INTER-CULTURAL COMMUNITY-BASED PEACEBUILDING: A COMPARATIVE PILOT STUDY

Anne Goodman, Edith Klein, Rick Wallace

for
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I   INTRODUCTION / METHOD

As this study began (October 2001), a survey of the globe would have revealed an intensification of conflict triggered by the events of September 11, 2001. With the intervention in Afghanistan, the world's attention shifted from the less pressing, lower-intensity conflicts of the moment (Kosovo, Rwanda, Northern Ireland) and became riveted on the single-minded effort to root out and destroy terrorist organizations. But in many parts of the globe, with equally dogged determination, thousands of people and organizations carried on the unheralded job of building bridges between communities in conflict, struggling against all odds to lay the foundations for a peaceful and non-violent environment.

As this study drew to a close (March 2002), violent conflict escalated further in Israel, giving some cause for doubt about the value of peacebuilding initiatives in places of intractable conflict. But the renewed outbreak of violence in the Middle East simply underscores the importance of *multi-track* conflict resolution, and confirms in our minds the principle that animated the present study: that inter-communal conflict must be addressed not only at the state/global level, but also at the community level and through the agency of indigenous, local organizations.

Because Canada's government—and its people—take an interest in preventing international conflict, and are deeply concerned to end violence wherever it may occur, it is gratifying to know that the last decade has witnessed an enormous expansion in efforts to resolve or transform such conflicts. Canada's government has supported many such efforts, or at least participates in international bodies that support them. These initiatives are carried out by international humanitarian organizations of a charitable or official nature, by refugee assistance bodies, by religious institutions, by volunteer peacebuilding projects, and even by isolated individuals. These initiatives are so numerous and diverse that merely describing them would fill encyclopedias. A variety of field guides, handbooks, and toolkits have been circulated or published to assist individuals and organizations in designing and implementing conflict-resolution programs, while conferences, international symposia, and workshops bring together experts and administrators to reflect on their experiences and to answer the oft-repeated question, "What have we learned?"

In surveying the documentation of this relatively short but intense period of experience with peacebuilding and conflict transformation, the authors of the present study observed a number of problematic issues. These issues included the following: (1) a tendency for sponsors and observers to focus on measurable results which were expected to be achieved in the relative short term; (2) a focus on the role and effectiveness of outside assistance to the neglect of an informed internal perspective; (3) an inconsistency in the use of certain terms and concepts; and (4) a focus on state-level conflict settlement activity coupled with a lack of awareness of or attention to community-based indigenous capacities for peacebuilding.

The literature and documentation on recent peacebuilding and conflict transformation experiences certainly acknowledges the complexity of issues, the need for sensitivity to context, and the importance of partnering with local activists. Nevertheless, there is an

observable thread running through much of the documentation that reinforces the "outsider" perspective.

The purpose of our study was to shift the perspective slighly by examining the "insider" perspective. We did so by taking a sampling of several kinds of peacebuilding initiatives in four different regions of conflict and examining them from several points of view: the principles underlying their design, the principles governing their implementation, how projects drew from their cultural and political context, the ways in which they monitored or evaluated their effectiveness, and the impact of the funding system upon which they depended.

Four countries were chosen for the research: Slovakia, Serbia, Israel, and Northern Ireland. We chose these four sites for our research because they represented societies in different stages of conflict, with different kinds of conflicts, and with varying levels of experience with peacebuilding and conflict resolution. Limitations of time and budget meant that we could not visit every project and initiative in each of the four countries, but we did accomplish our primary objective: to develop a set of policy recommendations based on extensive discussions and site visits with strategically placed individuals and organizations in each setting.

METHOD

Peacebuilding or conflict transformation projects were contacted directly or through knowledgeable contact people in each of the four countries. In two of the cases—Israel and Northern Ireland—the researchers focused primarily on community-based conflict resolution projects, while in the other two—Yugoslavia and Slovakia—the researchers drew a diverse sample: projects ranged from two or three individuals engaged in small-scale initiatives, to large organizations funded by international humanitarian bodies and involved in many different projects, to government ministry or United Nations spokespersons. The geographic location of projects was also taken into consideration: both the capital cities and the smaller localities were included in the sample. The list of organizations and projects visited and interviewed is given in Appendix A.

The interviews, which were semi-structured in design, took place in February and March, 2002. In advance of our interviews we developed a questionnaire instrument and research protocol. Our team visited Slovakia first, where interviews were conducted jointly, and then each of us visited one of the other three countries, and collected the data separately from one another. This approach had the advantage of allowing us to pre-test our questionnaire instrument, ensuring at the outset that all three team researchers were focusing on the same issues and framing questions in similar ways; a second benefit was that funds were conserved by having the remainder of the site visits carried out by the individual team members (Anne Adelson—Israel; Edith Klein—Serbia; Rick Wallace—Northern Ireland).

Parts of our interviews and discussions addressed the problem of inconsistent terminology, and we deliberately gave space to informants to define their conflicts in their own terms.

II   CONTEXTUALIZING CONFLICT

It comes as no surprise that understanding the historical background and nature of a conflict is crucial to the design and implementation of appropriate peacebuilding initiatives. But often an important element within an inter-ethnic conflict is the conflict over history itself—there are contested versions and interpretations. Agreement on history can itself constitute a moment of reconciliation just as much as a formal agreement between negotiators. In the pages that follow we have attempted to provide some of the essential elements in the background to the conflicts studied in this research project, without any claim that these interpretations are widely accepted by all sides in a conflict. However, the points we do highlight here are ones that we felt the disputants themselves were most concerned about and which need to be analyzed and understood by participants and program designers.

SLOVAKIA

While there is very little overt conflict in Slovakia, and obviously no militarized conflict, there is much latent tension and it can be considered a country in a pre-conflict stage. The main focus of our research was the conflict between the majority Slovaks and the Roma people. However, there are several other areas of conflict. One is between the Slovaks and another minority—the Hungarians. Other issues concern the dissolution of Czechoslovakia in 1993 and the development of a Slovak identity. There are also the tensions arising in the context of a transition to a different political economy, a process that began with the Velvet Revolution of 1990. The possibility of the country making a bid to join the European Union (EU) and NATO is an essential and far-reaching context for all the conflicts.

The Roma or Romany people, also known as Gypsies, are a group of dark-haired, dark-skinned people thought to have originated in Northern India. It is thought that Roma migrated westward starting about 700 years ago; they are now found throughout Eastern and Central Europe, the Balkans, and up to Northern Europe (France and Germany, England and Ireland). They have historically been a wandering people. Some still live in caravans although most live in some kind of settlements (many countries of Eastern Europe, which are home to large numbers of Roma, have banned nomadism). It is difficult to know the exact number of Roma in Europe but it is estimated at between 5-10 million persons.

The Roma have a long history of marginalization and persecution. Their nomadic lifestyle has put them outside the institutions of society. Along with Jews, homosexuals, and other minorities, Roma were victims of forced labour, sterilization, scientific experimentation, and mass extermination by the Nazis. It is estimated that between 250,000 and 500,000 Roma were exterminated in the holocaust. Roma intellectuals and cultural leaders were prime targets. Although they have a rich oral culture, many Roma are not literate and have received little or no formal schooling. The unemployment rate is very high and their work tends to be outside of the formal economy, much of it illegal. Roma communities tend to pay little or no taxes and receive few social services.

Slovakia has a population of 5.5 million and official statistics put the Roma at 2% of the population or 100,000. Most of our informants suggest that these numbers are low, mainly due to lack of accurate census information and the tendency of many Roma not to identify themselves as such, for a number of reasons. It is likely that the numbers are closer to 6-10% of the Slovakian state population, and therefore around 300-500,000 people. The unemployment rate amongst the Roma is around 90-95% and it is estimated that fewer than 1% have attended and/or completed public school. There are a handful of university educated Roma individuals—perhaps only 5-10 individuals in the entire Slovakian Roma community.

There has been some history of direct violence (physical assault and murder) against Roma in Slovakia as well as other parts of central Eastern Europe. Hate speech against the Roma has also been part of Slovak political culture, especially from the ultra-nationalist party leading in popular support going into the next election. In general, there is concurrence with or indifference to hate comments. In the media, the Roma are either invisible or negatively portrayed. For the most part, though, Roma suffer more from structural and cultural violence, as will be outlined later.

There are other concurrent histories that constitute the Slovakian context and which define the main and fundamental areas of change taking place today. Czech and Slovak populations, both Slavic groups, have had a long political association, sometimes close and at other times more distant. With a first-stage separation into a federation after the collapse of the Soviet bloc in 1989, followed by the division of Czechoslovakia into two separate countries in the so-called Velvet Divorce of 1993, the development of a Slovak nation-state identity has become a critical aspect of the context. The transition to a market-based economy in the post-Communist era has been more difficult for the Slovaks than for many of the neighbouring states, including the Czech republic. The economy has been saddled with the legacy of a defence-oriented, heavy industrial base which is antiquated, inefficient, and polluting, resulting in a 20% unemployment rate and marked regional disparities. Politically, Slovakia is trying to embrace a liberal-democratic model of governance without a history of capacity or involvement in public administration or a civil society independent of a highly controlled and centralized government. Slovakia is also evaluating the possibility of joining the European Union. The overwhelming pressures of all of these changes has led to the emergence of xenophobia and intolerance in the Slovak majority population, directed at all minorities but especially the Roma as the most vulnerable.

The other significant minority in Slovakia is the Hungarian. While their numbers are similar to the Roma—10 % compared with the 6-10% for the Roma—the nature of the relationship is very different. Hungarians tend to be better educated and have a higher socio-economic level than the majority population. Some of the tensions between Slovaks and Hungarians reflect the religious division of Catholic and Protestant in Europe, one that some of our informants see as a fundamental issue. In general, the Hungarians are concerned with issues affecting language and cultural protection; much like the French minority in Canada, they seek control over institutions such as education and language. The Hungarian population tends to be concentrated in various parts of the country, notably the South, and where proportions are high enough, the language predominates. Roma minorities in or attached to such towns or villages are likely to speak Hungarian

and even to identify themselves as Hungarian. There have also been political tensions between Slovakia and Hungary, which have led to tensions between the population groups with Slovakia. In one case, involving a dam on the Danube River on the Slovak-Hungarian border, the International Court of Justice was called in to intervene. In another case, current during our research visit, the Hungarian government unilaterally gave certain rights and privileges to expatriate Hungarians in Eastern Europe, for example, free use of public transport, library borrowing privileges, and access to the job market when visiting Hungary. This has also caused local tensions.

A general election slated for later in 2002 provides a context for the surfacing of these issues. The 1994 election, the first multi-party election in the history of the new Slovak state, brought in the government of Meciar, a far-right ultra-nationalist. In 1998, a concerted effort by NGOs, coupled with a broad-based campaign to involve young people in voting, lead to the defeat of Meciar and the election of the Hungarian Coalition Party. This party, once a mixed liberal-democratic party, has become a Hungarian ethnic party following the withdrawal of the Slovak coalition members. This situation of parties demarcated along ethnic lines is similar to what we have seen in Northern Ireland and Israel. There is general disillusionment with the government and the sense that Meciar's party will win the most votes, although likely not enough to form a government. Beyond the issue of treatment of minorities, the other big issue is bidding for integration with the European union (EU) and joining NATO. The majority (70%) of the people of Slovakia favour EU membership. In general, young people of all ethnic groups support this position, which is a key election plank of the Hungarian coalition party. The group most likely to oppose EU membership are the older Slovaks who are nostalgic for a return to a Communist-type economic system.

The contextual social landscape: Asymmetrical relationships

Roma have historically been marginalized in Europe and continue to be in the new Slovak state. The prevailing analysis in Slovakia recognizes three categories of Roma: integrated, separated, and segregated. The integrated Roma are those who have assimilated into the mainstream Slovak culture. Most Roma people who have been able to get an education and escape the bleak economic situation of the majority turn their backs on their community and no longer identify themselves as Roma. With the discrimination against the Roma and the internalized racism many Roma feel, this is hardly surprising. The separated Roma in Slovakia live in settlements on the edges of Slovak and Hungarian towns. They have a lower standard of living than their neighbours, unequal educational opportunities, and very little political representation. The Roma facing the worst conditions are the segregated Roma. These people live in separate or isolated communities, numbering anywhere from a few families to upwards of several thousand people. They tend to live in situations of extreme poverty, lacking basic needs such as water, schooling, and adequate housing. Their conditions are analogous to Third World situations and resemble the worst conditions to be found on Aboriginal reserves in Canada. The situation is also similar to that faced by the Bedouin people of Israel,

another migrant group. Social indicators such as life expectancy are much lower than for the general population.

Staggering illiteracy and unemployment rates are characteristic of the Roma community, a situation leading to a vicious cycle of poverty and criminalization. This reinforces negative attitudes toward them on the part of the majority populations, and leads to the kind of structural conditions that would make it difficult for Roma to transcend their situation. The high birthrate among Roma arouses suspicion and fear among majority groups, whose own population is shrinking.

Another issue of asymmetry is the lack of access of the Roma to political decision-making. A common problem that was noted was that Roma NGOs lack the necessary skill set to interact with local authorities and need capacity building in this regard. For example, it was reported that Roma had great difficulty developing and writing project proposals, lacked knowledge of their legal rights etc., but that there has been much improvement over the past several years.

Programs aimed at improving the situation of Roma must confront above all the deeply entrenched prejudices against the Roma culture. Most Slovak people perceive the Roma unsympathetically as a minority group beset by problems of its own making. In the view of the majority Slovak population, the Roma's problems can be dealt with either by keeping them separate or finding a social solution based on assimilating them as quickly as possible. Roma are treated as a disadvantaged group, much like people with disabilities. Most Roma children who attend schools are segregated in "special schools," simply because of language differences. The perception is that they are less able to learn or developmentally challenged and this becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy. Roma people tend to internalize these discriminatory attitudes and many of our informants see the formation of a positive self-identity as the most important first step, although an extremely challenging one.

An asymmetrical relationship also exists between the Slovaks and the Hungarian minority in regard to cultural rights, language, and education. While Hungarians struggle with with these issues, the fact remains that the Hungarians tend to have a higher standard of living and education level than the Slovak majority and have managed to have access to political decision-making through coalition governments. The presence of a national state (Hungary) on the border of Slovakia also poses sensitive political problems.

Cultural values regarding violence

Vladimir Meciar, the former President and leader of the Movement for a Democratic Slovakia (HZDS—the party likely to win the upcoming elections—has made particularly troubling remarks about exterminating the Roma before they exterminate the Slovak majority. This statement plays into prejudices Slovaks have about the Roma, fears of their rising birthrate, and willingness to use them as scapegoats at a time of economic difficulty. A number of NGOs and intellectuals have been actively protesting the racist reporting in the mass media. Through letters and meetings with reporters and editors,

they have adopted an educational approach geared to sensitizing individual players about misconceptions, as well as being more critical of negative depictions of Roma.

Several of our informants are concerned with the negative attitudes the Roma have internalized toward themselves, seeing this as a form of self-directed violence. They see the need for self-empowerment as essential in countering this.

Vocabulary and language used by the belligerents to describe conflict

In general, the Slovak majority is concerned with law and order issues, so they see the criminality of the Roma as a primary problem. The Roma are concerned with racist speech, especially by political leaders, as well as the direct attacks and killings; they are also concerned about the lack of basic needs and their desperate economic and educational status. The segregated Roma are described as being the most affected by the conflict, with poverty, lack of basic needs, education, social problems and isolation all being seen as aspects of the conflict.

Common elements important to understanding the peacebuilding context:

In studying the four cases under consideration here, we were struck that in each of them there appeared to be a key event that changed the configuration of political forces and thus created opportunities for improving inter-communal relations. For Slovakia, this event was the defeat of Meciar and his ultra nationalist party, Movement for a Democratic Slovakia or HZDS, in 1998, which came about in part as the result of a large diverse civic campaign against his government. The campaign focused on getting out the vote, especially the first-time youth voters who would likely not vote for Meciar. The resulting coalition government of new political parties with little experience and fractured visions has left the political scene very much mired in transition, yet simultaneously full of potential. The defeat of Meciar opened an important window of opportunity for the emergence of civil society groups who could mobilize openly for democratic reform.

Impact of international incentives

As in the other cases studied for this report, international incentives have a specific impact on the climate for changing inter-communal relations. This is evident in Slovakia, where the primary catalyst for addressing the Roma –Slovak relationship appears to originate with the Slovak state's application to become a member of the European Union. Since 1999, treatment of minorities has become a priority for the EU with the objective that inter-ethnic conflict, such as that involving the Roma, will not escalate to a militarized conflict as seen in the former Yugoslavia. This is an important element of the Stability Pact aimed at Eastern Europe; the Pact also calls for a series of political changes involving public administration law and a move to decentralization. Millions of dollars of EU aid to Eastern Europe is also part of the Pact, and Slovak NGOs are receiving funding from the EU, the World Bank, and elsewhere to address minority rights and local

infrastructure issues. Slovakia's full membership in the European Union is conditional on the ability of the state to address these issues.

The majority of Slovaks (70 % in a recent poll) support Slovakia's bid for EU membership. While our informants tell us that very few people understand the implications of EU membership, it is supported for several reasons. Younger Slovaks support it as offering more economic opportunities (older Slovaks of retirement age would prefer to maintain the security of the old Communist-style economy). Minorities, especially the Hungarians, favour membership as a means of opening the borders with the rest of Europe. It was widely admitted, however, that almost no one in the country understands the complexities of EU law.

The role played by international pressure needs to be understood in terms of the motivations and willingness of Slovak citizens and institutions to adopt pluralist, democratic, and inclusive practices. International pressure also moderates expectations about the extent to which such values are likely to be internalized.

NORTHERN IRELAND

The history of the conflict in Northern Ireland is itself partly about contested history, as in the other cases researched here. It is also about conflicts over social identity, economics, government policies, and structural inequalities. The historical animosity between the communities is rooted in religious sectarianism of the Reformation, economic displacement, and unequal representation in government decision-making.

Northern Ireland is a product of the British partition of Ireland concurrent with end of British colonialism in the Republic of Ireland in 1921. The retention within the United Kingdom of Northern Ireland represents the 6 of 9 Ulster counties that were more heavily populated by Protestants on an island where 98% of the Republic of Ireland are Catholic. The Protestant population is largely the product of a historical emigration from England and Scotland subsequent to the English colonization of Ireland after the seventeenth-century Battle of the Boyne between the Catholic Irish King and the Protestant English King.

The Reformation resulted in deep-seated divisions between Catholics and the newly established Protestant communities.   This schism along religious lines was incorporated into ideological claims by ruling monarchies from the sixteenth century onwards in Europe.   It was also the religious and political pretext for enormous violence in the vying for power.

In a community context, this translated into the segregation of villages and counties according to religious affiliation. Economically and militarily, the Protestant British military conquering of Ireland resulted in a British expansionist policy of settling British subjects in "won" lands. The result was the expulsion of Irish farmers from previously held land and its usurpation by Protestant English soldiers and Scottish

settlers. This is the crux of the Northern Ireland context; two communities with different historical, religious, economic identities competing for control.

The contextual social landscape: Asymmetrical relationships

The relationship between the two unequal competing communities reached a level of political disintegration from 1968 until 1994, exemplified in violence by the British government, paramilitaries—the Irish Republican Army (IRA), the Ulster Defence Force (UDF)—and the Royal Ulster Constabulary (RUC). Structural inequalities concerning issues as employment, housing, police, political institutions led to demonstrations by a Catholic civil rights movement in 1968.

Level of militarization

The resulting political instability resulted in the introduction of British troops into Northern Ireland arena and the infamous tragedy of the Bloody Sunday killings of 13 unarmed Catholic protestors by British troops in January 1972.   The situation continued to spiral into greater violence by the British military and paramilitaries from both the Nationalist and Loyalist communities. This period of increased militarization of the conflict from 1968 onwards is commonly known as "the troubles".

The period from 1994 to the present has been marked by a decrease in the militarization of the conflict through the unilateral cease-fires by the paramilitaries and the plebiscite on the adoption of the Good Friday Agreement (1998) on political reforms. This transition from a violent conflict to a political one has created a safer and less intense space for people to be involved in peacebuilding activities within and between communities.   The current period of the conflict can be seen as one of nascent reconciliation.

Intersection of class and communal conflict

Approximately 3,600 people have been killed and 30,000 injured during this period including people in the border region of the Republic of Ireland and in mainland England. About 1/3 of the killings occurred within a one square mile radius of downtown Belfast, primarily in the working-class neighbourhood where the two communities abut.   Further, it is estimated by ex-prisoner organizations that up to 98% of the paramilitary were working class and about 95% of those arrested and injured were working classes. It is noteworthy because it highlights the intersecting issues of class, social identity and economic exclusion as elements within the conflict.

Social impact of militarization

A number of women's groups in Northern Ireland spoke about the violence directed to women by their male partner, particularly partners involved in violent paramilitary activity.

The above dynamics have shaped and been shaped by issues of community identity in the Northern Ireland situation. Communal identities have political, national, and religious elements. Hence, one community is Republican, Irish, and Catholic, while the other community is Loyalist, British, and Protestant. These broad identities have created a differing discourse with different references and meaning.

Cultural values regarding violence

The Republican community viewed violence as emanating from the British State (imperial violence) with Northern Ireland a remnant of colonialism. The Loyalist community viewed violence as originating in the IRA (rebellious violence) and viewed Northern Ireland as a British homeland. In this context, the Loyalist communities preferred the status quo vis a vis British rule while the Republican communities desired change.

Vocabulary and language used by the belligerents to describe conflict

Differing language and viewpoints shape the judgments brought to bear on the actions and goals of the respective communities. The Republican community saw the conflict as rectifying a historical wrong (Irish partition of 1921) and IRA members as being Prisoners of War (POWS) in a context of historical de-colonialisation. The Loyalist community saw change as a surrender and abandonment by their legitimate government and UDF/Red Hand paramilitary membership as self-defence.

Common elements important to understanding the peacebuilding context:

There was a general consensus that the Good Friday Agreement (GFA) of 1998 was a watershed in the demilitarization of the conflict and the creation of a political process of conflict resolution and potential reconciliation. The Good Friday Agreement involved the main National and Loyalist political parties in Northern Ireland as well as the British and Irish governments. The Agreement adressed military and political issues including a reduction in British military forces, decommissioning by paramilitaries, the release of prisoners, changes in policing, as well as constitutional changes and a governance system of power-sharing with weighted voting.

Periods of overt violence, e.g. the 1980s, were difficult for community-based peacebuilding efforts because of the general context of violence and its effect upon the

capacity of communities to engage in dialogue or acknowledge any other perspectives other than their own. In short, the militarized context polarized communities and limited the space for potential inter and intra-community initiatives. The current post-GFA period creates different circumstances and perspectives on peacebuilding by community-based groups.

ISRAEL/PALESTINE

All the informants—and this included those who had been in Israel since or even before its inception as a country—named this period, dating back to October 2000, as the most difficult time they could remember. This period of open conflict dates to the emergence of the so-called 2nd *Intifada* ("uprising") in the Gaza Strip and West Bank, territories occupied by Israel since the 6-Day War of 1967.

While there had been sporadic incidents including suicide bombings in the preceding months, there is general agreement that the revolt was triggered by the visit of Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon to the Temple Mount in Jerusalem on September 28, 2000. The Temple Mount is also the site of the Al Aqsa Mosque, making it a holy site for Muslims as well as Jews. Many Palestinians call the uprising the Al-Aqsa Intifada, making its link to Sharon's provocative visit explicit.

An earlier uprising, the 1st Intifada, began in the Gaza Strip and West Bank in 1987, as Palestinians in the occupied territories fought against the Israeli occupation and for their right of self-determination. With pressure from the United States, a peace process began in the 1990s, leading to the Oslo Declaration of Principles of 1993 and the Oslo Interim agreement of 1995. While significant progress was made on several issues, including the recognition of both sides of the right of the other to exist within recognized borders, several outstanding issues remained and no final settlement was reached. Negotiations broke down in July 2000.

In marked contrast to Northern Ireland where the success of peace agreements helped lay the groundwork for peacebuilding and reconciliation, the breakdown of the peace talks in Israel led to deep feelings of disappointment and betrayal, a hardening of attitudes on both sides and a renewed reliance on violence. Israelis, disillusioned by the lack of tangible progress in the peace talks, defeated dovish Labour party Prime Minister Ehud Barak in an election in September 2000, replacing him with hard-line former general Ariel Sharon. The Palestinians, for their part, began the 2nd. Intifada.

In hindsight, there are clear reasons why the peace talks did not succeed. Both sides had differing—and erroneous—notions of the terms of the agreement. The Israelis felt they had given an extremely generous offer to the Palestinians, only to be rebuffed, but once the realities of the treaty's terms became apparent, the Palestinians discovered, instead of the state they had dreamed of, they had received limited control over scattered areas, separated from each other by Israeli-controlled areas and multi-lane "access" roads

to the Jewish settlements. The issues around which no agreement could be reached—control of Jerusalem and the "Right of Return" of Palestinians—remained contentious.

In compliance with the terms of the peace process, Israeli troops withdrew from the Gaza Strip and much of the West Bank, but the Israeli Government continued the practice of building Jewish settlements in these areas. For their part, the Palestinian National Authority did not stem the flow of terrorist attacks and suicide bombings.

A new and serious aspect of the latest wave of unrest is the issue of the Arab Israelis, the one million Arabs who are Israeli citizens. During the recent Intifada, they demonstrated in support of the Palestinians. The Israeli government responded and 13 Israeli Arabs were shot dead. The demonstrations and the shootings have left both Israeli Jews and Arabs feeling insecure and distrustful of each other. This deterioration is felt most deeply in the North of Israel—the Galilee. This region has relatively equal numbers of Arabs and Jews and a long history of coexistence and cooperation.

The heightened tensions existing in the region since September 2000 are part of an extended period of conflict dating back to before the state of Israel came into existence in May 1948. This period has seen five wars and two Palestinian intifadas, but has also had periods of less open conflict, notably around the time of the Oslo accords from 1993 onwards.

While the land has been successively conquered and ruled by various peoples over its long history, the current conflict over the land is between two groups: the Palestinian Arabs who fled or were driven out of Israel when the state was proclaimed in 1948 and the Israeli Jews. Some Jews claim the land as a biblical homeland, but for most part it is rooted in more recent historical developments. Many Jews immigrated to Palestine during the 1800s because of the oppression and persecution of Jews in Eastern Europe and support for Zionism, a late nineteenth-century movement advocating a national homeland for the Jewish people. Zionists at that time were not concerned with the local Arab community because they thought they would voluntarily move to other countries in the region or be outnumbered by mass Jewish migration from Europe. However, the immigration of Jews proceeded at a much smaller than expected rate while the Arab population expanded rapidly.

Additionally, the problems have roots in big-power decisions after the Second World War and to impractical and confusing declarations, which date to the present time. Pivotal to the conflict is that both Jews and Palestinians felt that the land had been promised to them. Key points in the recent history are the 1917 Balfour declaration declaring British support for the creation of a Jewish national homeland and the 1947 UN general assembly partition resolution which was accepted by Jews and rejected by Arabs. In 1948 the proclamation of the independent state of Israel was immediately attacked by Arab neighbours. By the time the fighting ended, Israel had extended its boundaries beyond the agreed limits and 700,000 Arabs had fled or were driven out and became refugees.

A series of wars ensued, of which the 1967, known as the 6-day war, was most crucial. Two things happened. First, Israel extended its boundaries into areas which remain contested, marking this as the start of the occupation. This war also extended the influence of the religious Jews who portrayed Israel's success as being due to the intervention of God. Israel had been willing to return all land except Jerusalem in return for peace treaties, but the religious disagreed and agitated for expansions into the biblical lands of Judea and Samaria. Minority parties, especially the religious parties, have been able to exercise considerable power in successive coalition governments, owing to a particular system of proportional representation. Second, Israeli Jewish settlements in these occupied territories became official policy of the Likud government of 1977 and this practice has continued to the present time.

Cultural values regarding violence (and how these have been effected by the context)

There is currently a high level of discouragement and despair, especially following the failure implementing the Oslo Accords. This period has seen a polarization of positions, with an erosion of moderate positions on both sides. On the Israeli side, there is rising support for the hawkish position of Prime Minister Sharon, while the Palestinian support for a violent struggle is also at a historic high.

Moreover, the division between the political right and left in Israel is so great that there is scarcely any common ground. By and large, the Left is pro-peace, universalistic, secular, and anti-Zionist, while the Right is religious, particularistic to Israel, and pro-Zionist. The left–the so-called peace camp—tends to be a protest movement in opposition to the Israeli government and army, with a long-standing position against the occupation. This sector has been under siege since the 2nd Intifada began, with the government and the army using the need to respond to terrorism as an excuse to clamp down on dissident voices. In government, the left of centre Labour party has tended to support the ruling Likud party in the interest of national security. The small parties of the left, for example, Meretz, have had little power but have had an important voice in raising concerns about human rights and other issues.

On the Palestinian side, Yasser Arafat, Chairman (or President to the Palestinians) of the Palestinian National Authority (PNA), is recognized by the Palestinians as their legitimate leader, although there is general dissatisfaction with his leadership, and with the corruption and lack of democracy of the PNA. More radical elements of the Palestinians, especially Hezbollah, Hamas, and Al Aqsa Martyrs Brigades, are gaining support. While there are Palestinian groups and organizations supporting a nonviolent struggle and a peacebuilding approach, these people are very marginalized. There is very little public opposition to the Intifada and the suicide bombings, and while there are a few isolated voices, there is no equivalent to the Israeli peace movement in terms of being critical of one's own side. While most of the Palestinian organizations have a stated aim of the destruction of Israel, but it is important to note that the Oslo accords marked the explicit recognition by the PLO of Israel's right to exist.

Since the collapse of the Oslo Accords and the commencement of the 2nd Intifada, the political climate has been difficult for Israeli and Palestinian groups in opposition to the policies and practices of the Israeli government and those working for dialogue and peacebuilding.

Diminution of the moderate voices on both sides

The intensification of the conflict has resulted in heightened security, increased levels of mistrust, and sharper polarization of the positions on both sides. Jews in Israel and the diaspora have tended to take one of two extreme positions—uncritical acceptance of whatever the Israeli government and army do or blanket condemnation. The latter is the most common position on the Palestinian side, as well as among Arab states. There are a small number of Palestinians advocating a nonviolent solution and being critical of some of the tactics used by Palestinian groups, but they are very much in the minority and are feeling increasingly marginalized.

Vocabulary and language used by the belligerents to describe conflict

The conflict is framed in very different ways by the Israelis and the Palestinians. Israeli Jews supportive of the government position name their desired goal as "peace with security". This phrase denotes an end to suicide bombers and the ability of Israelis to feel safe in their own country.

For Palestinians and those critical of the Israeli government position, the key phrase is "peace with justice". Justice refers to the right of the Palestinians to self-determination in their own homeland and the "right of return" of refugees. The extension of both of these concepts to their limits creates extremist positions, but there is considerable scope for common ground in a moderate interpretation of these concepts.

Violence is viewed differently by the two groups. The Israelis focus on the "direct violence" of the Palestinian uprising, i.e. the visible effects of people being harmed by the intended actions of others. The suicide bombings epitomize direct violence. The Palestinians and their supporters emphasize instead the more indirect forms of violence, the violence inherent in the power structures (structural violence), and the underlying legitimizing force in the ideology and religion (cultural violence). For them, the occupation is the primary violence and efforts to end it are thus legitimized.

These different perspectives on violence account for the stalemates that repeatedly occur in the peace talks. The Israeli side insists on an end to the suicide bombings before they will negotiate a withdrawal of their troops, while the Palestinians refuse to renounce the violent struggle while the conditions of the occupation and attendant repression are in place. This situation was very similar to that preceding the negotiations between the Apartheid regime and the exiled African National Congress (ANC) in South Africa

before the transition to the new government occurred. The government finally withdrew its precondition that the ANC renounce violence before negotiations could occur.

In obtaining a true picture of the conflict, it is also necessary to see that there is not one monolithic Israeli or Palestinian position. The description that follows is over-simplistic, but it delineates an extreme and a moderate position on both sides, and the way each uses the extreme position of the other to justify its own position. Most Israelis, while not supporting militarism per se, see the actions of the Israeli Defence Force (IDF) as a necessary evil to safeguard the security of Israel and the state's continued existence. They do not support an extension of Israeli excursions into the land beyond the 1967 borders and most support the principle and the inevitability of a Palestinian homeland. For the extremists, generally the settlers, expansion into the biblical lands is seen as positive. Most Palestinians oppose the occupation, especially the ongoing confiscation of land through illegal settlements, and support self-determination in their own homeland. Some Palestinian and Arab extremists, however, have the stated aim of the destruction of Israel, and it is to this position that the security policies of the Israeli government and army are pitched.

Level of militarization

Israel and Palestine are highly militarized. Emergency laws still in place since the beginning of the state are regularly renewed. All Israeli Jews must serve in the army for 3 years, followed by years of reservist duty. Women also serve in the military, but have a shorter period of initial service and reservist duty. Married women, pregnant women, and mothers are exempt, as well as women who declare that reasons of religion or conscience for women prevent them from serving. Israeli Arabs are also exempt; this acts as a form of discrimination since service in the military is a stepping-stone to civilian careers in Israel and it seems to be a prerequisite for advancement in political office and representation in peace negotiations.

Palestinians live under daily pressure of military occupation, having to undergo lengthy, often humiliating scrutiny at border checkpoints on the so-called green line. Closures, the restriction of the right to travel out of certain areas since the Intifada, has had a devastating effect on the economic status of Palestinians, many of whom had worked in Israel, meaning that unemployment is very high. The violence of the Intifada has also meant far fewer Israelis spending money in Arab stores and restaurants. Support for violence is very high among the Palestinians, most of whom cannot see another way to end the occupation and achieve the goals of self-determination. Incitement to violence is done by sheikhs in the mosques, in the schools, especially through the textbooks, and by Arafat's speeches in Arabic, which contrast markedly from his speeches in English.

Social aspects of violence and militarization

Militarization is pervasive. The print and visual media are saturated with violence. The front page of a daily newspaper during the research visit had a color photograph of police collecting body parts in large paper bags following a suicide bomb attack. Many people on all sides of the conflict have regular Internet contact where there are many sites depicting graphic violence. A Palestinian advocate of nonviolence speaks of being sickened by real life models erected in Palestinian universities depicting and celebrating nail bombs.

While most Israelis accept compulsory military service as a necessary evil to safeguard Israel's existence, there are those who are beginning to raise questions. The researcher spoke to several soldiers' mothers who spoke about the way military training and service changed their children's attitudes. One such mother described young people as entering the army like tender young flowers and emerging like hard bullets. Another woman who immigrated to Israel immediately after the holocaust said she never questioned that her three sons should serve in the military, but that faced with the same choice today, she would encourage them not to go, even if they risked imprisonment. A small but significant movement has arisen of army reservists refusing to serve in the occupied territories.

The high level of militarization is accompanied by high levels of violence in the societies involved. Militarism has its indirect costs, too, as money for essential social and environmental programmes is siphoned off to arms spending. It also has a key role in socialization, identity formation, and gender roles.

Asymmetrical relationships

There is a great discrepancy in power and socio-economic status between Israeli Jews and Palestinians. Palestinians have very little political power. The Palestinian National Authority put in place after the Oslo accords is seen as corrupt and authoritarian. Given the political reality of its limited jurisdiction and lack of legitimacy, this is not surprising. Most Palestinians live in poverty, unemployment is very high, and many, especially in the refugee camps, lack basic necessities. There is also a struggle over natural resources, especially water which is scarce in the region. Israeli Jews have far greater access to resources. Groups like Hamas and Hezbollah have funded social programmes in the West bank and Gaza.

Different aspects of the conflicts

While the conflict in the Middle East is often portrayed as being between Israeli and Palestinians, this is too simplistic a view. Within Israel, there are many divisions. Some are ethnic, for example between Israeli Jews, Arabs, Druze, and Bedouins. Arabs and Druze are exempt from army service, but this becomes a subtle form of discrimination,

precluding the latter groups from certain jobs, mortgages etc. The Bedouin generally have the worst conditions of all, in a position similar to the Roma in Slovakia. Even though many serve in the army where their skills in tracking are highly useful, their communities are often desperately poor and lack basic necessities.

There are also divisions between different groups of Jews in Israel, between the Ashkenazi of Eastern Europe and the Sefardis from Spain, Portugal and North Africa. Jews from Arab countries tend to have a lower status than those from Europe, and are underrepresented in politics. Successive waves of immigrants, e.g. from Russia and Ethiopia, have also caused conflicts. Beyond and sometimes intersecting with these conflicts are the ideological conflicts already mentioned, between left and right and between religious and secular.

Common elements important to the understanding of the peacebuilding context

The Oslo Accords and the second Intifada are recent seminal events that are important in understanding the context in which peacebuilding occurs. Because so much of the conflict hinges on contested and unresolved histories, there are also events in the past that are very much live aspects of the current context. These include the 1947 UN General Assembly partition resolution, the 1948 proclamation of the state of Israel, called the "nakba" or tragedy by the Palestinians, and the 1967 Six-Day War and its consequences.

Continued American support of Israel financially and militarily is the biggest outside factor. This has allowed the high level of military buildup in Israel. However, American support has probably been a key factor in Israel's pariah-state status, with countries and groups hostile to the US seeing Israel as a partner deserving of criticism.

In general, Israel is very suspicious and distrustful of the international community. UN general assembly resolutions are seen as being made by Arab-dominated blocs. Jews in and outside of Israel have an ongoing sense of themselves as victims resulting from a long history of persecution and a sense that without a state they would not be safe anywhere. The anti-racism conference in Durban, South Africa, where Israel was singled out as the only state guilty of racism, exacerbated this sense of paranoia. Additionally, European foreign policy and attitudes are seen by Israelis as being hostile to their interests.

The Arab states have generally supported the Palestinians, although they have done little to alleviate the social and economic difficulties of the refugees. There has been financial support from the EU, Canada, and other countries for the PLA.

The September 11 attack on the World Trade centre has had an effect on the Middle East conflict, though in contradictory ways. Immediately after the attack there was more latitude for Israel's focus on terrorism, especially when Al Quaeda were

determined to have links to some of the militant Palestinian groups. However, in the longer term there has been a rise in anti-American sentiment and attendant anti-Israel sentiment.

SERBIA

The political history of Yugoslavia, ex-Yugoslavia, and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (and now known as Serbia and Montenegro) for the last twelve years is the story of the militarization of the nation-building process. While scholars will debate eternally about the causes of the breakup of Tito's Yugoslavia, the explanation no doubt lies in the combination of historical factors, the political ambition of elites, and available windows of opportunity. The raw and violent expression of inter-ethnic hatred is only part of the picture.

The Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, as Tito's Yugoslavia was known, was an amalgam of many nationalities and national minorities whose cultural and linguistic rights were protected in the Constitution, but whose political rights were subjugated through Communist Party rule, and through the federal structure of the state with internal republican borders which only roughly corresponded to ethnically homogeneous settlements. Among other issues, the lack of strong central leadership was an important factor – made obvious first by Tito's death more than twenty years ago, and then by the collapse of the League of Communists. In the grasping for control over political power, the individual republics sought to go their own independent ways, with Slovenia and Croatia forging the path. The ensuing five years of war, which spread from Croatia into Bosnia, and which was brought to an end by the Dayton Agreement, resulted in extensive economic, political, and psycho-social damage not only to the territories on which the war was fought, but also to those on the sidelines—Serbia, Montenegro, and Macedonia. These latter three republics would soon be brought into the fray, as ethnic conflict erupted in Kosovo, Southern Serbia, and in Macedonia. In all of the regions of the former Yugoslavia, the wars displaced thousands of people, internal refugees whose presence inflicted further hardship on these societies.

The Serbian government leadership reverted to a kind of crypto-fascist totalitarian rule under Slobodan Milosevic, who garnered his support largely from rural voters in the republic, and whose appeal to national pride among many sectors of the Serbian population resonated deeply. Serbia became a veritable police state, held together by a complex web of corruption and vicious propaganda. In their concern to end the fighting in Bosnia, Western powers by turns negotiated with Milosevic or imposed sanctions on his state. While these policies may have been partially successful in ending the fighting, they made no impact on Milosevic's position in Serbia and indeed may have prolonged his reign. When Milosevic turned his attention to minorities within Serbia who were beginning to assert themselves politically, Western powers retaliated with a three-month bombing campaign intended to bring Milosevic back to the negotiating table. It took another year before Milosevic was defeated.

The contextual social landscape: Asymmetrical relationships

In Serbia, the political fallout of the collapse of Communism, the years of struggle with a successor anti-democratic government, bombing by international NATO forces, the ouster of the Milosevic regime, and the election of a fragile pro-democracy coalition—all of these are tangibly felt in everyday life. The issues of re-building nation-states and re-drawing borders are the stuff of everyday headlines. The complete reorientation of government—ideologically and in terms of practical policies—is analysed, contested, argued about, and feared. And while there have certainly been promising changes since the so-called "October Revolution" (the October 5, 2000, elections that brought Kostunica and his coalition of 18 political parties to power), the political, economic, and social orders are far from settled.

Within the framework of Tito's Yugoslavia, Serbs were the largest ethnic group, but not necessarily the dominant one where they resided. Because of their political dominance, however, and the constitutional structure of Tito's Yugoslavia, even where Serbs were a minority they felt protected within the larger state structure, as did indeed other recognized minorities or nationalities. Within the republic of Serbia—and in its post-Tito form—Serbs were the dominant group with respect to Kosovo Albanians, Bosniaks, and other smaller national minorities, but violent conflict erupted only with the first group. Nevertheless, the past ten years under Milosevic's rule have witnessed the development of intense stress and tension between Serbs and most other nationalities living within Serbia. Beyond Kosovo, in several regions (particularly Sandzak), inter-ethnic violence had been on the verge of erupting at any moment over the last ten years. Conflict in Serbia at the present time is thus based on several foundations: ethnicity, social class, and political affiliation.

Before the NATO bombing of Serbia and Kosovo, militarized violence had been kept outside the borders of Serbia proper (excluding Kosovo), and yet the decade of conflict left a clear impact on its population. The Milosevic regime itself saw benefit in maintaining the electorate in a polarized state, pitting urban and rural populations against one another. While it is true that ethnic minorities in Serbia proper were not specifically targeted, the climate for their existence could not be said to be particularly warm under Milosevic, and grew much chillier in the period leading up to the NATO bombing. Increases in anti-Roma and other forms of inter-ethnic violence began to be noticed at the onset of the Milosevic regime. Moreover, Serbia itself is far from ethnically homogeneous: about 60% of the population is Serb. Inter-ethnic conflict has already had dire consequences in Kosovo; the potential for it to affect other parts of Serbia is certainly real.

Cultural values regarding violence

Serbian political culture is not lacking in democratic values, but the last ten years of Milosevic's regime and the previous forty of Tito's have had a lasting negative impact on the level of political functioning and awareness. Xenophobia and ethno-cultural hatred are also uncharacteristic qualities of Serbian society, but Serbian culture traditionally places high value on self-sufficiency and what could be called heroic and even self-destructive strivings for functional independence, an idea embodied in the concept of "*inat*," or spite. A deeply patriarchal society, Serbia has preserved into the modern era a strong sense of extended (but

exclusively Serbian) family, rooted in an ancestral sense of place. That ancestral sense of place has assumed a sacred quality, even though many Serbs, particularly urbanized people, have virtually no connection with it. This attachment to a putative "ancestral" homeland was exploited and manipulated by Milosevic in the late 1980s; the legacy of that exploitation is apparent today.

Vocabulary and language of conflict

Under Milosevic, the public discourse employed a vocabulary of deceit and distortion. Serbs were depicted as victims who were being hounded out of their ancestral homeland (Kosovo) and forced to become sacrificial lambs to the hostility and arbitrariness of the international community. Serbs argued that they were being held, unfairly, to a higher standard than everyone else, and were being punished while others' misdeed went unremarked. This kind of argument was used by Milosevic to agitate against the alleged "conspiracy" of the international community. While the war was still going on between Serbs, Croats, and Muslims, official discourse in Serbia (and Croatia) also focused extensively on historical injustices, with accusations of atrocities and disloyalties launched by all sides in the conflict. Serbian discourse often raised the spectre of the wartime Nazi-sponsored puppet Independent State of Croatia, to spread fear and distrust.

Comon elements—Seminal events

The election of the Kostunica coalition in October 2000 marked a seminal turning point and opened up new opportunities for bringing the previous decade of hostility and conflict to a close. It allowed for the emergence into the open of individuals and organizations who had sustained the democratic opposition through tireless struggles for social development within Serbian society. Indeed, many of the talented and hardworking individuals who had worked for years behind the scenes now found themselves working in government in ministries and agencies.

Impact of international incentives

The relationship between Serbia and the international community (or Western powers) has been strained to the breaking point. The years of sanctions against Serbia in the 1990s brought untold damage to this relationship, even if sanctions may have been justified; the economy will likely take many years to recover to its previous level, and the loss of human capital caused by the war and by sanctions will likely never be regained. The irony is not lost on most Serbs that now, after the election of Kostunica, the same countries that were dropping bombs on the country are now eager to invest. It comes as no surprise, therefore, that there is distrust, hostility and bitterness in the perspective on international partners.

At the same time, there is genuine worry that whatever international aid is being brought into Serbia will soon quickly disappear now that Kostinuca has been elected. It is widely believed that most international bodies and foreign governments will assume that all the problems have now been solved, and they will pull out of Serbia.

Contextual issues crucial to understanding the conflict

One of the reasons that there is concern about sustained assistance from the West is that, for Serbia, the transition to post-Communism is only now beginning, which makes domestic political conditions fragile and uncertain. While other countries of the region have had a decade of experience with transition—and not all of it positive by any means—in Serbia this process is just getting underway. As of this writing the current government is surviving by the slimmest margin, dependent on keeping together a coalition of eighteen political parties. The political environment can best be described as tense.

It is important to recall that nearly half the electorate had weighed in on the side of Milosevic in the October 2000 election, a fact that has not gone unnoticed by Kostunica. Kostunica came to power on an anti-Milosevic campaign; now he gives every indication of protecting him. He is also now overseeing the next stage in the dissolution of Yugoslavia— the separation of Serbia and Montenegro. Thus, the electorate of Serbia remains polarized and deeply divided over several fundamental issues; the success with which these are squarely faced and resolved will determine to a large extent the level of stability we can expect in Serbia in the years to come.

III Peacebuilding - Conceptual Frameworks

SLOVAKIA

In the wake of the post-communist pan-European wave of democratization over the past decade, there is considerable international NGO presence in Slovakia, mainly geared to funding democratization initiatives. The majority of the main 10 funding bodies originate in the USA and Britain, with more recent additions from the EU. They include the Soros Foundation, USAID, Freedom House, C.S. Mott Foundation, the German Marshal Fund, the American Embassy, the Ford Foundation, the Westminister Fund, etc. There is also financial involvement on the part of the World Bank.

It is important to note the pivotal role international funding has had in the Slovak NGO sector. Similar to the situation in Serbia, but in marked contrast to the Israeli situation, there is little tradition of volunteerism. By and large, people expect to be paid for their involvement in NGOs, including their peacebuilding work. The gamut of funding runs from the League against Cancer and the Association for the Assistance of the Mentally Handicapped to civic associations, training in free market economics and NGO fundraising to forums on elections and projects involving minority rights.

Development of indigenous civil society

A national NGO sector has emerged in Slovakia with a role as the intelligentsia in civil policies and peacebuilding. There are currently somewhere between 13-17,000 NGOs that have emerged in the last decade, the majority of these in the last 3-4 years.

Two points should be kept in mind in this context. First, the nature of NGOs in the Eastern European setting is somewhat different from those in Canada. Their sudden and explosive emergence in an economic situation mired in difficulty means some, if not many, are not strictly speaking engaged in not-for-profit activities. Some may represent a single entrepreneurial individual seeking to access monies. Further, in keeping with the overall picture of a society re-tooling itself and having been denied involvement in democratic institutions or public administration, the experience of NGOs in community development and working principles of community empowerment is at an early stage.

Second, a number of strategic Slovakian NGOs are operating as vehicles for a class of middle-class intelligentsia to develop civil policies in an era of social confusion and political transition. In an era of immense social need, and with the election of inexperienced politicians, they are a small but active force, capable of organizing public debate via their involvement in legislative and public advocacy as well as statistical and policy research, and publishing. They have a key role to play in shaping and helping to realize a new socio-political vision, especially in a situation where most people are cynical about politics. As in most post-communist countries, there is a lack of experience

in both civil society and local governance in Slovakia. In both of these sectors institutions are being developed, as well as ways to work together in a partnership model.

The peacebuilding landscape in relation to our study

The groups and organizations covered in our study of Slovakia were chosen in a slightly different way than in the other field sites. Focusing mainly on peacebuilding between majority Slovaks and the Roma and other minorities, we worked directly with one contact person who helped us to connect to the organizations that are part of his networks. Furthermore, the groups we studied are connected to each other in a particular way. Building on work over the past eight years that focused on inter-ethnic communications and training primarily between Slovaks and Hungarians in Slovakia, but also between other groups in Eastern Europe, our informant has developed a multi-track approach to peacebuilding. A consortium of 15 Roma and 6 majority organizations has been developed. Almost all of the groups we met with are part of this consortium. The other key point is that in a pre-conflict situation, such as that of Slovakia, the landscape we are surveying is peacebuilding that is preventative in nature.

Indigenous understandings of conflict and inter-ethnic relations

There is a strong consensus that Slovakia is a society in transition—economically, socially, and politically. This is very like the perspective in Northern Ireland and Serbia. Additionally, there is a fear that the situation could potentially revert to greater intolerance and political polarization. These two factors provide great impetus for Slovak intellectuals to support EU integration and NATO membership.

Specific to the inter-ethnic/communal relations between the Roma and the Slovak majority, community-based peacebuilders held the view that the process of transforming the social segregation, structural inequalities and self-understanding of the Roma will be a generational process encompassing several decades. A key issue is the development of self-identity in the Roma, a process that will take time since many Roma know little about their origins, may not speak their heritage language, and have internalized the negative societal view of their own culture. This long-term approach contrasts with the shorter-term approach of funders who see 2-5 years as an adequate time frame for projects. Consequently, the funders' time frame perspective is seen as inadequate for sustaining systemic community-based peacebuilding approaches. Peacebuilders in all our field sites noted the identical concern.

In terms of the current context of peacebuilding, there are a number of common assessments held by various community-based peacebuilders/NGO activists. Current initiatives to address the conflict are often politically elite-based ones and are not necessarily embedded at the community level. There is a need for civic society and community-based organizations to engage with aspects of the communal and political conflict, and a key strategy has been to increase the community/civic capacity to do so. Our informants also believe that is vital to strengthen the confidence, knowledge,

competency, and capacity of people (Roma and Slovak groups) to sustain relationships and self-advocacy beyond the end of EU funding. Empowerment, long-term commitment and synergies are seen as the key characteristics of successful peacebuilding. The ways peacebuilding projects are structured need to reflect these principles, for example, Roma people must be involved in decision-making and project development from the outset.

Historical consciousness and confronting history

As in the Serbian case, the situation of the various ethnic groups in Slovakia is steeped in a long history of empire-building, power struggles, and shifting loyalties and identities. Given the tendency of belligerent groups to fan the flames of old historical grievances, it is no wonder that some politicians (notably Czech President Vaclav Havel) and groups in the area have suggested that a line be drawn across history. Many experienced international peaceworkers and humanitarian personnel believe the same. However, many of our informant groups think otherwise, stating that there can be no resolution of conflict without reconciliation with the past. This sentiment was echoed in the other case studies.

While openly confronting history constitutes an entirely new direction with respect to the Roma situation in Slovakia, it has a precedent in the case of the Hungarian minority. Research and documentation of Hungarian history and the Hungarian minority presence in the country goes back many years to the formation of Czechoslovakia after the First World War. An ongoing project is the creation of a common Hungarian-Slovak history text, based on the prototype created by French and English historians. The NGO focusing on this issue has broadened its scope beyond Hungarian minority issues in recent years to include other minorities, notably the Roma, and is involved in project including research, documentation, oral histories, and the production of books for Roma children. The recording and dissemination of Roma history is still at an early stage, considering that the Roma culture is primarily oral and codification of the language is an ongoing process. Initiatives for the Roma to deal with their historical situation are different from those in our other cases, notably Northern Ireland, where the process of historical engagement and appraisal is much further advanced.

Awareness of cultural orientations

There seems to be an enormous gap in knowledge and experience between the respective ethnic communities where peacebuilding initiatives are concerned. The Slovak community is in a hegemonic position, mainly because of the ethnically based politics in Slovakia together with a more established pattern of community activism, be it religious or political. Within the context of the challenges of transition with which Slovaks are faced, the tendency of the Slovak majority is toward ethnocentrism. Many Slovaks resent that Roma are receiving social benefits and some have called for a restriction of the birthrate of the Roma and/or their eviction from the country.

Hungarian peacebuilding groups, in contrast, welcome pressure from the international community as helpful in dealing with discrimination in Slovakia. They see the bid to join the EU as potentially very helpful to their efforts. They have been more interested in working in coalition with the Slovak parties, only to find their partners withdrawing, leading back to a situation of ethnically divided parties.

The Roma community is dispersed and marginalized, with a lack of homogeneity in the community. We heard from several informants that there is animosity and division among Roma NGOs and that many Roma people want to be leaders, without necessarily doing the work. The Roma women were singled out by many of the people we met as the most practical and efficient leaders, and likely to get the work done. Indeed, most of the successful projects seem to rely on Roma women's leadership. However, their status is lower than the men's, and they are not always accepted. The Romas' experience of government is as an entity working against their interests and against their community.

Slovak community-based peacebuilding approaches operate in stark contrast to the perceived current under-capacity of Roma NGOs. Community peacebuilding initiatives are more diversely rooted in Slovak society and target wider segments of society than those currently occurring in Roma society. Funding and political legitimacy issues are producing a competition between the Slovak community-based peacebuilding and emerging areas/actors of Roma community-peacebuilding. All of these factors are creating challenges to the consortium mentioned earlier.

Visions encompassed in peacebuilding initiatives/models

Roma and Slovak and Hungarian NGOs have different philosophies, emphases and analyses as to the most relevant notion of peacebuilding and community development. Roma peacebuilders, who are often women, tend to concentrate on meeting the basic social and educational needs of their community. Schooling and employment are seen as key. Other aspects of peacebuilding work include empowerment and self-knowledge of the Roma, and capacity building of Roma so they can deal with local authorities. Work to change the attitudes of the majority population is seen as important, making use of media and public education. A contradiction was noted: Roma capacity building tends to lead to assimilation of Roma and their resultant departure from the community. This has a deleterious effect on the culture and self-awareness or self-representation of the community. Unemployment was singled out as the most serious obstacle to retaining people within the community. This was particularly frustrating for Roma who had completed training programmes.

Slovak NGO efforts tend to be focused more on law and order and stability. One goal is the integration of Roma into the Slovak state apparatus. A second goal behind Roma projects is to stabilize the domestic political situation in Slovakia and to forestall a serious crisis which is predicted if there is not an immediate improvement in the Roma's standard of living and decline in the community's population growth. Roma people have

high unemployment rates and many are involved in criminal activities. This leads to a vicious cycle and feeds the xenophobia of the majority population.

The different ethnic groups tend not to be aware of the situations each of them faces and as a result peacebuilding is occurring in the context of competing tension between Slovak NGO peacebuilders, who have much higher levels of established capacity, and Roma NGOs, which are only beginning to emerge within Roma civil society and which lack experience and expertise in functioning within that sector. Moreover, the community-based peacebuilding approach is defined within conceptual and temporal parameters which differ in fundamental ways from those of the funders. The promise held out for Slovakia by its bid for EU membership includes not least the potential for capacity building and the creation of democratic organizations. It also allows for the possibility of legal changes, which would rationalize and strengthen the roles of NGOs and other civil society organizations within the Roma, Hungarian, and Slovak communities.

An interesting peacebuilding vision emerged out of the experience of Hungarian minority NGOs with a long history of working on coexistence between Hungarians and Slovaks. Following 8 years of organizing inter-ethnic communication training sessions involving 1500 people, the foundation responsible for the project (the Sándor Márai Foundation) decided to involve the Roma. In 1998 they introduced the idea to Roma opinion-leaders and then visited Roma settlements to collect data.

The main strategy of the programme lies in the training of Roma assistants to work in areas of the community which are seen as most problematic to the Roma, such as education and culture, public health, and relations with local authorities. The operating principle, or at least the theory, is that the circumstances of people's lives can be changed if enough Roma can get the appropriate training and return to their communities to engage in leadership and liaison roles. The Roma assistants training program, developed on the previous model, begins with self-knowledge and self-identity, issues which were identified by many of the informants as problematic. Other training topics include communication, heightening of empathy and tolerance, assertiveness training, and conflict resolution skills. This is followed by practical training in the sector where the Roma assistants will work (communicating with municipal authorities, partnering with local businesses, working with public health officials, etc.).

Training of Roma people is not something new, but this program seeks to address specifically those issues that have been obstacles in the path: a tendency for Roma who have received education or training to reject their own community and assimilate with the dominant community; the lack of employment possibilities for those receiving the training; acceptance of the Roma communities by the majority group; and lack of self-knowledge and self-acceptance by the Roma themselves.

The approach to peacebuilding adopted by the foundation uses a long-term multi-sectoral approach through the creation of a consortium. Each member of the consortium has a specific task, e.g., legislation, training, media, or public education. The involvement

of Roma NGOs in decision–making and planning from the beginning is seen as key. By tackling the issues of discrimination and human rights on all fronts at once and by a well-coordinated, concerted effort involving multi-disciplinary and inter-disciplinary expertise, it is believed that this approach will help to achieve long-term, sustainable solutions.

A focus on local opinion leaders is seen as very important in peacebuilding work. It is recognized that if their attitudes are not changed, they will perpetuate the ongoing situation, a perspective similar to that in the Israeli situation.

NORTHERN IRELAND

Extent and scope of international NGO presence in country

The current state of peacebuilding in Northern Ireland involves numerous levels of society. There is the role, politically and economically, played by the international community, most notably the European Union (EU) and the United States (USA). At the national level, political parties representing the various communities and their constituencies are engaged in a government of national unity as part of the implementation of the Good Friday Agreement (GFA). There is also community-based peacebuilding which seeks to engage people at the local level and strengthen civic society.

Development of indigenous civil society

Community-based peacebuilding is occurring in the context of an evolving tension with the established political elite. Continued funding from external sources is being increasingly directed through the new Northern Ireland Government. The result is an increased usurpation by the new state of the previous role played by community-based organizations, especially in directing the development of civil society.

Indigenous understandings of conflict and inter-ethnic relations

Regarding time frames for peacebuilding, there is a strong consensus amongst all Northern Ireland community-based peacebuilders that the process of transforming attitudinal/social segregation and structural inequalities is a process that takes place over a generation. Systemic changes are seen as embodying more than a topographical change.

Hence, the approach generally taken by funders—that a limited, three-year funding program could result in substantive changes—is seen as shortsighted and

fundamentally inadequate. This difference embodies the tension between a long-term, grassroots approach to community development and peacebuilding and the short-term (2-5 years) results approach of funding agencies.

Moreover, the approach is symptomatic of different institutional language. Large international donors/ funders (e.g., the European Union) are operating from a perspective of a political context of limited, competing, and ever-changing governmental spending priorities. "Long-term" spending to such a funder may be seen as five years, while "short-term" may be understood as one to twelve months.

In terms of the current context of peacebuilding, there are a number of common assessments held by various community activists. The GFA is seen as a politically elite-based agreement (Level 1 diplomacy), not embedded in the community, and there is a need for community-based people to engage with aspects of the political conflict. A key strategy has been to increase the community capacity to engage in negotiation within and between communities; to strengthen the confidence, knowledge, competency, and capacity of people to sustain relationships/self-advocacy beyond the end of EU funding.

Historical consciousness and confronting history

For community peacebuilders, peacebuilding is seen as a complex, widespread, and long-term process, implying social change. The conflict is perceived as having deep roots developed over years, resulting in broad legacies of trauma and prejudices, with systemic patterns of structural inequalities within and between communities.

Community-based peacebuilders view themselves as having a firm handle in the dynamics on the ground. Further, they view themselves as reflective of community needs while simultaneously being agents of change within the community by bringing the themes of peacebuilding to civil society. Not surprisingly, then, these initiatives are rooted in and target diverse spectrums of the society. In the Northern Ireland context, there are the faith-based communities (Corrymeela); the ex-prisoners' groups (EPIC and COISTE); the popular educators (Ulster Peoples' College); psycho-social trauma healing perspectives (Breaking the Silence); youth attitudinal shift (SOE, Northern Ireland Youth Council, Peace and Reconciliation Group); the legislative/citizen identity development; working class women and democracy (Peace and Reconciliation Group, Greenway Women's Centre).

Awareness of cultural orientations

Northern Ireland community peacebuilding groups, by virtue of their knowledge of and origins in their communities, have a complex appreciation of the contrasting levels of community development between the conflicting communities.   There is a general consensus that the Catholic/Nationalist community had a longer and more established pattern of community activism than did the Protestant/Loyalist community.   Moreover,

the Protestant community is more heterogeneous religiously (Methodist, Baptist, etc.), with a history of viewing government as an ally rather than a force to work against as a community. Hence, peacebuilding processes and stages look different in the respective communities.

Community-based peacebuilding approaches conflict with a very different conceptual and temporal framework than that understood organizationally and politically by funders. The results are community peacebuilding initiatives rooted in different levels of community development between communities and subsequently targeting diverse and very different segments of society. Funding and political legitimacy issues produce competition between community-based peacebuilding and the new government's role in developing civil society.

Visions encompassed in peacebuilding initiatives/models

Peacebuilding in the Northern Ireland context of community-based initiatives is a combination of community capacity building, relational/attitudinal shifts, and targeting social needs. Approaches adopted include education, community relations and dialogue, and spiritual and psycho-trauma healing.

ISRAEL/PALESTINE

Peacebuilding in Israel and the Occupied territories

Peacebuilding is a term that has proved elusive to define. Some of the contradictions and questions that have arisen in trying to determine what constitutes peacebuilding are germane in examining the peacebuilding landscape in Israel/Palestine. In the Canadian Peacebuilding Coordinating Committee's latest definition, peacebuilding is "the effort to promote human security in societies marked by conflict. The overarching goal of peacebuilding is to strengthen the capacity of societies to manage conflict without violence, as a means to achieve sustainable human security." Earlier descriptions of the term suggested that the primary aim of peacebuilding interventions should be to remove the root causes of armed conflict, that the efforts should be peaceful, that the interventions should be impartial and culturally sensitive, and that the efforts should be amenable to follow-on activities.

A combination of all these elements is not easy to achieve. In the multiplicity of activities and initiatives toward peace occurring in the environment of a protracted and multi-faceted conflict in Israel, some emphasize certain aspects of peacebuilding over others and the contradictions are apparent. A major distinction is between what can be called the peace movement and the coexistence movement. While there is some overlap and common ground, the former group tends to be a protest movement in opposition to

the Israeli government and army, with a long-standing position against the occupation. The latter group is more interested in dialogue and peacebuilding across ethnic lines. Then there are those groups who work to document human rights abuses, either from a legal or medical/humanitarian standpoint. Some groups are a combination of protest and humanitarian efforts, for example an organization that both speaks out against the demolition of the homes of Palestinians and also works to rebuild the homes.

The groups and organizations covered by this research project are primarily focused on initiatives toward shared efforts and dialogue to build bridges between different groups, rather than to engage in political protest. Some of the groups work within Israel, others between people in Israel and those in the occupied territories. Some groups and individuals use the term 'Palestinian" to denote the ethnic group, whether the people are Arabs who are citizens of Israel or living in Gaza and the West Bank. Within Israel, peacebuilding initiatives take place between Jews and Arabs/Palestinians, and between religious groups.

The practitioners interviewed in the project acknowledged that there are shortcomings and contradictions in both the movements. The peace movement, generally associated with the Left, is involved in activism and advocacy. The biggest problem is that the empowerment of the Left alienates the Right and the mainstream, both in and out of the country. One of the informants, a peace movement supporter herself, called this a "cosmic train to nowhere" and suggested that reconciliation has to be inclusive and make sense to everyone.

The coexistence models, also known as encounter groups or dialogue groups, do try to bring people together. Such groups have existed between Jews and Arabs in Israel and the West Bank and Gaza for many years. Many such models have been imported from the US and focus on interpersonal and cultural communication, an approach similar to the community relations model discussed in the Northern Ireland context. A key issue named is that of power imbalance between Israelis and Palestinians. This asymmetry is reflected in many ways. The most important is lack of political power, but inequities in economic status and access to resources were also raised frequently. Language was another key issue. The Hebrew language is dominant. Most Arabs speak Hebrew, but few Jews speak Arabic. This means that most dialogues are conducted in Hebrew. It is also a factor in dealing with bi-lingual, bi-cultural education or with publications put out in both languages.

History and development of indigenous civil society

There is a difference in the development of civil society in Israel and the occupied territories. Israel has a much better developed civil society. However, unlike the case of Northern Ireland, there is very little connection between the government and civil society, and most funding comes from outside the country. The government is closely connected to the military, the political leadership is all military men, and the peacebuilding groups

tend to be in opposition to the government. The situation has further polarized since the start of the 2nd Intifada.

When there is a connection between government and civil society, it has an effect on peacebuilding possibilities. A good case in point was the previous Minister of Education who helped to promote peace education and more focus on shared and parallel histories of the two groups in the schools. Many of the informants named the current Minister as someone who has made their work far more difficult.

Much of the peacebuilding activities are occurring at the local level, and when the local authorities are prepared to work with community groups, the scope for peacebuilding work is much greater. In the Galilee, where cooperative projects have developed between adjacent Arab and Jewish municipalities or communities, this has led to a development of a civil society that transcends ethnic lines to some extent. As in Slovakia, the role of mayors was mentioned as very important.

The Palestinians do not have a well-developed civil society or a history of democratic participation. The Palestinian National Authority is widely seen as authoritarian and corrupt. Strengthening of civic society is a stated aim of many of the projects we interviewed.

In the case of both groups, dissatisfaction and lack of trust in the political leadership was mentioned repeatedly. If there was one point of agreement, it was that nobody saw the present authorities as being in a position to bring about peace. On the other hand, as in the Northern Ireland context, civil society was totally absent from the peace talks, which many saw as a prime reason for their failure.

Role, strength, and legitimacy of faith-based intuitions

In Israel/Palestine, religious groups are acknowledged by many to be the primary cause of the conflict. The religious groups in Israel tend to be part of the political right and have supported the contentious settlement policy. The transformation of the conflict from solely a political one to one with religious underpinnings after the Six-Day War is seen as a key factor in its intractability.

Palestinian Muslim leaders have also tended to polarize the conflict and many use the mosques as a place to rally support for the Palestinian struggle.

Christians, the third group with a connection to the land, have played a marginal role but may have some third-party status that allows them to intervene. There is an international presence with groups like the Christian Peacemakers Team.

However, many of the groups interviewed felt that there is a strong need for the religious groups to become involved in peacebuilding work precisely because of their

role in the conflict. Some of this work is already happening, both in local exchanges and in international meetings in other countries like Egypt and Greece.

Indigenous understandings of conflict and inter-ethnic relations

Because of the asymmetry of the groups, empowerment of those in the minority group is seen as a key aspect of peacebuilding, especially by members of the less powerful group. One of the informants said, "You cannot make peace with people you humiliate," and there was much resonance with this view in the interviews. Humiliation was often named by the Palestinians as a key barrier to a negotiation process and this was tied to lack of power in all its aspects—political, economic, and cultural. Many of the practices of the Israeli occupation were described as particularly humiliating to Palestinians, and Israeli Arabs also spoke of being humiliated. It was acknowledged by both Israeli and Palestinian practitioners that Arabs in and out of Israel needed to find their voice.

In this context, dialogue processes that do not address the power issue are seen as problematic. Because of the political context and the internalized racism of both Israelis and Palestinians, the two groups would likely have different aims. Jews, in general, are looking for what some have described as "an authentic experience"—a sharing of their feelings—while Palestinians are seeking support for a political agenda. This raised questions of how a dialogue process could occur, and whether it was more useful on the basis of bringing people together as individuals or members of groups. Many of the same issues that occurred in the Northern Ireland context arose here, although with different terminology. In general, practitioners were aware of the power dynamics and the need to supplement dialogue with community development, identity issues in the separate groups and political advocacy to eliminate the injustices.

On an organizational level, most of the groups learned that it was vital to have 50-50 representations in decision-making at all levels. There was also recognition that symmetry was not possible in the face of inequality, and that the practices and processes on both sides could not be assumed to be the same.

Those informants with a theoretical understanding of conflict processes described it as being at a Stage 2—the surfacing of the conflict by giving voice to the concerns of the less powerful group. The emphasis at this stage has to be toward equalizing the power before a genuine dialogue can occur. Raising the issues to the surface is seen as potentially helpful—"putting the genie back in the bottle vs. dealing with the genie," as one of the informants put it. At this stage, politics tends to be very polarized. Since the Palestinians and those supporting their cause see the primary violence as the structural and cultural violence of the occupation, nonviolence and contact with the other side is problematic to many Palestinians in this context, and those who advocate it are marginalized or even killed as collaborators.

Creativity was mentioned as an important concept by many of the groups and it was certainly evident in the projects visited. In general, there was an understanding that there are no definitive answers in peacebuilding work and that it was important to try and

see what worked. There was also much evidence of groups adapting their strategies as they went along.

In the North of Israel in particular, the sense of betrayal was mentioned often and there is a sense that much work will need to be done to rebuild the trust that had previously existed. The groups that maintained their good relations through the difficult period of the 2nd Intifada tended to be those working at a very grassroots level with a high degree of interpersonal contact, suggesting that the building of relationships is an important facet of this work.

Historical consciousness and confronting history

As in the other case studies in this research project, this is a conflict of which the roots go back a long way. For some Israeli Jews, the biblical notion of ownership of the land is an ever-present reality, and this has unfortunately been translated into political currency through the settlements which have been described as "facts on the ground".

Even without going back to biblical times, an ongoing driving force in current Israeli politics is the fear arising from the many years of persecution of the Jews when they did not have a homeland and the still-potent issue of the holocaust.

Palestinians have a long history in both the Occupied Territories and Israel, a land that many still feel they are entitled to. Some have a family history going back many generations, and many families still hold the keys to properties they were forced to leave when the Israeli state was created.

For these reasons, many of the informants see confronting history as a key element in peacebuilding work, much like the work we saw in Slovakia. There are at least two directions for this work. One is the fostering of shared and/or parallel histories. This is based in a project originally done by French and English historians and taken up in other parts of the world, including Slovakia and Northern Ireland. Historians and history teachers would work together to create joint history texts in which the stories of both sides are told. In the instances where there is no agreement, a parallel history would be told. One such example is the event celebrated by Israelis as their independence and mourned by the Palestinians as the "nakba" or tragedy. In recent years, revisionist histories of Zionism have been written which acknowledge the Palestinian perspective, and shared and parallel histories have been incorporated into Israeli schools. However, these trends have been reversed under the current Minister of Education.

Another important way of dealing with history is in the context of reconciliation, a perspective adopted by several of the organizations interviewed. There is a growing understanding that unless the past is dealt with and some kind of reparations made for the land and property lost by Palestinians, a durable peace will be impossible to achieve. Another historical issue requiring attention is that of the Jews forced to flee Arab countries. One of the informants, a Jew from Egypt, suggested that dealing with this

group in conjunction with the Palestinian refugee question could provide a way to deal with the issue.

The meaning of time and the concept of time frames

There is an understanding that peacebuilding work is long term and that results may not occur quickly. The work of changing attitudes and building trust was seen to take time. Some of the informants mentioned the complexity of change and the need to work on many fronts at once, all of which is time-consuming. The tension between being an activist (and wanting quick results) and being a slow peace worker was also noted. The informants were all committed to the work, despite the setbacks due to recent political events.

One of the informants engaged in indigenous methods of peacebuilding and reconciliation explained that the process is a very lengthy one and cannot be rushed. There is a protracted period of negotiation with each side separately and then time is taken to check for agreement at every stage.

Awareness of cultural orientations around fear, humiliation etc.

A big factor in the conflict is the shifting roles of victim and aggressor. Fear is probably the key driving force, with Israeli Jews fearing neighbouring states who have threatened to drive Israel into the sea and diaspora Jews considered about anti-Semitism and a possible future holocaust. Some of the informants saw this fear being manipulated by the Israeli government to maintain oppressive policies in the name of security.

Another cultural orientation is around the land and both people's identification with it. This occurs both from a sentimental/religious basis and because they see it as crucial to self-determination and national security.

Visions encompassed in peacebuilding initiatives/models:

There are a number of different visions encompassed in the models. One is of compassionate listening and reconciliation—of the need people have to talk and be heard. This is an important aspect of dialogue groups. Reconciliation speaks to the need for some kind of healing of the past, both on an individual and communal level, and many people are insistent that it needs to be part of current peacebuilding work. Healing is seen as the integration of inner identity/suffering/ victim status with outer political change. However, there is recognition that certain terminology is not acceptable, even if the issue is. Healing, for example, is seen as too wishy-washy, but it is recognized that it needs to happen.

A vision of working with commonalities instead of differences was strong. Common suffering was key; the recognition that both sides were victims of violence and suffered bereavement. There was also the idea of common humanity especially in a religious sense of being descended from the same ancestor, Abraham's family and a common Middle Eastern identity, which is different from the west.

Both sides remarked on a lack of support for politicians and the sense that Oslo failed because of lack of grassroots involvement. Small groups are seen as very important, but they need to be part of a multi-track approach. There is also an understanding that the complexity of the issues necessitates a multi-faceted approach.

Working with decision-makers is seen as key, just as it was in Slovakia. In some models, training was provided for facilitators, teachers, role models, and community leaders. Some informants suggested the need for this training but were not able to provide it in the context of their projects. The perspective is that without an attitudinal change on the part of influential members of the society, they will perpetuate the cultural violence, e.g., through their own internalized racism/victimization.

A philosophy of working around values was part of several peacebuilding models. This occurred around a commonality of values across group lines, for example with the bereaved families who united around the idea that the loss of children on either side was unacceptable. Values within a group were also considered part of some of the peacebuilding work, for example, Israeli reservists cited Jewish ethics as the reason they would not serve militarily in the occupied territories. For Palestinians, nonviolence made sense in terms of the teachings of the Koran. Both a sense of renewal of religion and a search for common values is part of the peacebuilding work being done by some practitioners.

The focus on religion as peacebuilding is also tied to the discussion on values. Judaism and Islam, both religions with a strong social orientation, have been evoked as demanding an ethical stance toward the Other and to practices conducive to human rights for all. This has led to the formation of Jewish groups, for example, across denominational lines. It has also given the basis for inter-faith peacebuilding work on the basis of values common to all.

An exploration of values has the potential to lead people beyond sectarianism. Informants from all sides decried the way identity politics divides people into us and them on racial or religious lines and instead saw their identity as being with like-minded people from both sides, an attitude reminiscent of a yearning for "normal politics" in Northern Ireland. Indeed, participants in the research were interested in hearing about the peacebuilding experience of people involved in other conflicts, seeing the potential for a community based on a shared mission and value orientation. This sense also raised a contradiction. Peace practitioners wanted to see the peace movement as more mainstream and inclusive, but also worried that manipulation and co-optation may threaten its authenticity and integrity. Almost all the informants had a strong sense of mission in their work, a sense they were doing it because it had to be done, despite obstacles like

marginalization by their own group, lack of funding, and setbacks due to political events beyond their control.

SERBIA

The environment for peacebuilding initiatives

The involvement of Western powers in the Balkan conflicts over the last decade culminating in the NATO campaign against Serbia has led Serbs on the whole to feel resentful and untrusting of outsiders, and above all to doubt their impartiality and credibility. Prior to the election of Kostunica, a widely held perception was that Western powers are not only hostile and prejudiced against Serbs, but ignorant of their history and indifferent to their achievements, level of sophistication and education. Western conflict resolution efforts, whether arriving on an official basis or through humanitarian/peacebuilding NGO initiatives, were often viewed as patronising.

Internally, the development and sustenance of civil society in Serbia, despite the long years of Tito and then Milosevic, can be attributed in large part to the efforts of NGOs, both domestic and international (or domestic ones supported by international organizations). The so-called "third sector" kept alive the possibilities for humane, inclusive, and democratic development while politics unfolded in a brutal and destructive way. From this perspective, there is a strong, if recent, foundation for civil society and the growth of civic participation and responsibility.

The landscape has changed in several important respects since October of 2000. There is more open expression of pro-Western sentiment within Serbian society, since it is now seen as more permissible. The actions of non-governmental organizations are now officially recognized, with the enactment of legislation to register and regulate activities of NGOs. In the last year-and-a-half significant amounts of money and personnel have flowed to domestic NGOs, and while this has had mixed results, the overwhelming impression is that the outside financial support has played a critically important role in the promotion of social change and democratization.

Recently there has been concern expressed about the relationship between donor organizations or foreign NGOs and indigenous organizations. The recruitment of local personnel to work at Western salary levels has created tension within the third-sector community. Another problem is the division that apparently occurs when strong links are established with certain local NGOs and not with others, giving rise to a separate and more privileged group of aid organizations. While this differentiation among indigenous initiatives would in itself be problematic, there is even deeper concern about what is likely to happen when international organzations either change their focus or mission or depart from the scene altogether. The impact that outside organizations have on the internal relations among local organizations must, therefore, be kept in mind as an area requiring sensitivity, tact, and familiarity with local conditions.

The post-Kostunica support and positive reception for Western-based NGOs is not unalloyed: one occasionally notes overt hostility to their presence. A sign outside of a school in a Belgrade suburb which read "The renovation of this school is being funded by the European Union" was marred by graffiti which claimed, in large letters, "Traitor!"

Indigenous understandings of conflict and inter-ethnic/inter-faith relations

The conceptualization of inter-ethnic conflict in the Balkans is influenced by many factors: education, age, place of residence, social class, and even gender. At the risk of over-generalizing, Serbs who were supporters of Milosevic tended to be rural voters of central Serbia, poorer and less educated. They are inclined, according to public opinion polls, to have isolationist views, to have little knowledge of or interest in much beyond the borders of their village, or at best, beyond Serbia, and to regard certain political practices such as bribery and corruption as entirely normal. In this perspective, the conflicts are usually explained by ethnic attributes and, more commonly, by outside interference. By contrast, urban and educated people, usually younger people (under 40), especially those individuals who are actively working toward its transformation, are less inclined to attribute the conflict to deep, intractable, historical causes. They view the conflict as one of primarily political causes—a result of power-seeking politicians who manipulated their constituencies and exploited their rather undeveloped level of political culture in order to achieve their objectives.

The government voted into office in the elections of October 2000 brought in fresh thinking about inter-ethnic conflict. The establishment of a Federal Ministry of National and Ethnic Communities was a positive sign that government intended at least in a symbolic way to overturn the ethnocratic legacy of Milosevic and to create an atmosphere of tolerance. As mentioned earlier, the civil society movement got an enormous boost from the fact that many former NGO personnel were now themselves serving in the new government. But the fulcrum on which the future of ethnic relations in Serbia and Montenegro turns is the resolution of the status of Kosovo. Without the legal/political settlement of this issue there is unlikely to be significant progress in inter-ethnic reconciliation. Moreover, as the division between Serbia and Montenegro moves gradually toward more formalization, federal institutions threaten to become powerless, if not extinct.

It is also worth restating an important factor—that outside involvement in the resolution or transformation of conflict is a mixed blessing. For cultural reasons, the implication that Serbs cannot deal reliably with their own internal problems plays into the political strategy of the pro-Milosevic factions in Serbian politics. At the same time, those in the democratic opposition forces welcome the outside support but are sensitive to being patronised or otherwise thought of as inexperienced and benighted.

Confronting the historical past

Despite, or perhaps because of, the very major role played by historical grievances in the wars of the past few years in former Yugoslavia, there is almost no mention of historical issues, nor any apparent interest in dealing directly with discrepant histories in the context of peacebuilding in Serbia. The focus is much more on the present and the future, with building a better legislative framework for the protection of people's rights, and with fostering dialogue about current problems and their solutions. The researchers made note of the fact that history textbooks have been rewritten since October 2000 and in the new versions make no reference whatsoever to the Milosevic period.

Visions encompassed in peacebuilding initiatives/models

A catalyst for the growth of the third sector in Serbia was no doubt the founding of the Open Society Institute (OSI) by George Soros. An OSI office was maintained in Serbia since the collapse of the Communist regime, although it was closed down by the Milosevic authorities from time to time. Open Society funded many initiatives and sustained individuals and their projects through very difficult times. The vision of Open Society—to embrace a democratic, transparent, open, and inclusive form of government and political practice—influenced many of the projects that sought funding from OSI, and in many respects set the standard for later initiatives.

The shared vision observable among many peacebuilding initiatives in Serbia has to do with bringing back a sense of security and normalcy in everyday life, an aim of giving people the opportunity for the first time to enjoy the full benefits of citizenship, human rights, and democratic practice. Democratization in the Serbian context emphasizes accountability and transparency in government, but also raising the level of political culture through public campaigns and open discussion. This is understood to be a long-term task. Because the population is still deeply polarized on the issue of Serb-Albanian reconciliation, and because the status of Kosovo is still undecided, the vision of inter-ethnic relations from this perspective is vague.

To be sure, the democratic project embraced by the peacebuilding sector in Serbia is far from being fully embraced by the electorate. Moreover, the vision of inter-ethnic reconciliation, to the extent that it has been formed, has no doubt received a push from the international community's pressure on all the governments of the Yugoslav successor states to adhere to international norms in human rights.

IV   Peacebuilding- Strategies

SLOVAKIA

Peacebuilding in Slovakia is focused mainly on dealing with the issues of the Roma minority but initiatives come from different perspectives and sometimes for different reasons. Some of the projects and programmes are designed to enhance the possibility of EU membership since dealing with minority rights is a prerequisite. Some peacebuilding NGOs, notably those involving academics and young professionals, have a vision of a rights-based greater Europe that transcends narrow sectarianism. Others with a human rights focus, as well as community activists from the Roma community, have a desire to address inequities and abuses. Still others, especially those from minorities who are sensitive to conflict processes, see dealing with the problems of the Roma as a way of preventing a future conflict.

The popular Slovak bid for EU membership is proving to be an important contextual issue for peacebuilders. The European Union is providing funding for much needed work on minority issues as well as a basis for legislative changes. It is also valuable in giving a context for a new conceptual view of an identity that is rights-based, not ethnically based. It gives the possibility of the emergence of a liberal democratic pan-European model of citizenship to overcome a parochial view of citizenship and citizen rights being limited to being culturally "Slovak."

Peacebuilding initiatives focused on Roma community relations strategize around the many issues specific to the Roma. Many Roma lack basic needs such as adequate housing and health care. Lack of education and unemployment are major problems in the community, along with the associated social problems of crime, alcoholism and family violence. The Roma are victims of discrimination and sometimes hate speech or direct physical attacks. The lack of self-identity and self-worth of the Roma people is a major concern, compounded by the tendency of Roma who succeed to assimilate into the dominant culture.

Peacebuilding strategies reflect the necessity to deal with these issues on several fronts, including government, the legal system, the media, the schools, and the dominant community. The problems of the Roma cannot be dealt with in the Roma community alone; the issues must also be dealt with in the institutions of the dominant culture. Our informants fully recognized that a passive service-delivery model of "helping' the Roma is not viable and that sustainable change requires the involvement of the Roma as active agents in all aspects of the work, from the conceptual stage onward. Lack of resources and lack of knowledge is a problem, but probably the most foundational need is that of changing attitudes, both in the Roma community and outside.

Community-based peacebuilders do not believe short-term, piecemeal approaches will ultimately succeed. The peacebuilding strategies described below are not meant to be used in isolation; rather they constitute aspects of a whole community approach in which

the different components complement each other in synergistic ways. Many of these initiatives are part of the multi-sectoral consortium assembled by the Sándor Márai Foundation, consisting of 15 Roma and 6 majority NGOs.

1. *Community capacity building*.

One ambitious plan is the training of Roma assistants, the basis of the consortium approach. The plan has been pilot-tested in 3 communities and further pilot trainings are scheduled for this year. The aim is to train a large number of Roma (proposals exist for up to 5,000 over the next few years) to act as community interlocutors between the Roma community and Slovak service providers (doctors, mayors, teachers). The philosophy underlying this strategy is that the Roma themselves can change the circumstances of their community if there are enough of them to provide critical mass and if they receive training of appropriate length and intensity. Training the Roma to deal with local authorities is an important aspect of this model. The training has features that have not been part of previous efforts. One is the inclusion of a training component focusing on self-identity (see #2 below). A previous focus on skills training alone has been unsustainable and there is recognition that transformation requires a change in attitudes. Also important is the linking of the training to legal changes, measures to improve public awareness and ensuring there are enough people trained so they can support each other.

While the model holds out great promise, there are potential problems. Despite the involvement of Roma NGOs in the project design and decision, without Roma lead trainers/consultants, the project risks becoming a classic development project implemented by outside experts. In addition, its success depends on the adoption and implementation of affirmative action legislation, something that does not enjoy popular support in Slovakia. This may set up unrealizable employment expectations. The model also acts to create a small and influential new economic-social class of trained Roma interlocutors. The supposition is that they will act in the best interest of the communities but they may instead reflect deeper personal loyalties and be a socially disruptive force.

Another approach is to train the capacity of Roma NGOs to develop project proposals, coordinate project implementation, and satisfy funding agencies regarding standard levels of financial accountability. While this is a skill the Roma have identified as being important, it seems at the same time unrealistic to demand that Roma NGOs, often community groups, adhere to the same standards of EU funding proposals as highly sophisticated and well-resourced non-Roma NGOs.

Small concrete projects like providing stipends for youth to attend school and supplying schools with needed supplies have proven to be a useful aspect of community capacity building.

2. *Efforts to build self-identity of the Roma*

Most informants believe that the negative attitudes the Roma have internalized about themselves are the biggest factor in preventing change, so the stragey of fostering stronger self-representation is seen as very important.

One important way of building self-identity is through the self-knowledge aspect of the training programme for Roma assistants. This training, which uses techniques based on psychodrama and group psychotherapy, includes practising the fundamentals of communication, heightening empathy and tolerance, assertiveness training and conflict resolution.

Developing a positive media presence is also seen as critical, and the work of the Roma press agency is seen as especially important.

Roma tend to know very little about their history and culture. Initiatives for the Roma to educate themselves, research their history including the Roma holocaust, and develop books for children in schools (both Roma and non-Roma) are all important, and the Hungarian NGOs have been supportive in this. More basic is the effort to codify the Roma language since much of the culture is an oral one and the shared culture is being lost.

Supporting and enhancing the role of Roma cultural leaders, intellectuals, and musicians is seen as very important in providing positive role models. The Roma lost much of this leadership during the Second World War. Leadership continues to be lost to the Roma because of discrimination from the outside and lack of self-image within the community. The media typically depict Roma as either victims or criminals, so highlighting cultural figures, musicians, and positive role models is part of this strategy.

3. *Increasing awareness and understanding of the Roma in the larger community*

One aspect is research and advocacy, and includes developing statistics on community needs and public opinion, creating legislative initiatives, and dialogue and advocacy with political elites and political parties.

This model looks to affect attitudes and identities by concentrating on the media, political elites and youth. These peacebuilding efforts try to influence media reporters and editors to eliminate negative stereotypes and reporting on Roma in the mainstream press. The tactics include regular dialogue and letters from prominent people. Some of our informants suggested that this attempt to influence mainstream reporting is essentially being done in an uncoordinated and reactive fashion, thus limiting its impact and effectiveness.

Public education through billboards, music, posters and educational materials is another part of this work. Election campaigns, notably the "Rock the Vote" campaign of the previous election, offer opportunities for greater exposure and awareness.

4. *Advocacy and legal action*

The emphasis is on transforming the relationship between citizenship and identity through institutional and legislative changes.   The consortium of Slovakian and Roma NGOs is advocating for the adoption of anti-discrimination legislation and the establishment of a Slovakian human rights commission to secure enforcement of these proposed laws. The EU membership bid is a useful context to try and bring in mandated legislative changes.

Another aspect of this legal focus is affirmative action legislation to address the systemic employment discrimination faced by Roma. This is explicitly tied to the Roma training project, recognizing that the effect of the trained Romas will be much less if they cannot find work. Affirmative action has not been part of the Slovakian experience and it is likely to be rejected if it is seen as favoring one ethnic group- the Roma. However, it is more likely to succeed if it is focused on economically underdeveloped areas of the country and this is a strategy the groups are investigating.

5. *Meeting the basic needs of the Roma*

These initiatives tend to resonate strongly with the Roma, especially the women, giving them an immediacy that propels community involvement and has very tangible impacts. They tend to have greater involvement of women as the issues directly affect their children and families. The lack of training and empowerment of the Roma have been barriers against the Roma being able to do this work. This is why the training of Roma assistants is seen as very important. The people who receive the training will then be able to advocate for needed changes in their community.

This programme, if successful, would be a shift away from the prevalent social work model of having outside change agents assist Roma societies in attaining basic housing, education and/or health needs. It is not clear that the external agents of social change (be they teachers or social workers or PhD researchers) understand the Roma context, or are committed to being in the community long enough to accrue the requisite trust from the community itself, or are seeking to build the capacity of the community.

Another strategy is the long-term ongoing community-wide projects such as the one supported by the Canadian government in Svinia. There is anecdotal evidence of some very successful work. However, these projects require the long-term presence of dedicated, enthusiastic people to carry out the programs, people who often commit to living in the settlements. Doubts have been raised about their long-term sustainability, and from the interviews, it seems that there is not much interest in this kind of work.

Lack of consistent funding and insufficient programs to meet the needs also represent problems with the basic needs approach

Using a legislative approach, one that is sanctioned as part of the EU stability pact, is another aspect of this strategy. An integrated approach that includes a multi-track approach and education of the Roma about their legal rights is a promising development.

NORTHERN IRELAND

Models of peacebuilding

Four models from the Northern Ireland case are explored here: community relations, youth and citizen identity, cross-community information sharing, and issues of group facilitation.

Model #1 - Community Relations

"Community Relations" is the term used in Northern Ireland to refer to peacebuilding between communities, often using a process of cross-community dialogue.   Specifically, the pedagogical process is to foster trust and awareness across the sectarian divide through personal dialogue between individuals drawn from the two communities.

Peacebuilders making use of contextual issues

This process has been employed, for example, in schools with youth (Northern Ireland Youth Council), in communities (Peace and Reconciliation Group), and amongst youth and the spiritual communities (Corrymeela), and between paramilitary prisoners (Mediation Network and Corrymeela), and between ex-prisoners and civilian victims.

Kinds of problems emerging from the project experience itself

A major sectoral critique of this process will be released in late Spring 2002.   An initial snapshot survey of opinions raises a number of points.

Dialogue should not be seen as an end in itself—rather it may be an important component pedagogically but it needs additional concrete follow-up steps/activities/ends to build cross-community collaboration and sustain new relationships. It is not clear that this type of work can be accomplished without first doing community relations work *within* the separate communities.

It is an essentially individual pedagogical process that runs the complicated task of having to address wider social identities simultaneously. When participating individuals come from communities that are mutually suspicious or ambivalent, there may be a divergence between their experience and the group cohesion; in these cases individual participants run the risk of being alienated from their communities.

The community relations dialogues have been criticized for trying to avoid contentious and emotionally charged elements of the conflict. The result is polite discussion, without challenging or transforming entrenched social identities.

On the other hand, qualitative and emotional criteria of healing and trust, sharing stories and information (impacts), bringing the 68% of the population together who have never had a meaningful conversation with someone from the other community are likely necessary elements of sustainable reconciliation.

Model #2 - Youth and Citizen Identity

A second model of peacebuilding concerns **Youth and Citizen identity** and draws upon legislation. This is the more recent process of JEDI (Justice, Equality, Diversity Initiative) and the promulgation of national legislation on human rights and diversity. This approach is a combination of institutionalizing social and legal policy emphasizing responsibilities and rights. The peacebuilding goal is to develop and support the development of a social identity that is inclusive, rather than exclusive.

This is similar to Canadian policies of multiculturalism, citizenship and human rights commissions. The hope is to reinforce institutionally and ideologically a change in social relations and social identity.

Model #3 - Community Development

A third model is the **community development** approach. The pedagogical goal is to strengthen working relationships and thereby trust between and within communities, through a process of cooperating on issues of mutual concern.

Peacebuilders making use of contextual issues

Groups like The Springfield Inter-Community Development Project are using this community development approach in community inter-face areas. In Northern Ireland, "community interface" refers to the abutting of the Loyalist and Nationalist (working class) neighbourhoods, literally on different sides of the street. An example is areas like those in Belfast such as Shankhill Road and Springfield Road area where much of the violent neighbourhood conflict has occurred.

An example of this has been the group's development of a de-escalation response by community members on either side of the interface. A potential escalation and eruption of communal violence can be prevented by early intervention by community leaders. Using cell phones, they can alert each other regarding potential conflicts due to the fear in one community inspired by groupings of individuals from the other community near an interface point.   This allows community leaders to intervene to dispel or disperse possible situations within either community. This is especially useful during the contentious and tense period of parading from May until August each year.

Another example by the Springfield Inter-community Development project is the facilitation of an exchange of information from one community to the other regarding a problem equally affecting each. Large segments of the housing in Belfast are owned by the municipality. A faulty heating exchange device installed in the Catholic area was noticed and the community lobbied for redress. This information was shared with Protestant community activists as the same heating exchange device was to be installed in their housing shortly thereafter.

It is this same approach of sharing information regarding mutual concerns that have COISTE and EPIC, ex-prisoners groups, sharing information on legislation that negatively impacts on their respective memberships.   They have coinciding interests that establish elements of a relationship where none existed before.

Model #4 - Group Facilitation

A fourth model involves facilitating community relations groups, classes of youth and student, or committees of mutual concerns from across the troubled divide.

Group facilitation is an approach that incorporates key interpersonal communication and conflict resolution skills without necessarily naming them as such. The pedagogical goal of group facilitation is to develop and support the trust, participation, inclusiveness, impartiality, respect, collaboration and consensus within the group. Coinciding with the group process is the goal of transferring the same skill set via example and experience to the participants.

Kinds of problems emerging from the project experience itself

Three issues impact the effectiveness and capacity-building potential of group facilitation in the Northern Ireland setting. The first, credibility, can mean a number of things within and between communities. Depending upon which segment of the community one is referring to, the criteria for credibility will look different. Nevertheless, credibility is the group's acceptance of the legitimacy, knowledge, and capacity of the person(s). To a large degree, it is the belief that the facilitator(s) understands the community's language. Lack of credibility will doom group facilitation.

Connected to credibility is impartiality; the facilitation and pedagogical stance of creating a commonly accepted space that neither favours nor imposes a particular perspective. Impartiality is important in establishing credibility between the communities and maintaining it during actual meetings. Conversely, bias can undo community relation's initiatives, peoples' history projects, and/or cross-community meetings of mutual concern. Not only can bias alienate segments of the group and undermine the credibility of the peacebuilding process, but it can also reinforce sectarian views.

Transparency is the third element of group facilitation that supports peacebuilding. Transparency is a process of ensuring that the steps and goals are explicit, known, and agreed upon to limit distrust and the propensity to attribute ill intentions. This extends from the process of outreach to setting the agenda to the role of the facilitator.

Peacebuilding Sites

Northern Ireland is replete with peacebuilding sites: Churches, schools, womens' centres, youth organizations, prisons, community centres, popular education colleges, community health sites, and geographical neighbourhoods.

Peacebuilding agents

In the Northern Ireland context, there are the priests, ministers, and lay people involved in the spiritual-based communities and Churches (Corrymeela). Former combatants and the ex-prisoners' groups (EPIC and COISTE) have been and are influential peacebuilding agents, especially with youth. There are the popular educators and intelligentsia working with community activist folk (Ulster Peoples' College). There are health professions working with victims of psycho-social trauma related to the troubles (Breaking the Silence). The public education system is focusing on youth as agents of change (Northern Ireland Youth Council); and the underappreciated role of women as peacebuilders is the work of women's centres (Greenway Women's Centre).

ISRAEL/PALESTINE

Contextual issues

Peace builders are currently working in a context that is generally unhelpful to their work. The political situation means there is less possibility of face-to-face meetings, especially in groups working in both Israel and the West Bank and Gaza. It has also meant a polarization of positions, with a resultant loss of credibility and in some cases a real danger for those trying to work together across the ideological divide. . A shortage of funding has further hampered efforts. This is particularly true on the Palestinian side.

Economic hardships resulting from the closures mean that money must go towards basic necessities like food, rather than peace programmes.

Even in the midst of these difficulties, the informants we met, while often despondent, even despairing, were committed to carrying on their peacebuilding work because they saw it as vital. People who had previously been paid for their work continued even when funding cuts meant that no one was receiving a salary. Other group shared scarce resources to have a number of people working part-time (or full-time on a part-time salary), rather than a few people earning full-time salaries. The majority of the work was either unpaid or underpaid, with practitioners working in other fields to support themselves.

The intrinsic motivation of the informants was what kept them going. All had a strong sense of mission and a deep responsibility to their work.

Description of the models

Many of the informants had been working in the peacebuilding field over a long period of time and had an ongoing practice of action research, even if they did not explicitly name it that way, that is they adapted their practices in light of what they had learned through their experiences.

Many of the practitioners had begun with models imported from other places, especially the united States and Europe, and were gradually changing them as their contradictions and points of unsuitability with the local context became evident. A particular case in point is the dialogue group/encounter group, described in the Northern Ireland case study as the Community Relations model. The original model is based on the idea of people coming together as individuals, not as representatives of particular groups, and focusing on emotions and experiences rather than politics.

While dialogue and bringing people together was an aspect of many of the models, none of the practitioners was using the original model in its unchanged sense. Some practitioners made subtle changes to adapt the model to the local context, others supplemented it in several ways, still others came to reject some of its basic premises and develop a new methodology based on their understanding of the process.

One of the problems with the original model is that it was very individualistic and thus not entirely suitable for the more communitarian cultures in the Middle East. Some of the adaptations were toward a more indigenous way of doing things, including more emphasis on community, sharing of meals and rituals and the building of relationships and away from the original focus on problem solving.

Another problem was that the model did not take into account the political reality of a very unequal power distribution. Methods are developing that problematize this

asymmetry, rather than try and gloss over it in a way that can lead to the masking of structural and cultural violence.

Examples of models

A number of different projects and programmes were explored. These ranged from informal community-based groups with no structure or funding to groups with staff people and offices. Some worked alone, others in partnership with other groups, local authorities or funding agencies.

1. Dialogue/encounter groups

In some situations, dialogue is the primary focus, for example in some groups of women, but often it is a by-product of shared projects, e.g. environmental, theatre, music etc. The emphasis is on the experiential component rather than "the dialogue". In some groups, dialogue between individuals is emphasized and encouraged, whereas in others it is between representatives of groups.

2. Healing and reconciliation

Many saw a connection between the personal issues of healing with the political issues. New alliances are being created, for example with the New Age community which had previously been very individualistic. Groups working in this area report a shift to a focus on reconciliation and a need to deal with political issues like reparation for refugees as an aspect of healing. Non-verbal modalities like music, massage, theatre, dance, rituals, vigils, reiki/alternative health, meditation, and bearing witness are seen as important. Compassionate listening, allowing people to speak and be heard, is an important component of both this and the dialogue model.

3. Arts-based projects

All fields of the arts, including music, visual art, theatre, literature, poetry and dance are being used in peacebuilding work, often in very creative ways. A popular website suggests an international education project based on blues music, suggesting that "every society has their share of the blues"; other groups involve children and youth from different groups in creating theatre and bi-lingual, bi-cultural magazines.

4. Superordinate goals

Sometimes a shared project, like working together on a community environmental project or for sustainable agriculture becomes a way of bring people together. The shared project

becomes a way of building community, developing relationships between people and empowerment, as well as working on an issue that could be a source of conflict.

5. *Projects involving education, outreach, training, research and information-sharing*

Some of the models involved these as primary goals, especially some of the school-based projects. Others found their work naturally progressed into areas like outreach and information-sharing, and most informants expressed a desire to learn more about what others were doing and have time to reflect on their own experience.

6. *Projects involving religion and spirituality*

Inter-faith work is a way to build on commonalities; it is also a way to get beyond nationalism because the land is seen as belonging to God therefore no-one can own it (cf. First Nations people).

7. *Indigenous models*

Several of the informants make use of indigenous methods and practices, for example the Palestinian method of reconciliation known as *Sulha*.

8. *Empowerment and attitudinal change*

Empowerment is seen as something that comes out of practice, for example doing a community project and learning to advocate for one's needs. Attitudinal change is described as sometimes arising out of the project, but more often being an explicit aim of the project. Without such a change, especially on the part of the influential members of society like local opinion-leaders, changes will not be sustainable.
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It is difficult to classify the different projects and programmes in terms of their typology alone since each is a combination of a number of different features, practices and principles. The description that follows highlights some of the cross-cutting themes and issues.

Cross-cutting themes

- In general, all the informants have a deep commitment to their work, seeing it as a mission rather than a job. In difficult situations, they found different ways to do their work instead of giving up.

- The models are adaptable to change and display a lack of rigidity. There is a great deal of creativity and experimentation

- Most of the models emphasize commonalities: shared values, common suffering, a common Middle Eastern identity, building toward a common humanity

- There is an appreciation of interconnectedness of issues and the need to work on several fronts at once, for example legal/advocacy issues, empowerment, and community building.

- Indigenous practices are used where possible. In addition, people are making use of intrinsic factors they share, for example, as women and/or mothers or as musicians.

- People are working toward sustainability.

- The methods and structures need to reflect the aims of the project. Equality needs to be built into the structure and their needs to be joint decision-making.

- Small groups are a very important site for peacebuilding work.

- An ongoing focus on relationships and working with others is important.

Peacebuilding sites

While the number of people involved in peacebuilding activities may be small, there is a great deal of diversity and creativity in the movement. Peacebuilding sites exist in a number of places and their range varies considerably. On one extreme, there is a village designed as a coexistence project between Israeli Jews and Arabs; on the other, there are projects involving 20 or 30 women.

Schools are involved in peacebuilding work. Under a previous Israeli Minister of Education, this was integrated into government policy. However, the current Minister is antithetical to such projects. Most projects involving schools are initiated from the outside, for example as outreach projects of centres. Some are educational projects; others involve the arts- drama, music, and visual arts. Still others involve environmental or resource use projects. Palestinians schools- neutral

There are peacebuilding sites at universities and joint public policy think tanks. Many peacebuilding projects involve the arts, including theatre (especially involving youth projects), visual arts (for example a project involve mosaics made collectively by Jewish and Palestinian youth), literature and poetry, and music.

The Internet is an important peacebuilding site. There are websites dedicated to information exchange, links with groups and organizations and on-line dialogues. These

sites are particularly important at times of high security when there is a clampdown on media.

Women's centres and informal groups of women are often involved in peacebuilding work.

Joint projects exist at the community level, for example clean up of villages, environmental projects. This is especially prevalent in the Galilee where there are adjacent villages/communities.

With the Intifada there has been a displacement of projects from Israel /Palestine. Many are occurring in outside countries, e.g. Greece or Turkey. Also means that groups that had worked together are now working in parallel.

Faith groups are a small but important site for peacebuilding work.

Peacebuilding agents

Women have always played a strong role as peacebuilding agents, both in women's organizations and as community activists. Children and youth are seen as very important and have been the target group of many projects, in schools, communities, and art projects. Much of the peacebuilding work occurs at the local level and there are many community activists, most of whom work without pay. Projects include producing magazines, doing training etc.

Health professionals, including physicians, mental health workers and alternative health practitioners are peace agents. Some are involved in international coalitions as well. Religious leaders are beginning to play an important role. Local community leaders, for example mayors, have a key role in setting the stage for peacebuilding work. People in diverse fields like academics, artists, and musicians are also working as agents for peace. Environmental activists and those working on agriculture, land use and resource use are beginning to get more involved as peace agents and their role is likely to grow.

A multi-track approach is needed. Informants have verified that it is not enough, for example, to just involve school children. For change to happen, parents and teachers must also be involved and they must often they must be trained.

An important group of peace agents are the reservists in the Israeli military who are refusing to serve in the occupied territory for ethical reasons. While this group is small, its influence will be felt and it has the potential of undermining the legitimacy of the occupation.

The group most identified as being a hindrance to peacebuilding is the political leadership, yet they are the only ones that have had a role in peace negotiations. This

points to a need to both open up the peace process to involve all levels of society and to work to bring different people into political decision-making or train those who are there.

SERBIA

While the war was going on in Croatia and Bosnia, indigenous non-governmental organizations as well as various United Nations agencies engaged in or supported third sector initiatives, primarily to assist victims of war and refugees. Humanitarian assistance has continued, centred more in Kosovo and the less developed regions of southern Serbia or places where populations are thought to be at risk. But the shift in focus elsewhere has been on democratization of Serbia and the protection and promotion of human rights. Individuals and institutions at many levels are involved in this project: government ministries, NGOs, international organizations, small-scale mini-projects.

In Serbia, peacebuilding NGOs focus on several types of strategies which are community-based: advocating for human rights/minority rights on the community level; encouraging, and providing the forum for, community-based dialogue; engaging in locally-driven job-creation and housing development programs. At the same time, several initiatives focus on strengthening the linkages between community and state, by advocating a more audible voice for community interests.

At government level the emphasis is placed on constitutional and legislative measures to protect minorities. It should be recalled that in Tito's time Yugoslavia was a multi-ethnic state *par excellence* with entrenched protections for cultural—specifically language—rights. So in some sense it is not the case of the wheel being re-invented. But we should not lose sight of the fact that inter-ethnic relations and relations between the majority and minority populations is first and foremost a political problem or issue, and secondarily a social and attitudinal one in Serbia.

The projects visited for this research used one or more of the following strategies for inter-ethnic reconciliation and democratization:

1. Focusing efforts at the level of the state and inter-state relations

An organization based in Novi Sad, the Center for Regionalism, has developed projects that aim at removing visa regimes and trade obstacles between the successor states of the former Yugoslavia (the so-called Igman Initiative). The Center's strategy consists of convening expert teams and proposing state agreements or legislation which would enhance these objectives. Various lobbying activities aimed directly at the state apparatus have been organized from time to time. The impetus for this project came from a Prague-based organization, the East-West Institute, which is involved in the development of civil society throughout Eastern Europe and Russia and works in close partnership with the European Union in helping to implement the Stability Pact.

2. Focusing efforts at inter-communal dialogue

This is one of the most popular and wide-spread forms of peacebuilding initiatives, probably because it entails little cost and can be as short- or long-term as the success of the dialogue. The Belgrade-based organization Fractal has sponsored several such dialogues, as has the Novi Sad based Panonija organization. Several models are followed in this strategy: (1) the problem-solving workshop, in which mid-level elite members are recruited from two sides of a conflict to develop an agenda and deal with specific problems; or (2) an open discussion (public forum) with an audience, usually on a subject that is removed from inter-ethnic conflict but which interests people universally (such as corruption).

3. Organized on-going activities

In Novi Pazar, a predominantly Muslim town in the Sandzak region, one of the largest and most active NGOs (Open Club Urban In) organizes English classes and computer classes for young people and their parents. They also sponsor concerts, community projects which are small scale in nature, art exhibitions, film showings, theatre performances, and literary evenings.

4. Election campaigning

Although there were no election campaigns underway during the research visit, many NGOs had played an important role, in conjunction with the student movement, *Otpor*, in encouraging voter turnout. They acknowledged help from Slovak organizations (see the Slovakia section of this report), and had used their models for campaigning (some of which were American-derived or influenced).

5. Focusing on faith-based organizational foundations

The international humanitarian organization, Catholic Relief Services, has decided to organize boys' groups along the Boy Scouts model, and claims it has met with significant success. The same international agency has also sponsored inter-faith dialogues (see communal dialogue, above).

6. Specific campaigns aimed at attitude change

The Federal Ministry of National and Ethnic Communities, a government agency involved in a wide range of activities and projects aimed at improving inter-ethnic relations in Serbia and Montenegro, has sponsored advertising campaigns with messages designed to increase

tolerance. A recent one used the slogan "Tolerantno je sarmantno" ("To be tolerant is to be charming"). Another was geared specifically to a traditional Serbian story about a peasant whose cow fell sick and who wished the same ill fortune for his neighbour (the Serbian trait of "inat" or spite). The campaign used the slogan "May my neighbour's cow also be healthy."

7. Research, information-gathering, and expert groups

The simple gathering of data on social problems can be an important step in understanding critical social issues. Two recent research projects undertaken by Serbian NGOs made significant contributions in this respect: one on attitudes about graft and corruption; and a second on problems of the Roma communities from the point of view of Roma NGOs. Other Serbian NGOs have sponsored expert study groups to consider constitutional changes in the quest for democratization and decentralization of government. One of the initiatives encountered in this research visit consisted of what was essentially a one-person committee: the Helsinki Committee for Human Rights in Sandzak. The individual in charge was deeply involved in research activities which ranged from the analysis of legislation on minorities to the collection of information and documentation on human rights abuses which had taken place during the war and in the present period.

8. Youth projects

The most common youth project takes the form of youth camps, which essentially remove young people from the location of the conflict to give them something of a breathing space and respite from the tension of the region.

Among the NGO personnel interviewed in Serbia there was a consensus that no project has much chance of being effective if it is not based in the community. Local activities were considered the most important and the most needed. The interviewees also stressed the need for longer-term projects and were critical of international agencies that used short time horizons, such as three or six months.

Problems arising from the projects

Our observations of projects and interviews with personnel involved in project design and implementation in Serbia led to some conclusions about problems arising from these types of projects, listed above. They can be summarized as follows:

- Some projects run the risk of being selective with respect to participants and therefore unfairly giving advantage to some in the community and not to others (youth camps are one example).

- Removing individuals from the contentious location (again, youth camps are an example) is a practice that tends not to focus on the problem arising within the

community but rather on the individuals who are part of the conflict. The impact is less effective than dealing with directly with the conflict within the community itself.

- Dialogue groups tend to be discrete isolated events without follow-up or long-term programming. The impact may be profound but it appears to be short-lived.

V   Funding and Evaluation Concerns

We found striking similarities among all four countries with respect to funding problems and issues around evaluation. Such issues as project design, project selection, implementation, accountability, and evaluation are all essential elements of the peacebuilding landscape, as well as the presence of the donor community and the impact of international or external funding. Our findings are summarized below for all of the cases, with exceptions and special circumstances noted where appropriate.

CONSTRAINTS ARISING FROM FUNDING RELATIONSHIPS

In all of the cases under study, the role of international funders is overwhelming. This is not to say that peacebuilding is well supported financially, but merely that many peacebuilding initiatives could not be undertaken were it not for international funding. Having said that, it must be added that the relationship between the donors and the projects is complex, and it is often politicized.

The relationship varies from one setting to the next. In general, lack of adequate funding was often mentioned as a problem, and particularly in Israel this has become critical in the current political climate. Many groups in Israel have never had funding; others who have seen their funding disappear are working with no pay. In Serbia, the laws are changing with respect to non-governmental organizations, apparently with a view to regularizing the environment and rationalizing funding that comes from government sources.

1. *Impact of funders' time frames on projects*

Overall, there appears to be a major gap in expectations between time frames established by funders and those established by project designers. There is a negative effect of prematurely ending funding based upon unrealistic time lines, in turn potentially undermining the sustainability of the peace achieved.

In all the settings studied, project leaders and program designers were frustrated by the expectation that results can be achieved in a short period of time (3 to 6 months, or even 12 months) in areas where change is likely to be accomplished only in the much longer term (e.g., attitude and behaviour change, or capacity building).

2. *Skewing/impacting upon proposal designs*

There is an acknowledged enormous and pivotal impact that an influx of external American and European Union (EU) international funding has had on setting the priorities and influencing the approach of peacebuilding groups and NGOs. This was

particularly noticeable in Slovakia and Serbia with respect to the targeting of minority rights issues. Without the leverage of EU membership or financial assistance, it is unlikely that Roma rights would receive much attention. This phenomenon should signal funders' attention to the motivations driving peacebuilding initiatives.

Funder-driven proposals also have been seen to result in the irrational allocation of resources, for example, the building of a community centre which no one in the community uses. The proposal for a community centre met the perceived expectations of the funder, and indeed the proposal was successful in obtaining funding. But the project served no useful purpose, and diverted scarce resources from more important targets.

The funders' means of evaluating and measuring a project's impact is often defined numerically and quantitatively. This approach can overlook peacebuilding initiatives that premise themselves on longitudinal Roma community capacity-building, to take one example.

In Israel/Palestine, for those groups receiving funding from sources such as the EU, the World Bank, US and other international funding sources, the experience has been much the same as in the other projects in our research. The funding process skews the design, projects are geared toward unrealistically short deadlines, and the bureaucracy required to complete the forms is seen as very onerous, especially for groups with inadequate staffing. However, a particular funding source, the Abraham Fund, was mentioned as being a good example of a partnership model.

In the occupied territories, government (PNA) funding is tied to a particular ideological perspective. To maintain their independence, some of the projects, e.g. schools, have declined this funding, relying instead upon payment from the parents or programme users. This has become a problem since many people are unemployed due to the closures.

3. *Efficiency issues for peacebuilding projects*

The bureaucratic necessity of accountability is resulting in increasingly onerous, inaccessible, and arduous proposal preparation process for community groups. Proposal-writing itself is understood as a skill that needs to be learned; one of the expressed needs we came across quite often in the course of the field work was training in NGO management and fundraising. In the meantime, funders are inadvertently placing enormous obstacles in the path of realizing peacebuilding projects by requiring complex and culturally inappropriate application procedures and accounting processes.

Often it is the case, moreover, that funds are awarded to organizations, projects, or initiatives which are not yet prepared to carry out the project (e.g., they are staffed by volunteers lacking experience in project and personnel management or in handling and accounting for large sums of money). This state of affairs can create additional tensions

with communities and lead to increased fracturing. We found this particularly to be the case among fledgling Roma community organizations.

Many NGO personnel expressed dismay at the skills required simply to apply for funding from international bodies. The bureaucratic procedures involved in the application process were overwhelming in many cases (a criticism targeted especially at the European Union), while in others the personnel felt they were spending too much time on fundraising and not enough on delivering assistance to the client populations.

4. *Political and conceptual assessment*

Funders have their own—often unexpressed—political agendas. Frequently it is the case that what appears to make sense and to be desirable to the external funder may be in fact politically difficult for the host society. Looking at the Slovakia case, for example, it would be necessary to note that the development of a robust Roma civic society is likely to prove unpopular with national political elites, yet this is an explicit condition for EU membership. The enabling of Roma community groups to have a coherent common voice to lobby their government may be seen as problematic.

Second, we have noted cases where funding has been misguided because it is overly dependent upon the political/analytical bias and paradigm of the assessors. An example would be the passive acceptance of the Slovak government view that the issue is one of Roma problems rather than Slovak racism and policies.

Looking at the Northern Ireland case, we note that there is reluctance by funders to support potentially contentious groups or sectors. Ex-paramilitary prisoners' groups (both nationalist and loyalist, totaling around 25,000 people) working to re-integrate their members are experiencing particular funding difficulties, in part tied to elements of social opposition.

Whereas the particular role of women is acknowledged and evaluated within peacebuilding and development projects, there is barely a mention anywhere of class issues. The Northern Ireland case, as an example, is overlaid with class issues, which are poorly understood by international donor organizations, and with which they may be uncomfortable. Although Canadian society may well have conceptual difficulties with this type of analysis, the reality on the ground in Northern Ireland is deeply infused with class perspectives and class identities.

Assessing the political landscape is an essential pre-condition for funders contemplating entry into a conflict zone to support peacebuilding initiatives. In the host society, many players compete for a place at the table; it is vital to get a balanced and fair reading of which players should be supported. In Serbia, for example, there was frequent and bitter reference made to "anti-war profiteers," namely individuals and organizations that had substantial funding from international NGOs but had little to show for it in terms of actual achievements other than attendance at international conferences. Sometimes

those who have more resources to begin with are most successful at getting the attention of donor organizations but may be the least effective in terms of peacebuilding.

Consultation with the targeted communities would seem a vital step in this process. Our informants reflected the view within peacebuilding organizations that there seems to be a distinct lack of experiential knowledge within funding agencies of the complexity, importance, and nature of community development work in the context of peacebuilding.

EVALUATION ISSUES

5. *Self-evaluation and funder-evaluation*

One of the least understood areas for peacebuilders is project evaluation. Virtually all the informants spoken to in the course of this research made reference to the need for evaluation. Within their framework, evaluation is a tool that can potentially improve conceptual design and implementation of projects and can identify areas of need. Evaluation can provide valuable feedback and contribute to increased efficiency.

Problems are compounded because the funders' own criteria for evaluating project success are themselves underdeveloped. The funders' means of evaluating and measuring a project's impact is often defined numerically and quantitatively. This approach can overlook peacebuilding initiatives that premise themselves on longitudinal community capacity-building. As noted above with reference to Roma community initiatives, this issue is particularly germane in the case of Slovakia, where the peacebuilding work is essentially of a preventative nature; it is difficult to see how evaluation can be done.

Many project leaders and project funders declared that they carry out their own self-evaluations. In Israel, some of the ongoing groups did work on attitudinal change, for example doing pre-and post-attitudinal surveys before and after a particular program. Some of the evaluation was more anecdotal, for example, if youth involved in a project came back the next year to help or spread the information to their younger siblings. Many projects in Serbia also asserted that they did self-evaluations, but when pressed for details, however, none was forthcoming, and the objectivity of such a process is highly questionable.

6. *"Results based management" approaches*

There is an unquestioned presupposition by funders that community groups need to emulate and adopt a private sector/small business approach to community development

and in their dealings with their community.   This is not necessarily culturally appropriate for the type of work being done.

The ideology of good business practice and results-based management leads to an evaluation approach that inherently targets practical social needs (e.g., employment training, micro-economic projects, infrastructure improvement and physical construction) without giving adequate weight to the embedding of any new linkages of communication between communities. The Northern Ireland conflict is a perfect example wherein both communities have historically worked in the same environment yet do not discuss problems with each other, nor do they socialize.

External funders understand conflict within a paradigm of implementable project objectives that coincide with fluctuating government interests in particular regions of the world. Further, this crisis-response mode of peacebuilding defines "success" as a cessation of open violence and a sustainable status quo of a re-established government supreme authority. This approach flies in the face of the understanding of many community-based peacebuilding groups. Outside funders tend to look for a "product" at the end of the project, a measurable outcome. Peacebuilding projects are at a severe disadvantage in such a system because their outcomes are not easily measured, and certainly not in the time-frames most international NGOs prefer.

7. *Sustainability*

Sustainability, or capacity-building, is practically a mantra among donor organizaitons and NGOs. Few in our experience actually understood what these terms meant, and could not really define them. Practitioners did have similar issues—lack of time, lack of money, lack of support (criticized by both sides, in the case of Israel/Palestine). They complained of having no time for reflection, no opportunity to bridge theory and practice to give meaning to what they had been doing. One of the informants suggested that peace and coexistence work ought to become an industry, i.e., that it needs to become something that is supported financially in an ongoing way, rather than something that people do as volunteer work in their spare time.

This was a difficult issue that was more certainly in the forefront in Northern Ireland as our research visit coincided with pervasive lay-offs in the peacebuilding sectors as the EU Peace Funding (Part 1) had come to an end.

Peacebuilding project leaders in Serbia were in some cases critical of short-term training programs that lacked follow-up or practical application. It is one thing to offer a communications workshop or public forum discussion, but quite another to repeat the experience many times over a long period of time and to provide guided implementation opportunities. Moreover, there can be little in the way of capacity-building and sustainability if there is no financial commitment from the host government.

8. *Evaluation and accountability*

There is a relationship between evaluation and accountability which joins the financial with the substantive. Despite the above noted concerns regarding insistence on "results-based management" and evaluation/accountability, there is clearly the need for some kind of system that provides useful information for both funder and project leader. Obviously funders need assurance that funds are being spent appropriately, but they also need to review accountability practices with the projects themselves and with the communities involved.

The need for accountability and evaluation was expressed indirectly through a preference for ongoing action research, whether formal or not, as important in the ongoing design and adaptation of programmes. Nearly all our informants expressed the desire to hear more about what other people both within and outside the country were doing and would be interested in information-sharing, preferably on a face-to-face basis. This was a sure indication that the concern is to know whether their practice is effective.

VI   CONCLUSIONS AND
POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

In an age of fairly constant militarized inter-cultural conflict, the public eye is focused largely on state-level diplomatic negotiations. It has become increasingly clear, however, that the win-lose paradigm enshrined in historical agreements has little or no relevance to the current round of conflicts. Human security begins at the level of the community; now, communities themselves are taking the task of peacebuilding into their own hands. Whether private charities or non-governmental organizations or national or international governmental agencies, donor bodies ignore this phenomenon at their peril.

While peacebuilding has been going on ever since war began to be waged, in the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries this sector has burgeoned and professionalized to an unprecedented degree. Governments, civil society, and communities alike invest enormous resources in these initiatives with the full expectation that the investment will yield significant dividends.

Community-based peacebuilding addresses not only issues of inter-cultural and inter-state militarized conflict but other sorts of problems. Some of these lie latent and carry the potential for escalation; community activists are often motivated by the desire to transform such latent conflicts before they escalate, in the hope of building a more sustained democratically-based peaceful society. It is sometimes the case that fundamental problems need to be solved which on the surface may have no specific relationship to inter-ethnic conflict. Slovakia and Serbia serve as examples: both are East European societies in some sort of ill-defined transition, with weakened economies; both have experienced crypto-fascist leaderships over the past decade; in both countries we find a parochial conception of citizenship and civic rights as being dependent upon national cultural identity; the dominant political culture appears to be anti-liberal and even anti-democratic. Both have a history of problematic relationships with the respective minority populations: Slovakia, like Northern Ireland, has separate and segregated communities, and to some extent the same can be said of Serbia. Moreover, all four states under study here have a noticeable inequality between the communities in conflict; with one having more resources, experience, and knowledge in community peacebuilding than the other community. Efforts to develop democratic culture and to raise consciousness regarding inter-ethnic communication are necessary in order to lay the foundation for co-existence. The development of inter-cultural security rests on the capacity of communities themselves, and not just state-level negotiators, to devise workable relationships.

SUMMARY OBSERVATIONS

- **Conceptual frameworks**

Our research has yielded a rich and diverse picture of community-based peacebuilding initiatives. Slovakia, Northern Ireland, and Serbia are using models of legislative change involving affirmative action, citizenship rights, and anti-discrimination laws. Further, all four countries studied utilize models emphasizing relational and attitudinal shifts, as well as development of community capacities. There is a conscious awareness that legislative change is a vital—but not sufficient—component of developing human security within communities; at the same time, legislative action is deemed to be the backbone of social change, but ineffective without concomitant change at the level of the community.

Peacebuilding discourse in all the contexts studied here share certain common essential analytical elements: history, religion, immigration or other forms of population movement, government policies, structural inequalities, community identities and discourses, working class issues, increased militarization, and increased space for peacebuilding after the cessation of violence.

While commonalities can be observed among the theoretical underpinnings that inform project design in each of these countries, there is nonetheless an overwhelming sense that many project workers feel they are working in isolation, and long to share ideas and experience with their counterparts working in other areas of conflict, and to acquire more knowledge of a theoretical nature. We discuss this issue further in "Policy Recommendations," below.

- **Peacebuilding strategies**

Certain common strategies have evolved in each of the cases: youth-focused projects could be found among all four countries, in which community-based initiatives sought to enhance opportunities for young people outside the conflict environment. These met with varying success, however. Other common strategies that could be found among projects in all four cases included: problem-focused strategies; joint problem-solving within and between communities; campaigns with specific objectives (i.e., community efforts for "getting out the vote" in national elections); community-based activities with very broad, general, and somewhat unfocused objectives (i.e., bake sales featuring dishes prepared by different ethno-cultural groups from within the community); health-care-focused initiatives; and employment projects.

In Serbia, peacebuilding is interpreted more specifically as democracy-building, and there is a more focused effort to develop attitudes of inclusion, tolerance, and justice characteristic of well-developed civil society. These issues are shared in Slovakia, where changing the attitudes of the majority population toward the minority populations is seen as part and parcel of democratic development.

- **Funding and evaluation issues**

Nearly all projects observed in this research faced funding and evaluation problems. Problems that appeared to be shared in common included: the need to gear proposals toward the expectations of the donor; lack of long-term funding; the inappropriateness of evaluation methods based on measurable outcomes; the complexity of funding application procedures. Accountability as a concept is understood but variably applied. As merely one example, Slovakia, like Northern Ireland, faces the daunting funding process of the EU and its ancillary paradigm of peacebuilding that is both short-term and framed within the results-based management ideology.

Broadly speaking, there was widespread support among all projects for an improved system of project evaluation for NGOs and community-based groups. There is an understanding at least in the abstract that evaluation and accountability can be positive tools for improving pedagogy and evaluating the effectiveness of initiatives.

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

In the following recommendations, we have followed as closely as possible the needs expressed by our informants, which we found easily crossed national and cultural boundaries and could be applied to all of the cases studied. A summary list of these recommendations can be found in Appendix I.

Context assessment

There cannot be too much emphasis on this important point: the need to evaluate and assess the context prior to implementing or funding a peacebuilding initiative is a vital prerequisite. There were complaints about the inappropriate adaptation of project designs to particular cultural contexts. This problem can be avoided by making donor agencies more aware of the need to assess context and to frame calls for proposals in context-specific ways. To avoid the problem of donor-driven proposals, funding agencies and international donor bodies should engage in an initial consultation with potential recipients to learn more about the needs of the client populations.

The co-participation of community groups in context assessment is likely to improve the chances of success for projects.

Evaluation and accountability

The set of questions around evaluating project success/failure suggests a number of recommendations:

(1) For donor organizations, international funding agencies, and community-based peacebuilding organizations, there should be a well-designed, appropriate system in place to evaluate peacebuilding projects and to allow an ongoing system of monitoring. Accountability is, naturally, of great importance to funding bodies, but it is also important for NGOs themselves, who can benefit from improved management of limited resources.

(2) Donor agencies' own criteria for evaluation may be underdeveloped. If they have adopted a results-based management approach to evaluation, their results may be inaccurate and lead to skewed funding decisions. Rather than discard the RBM approach altogether, a better one could be developed based on a mutual negotiation with the funded group to define "success" to include measuring behavioural and attitudinal changes.

(3) Measuring genuine and sustained attitudinal change (internal change) in conflict areas can be problematic, to say the least, but donors and recipients alike should work together to develop ways in which this can be done.

(4) Fund recipients need (and indeed would welcome) evaluation and accountability systems that are appropriate to the kind of work they are doing.

(5) The lack of an assessment/evaluation tool to include working-class areas and groups can result in funding having only a minimal impact in those strategic communities, thereby undermining the overall goal of peacebuilding.

(6) There should be more emphasis on evaluation as a tool for improving practice, rather than a device to be used in a bureaucratic emergency.

(7) Donors and recipients should work together to develop evaluation tools that reflect the long-term multifaceted nature of peace work.

(8) On matters of evaluation and accountability, dialogue with other practitioners should be fostered.

Research/ Reflection

The comparative multi-case approach of this study enabled the researchers to highlight the similarities and differences in approaches to peacebuilding in several very different contexts. We found on the part of our informants an intense curiosity about what others were doing in other countries. There was an expressed need to learn from others, even from those in very different situations.

Individuals working at the community level, often in highly adverse conditions, suffer from a sense of isolation—not only from others doing similar work, but even from the donors funding them. They spoke of the need to share what they are doing and a desire to hear from others. The lack of time was mentioned often—no time to think about what they are doing in broader, theoretical terms, because of the pressing and urgent nature of their work. Practitioners in the field would like to have opportunities to reflect, share

experiences, and link theory and practice, to see, for example, what makes it possible for deep-rooted attitudes to change.

Conditions in the field change so rapidly when conflict (even if it is low intensity) is taking place that there is a need for ongoing research and reflection at regular intervals by impartial observers. We recommend continued support for research on peacebuilding activities.

Proceeding from what we have observed and learned from practitioners, we recommend establishing an international network of NGO community-based workers (not administrators) with funding to enable a meeting once a year to document and share experiences. We would recommend the establishment of a global network inaugurated through such a conference which would bring together practitioners, donor representatives, and academics—to share and develop ideas about evaluation, research, theory, etc.

Information sharing

Aside from the need to share experiences and ideas in a reflective environment such as a conference or annual meeting, there are also more concrete information needs. We found that there was duplication of effort and lack of awareness about important projects within the same country. In at least one case (Serbia), there was an expressed need for a database to document missions, purposes, donor support, activities, and achievements of individual projects and non-governmental organizations. This need was expressed despite the fact that several databases already exist—but they were considered to be inadequate and became obsolete quickly.

We recommend the creation and regular maintenance of a database to document community-based initiatives in peacebuilding to avoid duplication of effort and to enhance information sharing among donor countries, agencies, local NGOs, and community-based groups.

Training

While many practitioners in the field are well-versed in the vocabulary of peacebuilding and conflict resolution, there are areas where further training is needed. For example, there were specific cases in which the need was expressed for facilitators and opinion leaders to undergo compulsory training to ensure impartiality in the process.

We recommend that a survey be made of training requirements in selected fields, and to provide training initially through conference gatherings and, if there is need, to provide targeted training exercises for specific groups, individuals, and projects.

Funding

What we hear clearly from our informants in this study is that there are numerous problems encountered by community-based groups over the issue of funding channeled from foreign donors or government bodies through local representatives and local projects. These problems include: an onerous bureaucratic procedure for funding application; ideological strings attached to funding, often in the form of preferred projects, leading to donor-driven project proposals; short time-frames for project life; a sense of irrelevance to genuine political circumstances (for example, failing to recognize that in the midst of intense conflict, when funding sources tend to dry up, the work is most needed); lack of funding for income-generating projects.

A thoroughgoing and self-critical analysis of donor and agency funding would be a welcome exercise in order to overcome some of these problems. We recommend a more rationalized and culturally appropriate funding process; a greater focus on support for projects that stand a good chance of becoming genuinely self-sustaining and that create sustained employment for communities in conflict; and a longer time perspective in funding. We also recommend that donors be made aware of groups that are particularly disadvantaged (e.g., Roma communities) who may not be able to be source funding in ways that majority populations may. To this end, we recommend that donor publications and application materials be made available in all languages of relevance to the region in question. We recommend a re-thinking of results-based management in the funding process and a firm recognition that peacebuilding projects often do not lead to tangible, measurable results although they may be very successful.

We recommend that no funding should go to military purposes.

Promoting structural/cultural changes at the macro level

Finally, it is worth repeating that support for community-based peacebuilding initiatives is one of the significant ways in which long-term change leading to democratic and peaceful coexistence among communities in conflict can be fostered. At the same time, we recommend that donors and agencies pay attention to efforts at structural and cultural change which can be promoted within the community but also through other channels, such as trade and diplomacy.

We recommend political support for enhanced human rights legislation, such as the protection of minority languages in schools and other official locations; for the ending of disciminatory laws and practices (e.g. around army service); and for the support of a civilian alternative to military service.

Appendix I

Summary of Recommendations

1. Donor agencies should evaluate and assess the context prior to implementing or funding a peacebuilding initiative.

2. Funding agencies and international donor bodies should engage in an initial consultation with potential recipients to learn more about the needs of the client populations.

3. We recommend a more rationalized and culturally appropriate funding process; a greater focus on support for projects that stand a good chance of becoming genuinely self-sustaining and that create sustained employment for communities in conflict; and a longer time perspective in funding.

4. Donors should be made aware of groups that are particularly disadvantaged (e.g., Roma communities) who may not be able to be source funding in ways that majority populations can. To this end, we recommend that donor publications and application materials be made available in all languages of relevance to the region in question. We recommend a re-thinking of results-based management in the funding process and a firm recognition that peacebuilding projects often do not lead to tangible, measurable results although they may be very successful.

5. There is a need for well-designed, appropriate systems to evaluate peacebuilding projects and to allow an ongoing system of monitoring.

6. Rather than discard the RBM approach altogether, a better one could be developed based on a mutual negotiation with the funded group to define "success" to include measuring behavioural and attitudinal changes. Donors and recipients alike should work together to develop ways in which this can be done.

7. The time frame for projects is critically important in standards of evaluation: to be effective, most peacebuilding initiatives at the community level require much longer periods of time than can normally be accommodated within the institutional RBM approach.

8. Donors and recipients must also work together to develop evaluation tools that reflect the multifaceted nature of peace work.

9. There should be more emphasis on evaluation as a tool for improving practice, rather than a device to be used in a bureaucratic emergency.

10. On the question of evaluation and accountability, dialogue with other practitioners should be fostered.

11. Impartial, scholarly research on peacebuilding activities should be encouraged. The sharing of research results with practitioners and administrators should also be funded.

12. We recommend establishing an international network of NGO community-based workers (not administrators) with funding to enable an annual meeting to document and share experiences. A global network inaugurated through such a conference which would bring together practitioners, donor representatives, and academics—to share and develop ideas about evaluation, research, theory, etc.

13. We recommend the creation and regular maintenance of a database to document community-based initiatives in peacebuilding to avoid duplication of effort and to enhance information sharing among donor countries, embassies, agencies, local NGOs, and community-based groups.

14. We recommend that a survey be made of training requirements in selected fields, and to provide training initially through conference gatherings and, if there is need, to provide targeted training exercises for specific groups, individuals, and projects.

15. We recommend that no funding should go to military purposes, and that donors make a determination that their funding is not being used to support military activities.

16. Donors and agencies should pay attention to efforts at structural and cultural change which can be promoted within the community but also through other channels, such as trade and diplomacy.

17. We recommend political support for enhanced human rights legislation, such as the protection of minority languages in schools and other official locations; for the ending of discriminatory laws and practices (e.g. around army service); and for the support of a civilian alternative to military service.

Appendix II

General Reminder Notes on Peacebuilding Analysis

A number of general self-reflective reminders can aid our understanding of conflict and peacebuilding:

(1) Our discussions on a conflict often descend into a good/bad judgment of disputants.

(2) We simplify the complexities in our quest to make sense of the dynamics.

(3) We mistakenly assume communities and identities are cohesive and monolithic. We may overlook that a particular class or group within the community may be impacted/disadvantaged in deeper ways.

(4) Though communities may live literally next door, the distance between their respective social identities can be a world apart.

(5) The psycho/social/emotional dynamics of fear, mistrust, insecurity, segregation and poverty are powerful factors in the escalation of a societal conflict.

(6) An initiative's success depends upon the trust and credibility accorded it within a community. Local knowledge with local information, contacts and networks are often under-appreciated and under-supported.

(7) Women and mothers are key transmitters of information in the home and in a community, both in terms of inculcating children as well as fostering social cohesion.

(8) There is a propensity in government funding frameworks to put monies into policies of security rather than social development.

Appendix III

List of Organizations and Projects Consulted

NORTHERN IRELAND

Breaking the Silence

COISTE

Corrymeela

EPIC

Greenway Women's Centre

Queen's University (Belfast)

Mediation Network

Peace and Reconciliation Group

Rural Community Mediation Network

Spirit of Enniskillen

Springfield Intercommunity Development Project

Ulster Peoples College

Youth Council

ISRAEL/PALESTINE

Imut

Touch in Peace

Mifgash

Peacemaker Community, Israel

Peace Child Israel

Windows Magazine

House of Hope

Hope Flowers School

Neve Shalom- Wahat al-Salam (Oasis of Peace)

Blues for Peace

Beyond Words

Centre for Conflict Resolution and Reconciliation CCRR, Bethlehem

International Forum for the Culture of Peace (IFLAC)

Jerusalem City Farmers

Good Neighbours Project

Link to the Environment

The Bridge: Jewish and Arab Women for Peace in the Middle East

SERBIA

Belgrade:

Federal Ministry of National and Ethnic Communities

Freedom House

United Nations Liaison Office

Agencija Argument

Fractal

Catholic Relief Service

Novi Pazar:

Helsinki Committee for Human Rights in Sandzak

Urban In Community Centre

Novi Sad:

Otvoreni Klub

Centar za regionalizam

Panonija (Dobrotvorno Drustvo Centar za Neprofitni Sektor)

SLOVAKIA

Civil Society Development Foundation

Kalligram Foundation

Pontis Foundation

Milana Simecka Foundation

Institute for Public Affairs

Forum Institute

Sandor Marai Foundation

Slovak Republican Secretariat for Roma Communities