

VOLUME 14

# *New Routes*

2/2009

A journal of  
peace research  
and action

PUBLISHED BY THE LIFE & PEACE INSTITUTE

## **Conflict transformation: Three lenses in one frame**



UNDERSTANDING  
PEACEBUILDING THEORY:  
**Management,  
resolution and  
transformation**

CONFLICT  
TRANSFORMATION:  
**A circular journey  
with a purpose**

TOGETHER IN CONFLICT  
TRANSFORMATION:  
**Development co-  
operation, mission  
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**Conflict transformation  
by military involvement**

CONFLICT  
TRANSFORMATION:  
**A challenging necessity  
in a war-ridden region**

**Espoir de paix grâce à  
l'action de l'UPDI**

## Contents

- 3** UNDERSTANDING PEACEBUILDING THEORY:  
**Management, resolution and transformation**  
*Thania Paffenholz*
- 7** CONFLICT TRANSFORMATION:  
**A circular journey with a purpose**  
*John Paul Lederach/Michelle Maiese*
- 11** TOGETHER IN CONFLICT TRANSFORMATION:  
**Development co-operation, mission and diacony**  
*Paula Dijk*
- 15** **Conflict transformation by military involvement**  
*Thomas Boehlke*
- 19** CONFLICT TRANSFORMATION:  
**A challenging necessity in a war-ridden region**
- 23** **Espoir de paix grâce à l'action de l'UPDI**  
*Urbain Bisimwa*
- 30** **Conflict Transformation: Further reading**
- 32** **LPI News**
- 33** **Reviews and Resources**

# New Routes

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Editorial committee: Malin Brenk, Henrik Fröjmark, Bernt Jonsson and Kristina Lundqvist  
Editor: Kristina Lundqvist

Cover photo: Janerik Henriksson/Scandix

Layout: Georg Lulich Grafisk Form

Printer: Temdahls Tryckeri AB, Östervåla, Sweden

ISSN 1403-3755

## EXCUSE ME, IS THIS THE RIGHT WAY TO PEACE?

**THIS ISSUE OF NEW ROUTES** is largely about theory, or rather theories. A great number of scholars have developed theories on peacebuilding, conflict resolution, conflict management, conflict transformation, etc. But theory without practice in the context of peacebuilding is, if not dead, at least lifeless and of little use. Therefore, the descriptions and explanations of theory are accompanied by practical examples in order to make them more comprehensible and more based on real life experiences.

Since the late 1980's, the Life & Peace Institute (LPI) has been engaged in community-based peacebuilding and nonviolent conflict transformation in Africa. Therefore, the aim of this issue is to reflect on different aspects of conflict transformation, to explain its basic theory, to compare it with other approaches to peacebuilding and to describe its effects in reality.

Two of the most well-known researchers on conflict transformation, John Paul Lederach and Thania Paffenholz, have kindly contributed to this issue with their wealth of knowledge and experience. Paula Dijk from the Dutch interchurch organisation ICCO expounds their efforts within conflict transformation to help people create sustainable peace. The activities of the military within conflict transformation are described by Thomas Boehlke, with examples from the Philippines.

Other examples from the field are found in an article from LPI's field office in Bukavu, Democratic Republic of Congo, and from one of its partner organisations, the farmers' syndicate the UPDI, respectively. These texts depict the interaction between theory and practice, regional and local.

We hope that this issue will be useful and instructive both to readers who are already familiar with the concepts of different peacebuilding theories, and to students and others who have recently become acquainted with them and want further knowledge and inspiration. For this purpose, please see the Resource pages with a number of websites and publications for further reading.

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*Building peace is in itself one of the most intricate enterprises of human beings. Out of different theories, models and practical experiences a number of schools of thought have evolved, each with its own way of thinking and specific terminology. The dividing lines between the different approaches and their understanding are not always crystal clear. This article presents an overview of some of the most influential peacebuilding theories.*

## UNDERSTANDING PEACEBUILDING THEORY: Management, resolution and transformation

Thania Paffenholz

Peacebuilding is essentially about the process of achieving peace. Depending on one's underlying understanding of peace, peacebuilding differs considerably in terms of approaches, scope of activities and time frame. It is therefore not astonishing that the term and concept of peacebuilding are nowadays used in research and practice with varying understandings and definitions.

This article<sup>1</sup> gives an overview of the theoretical underpinnings of peacebuilding. A theoretical reflection allows for a better understanding as to why certain terms and approaches are used (and sometimes confused) in research and practice. The article presents a systematic analysis of different schools of thought that explain why different actors choose different ways to build peace, and where they derive their underlying theories from (explicitly or implicitly). The article thereby also presents new and critical research thinking in peacebuilding that might impact on practitioners' work in the future.

### Peacebuilding in international relations theories

In a nutshell, the focus of all international relations (IR) theories is on regulating the international system of states, thus maintaining peace as security, order or justice.<sup>2</sup> *Realism* focuses on the balance of power among sovereign nation-states based on an understanding that the international system is anarchic, and states are driven by interest rather than idealistic norms. Peacebuilding in realism refers to maintaining stability through hegemonial power and through the preservation of interests.

In contrast, *idealism* advocates for a world regulated by international organisations, norms and standards. Peace-

building therefore aims at achieving peace between nations on the basis of the establishment of norms and standards and through a super entity like the United Nations (UN), which can help in regulation and monitoring.

A Marxist-inspired *structuralist* IR analysis focuses on justice and equality, and critically analyses the power relations within the system. Peacebuilding in this context is a revolutionary approach to mobilise the masses in order to achieve radical change in the international system.

*Post-structural* IR reading also looks into issues of justice, equality and power relations, but puts the main emphasis on marginalised actors and discourses. Here peacebuilding is not about a common meta-narrative, but about understanding differences and including the discourses on the everyday peace of ordinary people into international debates in an emancipatory sense.

Peacebuilding within IR theory is often not explicit. The framing of IR theories has, however, inspired the middle level theories that deal more explicitly with peacebuilding (even if not all of them refer to the very term).

### Different schools of thought

I identify five main approaches (schools of thought) to peacebuilding that are presented below. The mainstream peacebuilding literature usually comes up with three schools (management, resolution and transformation), but I would like to add two more, one for historical reasons (complementary school) and one due to new discussions that currently take place in research (alter-

native discourse school) that could have implications on practitioners' work.

#### *The Conflict Management School*

The approach of the Conflict Management School is to end wars through different diplomatic initiatives. This is the oldest school of thought, closely linked to the institutionalisation of peacebuilding



**What was at first a more elite-based civil society approach became a general civil society and grassroots approach.**

in international law. Peacebuilders, according to the logic of this school, are external diplomats from bilateral or multilateral organisations. This school aims to identify and bring to the negotiating table leaders of the conflict parties. Its main focus is the short-term management of the armed conflict. Recent examples include the Sudan or Aceh peace accords (Miall et al. 1999, 158-168; Paffenholz 2001a, 75-81; Richmond 2005, 89-96).

The largest contribution of the Conflict Management School is its focus on those in power who have the ability to bring large-scale violence to an end through a negotiated settlement. The Conflict Management School has been criticised because mediators tend to concentrate solely on the top leadership of the conflicting parties (Lederach 1997), often ignoring the need for facilitation by different internal and external actors before, during and after the negotiations (Paffenholz 1998 and 2000). The approach also overlooks the deep causes of conflicts (Hoffman 1995).

*The Conflict Resolution School*

The approach of the Conflict Resolution School is to solve the underlying causes of conflict and rebuild destroyed relationships between the parties. In the early Conflict Resolution School, peacebuilders were mainly Western academic institutions carrying out conflict resolution workshops with non-official actors close to the conflict parties (Fisher 1997; Kelman 1992). As the approach evolved, the scope of actors was substantially broadened. What was at first a more elite-based civil society approach became a general civil society and grassroots approach, including a wide range of actors from individuals

to communities and organised civil society groups.

The common features of modern (second generation) conflict resolution approaches can be identified as follows: all involved actors aim at addressing the root causes of conflict with relationship-building and long-term resolution-oriented approaches, and they do not represent a government or an international organisation. The main suppliers are international NGOs. They often work together with national and local NGOs. The main activities performed are dialogue projects between groups or communities, peace education, conflict resolution training to enhance the

peacebuilding capacity of actors from one or different groups, and conflict resolution workshops.

The Conflict Resolution School has been criticised first from a conflict management perspective. Improving communications and building relationships between conflicting parties do not necessarily result in an agreement to end the war (Bercovitch 1984). The approach has later also been criticised for its assumptions that the work with civil society and the grassroots does not automatically spill over to the national level (Richmond 2001).

*The Complementary School*

This school focuses on the possible congruence between the Conflict Management and Resolution Schools. By putting the strength of these two schools together, it was somehow a logical step that peacebuilding is needed from the top and from below. In the early to mid-1990s, different approaches were developed that sought to overcome the dichotomy between conflict management and resolution. The three main approaches are a) the "Contingency model for third party intervention in armed conflicts" (Fisher and Keashly 1991), b) Bercovitch and Rubin's similar model (1992), and c) the Multi-Track Diplomacy approach (Diamond and McDonald 1996).

The main critique of this approach points out that in practice, different types of interventions can take place at the same time (Bloomfield 1995; Webb et al. 1996; Paffenholz 1998 and Fitzduff 2000) and do not fully address the issue of coordination (Paffenholz 1998).

*The Conflict Transformation School*

This school focuses on the transformation of deep-rooted armed conflicts into peaceful ones, based on a different understanding of peacebuilding. It suggests replacing the term "conflict resolution" with the term "conflict transformation" (Rupesinghe 1995). John Paul Lederach developed the first comprehensive and widely discussed transformation-oriented approach (Lederach 1997). (See also Lederach's article on p 7 in this issue.)

Building on the Complementary School, Lederach also sees the need to resolve the dilemma between short-term conflict management and long-term relationship building, as well as the resolution of the underlying causes of conflict. His proposal is to build

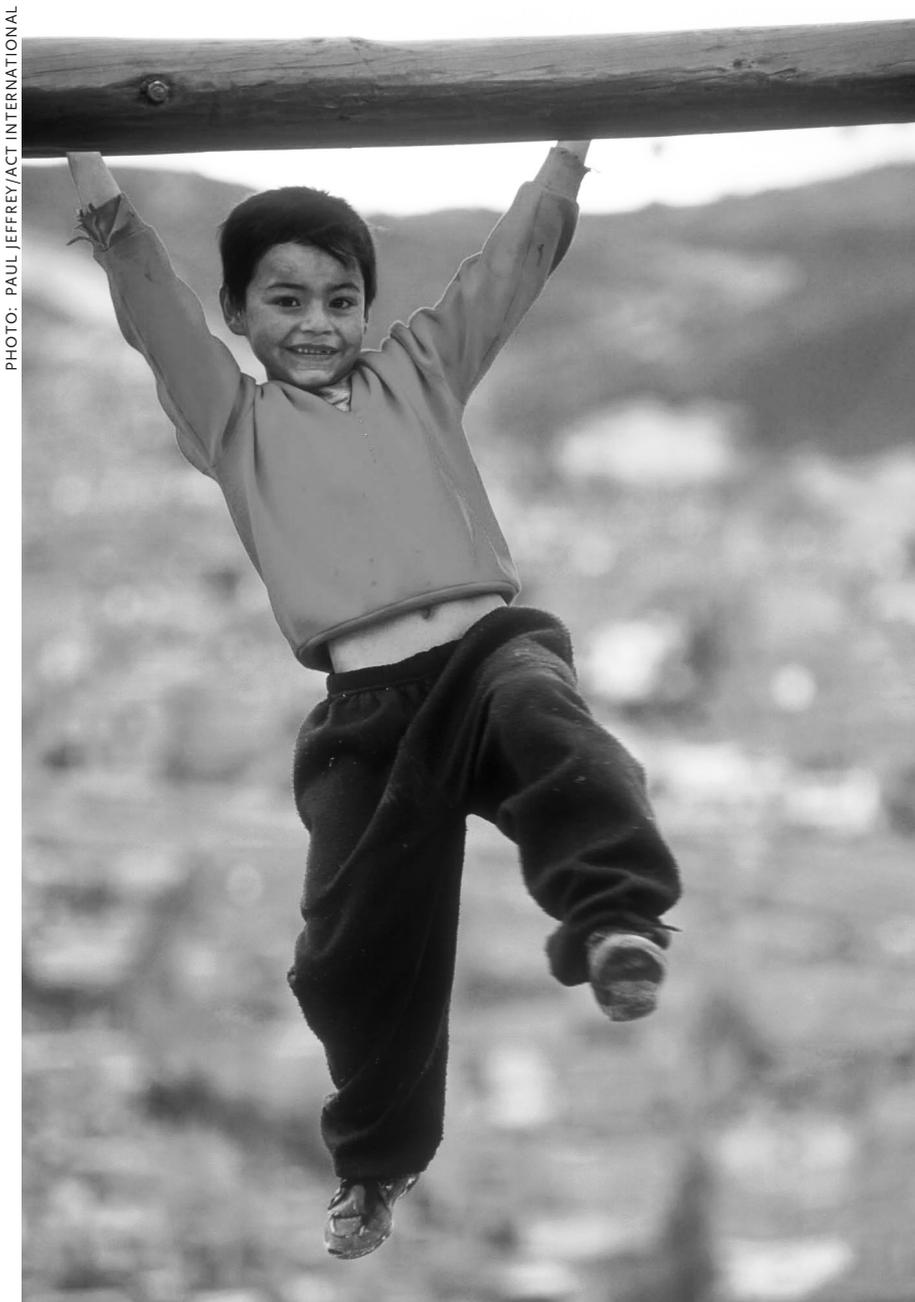


PHOTO: PAUL JEFFREY/ACT INTERNATIONAL

*Children often have the ability to play even in difficult outer circumstances. This boy has been internally displaced by violence in Colombia and now lives in Cazuca, a burgeoning poor neighbourhood south of Santa Fe de Bogotá.*

“long-term infrastructure” for peacebuilding by supporting the reconciliation potential of society. In line with the Conflict Resolution School, he sees the need to rebuild destroyed relationships, focusing on reconciliation within society and the strengthening of society’s peacebuilding potential. Third party intervention should concentrate on supporting internal actors and coordinating external peace efforts. Sensitivity to the local culture and a long-term time frame are also necessary.

This approach has a key focus on peace constituencies by identifying mid-level individuals or groups and empowering them to build peace and support reconciliation. Empowerment of the middle level is assumed to then influence peacebuilding at the macro and grassroots levels.

Lederach divides society into three levels, which can be approached through different peacebuilding strategies. Top leadership can be accessed by mediation at the level of states (track 1) and by the outcome-oriented approach. Mid-level leadership (track 2) can be reached through more resolution-oriented approaches, such as problem-solving workshops or peace-commissions, and with the help of partial insiders (i.e., prominent individuals in society). The grassroots level (track 3), however, represents the majority of the population and can be reached through a wide range of peacebuilding approaches, such as local peace commissions, community dialogue projects, or trauma healing.

Building on a decade of work in the Horn of Africa, the conflict transformation approach of the Life & Peace Institute adopts a community-based bottom-up peacebuilding approach, expanding Lederach’s mid-level approach to the grassroots track. This approach also combines in-country peacebuilding with peacebuilding advocacy at the international level (Paffenholz 2003 and 2006b).

The largest contribution of the conflict transformation school is its shift in focus from international to local actors. It therefore puts even more emphasis on civil society and ordinary people than the resolution school. The Conflict Transformation School has not been subject to any fundamental critique for a while. On the contrary, it has become the leading school for scholars/practitioners and the international peacebuilding NGO community.

Paffenholz, when analysing the validity of the approach in the Mozambican (Paffenholz 1998) and Somali peace processes (Paffenholz 2003 and 2006b), points to several deficiencies: First, the linkage between the tracks is not sufficiently elaborated, as conflict management is still necessary but is under-conceptualised in Lederach’s approach.

Second, external actors should not only support insiders directly, but also need to consider the wider peacebuilding arena, and might also lobby for peacebuilding vis-à-vis other actors like regional or international governments (Paffenholz 1998, 213-215).

Third, civil society organisations can also take up a conflict management approach as exemplified by the role of the churches in the Mozambican peace process (Paffenholz 1998, 213-215).

Fourth, the emphasis on the incorporation of traditional values and local voices in Lederach’s approach is confirmed in its essence. However, it needs to also be critically analysed, as in today’s world these structures are often transformed by modern developments (Paffenholz 1998, 76).

Fifth, the main focus on the middle level might not work in all societies, and the option to work directly with the grassroots in a bottom-up community peacebuilding approach should be better conceptualised, as exemplified by the work of the Life & Peace Institute in Somalia (Paffenholz 2003 and 2006b).<sup>3</sup> Other critiques point to the lack of a power analysis in Lederach’s approach (Featherstone 2000, 207) as well as to the negative consequences of the practical application of the approach by international NGOs (Paffenholz and Spurk 2006, 23-26; Richmond 2005, 103-104).

#### *The Alternative Discourse School of Peacebuilding*

There is an emerging literature analysing peacebuilding through the lens of discourse analysis and advocating for an alternative approach to peacebuilding (Featherstone 2000; Richmond 2005; MacGinty 2006; Heathershaw 2008). By deconstructing the international practitioners’ discourse, this school shows that the peacebuilding discourse has become a self-referential system that has long lost its connection to the real world and needs of the people.



### ***This school aims to identify and bring to the negotiating table leaders of the conflict parties.***

In line with Foucault, the Alternative Discourse School does not present an overarching theory, but points to the need to refocus on the everyday peace of ordinary people (Featherstone 2000; Bendaña 2003; MacGinty 2006, 33-57; Richmond 2005). On the basis of an analysis of Southern voices, Bendaña comes to similar conclusions by em-

phasising that peacebuilding becomes an inherently conservative undertaking seeking managerial solutions to fundamental conflicts over resources and power, attempting to modernise and re-legitimise a fundamental status quo respectful of a national and international market economy (Bendaña 2003, 5).

The alternative approach suggested here is one of transformative peacebuilding, which leads to a post-hegemonic society (Featherstone 2000, 213-214) where oppressed voices are listened to and respected. It therefore also implies structural changes and the acknowledgment that peacebuilding is mainly a Western enterprise that needs to engage in a serious South/North dialogue.

The biggest contribution of this emerging Alternative Discourse School of peacebuilding is its focus on ordinary people, oppressed voices, the critical analysis of power structures and an assessment based on realities instead of normative assumptions.

#### **Conclusion**

In sum, peacebuilding is still an undertheorised concept. Nevertheless, the theories presented in this article demonstrate that it is necessary to engage in solid theoretical reflection when doing peace work. All of these theories already have an impact on realities.<sup>4</sup> Knowing where one’s underlying theories come from is therefore a first step in a critical practitioner’s reflection on peace work. 

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1 This article sums up parts of a theory chapter of a forthcoming book: Paffenholz, Thania (ed.) 2009, *Civil Society and Peacebuilding: A Critical Assessment*. Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers.

2 For an overview of International Relations Theories see Goldstein, Donald M., Jay M. Shafritz, and Phil Williams (2005). For an attempt to conceptualise peace in International Relations Theory see Richmond 2008.

3 It should be mentioned here that Lederach is very much grassroots oriented in his field work.

4 For a presentation of a broad assessment of peacebuilding realities on the ground see the following publication: Paffenholz, Thania, *Civil Society and Peacebuilding*, Working Paper 4, Centre on Conflict, Development and Peacebuilding, The Graduate Institute, Geneva May 2009.

*When conflict arises, people tend to feel uncomfortable and seek for a reason and a quick resolution. However, in social conflicts the underlying causes are often multi-layered and refer to different aspects in time and context. In order to reach the goal, the actors have to enter a process of conflict transformation, which will turn out to be both linear and circular.*

## CONFLICT TRANSFORMATION:

# A circular journey with a purpose

John Paul Lederach and Michelle Maiese

In common everyday settings we experience social conflict as a time when a disruption occurs in the "natural" discourse of our relationships. As conflict emerges, we stop and take notice that something is not right. The relationship in which the difficulty is arising becomes complicated, not easy and fluid as it once was. We no longer take things at face value, but rather spend greater time and energy to interpret what things mean. As our communication becomes more difficult, we find it harder and harder to express our perceptions and feelings. We also find it more difficult to understand what others are doing and saying and may develop feelings of uneasiness and anxiety. This is often accompanied by a growing sense of urgency and frustration as the conflict progresses, especially if no end is in sight.

If someone uninvolved in the situation asks what the conflict is about, our initial explanations will typically be framed in terms of the specific issues the parties are dealing with. This is the content of the conflict, the immediate problems that must be resolved through problem solving and negotiation. However, the transformational approach addresses this situation somewhat differently. This is because conflict transformation is more than a set of specific techniques. It is about a way of looking and seeing, and it provides a set of lenses through which we make sense of social conflict. These lenses draw our attention to certain aspects of conflict, and help us to bring the overall meaning of the conflict into sharper focus.

Before proceeding further, I should describe what I mean by a lens as a

*Dialogue and collaboration can prevent violent conflict and promote peaceful solutions. Two boys in Mindanao, the Philippines, discuss their high-flown plans.*



PHOTO: FRANCISCO DATAR

transformational tool. I recently purchased a set of glasses that have so-called progressive lenses. This means that in my eyeglasses I have three different lens types in the same frame. One lens helps bring into focus things at a great distance that would otherwise be a blur. A second brings objects that are at mid-range into a clear picture. The third helps me read a book or thread a fish line through a hook.

It is interesting to note three things about my new glasses and how they relate to a transformational view. First, if I try to use the close-up lens to see at a distance, the lens is counterproductive and useless. Each lens has its function and serves to bring a specific aspect of reality into focus. But when it brings that layer of reality into focus, other layers are placed in a blur.

Second, no one lens is capable of bringing everything into focus. Rather, I need multiple lenses to see different

aspects of a complex reality, and cannot rely exclusively on one lens to see the multiple layers of complexity.

Third, the three lenses are held together in a single frame. I need each of the different lenses to see a particular portion of reality, and I need them to be integrated to see the whole picture. Thus, we need lenses that help us address specific aspects of conflict as well as a framework that holds them together in order to see the conflict as a whole.

So what are useful lenses that bring varying aspects of conflict complexity into focus and at the same time create a picture of the whole? First, we need a lens to see the immediate situation. Second, we need a lens to see past the immediate problems and view the deeper relationship patterns that form the context of the conflict. Third, we need a lens that helps us envision a framework that holds these together and creates a platform to address the content,

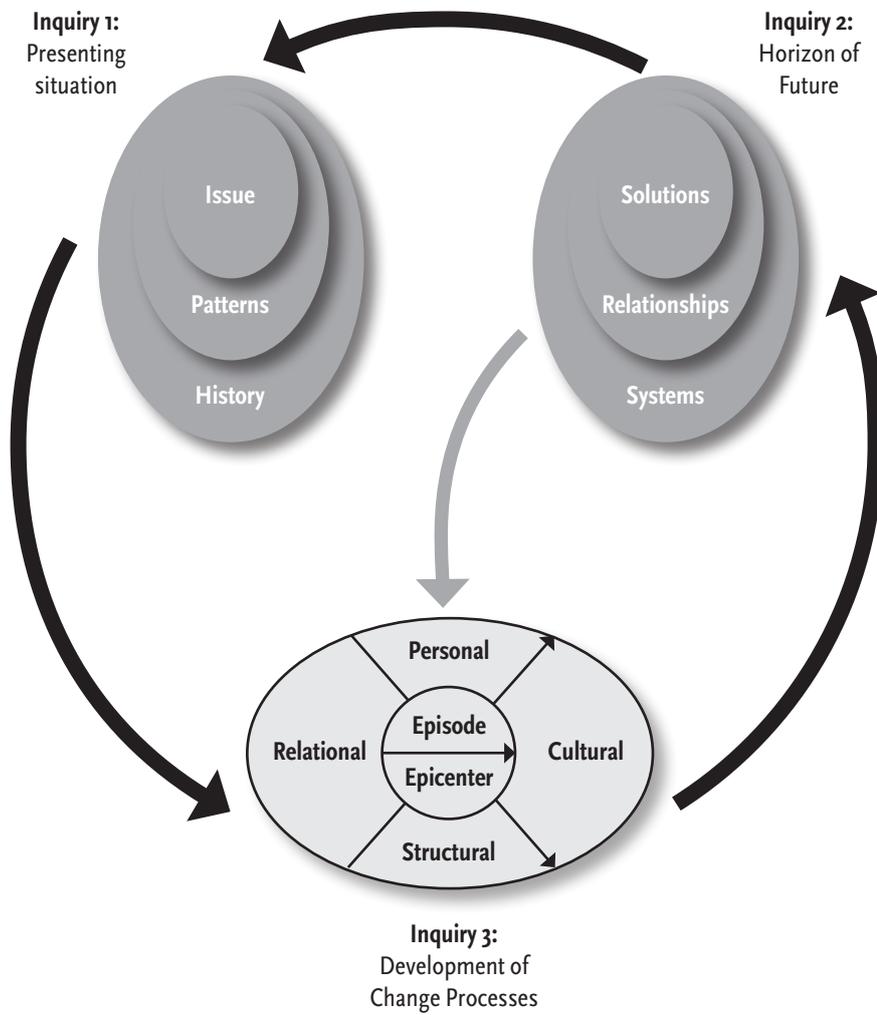


Figure 1 The big picture of conflict transformation

the context, and the structure of the relationship. From this platform, parties can begin to find creative responses and solutions.

### The conflict transformation map

It is common in the study of conflict to develop a map that helps us to engage in conflict assessment and analysis. Similarly, it is useful to have a map of what we mean by transformation. Figure 1 provides a shortcut overview of such a map, which can help us to visualize the development of a strategy to constructively transform conflict. This transformational framework has three components, each of which represents a point of inquiry in the development of a response to conflict:

- 1) The presenting situation;
- 2) The horizon of preferred future; and
- 3) The development of change processes linking the two.

The movement from the present toward the desired future is not a straight line,

but rather a set of dynamic initiatives that set in motion change processes and create a sustained platform to pursue long-term change. Such a framework emphasizes the challenge of how to end something not desired and how to build something that is desired.

#### *Inquiry 1: The presenting situation*

The first point of inquiry is the presenting situation, the conflict episode that provides an opportunity to look both at the content of the dispute and the patterns of relationship in the context in which the dispute is expressed. This is graphically represented in Figure 1 as a set of embedded circles or spheres.

A transformational view raises two important questions: What are the immediate problems that need to be solved? What is the overall context that needs to be addressed in order to change destructive patterns? In other words, transformation views the presenting issues as an expression of the larger system of relationship patterns. It moves beyond the "episodic" expres-

sion of the conflict and focuses on the relational and historical patterns in which the conflict is rooted.

Put another way, presenting issues connect the present with the past. The patterns of how things have been in the past provide a context in which the issues in a dispute rise toward the surface. But while they create an opportunity to remember and recognize, presenting issues do not have the power to change what has already transpired. The potential for change lies in our ability to recognize, understand, and redress what has happened, and create new structures and ways of interacting in the future.

#### *Inquiry 2: The horizon of the future*

The second point of inquiry is the horizon of the future, the image of what we wish to create. It asks us to consider what we would ideally like to see in place. However, this is not simply a model of linear change, in which there is movement from the present situation to the desired future. While the presenting issues act as an impetus toward change, the horizon of the future points toward possibilities of what could be constructed and built. It represents a social energy that informs and creates orientation. Thus, the arrow points not only forward to the future, but also back toward the immediate situation and the range of change processes that may emerge. This combination of arrows suggests that transformation is both a circular and a linear process, or what we will refer to here as a process structure.

#### *Inquiry 3: The development of change processes*

The final major inquiry is the design and support of change processes. This broader component requires that we think about response to conflict as the development of change processes that attend to the web of interconnected needs, relationships, and patterns. Because the change processes should address both the immediate problems and the broader relational and structural patterns, we need to reflect on multiple levels and types of change rather than focusing on a single operational solution. Change processes must not only promote short-term solutions, but also build platforms capable of promoting long-term social change.

Taken as a whole, this big picture provides a lens that permits us to envision

the possibilities of immediate response and longer-term constructive change. It requires a capacity to see through and beyond the presenting issues to the deeper patterns, while at the same time seeking creative responses that address real-life issues in real time. However,

and how movement is created. Specifically, it asks us to look at the patterns of interaction, not just the immediate experience, and understand the changes in these broad patterns.

Circular understanding suggests that we need to think carefully about how social change actually develops. This notion of circularity underscores some defining elements of transformational change processes. First, it reminds us that things are connected and in

3. Sometimes we feel as if the change processes are going backwards, and what has been achieved is being undone. Common to the change process is the feeling that we are "swimming against the tide" or headed upstream.

4. Finally, we sometimes feel like we are living through a complete breakdown. These periods tend to be deeply depressing, and are often accompanied by the repeated echoes of "we have to start from ground zero".

All of these experiences are integral parts of the change process and provide us with some important insights about change. First, no one point in time determines the broader pattern. Rather, change encompasses different sets of patterns and directions. Second, we should be cautious about going forward too quickly. Sometimes going back may create more innovative ways forward, and falling down may create new opportunities to build. Third, we should be aware that life is never static and that we must constantly adapt.

The key to create a platform for transformation in the midst of social conflict lies in holding together a healthy dose of both circular and linear perspectives. A transformational platform is essentially this: The building of an on-going and adaptive base at the epicenter of conflict from which it is possible to generate processes that create solutions to

**Circular understanding suggests that we need to think carefully about how social change actually develops.**

to more fully understand this approach we need to explore in greater depth how platforms for constructive change are conceptualized and developed as process structures.

**Platforms for transformation**

We come now to the operational side of transformation. The key challenge is how to support and sustain a platform with a capacity to adapt and generate ongoing desired change while at the same time responding creatively to immediate needs. To engage this challenge we have to think about platforms as process structures.

In modern physics, process structures are natural phenomena that are dynamic, adaptive and changing, and yet at the same time sustain a functional and recognizable form and structure.<sup>1</sup> Margaret Wheatley refers to them as "things that maintain form over time yet have no rigidity of structure".<sup>2</sup> The two terms that make up this term, "process" and "structure", point to two interdependent characteristics: adaptability and purpose. Transformational change processes must feature both of these characteristics. They must be both linear and circular.

Conflict transformation is a circular journey with a purpose.

In simple terms, linear means that things move from one point to the next in a straight line. It is associated with a rational-logical understanding of events in terms of cause and effect. However, in the social arena, events are likely moving along broad directions not always visible from a short-term perspective. In this arena, a linear perspective asks us to stand back and take a look at the overall direction of social conflict and the change we seek. It requires us to articulate how we think things are related

relationship. Second, it suggests that the growth of something often "nourishes" itself from its own process and dynamic. In other words, it operates as a feedback loop. Third, and most critical to our inquiry, an emphasis on circularity makes it clear that processes of change are not unidirectional. Figure 2 represents change as a circle, featuring four experiences common to those in the midst of a difficult conflict.

1. There are times when we feel as if desired change is happening. Things move forward and progress, and what we hope to build seems to be in sight.
2. At other times, we feel as if we have reached an impasse or "hit a wall". Nothing is happening or all pathways forward seem blocked.

Figure 2 Change as a Circle

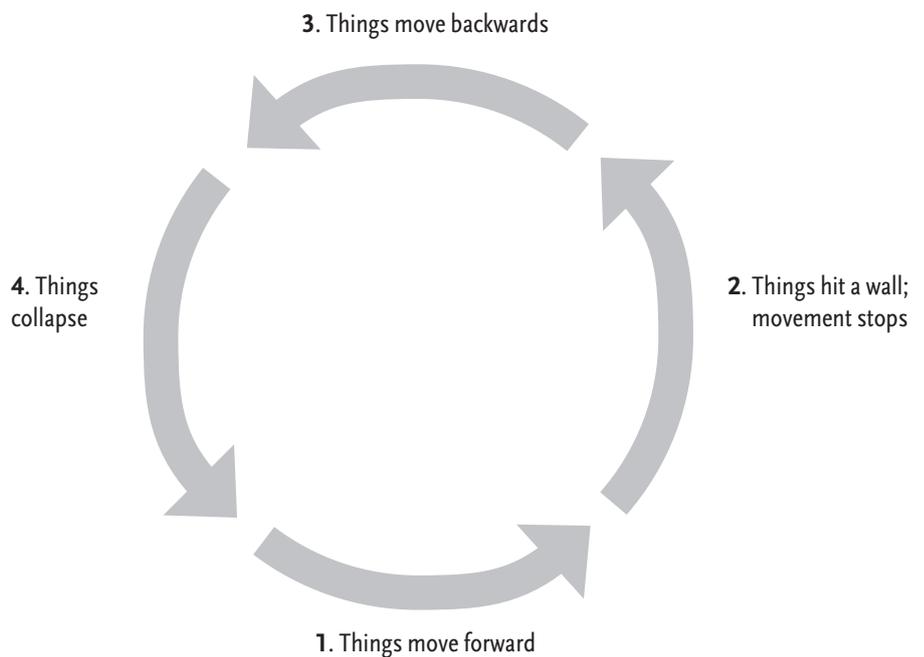
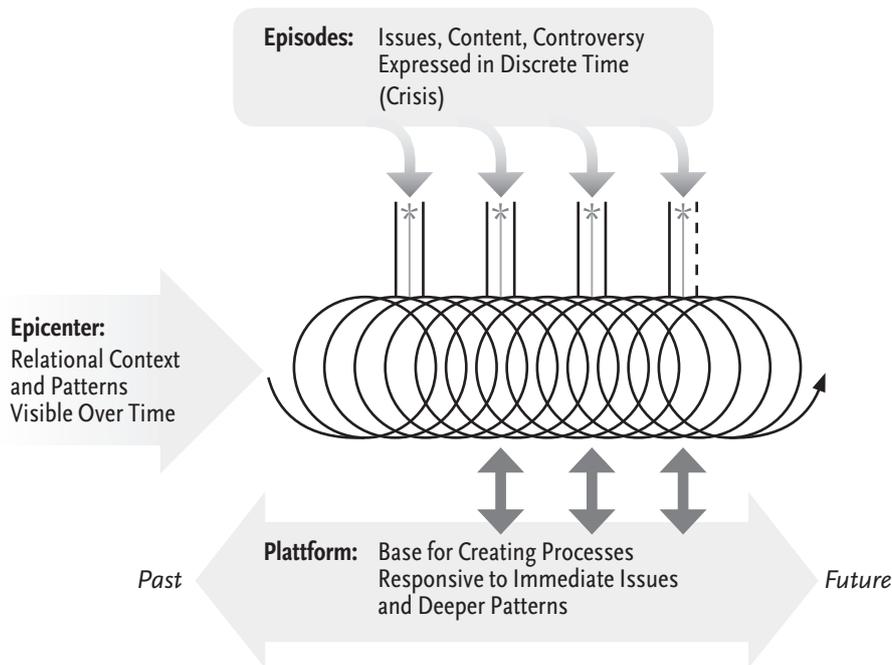


Figure 3 **Transformational Platform**

short-term needs and provide a capacity to work on strategic long-term constructive change in systemic relational context.

We can visualize this idea in Figure 3 by adding to our process-structure the rising escalation of conflict episodes. In order to understand a transformational platform, we need to visualize the idea of an on-going base from which processes can be generated. The escala-

re-generate change processes responsive to both immediate episodes and the relational context. It is in this way an adaptive process-structure, one that can produce creative solutions to a variety of problems.

### Conclusions

The lenses of conflict transformation focus on the potential for constructive change emergent from and catalyzed by the rise of social conflict. Because the potential for broader change is inherent in any episode of conflict, from personal to structural levels, the lenses can easily be applied to a wide range of

conflicts. A key advantage to this framework lies in its capacity to think about multiple avenues of response. A transformational approach inquires about both the specifics, immediately apparent in the episode of conflict, as well as the potential for broader constructive and desired change.

Clearly there are arenas in which transformation is limited and a quick and direct resolution of the problem is more appropriate. In disputes where parties need a quick and final solution to a problem and do not have a significant relationship, they typically appeal to negotiation and mediation. In such cases the exploration of relational and structural patterns are of limited value. For

example, a one-time business dispute over a payment between two people who hardly know each other and will never have contact again is not a context to explore a transformational application.

However, in cases where parties share an extensive past and have the potential for significant future relationships, and where the episodes arise in an organizational, community or broader social context, simple resolution approaches may be too narrow. Though they may solve the immediate problems, they miss the greater potential for constructive change. This is even more significant in contexts where there are repeated and deep-rooted cycles of conflict episodes that have created destructive and violent patterns. In such cases, avenues to promote transformational change should be pursued.

Increasingly, I am convinced that those in the alternative dispute-resolution field and the vast majority of people and communities who wish to find more constructive ways to address conflict in their lives were drawn to the perspectives and practices of conflict resolution because they wanted change. They wanted human societies to move from violent and destructive patterns toward the potential for creative, constructive and nonviolent capacities to deal with human conflict. This means replacing patterns of violence and coercion with respect, creative problem-solving, increased dialogue, and non-violent mechanisms of social change. To accomplish this, a complex web of change processes under-girded by a transformational understanding of life and relationship is needed. 📌

*This article is an abbreviated version of the Knowledge Base Essay Conflict Transformation, posted at <http://www.beyondintractability.org/essay/transformation/?nid=1223>*

“**The movement from the present toward the desired future is not a straight line, but rather a set of dynamic initiatives.**”

tion of conflict creates opportunity to establish and sustain this base. From the transformational view, developing a process to provide a solution to the presenting problem is important but not the key. Central to transformation is building a base that generates processes that 1) provide adaptive responses to the immediate and future iterations of conflict episodes, and 2) address the deeper and longer-term relational and systemic patterns that produce violent, destructive expressions of conflict.

In other words, a conflict-transformation platform must be short-term responsive and long-term strategic. The defining characteristic of such a platform is the capacity to generate and

1 See Margaret Wheatley's discussion of this in reference to learning organizations in *Leadership and the New Sciences*, San Francisco: Berrett-Koehler, Publishers, 1994.

2 Wheatley, 1994:16

*For a couple of years the international departments of the Dutch interchurch development organisation ICCO and the missionary organisation Kerk in Actie have worked together to promote justice, peace and democracy in 50 countries. The approach used in these collaborative efforts is conflict transformation, which aims not only at ending violence, but at achieving positive, sustainable peace.*

TOGETHER IN CONFLICT TRANSFORMATION:

## Development co-operation, mission and diacony

Paula Dijk

The Interchurch Organisation for Development Co-operation (ICCO) & Kerk in Actie has chosen to focus its peacebuilding policy on the approach of conflict transformation. This choice was made on the basis of the outcomes of a study that was done in 2004 to position ICCO in peacebuilding (Wormgoor, 2004). The main research question was: how do ICCO policy and practice relate to the different approaches in peacebuilding and what lessons can be learned from this analysis? An overall conclusion in this study was that no explicit choice had been made in ICCO's policy for a specific approach in peacebuilding, and that ICCO practice was 'in between' conflict resolution and conflict transformation.

In this study it is recommended that an explicit choice is made for conflict transformation, firstly because this is the most comprehensive of all approaches, and secondly because this is the only approach to address the underlying structures of a conflict, which was found to be closest to ICCO's development approaches. ICCO & Kerk in Actie is advised to acknowledge the importance and relevance of the other four approaches to peacebuilding, but to choose conflict transformation as the main focus for a country as a whole (Wormgoor, 2004: 39, 40).

ICCO & Kerk in Actie has based this approach of conflict transformation to a large extent on the work of John Paul Lederach.<sup>1</sup> (See also the article on p 7 in this issue.) This approach aims to end violence and to change negative relations between parties in conflict. In addition, it stresses the need to ad-

dress root causes of violent conflicts. This means that the underlying structures that consolidate unequal power relations, and thus cause injustice and inequality, need to be addressed.

ICCO & Kerk in Actie uses the following definition of conflict transformation: *Conflict transformation aims at truly achieving positive peace. It does not only aim to end violence and change negative relationships between the conflicting parties but also to change the political, social or economic structures that cause such negative relationships. Conflict transformation is aimed at empowering people to become involved in nonviolent change processes themselves, to help build sustainable conditions for peace and justice.*<sup>2</sup>

Different approaches to peacebuilding exist. Apart from conflict transformation, the main approaches are conflict management, conflict settlement, conflict resolution and conflict prevention. These approaches remain relevant in conflict transformation, but need to

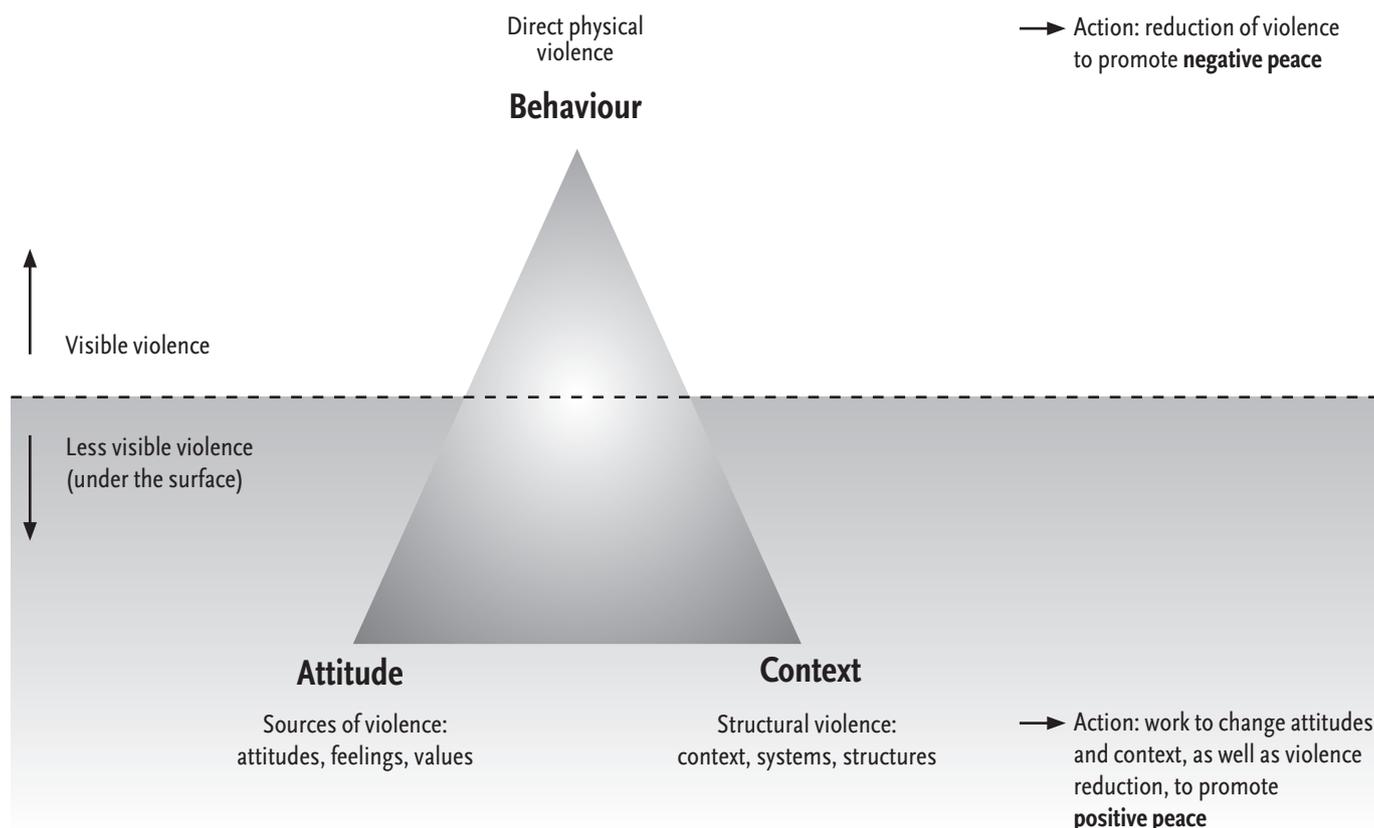
be complemented with interventions aimed at transforming the underlying structures of conflict, and linkages need to be created with all groups of actors. For example, while conflict resolution mainly focuses on changing attitudes and improving relationships between conflicting groups, conflict transformation focuses on changing the context as well (Specht, 2008:6).

### Characteristics of conflict transformation

- Emphasis is placed on the root causes of conflicts. This focus on root causes necessitates a thorough analysis of the causes (both the root causes and the more proximate causes) of conflict.
- The three main dimensions of conflict transformation are: the perceptions and attitudes of people, the context in which people live and the behaviour of people. These three dimensions are closely linked, as can be seen in the figure below.<sup>3</sup>

*A man prepares his small plot for planting outside the village of Koukou Angarana, Eastern Chad.*



**Adaptation of Galtung's triangle** (Fisher et al., 2000: 10)

- ▶ *Perceptions and attitudes*: How people behave is influenced by their perceptions and attitudes. Examples of perceptions and attitudes are distrust, feelings of superiority (negative examples) or trust and confidence (positive examples).
- ▶ *Context*: This concerns the circumstances in which people live, for example whether people have equal access to basic services, whether they have economic opportunities and whether they can participate in the political system. The context in which people live influences their perceptions and attitudes as well as their behaviour.
- ▶ *Behaviour*: The behaviour of people is a result of both their attitudes and the context in which they live. Examples of behaviour are violence, corruption (negative examples) or peaceful co-existence and dialogue (positive examples). Behaviour also influences attitudes and context.

The linkages between attitudes, behaviour and context imply that conflict transformation needs to address these three dimensions simultaneously.

**Applying policy in practice**

Taking the specific (post)-conflict situation as a starting point is a guiding principle in the policy of ICCO & Kerk in Actie, since we believe that there are no blueprints for conflict transformation. Analysis of underlying structures of conflicts and of the agendas and motivations of the different actors involved in the conflict is essential. Furthermore, our long experience in working with local organisations (both faith-based and secular) has given us a strong belief that these are best placed to work on conflict transformation, since they are rooted in their society and often have good insight into the causes, actors and dynamics of the conflict.

For these reasons we find it necessary to ensure that our policy on conflict transformation can be applied in practice by both our staff and our partner organisations. This necessity is also confirmed by a recent Partos programme evaluation on conflict transformation.<sup>4</sup> In the synthesis report on this evaluation, named "Conflict transformation: a science *and* an art", one of the main conclusions is that there is a lack of operationalisation and weak vertical integration of policies on conflict

transformation (South Research c.s., 2008: 97).

To ensure the effective operationalisation of our policy, we have developed, and will continue to develop, separate tools and guides that translate the policy choice for conflict transformation into user-friendly guidelines for formulating context-specific programmes.

We are stimulating the formulation of programmes on conflict transformation with our partners and other stakeholders in the above-mentioned countries/regions. ICCO & Kerk in Actie started using the so-called programmatic approach in 2007. The core characteristics of this approach are seen as:

- The need for cooperation and complementarities, which includes dividing roles among different actors according to strength, capacity and focus;
- Working towards a common goal that is specific and attainable;
- Having a process that is inclusive and participatory; and
- Dividing programmatic work into phases while recognising that it is an ongoing process.

Using the programmatic approach to work on conflict transformation means that we favour a participatory process in which partner organisations and possibly other stakeholders are jointly working towards the development of a programme. We strive to work with a mix of different kinds of organisations, like NGOs, Faith-Based Organisations, Community Based Organisations, Research Institutes, etc. Some of these organisations have strong constituencies, and therefore legitimacy, whereas others have considerable knowledge and experience.

In this process of programme development different phases can be identified. These phases are a guideline, not a blueprint. In some contexts a different phasing might be more preferable. Tools have been and are being developed to facilitate the formulation of context-specific programmes.<sup>5</sup>

The first phase concerns a thorough analysis of the conflict. This is preferably a joint initiative by all of the stakeholders involved in the programme

development, looking at the root and proximate causes of conflicts, actors involved, and all the main dimensions that need to be addressed in conflict transformation.

A tool for conflict analysis has been developed to be used in workshops bringing together the partner organisations and possibly others, as well as by individual organisations.<sup>6</sup> In this tool special attention is given to gender and religion.

The second phase is the development of a joint vision for the programme. For conflict transformation programmes, this means that a joint vision of peace and change is developed, as well as the key elements of a broad conflict transformation strategy. This is done in the form of a workshop in which all of the participants in a programme take part. A tool is being finalised for this purpose.

The third phase is the operationalisation of a realistic programme with a clear goal. The objectives, strategies,



***The context in which people live influences their perceptions and attitudes as well as their behaviour.***

expected results and indicators will be formulated. The participants will decide together, based upon the outcomes of the preceding phases, on which issues the programme will focus, possibly including sub-programmes. A tool is being developed to give guidance on the formulation of conflict transformation programmes.

#### **Some experiences so far**

As described above, we have fairly recently introduced this more systematic way of working on conflict transformation in order to ensure a better connec-



PHOTO: PAUL JEFFREY/ACT INTERNATIONAL

*Traditional grinding by two people demands strength, skilful co-operation and a sense of rhythm, like with these women in Eastern Chad.*

tion between policy and practice. It is therefore too early to give an in depth overview of our experiences and results. We can, however, share some of our experiences related to the process of developing a programme with partners and others on conflict transformation. Most importantly, we have opted for a participatory, context-based approach. It is our experience that the ownership of a programme grows when sufficient time is taken for a joint conflict analysis and vision development.

Besides, these contribute considerably to the exchange of knowledge and experiences between the partner organisations, and thus stimulate in a very natural way the creation of forms of cooperation. However, this is a process that is quite demanding for our staff and partner organisations in terms of time investment, but also because of the innovative character of introducing the programmatic approach in combination with conflict transformation. The tools we develop provide considerable support to staff and partner organisations, but should not be considered a panacea. As the synthesis report on the Partos programme evaluation on conflict transformation states: "Conflict transformation is both an art and a science" (South Research c.s., 2008: 29), where 'art' refers to intuition, empathy, imagination, creativity, adaptive leadership and courage. 📌

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*Rebuilding and repairing are essential elements in human life, Both women and men of Mayankyun village took part in reconstructing the school after the cyclone in Burma.*



PHOTO: CWS-ACT INTERNATIONAL

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1 Sources: "The little book on Conflict Transformation", John Paul Lederach, 2003; "Building Peace: Sustainable reconciliation in divided societies", John Paul Lederach, 1997. Washington: United States Institute of Peace.

2 Based on Wormgoor (2004:11), based on work of Lederach, last sentence Lewer (1999:2).

3 The terms negative and positive peace are mentioned in this figure. Negative peace is understood as the absence of visible violence, whereas positive peace can only be achieved when, apart from reducing violent behaviour, attitudes and the context are also addressed (Fisher 2000:10).

4 Partos is the national platform for Dutch civil society organisations in the international development cooperation sector. Four organisations participated in this Partos Programme evaluation covering the period 2003-2006, including ICCO & Kerk in Actie.

5 A three-phased approach has been developed. For each phase a tool for trainers and a tool for participants are developed. These tools are developed for ICCO & Kerk in Actie by Irma Specht of Transition International.

6 Specht, Irma (2008), *Conflict analysis. Practical tool to analyse conflict in order to prioritise and strategise conflict transformation programmes*. Utrecht: ICCO & Kerk in Actie.

## About ICCO & Kerk in Actie

ICCO is the interchurch organisation for development cooperation and one of the 5 largest Dutch co-financing agencies, working in 50 countries solely through local civil society counterparts. Kerk in Actie is the missionary and diaconal organisation in the Netherlands and the world of the Protestant Church in the Netherlands.

Since January 2007 the international departments of ICCO & Kerk in Actie have been merged, sharing partners and programmes. ICCO & Kerk in Actie gives financial support and advice to local organisations and networks across the globe that are committed to

providing access to basic social services, bringing about sustainable equitable economic development and promoting peace and democracy.

One of the thematic focus areas is conflict transformation, for which ICCO & Kerk in Actie has developed and are developing policies and tools for practical use. We are currently applying these in the following conflict or post-conflict countries (or sub-regions within countries): Afghanistan, Great Lakes, Kenya, Sudan and Uganda.

*The traditional view of military intervention as a 'quick fix' in insurgency situations is not valid in today's world, says the author of this article. With a starting point of the internal conflict in Mindanao, Southern Philippines, he reflects on the role of the military in this kind of protracted social conflict. There is a need for a high degree of sensitivity and knowledge about the underlying factors that cause the conflict. International (unarmed) troops can have a positive impact, as they are professional soldiers and speak the "language" of their counterparts.*

## Conflict transformation by military involvement

Thomas Boehlke

The end of the Cold War brought to a close four decades of antagonism between two political and military blocks that dominated the international system. This single international conflict clouded almost all other conflicts and even led to proxy wars between the two antagonistic systems (e.g. Vietnam War, wars of liberation in Africa), when each side supported their protégées dogmatically, materially and with military personnel. Although inter-state wars have not completely disappeared from the arena of global politics, they are the exception to the rule (e.g. the Iraq war 2003). The "Heidelberg Conflict Barometer 2008"<sup>1</sup> accounted for 345 contemporary conflicts in 2008. 134 of these conflicts involve armed violence and most of them are intra-state conflicts.

A practical example of an intractable and protracted social conflict that will serve as an example in this article is the internal conflict in Mindanao (Southern Philippines). It has already lasted for more than four decades and is one of the longest lasting violent internal conflicts. Its recurring hostilities have caused the loss of life of about 120,000 people and the displacement of more than two million people. The violent encounters mostly take place between rebel groups and the Armed Forces of the Philippines. Formal peace talks and negotiations (Track 1) are taking place or are about to be resumed between the government and rebel groups, but they are supplemented by complementary activities at various levels of society (Tracks 2 and 3).

### Sources of conflict

In the international context, the focus of conflict resolution and consequently mediation is on the settlement of con-

flicts, i.e. social conflicts. Social conflicts are defined as an interaction between actors (individuals, groups, organisations, etc.), where at least one actor experiences a difference or contradiction with another actor's perception, way of thinking or imagination, to the extent that his/her intentions and feelings towards a situation or condition are such that it appears to be incompatible or irreconcilable.<sup>2</sup>

For long, enduring ethno-political conflicts, E. Azar coined the term "Protracted social conflict".<sup>3</sup> It is a conflict between identity groups, of which at least one feels that its basic needs for political participation, economic wealth

sharing, security and equality are not respected. The insurgent party strives to gain access to state-related power.

The Muslim Filipinos form a minority (5 per cent) amongst a Christian majority (85 per cent) of the population. The "Moros", as the Muslim Filipinos call themselves, are a multi-ethnic group with differing cultural and linguistic backgrounds. They have in common their adherence to Islam. The conflict is ethnic in nature with socio-cultural, economic and political roots that eventually led to the marginalisation and impoverishment of the Muslim Filipinos in Mindanao. In the course of government politics to re-settle land-

*Patience, empathy and communicative skills are the "weapons" used in the monitoring of the ceasefire between the Moro Islamic Liberation Front and the Philippine Government, more sustainable than the cartridges of this rebel.*



PHOTO: THOMAS BOEHLKE

less people from a densely populated North to the less populated Mindanao, a demographic shift in Mindanao occurred. Muslims became a minority in their ancestral domains. “Minoritized over decades in their homeland, the last five provinces where Muslims remain as the majority are not only the poorest provinces but also those where the quality of life is worst. These five provinces – ... according to the Human Development Index ranking of Philippine provinces have the least access to education, health, electricity, and transport, water, and sanitation services – the basic infrastructure to sustain any growth or development. Moreover, life expectancy and adult literacy are the lowest in these provinces.”<sup>4</sup>

In 2004, a Joint Needs Assessment Team with the cooperation of the Philippine Government, Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) and local stakeholders in Mindanao provided an assessment of the causes of the conflict and the needs of conflict-affected areas in Mindanao. The underlying cause of the conflict is assessed to be *injustice* caused by the factors shown in the table below:

It is obvious that a multi-faceted approach is required that addresses the social, economic, political and security-related causes of conflict. The armed confrontation between rebel groups and the armed forces is supplemented by armed violence caused by armed groups like vigilantes, armed clan members or criminal gangs. The proliferation of small arms in Mindanao is contributing enormously to a very dangerous situation that lacks public security and a reliable judicial system.

**Conflict development and military involvement**

The cyclical nature of the conflict process with its action-reaction-counteraction momentum has the potential to escalate into violence, and to pass the threshold from a latent to a manifest and finally a violent conflict.

The dynamics that transform the dispute seem to progress principally towards escalation, unless it is prevented by conciliation or intervention. How is this progression conceivable? A social or political condition previously not recognised becomes apparent (it can

be *named*). The next step is transforming this realisation into a grievance (somebody can be *blamed* for it). Finally, the discontent will be voiced and a remedy will be *claimed* from someone (person or institution).<sup>7</sup>

This progressing transformation is true for all social conflicts and does not necessarily lead to physical violence, but there is a threshold that, once overstepped, is very difficult to return to. So *fighting* becomes the fourth sequential element, which is the common characteristic of an insurgency, rebellion or internal war. This will inevitably bring the employment of military forces.

An insurgency might be defined as the actions by a minority group within a state against its sovereign government, with the intent to disrupt the government’s influence and control and force political change by means of a mixture of subversion and military pressure. It aims to persuade or intimidate the local population to accept and support such change.<sup>8</sup> Naturally, from a government’s point of view, all activities conducted by the insurgents are considered illegal. A successful insurgency requires the support of the local populace. If there is no popular support, the insurgency will eventually fail. The two sides, the government as well as the fighting insurgents, depend upon the acceptance and will of the people to either support or resist the insurgency. The general action of a government in response to violent actions by insurgents is the employment of military and security forces. The prime interest of the challenged government will be to preserve the territorial integrity of the state, and consequently the suppression of insurrection by violence (*fighting*) tends to be the first option.

However, a quick “military fix” to such a situation rarely succeeds. The specific methods of warfare applied by insurgents are, for instance, guerilla tactics, terrorism or assassination of government officials. A symmetric “force on force” encounter in a traditional military form is unlikely to occur. The fighting will be protracted and recur over time. With the proliferation of small arms and modern weaponry, it is



Key causes of conflict as articulated by stakeholders in Mindanao<sup>6</sup>

<i>Manifested in following forms:</i>	<i>Key Triggers of Armed Confrontation:</i>
Social exclusion and marginalisation of Bangsamoro people and Lumads from mainstream of political, economic and social life of the Philippines	Presence of armed groups or militarisation of the communities
Loss of access to land and other key resources and economic opportunities	Declaration of “all-out-war” against the MILF by the Estrada Administration
Perceived suppression of Moro and Lumad <sup>5</sup> traditions, customs and institutions	Inter-tribal and inter-ethnic conflict
Extreme poverty	“Rido” (clan warfare and revenge killings/blood feuds)
Deprivation of basic amenities for a decent human existence	Crimes (e.g. cattle rustling, kidnapping)
Ineffective or imposed institutions of governance, rule of law and service delivery	Competition for scarce natural and mineral resources
	Local election disputes

also doubtful whether a purely military solution would even be feasible. A successful counter-insurgency has to strive for “winning the hearts and minds” of the population. The insurgents will try to convince the same population to stay the course and accept the hardship. Intimidation or oppression from either side will not resolve the conflict.

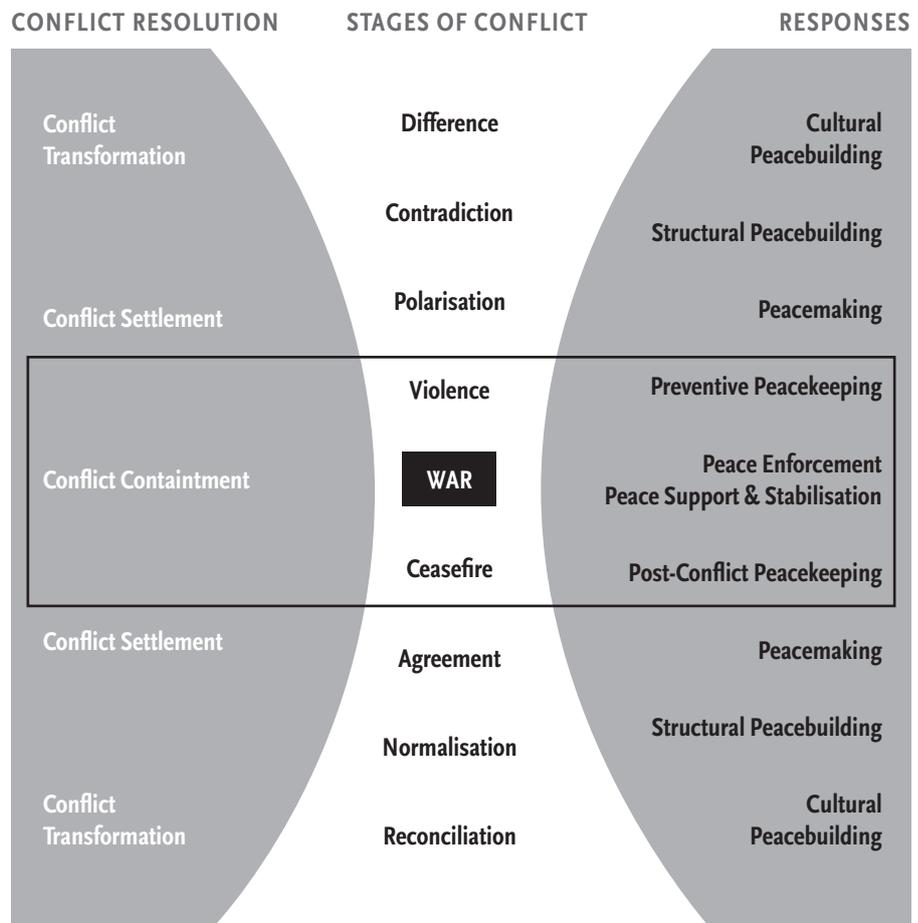
To suppress fighting is to tackle a phenomenon but not the actual roots of the conflict. It also delineates the role of the military as an actor in conflict transformation. It is a “war amongst people”<sup>9</sup> as General Rupert Smith describes it, where a single massive event of military action no longer delivers a political result. The cessation of hostilities in violent conflicts does not necessarily mean the end of a conflict, but should rather be seen as “a band-aid over an infected wound”. For military actors as an element of Track I efforts it means to create a peaceful and secure environment conducive to development.

**The role of military actors in conflict transformation**

Peace processes are established through a multiplicity of conflict resolution activities. Ramsbotham and Woodhouse<sup>10</sup> developed the “hourglass model” of conflict resolution, which combines the nature of conflict resolution efforts with stages of the conflict and adequate responses to these stages. The military has a critical but limited role to play in support of Track I efforts.

The hourglass represents the narrowing of political space toward escalation that culminates in violence. The widening represents political space and the de-escalatory aspects of conflict resolution. The rectangle in the centre illustrates the sphere where conflict containment, the attempts to limit and end violence, takes precedence over other interventions. This is the sphere where predominantly military means are being employed and the use of force occurs.

The objective is to create conditions that would permit a pacific settlement of the conflict through negotiations and dialogue. It would remove the element of *fighting* from the escalatory sequence of *naming – blaming – claiming*. It delineates where military contingents and police forces, for instance UN or NATO peace forces would be employed to end hostilities and prevent a resumption of fighting. Maintaining a ceasefire (including coercive means) provides the opportunity to re-enter into dialogue



Hourglass Model of Conflict Resolution Responses<sup>11</sup>

again and to transform violent or potentially violent conflicts into peaceful (nonviolent) processes of social and political change.

The escalatory sequence of events eventually might turn into violence when a conflict party expects violence to leverage concessions from an opponent or to affect the balance of power in ensuing negotiations, or when a state responds repressively or is perceived as doing so. Whether a conflict further escalates also depends on the way armed forces are employed or respond to civil protest or unrest, and the public perception thereof. The so-called “Bloody Sunday” 1972 in Northern Ireland is an event where British security forces opened fire on demonstrators, thus further igniting a latent conflict. As a consequence the Irish Republican Army was able to recruit a great number of militants, thus starting a spiral of violence. In Mindanao the long and fierce fighting has installed fear and distrust and alienated the armed forces from the population. The military is seen as an occupant rather than a protector, a situation a local field commander intends to change.

Contemporary (internal) conflicts require a new set of skills for the military “war-fighter”. It is an understanding of conflict dynamics that will need to be complemented by conflict management skills, to break away from old and failed patterns of dealing with present-day conditions and to regain people’s trust and thus avoid renewed escalation. In Mindanao, the local military commander, Major-General R. Ferrer<sup>12</sup>, chose a different approach to the challenges of achieving peace. He introduced conflict management training for his field officers and non-commissioned officers in order to effectively contribute to conflict transformation. It is the “transformation of mindsets that is challenging the military to go the distance, going deeper into unknown territory, such as understanding culture and history, analysing human behaviour, using sound judgement when it comes to tribal wars or *rido*, learning to practice empathy and communication, and erasing biases.”<sup>13</sup>

An encouraging fact is also that this training takes place in cooperation with local NGOs. The five-day training courses cover the following learning objectives<sup>14</sup>:

- cite concepts and theories on conflict, peace and peace building;
- outline the different concepts, principles and approaches of peacebuilding work;
- demonstrate basic skills of mediation, negotiation and dialogue;
- identify ways how peace building can be integrated in their own work context; and
- analyse/assess conflict in their respective Areas of Responsibility using [conflict management] tools.

Additionally another programme called SAAL'AM (Special Advocacy on Literacy/Livelihood and Advancement for Muslims) focuses on enlisted personnel. This programme aims at soldiers employed in remote geographic areas where they stay with local communities and are supposed to teach basic reading/writing and instruct on aspects of livelihood. These are areas where military personnel are often the only government representation.

In support of the peace process an International Monitoring Team was employed to Mindanao, encompassing (unarmed) military personnel from Malaysia, Brunei, Libya and Japan. Their mission was to monitor the ceasefire between the Moro Islamic Liberation Front and the Philippine Government. Their main "weapon" is patience, empathy and communicative skills in order to diffuse any tense situation arising, by mediating between armed groups involved. Their strength rests in the fact that they are professional soldiers and a kind of respected peer for their counterparts, as they speak the "language" and understand potential concerns.

### Conclusion

The military plays a critical role in the way to sustained dialogue as the way to conflict transformation. However, it has a supportive role in the process of conflict resolution and has its main emphasis on conflict containment. The military side comes on stage at a time when a conflict has escalated and the use of force, or the threat thereof, is unavoidable to counter violence.

The way the military is employed needs to keep the end, a sustainable peace, in mind. At a time when contemporary (internal) conflicts are characterised by "war amongst people", a new set

of skills needs to be acquired by military personnel, if they are going to be part of effective peacebuilding.

Although military intervention is primarily an element of Track 1, its involvement will necessarily permeate all levels down to the grassroots and require proper cooperation and coordination with all other players actively involved in the peace process. 🌿

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1 HIIK, Heidelberg Institute for International Conflict Research, 2008)

2 See Glasl, 2004, p. 44

3 Conflict Theory developed by Edward Azar that identifies the deprivation of human needs as source of protracted social conflicts and are usually expressed collectively. It is the prolonged and often violent struggle by communal groups for such basic needs as security, recognition, and acceptance, fair access to political institutions and economic participation. See Ramsbotham, Woodhouse and Miall 2005, p. 84ff.

4 Gutierrez and Borrás, 2004

5 Moro = Muslim Filipino; Lumad = member of indigenous Non-Muslim and Non-Christian ethnic groups

6 World Bank, 2005, p. 17

7 See Felstiner, Abel, & Sarat, 1980-81

8 Definition developed by the War Studies Department of RMA Sandhurst (UK Army Field Manual on Counterinsurgency, 2001)

9 Smith, 2005

10 Ramsbotham, Woodhouse, & Miall, 2005, p. 14

11 Compare Ramsbotham, Woodhouse, & Miall, 2005, p. 12

12 Commander of the Philippine Army's 6th Infantry Division (Cotabato City)

13 Yabes, All Wars end in Peace-Army Maj.Gen. Ferrer tells his men: Soldiers can be peacebuilders without losing their fighting spirit. 2008

14 Balay Mindanaw Foundation, Inc. 2009

Since the Life & Peace Institute opened its field office in Bukavu, Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), in 2002, its work has been based on the theory of Conflict Transformation. A strategy has been developed on how to transform violent conflicts and build sustainable peace in the volatile situation in Eastern DRC. The aim is to strengthen and enable local partners by helping them become so-called Professional Centres for Conflict Transformation.

## CONFLICT TRANSFORMATION:

# A challenging necessity in a war-ridden region

The uniqueness of the Life & Peace Institute (LPI) lies in its work being grounded in the theory of Conflict Transformation (CT), as opposed to other approaches commonly known as “conflict resolution” or “conflict management”.

CT takes as its central tenet that conflict is not necessarily violent or negative, but rather inherent in all societies, and must be seen as a potential vector for change towards something positive, or pacifist. Based on the idea that conflict represents a social situation in which several actors pursue incompatible objectives, CT focuses, both at the theoretical and action levels, on three key concepts: problems, actors and dynamics. As far as actors are concerned, both attitudes (cognitive and emotional: representations, stereotypes, fears, etc) and behaviours (violence, pacifism, etc) are considered crucial.

Thus, while conflict resolution essentially seeks to put an end to violence by working on the behaviours of actors (mainly using techniques of mediation through negotiations and diplomacy), and conflict management mainly tackles the problems in order to try and contain them without necessarily solving them (for example, the use of peace-keeping troops), conflict transformation simultaneously tackles attitudes, behaviours and problems with the aim of transforming, or positively changing, them.

CT work is therefore both analytical (in that it tries first to understand the conflict) and prescriptive (by prescribing possible courses of action to transform it). It takes into account four dimensions of conflict:

*Displaced people, like this girl in Eastern DRC, need food and shelter, but most of all peace. Since 1998 5.4 million people in the country have died of war-related violence, hunger and diseases.*



PHOTO: PAUL JEFFREY/ACT INTERNATIONAL

- a) Personal/individual, in which CT seeks to minimise the effects of the conflict on a person and to maximise his/her ability to cope with it through, for example, psycho-social help, counselling, victim-perpetrator confrontation, spirituality, etc.
- b) Relational, in which CT considers inter-dependencies between groups or within a group, looking at, for example, communication or interaction means, stereotyping, mutual comprehensions, etc.
- c) Structural, in which CT examines to what extent social structures carry the potential for conflict, or how conflict in its turn impacts social structures.
- d) Cultural, in which CT looks at how certain cultural traits can negatively influence conflict, for example customary power, women's roles, ownership systems, identities, etc.

CT involves simultaneously acting upon one or more of these dimensions, tackling the conflict from several angles, working with a multitude of different actors (from the bottom to the top) likely to influence these levels, and guaranteeing a more complete and durable solution in the long run.

### Transforming conflicts in practice

As mentioned above, LPI believes that CT activities should/could focus on four dimensions of conflict and two levels of intervention (analytic and prescriptive). With the aim of developing unique expertise and of achieving more internal coherence, LPI thinks that its CT activities should be limited to the analysis level, as well as to a few specific interventions (in dark grey in the table on next page):

Dimension \ Level of intervention	Personal	Relational	Structural	Cultural
Analysis	Feelings Emotions Perceptions Fears ...	Person-Group, Person-person, Group-group ...	Structures, systems  (political, economic, social...)	Ideologies Values Norms Identities Customs ...
Action	Therapy Psycho-social accompaniment...	Mediation Negotiation Reflection	Mediation Negotiation Reflection	Mediation Negotiation Reflection
		Advocacy Sensitisation  To resume relations	Defending interests Advocacy Long term actions (e.g. Development work)  To modify structures	Cultural activities, etc...  To change mentalities

 *Interventions to be executed by a conflict transformer*

 *CT actions to be executed by other actors*

LPI discourages interventions by one actor only on all of the dimensions of the conflict. It is important that a professional CT organisation circumscribe the activities it allows itself to execute in order to safeguard its internal coherence and perceived impartiality in the

the organisation to avoid dispersion and amateurism, which, no doubt, a tendency to respond to all existing needs at once would result in.

Consequently, a conflict requiring actions in the social or economic domain (for example, psycho-social accompaniment of victims, or development activities like road rehabilitation) will not be executed by the CT organisation itself. When the CT function cohabitates with other sectors within a larger organisation, collaboration links with these sectors will be sought. In all other cases, a PCCT will have to develop advocacy skills in order to mobilise specialised actors in these fields. The response of these actors will serve to achieve complementary and durable solutions to the conflict.

Another justification for limiting the scope of activities to be carried out by a CT actor will be linked to an impartiality requirement at the analytical level. In order for the PCCT's conflict analyses to be truly professional, they will have to be perceived as objective by the conflict-

ing parties. This objectivity and impartiality, which will have to be built, consolidated, and preserved, will be compatible with only a few very specific activities. Advocacy activities, for example, which by definition involve taking clear stands on certain issues or actors, will only be carried out occasionally and with great caution. All other activities (for example, development, health, etc), despite being necessary in order to transform a conflict in a sustainable way, will be left to more specialised actors whose mandate it is to execute them.

Taking into account all of these views on how conflict can be transformed and what role LPI should play in this, how does LPI put all of these ideas into practice in DRC? Basically, LPI believes that there are two main starting points for change in DRC:

- 1) The involvement of local, independent organisations in the peace building process.

Very often the actions of peacebuilding are choreographed by international organisations (diplomats, MONUC, UN, and international NGOs). Attempts to resolve a conflict are mostly situated in the

 ***Conflict is not necessarily violent or negative, but rather inherent in all societies.***

conflict. Over the past two years, LPI-Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) has developed a clear strategy on how to transform conflict in the specific context of Eastern DRC and how to contribute to a long-term peace in the region. The idea is to reinforce local partners in several domains, in order for them to become Professional Centres for Conflict Transformation (PCCT). A PCCT will have to circumscribe the activities it allows itself to execute in order to safeguard its internal coherence, to develop a unique expertise in a specific field of intervention, to professionalise its staff, and to communicate its objectives in a transparent way. This will also enable

higher circles of society (track 1 top down diplomacy), often with only limited success. LPI believes that – at the same time – conflict should be transformed slowly, concretely and on a long-term basis on the ground, with the actors directly involved in the conflict (multi-track bottom-up approach). For this type of work, local organisations who have gained the most appropriate credibility over the years and who are deeply rooted in Congolese society are the natural actors for change. This is why LPI wants to strengthen local partners to become independent PCCTs, who will continue to transform conflicts positively, even when LPI leaves DRC after a few years.

Through reinforcement plans, LPI intends to develop the capacity of seven local preselected organisations in order for them to become PCCTs. This implies the reinforcement of several organisational aspects: conflict transformation, administrative, legal and financial matters.

This capacity building can take on several different forms:

- a) theoretical and practical workshops in which the expertise of LPI staff is shared with local partners;
- b) theoretical and practical workshops involving external experts or consultants on matters in which the expertise of LPI staff is insufficient;
- c) accompaniment of LPI's local partners in their field and/or office work;<sup>1</sup>

d) sharing of information, documentation and tools with LPI's local partners;<sup>2</sup> and

e) exchange visits with other PCCTs in the region, for example with CENAP<sup>3</sup> in Burundi or IRDP<sup>4</sup> in Rwanda)

- 2) The involvement of local conflict actors in the mutual understanding and transformation of the conflict:

One of the basic causes of conflict in DRC is the manipulation of several conflict actors by certain leaders. Very often, manipulation is combined with



**Attempts to resolve a conflict are mostly situated in the higher circles of society, often with only limited success.**

misinformation. LPI-DRC believes that in order to solve a conflict at any level it is essential that all actors have a

complete, objective and shared understanding of all causes and consequences of that conflict. Therefore, LPI's partners are encouraged to use a methodology of Participatory Action Research (PAR). This methodology includes research that involves all parties to the conflict at several levels, and continuously keeps them updated on the information gathered and the development of the research. Thus, conflict actors give information to the researchers working for LPI's partner organisations, but they also receive information and hence participate actively in the conflict analysis and resolution through dis-

cussions, debates and proposals for possible solutions.

As this is a very new approach in Eastern Congo, it is a process that is still being tested and improved. LPI-DRC faces many challenges in this process, but the first results are promising.

**Balanced information to all parties**

Educating partners on how to perform a PAR will have a positive impact on the transformation of a conflict, as lo-

cal conflict actors will be informed neutrally on the different aspects of the conflict and on the different positions of other parties to the conflict. During a roundtable participatory review entailing an exchange of information they will be invited to join a debate in the presence of other conflict actors, a debate during which LPI's local partners will be able to play the role of mediator between the different parties. Thanks to the balanced information and through the process of mediation, the different conflict actors can start looking for possible solutions and LPI's local partners will be able to assist in the implementation of these solutions.



*In September 2005 LPI arranged a workshop in Jinja, Uganda, for promotion of interfaith dialogue in Sudan. The consultation was planned jointly by Christian and Muslim organisations.*

PHOTO: LPI

Before starting to transform a specific conflict through PAR, LPI-DRC encourages its partners to do in-depth context analyses. These analyses allow them to map all ongoing or frozen conflicts in a certain area. Using this detailed conflict mapping, LPI's partners can identify a specific conflict on which they will perform a much more in-depth PAR. LPI's partners are currently working on context analyses in Northern North Kivu (SOFEPADI<sup>5</sup>), Southern North Kivu (ASP<sup>6</sup>) and Kalehe Territory, South Kivu (Padebu/APC<sup>7</sup>).

LPI has already started up 'real' PARs on, for example "The Rasta Phenomenon in Kanyola et Nindja" and on "The Link between Armed Groups and Local Communities in the Minembwe Highlands and Surroundings".

## **Conflict transformation simultaneously tackles attitudes, behaviours and problems.**

In an article (in French) by LPI's local partner UPDI<sup>8</sup> on p 23 in this issue, you can read more about the CT activities on the Rasta Phenomenon, FDLR<sup>9</sup> and local populations in Nindja-Kanyola. UPDI, a farmers' syndicate, has become one of LPI-DRC's seven partners, as their members are both direct victims of the conflict as well as very useful sources of information and actors for solutions. From this specific case on the Rasta, the PAR methodology has been fully 'tested' and has further evolved. It is clear that LPI is still developing its third phase, and its partners are also still looking for the most efficient entry points and methodologies within the context of Eastern DRC.

"The Link between Armed Groups and Local Communities in the Minembwe Highlands and Surroundings" (implemented by LPI-DRC's local partners ADEPAE<sup>10</sup>, ARAL<sup>11</sup> and RIO<sup>12</sup>) takes into account the lessons learned from the Rasta PAR and moves further on the road to developing a more effective CT approach. While the Rasta PAR was still a rather linear process (research – round table conference – commissions and CPPs<sup>13</sup>), the PAR on Minembwe tries to combine the gathering of information with small restitutions towards the conflict actors, the search for solutions by these actors, dialogue meet-

ings, etc, slowly building up to a big round table in which all actors should be represented. This is a very delicate and time-consuming process, but reduces the chance of failure of the round table in such a context.

These earlier experiences allow LPI to continuously improve the PAR methodology and to document this approach in order to feed into the CT.

### **Challenges and expectations**

#### *The DRC context*

LPI faces many challenges in the DRC. Working in the field of CT would most likely be easier in a 'classical' post-conflict context, which is not really the case for Eastern Congo, as more than 15 armed groups are still active there (governmental and international community-driven). Peace processes have not yet proven very effective, and MONUC, the UN peace-keeping force, seems to be stuck in an unclear mandate and is often criticised for not being able to defend Congolese civilians adequately. This intermediary phase between 'conflict' and 'post-conflict' does not always allow LPI's work to move forward as quickly and efficiently as desired.

#### *Impact assessment*

Working in the domain of peacebuilding, it is not always easy to assess one's real impact on the ground. In the area of capacity-building of local partners, LPI-DRC can quite easily assess its results and outcomes. The extent to which this capacity-building effectively contributes to peace in the area is more difficult to measure. Many indicators on this topic cannot be seen as "SMART"<sup>14</sup>. LPI is still in the process of determining the right indicators and developing the right tools to assess its impact more easily.

#### *Neutrality*

Working with CT demands the full neutrality of LPI-DRC and its partners, as well as the need to be perceived as fully neutral by all direct and indirect conflict actors (including the victims). This implies a delicate balancing exercise between correctly informing actors and not blowing up bridges for peacebuilding opportunities (which – very often – requires compromises). How to make LPI's conflict analyses public, and

who to inform about the activities, is a complex challenge in itself.

Moreover, as partners have to be neutral and perceived as neutral, this means in principle that they will have to become specialised in CT, steering away from development or humanitarian activities (helping populations from one certain village, for example, and not from the neighbouring one, can already cause problems), as well as from human rights activities (actively denouncing human rights abuses can obviously scare off certain conflict actors). And even being specialised PCCTs, partners will still have to think carefully when distinguishing between awareness-raising and advocacy.

#### *Long term process*

Transforming a conflict is a long-term process. As peace and conflict are very delicate and complex matters, an entire PAR process can easily last over 18 months, whereas donors rarely fund projects for more than two years. One of the big challenges is to convince the donors to fund LPI and its partners for a longer period in order to not put pressure on these time-consuming activities and to have more time to do a proper follow-up. 🌿

*The article is compiled by different staff members at LPI's field office in DRC.*

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- 1 LPI-DRC staff can spend time in the offices of their partners, giving advice/training/accompaniment in the work environment – for example, on bookkeeping matters and report writing.
  - 2 For example, literature on conflict transformation and accountancy software.
  - 3 Centre d'Alerte et de Prévention de Conflit ([www.cenap.bi](http://www.cenap.bi))
  - 4 Institut de Recherche et Dialogue pour la Paix ([www.irdp.rw](http://www.irdp.rw))
  - 5 Solidarité Féminine pour la Paix et le Développement Intégral
  - 6 Action pour la Solidarité et la Paix
  - 7 Action pour la Paix Concordante
  - 8 Union Paysanne pour le Développement Intégral
  - 9 Forces Démocratiques de Libération du Rwanda
  - 10 Action pour le Développement et la Paix Endogènes
  - 11 Arche d'Alliance
  - 12 Réseau d'Innovation Organisationnelle
  - 13 See the article about UPDI in this issue of *New Routes*
  - 14 Specific, Measurable, Acceptable, Realistic, Time Sensitive

*L'action de l'Union Paysanne pour le Développement Intégral (l'UPDI) en Afrique Centrale a pour objectif de contribuer à résoudre, en toute impartialité, les conflits intercommunautaires aux conséquences désastreuses de l'Union. Divers moyens d'action, juridiques, pratiques et matériels, sont mis en œuvre en fonction des besoins et des ressources. En dépit d'innombrables difficultés dues aux désaccords entre les parties adverses, et grâce à l'assistance de l'UTC et du LPI, l'UPDI a bon espoir d'atteindre ses objectifs : rétablir la paix et la sérénité en sein des communautés en conflit.*

*An English summary of the texts in French is found on page 29.*

# Espoir de paix grâce à l'action de l'UPDI

Urbain Bisimwa

En sa qualité de syndicat paysan, l'Union Paysanne pour le Développement Intégral (l'UPDI) a depuis longtemps en son sein un secteur syndical qui s'occupe de l'arbitrage des différends survenus au sein de ses collectifs (organisations paysannes à la base) : règlement des conflits fonciers et autres litiges entre paysans par des accords à l'amiable, sans recourir aux tribunaux classiques/juridictions officielles. Avec l'appui de ses partenaires, dont l'Institut Vie & Paix (Life & Peace Institute, LPI), l'UPDI est parvenu à accroître les capacités de ses para juristes et de ses chambres arbitrales.

L'unité de transformation des conflits est le résultat du Congrès extraordinaire sur le positionnement stratégique de l'UPDI organisé pour partager la réflexion sur ses activités syndicales. Rappelons qu'à l'issue des travaux de ce Congrès, il a été démontré que l'UPDI, comme syndicat paysan, a pour mission la défense des droits et des intérêts de paysans. Par conséquent, elle ne peut pas avoir de structures juridiques en son sein. Sinon, elle serait à la fois juge et partie.

A titre d'illustration, prenons le cas d'un non membre qui aurait un litige avec un membre de l'UPDI, et que tous deux décident de le porter devant l'un des tribunaux arbitraux de l'UPDI. Comment ce non membre pourrait-il compter sur l'impartialité de ce tribunal arbitral, au cas où il perdait sa cause face à un membre. En ce cas, la question de la neutralité pourrait se poser, si le tribunal était une structure intégrée à l'UPDI.

C'est pour cette raison que les membres de l'UPDI réunis en congrès ont décidé de revoir la structure de l'Union en y ajoutant un sixième secteur. Ce secteur aura pour mission la transfor-

mation des conflits communautaires et l'arbitrage des différends entre membres ou non de l'Union. Ce secteur inclura aussi des non membres comme gage de neutralité.

Malgré cela, la question centrale n'a pas été résolue, du fait que l'UPDI reste un syndicat paysan qui dispose d'une Unité de Transformation des Conflits, l'UTC. Pour remédier à cette contradiction, il est impératif de renforcer les capacités d'intervention de cette dernière unité, pour qu'à la longue elle se détache de l'unité syndicale.

## La procédure de solution des conflits

Pour les conflits ayant des répercussions directes ou indirectes sur l'Union, les analyses s'effectuent à la base, c'est-à-dire au sein des collectifs concernés, par des chercheurs sélectionnés et réputés pour leur impartialité, leur honnêteté et leurs compétences dans ce milieu, et aptes à maîtriser les enjeux afférant au conflit. Les 33 collectifs (communautés de base qui, ensemble, constituent l'UPDI) expriment et transmettent, par le biais de ses chercheurs, tous les besoins (conflits identifiés) au Congrès de l'Union. Cet organe suprême de l'Union décide du (des) conflit(s) qui nécessitent un traitement urgent, et transmet cette tâche au Conseil d'Administration, dont le Secrétaire Général en instruit à son tour, pour étude, l'Unité de Transformation des Conflits, ou UTC.

L'UTC de l'UPDI étudie des conflits ayant un impact direct ou indirect sur l'Organisation. C'est-à-dire qu'elle analyse des conflits à l'intérieur ou à l'extérieur de l'Union, dans la mesure où lesdits conflits présentent un intérêt, proche

ou lointain, pour sa communauté et son environnement.

Sa principale mission est la transformation des conflits intercommunautaires par des analyses, en assurant aux parties ou acteurs impliqués dans ce conflit un maximum de vérité, de neutralité et d'objectivité.

Au sein des 33 collectifs de l'Union, une sélection de 33 chercheurs est effectuée en interne, suivant les aptitudes définies par le Conseil d'Administration. Ceux-ci sont bénévoles et ont pour mandat la collecte des données et l'analyse de contexte au niveau de leurs collectifs et de leur environnement, proche ou lointain, mais avec un impact sur leur communauté.

Au cours de l'analyse, et selon les besoins et les moyens disponibles, une sélection est effectuée parmi les 33 analystes issus des collectifs, pour assurer et faciliter le relais entre l'analyse menée et son champ d'étude. Ils sont semi bénévoles, c'est-à-dire qu'ils perçoivent une prime leur permettant de couvrir les frais relatifs à leur mission. Ils sont formés et on des aptitudes d'analyse plus poussées que les chercheurs directement recrutés au sein des collectifs. Ils participent, à leur tour, à la formation des 33 analystes ou chercheurs de base, en vue de les rendre plus efficaces en matière d'analyse à leur propre niveau.

Les chercheurs de l'UTC analysent le conflit dans le but de le comprendre et surtout de le faire comprendre aux acteurs en présence, en vue d'une transformation positive. Par des descentes de terrain, les chercheurs récoltent les données nécessaires à l'analyse. Ils reçoivent et compilent les données des analystes de terrain, concernant le conflit à l'étude. Ils interrogent toutes



*Ces filles, déplacées en raison de la guerre à l'est de la RDC, habitent dans un camp situé sur une coulée de lave, dans la ville de Nzulu. Un quart de million de personnes a été déplacé à cause de la violence.*

les sources possibles, dans le souci de recueillir toute l'information utile à l'analyse et à la transformation du conflit. Selon la nature et la spécificité de chaque conflit, ils suggèrent et arrêtent les mécanismes et la méthodologie à mettre en œuvre en vue de sa transformation.

Ils consultent les parties impliquées dans le conflit, afin de déterminer ensemble les moyens propices à l'issue de la crise.

En tant que cellule technique spécialisée de l'Union, les chercheurs apportent leur support et accompagnent les activités en rapport avec la transformation des conflits, organisées par le Conseil d'Administration (restitutions et autres). Ils veillent au respect des recommandations ou conseils émis par les autres partenaires, en vue d'améliorer les approches relatives à la transformation des conflits. Ils organisent et supervisent diverse activités collatérales et/ou transversales afférentes à l'UTC. Pour la pérennisation et la consolidation de la paix à la base, l'UTC propose et accompagne des actions transformatrices de conflit, telles que campagnes de sensibilisation à la cohabitation pacifique, travaux communautaires à

intérêts convergents pour les communautés jadis en conflit, projets d'intérêt commun, manifestations socioculturelles avec la participation et en faveur des parties post conflit.

L'UTC de l'UPDI dans ses activités quotidiennes effectue :

- des enquêtes auprès du plus grand nombre possible d'acteurs ou observateurs en rapport avec le conflit ;
- des analyses de contexte suivant ses particularités (Recherche Action Participative, observations directes, analyses des documents oraux ou écrits) ;
- des descentes de terrain pour la récolte des données ;
- la coordination et l'encadrement des analystes locaux ;
- la tentative de recherche des solutions aux conflits opposant des communautés ou groupes à travers des études objectives approfondies et le concours des parties en conflits ;
- l'organisation de réunions, conférences, tables rondes (restitution aux parties) avec la participation des parties en conflit et de tous les acteurs ou ob-

servateurs ayant un rapport quelconque avec le conflit ;

- la recherche et la documentation dans les centres de recherche, spécialisés dans la recherche et la transformation de conflits intercommunautaires ;
- l'organisation de visites d'échanges et d'expérience dans d'autres centres spécialisés dans le domaine de transformation des conflits, à l'intérieur et à l'extérieur de la province et/ou du pays ; et
- le compte-rendu et l'évaluation à destination des parties, partenaires, autorités politiques ou autres.

Pour atteindre ses objectifs, l'UTC utilise les stratégies suivantes :

- la sensibilisation des acteurs ou parties prenantes du conflit, à ce qui favorise sa transformation positive en vertu du principe général gagnant ;
- la formation et le perfectionnement des analystes et des chercheurs ;
- la formation des noyaux locaux à la base, au sein des collectifs, pour la transformation des conflits et les enquêtes de terrain ;

- la collecte des données à travers les structures (analystes – chercheurs) au sein des communautés de base, et les compétences locales ;
- les visites d'échange et d'expériences avec les autres entités spécialisées dans la transformation des conflits ; et
- les échanges et débats autour de divers thèmes relatifs à la transformation des conflits.

Il est à noter qu'au cours de la recherche, l'UTC de l'UPDI rend compte au Secrétariat Général de l'évolution et des résultats obtenus à tous les niveaux. Le Secrétariat Général transmet ses résultats au conseil d'administration qui, à son tour, rend compte à l'assemblée générale, le cas échéant. La restitution auprès des parties et/ou des autres acteurs du conflit incombe au Conseil d'Administration.

### Bénéfices et difficultés

Comme tout travail de recherche, le cycle de transformation de conflit est passionnant, car l'analyste va de découverte en découverte : au fur et à mesure que l'on avance dans l'enquête, on se

retrouve face à de nouvelles réalités. De ce fait, ce travail enrichit le chercheur. Le second aspect positif est la compréhension des faits « réels » qui s'établit entre les parties prenantes du conflit en cours, ou vers la fin de l'analyse. En effet, l'incompréhension entre les contestants provient souvent d'une fausse interprétation et d'une ignorance de la vérité, qui sont à la base de plusieurs événements conflictuels, surtout dans le contexte où évolue l'UTC de l'UPDI. Une troisième satisfaction est ressentie lors du rite de réconciliation (issue heureuse de la transformation) : il est en effet très émouvant de retrouver des parties hier en conflits autour d'une activité communautaire, partageant un même repas, animant une activité culturelle commune, etc. On ne saurait trop insister sur la joie qu'on éprouve d'avoir contribué, de manière aussi modeste que ce soit, au rétablissement d'un climat d'apaisement au sein de communautés dans lesquelles on vit.

La transformation de conflits présente aussi des exigences spécifiques en fonction du contexte. L'ignorance sous

toutes ses formes est un grave handicap auquel un chercheur se trouve confronté, surtout en milieu rural. La méfiance et parfois l'hostilité qu'on observe souvent chez des acteurs en conflit sont des défis majeurs que doit relever un chercheur soucieux de vérité et de neutralité. L'environnement n'est pas des plus favorables pour un travail de ce genre, dans un contexte africain : dans le milieu où œuvre l'UTC de l'UPDI (Afrique Centrale), il faut y ajouter l'attentisme qui règne au sein de la plupart des communautés. Il faut également rappeler les contraintes logistiques que présente un travail de recherche en Afrique, où l'accès à plusieurs localités n'est guère facilité et où les conditions de travail ne sont pas des meilleures.

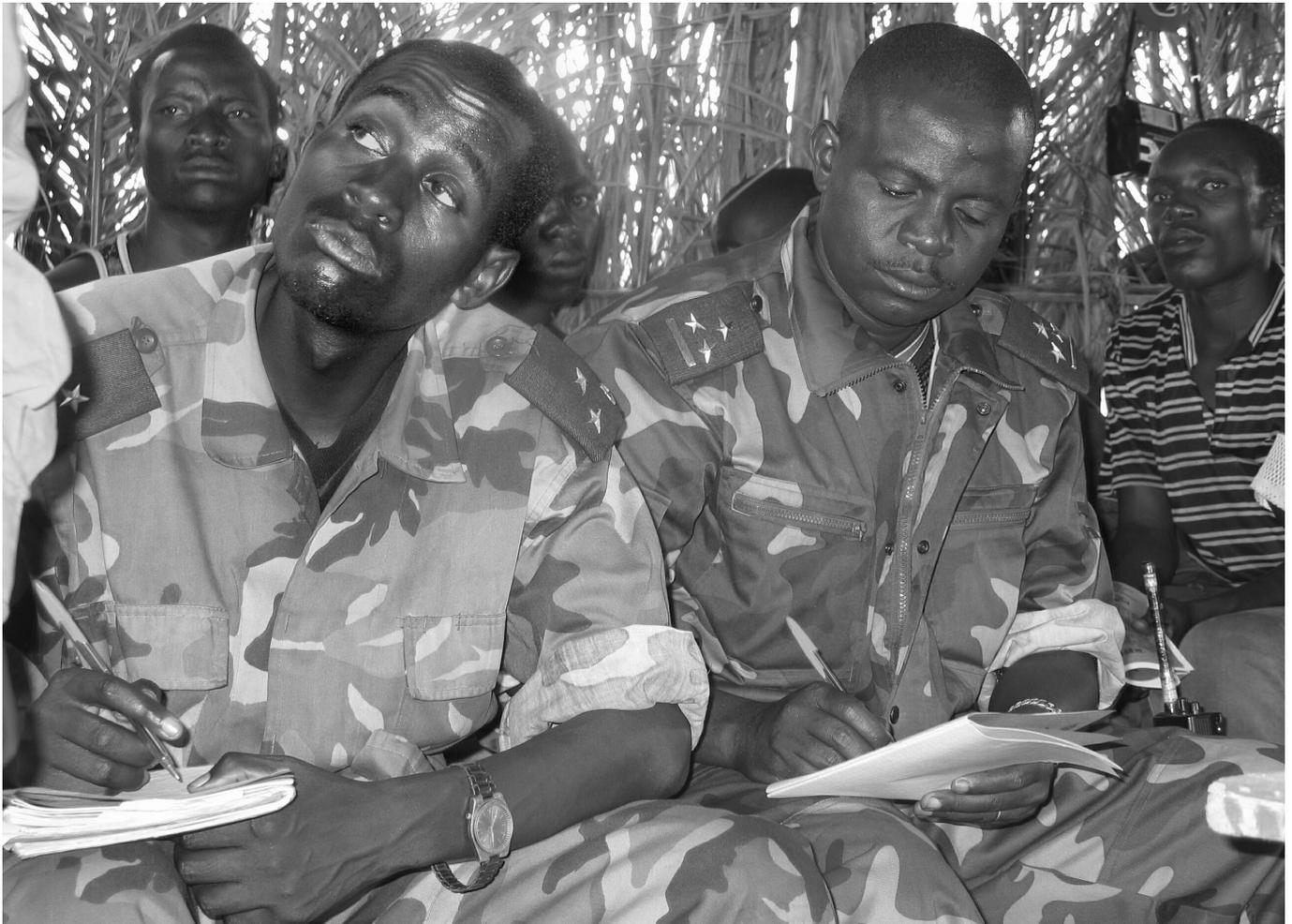
L'implication des institutions étatiques dans la recherche de la paix est encore à améliorer, afin que les organisations œuvrant dans la dynamique de paix obtiennent des résultats beaucoup plus significatifs. Le professionnalisme de l'UTC de l'UPDI demeure, du reste, une priorité qui ne peut s'acquérir sans le concours d'autres intervenants en matière de transformation de conflit. Le



PHOTO: PAUL JEFFREY/ACT INTERNATIONAL

Quelque type de vie quotidienne se passe dans un camp situé à Sasha à l'est de la RDC, dans laquelle des familles se sont réfugiées à cause de la violence entre les forces rebelles et le gouvernement dans l'automne 2008. Francine Innocent (à gauche) et Tantine Balume (au centre) nourrissent ses enfants, pendant des femmes marchent en direction du marché.

PHOTO: LPI



*Tous les efforts se poursuivent pour mettre fin au conflit à l'est de la RDC et pour soutenir la construction de relations pacifiques. Des gens venant des différents secteurs de la société, et même des soldats, prennent partie à la formation pour la Transformation de Conflits, avec le soutien du LPI.*

renforcement de capacité de ses membres nécessite un accompagnement quantitatif et qualitatif.

### **Leçons apprises**

Lors de son parcours, l'UTC de l'UPDI, comme les para juristes des chambres arbitrales dans le passé, a compris que le développement durable est un mythe dans un milieu conflictuel. Les petits conflits entre familles d'un même village, les conflits identitaires entre communautés et, à plus haut niveau, les climats tendus ou les conflits armés entre Régions ou États est le principal handicap à l'épanouissement humain, sur tous les plans.

Aussi, la Région des Grands Lacs Africains, où œuvre l'UTC de l'UPDI, rencontrera beaucoup d'écueils sur son chemin, si les divers intervenants (gouvernement, autorités coutumières et religieuses, organisations membres de la Société civile, etc.) ne mettent pas rapidement sur pied des mécanismes fiables, en vue de transformer positivement les conflits identitaires auxquelles sont expo-

sées les populations. Dans nos activités quotidiennes, nous nous sommes rendu compte que la diversité est une richesse, si elle est positivement comprise. Il va sans dire que, quels que soient les mécanismes mis en œuvre, la recherche dans le cadre de la transformation des conflits ou de la dynamique de paix présente des risques et des dangers certains, dans un environnement post-conflit comme celui dans lequel nous vivons.

### **Perception de l'approche**

L'enrichissement apporté par les partenaires, surtout le LPI, en matière de transformation de conflits, a contribué favorablement aux capacités techniques et matérielles de l'UPDI dans la poursuite de ses objectifs. A savoir, la promotion d'un climat de paix propice au développement non seulement des communautés membres de ses collectifs, mais aussi, et surtout, en faveur des populations environnantes.

Au départ, les communautés à la base avaient des difficultés à concevoir la transformation de conflits comme élé-

ment majeur susceptible de contribuer positivement au développement humain. Les préjugés, l'hypocrisie, l'attentisme, le repli sur soi, la méfiance et tant d'autres valeurs négatives, constituaient des freins à l'implication des bénéficiaires dans la dynamique de paix.

Néanmoins, et toujours avec l'accompagnement du LPI (technique et matériel), ils commencent petit à petit à s'approprier cette dynamique, à telle enseigne qu'à certains endroits il existe des Centres Permanents de Paix qui peuvent analyser le contexte de leur milieu. Bien sûr, il faut encore les accompagner un certain temps avant qu'ils ne deviennent eux-mêmes bâtisseurs de paix dans leurs propres villages. Il est prévisible qu'avec la Recherche Action Participative suggérée par le LPI, la perception à la base sera encore améliorée. 🌿

# PLAN DE RÉOLUTION DES CONFLITS ET PHÉNOMÈNE RASTA

## Introduction

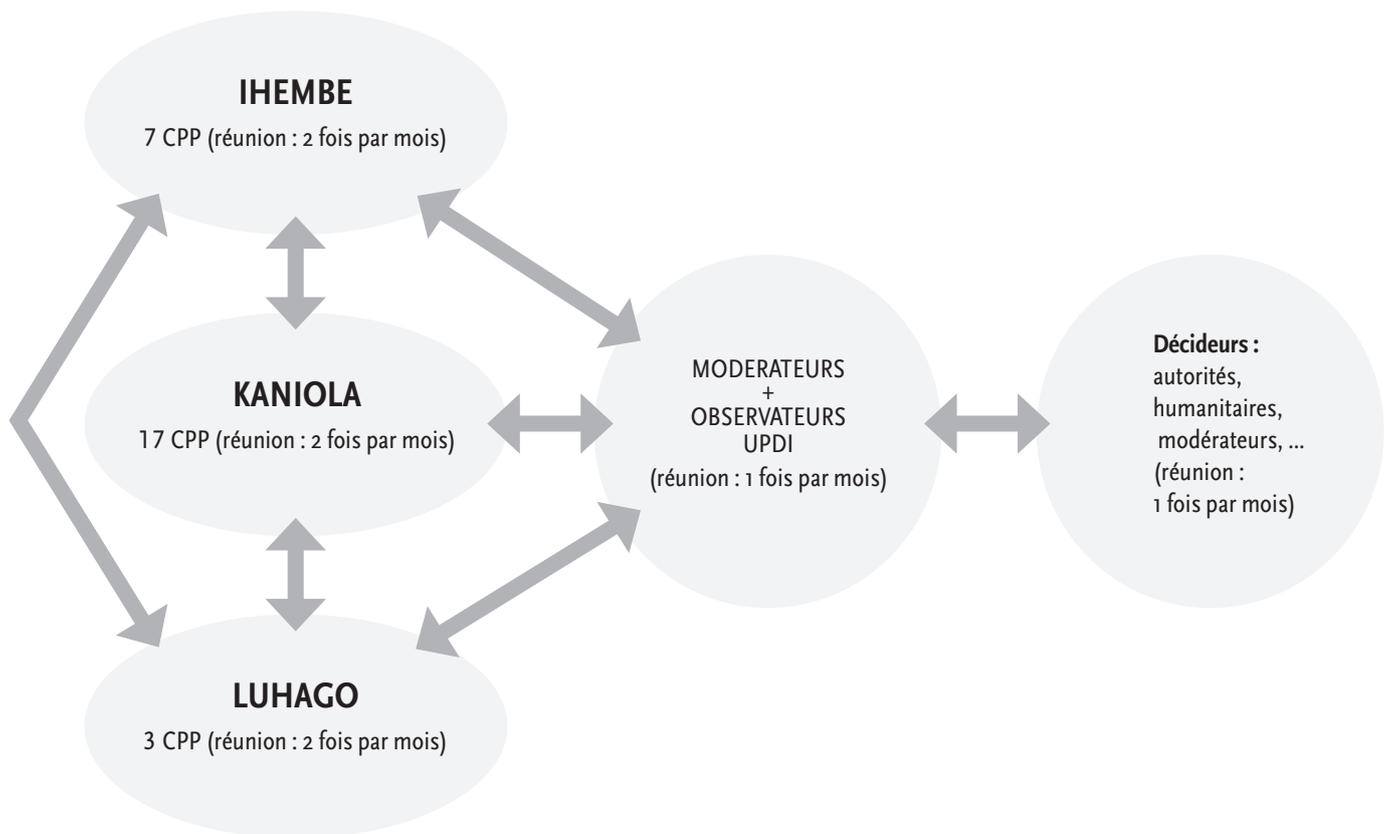
Dans sa démarche de transformation des conflits, l'Union Paysanne pour le Développement Intégral (UPDI) a inauguré une série des réflexions avec tous les acteurs intervenants directement ou indirectement dans la zone de Kaniola/Nindja, en vue de mener des actions susceptibles de contribuer à ramener

la paix dans la zone, après l'analyse effectuée sur le phénomène Rasta. Ces intervenants sont constitués des membres de la Société civile locale, les ONG nationales et internationales, ainsi que des autorités politico-militaires tant au niveau national que provincial.

Le second objectif de ces réflexions était d'amener tous les acteurs concer-

nés à s'approprier la problématique et à s'impliquer davantage dans des actions pouvant aider à consolider la paix et la concorde mutuelles au sein des communautés de la région.

Le schéma suivant a été adopté par l'ensemble des acteurs concernés par l'analyse :



### Explication de la figure :

Dans le village de Ihembe, il existe sept Centres Permanents pour la Paix (CPP). Dans le village de Kaniola, il y en a dix-sept et dans celui de Luhago, on compte trois. Tous ces CPP tiennent leurs réunions deux fois par mois au sein de leurs villages respectifs. Tous les éléments de la figure entretiennent une interaction entre eux (d'où les traits à double flèche).

Il faudra noter que les activités des CPP sont coordonnées par des modérateurs sous l'encadrement des observateurs délégués par l'UPDI. Les modérateurs et les observateurs se rencontrent une fois par mois pour harmoniser les propositions à soumettre aux décideurs (autorités locales, provinciales et autres, ONG internationales).

Les décideurs se réunissent une fois par mois pour statuer sur ces propositions. Les décisions prises au cours de cette réunion sont communiquées et suivies à la base à travers les modérateurs et les observateurs (d'où la ligne à double flèche).

Les observateurs facilitent le fonctionnement et accompagnent les CPP pour une période limitée. Ils vérifient, par le biais des modérateurs, si les actions et/ou les décisions prises (par la commission des décideurs) ont réellement contribué à la transformation des conflits dans le milieu.

### Thèmes de sensibilisation

La sensibilisation des populations de la zone concernée portera sur l'harmonisation

des points de vue des habitants de Kaniola et Nindja sur le phénomène Rasta, dans le but de lever la méfiance engendrée par ces derniers entre les deux communautés, s'étendant aussi aux villages avoisinant la forêt de Muga-ba et ceux qui en sont relativement éloignés. Elle montrera l'intérêt qu'ont ces dernières à entreprendre des réflexions et des actions communes dans l'objectif d'une cohabitation dans la concorde. Dans cette optique, il faudra brièvement revenir sur la problématique et l'histoire des Rastas.

Elle devra aussi s'appesantir sur la compréhension mutuelle qui doit exister entre les populations vivant avec les Forces Démocratiques pour la Libération du Rwanda (FDLR) et les autres. Il

faudra insister sur la solidarité qui doit animer les habitants des zones non occupées par les FDLR envers leurs concitoyens obligés à y résider, et qui souvent sont considérés comme complices des FDLR, ce qui se traduit par un climat de méfiance, de suspicion et d'accusation gratuite. Cette solidarité est indispensable à une coexistence pacifique et sécurisante en cas de confrontation armée (entre les FDLR et la coalition) ou non.

Compte tenu des changements actuels (accords intervenus entre la République Démocratique du Congo et le Rwanda), la sensibilisation portera également sur l'historique succincte des FDLR (depuis l'arrivée des réfugiés hutu jusqu'à ce jour) en passant par les différents accords tendant à faciliter leur retour volontaire au Rwanda.

Pour mieux approcher les attentes des populations, il faudra les amener à définir et appréhender par elles-mêmes leur comportement par rapport aux acteurs en présence vis-à-vis du contexte du moment (FDLR, population elle-même, Forces Armées de la République Démocratique du Congo), Rwandan Defense Forces, Mission d'Observation des Nations Unies au Congo (MONUC), groupes armés, classe politique, etc.). Dans le même but, il conviendra de s'approcher de leur propre perception de l'avenir.

### Objectifs

Les objectifs à atteindre sont :

#### Objectif global

- a) Créer des mécanismes de solidarité entre les populations du Groupement

de Kaniola en Territoire de Walungu et celles d'Ihembe, Luhago et Iregabarhonyi à Nindja en Territoire de Kabare.

#### Objectifs spécifiques

- a) Harmoniser la compréhension de la situation sécuritaire dans la zone (Kaniola et Nindja)
- b) Réduction de la tension entre les populations qui vivent avec les FDLR et celles ne vivant pas avec eux.

### Stratégies

Les stratégies suivantes ont été arrêtées face à la situation nouvelle :

- Mise en place des Centres Permanents pour la Paix (CPP) à la base, qui se réunissent deux fois par mois afin d'analyser le contexte de leurs villages et proposent des actions concrètes à mener. Les propositions de chaque CPP sont centralisées au cours d'une réunion des modérateurs qui, avec les observateurs de l'UPDI, se réunissent une fois par mois et à leur tour réfèrent à la commission des décideurs, composée des autorités, des humanitaires, de la MONUC et autres instances aptes à décider des actions pratiques à mener dans la région.
- En collaboration avec les observateurs, les CPP procéderont à la sensibilisation de la population sur place (par exemple, couloirs humanitaires en cas de conflits, secours aux populations déplacées, négociations auprès des autorités ou des humanitaires, etc).

- Les autorités politiques, militaires ou coutumières ne feront pas partie des CPP à la base, qui seront composés de personnes de même statut social.

### Activités

Après cette concertation et en plus de deux activités qui ont déjà eu lieu (à savoir : l'évaluation des commissions et la réunion de la commission ad hoc), l'équipe technique de l'UPDI a adopté les activités à mener durant les trois prochains mois et propose la planification suivante :

- sélection des membres des CPP et sensibilisation de la population sur le contexte actuel ;
- installation des CPP selon les axes et publication du règlement d'ordre intérieur Fonctionnement des CPP (six réunions par CPP) ;
- suivi des activités des CPP par les observateurs ;
- trois réunions des modérateurs à Walungu ;
- trois réunions des décideurs à Bukavu ;
- suivi des activités de la commission des décideurs ; et
- évaluation des activités : par contrainte budgétaire, la troisième réunion des décideurs servira en même temps de cadre pour l'évaluation des activités du trimestre concernée.

PHOTO: LPI



*La formation dans les différents aspects de la vie en société est une contribution vitale à la Transformation des Conflits. Des ressortissants du Nord Kivu à l'est de la RDC, font la queue pour une formation.*

*To build up a new home is a physical as well as a mental effort, but also a sign of hope for the future. A man displaced by fighting in eastern DRC builds a hut in a camp in the village of Sasha.*



PHOTO: PAUL JEFFREY/ACT INTERNATIONAL

## FARMERS' UNION BRINGS HOPE FOR PEACE

In its capacity as a farmers' union, the Union Paysanne pour le Développement Intégral (UPDI) has long included a Conflict Transformation Unit (UTC) for the arbitration of conflicts within its communities. The task of this unit is the transformation of community conflicts and the mediation of disputes between members or non-members of UPDI. The unit also includes non-members as a pledge of neutrality.

The purpose of this forum is to analyse conflicts within or outside of UPDI, insofar as they are of interest, immediate or distant, to the communities concerned and their environment. The analyses are conducted by researchers at the UTC in order to understand the conflicts and, above all, to make the actors involved understand them in view of a positive transformation.

The tasks of the UTC are manifold: It conducts surveys, including the largest possible number of actors/observers related to the conflict. It makes context analyses (participatory action research, direct observation, analyses of written or oral documentation). The unit works on site in order to collect data, and organise and supervise the local analysts. Solutions to the conflicts between the communities are sought through objective, in-depth studies in cooperation with the parties to the conflict. The UTC organises meetings, conferences and round table participatory reviews

entailing an exchange of information among the conflicting parties. It facilitates research and documentation in Research Centres specialising in the treatment of conflicts between communities, and tries to make actors or contestants aware of anything that can contribute to a positive transformation of the conflict.

The action plan stipulates, among other things, the roles attributed to the Centres for Permanent Peace, the moderators, the policy makers and the observers, respectively.

The effort to increase the awareness of the people of the area includes the harmonisation of views between the dwellers in Kaniola and Nindja about the Rasta Phenomenon. It also insists on the mutual understanding that should exist between people living with the Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda (FDLR) and others.

To better respond to people's expectations, the UTC must help them to understand and define their behaviour towards the stakeholders related to the context of the present moment: the FDLR, the population itself, the Armed Forces of the Democratic Republic of Congo, the Rwandan Defence Forces, the United Nations Observation Mission in Congo, the armed groups, politicians, etc. For the same purpose, it is advisable to come closer to people's own perception of the future.

The objectives are: a) to establish mechanisms of solidarity between the peoples of the Kaniola Group within the Walungu Territory and those of Ihembe, Luhago and Iregabarhonyi, Nindja, in the Kabare territory, b) to harmonise the understanding of the security situation in the area (Kaniola and Nindja), and c) to reduce the tension between the people who live with the FDLR and those not living with them.

The strategies adopted in response to the new situation are: a) the establishment of permanent Centres for Peace (CPP) at the ground level (base), b) increased awareness of local people (for example, humanitarian corridors in the event of conflict, help to displaced people, negotiations with the authorities or humanitarian organisations, etc.), and c) the absence of political, military or customary instances within the CPP at the base level, which should consist of persons of the same social status.

In the field of conflict transformation, enrichment provided by partners, especially the Life & Peace Institute (LPI), has contributed positively to the technical and material resources of the UPDI in pursuit of its objectives. It is likely that, thanks to the Participatory Action Research suggested by LPI, the perception at the base level will be further improved.

*Summary in English by Bertrand Ligny*

# Conflict Transformation: Further reading

*For those of you who would like to read more about conflict transformation we recommend the following resources.*

*Please note that this list is by no means exhaustive.*

## Publications

### Little book on Conflict Transformation

**John Paul Lederach**

John Paul Lederach is internationally recognised for his breakthrough thinking and action related to conflict on all levels – person-to-person, factions within communities, warring nations. He explores why "conflict transformation is more appropriate than "conflict resolution" or "management". An excerpt can be found on

<http://www.beyondintractability.org/essay/transformation/>

### Berghof's Handbook for Conflict Transformation

The Berghof Handbook for Conflict Transformation is a comprehensive and cumulative website resource that provides continually updated cutting-edge knowledge, experience and lessons learned for those working in the field of transforming violent ethno-political conflict. The Handbook is published by the Berghof Research Centre for Constructive Conflict Management based in Berlin, Germany. Online: <http://www.berghof-handbook.net/> but the Handbook is also available as hardcopy under the title "Transforming Ethnopolitical Conflict – The Berghof Handbook", Alex Austin, Martina Fischer & Norbert Ropers (Eds.), Wiesbaden 2004, VS-Verlag für Sozialwissenschaften (can be ordered on <http://www.vs-verlag.de/index.php?do=list&site=we&sid=84319327549ef26c7d393e313120695&search=Austine&product=boo>)

### Beyond Win-Win: The Heroic Journey of Conflict Transformation **Louise Diamond**

Peace is not a static phenomenon. "The discovery of peace" is a continuous process of developing structures and relationships which fulfil our needs and correspond to our perception of well-being. To discover peace, a system encouraging conflict should be transformed. Conflict transformation involves changing parties' beliefs and behaviours, releasing the energy limited by determined patterns of thought and action, to move toward creating new relationships. This paper presents a map of the journey of discovering peace and, hence, transforming conflict. It consists of five parts including motivation (touching the ideal), quest (vision and commitment), test (causes and consequences), death (self-examination and letting go), and rebirth (reframing and action).

### Conflict Transformation: A Spiritual Process

**Mark Chupp ed.**

Conciliation Quarterly, 1993

Conflict transformation is a spiritual process which brings internal, relational and structural change. The author sees seven spiritual aspects to transformation which develop

along a cycle: coming together, commitment and trust, listening, empathy, dialogue, and restoration.

### Engage Conflict Well: Transforming Conflict in the United Methodist Church

**Thomas W Porter and Mark Conrad Mancao**

In *Positive Approaches to Peacebuilding: A Resource for Innovators*. Edited by Liebler, Claudia, et al. Washington DC: Pact Publications, 2003

"The JUSTPEACE Center for Mediation and Conflict Transformation believes that creating justpeace through conflict transformation involves preparing the self and engaging others in processes that move in positive directions. "Engage Conflict Well" is an emerging model in The United Methodist Church, which explores these interrelated phases of conflict transformation.

### The State of the Art of Conflict Transformation

**Kevin P Clements**

In *Searching for Peace in Europe and Eurasia: An Overview of Conflict Prevention and Peacebuilding Activities*. Edited by van Tongeren, Paul, Juliette Verhoeven and Hans van de Veen. Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2002.

"The field of conflict resolution/conflict transformation is still in a dynamic stage of evolution. It is an evolving sphere or interdisciplinary endeavour that has both theoretical and practical implications. This chapter will begin with a map of the field and an assessment of the state of the art. It will then analyze and assess these schools of thought by identifying trends or themes within the different perspectives. This will be followed by a critique of the field and recommendations for improving the theory and practice of conflict transformation."

### The Third Side: Why We Fight and How We Can Stop **William Ury**

New York: Penguin Books, September 2000.

In this book, William Ury explains that it takes two sides to fight and a third to stop it. Based on years of experience as a conflict resolution practitioner, Ury describes ten practical roles that people can play to prevent destructive conflict. He argues that fighting is not inevitable human behaviour and that we can transform battles into constructive conflict and cooperation by turning to what he calls, "the third side".

### People Building Peace II: Successful Stories of Civil Society **Paul Van Tongeren, Malin Brenk, Marte Hellema, and Juliette Verhoeven eds.**

Individuals can make a difference working for peace worldwide. That is the message of *People Building Peace II*, an

inspiring collection of stories of how "ordinary" men and women have played a crucial part in conflict prevention and peacebuilding. Thematic chapters, illustrated with compelling case studies, present new trends in the role of civil society in conflict transformation. The cases reflect the variety of activities initiated and sustained by a broad range of actors, including women's groups, youth groups, and faith-based organisations. Such topics as reconciliation, dialogue, networking, and traditional methods of conflict resolution are among those thoroughly explored, as are the successful initiatives of lesser-known NGOs. The resulting rich tapestry, an outcome of the Global Partnership for the Prevention of Armed Conflict, is an invaluable compendium of best practices and lessons learned, and at the same time a stirring call to action.

(All chapters can also be found on <http://www.peoplebuildingpeace.org/thestories/>)

### **Civil Society and Peacebuilding: A Critical Assessment**

**Thania Paffenholz ed.** Forthcoming autumn 2009.

Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers.

Aims to share the results of a three year international research project with the interested research and practitioner audience, and to develop a standard work for research, teaching and the interested practitioner community. Based on a sound analytical theory framework that has been developed from democracy, peace and development research, additional thematic and case study research was conducted by country experts during 2007. The themes of gender, media, youth and networks were dealt with as cross-cutting themes.

See also Thania Paffenholz' article on p 3 in this issue.

## **Online (web) sources**

### **Berghof Handbook for Conflict Transformation.**

Berghof Research Centre for Constructive Conflict Management (see more info above) The website content comes from two central resources:

- 1) commissioned articles by leading experts from current practice and scholarship, and
- 2) a Dialogue Series on key issues, in which practitioners and scholars critically engage with and debate one another in light of their varying experiences.

Available at: <http://www.berghof-handbook.net/>.

### **Especially: "Civilizing Conflict: Constructive Pacifism as a Guiding Notion for Conflict Transformation"**

**Dieter Senghaas** [http://www.berghof-handbook.net/articles/senghaas\\_handbook.pdf](http://www.berghof-handbook.net/articles/senghaas_handbook.pdf).

This article presents "causal/constructive pacifism" as a guiding notion for conflict transformation. If civil or international war is the effect of anarchy, a social order from which enduring peace emerges must be built at the national, regional/continental and international levels. Correspondingly, the author develops a historically informed model of a complex peace architecture ("civilisational hexagon"), the components of which he discusses at both the national and international level. Hexagonalising peace is the very basis for conflict transformation, i.e., for civilising conflicts in a potentially violence-prone political, socio-economic and socio-cultural environment.

### **"Conflict Transformation: A Multi-Dimensional Task"**

**Hugh Miall**

[http://www.berghof-handbook.net/articles/miall\\_handbook.pdf](http://www.berghof-handbook.net/articles/miall_handbook.pdf).

This essay identifies the key theorists and modes of practice of conflict transformation. It attempts to distinguish these from the theories and practices of conflict resolution and conflict management, while at the same time arguing that conflict transformation draws heavily on these earlier traditions. Conflict transformation as a response to the changing nature of contemporary conflict, however, is still an incomplete synthesis.

**Beyond intractability:** <http://www.beyondintractability.org/>

**Especially:** Burgess, Heidi and Guy M. Burgess. "Conflict Transformation and Peacemaking.", 1997 Available at: <http://www.beyondintractability.org/articlesummary/10299/>.

### **"Conflict Transformation: From Violence to Politics"**

**Diana Francis** CCTS Newsletter, Number 9, Summer 2000

Available at: <http://www.c-r.org/ccts/ccts9/vipolint.htm>.

This is a paper written for a series of seminars designed to explore what is necessary to move from violent conflict to something which might be described as peace.

### **"Healing as Part of Conflict Transformation"**

**Roswitha Jarman** CCTS Newsletter, Number 12, Spring 2001

Available at: <http://www.c-r.org/ccts/ccts12/healing.htm>.

This article explores how outsiders coming in to war-torn regions can contribute to healing the personal and interpersonal hurt of individuals and groups and thereby contribute to the process of conflict transformation.

### **"Reconciliation: Central Component of Conflict Transformation"**

**Nicole Negowetti** April 4, 2003

Available at:

<http://www.skynet.ie/~peacesoc/read/reconciliation.html>.

This essay examines the concept of reconciliation as central to John Paul Lederach's theory of conflict transformation. It asserts that contemporary intra-state conflicts require innovative approaches that consider the subjective experiences of both victims and perpetrators, for their transformation. The piece includes discussion of Lederach's distinction between conflict transformation and the concepts of conflict resolution and conflict management.

### **Transformative Approaches to Conflict.**

**Heidi Burgess, Guy M. Burgess and Tanya Glaser**

Conflict Research Consortium

Available at:

<http://www.colorado.edu/conflict/transform/index.html>.

This site contains information about a variety of transformative approaches to conflict including transformative mediation, John Paul Lederach's conception of transformative peacemaking and conflict transformation, the analytical problem solving/human needs approach to conflict transformation, research on the transformation of conflicts from intractable to tractable (primarily done at Syracuse University), and other techniques for successfully dealing with intractable conflicts, particularly dialogue and constructive confrontation.

# LPI News

## Resident Representative meetings

All heads of LPI's field offices and key staff from the Uppsala office came together for a Resident Representatives meeting in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, in March and in Nairobi, Kenya, in May, respectively. Resident Representatives meetings are a way to meet and discuss a number of issues related to strategy, vision and of an everyday character.

A lot of the discussions were held in regard to LPI's impact assessment tool called PME&L, which stands for Planning, Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (see also below).

In addition, time was devoted to discussing the operationalisation of LPI's two new priorities in the Strategic Plan 2010-2015: "Policy work and awareness raising" and "Cross-fertilisation of conflict transformation theory and practice". Issues relating to the new implementation plan, as well as finance and security were also examined.

## Workshop on LPI working tool

In 2007, LPI initiated a research project on impact assessment in peacebuilding. In time this project inspired LPI to develop its own tool for Planning, Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (PME&L) within conflict transformation and capacity building. A draft version of the tool was tested in 2008 by the field offices. LPI's Nairobi office, Kenya, for example held one to two two-hour sessions per week on PME&L throughout the autumn of 2008, and has now incorporated the tool into its everyday working routines.

The tool has also to a certain extent begun to be socialised among LPI's partners. In order to exchange different experiences and envision the future working process for the continued development of the PME&L tool, LPI arranged a workshop in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, in March this year. The workshop resulted in clear recommendations for how the work with the tool should proceed, as well as in the identification of strengths, weaknesses and remedies of the tool.

## Strategic Plan workshop

Beginning in 2010 LPI will have a new Strategic Plan. The Plan will be concretised in three-year Implementation Plans and one year Action Plans. In order to draft the new Strategic Plan, a workshop was arranged for the Residential Representatives, board members and staff from the Uppsala office in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, 16-20 March. Facilitating the workshop was LPI's board member Thania Paffenholz.

PHOTO: LPI



Thania Paffenholz

The Strategic Plan for 2010-2015 focuses on three strategic priorities for LPI within the coming six years: civil society support and engagement through capacity building, joint engagements and research, policy work and awareness raising, and, finally, the cross fertilisation of conflict transformation theory and practice through the sharing of experiences, networking, and research and strategic partnerships.

## Board meeting and seminar on peace in the Horn of Africa

Between 11 and 13 May, the Life & Peace Institute held its 25th Annual Board Meeting in Nairobi, Kenya. The main focus of the meeting was LPI's new Strategic Plan.

Connected to the Board Meeting a well-attended external seminar day was organised, aimed at generating ideas to strengthen the peacebuilding initiatives of LPI and its partners operating in Somalia and the rest of the Horn

of Africa. Speakers included, among others, Ambassador Bethuel Kiplagat (former Intergovernmental Authority on Development Special Envoy to the Somalia Peace Talks Negotiations), Dr. Mustafa Ali (Secretary General, African Council of Religious Leaders), Fr. Willybard Lhago (Vicar General, Archdiocese of Mombasa and Advisor to the Kenya Episcopal Conference on Inter-faith Actions), Dr. Hassan Mwakimako (University of Nairobi), and Fred Nyabera (Executive Director, Fellowship of Christian Councils and Churches in the Great Lakes and the Horn of Africa, FECCLAHA).

A Memorandum of Understanding was also signed between LPI and FECCLAHA. LPI was represented by the President of the LPI Board, Rev. Gustaf Ödquist, and Michele Cesari, LPI's Resident Representative in Nairobi. FECCLAHA was represented by its Executive Director, Fred Nyabera.

## Seminar with Fred Nyabera from FECCLAHA

At the beginning of April Fred Nyabera, Executive Director of FECCLAHA, gave a lecture entitled Transforming Armed Conflict in the Great Lakes and the Horn of Africa – the Role of Faith Communities at the LPI Uppsala office. Besides LPI staff, the President of LPI's board as well as representatives from, among others, the Swedish Ministry for Foreign Affairs and the Swedish Mission Council participated in the seminar.

Mr Nyabera identified the specific role and comparative advantages of faith communities in transforming conflict. He acknowledged their key areas of involvement as well as their most significant lessons learnt, which, among other things, are to promote African peace methods, engage elders, religious leaders, local authorities and actively involve women in peacebuilding.

## Staff changes

Olivia Kibui started working with LPI-Nairobi in March as the new Programme Advisor and Editor of the

Horn of Africa Bulletin. Her background and degree is in Communication.

At the end of May, *Déo Buuma*, LPI's Human Resources and Administrative Manager in the DRC office since seven years, left LPI to become Secretary General of Action pour la Paix et la Concordance, LPI-DRC's new partner that originated from Padebu. He is replaced by *Sylvie Chakirwa*.

In March, *Bernardin Lwamuguma* started as Finance and Administration Assistant in the office in DRC.



### Timor Leste research report

A pre-study entitled *Timor Leste – New times, new issues?* has been published on the LPI website. The study was written by Kjell-Åke Nordquist for

a research project on Timor Leste's internal socio-political development. The study is downloadable as a pdf-file free of charge.

Kjell-Åke Nordquist is a senior research fellow at the Stockholm School of Theology and associate professor at the Department of Peace and Conflict Research at the Uppsala University.

## Reviews and resources

### Colonialism and genocide

*Empire, Colony, Genocide. Conquest, Occupation, and Subaltern Resistance in World History. Edited by A. Dirk Moses. New York and Oxford: Berghahn Books 2008*

For a long time, colonial forms of mass violence were – if at all – treated separately from other genocidal practices. The Genocide Convention adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in 1948 was in fact a response to the industrial mass killing by the Nazi regime. (See article in *New Routes* 4.2009, pp 3ff.) Churchill had called it the “crime without a name”, for which Raphael Lemkin coined the term genocide. As the seven chapters to this volume's first section on intellectual history and conceptual questions reveal, this normative definition is – particularly in the understanding of Lemkin – anything but confined to the Holocaust. It dates back to earlier forms of mass extinction as much as it applies to later ones leading up to today.

The second section of the book provides in nine chapters the effects of empire on the local people in the processes of colonisation. Case studies include 19th century Cambodia, Tasmania, America and Australia, Canada, German extermination strategies in Southwest and East Africa, the Armenian genocide, and the imperial Russian and Nazi German obsessions in Eastern Europe.

The third section is a rather cryptic effort to complete the variety of cases with three chapters offering examples of what is termed “subaltern genocide”. This part would have benefited from additional evidence.

“The history of genocide is the history of human society since antiquity”, the editor notes in his preface. The 19 chapters to this impressive collection of both theoretical as well as empirical studies and reflections convincingly make the point. They recall the inherent violence that went hand in hand with the “civilising mission”. There were many different preludes to the Holocaust in all parts of the world, resulting in the extinction of people considered unworthy of being treated as human beings. Settler colonialism in Australia, Canada, North America and various African countries practised annihilation strategies before they were applied in parts of Europe itself, when the settler colonial forms of invasion and occupation in Eastern Europe resembled an annihilation strategy.

The volume is disturbing and provocative reading. It raises fundamental methodological and conceptual notions related to genocide. It thereby positions genocide studies in their own right much independent of the hitherto largely dominant Holocaust studies, and situates the latter in a wider context. It is a context of a modern history of violence, which emerged in its still existing forms hand in hand with the industrial mode of production. Frontiers were as much killing fields as organised industrial mass production translated into corresponding organised mass killing. By “uncovering the colonial roots of the genocide concept itself”, as the editor's preface notes, the authors seek to “operationalise Raphael Lemkin's original but ignored insight that genocides are intrinsically colonial and that they long precede the twentieth century”.

*Henning Melber*

### Ex-combatant remobilisation

*Dangerous Liaisons: Why Ex-Combatants Return to Violence. Cases from the Republic of Congo and Sierra Leone, Anders R. Nilsson. Department of Peace and Conflict Research, Uppsala University, 2008*

Why do some former fighters fight again and others not? This is the simple, basic question that Anders Nilsson addresses in the dissertation *Dangerous Liaisons: Why Ex-Combatants Return to Violence*, in which he unpacks empirical studies of six ex-combatant remobilisations, three in the Republic of Congo and three in Sierra Leone. It is an ambitious study seeking to explain rather than merely describe, and to trace causal mechanisms rather than be satisfied with correlations.

Through a tightly packaged, neatly structured presentation of the data and the analysis, Nilsson convincingly argues that three factors are in play when former fighters re-engage, namely remobilisers, relationships and remaritalisation, in this order of importance. The ordering is of some significance as it challenges many structural, academic understandings of the reasons why fighters return to

organised violence, which gives undue weight to experiences of remarginalisation. Nilsson's point is sharp: if marginalisation was so important, why do so many marginalised ex-combatants not remobilise? Instead, in the preliminary theory Nilsson develops, primacy is given to the necessity of remobilisers, that is, those who utilise existing relationships or intermediaries to access, motivate and facilitate returns to violence.

Nilsson seeks to adopt an actor-centric perspective, and while there is a depth to the analysis and a level of detail in the cases presented that belies the actual amount of time spent in the field, there are strikingly few actor-centric perspectives on display, and the analysis at times feels strangely disembodied. Part of the reason lies in the fact that this is an academic dissertation where the tools of the trade are supposed to be displayed, in order to be judged. And they certainly are well-displayed. However, it seems unnecessarily abstract to think of organised violence as a 'dependent variable' and those responsible for remobilising as 'entrepreneurs of violence'. One also wonders why organised violence is defined in terms of 'harm' inflicted by 'specialists in coercion'.

Without access to remobilisers, ex-combatants will not resort to organised violence – this is Nilsson's key finding and it is important. It nuances thinking that suggests ex-combatants are roaming the streets just looking for a fight, and it points to the importance of vertical networks (command structures) established during times of conflict. A potential next step might be to analyse the themes of authority and loyalty as two sides of the same coin (complementing discussions of affinity, trust and fear) characterising the relations between remobilisers, intermediaries, and the mobilised. This would put some extra meat on the explanatory skeleton proposed. The analysis could also be further developed to consider the extent to which horizontal relations between ex-combatants affect their willingness to re-engage in violence.

These further questions do not demonstrate holes in the analysis, but the extent to which the reader is drawn into the material and empowered to think with it and through it about the issues under consideration. This is a must read for scholars and policy makers involved with post-conflict reintegration and peacebuilding, and offers some intriguing directions for researchers to follow.

*Andrew M. Jefferson*

### **Traditional conflict resolution**

*Making Peace in Ethiopia: Five Cases of Traditional Mechanisms for Conflict Resolution (TMCR)*, eds Tarekegn Adebo and Hannah Tsadik. *Peace and Development Committee*, 2008

This book illustrates how ingeniously traditional mediation and reconciliation in Ethiopia combines truth, justice, and forgiveness, and has proven successful. The role of elders and the reconciliatory element of the Traditional Mechanisms for Conflict Resolution (TMCR) have been at the hub of the discussion, which has often resulted in a pragmatic and sustainable resolution of conflicts at the local level as confirmed by the findings of the field research. The publica-

tion is composed of five research studies among the people of Arsi Oromo, Walayta, Northern Wollo, Sidama and Gurage, conducted by Yirga Gebre, Uthman Hassen, Mamo Hebo, Mellese Madda and Ambaye Ogato, all scholars on TMCR.

The authors posit that elders' peace making was proved instrumental beyond history and local scope to solve present-day issues of national importance. Clearly, the authors draw some hasty conclusions in this regard, which should have been given more time to be observed and analysed from various perspectives. As far as the findings of the research works are concerned, they assert that Traditional Conflict Resolution Methods are effective in ethnically, culturally or religiously homogenous societies, which normally exist at the local level.

The type and nature of cases that range from inter-personal to inter-ethnic in scope are discussed at length, addressed by these hierarchical traditional institutions. In most of the cases the writers show the links between religion and spiritual and cultural values and these institutions in finding truth and enforcing decisions. The authors tend to lean more on the side of practical methods and applications of TMCR rather than on theoretical discussion.

The book assesses possible conditions that favour elders in the research areas to be successful in their conflict resolution efforts and to help to overcome the 'credible commitment' problem, which characterises the majority of the national and international mediation efforts. The cases illustrate the existing relationship between formal courts and TMCR structures, and disclose the gender asymmetry in the traditional institutions. In assessing the qualities of TMCR, the book stipulates advantages as well as limitations in the research localities.

The last chapter contrasts each research case with the theoretical conditions of effective mediation. Some parallels are drawn and possible directions for further research are highlighted with regard to communal level mediation, in order to fully attest them in view of contemporary theoretical models and international mediation experiences.

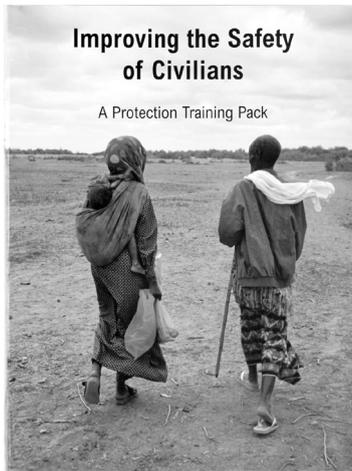
This is certainly a volume that should be on hand in peace research institutions, colleges and among practitioners where it may be consulted by newcomers to the field of mediation, and to conflict resolution at large. Some chapters are written in the style of an academic paper, while others offer a rather straightforward tale of issues in traditional conflict management. Nevertheless, this is essentially a practical book that describes a variety of models and elements of traditional mediation.

*Bereket Tarekegn*

### **Protecting civilians**

*Improving the safety of civilians. A protection training pack.* Oxfam GB, 2009

We see it on the news: civilians targeted and unprotected in situations of conflict or complex emergencies. The case of Sri Lanka, for instance, where civilians are trapped between the two sides of the conflict, where humanitarian



access is restricted and civilians are used in the fighting as human shields. The protection and safety of civilians in conflict zones and in emergencies has always been a major issue. Hence, various training materials related to protection issues have been developed such as the Sphere project, the Inter-Agency Standing Committee's "Growing the sheltering tree:

Protecting rights through humanitarian action", the Overseas Development Institute's "Protection", a guide for humanitarian agencies from Active Learning Network for Accountability and Performance (ALNAP) in Humanitarian Action, plus additional publications from the International Committee of the Red Cross and others.

One of the latest is Oxfam's Improving safety of civilians. A protection training pack that addresses the needs of building up a comprehensive understanding and programming on protection. The target group of the publication is field workers at different levels. The material is hands-on and is structured as a three-day workshop for those who have little or limited knowledge of protection. The training is divided into four different modules: understanding, planning, mainstreaming and programming of protection. All modules are built on relevant issues connected to the themes.

The material is easily accessible and can also be used as inspiration for those who already have a basic understanding and knowledge of protection issues but need to further strengthen the programming side in their organisation. There are few scenarios and case studies, but the user may well add some of their own case studies. Similar to all training materials, the Oxfam pack provides a structure and it is up to the user/trainer to develop it further according to their needs.

The resource pack is also a perfect guide for those who are not that experienced in holding a workshop. All modules are commented on and every step is described, although it should be pointed out that it is a prerequisite for the trainer to have a good knowledge of protection issues.

Given the time frame of three days, one may have to revisit and make use of the material in follow up workshops. The material offers some guidelines for implementing advocacy activities, but a more in-depth material focusing on the legal and political frameworks for protection issues is needed. Perhaps other guidelines, such as ALNAP's, would be more useful for that purpose. Otherwise the material is relevant, easy to work with and a good source of inspiration for developing one's own modules based on the needs of a specific organisation. For those who need to get started in programming on protection, the Oxfam pack is an excellent starting point.

Malin Perhult

## Ethiopian social and political life to date

*The Culture of Power in Contemporary Ethiopian Political Life, Sarah Vaughan and Kjetil Tronvoll. Sida studies no.10, first published 2003, reprinted 2005*

Vaughan and Tronvoll give an in-depth and revealing account of the hierarchical power relations at play in modern Ethiopian society, particularly vis-à-vis developments since the end of the war in 1991. With the embracing of democratic values by the Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front following the overthrow of the dictator Mengistu, there was an emphasis on promoting the position of ethnic groups in a federal structure with the aim of reinforcing state unity within this culturally and religiously diverse country. Although this emphasis on democratic values cannot be underestimated in a region renowned for more oppressive systems of governance, it is the approach by the government to civil society which undermines progress.

Vaughan and Tronvoll stubbornly point to the need to involve all Ethiopians in decisions affecting their lives. Yet, despite advances in promoting democratisation, this has been compromised by the curtailing of NGOs and charity organisations through the passing into law of the Ethiopia Charities and Societies Proclamation in early 2009. The restrictive nature of this law detracts substantially from the ruling party's expressed commitment to the "entrenchment of 'people's power'", and jeopardises efforts to establish a system of governance grounded on the government's stated principles of equality of access, when it came to power almost twenty years ago.

The recent addendum made to the law to include all faith-based bodies could turn out to be a bridge too far for the government, as it effectively entails trying to hold in check traditionally influential institutions – particularly the Ethiopian Orthodox Church – in the run-up to elections in May next year. With the new civil society organisations law in place, the powerlessness of the donors to affect proceedings and the subdued voice of the Diaspora, the coming year could prove to be a significant step backward for Ethiopia in opening up its political machinery for meaningful dialogue.

The role played by the Diaspora, so prominent during the elections in 2005, is not even mentioned throughout the book. To be fair on the authors, this could be down to a stringent focus of the book to look more into the daily political life within the country. Yet, it effectively leaves out a significant agent of change on the Ethiopian political and cultural landscape, creating rather less than convincing conclusions at the end. In spite of this oversight, if that is what it is, it represents the most concrete analysis of Ethiopian social and political life to date, keeping in mind the paucity of similar literature on this theme in the development arena.

Shane Quinn

## The uplifting transformation

This poem by Brian Wren, which I copied off the fence at Greenham Common once, expresses the passion I feel for the idea that peace is far more than the absence of physical violence – or indeed, than a return to civil politics. The ongoing efforts of oppressed people to uplift themselves are essential to the work of conflict transformation.

Diana Francis  
Chair of the Committee for  
Conflict Transformation Support

*Say no to peace  
If what they mean by peace  
Is the quiet misery of hunger  
The frozen stillness of fear  
The silence of broken spirits  
The unborn hopes of the oppressed.*

*Tell them that peace  
Is the shouting of children at play  
The babble of tongues set free  
The thunder of dancing feet  
And a father's voice singing.*

...

*Tell them that peace  
is the hauling down of flags,  
the forging of guns into ploughs,  
the giving of fields to the landless,  
and hunger a fading dream.*



PHOTO: GEORG LULICH

## LPI PERIODICALS

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**New Routes**, next issue of the quarterly journal will be out in September 2009.

**Horn of Africa Bulletin**, a monthly online newsletter covering the African countries of the Horn.

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