

Conflict and Post-conflict: Asia Pacific Dimensions Workshop Report
SSGM Project, ANU – 23-24th September 2002

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The **Conflict and Post-conflict: Asia Pacific Dimensions** workshop was held at University House, Australian National University, 23rd – 24th September 2002. The workshop was hosted by the State, Society and Governance in Melanesia Project (SSGM), in collaboration with the newly established Centre for Conflict and Post-Conflict Studies, Asia Pacific (ANU), and supported by AusAID. RSPAS Director, Professor Jim Fox officially opened the workshop, followed by an introductory address by Ann-Maree O’Keeffe, Deputy Director General of AusAID. The key speakers were Dr Alan Tidwell (US Institute of Peace) and Andy Carl (Conciliation Resources), who participated in the workshop alongside a broad range of policy makers and academics from throughout the region.

The objectives of the workshop were to:

- canvass themes and debates in the recent international literature on conflict
- examine how these debates might inform analyses of conflicts in the Asia Pacific region and to ascertain what the region has to contribute to the international discourse
- determine how comparable the conflicts and post-conflict situations in our region(s) were and whether there is anything distinctive about them, particularly in Melanesia
- facilitate a comparative dialogue amongst area specialists, and
- engage practitioners, policy-makers and NGO representatives in this dialogue with a view to:
 - sharing their experience on conflict & post-conflict
 - assisting in bridging the research-policy gap, and
 - discovering practical approaches to managing conflicts/building peace in the region.

These objectives were met via a variety of formal seminar presentations, small group discussions and short ethnographic snapshots of conflict and post-conflict situations in the Asia Pacific region. The following report summarizes each of the six workshop sessions. Copies of Dr Alan Tidwell’s paper, Andy Carl’s paper and AusAID’s presentation on the “Peace, Conflict and Development Policy” are attached at Annex I. The workshop program is at Annex II.

The conclusions drawn from the Workshop were multiple and varied, but central to them was the recognition that:

- conflict and post-conflict initiatives were complex and their dynamics not unique to specific regions
- peacebuilding was a long-term process and it was imperative that practitioners avoided attempts at a 'quick fix' and developed skills and strategies, especially for the encouragement of local ownership, for the longer haul
- area scholars could engage productively across regions and disciplines particularly in relation to causative factors of conflicts, and that
- bridging the gap between policy-makers, scholars and peace practitioners was an important and immediate challenge.

SESSION ONE: QUESTIONS ON CONFLICT ANALYSIS AND PEACE BUILDING

Dr Alan Tidwell, Program Officer at the United States Institute of Peace, presented a paper entitled “*Questions on Conflict: Analysis and peace building*”. In his paper, Tidwell provided an overview of the discipline of conflict resolution, emphasizing the fact that the discipline itself is ill defined. Primarily, the discipline of conflict resolution is defined by the fact that a conglomerate of people self-identify as conflict resolution scholars and practitioners. Tidwell’s paper focused upon four primary issues, namely the development of conflict resolution as a discipline, the structure of the discipline, key tensions and ideas with which the discipline engages, and root causes of conflict.

1. *The Development of Conflict Resolution as a discipline*

The cold war precipitated the development of modern conflict resolution discourse, with a number of subsequent developments constituting key milestones in the development of conflict resolution as a discipline, including:

- the establishment of the Journal for Conflict Resolution at the University of Michigan in the 1950s, which heralded the beginning of the discipline. Ironically, the journal is not particularly well esteemed by conflict resolution scholars today, however it played an important role in initially calling scholars to study conflict in attempts to predict the emergence of conflict and ways in which to intervene, and
- the influence of the American scholar, Mary Parker Follet, who rejected ‘traditional’ characterizations of conflict as comprising compromise, competition or accommodation. Follet claimed that such methods were inappropriate for dealing with conflict, as each entailed a winner and a loser. She therefore proposed the need for ‘integrative problem solving’ and ‘creative solutions to conflict’. Primarily, Follet emphasized the need to identify the underlying motivation of each conflict.

2. *Structure of the discipline*

The discipline of conflict resolution boasts a diverse population of people from various backgrounds with different motivations, including scholars, peace-activists, practitioners, analysts, etc. As a discipline, conflict resolution is motivated by the notion of praxis, that is, the interplay between theory and practice. It is therefore populated by scholars with a strong orientation towards action who are also practitioners. The field is concerned with both description and prescription.

3. *Key Ideas and tensions*

Tidwell outlined four primary issues for discussion, namely state failure, time, structural violence and justice.

State failure

State failure occurs when a state ceases to maintain a monopoly over the use of violence. However, it is important to avoid overemphasizing the failed state model as many successful states are also riddled with violent conflict. As proposed by Zartman, failed states often result in warlordism, whereby the state is unable to keep warring factions

apart. As distinct from ‘failed states’, we may also refer to failing or ill-formed states, eg. the Philippines.

Time

Zartman proposes the notion of ‘ripeness’, that is, the moment at which it becomes appropriate to intervene in a conflict. Similarly, Tidwell noted that all conflicts at some point reach a ‘hurting stalemate.’ It might therefore be important to identify the ways in which we can encourage ripeness and create openings for peaceful conflict resolution.

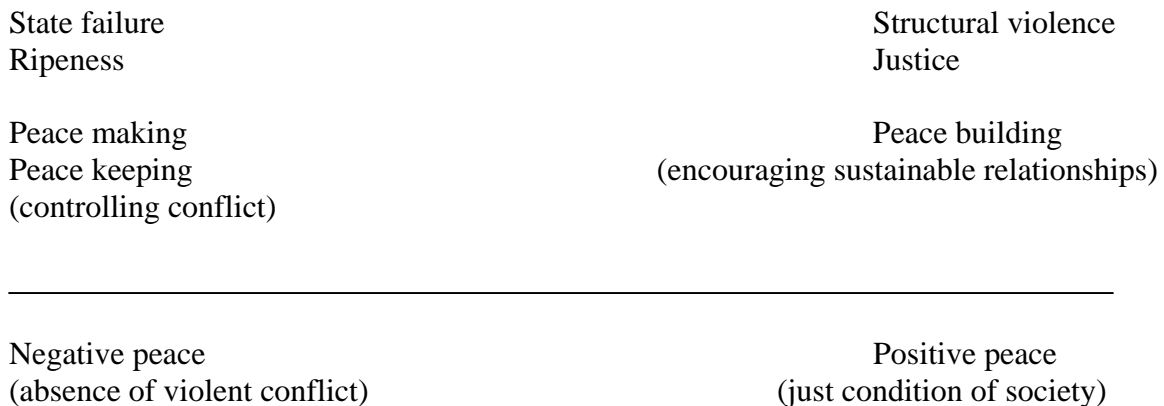
Structural Violence

As formulated by Galtung, structural violence occurs when the probability that one will meet one’s expected life chances is reduced. For example, poverty is structural violence, and is thus as violent as warfare. Positive peace occurs when the conditions of structural violence have been eliminated.

Justice

There is no uniform agreement on the definition of the term justice. Various forms of justice are acknowledged, including distributive justice, natural justice, procedural justice, and relational justice, in which social relationships are fair and equitable.

These four issues may be situated on a continuum, as follows:



Peace making comprises the process of controlling and managing conflict. This may entail practitioner interventions such as mediation, negotiation, arbitration or conciliation. For example, peace agreements may be made in order to keep warring factions apart. Peace building however, relates to the creation of stable conditions in order to prevent conflict, or to alter the basis of existing conflict-ridden relations. This may involve initiatives to enhance vertical and horizontal communication and capacity building.

4. *Root causes of conflict*

Tidwell outlined four theories relating to the root causes of conflict, namely greed/grievance, culture, enmity and human needs.

Greed/grievance

The greed v grievance debate may be broadly aligned with economic versus political perspectives respectively. The greed or utility maximization perspective is best represented by Paul Collier. Those who advocate this approach argue that greed motivates conflict, as conflict is often profitable in the short term. Unlike Collier, advocates of the grievance approach, like Caplan, offer ideological explanations for conflict, eg. ethnic hate. Neither approach offers guidance for action.

Culture

It is widely acknowledged that different cultures exhibit different levels of conflict, however this is a poorly studied area of conflict resolution. Work in this area has been undertaken by cultural anthropologists, yet their writing is largely inaccessible. With the exception of John Paul Lederach, who developed the 'eliciting approach', most work pertaining to culture and conflict has emanated from practitioners concerned with cross-cultural communication.

Enmity

Enmity approaches to identifying the root causes of conflict come largely from the field of psychology. They entail the examination of enemy systems and focus upon the notion that in order to kill, one must dehumanize the other.

Human needs

John Burton is a major exponent of the human needs approach to conflict, whereby conflict is said to result from people's motivation to satisfy human needs. Lisa Shirk has further developed this model, moving beyond Maslow's basic conception of human needs to include social needs (respect, security, participation), cultural needs (culture, religion, identity) and material needs (food, shelter, healthcare). In particular, the human needs approach is concerned to identify the difference between means and ends.

Discussion

State, Society and Governance in Melanesia Project Fellow, **Anthony Regan**, led discussion, which focused primarily upon:

The nature of conflict: The term conflict is variously defined, with little disciplinary agreement as to its precise definition. Whilst many definitions are predicated upon the number of participants involved, Tidwell suggested that the way in which one employs the term is dictated by one's objectives. For example, one may wish to eradicate violent conflict entirely or merely to minimize morbidity. Each objective will in turn influence the way in which one defines conflict. It was also noted that whilst conflict is typically seen to be indicative of social dysfunction, conflict in some regions is both normal and accepted. Tidwell noted that the discipline of conflict resolution typically characterizes conflict as dysfunction, as illustrated by the frequent use of medical terminology aligning conflict with illness. Some scholars however, particularly those interested in social justice, acknowledge that in some instances conflict is useful and can play an integral role in bringing social justice issues to the fore.

Models of conflict resolution: Many participants argued that the proposed continuum of conflict resolution was overly mechanistic. Primarily, it was argued that it is difficult to identify the true root of conflict, as conflicts are complex and often embrace multiple underlying motives. It was also noted that it is difficult to gauge the point at which a conflict situation may be rendered post-conflict. Tidwell concluded that whilst this linear notion does not necessarily reflect reality, it is useful for considering the various phases and aspects of conflict.

Brief mention was also made of the state's role in perpetuating conflict, the lack of disciplinary reflexivity and the lack of literature on practical issues such as weapons disposal, particularly that which is not case specific.

Following Tidwell's paper, Lisa Roberts and Barbara O'Dwyer outlined AusAID's **Conflict, Peace and Development Policy**, attached at Annex 1.

SESSION TWO: CONFLICT DYNAMICS – FROM ACEH TO FIJI

In this session, participants presented ten-minute snapshots of conflicts in Aceh (Edward Aspinall), West Papua (Jaap Timmer), Mindanao (Ron May), East Timor (Dionisio Soares), Bougainville (Anthony Regan), Solomons (Sinclair Dinnen), Vanuatu (Michael Morgan) and Fiji (Steven Ratuva). Despite obvious local specificities, presenters identified a number of key themes, namely the difference between strong and weak states, the lack of discipline in the state forces, resources, ethnicity and religion, migration, representations of conflict, and post-conflict models for peace.

1. Strong states and weak states

Sinclair Dinnen suggested that state weakness had contributed to the perpetuation of conflict in Solomon Islands. He argued that the state is weakly embedded and politically paralyzed. Therefore, government structures have been compromised, a problem that has been exacerbated by the general breakdown of law and order. While Vanuatu has not experienced an outbreak of major violent conflict since the Santo rebellion 22 years ago, low-level violent incidents (mainly in the form of uprisings by state disciplinary forces) have occurred from time to time. In Vanuatu the state also appears to be weakly embedded, which according to Michael Morgan is evident in the anti-government rhetoric employed by the country's chiefs, and also in the generally growing disenchantment with politics among the ni-Vanuatu. In Fiji the state has become ethnicized. For example, there is a long history of indigenous Fijian domination of the military and the police. As illustrated during the 1987 coup, this imbalance is of great importance during times of political turmoil.

Ed Aspinall commented that in Aceh, the state has failed to use its capacity for coercion in legitimate ways, with the seeds of the current revolt being sown during a period of forceful activity against the Acehnese during the 1980s. In the current phase of the conflict, Aspinall claimed that the state has seized whatever means it has at its disposal to end the operations of the Free Aceh Movement. In West Papua this was also shown to be the case. Here, Jaap Timmer, argued that Kopassus has virtually unfettered freedom to

act as and how it sees fit in all circumstances. In other parts of Indonesia, Timmer argued that continuing violence benefits the state - which pits different sections of the warring parties against each other. He claims that this situation allows the military to access regional resources while locals fight each other. In West Papua this has resulted not in a lack of authority but an excess of authority. This in turn has led to widespread confusion - people do not know whom to trust and to whom they can voice their grievances.

In his discussion of the Bougainville conflict, Tony Regan argued that if the state had not used heavy-handed tactics in response to the dispute, Papua New Guinea may not have faced a separatist uprising. He claimed that while support for independence was certainly evident at the beginning of the dispute, widespread grievance over levels of economic inequality was the most immediate issue throughout the duration of the dispute. As the state began to crack down on the separatist movement, sympathy was galvanized for the BRA, even though many Bougainville islanders initially viewed the BRA with some apprehension.

2. *Lack of discipline in the state forces*

In Aceh it was claimed that the military and police have been involved in illegal business activities. In the Maluku this has also been the case, with military officers selling arms and uniforms to various groups involved in the conflict. This has in turn helped to prolong instability in the region. The military has also been involved in logging enterprises in West Papua, with the military reaping large portions of the financial rewards accruing from the industry at the expense of local people. During the years of the Wahid presidency in Indonesia there were some successes in trying to bring the Ambon conflict under control. Wahid was convinced that this conflict was in fact being helped along by military efforts and thus made determined efforts to return the army personnel stationed in this region to their barracks in order to prevent them from interfering. Timmer argued that the military however, opposed to such confinement, continued their activities in Ambon, and at the same time rallied the media and parliamentary opposition to make an effective attack on the presidency by pointing to the fact that Wahid was unable to resolve sectarian violence in the country.

The question of corruption of state forces and their ability to manipulate conflict in the community has had an obviously detrimental effect upon negotiations for peace in Solomon Islands. At the same time the reliability of the state's forces may be questionable, as recently shown by the police force mutiny in Vanuatu. At other times in Vanuatu the state forces have shown themselves willing to follow the lead of individual members of the elected parliament, but not the government as a whole.

The capacity of the military to take control was perhaps most dramatically brought to a head in Fiji in 1987, when the military led a coup against the Bavadra Government, dismissing the country's democratically elected parliament and placing Colonel Rabuka in power. On the other hand, the attempt to enjoin the military to participate in the coup attempt of May 2000 by civilians and dissident army personnel saw the RFMF hierarchy resist the would-be coupists.

3. Resources

Economic issues and disgruntlement over inequitable resource distribution are common precipitators of conflict. However, Aspinall argued that the notion of greed sheds little light upon the conflict in Aceh, claiming that while there does seem to be a correlation with the emergence of the Free Aceh Movement in 1976 and the opening of oil and gas fields in the region (particularly the richly resourced Arun Gas field), identity issues have played a more significant role in fueling the conflict.

According to Timmer, in West Papua resource extraction activities have played a key role in generating conflict. He argued that resources have been poorly managed and that this has led to widespread frustration at the grass roots level and attacks against those who are held responsible for the poor distribution of financial benefits. Timmer also noted that the state has been heavily involved in such activities, pointing to the example of the Freeport mining venture, whose management he claims associates closely with Jakarta elites.

Discussing the long-standing conflict in Mindanao, Ron May cited low levels of economic development within Muslim populations as a factor contributing to conflict. Similarly, when considering the economic situation of many young militants in Solomon Islands, it is clear that economic considerations played some role in the conflict in this area. Dinnen noted that there is great disenchantment amongst this population and that the ongoing conflict has given them something to engage with. Similarly, for many sections of the ni-Vanuatu population, living conditions are dictated by a precarious economic situation. This not helped by the country's weak economy or rising levels of unemployment and the situation does not seem to receive the amount of attention it should from elected officials.

In relation to Fiji, Steve Ratuva claimed that economic grievances over the perceived unevenness of development have contributed to Fiji's recent political upheavals. He discussed the ways in which indigenous Fijian nationalists refer to the economic imbalance between races and claim that the country's Indo-Fijian population has advanced economically at the expense of the indigenous population. In Bougainville on the other hand, Regan claimed that the separatist issue actually masked economic grievances and levels of economic inequality. He argued that since the early days of the conflict, rebel groups had attacked not only the mine, but also wealthy elites and the Bougainville bourgeoisie.

4. Ethnicity and Religion

The ethnic and religious bases of conflict often draw upon rigid notions of identity that promote the idea that various groups are homogenous - this may not in fact be the case - but the politicization of religion and ethnicity is an important means by which to fuel dissent when unrest threatens. Ed Aspinall argued that the Aceh conflict is archetypal in this regard. He claims that members of the Acehnese freedom movement tend to articulate their ethnic identity and collective past in rigid terms, characterizing Aceh's population as an ethnically homogenous group whose dispersal is coterminous with the territorial boundaries of their province. The Achenese have a strong feel for the history

of their region and are able to mobilize a powerful set of historical resources in order to stake their claim to a distinctly Acehnese identity. Hence the period of the Acehnese sultanate is looked back to with pride and nostalgia as a time of former greatness. The Acehnese also place a high emphasis upon the importance of religious piety.

Sinclair Dinnen noted that framing the unrest in the Solomons in terms of ethnicity (a fight between two distinct peoples from Guadalcanal and Malaita) has helped to perpetuate the conflict, disguise the real issues fueling unrest and moreover, that this emphasis fails to account for the ways in which the conflict has changed. He argued that these ethnic identities are in fact a product of the post-colonial period and are not fixed but fluid. This has had a significant impact on the peace process. Dinnen argued that the Solomons conflict is no longer a conflict about ethnicity but about the control of resources such as weaponry and the capture of the state, which is weakly embedded and lacks accountability.

Dionisio Soares suggested that as people in East Timor demand that their own identities are recognized in the nation-building process, there is the potential for ethnic divisions in the newly created nation to precipitate further internal conflict

Timmer argued that whilst the conflict in Ambon has its roots in the issue of religious difference, this issue has been politicized and made more urgent by political and military groups who have realized that their own interests can be served by perpetuating this conflict.

With reference to the southern Philippines, Ron May highlighted the fact that since the 16th century, the Moros have been under siege from outsiders attempting to introduce foreign cultures and religious beliefs to Mindanao. The first wave of invasion was begun by the Spanish, who led a 350-year battle in the region and attempted to convert the indigenous islanders and the Muslim Moros to Christianity. This battle and the final capitulation to the Spanish saw the emergence of a feeling of cultural domination that has continued for centuries. The ceding of Mindanao to the USA by Spain in 1898 then led to a strongly resisted policy of "attraction", which was designed to integrate the Moros into "mainstream" Filipino society. These two waves of invasion fuelled a long-running sense of grievance in this region against what is often seen by the Moros as rule, and cultural domination imposed upon them from outside.

The conflict in Fiji is similarly framed in terms of racial identity, and many of the solutions proposed to ongoing upheavals in this region have sought to come to terms with the highly politicized racial divide in Fiji and the capacity of this division to create conflict in the future. There is often great conflict between the supremacy of indigenous Fijian interests and the interests of the Indo-Fijian population. Despite the fact that within these two groups there have often been internal conflicts - when major upheavals occur it is the question of race that is most readily debated. Resolutions to this issue are often thought about in terms of creating new constitutions that allow for more equitable parliamentary representation, reformed electoral systems, or government sponsored moves towards reconciliation. But the history of Fiji since colonial times has seemed to

compound the importance of ethnicity as a lens via which to understand political culture. The various solutions that have been proposed to ensure peace in Fiji in recent times and reduce the likelihood of Fiji experiencing another coup have not been able to lessen the fact that ethnicity remains a legitimate focus of political discourse.

5. Migration

Migration is often viewed as a factor leading to conflict. In the post-independence period in the Philippines, Ron May argued that Mindanao was seen by the administration in Manila as a "new frontier", which had to be contained to prevent outbreaks of insurrection. The administration therefore promoted internal migration to this region from other parts of the Philippines. In the 1970s grievances over loss of traditional lands erupted and violent clashes occurred between traditional Muslim groups and the newcomers.

Fiji's racial tensions can be understood as a result of colonial history, particularly of the British practice of bringing indentured labour from India to work in the colony's sugar industry. With the end of indenture in the 1920s land was leased to this population, who themselves became small-scale sugar farmers. The leasing of land has become an urgent issue in the current context - as many leases are now due for renewal and many indigenous land owners want to reclaim their land. On the other hand many of the Indian farmers have lived on this land for generations and find it difficult to imagine pursuing a lifestyle other than farming.

In Eastern Indonesia Timmer argued that decades of transmigration policies have intensified perceptions of cultural difference, thus impacting upon issues relating to land and resource distribution. Immigrants from Java, Buton, Bugin and Makassa have moved to parts of eastern Indonesia and filled gaps in the labour market, or created their own small businesses. These groups often seem caught in the middle of a battleground where the interests of Javanese elites and the state security forces clash with those of local communities. Timmer argued that local groups have responded to immigration by demarcating their own boundaries of identity, relying upon markers such as ethnic characteristics and religious labels as a means to articulate distinctiveness.

In Solomon Islands, Dinnen argued that there was a gradual build up of tension on Guadalcanal against Malaitan immigration. The return of exiled and self-exiled populations to East Timor in the post-Independence phase has also been problematic, as the new nation is forced to deal with the differing expectations of different sections of its population. This has become evident in recent disputes over land issues. At present there are three systems of land title operating at once, customary, Indonesian and Portuguese. Soares pointed to the difficulties that arise when East Timorese return to their homeland expecting to reclaim their land with Portuguese land titles, which may have been invalidated during the Indonesian occupation.

There has been a small amount of urban migration in Vanuatu. Here different ethnic groups often live in close proximity in peri-urban settlements - this may increase the potential for conflict.

6. *Representations of conflict*

Stereotypical representations of groups involved in conflict lead to heightened tensions. In Fiji this is common, with Indo-Fijians being referred to as selfish and money hungry, while Fijians are seen as lazy. In Indonesia, Jakartan officials view different regions and groups involved in conflict in different ways. For example, the Malukans are considered politically sophisticated while Papuans are viewed as stuck in "Stone-age ignorance". Jakarta has embarked upon a program to advance the status of Papuans so that they can become "full" members of the Indonesian nation. However, Jakarta is also often puzzled by the fact that Papuans appear to fail to realize that "Indonesia is in fact spending a lot of money to improve the living standards of the people."

In Fiji, the coups of the last decade are often interpreted in terms of racial difference. This tends to mask the fact that there is also intra-racial tension, which has similarly led to eruptions of violence. The same is true in Solomon Islands, where the framing of conflict in terms of ethnicity has prevented peace by masking the fact that the state has been captured by those involved. The focus on ethnicity also ignores the extent to which the dynamics of the conflict have changed. Similarly in Bougainville, the conflict was initially a protest about inequitable resource allocation, not separatism. In Vanuatu the memory of the Santo rebellion may in fact prevent further conflict in this country, as this rebellion is often represented in terms of the cost to the people involved and to the nation.

7. *Post – conflict: Models for peace*

The granting of the special autonomy agreement for West Papua has failed to limit unrest, for while the model was devised by the Governor of Papua and a team of Papuan academics, wide consultation with local people was not undertaken. Consequently, according to Timmer, as Papuans claim no ownership of the agreement, it has actually increased competition between them.

In Aceh the state used the peace process as an adjunct to other measures to bring about the complete destruction of the Free Aceh Movement - not in place of hostilities. The tactic was to crush the movement in the field and then accept their surrender across the peace negotiation table.

Since self-rule in East Timor, many people have claimed that they feel as though they are not represented in the new nation. In the post-referendum era there seems to have been a renewal of internal conflict between various East Timorese groups. Old grievances remain, however many overlook the fact that firm political identities were formed before the 1975 invasion, and these identities are becoming important once again. There is a feeling that the symbols of the new nation do not represent all groups – eg. the Fretlin flag has become the flag of the nation. Some claim different dates for independence, with some looking to the date on which the Portuguese left East Timor (28 November 1975), while others look to May 2002.

In Fiji, in the post 2000 coup environment, there is much talk about reconciliation - and indeed there is a government ministry of reconciliation. However, given that government rhetoric is replete with references to the racial divide, we might start to think about state

moves to promote reconciliation as being tokenistic rather than genuine. On the surface there appears to be some willingness to solve these problems, but under the surface old differences and grievances linger.

The Bougainville peace process received great impetus from civil society, a contribution that is often overlooked. In particular, women and traditional leaders played an important role in promoting the idea that violence was an unacceptable means of resolving conflict. The strategy behind the peace building efforts in Bougainville aimed at using the moderates to pull in the hardliners at the local and national level. There was a policy of no exclusion so that all groups on each side of the divide in Bougainville became included in the process. But it would be a mistake to think that the problem is dealt with definitively. There was always the underlying issue of economic inequality and this issue remains. It will remain to be seen in the future if the original idea of high autonomy and delayed referendum will be enough to deal with the tensions of renewed economic inequality.

SESSION THREE: CONFLICT DYNAMICS – FROM ACEH TO FIJI (CONTINUED)

Session three, chaired by State, Society and Governance in Melanesia Senior Fellow, **Bronwen Douglas**, entailed discussion of the issues presented in the preceding session. In particular, Dr Douglas sought to explore some of the issues that had not been raised or adequately discussed previously. These included gender issues, culture and opportunity.

1. Gender Issues

Given that females constitute half of the world's population, the lack of consideration of gender issues in conflict is surprising. In Melanesia, including in Bougainville and the Solomons, women's groups have played a central role in peace processes. Indeed, it has been suggested that the Bougainville peace process would have collapsed in the absence of women's support. However, these groups have been sidelined, whether due to their invisibility in society or their own self-perceptions, from the post-conflict political process. Dr Douglas commented that women are often well placed to facilitate peace, as often they are not confined by kin relationships in the same way that men are. However, Tony Regan noted that in the Bougainville case it is hard to generalize about women, as many actually encouraged violence. AusAID officer Angela Mercuri noted that women have played an active role in the development of a vibrant civil society in Solomon Islands but that national groups have subverted the efforts of grassroots women's groups. SSGM Fellow Steve Ratuva noted that Fijian women face the difficult tension between a culture that creates an ideology of a woman's appropriate role, and a civil society that is trying to change that.

2. Culture

Culture should be in the foreground of our discussion as while it is a global phenomenon, it has local resonance. In Melanesia this is embodied in the senior-oriented culture of society, which means that women do not tend to speak out often. Angela Mercuri noted that in Solomon Islands, young people are educated and respect their elders less.

Furthermore, in the Solomons there is no one custom that fits all. According to Michael Morgan, in Vanuatu none of these issues are talked about coherently, and all are challenged at the local level.

Another important cultural factor in Melanesia is the notion of reciprocity, which ensures that revenge is an integral characteristic of conflict. While there are local elements of culture prevalent in fighting throughout the region, there are also external cultural influences, for example the BRA characterized themselves as Rambos, there are stories of people dancing to bullets etc. New customs are emerging that incorporate traditional ideas, modern authority and Christianity.

3. *Opportunity*

Sinclair Dinnen raised the need to look at conflicts as opportunities for change. Participants agreed, noting that in the Pacific, many conflicts relate to tensions between centralized authorities and local peoples. Typically, such conflicts are further confused by the interplay of ethnic, religious and economic divisions. In order to effectively address Pacific conflicts, it is therefore necessary to understand what local people are responding to and what they are trying to achieve by engaging in conflict. External programs for reform must engage with traditional culture, however as noted by Greg Urwin, customary revivals will be effective only in modified forms. Ron May warned against the increasing trend towards the promotion of the federalist model. Greg Urwin concurred, stating that in Solomon Islands it would be better to start with local needs and service delivery.

SESSION FOUR: MANAGING CONFLICT AND POST CONFLICT – PRACTITIONER’S PERSPECTIVES

Andy Carl, director of Conciliation Resources, London, presented a paper entitled “*Bridging the practice-to-policy gap in transforming conflict in Asia, the Pacific and beyond: an international NGO perspective.*” In his paper, Carl outlined the work of Conciliation Resources and discussed the practical implications of assisting those in conflict and post-conflict situations.

1. *Conciliation Resources*

Conciliation Resources is a small London-based NGO that supports the activities of those working to transform armed conflict. Conciliation Resource’s main approach is to transcend the state-centred approach towards conflict resolution, and to be mindful of the gap between rhetoric and capacity. Conciliation Resources key program areas are Angola, Caucasus, Fiji, Northern Uganda, West Africa, Pan-Africa media strengthening, and accords in the Philippines/Mindanao, Sri Lanka, Cambodia and PNG/Bougainville.

Carl highlighted the need for documenting peace processes so as to note precedents and lessons that may be useful elsewhere. In particular, Conciliation Resource’s experiences have highlighted the importance of facilitating dialogue, contributing to the development of organizational/institutional capacity, complementing local capacities, engaging and

facilitating mediation. Experience has also shown however, that these goals may be impeded by a number of factors including skepticism towards NGOs, lack of corporate penetration of conflict resolution, the lack of cumulative effect of NGOs for peace, lack of harmonization/cooperation between NGOs, lack of harmonization of peace policy, the different aims and agendas of different organizations and the lack of government support for conflict resolution work. It was also noted that there is a lack of shared framework/vocabulary and understanding of the major issues involved. This is exacerbated by the fact that various agencies participating in conflict prevention and resolution share equally complex agendas, which are often not harmonized.

2. *Practical implications of assisting those in conflict situations*

Carl noted a number of core challenges to NGO intervention, namely 1) ascertaining the point at which it is appropriate to intervene in a conflict situation, 2) the centrality of human rights and 3) the need for alliance/cooperation of all parties.

In terms of entry points for intervention, Carl used the NGO International Alert's involvement in the support of the deposed Bavadra regime in Fiji as an example of successful intervention. In this case, International Alert was engaged at an early stage to co-convene a seminar called 'The National Agenda' at USP. The seminar encouraged open and frank discussion that led to setting an agenda for future action, the formation of the Citizens Constitutional Forum (CCF) and the strengthening of Fijian diaspora and NGO connections. Some problems arose however, when the CCF tactically moved from their convening role towards an overt advocacy role.

In relation to the centrality of human rights in donor discourse, it is important to note that there are tensions between group rights, human rights, identity and ethnicity. It is also integral to question whose role is it to defend human rights and who participates in the process. In many instances, inappropriate initiatives do more harm than good. Carl also emphasized the need for public participation in peacemaking, drawing upon the examples of Bougainville and Fiji.

Carl noted that conflict prevention and resolution work benefits from non-state actors in a variety of ways by diversifying the terms of engagement for development, 'sensitizing' development assistance, encouraging long term engagement, providing a presence at the local level and minimizing the risks for peace building. It was noted that development actors are often caught in attempts to outplay each other and that aid programs are often not fully informed about relevant issues. Aid donors therefore stand to benefit from the lessons learned by NGO practitioners

Discussion

Following Carl's paper, Alison Chartres, Angela Mercuri and Alan Moody, all from AusAID, discussed the key points raised. Primarily, it was agreed that there is clearly a need for flexibility and that co-operation and coordination between all parties involved is integral to the success of aid programs addressing conflict. It was agreed that it is important to document all programs so as to transfer lessons learned to other attempts at peacemaking/peacebuilding. For example, in Solomon Islands, funding a church organization caused discomfort for AusAID. It was also noted that it is difficult to promote human rights, for whilst they are embedded in government policy, many governments do not have the capacity to implement policy. It is therefore important for donors to find alternative means of supporting human rights. More generally, the need for greater analysis at the grass roots level was emphasized.

SESSION FIVE: MANAGING CONFLICT AND POST-CONFLICT – PRACTITIONER'S PERSPECTIVES (CONTINUED)

In session five, participants divided into five groups to discuss issues that arose during previous sessions. This activity was designed to encourage practitioners and policy-makers, including NGO representatives, to share their perspectives on conflict and post-conflict; to help bridge the research-policy gap; and to discover practical approaches to managing conflicts/building peace from those with hands-on experience.

Each group was asked to explore set themes including methods of prevention, resolution, settlement, reconciliation, rebuilding, policy dilemmas, the role of aid donors and other humanitarian interventions, evaluating impact, local capacities for peace, dialogue initiatives, insider/outsider relationships, and dealing with disruptions. A general overview of each group discussion is provided below.

Group 1

- It is important to acknowledge the preconceived perceptions of aid groups in conflict environments and the ways in which communities perceive them. Trends such as the “white Landcruiser” syndrome, the privileged conditions of foreign aid workers, and the high turnover of international staff in conflict zones are examples of the difficulty in establishing trust in conflict torn communities. This relates to the importance of local voices in the process so that external aid groups do not misinterpret things.
- It is necessary to mainstream the study of post-conflict for both the academic and aid sectors. Initiatives such as the World Bank's *Economics of Crime, Civil War and Violence* and AusAID's *Peace, Conflict and Development Policy* are good examples of introducing the concepts into aid discourse.
- Custom and governance and the “sequencing of aid” is related to the establishment of coordinating aid and sequencing of post-conflict accords so that both can be mutually reinforcing.

Group 2

- Bilateral aid agencies can support non-state actors, sometimes via multilateral agencies, for example the Committee for Peace Restoration Fund in the Solomons.
- It is important to consider whether government agencies should intervene at all, and whether “civil society” is being corrupted. An ancillary point was that during conflict it is difficult to “hear” with so many voices, and decision makers may only be hearing a minority. The important point was to maintain communication in this event.
- Deciding what investments aid agencies make is difficult. Sometimes the programs are too large to sustain, and it could be better to support programs that have a community focus. Examples include the heavy level of investment in Churches by communities in Melanesia, but not infrastructure, and the large AusAID program in the water supply of Dili, which was seized and controlled by the militias.
- The expectations of communities in post-conflict societies must be considered. This could be something to build into peace deals.

Group 3

This group discussed the difficulty of the “quick fix”. The group comprised analysts and activists with experience in a range of conflict situations, notably PNG, Bougainville, East Timor and Mindanao. While the idea of the “quick fix”, (conceptualized as a rapid solution to a complex conflict that marginalizes key points needed for a sustainable resolution) was seen as negative, participants agreed that it could have positive outcomes in the right circumstances. A “quick fix” which ends violence, establishes workable accord and precipitates a long process of reconciliation could be useful in some circumstances. This is especially the case if there is local and external consensus over the agreement. The main points raised were:

- The perception of the quick fix as a symbolic victory or as a mistake waiting to be played out. This is often the case with external actors who desire an agreement so that a perception of normalcy can return. One factor that emerged from the workshop is the emphasis on community consensus experienced in Melanesia, comparative to South-East Asia. This is often antithetical to aid donors who wish to see an agreement to resume projects, often ignoring the residual disagreements which aid can exacerbate.
- The conception of the quick fix as a temporary measure or the beginning of a long process. This can be seen in the drafting of a constitution, for instance the drafting of the Bougainville autonomy constitution (6 months), East Timor (1 year) and Fiji (18 months).
- The necessity of consultation and participation, not paralysis. By in-built participation and community involvement, actors in the “quick fix” can keep communities informed of progress, while also receiving regular community feedback.
- The involvement of both external and internal actors to generate the quick fix, and the recognition that in establishing a sustainable post-conflict strategy, both are essential.

- Simultaneous empowerment. The strategy that will grant equal strength to all sides through the timing and promotion of non-violence.

Group 4

- Practical applications of the strategy for conflict prevention in PNG.
- Recognition of AusAID's need to deal with non-state actors. Will this lead to higher levels of disputation?
- Intensely local nature of conflict, such as Sri Lanka. From this, decisions could be made to engage with certain sectors such as youth.
- Perceptions of aid at a local level differ greatly.
- Harmonization between actors, for instance large multilateral donors, and the use of neutral actors to facilitate this (such as Norway in Sri Lanka) is necessary.

Group 5

This group reported on concepts of conflict and the role of the state and external actors *vis a vis* communities in conflict.

- What is conflict? There are several different notions of what constitutes a conflict.
- Challenges of electoral governance. Outside the focus is on formal institutions and the sense that there is *dysfunction*. Yet from below there is function, away from the eye there is a realm of informal politics where many decisions are made. In much of Melanesia, the context of conflict is related to nation building, and there should be some attempt to link the local and national.
- Getting away from the formalistic notions of post-conflict. What happens when the state goes bad? For instance in the Central Highlands of PNG the state has evacuated. In the cities the state is often viewed as the problem, yet in the Central Highlands it is its absence that is seen to be problematic.
- Sign of support for notions of the incentive mechanism, for instance the incentive scheme run by AusAID. While there was recognition that there will always be a moral hazard to this, it still remains a worthwhile process.
- Reservation was expressed in non-state actors. For example, in PNG and the Solomons, vehicles such as NGOs are captured for personal agendas, and some are "personalized". There is a moral hazard that NGOs can at times suffer the same fate as the state, being captured by individuals for personal ends. There were also two further observations, that "intervention" as a concept was problematic and that the "peace field" is also problematic in that there are differences within the field, for instance peace workers *pace* Andy Carl.

Discussion

The Workshop concluded with discussants being invited to give an overview of the themes that emerged during the session and provide avenues for further dialogue.

Alison Chartres (AusAID)

Alison Chartres noted that post-conflict situations appear to be highly appealing to NGOs. For example, after the 1997 ceasefire in Bougainville, AusAID received many requests for support from NGO programs. Most successful are those who know how to adapt their programs to different needs and do not come in with ready-made rigid

formulas. At times there can be strong competition between NGOs for funding assistance. The need for strong coordination and coherence between the multiple players in these situations, as Andy noted, is an absolute necessity.

Alison reiterated Andy's emphasis on dialogue and people's participation. All working in these situations must ensure that their activities complement local initiatives and needs. AusAID's road upgrading project in Bougainville was two years in preparation due to the need for continuous dialogue with local groups, former militants etc. Although AusAID could have contracted external organizations to upgrade the road in a relatively short time, it was clear that the former militants and other community members wished to participate fully in the project, even if it was to take a longer time for completion. This community participation and ownership approach proved successful.

Alison claimed that she was interested to hear of Conciliation Resources' work in media/training journalists. In conflict/post-conflict environments, the media is a very powerful medium. During her time in Solomon Islands last year she witnessed the ways in which incorrect media reporting can potentially set a peace process back many steps. Responsible journalism is crucial.

Whilst we can identify some common elements and threads between countries/regions experiencing conflict and emerging from it, we must also acknowledge that there can also be fundamental differences (for example, between Solomon Islands and Bougainville situations). We can't apply a set formula to our work in different environments but must be flexible and adaptable in our approaches and activities. As one of the small group discussions noted, there are also differing perceptions and definitions of what conflict is and at which stage outside interventions are necessary/welcome.

Bronwen Douglas (SSGM)

Bronwen Douglas outlined the fundamental gendering of many conflicts, post-conflicts and reconstruction. This included not just young men with guns, but the rhetoric of the public and private realms. She added two fundamental points in relation to Melanesia, that power is held by senior men, and that males have better access to modernity (such as education). In regard to the sources of conflict, several points were outlined. Because in Melanesia women are "peripheral", there is a prominence of women's groups. This is also related to the crisis of structural adjustment programs in the mid 1990s and the subsequent crisis of government.

Angela Mercuri (AusAID)

Angela Mercuri noted that Andy Carl's paper highlighted many of the challenges confronting both practitioners in the field and development agencies such as AusAID. It flagged many of the tensions between policy and praxis and the challenge remains as to how to balance these tensions in such a way as to further genuine, durable peace – building.

Broad people's participation in peacebuilding/nationbuilding is critical. We need to accommodate in our responses the fact that such participation is likely to be lengthy, and

more generational than short term. It is not a linear, smooth process and consequently often not neatly aligned with donor timetables /agendas. This is particularly so in relation to the process of reconciliation in (post) conflict contexts; inclusion of groups who may have not taken part in the conflict but who nonetheless have been significantly affected by the conflict is crucial in minimizing and de-escalating the cycle of conflict.

The presence of a vibrant, dynamic civil society is a prerequisite for the process of nation building. In the context of Solomon Islands we saw how slow and fraught the emergence of such an entity can be and yet how essential it is to the process of building wider, more diverse coalitions of interests and perspectives.

The manner in which donors/external players intervene in the conflict; the how can be as important as the response itself. We need to take account of opportunities to link kastom/traditional forms of governance with western approaches to assist in the creation of new systems/structures that are nonetheless locally rooted/owned. For example, in Solomon Islands the role played by the SICA Peace Office in raising awareness about issues of inclusion of people's participation in the process of deciding on matters of national importance (eg. work in relation to getting the government to drop the bill to extend life of the Parliament, holding of national elections, raising awareness about the importance of a more transparent electoral process, sensitizing the SICA executive on the need to extend its role in terms of providing spiritual as well as more temporal guidance and leadership to their people in a period of extreme change and uncertainty).

A key challenge is to balance the tension between finding/imposing a speedy/expedient short term solution (sometimes driven by donors' domestic foreign policy considerations) and the need to slowly find local solutions that are accepted and likely to be respected in the longer term by local actors. It is necessary to seek opportunities to assist/support local processes at various levels and with a variety of actors. Donors must harmonize their responses in these dynamic environments and responses must be timely and flexible.

Significant challenges remain for donors to allow local actors to manage/drive the process rather than be driven by it; in (post) conflict situations external actors/donors need to re-evaluate responses in ways that are supportive of emerging local actors who can take the process of reconciliation/transformation forward if sensitively assisted. Eg. the support provided by Aus/NZ to the SICA Peace Office in the Solomon Islands in the post Townsville Peace Agreement period. The approach was fairly hands off but gave the Peace Officers a modicum of financial/technical support that enabled local actors to engage in a process of inclusion, bridge building, awareness raising and advocacy. From an external donor perspective this approach can be risky, especially as such work can be political and sensitive, but also because it may not conform to more conventional ways of providing assistance.

Donors also need to remain sensitive to a country's capacity to absorb/distribute assistance in the post conflict period. Steps must be taken to ensure that equity issues are taken into account to minimize the potential for escalation of the conflict as a result of resource distribution (do no harm principles should be applied); donors must resist the

temptation to set up parallel structures/systems rather than revisit/revitalize/renew existing ones where possible and appropriate

SESSION SIX: CONCLUDING REMARKS

The Workshop concluded with four discussants providing an overview of the themes that emerged in attempts to facilitate further dialogue. Alan Tidwell and Andy Carl were also invited to distill some of the threads of the proceedings.

Alison Chartres (AusAID), noted that:

- there were no clear answers to how and when to get involved in conflict and post conflict
- there was the dilemma of what to do with no set formula. She also stated that there was ‘drift’ across the region
- AusAID still has a lot of work to do, to roll out the policy document (*Peace, Conflict and Development Policy*) to implement it, and be better at predicting conflict. This necessitates further thinking and discussion, and
- community participation and dialogue is particularly important and it is necessary to make sure that programs are not imposed.

Bronwen Douglas (SSGM, ANU), noted:

- the fundamental gendering of many conflicts, post-conflicts and reconstruction. This included not just young men with guns, but the rhetoric of the public and private realms. She added two fundamental points in relation to Melanesia, that power is held by senior men, and that males have better access to modernity (eg. education)
- that because Melanesian women are ‘peripheral’, there is an abundance of women’s groups. This is also related to the crisis of structural adjustment programs in the mid 1990s and the subsequent crisis of government
- the critical importance of human rights and justice perspectives, the problem of liberal restraint on these matters and how this is picked up on in the region. Its not good enough to step back and say ‘its their culture’ and be afraid of moral relativism. There is the question of reciprocity in these cultures, and
- that in much of Melanesia electoral politics is institutionalized pork-barreling

Raymond Apthorpe (National Centre for Development Studies, ANU), observed that the contributions of Group 5 were particularly valuable in bringing together the themes of the workshop. He noted that:

- issues to be born in mind when engaging non-state actors should be the same as when engaging state actors
- interesting themes emerged, such as reservations over ‘civil society’, which one observer argued could be as corrupt as non-civil society
- in terms of regionality, one could easily have been talking about Melanesia as about Liberia and the Balkans. It is not so different, especially when looking at Andy Carl’s analysis
- these dynamics are not unique to the Pacific and it would be unwise to think that a ‘regional’ solution could be adopted and applied across Melanesia

- perhaps just looking at conflict or war is not enough. Maybe there is something in old conflict literature that could assist in notions of conflict resolution, and
- what is striking about this area of investigation is the number of area studies people involved yet the link between analysts and peace practitioners remains to be made, perhaps 'learning' through 'evaluation' might provide that link.

Alan Tidwell (United States Institute of Peace), noted that management and learning are good places to start. He had three main points:

- *bridging the gap*: there are a variety of gaps between policy makers and scholars. Recognizing these divisions and attempting to overcome them is a key challenge
- *managing issues of complexity*: there are different varieties, and to understand conflict you must recognize that there are many different types of conflict. Individual ideas of conflict, the complexity of the group and *between* the groups, just as there is the complexity of the organization between states. Who's managing the complexity? There is the challenge of analysis and understanding, and
- *what is the objective of conflict resolution?* In terms of the robustness of dialogue, people tend to forget the objective and dialogue between organizations.

Andy Carl (Conciliation Resources), primarily commented upon the unique interaction between policy makers and academics that occurred during the workshop. His final points related to:

- steps to be taken after conflict analysis
- setting objectives
- recognizing the need for a 'regional' model of conflict resolution, and
- the challenge of meeting horizontal and area studies perspectives.

Ron May (Political and Social Change, Research School of Pacific and Asian Studies, ANU)

In offering a few broad overview comments, Ron May noted that the workshop had brought together a number of people with some degree of familiarity with bodies of literature on sources of conflict and strategies for conflict prevention, conflict resolution and post-conflict reconciliation and reconstruction, and a substantial group of people, from the universities, NGOs and government, with first-hand experience, as observers and practitioners, of conflict situations in the region. Many of those participating in the workshop have become involved in analyzing and/or dealing with conflict and post-conflict situations without any specific training in conflict management; workshops like this thus offer a useful opportunity to make comparisons and examine theoretical perspectives.

It is clear that there are no simple or universal solutions, and that every situation is to some extent unique. Nevertheless the discussion has suggested some parallels, for example in relation to 'ethnic' fragmentation and emerging new ethnicities, the lack of a deep sense of 'nation' in many post-colonial states, and declining state capacity in parts of the region. It has also raised some interesting questions about the potential for positive outside (especially regional) intervention or mediation in internal conflicts. Ron May also questioned the comments of Raymond Apthorpe, suggesting that perhaps experiences in

Melanesia provided some evidence of a greater capacity for settling disputes through local negotiation that has been the case in Africa and much of Southeast Asia.

He referred to the recent establishment within the ANU of the Centre for Conflict and Post-Conflict Studies, Asia Pacific at the ANU, and expressed the hope that some of the themes raised at the workshop could be pursued through the CCPCSAP and SSGM. It is planned to hold a further conference on the sources of conflict and strategies for peace making in 2003.

ANNEX 1

(1A) Questions on Conflict Analysis and Peacebuilding

Alan Tidwell
US Institute of Peace

It is better to ask some of the questions than to know all the answers.

James Thurber

The objective of my presentation is to identify some issues arising as one takes a conflict analysis view of peacebuilding. This is necessarily a critical view. Before I identify these issues I should state that it is my contention that peacebuilding is equally important in preventing conflict and in assisting with post-conflict reconstruction. My broad remit was to prepare a brief paper useful to those considering problems of post-conflict development. I take as my point of departure the AusAid “Peace, Conflict, and Development Policy” that states:

By strengthening its analytical capacity in conflict prone environments, the aid program will seek to identify and work on the root causes of instability in developing countries in our region. An enhanced understanding of the sources of instability will assist the program to fashion appropriate preventive measures.¹

In enhancing the understanding of the sources of conflict three questions should be addressed. Those questions are:

- What is the capacity for conflict (and its resolution)?
- What are the opportunities for conflict’s expression (or its resolution)?
- What will exist to engage in conflict (or its resolution)?

So, in this paper I will briefly outline conflict analysis, examine the nature of peacebuilding and then move to address the questions concerning capacity, opportunity and volition.

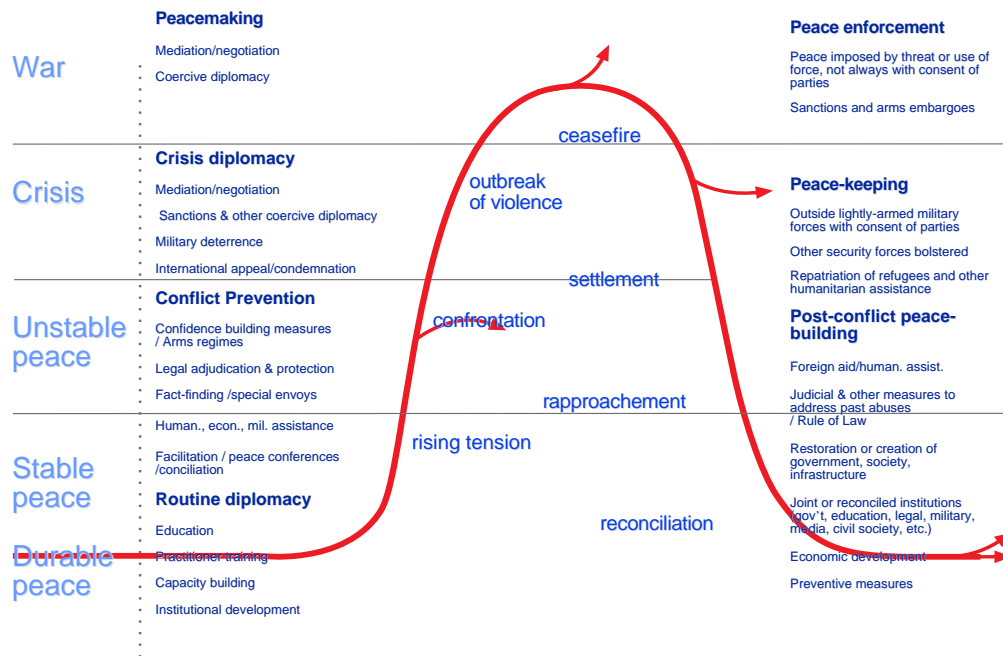
Conflict Analysis

Conflict analysis concerns addressing conflict by dealing with the fundamental or root causes of the conflict. Conflict may be addressed by altering the perceptions of the enemy or through changes in social institutions and structures.² Conflict analysis is less concerned with the practices of resolving conflict (e.g. negotiation, mediation, facilitated dialogue) than it is concerned with linking an understanding of the root causes of conflict with appropriate actions (e.g. peacemaking). Lund’s conflict life cycle is an attempt to depict the link between symptom and remedy.

¹ AusAID, *Peace, Conflict and Development Policy* (Canberra: AusAID, 2002), p. 8.

² Ho-Won Jeong, “Conflict Management and Resolution,” *Encyclopaedia of Violence, Peace and Conflict*, Vol. 1 (San Diego: Academic Press, 1999), pp. 389-400.

Life Cycle of Int'l Conflict Management



This conflict curve simply demonstrates several points:

- Conflict escalation and de-escalation are continuous processes, rather than discrete events,
- There are numerous stages of conflict, each with its own unique characteristics, and
- Different stages of conflict call for different methods of escalation or de-escalation.

Some may wish to argue that conflict analysis is something one does prior to undertaking an intervention. This rather tidy and linear view of handling conflict flies in the face of practical everyday experiences of conflict. Conflicts do not follow a script, they may have dramatic qualities about them, but they are not drama. With no clear 'pre-intervention stage,' conflict analysis is an ongoing process. As the Lund curve suggests, analysis is continuous.

From Burton's perspective the unit of analysis in conflict analysis is the individual. John Burton, the noted Australian academic and diplomat, argues against taking a 'discipline bound view'. Rather than analyze conflict from the perspective of politics, sociology, or economics, one must take an interdisciplinary view. The term interdisciplinary has attracted strong reaction, but the essence of Burton's point is that one cannot stop at the shore of one discipline when studying conflict, refusing to go any further. So, for example the conflict analyst may look at social structures, political parties, economic resources, environmental impacts, as well as individual psychological causes of conflict.

Conflict analysis is guided by what might be termed a conflict resolution orientation. The phrase conflict resolution can be used to describe the field of inquiry and practice concerned with the description, analysis, prevention and intervention into conflicts at all system levels. I take the definition of conflict resolution to be "...the transformation of relationships in a particular case by the solution of the problems which led to the conflictual behavior in the first place".³ Conflict resolution, then, is focused on problem solving as a means, and not simply conflict containment. Conflict resolution concerns interpersonal, organizational, communal, ethnic, religious, national, and international conflicts. Insights about conflict at one level may prove useful and fruitful at other system levels. In fact, some wish to generate a series of generic statements concerning conflict cutting across all system levels.

A wary reader will wonder at the use of the terms conflict management and conflict resolution. Conflict management typically refers to reducing the negative consequences of conflict. Conflict resolution has a more permanent outcome. Unfortunately, these are not hard and fast distinctions, as there is considerable variance in the field.

Returning to conflict analysis, one must ask how one conducts conflict analysis? What is the theoretical focus? There are a variety of approaches. Some focus on structures (peace studies, exemplified by Johan Galtung), others on the individual. Still others have a more disciplinary character. For example, one set of analytical questions concern 'greed and grievance' issues. Essentially, the greed and grievance debate is predicated upon the observation that conflict is either motivated by financial/resource gain (greed) or by political demands (grievance). Paul Collier has put forward the greed thesis, and supports his contention that greed is a primary motivator in intranational conflict – in his language economic opportunity has more potent explanatory power than political grievance. Yet, researchers are not at all settled on the greed and grievance debate. Some note that Collier's work sets up a straw man argument around the issue of grievance. More likely, conflicts can be viewed through a dual lens of political grievance and economic greed. These are the sorts of debates working their way through the field of conflict analysis and resolution.

Perhaps the most radical view of conflict resolution can be found in Burton's work often entitled *Conflict Resolution as a Political System*. In this work Burton identifies the problem of conflict prevention as being found, not in political or economic structures, but rather in the processes used to solve problems. Whether a political system is democratic, an oligarchy, or something different again, the measure of that systems success is the extent to which it encourages human growth and the satisfaction of needs. Ideally, the process Burton has in mind is a problem solving one; one which identifies problems, develops solutions, and provides feedback to decision makers on the extent to which the problem is solved. Burton's hope is that through a process focus the sources of violent conflict can be reduced, because the underlying motivations for violent conflict are addressed. Conflict resolution as a political system is as much about addressing existing conflict as it is about preventing the eruption of violent conflict.

³ John Burton, *Conflict: Resolution and Prevention* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1990).

In recent years the practice of peacebuilding has emerged as a method of preventing conflict from erupting. Yet, it is unclear precisely what is meant by this term.

Peacebuilding

While peacebuilding has become a widely discussed and utilized idea, precise definitions of the term remain elusive.

Peacebuilding as an instrument for addressing intra-state conflict emerged with the publication of the UN Secretary-General's report *An Agenda for Peace* (1992). Secretary General Boutros Boutros-Ghali defined post-conflict peacebuilding as "...action to identify and support structures which will tend to strengthen and solidify peace in order to avoid a relapse into conflict." The report advocated rebuilding war-torn institutions and infrastructure through a series of measures that went beyond those identified with traditional peacekeeping.⁴ These measures included institution-building, encouraging political participation, election monitoring, advancing human rights etc. The aim of peacebuilding in contrast to peacekeeping was to go beyond the concern with the cessation of violence, and to eliminate or transform the underlying causes of conflict so that peace could be achieved.

An important point in the definition of peacebuilding advanced here is that it is seen as post-conflict intervention. However, other analyses of peacebuilding have argued that peacebuilding should not be restricted to any specific phase of conflict.⁵ The UN itself (1995 supplement) has subsequently acknowledged that peacebuilding is a continuum of activities not restricted to any phase of conflict.

Canadian Foreign Minister Axworthy described peacebuilding as "a package of measures to strengthen and solidify peace by building a sustainable infrastructure of human security." He continued:

I see peacebuilding as casting a lifeline to foundering societies struggling to end the cycle of violence, restore civility and get back on their feet. After the fighting has stopped and the immediate humanitarian needs have been addressed, there exists a brief critical period when a country is balanced on a fulcrum. Tilted the wrong way, it retreats into conflict. But with the right help, delivered during that brief, critical window of opportunity, it will move toward peace and stability.⁶

He too like the UN Secretary General believes that it is post-conflict.

⁴ Non-traditional or second-generation peacekeeping contains a substantial civilian component and is concerned with conflict settlement rather than merely obtaining and enforcing a cessation of violence.

⁵ John G. Cockell, "Conceptualising Peacebuilding: Human Security and Sustainable Peace." In Michael Pugh, ed. *Regeneration of War-Torn Societies* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 2000), p.15-34. Cockell's argument is that waiting for a peace accord or a negotiation process before engaging in peacebuilding "risks allowing opportunities for effective peacebuilding to pass by irretrievably" (p. 18). The 1995 *Supplement to An Agenda for Peace* makes the case that peacebuilding be defined by its activities and objectives rather than by its sequencing alone.

⁶ Building Peace to Last.

However, others such as Gareth Evans see peacebuilding as both palliative as well as preventive. For example, Evans defines peacebuilding as "a set of strategies which aim to ensure that disputes, armed conflicts and other major crises do not arise in the first place - and if they do arise that they do not subsequently recur."⁷

Regardless of their differences over sequencing, these definitions make it clear that the aim of peacebuilding goes beyond mere efforts at conflict management and is oriented towards achieving conflict transformation. Conflict transformation according to Luc Reyhler goes beyond conflict resolution and focuses on changing attitudes, ways of interaction as well as underlying structural conditions with a view towards establishing sustainable peace.⁸ Thus peacebuilding in addition to being a bundle of actions and strategies is a process of changing conflict-inducing structures and relationships.⁹ Thus for Lederach, building relationships with partners and program recipients is as, if not more integral than specific actions and strategies.

Another approach is the human security approach.¹⁰ This approach links the meaning of peacebuilding to that of human security. Threats to human security and fundamental causes of conflict combine to produce violence according to this analysis. As a result peacebuilding activities are directed towards ensuring human security.

A central tenet of peacebuilding has been "Do no harm." Yet, peacebuilding can become harmful, by supplying succor to those who would violate human rights, or by identifying peacebuilding participants as targets for attack. Harm occurs, however, mostly at the program/implementation level, where the intricacies of conditions on the ground are inadequately understood or considered.

Assessing the success of peacebuilding is difficult. Neufeldt and Fast suggest three difficulties in assessing the effectiveness of peacebuilding.¹¹ These are: the long-term focus of peacebuilding efforts make short-term assessments difficult, the degree to which peacebuilding concerns the intangibles of relationships and attitudes "...and the difficulty of measuring changes in a real world context hamper evaluation efforts...", and wide array of political, economic and social contexts in which peacebuilding efforts are undertaken. Lund has examined the impact of peacebuilding in several African contexts and finds limited success with peacebuilding there. Lund examined peacebuilding efforts in Kenya, Somaliland and Burundi, and found that:

⁷ Gareth Evans, *Cooperating for peace: The global agenda for the 1990s and beyond* (St. Leonards, NSW: Allen & Unwin, 1993), p. 9.

⁸ Luc Reyhler, "From Conflict Building to Sustainable Peacebuilding: Concepts and Analytical Tools", in Luc Reyhler and Thania Paffenholz, eds. *Peacebuilding: A Field Guide* (Boulder: Lynne Rienner, 2001), p. 3-20.

⁹ John Paul Lederach, *Building Peace: Sustainable Reconciliation in Divided Societies* (Washington DC: US Institute of Peace Press, 1997). What I have referred to here as conflict-inducing structures and relationships, Lederach describes as unjust ones.

¹⁰ John G. Cockell, "Conceptualising Peacebuilding," p.15-34.

¹¹ Reina Neufeldt & Larissa Fast, *Strategic and Comprehensive Lenses on Peacebuilding Evaluation*. Paper Presented at ISA Convention, New Orleans, LA, 27 March 2002.

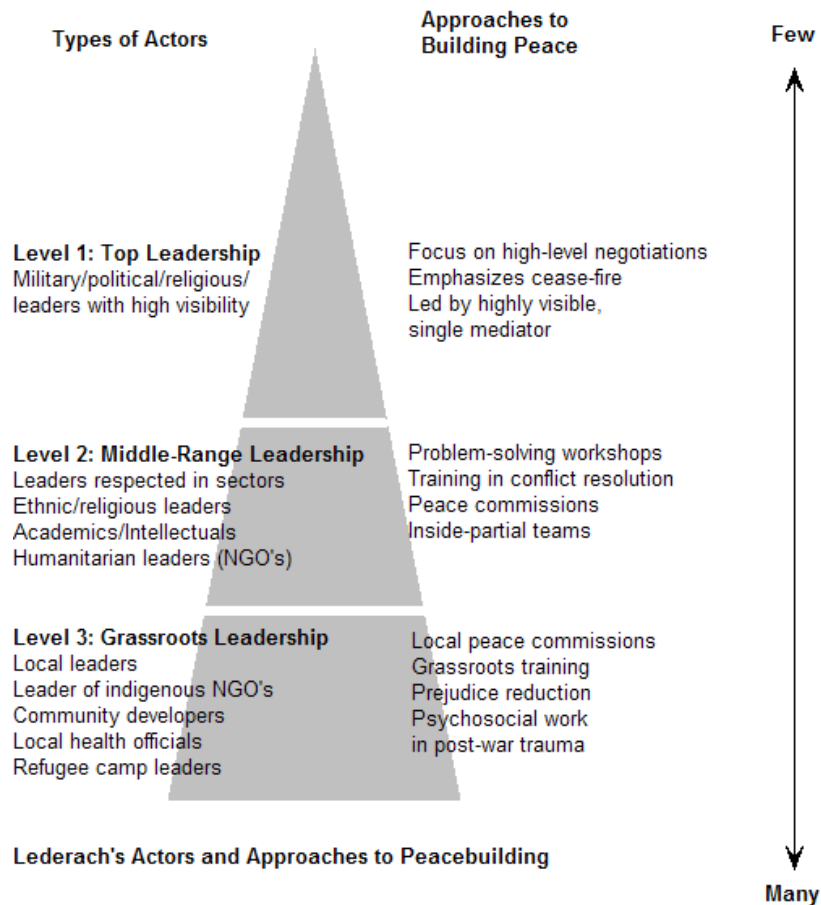
Although definite effects on the prevention of violence and the promoting of a negotiations process were achieved in the Kenya case, the unofficial dialogues in Somaliland and Burundi had limited spill over into their countries' wider conflicts, whether violent or simply political, or on other wider effects, such as on inter-communal relations and the economy. The strongest impacts were seen in creating communication channels that otherwise would not exist for identifying and addressing though not resolving public policy or conflict issues....¹²

In short, Lund found that the peacebuilding efforts he examined had the primary feature of linking people who had not previously been linked. What he does not consider, however, are the broader consequences of peacebuilding, and these may be more important in the long term.

The challenge of peacebuilding is to deliver results that have consequences for reducing violent and destructive conflict. I use the phrase consequences very carefully; I do not use the term impact. Impact carries the connotation of effectiveness and of potency – something that has impact is a potent force. With regard to peacebuilding the notion of impact is troubled, however. Impact necessarily limits one's view. Peacebuilding may have very limited impact, but its consequences may be significant if one considers to extent to which links are created between the internal and external.

Lederach's peacebuilding model suggests the importance enhanced communication has. Peacebuilding may focus on one or more of three groups, leaders, middle range leaders or grassroots leaders. As an illustration, peacebuilding could focus on the top leadership of Mindanao (e.g. the political leaders); it could focus on the middle range (e.g. mayors of townships, local councils), or the grassroots leaders (e.g. neighborhood leaders, civil society activists, local religious leaders).

¹² Michael Lund, *Preventing violent conflict* (Washington DC: US Institute of Peace Press, 2000).



In peacebuilding there may be two or more pyramids in play. Part of the challenge is to get different pyramids to interact. Equally challenging, however, is to achieve not only horizontal integration, but vertical integration as well where elements of the top, middle and grassroots leadership are in dialogue on peacebuilding.

Three Questions

Capacity concerns the ability to engage in conflict. It is a consideration of power, skills and ability. Much of the study of conflict concerns capacity. Parties to violent conflict must have that ability to engage in violence; equally those engaged in the resolution of conflict must have the requisite resources.

Security scholars seek to understand what weapons parties have available, political scientists and sociologists consider to what extent social cleavages exist, how they came about and how they behave in social conflict. In Bougainville, for example, we observe cleavages between linguistic groups, between dark skinned and light skinned people, and between age groups. In addition, we may take account of purchased, home made and stolen firearms. We may count the number of combatants in the BRA. We may read about the grievances of the BRA and of their political program. This tells us something about the capacity to engage in conflict.

An equally important question for those engaged in peacebuilding is to what extent do parties have the capacity for peacebuilding. The analyst may wish to ascertain the extent to which civil society exists in a given locale, for example. Again, in the case of Bougainville we may wish to know what civil society groups exist locally. Who are the potential local sponsors of a peacebuilding program? Who on the island can easily move across linguistic and cultural groups? What are the existing examples of indigenous or recent reconciliation? Can these reconciliation methods be adapted to the current local situation? And of course, what are the goals of a given peacebuilding exercise and are they achievable?

To what extent does opportunity exist for conflict? Opportunity concerns openings and processes that allow conflict or its resolution to be expressed. For example, to what extent do opportunities exist for greed to be expressed? Is there a market to be taken advantage of? Often such opportunities do not exist in places where the state is strong. Yet, in cases where failing or failed states exist new opportunities may be opened up for the expression of conflict. This is very much what happened in the context of Angola, where the state in Angola was hardly in existence, and where the global market in diamonds was open to access by UNITA rebels. Opportunities may be opening in the Solomon Islands.

With regard to peacebuilding one is faced with a similar set of questions. Is there a market for peace? Are there those in the local community who seek peace and to what extent do they have the opportunity to interact? Are there opportunities for the emergence of civil society groups and can they make their presence public and known? Of course, opportunities may be created both by the positive and by the negative. Zartman's 'hurting stalemate' – where neither party can make progress with their conflict agenda – may be the basis upon which the peace market emerges.

Finally, and perhaps the most difficult set of questions concerns volition or will. To what extent is there in existence the will or volition to take or maintain power? To what extent is there the will to vilify and demonize the other? For the analyst uncovering data about will or volition is difficult, in as much as volition (will) may exist far in advance of its expression.

Will or volition is equally important in peacebuilding. Is there a desire to build peace? Is there a will to communicate with the other side, the enemy? Is there the will to deal with the spoilers of peacebuilding? Is there the will to trust?

Conclusion

I have given a sketch of the conflict analysis view of peacebuilding. Some of the central elements I have outlined include the observation that conflict analysis crosses analytical levels. How can one tap into the insights on conflict and its resolution at multiple levels so as to improve the analysis and prevention of conflict in Melanesia? And, how can one engage in an ongoing analysis of conflict? What indicators, processes and institutions are needed to maintain an appropriate analysis? Should analysis be employed with conflict management or conflict resolution in mind?

I also noted that there is a link between how one responds to conflict and the analysis that preceded the intervention; the method of intervention is contingent upon the local needs and the donor capacity. Institutions will often have given capacities to respond to a conflict, yet those capacities may not match the requirements on the ground. It is important to undertake a needs survey in order that an intervention may be tailored to local conditions. Yet, this contingency approach may tax the donor agency management – so, how can agencies such as AusAid assist other donors and NGO's to more effectively undertake a contingency approach? Furthermore, interventions in one area may actually deplete or affect peace in other areas. Unanticipated consequences of peace building may emerge. How can one develop an effective predictive model of intervention?

Peacebuilding must link both horizontal and vertical elements of the conflict. I noted that often there is a disconnection between not only the conflicting parties, but within one side or another. How can peacebuilding activities be designed so that they encourage both vertical and horizontal links? What role do individuals play? What role does structural reform play in vertical and horizontal integration?

Of course one of the most difficult challenges is assessing the effectiveness of peacebuilding. As I noted I prefer to ask whether peacebuilding has been consequential, both for internal actors as well as linking external actors with the internal. One of the aspects of peacebuilding is that it keeps the international community engaged. Internally, on going peacebuilding at the very least keeps the ideas of peace in play among at least a small community. How can a robust and meaningful evaluation program be developed? What are the indicators of 'successful' peacebuilding?

(1B) Bridging the practice-to-policy gap in transforming conflict in Asia, the Pacific and beyond: An international NGO perspective

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The Challenge: A call for solidarity

Now more than ever, because we have the capacities and because the violence of organised conflicts and poverty affects the most vulnerable in the Asia Pacific region and elsewhere, there is a clear humanitarian need to act in a spirit of solidarity; solidarity with the survivors of violence and solidarity with those dedicated to the struggle (local and global) for a more just and peaceful international order.

I would like to see that our discussions are rooted in practical experiences and challenge us to set relevant and achievable goals and strategies. As I work with an international non-government organization (INGO) engaged in conflict transformation, I will offer a non-governmental perspective. The task of engaging with such a complex agenda is enormously daunting. The organizers have asked me to try and articulate a framework however, I would like instead to offer (I hope) a consistent vocabulary and an agenda of issues and challenges based on our own and international experiences. I would also like to avoid the responsibility of addressing the conflict and post conflict phases as the more I thought about these issues the more I realized that many of these challenges are generic and the dichotomy not always useful. That said, I will comment upon implementation and consolidation issues.

What defines our work as an INGO is that we are forever trying to capture the complexity of conflicts, motivated by an intolerance of acts of injustice and an imperative to “do something” and effect some positive change. Never knowing enough, and armed with our ignorance and uncertainties we nevertheless choose to engage. I would like to introduce the work of my organization, situate us in the field, raise some questions about the current global context in which we work and highlight three core challenges, namely: entry points for intervention, the centrality of human rights, and the importance of people’s participation in peacemaking. I would like to close with a few reflections on policy challenges for development assistance in conflicts.

One of the dimensions of this complexity is the need for us to think beyond institutional frameworks, for those of you working for or to influence governments there is a need to think beyond state-centred analysis. For those of us working within the loose context of heterogeneous ‘civil-society’ organizations there is always the need to be pragmatic about recognizing the gaps between our rhetoric and our realities, our capacities and our aspirations, particularly when it comes to the humble limits of our strategic influence.

At the core of this presentation I would like to pose the question: What could it mean to put people and their communities, rights and justice, unambiguously at the centre our peace, conflict and development policies? Based on my experiences in this field (particularly working in the South Pacific) and those of my organization, I would like to offer the following reflections.

About Conciliation Resources (CR)

We are a small London-based INGO. We describe our principle objective as supporting the activities of those working at community or national levels to prevent or transform armed conflict into opportunities for social, political and economic development, based on more just relationships. Our core capacities rest in a very talented team of people with a great deal of experience (and the relationships and reputations they bring with them), as well as in our own seven years of organizational development and programme partnerships and ongoing financial co-operation with (we think enlightened) governments and charitable foundations.

We are working in support of initiatives in and on: Angola, the Caucasus (Georgia and Abkhazia), Fiji, northern Uganda and West Africa (Sierra Leone, Liberia, Guinea, and Nigeria). We have also worked in the Balkans, Somalia and Sri Lanka. We have two roving programmes: one works with journalists and media institutions in Africa on conflict reporting and the other, a programme and publication series called *Accord*, promotes opportunities for learning from peacemaking practice. It is in the context of the *Accord* programme that we have also been engaged to varying degrees in peace processes in the Philippines/Mindanao, Sri Lanka, Cambodia and most recently in PNG/Bougainville.

What the work actually involves obviously varies according to the needs and designs of our local partners, who themselves respond to the particular needs and opportunities of their own conflict. We can however, outline generic tasks, namely:

- Engaging in sustained and dynamic collaborations for conflict transformations (for example our work in Fiji with the CCF, “conciliation without resources”)
- Providing inputs and support for training and education (BICWF critical literacy project)
- Providing resources to improve peacemaking practice (for example the *Accord* series)
- Providing capacity-building support (peacebuilding is more about filing than it is about mediating between warring factions)
- Providing advocacy support (Fiji and international institutions)
- Supporting political conciliation (Georgia-Abkhazia dialogue)
- Providing flexible and appropriate advice (religious leaders in northern Uganda).

What particularly distinguishes our work, and we are not by any means unique, is not so much what we do, but how we do it. Despite working across international borders and boundaries we do seek to respect the principles of popular sovereignty and the supremacy of local ownership of conflict and peace processes. We are challenged every day with trying to play an appropriate external role, mindful of whom we are and where we are

coming from, to support (not complement and certainly not displace or supplant) local and community-led capacities and initiatives. To a lesser degree and usually in support of our partners, we engage with our own governments and communities in attempts to influence their engagement in conflicts.

About NGOs working in the field of conflict resolution and peacebuilding

Particularly in the last decade, we have witnessed a proliferation and professionalisation of organized, local, national and international civil society responses to conflict. These range from non-violent civilian accompaniment initiatives (IPB) to multi-million dollar communication and policy organizations (like Search for Common Ground or ICG) to organizations specializing in mediation (San'Egidio, Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue). It is difficult to give a sketch that accurately captures the diversity of these initiatives. I suppose that like any 'imagined communities' we are as different as we are alike. Because we grow out of the misery of others (Joseph Garang famously referred to the peace and CR organizations engaging in Southern Sudan as 'vultures of peace')¹³ there is now a mini-industry dedicated to studying us and trying to evaluate our impact. One of the challenges of trying to become more discerning about this field of non-state conflict resolution is that there are no boundaries and there is a great deal of shape-shifting. Development, and humanitarian agencies are mainstreaming peacebuilding agendas, human rights and environmental organizations are adopting new tactics of engagement and commercial and corporate entities are adapting explicit conflict-management roles.

The multiplicity of actors and interventions does not collectively bring peace. A look at the Bougainville intervention timeline does not suggest that the influence of the various groups over the conflict cycle has a cumulative peace building effect. If anything, the lack of communication and learning that occurred between the various interventions and the lack of coherence in interventions points to tragic lost opportunities. The consequences of the lack of coherence at the intergovernmental level are more profound than for NGO actors, especially when there is a lack of consensus on sanctioning behaviour. The value of some harmonization of government peace policy can be clearly seen in Sri Lanka today.

For the non-governmental sector, the challenge remains of how to become more discerning of the relative value of different approaches at different phases of the conflict cycle. There is an important collaboration of NGOs under the leadership of the Collaborative for Development Action in the US called the Reflecting on Peace Practice project working specifically on this task.

One factor that Jonathan Goodhand in the UK (SOAS)¹⁴ points out is the simple dichotomy of those working "in" conflict situations and those working "on" conflict. Put differently, many intervening agencies are working towards different goals or horizons.

¹³ Mark Duffield, *Global Governance and the New Wars. The Merging of Development and Security* (London: Zed Books, 2001)

¹⁴ Jonathan Goodhand, *Conflict Impact Assessments* (London: HMSO, Department for International Development, 2002)

As NGOs intervening in conflict, we need to be assessed against the goals we set for ourselves and by the integrity of the methods we employ.

The global and regional context

I remember when I was a student in Dublin, standing on a bridge over the Liffey, watching the river flow towards the Irish Sea and seeing the branch of a tree being borne upstream on an invisible tidal bore wondering just how that worked. And I offer that as a metaphor for my own confusion over the seemingly contradictory crosscurrents in government policies on peace and conflict. I would like to congratulate AusAID and the Australian government on their published peace, conflict and development policy, which is clearly a progressive document that reflects a lot on lessons from Bougainville, East Timor, Fiji, and no doubt elsewhere. Similar enlightened documents have come out of a number of other governments. I would single out the British, Norwegian, Swedish and particularly the Swiss governments for similarly forward thinking. I would go so far as to say that the state sector is moving ahead of much of the thinking in the NGO/academic sector, although we all lag behind the work being pursued by local people seeking justice and peace in their own conflicts. But how are we to make sense of these policies in the context of this second year of the “War against Terrorism”? Where is the coherence in policy between support for promoting human security, community-led peacemaking, and the participation of women, between conflict prevention and preventative war with Iraq? And what of the coherence of policy for dealing with the victims of violence and war, whether they are internally displaced or seeking asylum in our own countries? Is conflict resolution a “for export only” industry? Do these policy discussions have relevance for our “own conflicts”?

The global nature of our work means that these apparent contradictions in foreign policy affect and perhaps inhibit or undermine our work. I think this challenge is no more evident than in the rhetoric about conflict prevention. For example, when speaking of the impending bombardment of Afghanistan at the 2002 Labour Party Conference, Prime Minister Tony Blair sought to assuage the concerns of the humanitarian community in Britain by announcing that the allied forces would be dropping bread as well as bombs, that every effort would be made to make it a humanitarian war. No doubt, when the job is done the government will need to draw on all of our expertise to build a new democratic state. Some of us are not comfortable with our place in this type of policy agenda. Rather than offering a framework, here are a few key intervention challenges that appear particularly relevant to the Asia Pacific region:

Key (NGO) Intervention Challenges

1. Respecting sovereignty, retaining independence and engaging with non-state actors

We have heard, and we all recognize that the arenas for most of the world’s conflicts are national (so called internal conflicts, though they never are such). This has posed clear and repeated challenges for the national, regional and multi-lateral bodies and institutions based on state membership. How should they relate to non-state actors, be they the un- or under-represented sectors of society, political or armed groups engaged in conflict with

the national government, or other institutions of ‘civil society’ such as religious institutions, unions, NGOs, traditional leaders, or other groups and individuals. There is a great deal to be learned from reflecting on the limitations of and opportunities for official engagement with these different actors in conflict.

We know that civil society and NGO actors have the collective capacity to reach across national boundaries, form direct relationships with their counterparts in countries in crisis or conflict. We tend to operate in these grey areas in terms of respecting state sovereignty. The unfolding tragedy of our two colleagues arrested in Indonesia last week for violating visa restrictions reminds us of what is at stake. As academics and NGO activists what box should they have ticked on their applications? Business? Perhaps so. NGO’s operate with varying degrees of respect for national or popular sovereignty. Some troubled with questions of legitimacy and the appropriate limits of their role, many not, pursuing their self-declared mandates.

Entry points for intervention

I first became engaged in Fiji shortly after the coups of 1987 (with what is now a sister organization, International Alert) when we were approached by members of the ousted Labour government in an open-ended call for support and solidarity. We kept in touch with contacts, developed friendships, and looked for an opening, an opportunity to support agents for change. The opportunity came in 1992 when we co-convened a seminar, “The National Agenda”, at the University of the South Pacific (USP), focusing on the economic and social challenges facing Fiji and the obstacles posed to change by the 1990 Constitution¹⁵. It was a frank and open exchange between government, opposition and other influential groups and individuals, and it was from that seminar that the terms of reference were first articulated for the legislation authorizing the review of the Constitution and the establishment of the Reeves Commission. Although of course, there were other factors and other influences that contributed to these steps. Our role as a London-based NGO was a modest and indirect one. The agenda was being set and the process identified by a dynamic group of people who were later to constitute themselves as the Citizens Constitutional Forum (CCF). We were able to help them resource their work and with prominent international guests we were able to help them seize opportunities for convening influential dialogues. Another aspect that characterized our work in Fiji and elsewhere, and helped us bridge insider-outsider roles, was that we actively co-operated with like-minded members of Fijian diasporas. Over time, our role as an international partner scaled down and became increasingly invisible.

Where to start?

Resourcing peace and playing a ‘capacity building’ role does, or can, involve dilemmas regarding the importance of local autonomy. What do you do when you see that local capacities are not doing everything that needs to be done, or when they are organizing along lines other than those that (in our own analysis) might serve a better purpose? We witnessed this problem in Uganda, where our partner agency, Kacoke Madit, had organized along ethnic (Acholi) lines to work with conflict between the LRA and the GoU in the north. We might have preferred a more multi-ethnic and national organizing

¹⁵ See workshop publication, published by the Citizens Constitutional Forum, Suva Fiji, 1992

principle but this was a gap between reality and design. We faced a similar challenge in supporting the CCF in Fiji when they tactically moved from the role of convenors of dialogue on rights and constitution-making to undertaking an active advocacy strategy (the point of departure was in their decision to make a submission to the Reeves Commission – a submission by the way, which successfully called for a power-sharing formula for cabinet government¹⁶). Although all such decisions to support local initiatives are not good ones I believe that it is good practice to follow the lead of local people, who own the conflict and who will live with its consequences long after we have departed.

The notion of what forms culturally and politically appropriate international relationships is obviously one which has challenged peace and development work in Bougainville and will obviously challenge future development policy. The power of inappropriate development approaches in Bougainville to destroy the very fabric of a society has been shown. Have lessons been learnt? How can private and public development initiatives be assisted to avoid repeating the mistakes of the past? How can future development policies learn from the lessons of the past and better relate to the complexity of Bougainvillean society and Bougainvillean aspirations for self-reliance and self-determination? How do international development and support agencies appropriately sustain support of capacity building, both in terms of local and provincial governance and amongst civil society organizations? Then there are the particular challenges and unfinished business of dealing with the past legacies of colonialism.

2. Defending and promoting human rights, humanitarian law and international standards: The arena of early warning

There is a tension between the roles of human rights defenders and that of conflict resolvers. In the archetypal Burtonian intervention¹⁷, when facilitating a process of analysis and problem solving there is no place for the third party to uphold international standards and principles.

It does not help that there remains a debate about core human rights issues at the centre of conflicts in the Asia Pacific region, notably the issues of the right to self-determination and the balance of group and individual, minority and indigenous rights. The institutions that oversee and protect human rights are weak and their mechanisms are situated far from the source of the problem.

Since the Fiji coups of 1987 there have been some significant gains in this area – notably the establishment of the High Commission for Human Rights, the Harare Declaration, charging the Commonwealth Secretariat with taking action when international standards for democratic governance are violated, and the EU-ACP Cotonou Agreement. The appointment of the Commonwealth Secretary General's Special Envoy, the South African Justice Pius Langa, and the suspension of development assistance under Article 96 of the Cotonou Agreement, sanctions negotiated with the Qarase Administration, and

¹⁶ See submission published by the CCF, Suva

¹⁷ John Burton, *Resolving Deep Rooted Conflict. A Handbook* (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1987)

some of the few still left in place have proved effective instruments for preventative diplomacy.

The Fiji case asks most starkly: Whose role is it to safeguard/guarantee a settlement under duress? Who defends human rights when democratic governance is violently overthrown? Who defends the defenders? When the Chaudhry government was taken hostage, the international outcry was clear but the first line of defence was Fiji's civil society, NGOs and media. The importance of supporting local human rights defenders in divided societies at every stage of the conflict cycle (prevention, mitigation, and management) is clear, though giving support to such a vulnerable and often outspoken sector does not come without associated risks. Perhaps because of these risks, the support mechanisms are weak, for example in the case that restored the 1997 Constitution following the coup (Prasad vrs. Government of Fiji), NGOs were left to raise the resources for legal representation.

This line of questioning risks making an assumption that the emphasis for human rights protection is always in periods of crisis. Was there not also failure to aid the efforts of the Chaudhry government to tackle the land tenure crisis and to legislate the Bills (like the Social Justice Act) envisaged in the constitutional settlement. An effective human rights policy would involve both supporting and rewarding the advancement of human rights as well as setting sanctions on behaviour aimed to impede them.

A case for conflict prevention

CR always characterized our programme in Fiji as one of conflict prevention. Prevention in the sense that unless the 1990 Constitutional framework was changed, unless the insecurities over land tenure were resolved, there would indeed be violent conflict in Fiji. We were aware of the risks of a human rights centred strategy, that is if our partners were successful in raising popular levels of awareness of human rights and there was no accompanying change, then the outcome, at least in the short term could be heightened conflict. The analysis proved wrong, or at least the source of violence came from an unexpected excluded sector (redundant politicians and social entrepreneurs). Indo-Fijians, particularly young Indo-Fijians did not choose a militant path.

So what is the importance of human rights in a government's conflict prevention policy? What are the risks of a weak or even the absence of a response to government-sponsored or tolerated human rights abuses? When bi-lateral assistance, trade and full participation in multi-lateral institutions are in no way conditional on upholding international standards? Specifically, what is the place of human rights in a conflict prevention policy for Fiji at this time?

3. Public participation in peacemaking: The peoples' right

From the wreckage of conflict in the Pacific and Asia come the processes that ended them, and these processes are concentrated, transformative and defining moments in a country's history. The nature of the process, who participates, and to what degree and at what stage can determine the scope and form of constitutional and governance structures of the country. The cases of both Bougainville and Fiji underline the importance of

inclusion, both as a right and as good practice. From an external perspective these periods of concentrated change represent opportunities for promoting structural improvements in governance, human rights and security and development policy.

In a seminar organized by my organization earlier this year with participants from several countries engaging in peace processes¹⁸ participants raised concerns that those who initiate and engage in armed conflict should not be able to impose the terms of settlement on the population as a whole. This risks a process that merely recycles and re-legitimizes old traditional power structures. You could see similar dilemmas in processes like Fiji's constitutional review, where the mechanisms for challenging the vested and communal interests of Fiji's political parties (reluctant to move away from communal politics) were weak or nonexistent. The ground for greater public participation is rarely offered and reluctantly given. The Fiji constitutional review process was (with hindsight) too focused on designing the new democratic framework and perhaps placed too little emphasis on educating the public, bringing them along with the proposed change and sustaining the process.

Indigenous cultures and cultures with strong rural community structures (even with their strong hierarchies) show a need for people to directly participate to support decisions. Thus while at the large Bougainville meetings (similar to others taking place in Somalia and Mali) many participants say very little if anything, they act as the eyes and ears of their communities. The support given to subsidize travel costs illustrates an enlightened policy on the part of the Australian government – and one that should stand as an example to others.

Even where there has been a relatively high degree of participation, as in Bougainville, the challenge remains to ensure that the agreement is rooted and enjoys public support so that (unlike Fiji's constitutional accommodation) it can withstand the first heavy weather – because it seems that one thing you can count on in the Asia Pacific region is heavy weather. Where agreements involve compromise, the understanding of why those compromises were made needs to become part of a living history.

In Conciliation Resources' seminar participants flagged their concern about the limits of superficial participation. In situations where participation in decision-making is already weak and if civil society is not well organized or able to promote clear agendas, mechanisms to promote involvement may ultimately be of limited value, thus the accompanying need to promote these capacities.

The challenge of promoting participation is not one that ends with an agreement signed. In a post-agreement peacebuilding phase there are particular challenges for external agencies to promote participation and social cohesion and avoid creating a hierarchy of victims & survivors: As in all post-conflict situations there is a jostling for position to be prioritised between ex-combatants, children, those debilitated by the physical and/or mental legacy of their trauma, and other survivors. How can strategic development

¹⁸ Catherine Barnes, C. ed., *Owning the process: Public participation in peacemaking*, *Accord*, <http://www.c-r.org/accord/peace/accord13/index.htm> (February 2002).

policies reflect these tensions, not exacerbate these social divisions and help promote reconciliation and social cohesion?

Conclusion: policy lessons learned from non-state actors

Conflict prevention and resolution work benefits from non-state actors in a variety of ways. Some of these may include:

(a) Diversifying the terms of engagement of developmental aid

The recognition that state actors' involvement, largely through developmental aid programmes and diplomatic means, provides limited windows of engaging with the underlying dynamics that generate conflict and the diverse groups and sectors. Also recognizing that individuals, NGOs and INGOS (even non-Australian ones!) can have a strategic role to play.

(b) Sensitizing developmental aid

What materializes as development aid is largely a process that involves interaction between policy officials. This often does not take into account the underlying factors, often simmering tensions that are within the reach of developmental aid interventions. But to understand and interpret these requires listening to non-state voices. Non-state actors can express these issues, but this is not necessarily what recipient governments want or encourage, and herein lies the dilemma for developmental co-operation policy-makers. How do they effectively and meaningfully engage in policy making with non-state actors in divided societies?

(c) Engage and engage: It takes more time than we first thought

We recognize and understand that the dichotomy between conflict and post-conflict situations is merely conceptual. The 1997 constitutional agreement in Fiji, the transition to independence in East Timor and the Bougainville Peace Agreement were milestones, but their achievements are vulnerable. The underlying dynamics of conflicts such as persistent inequality, regional exclusion, marginalisation, under representation in powerful positions or simply economic decline and its attendant poverty and unemployment problems constitute breeding grounds for rapid mobilization against peace processes. Developmental actors appear to disengage or reduce their engagement when milestones are achieved. In the world of conflict prevention and peacebuilding the securing of milestones is far subtler and less obvious. The promotion of dialogue at grassroots level through non-state actors, the promotion of capacity at grassroots levels during periods after a settlement has been reached ought to be a core part of development policy. Yet this is precisely what developmental actors move away from when conflict is apparently 'resolved'.

(d) Conflict takes place very locally

When violent conflict breaks out, it does so in very local areas. This is often beyond the reach of public authorities in-country and certainly beyond the view of the international media. Non-state actors often have better agility and maybe pre-existing presence in such regions – but lack capacity. Local conflicts rapidly flare into broader regional or national conflicts. But they may also indicate that some larger efforts such as a sustained effort to

destabilize a government may be underway. The agility of non-state actors, their sustained presence throughout is something that development policy actors can learn a lot from. Indeed writers in this field like Yash Ghai and Satendra Prasad have argued that the failure of democracy in the South Pacific has been the failure to support and help sustain civil society.

(e) Peacebuilding is hard and risky work

As practitioners we have realized that promoting peace and reducing conflict is hard and exhausting work. The lesson we learn from practice generally fits under the “one step forward and two steps back” heading. Conflict prevention creates risks for all those involved. The rewards are unquantifiable and often defy the matrixes used to measure the success and failure of interventions. It is also skilled work and multi-tiered. Promoting a culture of peace involves work at so many levels, with young people of course, but also with society at large and groups such as chiefs and elders. In divided societies, the promotion of peace and conflict resolution skills is not something that can and ought to be left to governments – in fact that ought to be the very last thing that governments do. The Ministry of National Reconciliation in Fiji, for example, where the Government is almost exclusively comprised of one ethnic group appears to be somewhat of a cynical gesture. Such interventions are the business of non-state actors. Reconciliation in Solomon Islands and PNG are also cases in point. But for non-state actors such work involves risks as well. The ways in which we can make such work rewarding and less risky ought to be examined.

(e) Groping in the dark

There is much talk about coherence between developmental actors. But across the South Pacific, we have seen how developmental actors have groped in the dark during periods of heightened tension and conflict. In the first instance, developmental actors have attempted to outplay one another during periods of heightened conflict. A gulf has opened between the way in which China and Japan engage in the region and the way in which New Zealand, Australia and possibly the EU engage. Pacific leaders have mastered this game well it would seem. But this highlights two problems. First is the obvious lack of a mechanism for coherence between developmental actors. Second is the lack of understanding of recipient countries of the “essential conditions” for development partnerships. For example, what does respect for rule of law mean for continued engagement with development actors? But more than that is the question of how to move development co-operation away from the promotion of national or national corporate interests. We think non-state developmental actors can teach a lot to developmental actors and learn from them as well. But where does this dialogue take place?

(1C) The Australian Aid Program’s “Peace Conflict and Development Policy”

Conflict in the Asia-Pacific region, because of its link to poverty, constitutes a central and direct challenge to the achievement of the government's objectives for the aid program of reducing poverty and achieving sustainable development. Addressing conflict effectively is therefore core business for the aid program and is likely to remain so for the foreseeable future.

The Minister for Foreign Affairs, Mr Downer, launched the Aid programs new policy on Peace, Conflict and Development Cooperation in June 2002.

In producing this policy the Aid program has drawn heavily upon lessons learnt from its own experience working in conflict situations, as well as work already done by the Development Assistance Committee and other donors. In particular, the policy incorporates findings and recommendations of two AusAID-commissioned reports, namely:

“*Overview of Donor Operational Practices*”, which examined contemporary programming issues in conflict environments and progress by other donors towards integrating conflict prevention and peace building objectives into development programming; and

“*A Review of AusAID’s Recent Experiences in Conflict Environments*”, which reflects on AusAID experiences and lessons from Bougainville, East Timor, the Solomon Islands, and Cambodia.

The policy also incorporates many of the concepts and ideas promoted in the DAC Guidelines, *Conflict, Peace and Development Cooperation on the Threshold of the 21st Century* (1998), and the supplementary policy note, *Helping Prevent Violent Conflict: Orientations for External Partners* (2001).

Why develop a peace-conflict policy?

- Promotion of peace and stability, particularly in the Asia-Pacific region is a major foreign policy objective of the Government.
- The genesis of the policy lay in the question “What is the role of the Australian aid program in achievement of this objective?”; and
- The assumption that AusAID is part of an inter-departmental approach to achievement of this key government objective.
- Indicative of increasing incidence of violent conflict in our region (the so-called “arc of instability”). Over three-quarters of AusAID’s programs are now delivered in conflict-prone countries.

But why are peace-conflict issues relevant to development practitioners?

The decision to produce a policy on Peace, Conflict and Development for the Australian aid program was underpinned by three considerations related to the relationships between violent conflict (or instability) and core objectives of development cooperation – sustainable development and poverty alleviation

- Sustainable development is inhibited by conflict. The impact of Australian aid, as measured by the sustainability of outcomes and outputs, therefore correlates with the sensitivity of our development practices to peace-conflict dynamics within a society.
- Poverty as a root cause of conflict but conflict also as a cause of poverty. Poverty alleviation efforts are influenced by the incidence of violent conflict. To reduce poverty, development practitioners must therefore locate their efforts within a broader security framework – commonly referred to as Human Security – aimed at establishing an appropriate enabling environment.
- Recognition that development and humanitarian assistance - both processes of change and therefore inherently conflictual - can have positive and negative impacts on peace-conflict dynamics. These processes can either support peace initiatives and provide incentives for peace; or upset equilibrium between peace and conflict in society and/or be manipulated by those with a vested interest in promoting violent conflict.

Peace Conflict & Development Policy:

The policy provides a framework for improving the Australian aid program's ability, as an important part of the Government's broader efforts, to address conflict and instability. The policy sets out new directions emphasizing conflict prevention and peace-building whilst maintaining a commitment to more traditional humanitarian relief and reconstruction. The policy is founded on three interlinked pillars: conflict prevention and peace-building; conflict transformation; and political, economic and social rehabilitation.

Directions established under the new policy will therefore aim to:

- identify opportunities to provide suitable **short-term** disincentives for perpetuating violent conflict; and
- **longer-term** strategies for building peace and promoting reconciliation in war-torn societies

The pillars referred to above represent components of a cycle rather than a progression or continuum (i.e. post-conflict phase may also be considered as the next pre-conflict phase); and phases may be indistinct and overlap. For example, in contemporary intra-state conflicts some areas may be zones of relative peace whereas violent conflict may be ongoing in others.

The policy requires a radical shift from traditional development approaches of conflict avoidance or conflict response to more proactive approaches that actively seek to influence the course of trends leading to, or sustaining, violent conflict

- Traditionally, aid programs have worked **around** conflict (development assistance) or **in** conflict (humanitarian assistance).
- New paradigm seeks to identify opportunities for Australian aid program to systematically work **with** conflict to avoid negative peace-conflict impacts (i.e. “Do No Harm”); and
- as far as practicable, to positively enhance the prospects for peace (i.e. support local capacities for peace).

In this respect, programming of Australian aid will aim to move beyond the traditional “comfort zone” and pursue options for preventive and peace-building action, bearing in mind that peace cannot be imposed but may be facilitated/encouraged by judicious programming; and aid, by itself, is unlikely to achieve peace so that our support must be provided in concert with other government departments and stakeholders.

Improved understanding and analysis: In order to integrate these concepts into the aid program, we recognize the need to better understand peace-conflict dynamics and identify opportunities to positively influence peace-conflict outcomes. We plan to adopt more systematic conflict analysis to promote understanding of the root causes, nature and likelihood of violent conflict.

Flexibility and responsiveness: The peace-conflict environment is notoriously difficult to plan and monitor, we plan to:

- Develop skills and flexible response mechanisms to recognize and take advantage of windows of opportunity to support peace; and
- Develop new performance indicators to monitor peace outcomes.

Coordination and partnerships

- Strengthen relationships with key areas of the Australian government to enhance coordination – particularly Defence, DFAT and ONA
- Strengthen engagement with selected multilateral organizations and NGOs on peace-conflict issues and to draw on lessons learned in practice.

The Policy statement contains an extensive agenda, which will take time to roll-out. Key areas in the initial stages are likely to include:

- Awareness raising and training for AusAID staff, Australia partner agencies and contractors on the relationship between peace-conflict issues and aid program activities.
- Developing research and support capacity to operationalise the strategic directions outlined in the policy, within AusAID programs and activities.
- Development of a suite of tools, with some predictive characteristics, to diagnose potential crises and to devise forward-looking solutions to prevent, reduce and/or transform conflict.
- Pilot activities within a few key areas of the program to demonstrate application of conflict prevention and peace-building approaches.

Peace, Conflict & Development Policy aims:

- To support peace and stability, especially in the Asia Pacific region.
- To mainstream peace-conflict considerations into AusAID development programs.
- To emphasize preventive action versus post-crisis cure.
- To strengthen partnerships and coordination within Government and beyond.
- To contribute to international best practice in conflict analysis through “learning” and research.

The policy represents a considerable agenda, which is expected to become mainstreamed over time and not overnight. AusAID welcomes collaboration with others working in this emerging area of importance for development cooperation.

ANNEX 2
“Conflict and Post Conflict – Asia Pacific Dimensions”

WORKSHOP PROGRAM

23-24 September 2002

**Common Room, University House,
Australian National University**

DAY I Monday 23 September

- 9.30 –10.00** **Registration**
 – Morning Tea/Coffee
- 10.00 – 10.30** **Opening Remarks:**
 Professor James Fox
 Director, Research School of Pacific & Asian Studies, ANU
- Ms Ann-Maree O’Keeffe**
 Deputy Director General, AusAID
- 10.30 – 12.00** *“Questions on Conflict Analysis and Peacebuilding”*
- Dr Alan Tidwell**
 United States Institute of Peace
- Chair: Anthony Regan**
 General Discussion
- 12.00 – 12.30** *“Policy on Conflict, Peace and Development”*
- Lisa Roberts and Barbara O’Dwyer**
 Humanitarian & Emergencies Section, AusAID
- 12.30 – 1.30** **LUNCH**
 Fellows Garden
- 1.30 – 3.00** *“Conflict Dynamics – from Aceh to Fiji”*
 Chair: Hank Nelson
- Short, ten-minute snapshots of the dynamics of conflict –**
 Includes Ed Aspinnall – Aceh; Dionisio Soares – East Timor;
 Jaap Timmer – Papua; Ron May – Southern Philippines; Tony
 Regan – PNG Bougainville; Sinclair Dinnen – Solomon Islands;
 Steven Ratuva – Fiji; Michael Morgan – Vanuatu.
- 3.00 – 3.30** **AFTERNOON TEA**

3.30 – 5.00 *“Conflict Dynamics – from Aceh to Fiji” (continued)*

Chair: Bronwen Douglas
Comparative perspectives continue

Small Group Discussions
Identification of major themes and issues.
(Includes ethnicity, identity, culture, religion; gender perspectives, masculinity; greed – grievance, resources, guns; state formation – failure; models and strategies of resolution, etc)

DAY II Tuesday 24 September

9.00 – 10.30 *“Managing Conflict & Post-Conflict - Practitioners’ Perspectives*

Andy Carl
Co-Founder and Director - Conciliation Resources

Chair: Sinclair Dinnen
General Discussion
(Discussants include Alan Moody, Alison Chartres, Angela Mercuri, ACFOA)

10.30 – 11.00 **MORNING TEA**

11.00 – 12.30 *“Managing Conflict and Post-Conflict” (continued)*

Chair: Lisa Roberts
Small Group Discussions

Main themes and issues
(Includes methods of prevention, resolution, settlement, reconciliation, rebuilding, policy dilemmas, roles of aid donors and of other humanitarian interventions, evaluating impact, local capacities for peace, dialogue initiatives, insider/outsider relationships, dealing with disruptions, etc.)

12.30 – 1.30 **LUNCH**

1.30 – 3.00 **Concluding Session**

Chair: Ron May
Includes Alison Chartres, Bronwen Douglas, Raymond Apthorpe, Peter Larmour

Contact:
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The contribution of AusAID to this workshop is acknowledged with appreciation.