengali government started to build military cantonments in the hills and encouraged Bengalis to settle in the region. In 1976, the JSS started its armed struggle. The government responded by deploying police, military and paramilitary forces, for which some 400 camps were built between 1970 and 1985.

In the early 90s, rounds of dialogue started and in 1992 the JSS declared a unilateral ceasefire. Their main demands were regional autonomy, traditional land rights, constitutional recognition of the indigenous ethnic groups, and the transfer of the Bengali settlers to the plains. The dialogue process ended with the signing of a peace agreement on 2 December 1997. The agreement does not mention the transfer of settlers, although a verbal promise to this effect was given by the government negotiation team and also by the Prime Minister. Some of the settlers have left, but many families remain with the help of daily rations and other assistance from the government. The agreement calls for setting up a Regional Council which will be in control of land management. In theory, no lands can be sold without the council's permission. Lands listed as under government control are excluded, however. These include forests and the lands under the Kaptai dam. This means the Forest and Environment Department can continue to acquire land.

Since many provisions of the agreement have not been implemented, the JSS is hesitant to set up the Regional Council. An agreement was signed with the Indian government regarding the return of refugees, but problems arose when the returning refugees found their lands occupied by Bengali settlers. They are now internally displaced and cannot return home unless the settlers are transferred. The Land Rights Commission, to be headed by a retired judge, has not yet been formed. The commission will settle land disputes on the basis of the current laws, customs and traditional rights. Until the partition of British India in 1947, land rights were determined according to the CHT Regulation Act of 1900, which gave exclusive ownership to the indigenous people. The various ways the different groups dealt with land rights issues were never documented, however. Since these issues will come up as soon as the Land Rights Commission begins settling land disputes, there is an urgent *need for research on these traditional and related land rights*.

Pressure from the international community has played an important role in bringing the problem to the attention of a wider audience. The CHT issue had been viewed as an internal problem of insurgency until the involvement of India brought the issue to light. Within Bangladesh there is a cultural perception that CHT is not really part of the country. The writing of the Bangladesh constitution was an elite process. The existence of any group or language other than Bengali was not recognized. It is unlikely that constitutional amendments will ever accommodate the interests of the indigenous people. Local government is guaranteed in the constitution, but not in combination with autonomy.

The main issues that remain unresolved are the land issue, the transfer of the Bengali settlers, and the transfer of powers: the completion of the legal process, the role of the councils, and the removal of the contradictory provisions.

Some mechanisms are in place to push the agreement forward. A three-member committee will oversee the implementation process. It consists of representatives of the Prime Minister and the JSS, and the chairman of the Task Force. However, there is a great lack of trust

between the parties. The JSS plans to launch a political campaign to keep up pressure on the government, but this will require international support.

The role of women in the JSS has increased since the signing of the agreement. Before, the social environment did not allow their active participation. They are a symbol of group identity. Although the gender issue should not be treated in isolation from other forms of inequality, it is vital to listen separately to women's views since they may differ from the views of men.

Capacity-building is needed at the community level, taking into account the gender issue and the community approach to peace-building. There is an urgent need for training in governance and administration for local leaders as well as for local civil groups. There is also a need to develop economic capacity through vocational training. *Research is required to ascertain what kinds of development programmes local people think are needed.* This is all the more important now that a number of donor agencies as well as oil and gas companies are waiting to go in. At the moment there is no local capacity for making development plans or writing project proposals. *Research should also focus on the institutions that affect people*, including governments and multinational companies. It is important for the affected people to know how decisions are made at state level and how information is controlled.

The role of the military as a body should be examined. Perpetrators of violence are a menace to society not only as individuals but also as an institution. There is a need to distinguish between individual and institutional perpetrators. Institutions need to be dismantled, but in some cases pity can be taken on individual perpetrators.

Research and financial assistance are conditions for the legal aid required for dealing with problems of land rights and specific court cases. In terms of reconstruction and rehabilitation, the CHT is at rock bottom, in need of everything. There is a need for psychological rehabilitation as well, but there are no institutional mechanisms to deal with these problems. *Research is needed to determine the best mechanisms for dealing with psychological traumas.* There is also a *need to document history.* The researchers for this are available, but they have neither institutional nor financial support. There is already debate over different interpretations of history but everything is communicated orally. Documented history will give guidance to future generations. Since language and culture have been suppressed, it is important that attention be given to *studying and preserving the indigenous languages and cultures of the CHT.*

Exchanging ideas and learning from other people's experience are considered very useful and should be encouraged. *Knowledge pertaining to autonomy and/or cease-fires* is of particular interest in the CHT case, especially if that knowledge is from a bottom-up perspective. Research and capacity-building requires more than just funds. *The research should incorporate everybody, not only experts, and the results should be accessible to all.*

The case of Bougainville, Papua New Guinea

In 1960 rich mineral deposits of copper, gold and silver were discovered on the island of Bougainville. This prompted the colonial Australian administrators to forcibly evict indigenous Bougainvilleans from their traditional land. When Papua New Guinea (PNG) was given its independence by Australia in 1975, Bougainville expressed its desire for self-rule, but was not heard. Meanwhile, indigenous landowners who had attempted to stop the mining on their lands met with police brutality. No compensation was ever paid for the confiscation of their lands or for the resulting environmental degradation. When the Bougainvilleans found their

non-violent, passive resistance met with heavily armed PNG security forces in 1988, they finally resorted to the use of arms. The PNG government sent in military troops to quell the uprising on Bougainville. In 1990 a cease-fire was signed and the troops were withdrawn. The Bougainville Interim Government was formed and in May 1990 Bougainville unilaterally declared independence. The PNG government responded with a total economic blockade.

In 1994 negotiations were brokered by the Solomon Islands, which foresaw in the deployment of regional peace-keeping forces. In 1995 talks followed in Cairns, Australia, under auspices of the UN, the Commonwealth and UNPO. In 1997 New Zealand brokered peace talks and invited Bougainville leaders to come to Christchurch. This resulted in the Burnham Declaration, signed only by the various groups of Bougainville itself. This declaration laid an important foundation for the further process. In October 1997 the new government of PNG signed the Burnham Truce, which provided for a foreign observer mission. In January 1998 PNG and Bougainville leaders met again and the Lincoln Agreement was signed, which included clauses on security and development. In April 1998 a permanent and irrevocable cease-fire was signed which would be monitored by peace-keeping troops. The UN was asked to set up an office on Bougainville. Its purpose is to monitor the cease-fire and peace process and the activities of the 300 unarmed peace-keeping forces. The office also chairs the Peace Process Consultative Committee, which is overseeing the demobilization and the disarmament of other combatants and maintaining contact between the parties.

Today reconciliation is a high priority, since reconstruction, restoration and rehabilitation are meaningless without reconciliation. At the same time, reconciliation is empty without compensation. The Bougainville Interim Government believes that the reconciliation process should come first. This process should focus not only on Bougainville and PNG but also on the Solomons, since they suffered greatly from the spill-over effects. During the blockade, the Solomons opened their border to allow in some 5000 refugees. The large number placed a strain on the hospitals and budget of the small country.

If donors are genuine in their support of the peace process, outside consultants must be prepared to use the available expertise and to work with the Bougainvilleans as equal partners. The Bougainvillean people should have full participation in developing restoration programmes and activities. Activities already initiated by the people should be supported and further developed. Local people started these grassroots projects during the economic blockade in order to survive. Examples of such activities are the use of coconut oil for fuel, the growing of rice, and the development of mini-hydro schemes throughout the villages and communities.

In the area of law and order, research is needed on the subject of traditional customs and local tribal chiefs. The people are developing their own concept of local-level 'community policing' and build on a traditional system for settling land disputes. Study and support are also needed for the further development of traditional medicine.

The problem with the Lincoln Agreement is that some issues are not addressed, which is especially worrying since the initiative for the peace agreement came from the people themselves: e.g., bottom-up. The difficulty now is how to accommodate the grassroots needs in a constitution. The people want the freedom to choose on the question of autonomy. They feel the provincial government arrangement under PNG was negotiated without their involvement. The interim government hopes to avoid this problem in the future by following a bottom-up approach of involving people throughout the process. In the case of Bougainville

the agenda was set by PNG. *Research on how agendas for negotiations can be determined in a bottom-up way* can be useful anywhere that people will soon be entering into such negotiations.

The process of reconciliation has started: villagers in the border areas are sitting down together, holding reconciliation ceremonies and discussing compensation. During the fighting in the border areas, many people fled into the bush. *An area for useful research would be the current situation of women and children in the border area.* The problem of traumatization is not recognized as such, although some church groups are involved through counselling services. Programmes are needed to counter youth frustration.

In the light of reconciliation, refugees are encouraged to come back and resume their lives. But before they can do this, the situation must return to normal. Security comes first, followed by compensation, reconciliation, rehabilitation and reconstruction. Only then can development take place. The many displaced Bougainvilleans, who continue to live in 'care centres' because their houses were destroyed during the war, need assistance for resettling. Logistical support and transport are needed to bring people together for the meetings and consultation that will facilitate the reconciliation process. The problem of land acquisition by the military and multinational mining companies can be addressed as part of an overall political solution. Similarly, land rights and land tenure can be part of the overall reconciliation process.

An EU-ACP mission that recently visited the Solomon Islands and Bougainville determined that both are ten years behind in their development. The EU was asked for assistance for the rehabilitation and reconstruction of the border region. The UN has identified some main development needs: the rebuilding of infrastructure, education and health care, and support for the peace process. On the level of principles, trust needs to be developed. There is a need for consultation and transparency regarding policies, government and development projects. Local people need to be involved and consulted.

The people of Bougainville anticipate a follow-up to the expert meeting. They expect a mission team to come to talk to them and get their views, and to reinforce the studies already undertaken by the EU. *Research should be done to identify the needs and the potential on the ground* for activities, and the findings should be reported to donor agencies. There is institutional capacity on the ground in the Solomons for undertaking research, but this would need financial support. *Research is needed to identify development projects that would foster self-reliance.* Projects and activities should be based on the initiatives of the people. It is vital to involve the people in reconciliation efforts and to listen to their needs. There seems to be a lack of coordination between the activities undertaken by different donors.

Knowledge related to cease-fires and autonomy issues would be of great interest in Bougainville. Exchanges of experience in these areas would be invaluable and should therefore be encouraged.

The case of South Africa

There are different views as to the post-conflict consolidation of democracy in South Africa. In the literature, the transition ended with the 1994 elections, when the country was opened up and freedoms were allowed. The government defined the transition differently. The government talks of a pre-transition period between 1990 and 1994, during which negotiations took place, a constitution was drafted and elections were held. This was followed by a transition period from 1994 to 1999, the period of the forced coalition

government of national unity. The post-conflict era has to deal with the evolution of a new party system. Before, these parties had a common adversary, but now that the goal is achieved they will have to learn to deal with factions.

In the case of South Africa, the popular struggle formed the basis for the struggle for democracy. Although the transition was triggered from below, the settlement was top-down. The drafting of the constitution was an elite party process between the ANC and the NP. The constitution did not have a provision for traditional forms of leadership or kings. The peace settlement had no real winners, and a general amnesty was added to the constitution. Against this background the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) was created to investigate the excesses of the authorities and their supporters during the apartheid regime. Bishop Tutu managed to take the politics out of the issue and bring in the moral aspect. He expanded the TRC mandate to include excesses by members of the ANC. To him, reconciliation means to accept that things went wrong. This moral element of acceptance is a precondition for reparation and is vital. But reconciliation and reparation have not yet taken place in South Africa. There has only been moral acceptance. As to the transformation, the inequalities based on gender, race and class remain in South Africa. Over 60 per cent of the people are extremely poor.

Speaking from in-depth experience with crisis resolution and conflict management in Africa, four structural causes of intra-state crisis are identified:

- authoritarian rule;
- exclusion of minorities;
- socio-economic deprivation and inequity;
- weak state capacity for conflict management.

These are structural conditions that give rise to violence. Violence is not synonymous with conflict, but is a symptom of crisis or the outcome of a crisis. As long as the structural causes persist, the crisis will continue, also after the signing of the peace agreement.

In the case of South Africa, the authoritarian regime has been dealt with satisfactorily in the peace agreement. The process of transition and transformation towards democracy takes a long time: people need to learn to understand and value the constitution and the notion of respect for cultural diversity. The current phase is one of post-settlement peace-building. The exclusion of minorities has been dealt with through a government of national unity in which minorities are proportionally represented, although some tensions remain. Socio-economic deprivation has not been dealt with, however. The free-market policy adopted by the government has led to the poor getting poorer. This is accompanied by rising unemployment, threatening the fragile democracy. There is a widespread problem of crime in South Africa, partly caused by the socio-economic deprivation and inequity.

The weakness of the state has not been dealt with. The logical remedy is capacity-building. There is a need for persons with more experience, skills and expertise at both state and community levels. The international community tends to focus more on democratic government than on effective government, and underestimates the importance of this capacity-building. Good governance and democracy consist not only of a set of values but also of mechanisms to put these principles into place. If the state's lack of capacity for dealing with conflict is not addressed, the peace settlement is threatened. The transition period is vulnerable and the international community should put its emphasis on capacity-building for the state and for local government and the communities, taking into account

gender aspects. People want to be trained and empowered to deal with their problems themselves. Foreign aid agencies should listen to their needs.

The problem of the weak state is especially acute at the local level. During the apartheid era the country was never really governed and local authorities are therefore not strong. But local government is the level that can deliver to the grassroots. For this reason, capacity-building has to be top-down and bottom-up simultaneously. It is essential that training in governance be given to the persons who used to work underground and now are supposed to govern. The weakness of the state is also visible in the persistence of the culture of violence and the problem of frustrated youth. Many keep looking for solutions to old problems through violence. An additional problem is the violence against women. This is structural and systematic but takes place in the homes and is thus less visible.

The process is as important as the outcome of the peace settlement; needs and interests need to be identified. There is a *need to empower local actors to do their own new research and to benefit from existing research*. This means *building the local research capacity of NGOs at the community level, helping to provide access to existing information, teaching basic research skills, and trying to bridge the gap between researchers and practitioners*. There is also a *need to identify community needs and to see which methods are available and effective*. NGOs also need to upgrade their organizational and management skills, and to be trained in documentation and the writing of grant proposals.

There is a need for a *common understanding of what reconciliation means at different levels of society*: at the levels of political leaders, communities, and individuals. The traumas of the perpetrators must not be underestimated, because they remain a menace. The process of healing and the need to know what happened are vital. Coupled to this is the *need to document history: i.e., to restore institutional memory*.

Comparing their experience with that of people in other parts of the world who have undergone similar processes has proven very useful to the South Africans over the last few years. In turn, they now get many requests to share information about their own peace process and the TRC.

Conclusions

The cases discussed at the expert meeting are at different stages: most are still in the peace-making phase towards a negotiated settlement and not yet in the stage of post-conflict peace-building. All participants agreed, however, that the *process* of the peace settlement is as important as the outcome, since it is vital that needs and interests be identified. In the process of identifying the research and/or development activities that are needed, it is essential that local actors be involved, and specific attention should be given to the gender issue.

Participants agreed that it is vital to address the *root causes of conflict* during the process of peace-making and peace-building. Not addressing these causes means allowing a time bomb to continue ticking under society.

With respect to *development*, the participants came to the following conclusions:

- Local initiatives need to be supported and the potential on the ground needs to be developed further, e.g. in the areas of customary law, traditional reconciliation efforts, and processes of peace-making and healing.
- Transition to democracy needs to be accompanied by development.

- The capacity of the state, local government and communities for dealing with conflicts needs to be strengthened.
- Reconciliation comes before rehabilitation and reconstruction. Reconciliation needs to be accompanied by compensation.

After discussing the problems with which these post-conflict societies are dealing, the participants discussed which *knowledge* is needed to help ensure a lasting solution to the conflicts. While identifying these needs ‘on the ground’, it became clear that in some cases this knowledge could best be acquired through training or exchange, while in other cases it would be appropriate to generate new knowledge by undertaking research.

As regards *research*, participants identified a need for both academic and action-oriented research, and pointed out that there must be a link between the academic debate and the practitioners. Local people need to be involved in determining the areas where research is needed, and the results of research have to be accessible to all groups. Among the areas mentioned for new research are:

- The identification of needs and potential on the ground (involving local people and taking into account the gender aspect);
- Customary law;
- Land rights and laws;
- Conflicts over resources;
- Process of establishing authority and building an indigenous identity;
- Indigenous languages and culture.

Interest in some of these areas was more widely shared among the participants than interest in other areas. The meeting was not intended for drawing up a research agenda, however, as this would require a much longer process and the involvement of many more actors. Nevertheless, it was concluded that research could contribute to better practice.

Participants pointed out that *building local research capacity* is more important than identifying topics for research, since research needs vary from country to country. Local actors need to be empowered to undertake research and to access existing research.

As part of building up the capacities of state, local government and community organizations, the following *training needs* were specified:

- training in administration and good governance at all levels of society (community, local government, national government);
- training in organizational and managerial skills at the local and NGO level.

Apparent in all four post-conflict situations was a need for more insight into the *healing process*. Traditional forms of seeking truth and reconciliation--e.g. through storytelling or traditional healing ceremonies--need to be supported. Again, special attention is required for the women’s perspective. As part of the healing process, mechanisms need to be developed for dealing with the psychological traumas of both victims and perpetrators. Coupled to this is the need to document history.

The participants agreed on the importance of *exchanging knowledge and sharing experiences*, be it through documents, symposia or direct contact. As areas of particular interest for South-South exchange, the following were mentioned: negotiation processes, autonomy, cease-fires, and land rights and laws.

List of RAWOO publications

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Building bridges in research for development. Review of 1997 and 1998. May 1999.

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