



**Active Learning Network on Accountability
and Performance in Humanitarian Action**

**A Synthesis of Evaluations of Peacebuilding
Activities Undertaken by Humanitarian
Agencies and Conflict Resolution Organisations**

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This synthesis report of evaluations of peacebuilding interventions by humanitarian agencies pulls together 15 country case studies, of which roughly half concern third party humanitarian agencies while the rest can be categorized as conflict resolution/transformation organizations. Recognizing that there is new-found interest in peacebuilding, though it is not a new field, this report aims to contribute to the debate around possible criteria and the need for conceptual frameworks for assessing such interventions. The central argument of the paper is that peacebuilding is not simply a technical exercise and, as such, requires new ways of viewing and assessing it.

The paper is primarily written for the Active Learning Network on Accountability and Performance in Humanitarian Action (ALNAP). Accordingly, the paper draws out key accountability and performance issues, including:

- ! the internal and external pressures on humanitarian agencies to be engaged in peacebuilding (section 1);
- ! the difficulties in assessing peacebuilding activities (section 1);
- ! the difficulties created by the international humanitarian system's inadequate emphasis on learning (section 1);
- ! the lack of clarity over terminology (sections 1 & 6);
- ! the necessity for more (qualitative and quantitative) evaluations (section 2);
- ! the need for appropriate criteria (section 4);
- ! the recognition of the limits and capacities of humanitarian and conflict resolution agencies to successfully contribute to peace processes (sections 4 & 5); and,
- ! the requirement for an improved conceptual understanding of the issues by agencies and donors (section 7).

An important finding is the fact that neither humanitarian nor conflict resolution agencies bring peace in themselves. There are many other factors involved in creating the conditions for peace. The crux of the issue is the extent to which humanitarian and conflict resolution agencies contribute to peacebuilding, if at all. Overall, the reviewed texts give some insights into the impact of these interventions. They produced mixed results, though mostly positive, at the local level, reaching a small proportion of the population. More research is called for to find out the impact on peace processes by this portion of the population, be it the direct beneficiaries, representatives from the warring parties, or local non-governmental organizations.

The success of humanitarian organizations engaged in peacebuilding seems to be dependent

upon the clear and evident link between these activities and their humanitarian work. Negotiations to ensure access to humanitarian actors is quite a different thing from negotiations to bring peace in its own right. Though the latter may be desirable, humanitarian organizations run the risk of creating adverse consequences for their clients, other agencies, and humanitarian principles. According to the reviewed texts, limited peacebuilding activities, usually with an emphasis on the technical side and with the goal of furthering the humanitarian work, is acceptable and often successful.

Conflict resolution/transformation agencies were also mostly successful in carrying out the more overtly political aspects of peacebuilding. For these agencies, an important lesson is to not to take on government-government activities. For both types of agencies, the recognition of their limits and the need to improve their capacities are key lessons drawn out by this report.

As the paper is concerned with the content of peacebuilding interventions and the methodologies employed to evaluate them, it makes the case that both agencies and evaluators need to acquire specialist skills and knowledge in order to be more effective at understanding and affecting peace processes. Similarly, donor organizations have a responsibility to critically reflect on their role and to act in ways which ensures that peacebuilding is not just a fashionable area for their funding; it has to be considered in a systematic and objective way. The paper concludes with a call on agencies and donors alike to progress current initiatives and to develop transitional thinking in order to cope with what many call 'transitional' wars.

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Comments

Comments on this report can be sent to ALNAP via email on <alnap@odi.org.uk> or via post to ALNAP Secretariat, Overseas Development Institute, 111 Westminster Bridge Road, London, SE1 7JD. Copies will be sent to the author. Comments may be used in future ALNAP publications and/or meetings.

1. INTRODUCTION

Since the end of the Cold War, the international community has been struggling to meet the challenges brought about by fundamental changes in the nature and number of wars, the corresponding proliferation of international actors, and changes in flows of financial assistance. The world which harbours these wars has also markedly changed. Globalization and the neo-liberal democratic model lauded by Northern governments are key in shaping the post-Cold War world.

A world in transition leaves the development and humanitarian communities much to adjust to. One adaptation made by some in the aid community has been to embrace peacebuilding activities. However, some in and outside of the aid community greet this advent with scepticism backed by concerns that these currently fashionable activities drain much needed financial resources from other programmes. Moreover, it is argued by some humanitarians and academics that peacebuilding undertaken by humanitarian agencies separates them from their value base.

Within such a context, this synthesis report is concerned with the content of peacebuilding interventions by humanitarian agencies and the methodologies employed to evaluate them. The paper examines 13 reports¹ which analyse peacebuilding activities, of which roughly half concern third party humanitarian agencies while the rest can be categorized as conflict resolution/transformation organizations. The aim is to contribute to the debate around possible criteria and conceptual frameworks for assessing such interventions. The paper puts forward the case that peacebuilding is not simply a technical exercise and, as such, requires new ways of viewing and assessing it.

1.1 This Paper's Structure

The primary audience for this paper is the Active Learning Network on Accountability and Performance (ALNAP).² Working from the premise that peacebuilding activities impact on and are impacted by the political, social, cultural and economic spheres, this paper takes the position that the analysis of the reviewed studies must be contextualized. To establish the

¹ References to the reviewed texts are in **bold**.

² ALNAP is a network of donor governments, UN agencies, the Red Cross/Crescent movements, NGOs, and academics/researchers. According to the Information Note (June 1998), ALNAP's overall goal is "to improve the quality and accountability of humanitarian assistance programmes by providing a forum for the identification and dissemination of best practice and the building of consensus on common approaches." Specifically, it wants to identify and uphold best practices in relation to monitoring, reporting, and evaluating humanitarian assistance. It aims to move towards a common understanding of "accountability" also in relation to humanitarian assistance.

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broader context, section 1 outlines the issues involved and indicates the pressures and desires behind this move towards peacebuilding.

Section 2 then focuses on the surveyed samples by looking at the basis for inclusion, describing the basic content of the studies, and highlighting the approach of the evaluators. Section 3 proceeds to overlay the peacebuilding evaluations onto a matrix developed in this report. The matrix was created to overcome the difficulties associated with comparing the reports, difficulties which stem from the diversity of programmes and actors. Moreover, it reflects methodological difficulties encountered by the evaluators. Drawing out points from the matrix, section 4 analyses the criteria and methodologies of the evaluations. A key issue is whether traditional evaluative criteria are appropriate for this type of work.

Section 5 examines the assessment of the interventions by highlighting the type of activities being carried out and the ethical stance/value base of the intervening agencies. In Section 6, the paper pins the evaluations to the key notions of peace, peacebuilding, and conflict -- the very concepts which should underpin the interventions. The conclusion summarizes the main issues and links these to implications and recommendations. Finally, as this paper makes a case against the indiscriminate use of terms, there is an annex which uses current literature to define key terms.

In sum, the paper is structured like an hour-glass. It broadly examines the current methodological issues and then hones in on the detailed specifics of the studies. The analysis of the content of the interventions moves from the particulars of the studies to the wider issue of appropriate frameworks.

1.2 Setting The Context

As the studies reviewed in this report are concerned with internal wars, it is important to sketch out the nature and scale of these conflicts. Post World War II wars are largely regarded as internal in nature and this trend has significantly increased since the end of the Cold War. Early on, however, it should be noted that the term 'internal war' is problematic. It does not adequately indicate the fact that 'internal wars' often cross international state borders as part of their tactical operations (e.g. Uganda and Sudan). Moreover, external actors can be extremely influential in shaping an internal war through indirect funding (e.g. oil profits in Colombia), supplying soldiers and military equipment (e.g. Rwanda's involvement in the wars in DR Congo), and political manoeuvring (e.g. the protective alliance Russia offers Serbia in the Kosovo conflict).

In lieu of more appropriate terminology, this paper will use the term 'internal war' as it is currently applied. Internal wars tend to be protracted crises associated with economic and political collapse or fragmentation which is exacerbated by predatory social formations usually along ethno-nationalist lines (Goodhand & Hulme, 1997; Duffield, 1997). Compounding concerns over internal wars is the fact that there are more of them and they occur in new places. A 1996 study found that since 1989, there had only been five state-state wars out of 96 armed conflicts (Stremlau, 1998). Joining the fray are conflicts in areas previously shackled by the constraints of the East-West confrontation, namely those in Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union.

Another feature which characterizes internal wars is the violent relationship between combatants and civilians. In a post Cold War world, 90% of casualties are civilians compared with earlier this century when 90% of casualties were soldiers (Stremlau, 1998). Since the end of World War II more than 45 million people have died as a result of armed conflict (Ball & Halevy, 1996). There are over 42 million refugees and internally displaced persons globally (van de Veen, 1998). The other part of the story is the social destruction, material damage, and environmental costs. The summation are humanitarian crises which are referred to as complex emergencies.

In response, the global amount of overseas development assistance (oda) spent on humanitarian aid³ has increased from about 2% in 1980 to 10% in 1994 (Borton & Macrae, 1997). However, the overall oda is declining. Yet, there has been a proliferation of the number of non-governmental organizations⁴ (NGOs) vying for those resources. Duffield (1997) argues that NGOs are getting into the business of selling their commercial product and increasing their market share -- a 'privatization' of aid.

At the same time, there are concerns that the end of the Cold War also brought with it a donor strategy to use aid in lieu of political engagement, especially for non-strategic areas, a process dubbed the 'politicization' of aid (Duffield, 1997; Hendrickson, 1998). In his assessment of conflict resolution NGOs, Duffield (1997) found it interesting that donors accepted and promoted 'private diplomacy'. This relates to the idea of 'multi-track diplomacy' where track I is official government-government interaction and track II is unofficial, non-governmental diplomacy (Lewer & Ramsbotham, 1993). Track II activities should complement track I activities. However, there is concern that unofficial activities are being used as a substitute for official interactions (Large, 1998). Peacebuilding activities by humanitarian agencies are part of that trend towards 'private diplomacy'.

Aid which is 'privatized' and 'politicized' is open to scrutiny given the competitive market and the desire to ensure that donor aims are promoted. A product of this scrutiny has been the recent attempts to evaluate peacebuilding activities. Illustrating this fact, the bulk (61%) of the reports reviewed are from 1997. The two reports which are the old-timers of the lot were

³ For the purposes of this paper, the term 'aid' will be used interchangeably with 'humanitarian aid'.

⁴ In the literature, the term 'NGO' is sometimes used to simply refer to non-governmental organizations but it is also used as a composite term to include the International Federation of the Red Cross/Crescent, and agencies in the United Nations and the European Union.

published 1994 and both centre on the same USAID programme in El Salvador.

Add to all this the pervasive yet selective media coverage of conflicts, negative public perceptions of aid, and the containment policies of many donor governments and it becomes clear that humanitarian aid is manoeuvring in a highly pressurized political context. The logic within this context demands that humanitarian aid should 'do more than just save lives'. In this climate, humanitarian agencies can and should add peacebuilding to their 'to do' check list. The case for the external pressures has been made but it is also important to recognize the legitimate desire among humanitarian actors to stop wars and the subsequent suffering. There is also a desire not to sanction the crimes of war associated with the creation of 'ethnically pure areas,' and therefore agencies adopt a peacebuilding strategy. UNICEF and Care's school based health and peace work was predicated on this (**Ajdukovic & Busko, 1997**). On the practical side, building trust through peacebuilding activities is necessary 'to get the work done' as was the case with the Humanitarian Assistance Coordination Unit in Angola (**Ball & Campbell, 1998**).

It is not within the mandate of this paper to delve deeply into the context in which aid operates. However, it is important to outline the issues and to indicate the pressures and desires as to why humanitarian agencies make peacebuilding claims. A key question for further research is how these pressures and desires impact upon the outcomes of the intervention. The issue is whether or not wrong decisions are produced because of these pressures and desires.

1.3 The Problems Of Peacebuilding By Humanitarian Agencies

A crucial question is whether humanitarian agencies should be involved with peacebuilding. Critics note that peacebuilding is based on naive notions and unchallenged assumptions. Sometimes in a paternalistic way which conjures up memories of imperialistic attitudes, agencies assume that they can identify and support local capacities. In a highly politicized environment, this is questionable. Voutira and Brown (1995) note that agencies often work without analysing the power dynamics between stakeholders.

There is also the set of issues connected with the fact that peacebuilding is a political process, the activities of which may not comply with the underlying principles of humanitarianism. The introduction of an activity which could be perceived as overtly political, by an actor who should be impartial and non-political, in an environment which is rife with power dynamics, may bring negative consequences to the agency's clients, its activities, and to the wider humanitarian community working alongside that agency.

Another concern is that the instruments available to humanitarian agencies are weak compared to those of their powerful economic and political counterparts which perpetuate conflict (Hendrickson, 1998). From a 'politicized' aid perspective, Hendrickson (1998:6) points out that:

The recent failings of the international community in the face of massive human suffering can perhaps best be understood in terms of the growing incompatibility between the responses being proffered and the kinds of problems being addressed and

the starting point for such a debate is perhaps recognition that humanitarian aid was not conceived to solve the problems it is now expected to tackle.

At the crux is whether activities within the realm of privatized diplomacy are insufficient and perhaps insignificant without the ability to pull on political, military, and economic levers. If one even partially accepts the arguments around privatized and politicized aid then there is doubt over whose agenda is being promoted. Accordingly, humanitarian agencies, as members of civil society, need to define their relationship to the state (Voutira & Brown, 1995). At issue is whether or not the pressures on humanitarian agencies cloud or impair their ability to critically analyse the conflicts they are involved in and the peace which they are attempting to build.

1.4 The Challenges Of Evaluating Peacebuilding Activities

Even though organizations such as Peace Brigades International and International Alert have been working in the field of peacebuilding for over 18 and 13 years respectively, the methodology for evaluating peacebuilding activities is underdeveloped, a fact which was repeatedly mentioned in the documents utilized in this paper. This research reveals that there is no norm for evaluating peacebuilding B a kind of 'methodological anarchy'⁵ prevails which presents real problems for comparing evaluations.

Amongst the problems in evaluating peacebuilding is the lack of baseline data and the inability to clearly establish links between inputs and outcomes. Also, there is little evidence of positive impact which give credence to peacebuilding claims. From these two sentences, it is important to disentangle two key issues. The first has to do with methodological shortcomings in assessing peacebuilding. From a rational science perspective, it reflects negatively on the peacebuilders that there is an inability to prove in a methodical and technical fashion that an intervention builds peace. At root is a logic which maintains that if it cannot be put in a box and measured, then it should not be done. This does not constitute an argument against peacebuilding, but it does constitute an argument for the realization of appropriate methodologies to evaluate peacebuilding.

The second issue regards how agencies promote their peacebuilding activities. Sometimes this is done in such a way that raises expectations. The label 'peacebuilding' indicates an operation which agencies may not be able to accomplish. Goodhand and Lewer (1998) notes that effective interventions increase the probability of peace more than they can actually bring peace. Perhaps the problem lies not with the answer but how the question is phrased: 'Can a third party build peace? No.' 'Can they contribute to peacebuilding? Sometimes.' At issue is the extent to which local circumstances and actors are amenable to the influences of third

⁵ This phrase was coined in Borton and Macrae (1997). It is interesting and relevant that there are similar findings between this report and their report which synthesized evaluation reports dealing with humanitarian aid.

parties and willing to work with them in the pursuit of peace.

Another problem is the lack of clarity and even greater lack of consensus around key notions and definitions. For example, the distinction between peace-making, peace-keeping and peacebuilding is blurred. Peace-making attempts to garner agreement between warring parties; whereas peace-keeping aims to ensure compliance with agreements using a number of activities such as elections, human rights monitoring, and separating combatants. Peacebuilding seems to be a generic term loosely used to encompass many activities, including those under the realms of peace-making and -keeping. In general, peacebuilding aims to address the underlying causes of conflict and create institutional and socio-economic structures which promote lasting peace (Goodhand & Hulme, 1997). In this synthesis report, the type of activities covered by the peacebuilding umbrella include:

- ! Demobilization, demining, repatriation/reintegration, rapid rebuilding and promoting political pluralism in Mozambique (**Suhrke et al, 1997**);
- ! Encouraging negotiations between armed rivals in Sierra Leone (**Sorbo et al, 1997**); and
- ! Running trauma healing, bias awareness, and non-violent listening skills courses for school children in Croatia (**Ajdukovic & Busko, 1997**).

The fact that there is no common understanding of what peacebuilding is, adversely affects the ability of evaluators to assess it.

The appropriate evaluation processes will heavily depend on the approach and level of the peacebuilding efforts. The analysis has to be pertinent to the activity. There is the issue of which layer or track the intervention is operating on coupled with the degree and approach of the peacebuilding efforts. This report is concerned with track II peacebuilding by unofficial, non-governmental agencies. The degree and approach vary. It is this variation that could be a source of methodological and conceptual problems.

A common understanding of the key notions of peace and conflict has not been established. These notions should be the cornerstones upon which an intervention is built but their definition is either glossed over or ignored in the evaluations. There is a need to define the problem and the objective of the intervention which, in turn, serves as a basis to measure performance.

Joining the list of problems associated with evaluating peacebuilding is that resources have not consistently been made available for evaluation. This is reflective of the state of affairs surrounding peacebuilding. There is the perception that peacebuilding is benefiting from recent international attention and funds -- aid's new 'fashion accessory'. Many question if this is at the expense of development and relief activities.

Research by Michael Renner (1995) shows that in 1994 only one out of four dollars -- or \$4 billion of \$16 billion -- was spent on conflict resolution and peace-keeping globally out of the

total peace and disarmament expenditures (endnote 1). However, using these numbers are problematic given that it is unclear which budget lines they refer to, and the confusion around definitions. This difficulty was reiterated by **Suhrke et al (1997)** who point out that the distinction between activities such as community development and repatriation is not easily made. This raises doubts about what constitutes 'peace and reconciliation' activities.

The lack of clarity clouds the picture. But the point should not be lost that peace-related funding is ad hoc and tends to focus on immediate and tangible needs such as demining operations (Renner, 1995). Similar findings emerge from the Norwegian aid portfolio for activities related to the peace-process in Mozambique. Demining activities received 14% of the budget while peace and reconciliation used only 2.6%. However, to put this in perspective, peace-process related activities represented about one fifth of the Norwegian aid disbursements from 1992 to 1995 (**Suhrke et al, 1997**) (endnote 2).

While Renner's research does not answer the question of whether peace-related expenditures drain resources from other operations, it does indicate that peacebuilding is not a global priority and, accordingly, the available resources are primarily aimed at reactive measures. There is no doubt that this has an adverse 'knock-on' effect on the discipline of evaluating peacebuilding.

A consequence of the problems indicated is the fact that there are relatively few evaluations of peacebuilding programmes in general, and that even fewer are available for reviewing. As long as an examination of an intervention is expected to show a linear relationship between cause and effect and to do so in a competitive market where agencies are vulnerable to losing income as a result of criticisms, then the negative lessons learnt will be closely guarded secrets. Moreover, there is a risk that positive lessons become distorted out of context of the whole picture. This secrecy and desire to only promote the positive points will be at odds with the recent calls to scrutinize peacebuilding activities. Agencies are faced with the dilemma over whether or not to share reports; in any case, they risk being criticized. This way of working is dysfunctional for learning more about peacebuilding.

1.5 Summary Of The Key Issues

- ! The 'privatization' and 'politicization' of aid impacts it, but to what extent and to what end is a matter for debate.
- ! In a complex picture, humanitarian agencies are not simply hapless victims of external pressures. Their desire to build peace may encompass many motivations from stopping the war to increasing their revenues.
- ! Peacebuilders in humanitarian agencies are criticized for wielding weak tools which may only succeed in placing both their clients and humanitarian principles at risk.
- ! Peacebuilding by humanitarian agencies (track II) is not a substitute for political engagement between governments (track I). It does need to complement high-level activities.

- ! The lack of baseline data and the difficulties in establishing cause and effect are amongst the methodological problems.
- ! Key terms and notions have to be defined, analysed, and standardized so that everyone is 'speaking the same language' if the thinking behind peacebuilding is to progress.
- ! Peacebuilding, in its current capacity, is primarily structured to give immediate and tangible benefits.

2. DESCRIPTION OF THE SAMPLE

For this review, 13 reports were analysed. As explained below, it was preferable to examine in detail country case studies. Consequently, 15 studies have been extracted from the reports and are labelled **A-O** below. The studies are organized so that the third party humanitarian interventions take up the first eight spaces labelled **A-H**. Bringing the matrix up to letter '**O**' are the evaluations of third party conflict resolution agencies and reports which examine national peacebuilding efforts. Reports focussing on the same country are situated next to each other; as are the two reports concerned with the role of health in peacebuilding.

- A: Ball & Campbell (1998) Humanitarian Assistance Coordination Unit (UCAH), Angola**
(in Ball, N & K Campbell (1998), Complex Crisis and Complex Peace: Humanitarian Coordination in Angola)
- B: Zagaria & Arcadu (1997) World Health Organization (WHO), Angola**
(in Zagaria, N & G Arcadu (1997), What Role for Health in a Peace Process?)
- C: Ajdukovic & Busko (1997) UNICEF/CARE, Croatia**
(in Ajdukovic, M & V Busko (1997), Evaluation Report: School-Based Health and Peace Initiative)
- D: UNHCR (1996) UNHCR, Mozambique**
(in UNHCR (1996), Mozambique: An Account from a Lessons Learned Seminar on Reintegration)
- E: Suhrke et al (1997) Norwegian government's humanitarian aid, Mozambique**
(in Suhrke, A, et al (1997), Evaluation of Norwegian Assistance to Peace, Reconciliation and Rehabilitation in Mozambique)
- F: Roush et al (1994) USAID, El Salvador**
(in Roush, J, et al (1994), Final Report: Evaluation of the Peace and National Recovery Project (519-0394) El Salvador)
- G: USAID/El Salvador (1994) USAID, El Salvador**
(in USAID/El Salvador (1994), The First Three Years of the Peace and National Recovery Project (519-0394): Lessons Learned)
- H: Adekanye et al (1997) Norwegian Church Aid (NCA) Mali**
(in Adekanye, J. Bayo, et al (1997), Norwegian Church Aid's Humanitarian and Peace-making Work in Mali)
- I: Heinrich (1997) Life & Peace Institute (LPI), Somalia**
(in Heinrich, W (1997), Building the Peace: Experiences of Collaborative Peacebuilding in Somalia 1993-1996)
- J: Sorbo (1997) International Alert, Sri Lanka**
(in Sorbo, G et al (1997), NGOs in Conflict: An Evaluation of International Alert)
- K: Wohlgemuth (1997) International Alert, Burundi**
(in Sorbo, G et al (1997), NGOs in Conflict: An Evaluation of International Alert)
- L: Macrae & Atkinson (1997) International Alert, Sierra Leone**
(in Sorbo, G et al (1997), NGOs in Conflict: An Evaluation of International Alert)
- M: Tidbeck & Malange (1995) Joint Working Committee for Peace, S. Africa**

(in Tidbeck, L & N Malange (1995), An Evaluation of Joint Working Committee for Peace in Natal)

N: **Ball & Spies (1997) South African Peace Committees, S. Africa**
(in Ball, N & C Spies (1997), Managing Conflict: Lessons from the South African Peace Committees)

O: **Lord (1998) Liberian Women Initiative (LWI), Liberia**
(in Lord, D (1998), The Empowerment of Liberian Women in the Electoral and Democratic Process)

For the purposes of this paper, the studies will be referred to by either their assigned letter or by the last name of the authors. As mentioned earlier, to help the reader differentiate between references from the reviewed texts and other readings, the listed studies are in **bold**.

2.1 Basis For Inclusion

Inclusion of a report in the sample was based on whether or not an activity specifically claimed to build peace. For example, only demobilization programmes which specifically linked themselves with peacebuilding were included as opposed to all demobilization programmes. As this paper focuses on peacebuilding interventions by humanitarian agencies, it concentrates on the country case studies of work done by intervening agencies. In three examples, the work is done by national organizations but the evaluation is submitted by a third party. Since it took some effort to gather enough evaluations to compare, these reports were included.

Documents were explicitly gathered for use in this report and then placed in the ALNAP database. At the time of writing, there were 32 reports dealing with peacebuilding in the database. However, this synthesis paper compares only 13 reports, as the others either mention peacebuilding only briefly or are thematic issue papers looking, for example, at the role of the health sector in transition countries (Macrae, 1995) or peace education in eastern Africa (Ressler & Obura, 1996). These were excluded on the basis that their thematic nature meant that they were too broad. Though they specifically dealt with peacebuilding, the International Peace Academy's reports on Haiti, Somalia, and Cambodia were excluded because they generally concerned the overall international response in those countries and specifically UN peace keeping missions.

It is important to highlight a few points regarding the types of studies employed and their intended audiences. A common point made either explicitly or implicitly was that the evaluators encountered methodological problems. Only five (33%) used the term 'evaluation' in their titles and only another three internally describe themselves as evaluations. Many use the less stringent terms 'lessons learnt' to characterize their work. This is coupled with the fact that only about half are definitely in the public domain and the rest are either not for the public eye or in that grey limbo land of 'is it or isn't it public?'

As a direct result of what is available, this synthesis report compares evaluations, final reports, seminar proceedings, and lesson learnt studies. Admittedly, this accounts for and

deflects some of the criticisms levelled at these reports. However, since all of these studies are intended to provide insights into and lessons learnt from peacebuilding interventions then they were deemed acceptable for inclusion. The crucial point is that more informative evaluations have to be conducted for this important field of peacebuilding.

2.2 Focus Of The Studies

In the process of comparing the 13 reports, subsections (i.e. country case studies) were extracted and examined in order to facilitate an understanding of the details contained in the reports. The process of disaggregating the information allows for more critical analysis. In total, there are 15 country case studies. The geographical distribution is not diverse; 11 case studies (73%) focus on conflicts in Africa. The total sample includes 11 countries, with Angola, Mozambique, El Salvador, and South Africa each being represented twice. There is only one report regarding Croatia which is surprising considering the resources going towards peacebuilding in Former Yugoslavia.

All the reports regard interventions resulting from internal wars. As noted in the introduction, the term 'internal war' is a blanket term which does not justly describe the different causes, impacts, and solutions facing each country. For instance, the transition period ensuing the apartheid era in South Africa is very different from the fragmented state of Somalia.

Half of the reports concern third party humanitarian agencies; three focus on UN activities, three assess the work of donor governments, one looks at a joint UN/NGO intervention, and one analyses an NGO. Of the remaining seven case studies, four pertain to third party conflict resolution agencies. The last three examine national agencies but the reports are submitted by a third party. This range of reports basically reflects the type of agencies involved with ALNAP.

2.3 Approach Of The Evaluators

Studies B, D, G, and O seem to have been written by persons closely associated with the work. Many of the studies pulled together consultant teams of two or more persons. **Study C** had the largest team of eight. It is difficult to pin-point the exact length of time the authors spent on the reports, but for many it seems to have been short. Each **study E** and the overall International Alert evaluation (including **studies J, K, and L**) took around six months to complete. **Study I** took one year at 75% of the researchers time.

In the works by **Ball (with Campbell, 1998)**, **Heinrich (1997)**, and **Adekanye et al (1997)** it is evident from the bibliographical information about the authors that they were experienced in analysing peacebuilding activities. These evaluators in particular, alongside **Macrae and Atkinson (1997)** and **Ajdukovic and Busko (1997)**, have tried to push the thinking on how to evaluate peacebuilding interventions. **Heinrich** and **Adekanye et al** went to great lengths to locate their evaluation in a peacebuilding conceptual framework. **Ball and Campbell's** work illustrates the necessity to critically analyse each component of the intervention. **Macrae and Atkinson's** work was very analytical while **Ajdukovic and Busko** strove to quantify their findings. The way forward is to integrate these approaches to produce an appropriate methodology.

Studies F, H, I, and N consulted texts on peace and conflict management theory. **Study F** looked at John Burton's work, **study H** referred to Johan Galtung, while **studies I and N** cited John Paul Lederach's writings. In addition, **study I** reviewed several other peace theory texts. Based on the type of literature that they utilized and their research experience, **Ball, Heinrich, and Adekanye** seemed particularly poised for the task at hand. As with other specialist tasks, it is appropriate and necessary to employ persons with specialist skills and knowledge for evaluating peacebuilding interventions.

2.4 The Methodology Of This Paper

This synthesis report is one of many attempts to understand the cause, impact and implications of peacebuilding activities by the international humanitarian and development communities. The Canadian, British, Swedish and Dutch governments are amongst those who have made peacebuilding a priority and this is demonstrated by the creation of new inclusive departmental structures and additional resources for research and programmes. In Britain, a commitment to build peace and tackle the underlying causes of a crisis is a key component of the 'Principles For A New Humanitarianism' announced by Clare Short the Secretary of State for International Development (Short, 1998). The World Bank has initiated several conferences on the topic of conflict prevention and post conflict reconstruction, one of which spawned a working group to pool together analytical tools already in use by different agencies, and to develop a matrix. There are also numerous agencies, like International Alert and the World Health Organization, who are actively trying to learn from their field experiences. Practice is ahead of theory but many actors are striving to come to better conceptual grips with peacebuilding.

As previously mentioned, a concerted effort was made to obtain as many documents as possible for this report and in doing so to bolster the ALNAP database. Over 150 requests for evaluation reports were directed to a wide group, though the bulk were directed at members of ALNAP. Contact was made at meetings, conferences, and via email and telephone. Materials were also extracted from the Internet.

This report evolved from a preliminary report submitted during ALNAP's meeting in May 1998. The preliminary paper was written when there was only a limited selection of reports available for review. Even so, they represented considerable diversity in terms of programmes and actors. A matrix was developed out of information drawn directly or by extension from the documents, and from the literature which attempts to conceptualize and understand peace. It was created to overcome the difficulties associated with comparing the reports. With further research, this approach may help to evaluate interventions after the fact and to analyse a planned intervention.

The paper is positioned to extract lessons from practice which can augment the understanding of peacebuilding because it looks at a range of interventions both vertically from community to international and horizontally across the spectrum of activities. This approach is grounded in the belief that peace is not owned by a single set of actors, and by extension, interveners can and must learn from each other. That was the theory. Then there is the practice. In practice, the term peacebuilding is used by a wide range of actors involved in diverse

activities. This report highlights the positive and negative attributes of this phenomenon.

2.5 Summary Of The Key Issues

- ! There are 15 country case studies from 13 reports. These studies predominately concern internal wars in Africa (73%). Roughly half of the studies focus on third party humanitarian agencies while the remaining half examine conflict resolution/transformation agencies.

- ! The studies have been assigned the letters A-O. References to the reviewed texts are in **bold**.

- ! As a direct result of what is available, this synthesis report compares evaluations, final reports, seminar proceedings, and lesson learned studies. The crucial point is that more informative evaluations have to be conducted for this important field of peacebuilding.

- ! Evaluating peacebuilding requires the utilization of a peacebuilding conceptual framework, the disaggregation of activities, and innovative analysis.

- ! Evaluators need to command specialist skills, knowledge, and experiences.

- ! A matrix was developed out of information drawn directly or by extension from the documents, and from the literature which attempts to conceptualize and understand peace. It was created to overcome the difficulties associated with comparing the reports.

3. UNDERSTANDING THE MATRIX

From the outset, it should be made clear that the matrix reflects the progress and limitations of current practice and theory. The matrix was created through a process of reading through evaluations and theoretical documents and then testing it on the reports. The matrix concerns itself as much with the evaluation processes as it does with the interventions. The information provided in the matrix about each country case study is based on the information available in the reports. If information was not given in the report the space was left blank. Where information was eluded to but not sufficiently clear a '?' was entered. The matrix is found in annex 1.

Since this synthesis report is concerned with the content of peacebuilding interventions and the methodologies employed to evaluate these interventions by humanitarian agencies, the matrix contains both these aspects. The matrix first looks at the 'Evaluation Processes & Outcomes' section by outlining such topics as criteria and methodologies used.

Since this report focuses on evaluations of peacebuilding activities by humanitarian agencies, it looked to similar, broad-based reviews of humanitarian activities. The criteria utilized are based on work done for Study III of the Joint Evaluation of Emergency Assistance to Rwanda

(Borton et al, 1996) and duplicated in the synthesis report of emergency aid by Borton and Macrae (1997). The criteria used in these reports, in turn, are based on the concepts initially developed by Minear (1994). The six criteria are:

! appropriateness, coherence, connectedness, cost-effectiveness, coverage, and impact.

These criteria are attempting to address the special circumstances of humanitarian activities and the subsequent evaluation processes.⁶ Using the right criteria is important because they frame the types of questions asked of a project or programme.

These terms warrant defining. Appropriateness is a broad, inclusive criterion. It aims to measure whether humanitarian activities and inputs are accountable, cost-effective, in tune with local needs, and relevant. Timeliness is a key issue within an assessment of an intervention's appropriateness, especially since humanitarian programmes often operate within fast moving time-frames. For this reason, 'timely' was included as a subset of appropriateness on the matrix. Coherence refers to how well the overall political, military, and aid components fit and work together. Coherence is related to a 'systems-thinking' approach. Coherence could also address the question of coordination within the international humanitarian community. Again, this criterion was subdivided to differentiate between the two meanings. Coordination is a sub-category of coherence.

Connectedness is associated with the relief-development continuum debate. It concerns whether a short-term activity is carried out with long-term considerations in mind. Cost-effectiveness is self-explanatory. Coverage means that the population in need of assistance is able to receive it. For a particular programme, this would entail reaching those it intended to reach and the overall coverage would concern whether there were gaps between programmes. Coverage highlights the special needs of population sub-groups. Impact is categorized alongside outcome. Impact considers the wider effects, intended and unintended, on individuals, communities, and institutions. Essentially, it is trying to find out the difference the intervention has had on the beneficiaries.

The matrix examines the 'Assessment of the Interventions' section by looking at issues such as the types of peacebuilding activities; whether the agencies have articulated an ethical stance as part of their work; and the time spent in the country before and after the break-out of overt conflict. The range of activities listed under the 'type of intervention' section indicates how extensive this field is. It raises many questions as to why the term is used so loosely to encompass a plethora of activities.

The sections 'work with affected community', 'time', and 'staffing issues' are attempting to scratch at the surface of issues such as trust, accountability, ownership, transparency,

⁶ For more details about the debate and arguments surrounding the use of development criteria verses humanitarian sub-criteria, please refer to Hallam (1998).

sustainability, and commitment. It is insufficient to simply put those issues down as categories because they in themselves do not probe deep enough and give too much leeway for inaccurate reporting. Admittedly, the aforementioned sections are not sophisticated enough to discover the quality of the relationship. For example, an agency can be mostly staffed by locals but the head of operations could be a contemptible expatriate whose very gestures reek of imperialism.

4. EVALUATION PROCESSES/OUTCOMES

It is useful to highlight and analyse key points drawn from the matrix. In this section, information about 'criteria' and 'methodology' is considered.

4.1 Findings In Relation To The Criteria

As evident from the matrix, most reports did not use the criteria of:

- ! appropriateness, timeliness, coherence, coordination, connectedness, cost-effectiveness, coverage, and impact/outcome.

A reader will not be able to pick up one of these studies and find out basic information about the intervention such as whether it was well coordinated or cost-effective. Even so, five studies came to the conclusion that the outcome/impact was positive and another five found that the intervention was mostly successful. Two studies regarding the work of International Alert in Sri Lanka (**Sorbo, 1997**) and Sierra Leone (**Macrae & Atkinson, 1997**) strongly imply that the interventions by and large failed to meet their objectives.

The International Alert example illustrates an important point about the use of the criteria by the reviewed studies which has influenced how this synthesis report analysed the information contained in those studies. Since, for the most part, the criteria were not explicitly used by the studies, the information had to be surmised. Though many of the criteria were not directly dealt with, the studies did provide some materials and insights which were used as the basis for giving a particular criteria a '?'. The studies, many of which deem themselves to be evaluative, are open to individual interpretation. The utility of such exercises is questionable.

4.1.1 Appropriateness and Timeliness

The majority (80%) of the studies imply to one degree or another that the intervention was appropriate. However, as already mentioned, this is open to interpretation because the evidence was not spelt out and it is unclear how the studies have arrived at their vague conclusions. For example, Health as a Bridge for Peace broadly concludes that peacebuilding is possible when health concerns bring opposing sides together; but at the same time, it raises many questions about the coordination and coherence of the peacebuilding strategy (**Zagaria & Arcadu, 1997**).

Macrae and Atkinson's (1997:223) report clearly states that it was "neither feasible nor

appropriate for an NGO to attempt to replicate the work of international organisations and governmental bodies." However, this viewpoint is tempered when they acknowledge that International Alert played an important role in bringing one of the warring factions to the negotiation table and informing that party of the international condemnation of its human rights abuses.

The timeliness of an intervention has been ascertained from a total of seven reports. Of these, only the study of the school base programme in Croatia determined that the intervention was ill-timed (**Ajdukovic & Busko, 1997**). Interestingly, this was one of the studies which took the most pains to get feedback from the primary stakeholders -- the children, their parents, and teachers. In this example, the problem was that the programme overlapped with a period of heavy workload for the children and teachers.

Information found in annex B of the Empowerment of Liberian Women in the Electoral and Democratic Process project clearly states that this intervention was timely because it reached rural women before the election to inform them that they had the right to vote and that their votes mattered (**Lord, 1998**). The same information can be inferred from the main text. In many of the examples, timeliness was inferred when more overt conflict was prevented by the intervention, but this point is not made explicitly.

4.1.2 Coherence and Coordination

Keeping in mind that an intervention should not be carried out in isolation, and the fact that peacebuilding is a comprehensive concept based on the need to build lasting institutional and socio-economic structures for peace, the issues of coherence and coordination are particularly pertinent. Coherence concerns whether an activity links with the overall international response. As such, it should figure highly in the studies which deal with peacebuilding because of its far reaching ramifications. This review took a broad view of this concept, and where applicable considered economic issues and linkages to local political, military, and economic entities. Even so, in 26% of the reports, no inference to coherence can be drawn.

There are mixed results in terms of how coherence is tackled both in the findings by the studies and this report's findings of the studies. For example, **Zagarria and Arcadu (1997)** explain that the humanitarian and military offices of the UN had very different views of the key implementation areas of the peace process in Angola. This resulted in delays in the implementation of the quartering process for dependents of soldiers, and a less comprehensive humanitarian programme for the dependents, and it left the process open to political manipulation. The evaluators turned this into a lesson learnt. They write:

A multi-sectoral approach in designing humanitarian activities connecting all involved in the peace implementation process is a useful and effective tool for the peace building effort, and it is recognized by the international community who has the responsibility to support and finance the overall intervention (**Zagarria & Arcadu, 1997:19**)

This is an excellent point which is applicable to future crises. The weakness of the report is that while it pertains to WHO, the authors pass on little evaluative information about that

agency except at the end, where most of the lessons learnt are directed at WHO. If the grading scale of matrix had half a '?', then this evaluation would get one for its coverage of coherence.

Conversely, **studies A, D, and H** are good examples of a thorough analysis of the topic of coherence. The first two will be briefly covered. Length wise, the **UNHCR** document is only 13 pages compared to the more than 100 pages by **Ball and Campbell**. Regardless, both are able to give detailed insights into the issue of coherence.

First, **Ball and Campbell's (1998)** study draws linkages between the organization that they are examining, the Humanitarian Assistance Coordination Unit (UCAH), and actors in the political, military, development and humanitarian spheres. They point out that the work of UCAH in Angola, as the lead agency in charge of overall humanitarian coordination, demobilization, and reintegration activities, necessitated support from other actors.

In one example, they look at the relationship and role of the diplomatic and political support offered by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General (SRSG). In recognition of the important and distinct issues facing humanitarian actors, the SRSG included the Humanitarian Coordinator in the body which supervised the implementation of the peace accords. This enabled the UCAH to bring access and security issues to the attention of the UN peace-keepers and the main antagonists. The evaluators also point out weak relationships. For example, NGO involvement in strategy development gave a mixed result.

In the second example (**study D**), the report of UNHCR's lessons learnt seminar on reintegration in Mozambique is a short document, but it gives many insights into coherence. Looking at local issues which reflect upon the work of other international actors, it discusses the need for job opportunities for the rural and urban populations; the role of the elections in confidence building; problems with disgruntled soldiers; and the weak economy and the need for debt relief so that Mozambique can recover. One major theme of the seminar was that reintegration of refugees was not an isolated affair and that consideration of the broader context is essential for the long-term success of the programme.

The **UNHCR (1996)** study also notes that the peacekeepers had little impact on the repatriation strategies of refugees but recognizes the political significance of the peacekeepers. It acknowledges that there was a need for better coherence among NGO partners and that more civic education could have been provided in the refugee camps and during community development programmes. Again, these reflections touch on the work of other actors and their relationship to the reintegration programme.

In this review, sub-dividing the concept coherence and creating the category of coordination was useful for disaggregating the information and enabling the reader to quickly glance at the matrix to gain the relevant information. However, since the terminology used in the studies is not standardized, there was room for interpretation. For example, a study which discusses coordination may actually be referring to coherence. **Study H** is one such example. In it, **Adekanye et al (1997)** detail the types of relationships the agency had with other foreign NGOs, local organizations, UN agencies, religious bodies, and the warring sides. By doing so, the report covered both topics. Of the reviewed works, all but one study covered one or both topics.

Successful coordination is implied in **study O**. LWI joined the Liberian Election Observers Network (LEON), thus uniting with a nationally coordinated effort. Moreover, LWI was given disproportional representation in order to make space for women participants. It should be noted that since this was a report to the funder of a project which was to be turned into a longer programme, it does not critically detail the coordination.

A more critical, though not very detailed examination of coordination can be found in **UNHCR (1996)**. This report infers that the coordination was not successful, though this is open to interpretation. The seminar took it as a lesson learnt that there should have been "better exchange and analysis of information between UNHCR teams in the country of asylum and country of origin would greatly enhance the repatriation and reintegration process" (**UNHCR, 1996:6**). Looking at Mozambique, the seminar also found that it was erroneous to have the humanitarian coordination stop when the peacekeepers left.

Study I makes an interesting point about the implications of becoming an implementing agency in Somalia's competitive NGO culture. The situation necessitated that LPI carry out a training programme for local councils. The evaluator suggests to LPI to analyse how this has changed its working relationships. He warns that most major donors have discovered community-based peacebuilding, turning it into a point for competitive fundraising, therefore LPI is faced with the scenario of becoming one of the competitors. **Heinrich (1997:175)** writes, "In the Somalia context, LPI will most probably not be accepted by most other organizations as an institute that could facilitate communication, coordination, and cooperation." Its coordinating and encouraging functions should not be the price that LPI pays for being an experienced agency in peacebuilding.

In total, 73% of the studies addressed the topic of coordination. Thirty-three percent of the studies found that the intervention was failing in this aspect.

4.1.3 Connectedness

Eighty-seven percent of the studies imply that the intervention supported long-term development. The only negative result is found in **Study E** which indicates that, for the most part, Norwegian government assistance was only concerned with the delivery of short term aid. The authors write:

Norwegian authorities gave little systematic attention to the links between supporting the peace process in the short run and sustaining the peace in the long run. The decision to postpone the preparation of the formal "country strategy" paper until after the elections, and subsequent delays (the paper was by early 1997 still not complete), limited the institutional opportunities for articulating a comprehensive strategy and pursuing proactive policies. (**Suhrke et al, 1997:xi**)

The failure to take on long-term considerations also seeped into programme areas. The study found that the demining activities were seen as independent from the development programme, resulting in a view that it was a technical exercise. Subsequently, operations were more determined by the organization's capacities than the humanitarian and development

needs of the affected population (**Suhrke et al, 1997:83**). Moreover, the programme was slow in building up local capacities. At the same time, the evaluators noted the complex relationship between development aid and the peace process. They cite the example of the Norwegian government contributing to the reconstruction of the electricity sector which may help in the long-term to bring stability and sustainable peace.

Borton and Macrae (1997) found that in evaluations of humanitarian aid, the topic of connectedness was often covered in the discussion of the 'continuum' or the 'relief-development linkages'. That was rarely the case in this survey. Peacebuilding itself seems to encompass the link between short and long-term activities. Peacebuilding covers the spectrum from short, intermediate, to long-term work. As part of short term activities, peacebuilding lays the foundations for long-term activities at the same time peacebuilding is a long-term activity.

In their review, Borton and Macrae (1997) observed in several studies that the lack of an overarching authority to provide a policy and programming framework resulted in aid decapitating the local structures. Similar findings can be found in this paper. In interviews with the affected population, **Heinrich (1997)** heard that other NGOs would not recognize the local councils in Somalia. They had the opinion that the councils were a product of a top-down decision by the lead UN agency and were not the legitimate and respected voice of the local communities. However, he also witnessed that several councils were working and were strengthened by trainings from the Life & Peace Institute.

Regarding, the work of the Norwegian government, for what it did not manage through contracted NGOs on the local level, it seemed to have accomplished on the governmental level. It took steps to cushion the impact of an imbalanced relationship between the government of Mozambique and the international community (including 170 NGOs). To that end, the evaluators found that "Given Norway's principled emphasis on 'recipient responsibility' in aid, it seems reasonable to assess Norwegian contributions in the transition period with particular reference to the criterion of enhancing recipient autonomy" (**Suhrke et al, 1997:119**).

For the majority of the studies, supporting local capacities is a crucial element of connectedness. **Study H** stresses the local ownership of the peace product and processes. Accordingly, its partnership strategy was a key component of NCA's work in Mali. In El Salvador, **study F** found that reconciliation processes were bolstered by increased participation in the planning and implementation of programmes. At the crux is the relationship between short-term interventions by third parties, local ownership of peace, and sustainable peace and development. To one degree or another, these interventions are trying to find the right mix.

4.1.4 Cost-Effectiveness

Cost-effectiveness had a very low turn-out with only one report touching on it sufficiently to warrant a '?'. **Study K** points out that it is difficult to measure cost-effectiveness. However, **Wohlgemuth (1997:182)** notes that "the overall cost of the programme of , 400,000 for the 1996 programme is small compared with all activities implemented by all actors during that

year. The way Alert operates as catalyst and bridging financier means that it usually only pays a small but strategic portion of the total costs for each activity." And secondly, the evaluator observed how cost-conscious the International Alert team was in Burundi.

Study E discusses cost-effectiveness, but only in relation to the demining programme. In that example, they compared the cost per square metre of work done by different agencies using comparable methods and found that the one contracted by the Norwegian government was cheapest. For the purposes of this synthesis report, this is not sufficient information for inclusion on the matrix since the analysis only involved one-fifth of the programmes covered in the evaluation.

There are probably numerous reasons why the studies did not undertake analyses of cost-effectiveness. Perhaps the terms of reference did not call upon the evaluators to examine this issue. This is difficult to test since only two studies (**E & F**) include the terms of reference. In **study E**, the evaluators were instructed to examine cost-efficiency. **Study F** only required the evaluators to record the costs and hence there are many figures but no accompanying analysis.

Perhaps the evaluators and the agency personnel lack the skills to carry out a useful cost-effectiveness analysis. Aid personnel, in the past, have misunderstood what it entails (Hallam, 1996). There are also environmental factors surrounding the very nature of complex emergencies. The severity of the crisis, the urgency for action, the multiplicity of actors involved, and the changing circumstances all contribute to the methodological and practical problems associated with such an analysis. In sum, it is difficult to pin-point the particular effects and assign them to a specific agency (Hallam, 1996). The problems are almost identical to those associated with evaluating peacebuilding in general.

4.1.5 Coverage

Coverage concerns whether those in need are included, proportionately to their need, in the international (and local) response. For the most part, the studies do not explicitly deal with coverage and rarely in relation to the peacebuilding activities. For example, **study A** shows that one of the tools available to the humanitarian coordinator in Angola enhanced coverage. The ASDI- (Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency) UCAH Mechanism (AUM) was a source of seed money for rapid response, usually for one-off requests. As such it "was one of UCAH's most useful tools for pursuing strategy on a nationwide basis and focussing on the most critical needs. The AUM funding procedure has been widely praised by both its clientele, the NGOs, and its funder, Sida" (**Ball & Campbell, 1998:26**). The authors go on to write:

NGOs that were able to start up quickly and achieve results were able to approach other donors for funding with great success because they had proven track records working in an area of obvious need. Relatively small amounts of funds therefore not only met immediate gaps in coverage but often influenced the direction of funding by other donors as well (**Ball & Campbell, 1998:27**).

In studies focussing on donor governments, there is the re-occurring theme of being the 'good donor' because of the desire to satisfy almost every request. This leads the evaluators to point

out that the donor's portfolio was 'fragmented' (**study E**) or 'scattered' (**study F**). In the case of USAID, the evaluators warn, "The multi-faceted structure of the project provided needed flexibility during the emergency and de-mobilization phase, but it is not appropriate for supporting economic re-vitalization and consolidating the gains to date" (**Roush et al, 1994:ES-6**). In **study E**, the evaluators emphasize the exceptional administrative burden placed on the staff of the Norwegian embassy because they were coping with a fragmented portfolio, trying to positively respond to almost any request, and compensating for the recipient's lack of managerial capacity (**Suhrke et al, 1997:16**).

An interesting point about the intervening agency's relationship to the conflict before the beginning of peacebuilding derives from the USAID studies in El Salvador. Both note that USAID had considerable difficulties in developing trust with the insurgent side, the FMLN, and its sympathizers. Reading the report written by USAID/EL Salvador staff leaves one with the impression that the staff were somewhat biased against the FMLN. Setting the tone early on in the text, the authors state that the USA's relationship with the Salvadoran government (GOES) was largely shaped by its concern that that government would be the second country in Central America to fall into communist hands (**USAID/El Salvador, 1994**). FMLN's perception of USAID in the transition period was shaped by USAID's close relationship with the government and the fact that the government agency for coordinating and managing USAID funds was essentially the same as that used for the government's counter-insurgency programme (**Roush et al, 1994**). **Roush et al (1994:IV-4)** advises that:

The attitudes of GOES and USAID personnel can be very important in promoting reconciliation. In considering what is a win-win solution, participants need to re-read the Peace Accords, take a broader perspective than seems frequently to be the case, and get away from the idea that one or the other side of the recent conflict was winner or loser.

With hind-sight, the USAID writers have turned this into their first lesson learnt:

1. USAID Management and Staff Should Receive Special Training by an Expert in Conflict Resolution/Consensus Building Prior to Design of the Project.

A USAID (mission) probably will be faced with project counterparts and beneficiaries holding deep-seated emotions, and mutual distrust and animosities towards each other -- and perhaps toward the USAID (mission) if it is identified with one side of the conflict -- due to their recent belligerent status. And there may be a number of political agendas being pushed. There must be strong consideration of the political dimension of the project and a good understanding of the political forces at play.

This is far beyond the normal situations in which a USAID (mission) attempts to build consensus among a project's stakeholders. Reducing the conflicts and reaching consensus will be a tough job, one for which good preparation is needed. Success will not only result in a better project and faster implementation, but also serve the peace process (**USAID/El Salvador, 1994:25**).

As evidenced by the example, it is important for an agency to analyse its relationship to the

conflict and the conflicting parties before attempting to build peace. The inability of USAID/El Salvador to do so adversely affected the implementation of its programmes, impinged upon its coverage, and hampered the reconciliation processes. Though this is the case of a particular government involved in a particular conflict, the lesson is applicable to other intervening agencies.

Though the USAID example does not directly deal with the topic of 'coverage', an important lesson can be drawn from it. Another lesson is the fact that if evaluators want to get across a certain message then they should not leave it to the reader to do the guess-work. The case can be made for the development of appropriate criteria which can be applied in a standardized fashion. The stress has to be on the word 'appropriate'.

In relation to peacebuilding, the coverage criterion can be applied in its current use with the emphasis on the end-beneficiaries, and the implications can be analysed from a 'peacebuilding perspective'. The USAID example is illustrative of this approach. Coverage, in this sense, is applicable to those cases where the primary aim is humanitarian assistance, and peacebuilding is a by-product of the work done to achieve that aim. Other examples can be found in the surveyed studies. They include negotiating for access (**study A**); bringing together the conflicting parties over issues of mutual concern like health (**study B**); and demining to add to the sense of security (**study E**). Evaluators need to ask: 'Did the intervention provide according to the needs of the end-beneficiaries? And was this done in such a way to provide a 'peace dividend'? In other words, how did the humanitarian intervention contribute to peacebuilding?'

The term 'coverage' can also be applied to those in political need; meaning that it reflects the more political aspect of peacebuilding. This type of work is already being conducted through civil society development, partnerships, etc. If seen in this light, the 'level of society' section of the matrix may be useful, as it seeks to identify with whom the intervening agency is working closely to achieve its objectives. A glance at the matrix shows that all the interventions are working on several levels to build peace. For example, Norwegian Church Aid focuses on developing local partnerships but at the same time, it cooperates with all the levels indicated on the matrix.

Superficially, this is about who is working with whom. What it does not address are the more substantial issues of 'Why that group or combination of groups?' 'What qualifies the intervening agency to build local capacities?' 'What are the political agendas and manoeuvring of local groups?' These are just a few of the questions that have to be asked and answered. Peacebuilding in a more politicized sense may make some humanitarian agencies feel uneasy but at the same time, it has to be recognized that this type of work is being done. Agencies have to be aware of the issues. Evaluation processes, which start during the planning stages, are one of the tools available to them.

4.1.6 Impact/Outcome

As mentioned at the beginning of this section, 66% of the studies seem to conclude that the intervention had either a positive impact/successful outcome or one that was largely so. Both the humanitarian and conflict resolution/transformation agencies are able to produce small changes at the local level. This synthesis will venture to say that, based on the reviewed

studies, this is what track II successes look like -- small-scale, local-level, with a mixed though mostly positive impact. They do what they are set up to do. Evidently, more in-depth research is needed but these are the early signs from the 15 studies.

Assessing the impact is, however, a difficult assignment. As duly noted in **study E**, measuring the impact of an intervention for sustained peace requires a long time-frame. For 66% of the interventions, the programmes were still running at the time of evaluation. Peacebuilding should probably be measured in decades. Yet the longest time period between the end of the programme and the beginning of the evaluation is three years (**study N**).

While the evaluations were not designed to look at the long-term implications of their results, they do provide valuable insights for mid-term programming. Namely, the programmes have to be congruent with the phases of local peacebuilding. One can surmise that agencies will face problems with rigid budget lines and confusion over departmental mandates -- another round of the 'relief-development' continuum debate. Transitional thinking by agencies and donors is required.

Evaluations which improve current practice are useful for institutional learning, having an internal impact on the working methods of the organization. This in turn may influence the wider humanitarian community. The studies provide three cross-cutting themes: the need for flexibility; the necessity of providing staff with appropriate training (e.g. in peacebuilding, conflict resolution, consensus building); and the need to be mindful of the local ownership of peace. These themes all have to do with acquiring the right skills and knowledge to carry out peacebuilding within the context of humanitarian activities. Furthermore, they have to do with having the mind-set to capitalize on those skills and experiences. In general, staffing issues were raised in most of the studies. For example, in **studies A, D, F, G, H, M, and N**, having appropriate staff (e.g. with the relevant skills, training and knowledge) and speedy mechanisms for getting them into the right job were essential for the successful implementation of the programmes.⁷

Evaluations which try to assess an agency's contribution to sustainable peace are on another level and they require a commitment to the long-term. Both the humanitarian and development communities may have to do some rethinking on how they are going to progress current initiatives (see section 2.4) and encourage the creation of appropriate criteria for the different stages, and potentially different types, of peacebuilding. It would be incorrect to place this responsibility only on the shoulders of the humanitarian community, because humanitarian activities are not isolated from wider development processes, and peacebuilding, by its very nature, requires many inputs from different types of actors at different stages.

The reviewed texts offer several lessons to the wider international community. Humanitarian agencies do have a peacebuilding role to play (see section 5.1). But this should not be at the expense of their humanitarian work. Instead, humanitarian agencies need to perform their

⁷ Current initiatives, such as 'People in Aid', are addressing staffing issues and highlighting their importance.

peacebuilding activities in ways which strengthen their humanitarian work. Another key lesson arises from the fact that, in the cases reviewed, elections were tied to unrealistic time-scales which had negative consequences for humanitarian activities, a situation made worse because the overall humanitarian coordination was defined by the same time-frame (e.g. Mozambique -- **studies D and E**). **Studies A, F and G** highlight a similar finding in that humanitarian activities and time-scales have to be shaped by humanitarian considerations. **Studies F and I** point out that training programmes for the affected population can become marginalised, unless they are tied to strategically planned development schemes.

4.2 Findings In Relation To The Methodology

Gathering information in a volatile situation, having no baseline data, and missing replicable predecessors all contribute to 'methodological anarchy'. Actually, superficially the studies basically used the same methods. Of the 15 studies, 11 (73%) used some combination of literature review, interviews with staff/ex-staff, and interviews with the affected population. The four studies that did not detail their methodologies seem to have been written by people closely associated with the work.

However, the problem seems to rest with the quality of data, which is defined by the type of questions asked. This synthesis report asserts that trying to fit the assessment of peacebuilding activities into a traditional framework may be akin to fitting a square peg in a round hole. Simply put, evaluators are not using Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) criteria⁸ and neither are they using the newer humanitarian-oriented criteria. There is a very strong case for viewing the problem from a different angle and for establishing more appropriate criteria to evaluate peacebuilding. Moreover, the development of generic criteria will provide only limited information though this would allow for comparisons between interventions. However, specific criteria are still needed to encompass such issues as the phase of the conflict, the degree of the peacebuilding effort, and objectives of the intervention. It may not be necessary to start completely anew, but fresh thinking may be required.

4.3 Summary Of The Key Issues

- ! Current practice in evaluation of peacebuilding activities leaves the reader to do a great deal of guess-work.
- ! The fact that evaluators are not using standardized criteria indicates that it is time to seriously review criteria with the aim of making them useful and meaningful to the field of peacebuilding.
- ! The assessment of a peacebuilding activity should start in the planning stages.
- ! The contributions of local inputs are not sufficiently represented in the current criteria.

⁸ The OECD criteria are efficiency, effectiveness, impact, sustainability and relevance.

This will have to be remedied if agencies and donors are serious about the local ownership of peace.

- ! The reviewed texts give some insights into the impact of track II interventions. They show that this type of intervention produces mixed results, though mostly positive, at the local level, reaching a small proportion of the population. It is not clear how this segment of the population impacts the local peace process. Only evaluations which examine the long-term can assess this.
- ! Transitional thinking is required. It will probably involve flexible programming which emphasizes local ownership of peace processes and the development of specialized skills for staff. Transitional thinking has to be advanced by both the humanitarian and development communities.

5. ASSESSMENT OF THE INTERVENTIONS

This chapter focuses on the details presented in the 'Assessment of the Intervention' section of the matrix. Issues related to the different types of interventions and their ethical stance will be examined.

5.1 Findings In Relation To The Type Of Intervention

Evidently, the range of activities listed under the 'type of intervention' section is not exhaustive, but it does indicate how extensive this field is. It raises many questions as to why the term is used so loosely to encompass a plethora of activities. One argument is that agencies are doing their part to contribute to a multi-faceted peace process. A counter-argument is that the lack of clarity over terms adds to the confusion over what peacebuilding is and what it entails. There are grounds for both cases.

From the matrix, the reader can clearly see a demarcation line between the types of activities carried out by third party humanitarian organizations, and conflict resolution/transformation agencies. For the most part, the humanitarian agencies are concerned with the technical aspects of peacebuilding. Information from **studies A-H** (excluding **study G** since it covers the same activities as **study F**) shows that every intervention except that examined in **study C** dealt with repatriating refugees and/or demobilizing soldiers. Furthermore, activities supported by the **UNHCR, the Norwegian government, and USAID** represents another cluster of activity around rehabilitating infrastructure and demining.

The peacebuilding activities of these organizations were carried out because of their technical operations. UCAH promoted dialogue in order to facilitate the process of widening the operational space for humanitarian activities and actors in Angola (**study A**). **Ball and Campbell (1998:68)** clearly make the point, "the Humanitarian Coordinator's contribution to peace-building should result from, not occur at the expense of, coordination and facilitation activities." Building coalitions over health issues necessitated information sharing (**studies B and F**). In **study D**, UNHCR facilitated contacts at the local level which "removed tensions,

allowed for broad information sharing between former conflicting parties, provided new recognition to traditional community leaders, and gave government a more realistic picture of prevailing conditions, all contributing to better social understanding and giving impetus to the reconstruction efforts" (UNHCR, 1996:4).

The greatest efforts to bolster social relations amongst the humanitarian agencies are found in **study H**. This finding matches with NCA's move from a humanitarian mandate to a multi-mandate with an emphasis on peace-making. The evaluators pointed out that "NCA's long-standing achievements in the humanitarian field have proved a useful stepping-stone towards the organisation's subsequent role as a facilitator in peace-making in Mali and external (sic)" (Adekanye et al, 1997:36). Moreover, several of NCA's Mali senior staff and many other Malians closely associated with the organization played pivotal roles in the NCA peace project. These staff members had been employed since the 1980's when NCA was only engaged in humanitarian activities.

Another feature particularly prevalent in the humanitarian agency studies is the emphasis on taking steps towards recipient autonomy. As mentioned earlier, building local capacities is an important aspect of the application of long-term considerations to short-term work -- connectedness. It also makes sense because many of these organizations are working with and through local institutions; accordingly, this issue is highlighted in the texts. In **study B**, UNICEF states its continued support to the Croatian Ministry of Education and Sports for the health and peace initiative. The Ministry in turn has engaged a local NGO to proceed with the programme for three years. **Studies F and G** examine how USAID's programmes supported national and local governments in El Salvador. For example, community members are represented on committees that select and monitor the contractors on infrastructure projects based in that community (USAID/El Salvador, 1994). In this way, USAID encouraged local reconciliation in the conflict zones and supported local democratic structures.

Humanitarian agencies have a critical role to play in building peace. These organizations have the resources to carry out the activities necessary for re-introducing a sense of security which may promote sustainable peace. They do this in numerous ways such as through repatriation packages, demining areas needed for social and economic exchange, and providing an international presence. These generally low-level peacebuilding activities are interlinked with the humanitarian work.

The peacebuilding efforts of conflict resolution agencies tend to be more overtly political. In South Africa, members of the Peace Committees physically placed themselves between conflicting sides to reduce violent incidences (Ball & Spies, 1997). International Alert in Burundi facilitated the formation and continuation of a NGO which represented the two main ethnic groups and contained persons from moderate and more extreme tendencies. It involved influential persons from political parties, parliament, the army, and the administration. This NGO, in turn, promoted dialogue and peacebuilding within the Burundian society (Wohlgemuth, 1997). Nevertheless, an important lesson that should be learnt from International Alert's work in Sierra Leone is that track II actors cannot and should not assume the activities of track I actors (Macrae & Atkinson, 1997). Agencies may find that they have neither the capabilities nor the legitimacy to work as track I actors.

Some may argue that humanitarian organizations are not and should not be placed to do peacebuilding B activities which should be left to conflict resolution agencies. However, there does not seem to be a case of either humanitarian agencies or conflict resolution agencies carrying out peacebuilding activities. A fuller analysis would benefit from the examination of several studies from the same country. That said, these 15 studies show that the two different types of organizations are carrying out different roles and functions. From this point, the issue seems to be how well these different agencies work and strategize together (i.e. their coherence) alongside their local counterparts in ways which promote sustainable peace (connectedness).

5.2 Findings In Relation To The Ethical Stance/Value Base

The reasons for examining the ethical stance/value base of an agency are two-fold. First, since peace is not value-free (see section 6), it is important to understand the values which drive an agency to act and to assess how transparent these values are to outsiders. Second, in the context of the current humanitarian principles debate,⁹ peacebuilding by humanitarian agencies raises many questions as to whether such activities diminish the principle base on which all humanitarian organizations should be standing.

In eight of the 15 studies (53%), agencies either articulated their ethical stance/value base or it was a key feature of their work. Of these, four of the studies (**H, J, K, and N**) indicate that this was viewed positively by the affected population.

In **studies A and C**, the agencies based their stance on international legal frameworks. In Angola, UCAH's firm stand on humanitarian principles fostered its ability to coordinate and act for humanitarian objectives. A lesson from **study A** states:

Humanitarian activities and humanitarian negotiations can and should support peace and efforts at peace-building. Political and humanitarian strategies and activities of the international community can inform each other. However, the Humanitarian Coordinator and staff must be careful that negotiations and activities continue to focus on coordinating and facilitating humanitarian actors and promoting humanitarian space. If the Humanitarian Coordinator becomes more directly involved in political negotiations his/her impartiality and neutrality may be more easily questioned, and it is the very neutrality and impartiality of humanitarian activities that allows humanitarian negotiations and facilitation to commence at all. (**Ball & Campbell, 1998:36**)

In **study C**, Croatia's ratification of the Convention of the Rights of the Child enabled UNICEF to shift its approach from basic needs to basic rights. Subsequently, UNICEF embarked on programmes of tolerance building, conflict resolution, problem solving and communication skills alongside its trauma healing programmes.

⁹ At, for example, the ECHO/ODI conference entitled 'Principled Aid in An Unprincipled World: Relief, War, and Humanitarian Principles' (7 April 1998).

For organizations like the Life & Peace Institute and Norwegian Church Aid, the values derived from their religion defined their ethical framework. In 1984, LPI's founding statute stated:

The purpose of the Foundation is to conduct scientific research, primarily from Christian, and ethical perspectives, on questions of international conflict, and on the possibilities for collaboration among nations. The Foundation's aim is to support Christianity's role in reconciliation, peace, and justice. **(Heinrich, 1997:31)**

In relation to its specific work in Somalia, the Institute's basic philosophy of active peacebuilding was:

1. That sustainable peace can only be found within the local social and cultural context...
2. That this work has to start at the local community level and from there involve the entire society in a gradual transformation of the society into a culture of peace.
3. That this is a very broad and long-term peacebuilding effort that can only be made sustainable by the people themselves...
4. That the role of the LPI is to act as a facilitator, strengthening locally initiated efforts for peace and democracy. **(Heinrich, 1997:33)**

In **study H**, the evaluators attach great importance to NCA's core values of compassion, justice, participation, responsible stewardship of God's creation, and peace. Differing from many humanitarian organizations, "the NCA does not claim to be either a neutral organisation, or a solidarity organisation. The primary obligation is to help people in need and this calls for intervention in areas where their actions can be politically interpreted." **(Adekanye et al, 1997:19)**

In the cases of **studies H and I**, the values of NCA and LPI clearly defined the basis of their work and the transparency with which this was conducted was highly appreciated by the people that they worked with and for. Their values facilitated their peace work.

Slim (1994) argues that it is essential that humanitarian agencies carry out ethical analyses of their work. Multi-mandate organizations face additional strains. He writes:

For example, an organisation whose mission is focussed on the one main principle of saving life may well have few, if any moral dilemmas. With a purely humanitarian mission, most of its difficult choices are relatively easily decided in terms of which course of action will save the most lives. At the opposite end of the spectrum, an NGO which has built a mission around a wide variety of basic principles encompassing civil, political, and economic rights may find its various principles constantly competing. (Slim, 1997:248)

The surveyed samples in this report seem to fall in the middle of the spectrum to which Slim refers. The issue is whether peacebuilding activities necessitate organizations to have their work grounded in values which can be articulated and acted upon by every staff member.

Failure to do so can be costly, as was pointed out in **study L**. The authors concluded, "in the view of the evaluators, International Alert has an insufficient sense of its own identity underpinned by robust principles and effective management to be able to claim a legitimate role in peace negotiations at the level it attempted in relation to Sierra Leone." (**Macrae & Atkinson, 1994:224**)

In the studies highlighted in this section, the articulation of the organizations' values was a key component of their work and their ability to work on peace issues. The examples of **studies A** and **C** do not make a definitive case for how adherence to humanitarian principles and international legal frameworks can strengthen peacebuilding activities. But they are interesting examples of a topic that warrants further research.

5.3 Summary Of The Key Issues

- ! Greater clarity over terminology is needed.
- ! Humanitarian and conflict resolution/transformation agencies have different roles to play in building peace. The issue is how they progress their working relations (i.e. it is one of coherence) alongside their local counterparts.
- ! For peacebuilding activities in particular, it seems beneficial for organizations to have their work grounded in values which can be articulated and acted upon every member of staff.
- ! There are several examples in the studies examined in which the linkage between the organization's work and principles was evident, transparent, and beneficial. However, more research is needed on this topic.

6. KEY NOTIONS

Terms such as peace are bound up in different and sometimes contradictory moral and political discourses (Baranyi et al, 1997). Adding to difficulties is the fact that various actors may use terms indiscriminately without due consideration of the implications (Goodhand & Hulme, 1997). The key notions of peace, peacebuilding, and conflict are linked to what the agencies are trying to achieve, how they plan to achieve it and in what context. These notions will be briefly laid out in this section.

6.1 Peace

The term 'peace' is understood and employed in many different ways. In general it is recognized that peace incorporates economic, political, social, humanitarian and cultural issues (Goodhand & Hulme, 1997). Peace is an elusive, intangible concept but nonetheless it is an integral part of peacebuilding activities. Spencer (1997) argues that an organization's understanding of peace will affect the type of intervention that it carries out. And by

extension, it is possible that the type of peace pursued affects the success of an intervention. Working assumptions have to be challenged and questions have to be asked such as 'What kind of peace is achieved and what are the implications for the people in both the developing and developed worlds?' and 'Whose peace is it and who owns it?'

Peace takes on different meanings, depending on the conceptual framework employed. Two key conceptualizations are outlined here. One is the prevalent 'peace as order' framework exemplified by the 'peace through strength' position during the Cold War. It is also associated with the saying that 'peace is the absence of violence', where violence is narrowly defined as being physical and overt. This concept is predominately concerned with security and predictability obtained through stable state and hierarchical international structures (Banks, 1987; Assefa, 1993). It is associated with notions of linear development and the idea that peace can be engineered.

In the 'peace as order' conception, "the ideology of peace reinforces a status-quo that is favourable to the dominant power" (Salem, 1993:1). Its preoccupation with controlling overt violence is a major shortcoming because it appears to condone covert violence and ignores latent conflicts (Assefa, 1993). Another limitation is that it cannot produce a vision of the future which is substantially different from the past since it is concerned with preserving the status-quo.

The other key concept is that of 'peace as conflict management'¹⁰ which incorporates ideas of order and justice in an attempt to create a more encompassing, process-oriented framework (Assefa, 1993; Banks, 1987). There is an acceptance that the status-quo may be disturbed because conflict has a role in societal relations (Assefa, 1993). This concept demands that root causes are addressed; that justice has to permeate the process of resolving conflicts; that relationships have to be marked by equality, respect, mutual enrichment, and growth; and an understanding that people's deeper needs are not totally incompatible (Assefa, 1993). Peace is seen as a dynamic, inclusive concept which grants people space to define it according to their needs, values, and cultural setting.

Conventional analysis sees this as an unduly idealistic, non-operational option. However, it seems as though some of its main attributes are filtering into main-stream development and humanitarian thinking (see Short, 1998; Goodhand & Hulme, 1997; also see the language used in the 'Peacebuilding' section below). Perhaps this is because former ways of thinking have not provided solutions to complex emergencies. Solutions have to be appropriate to the problem. Perhaps the language and some of the spirit of 'peace as conflict management' is coming into vogue because agencies need a framework for understanding their work. This could be seen as a counter-weight to the 'problem' of globalization which Duffield (1998) argues is changing the architecture of the nation-state structure which in turn affects power relations and social safety nets.

The language of peace is ripe for manipulation. At one extreme, peace can be used as

¹⁰ The term 'peace as conflict management' is used here since it is based on the work of Banks (1987). However, 'peace as conflict transformation' would be more in line with current thinking and practice.

evidence of an apparent paradigm shift while behind the scenes the mechanisms which keep the status-quo in place continue to work. At the other, it could also be part of a calling for new thinking and new solutions. The point is that peace is not a value-free term. It is a complex concept which warrants discussion especially in relation to an intervention which claims to build peace. The vagueness of the term 'peace' makes it easy to want to side-step it as an issue, and the assumption that 'we' all know what it is makes it convenient to avoid its analysis. But without thorough analyses, the concept of peace is open to misuse, even by those with good intentions.

It is the evaluator's job to convey an agency's position and to use this as a frame for assessing the intervention. Especially for in-depth studies, the evaluation should consider the broader goal which the intervention is trying to achieve, link this to the specific goals of the programme/project, and analyse how the intervention matches up.

6.2 Peacebuilding

Peacebuilding is a term used loosely to encompass a range of activities which aim to prevent, alleviate, or resolve conflict (Goodhand & Hulme, 1997). In general, peacebuilding aims to address the underlying causes of conflict and create institutional and socio-economic structures which promote lasting peace (Goodhand & Hulme, 1997). **Heinrich (1997:9)** uses J.P Lederach's extensive definition:

peacebuilding must be understood as a comprehensive term that encompasses the full array of stages and approaches needed to transform conflict toward sustainable, peaceful relationships and outcomes. Peacebuilding thus involves a wide range of activities and functions that both precede and follow formal peace accords.

Metaphorically, peace is seen not merely as a stage in time or a condition. It is a dynamic social construct. Such conceptualization requires a process of building, in involving investment and materials, architectural design, coordination of labor, laying of a foundation, as well as continued maintenance. (Emphasis added by Heinrich)

Along the same lines, O'Reilly (forthcoming), when assessing the contributions of World Vision's area development programmes to peacebuilding, uses the working definition:

Peacebuilding is the outworking of a perspective or vision that seeks restoration of economic, political, social, emotional and spiritual relationships which may or may not be expressed by overt conflict. It is a process rather than a discrete event and its outcome is a culture of peace that permeates all levels of society.

The broad range of activities which are covered by the peacebuilding umbrella are congruent with the broad definitions on offer. However, in-depth assessments require the intervention to be disaggregated.

6.3 Conflict

Another contentious area is the range of meanings attached to the term 'conflict'. An organization's analysis of the root causes of a conflict should shape its activities within the scope of its capacities. There are numerous perspectives, from community level analysis to

scarcity analysis, many of which can be applied simultaneously to help describe the complex nature of conflict.

While 'peace as order' thinking dominated international politics, conflict was associated with being a negative, dysfunctional state which disrupted linear development. This perception is changing with cases of 'positive' social change resulting from conflict situations, e.g. women asserting their rights in Nicaragua and Serbia. A different view of conflict could arise from the integration of 'peace as conflict management' language and ideas into humanitarian and development circles.

Peacebuilding taps into the view that conflict is a common experience across all types of relationships and cultures. Conflict is a socially-constructed event based on people's perceptions, interpretations, expressions, and intentions. Accordingly, it makes cultural sense. Consequently peacebuilding has to be contextualized. That said, there is a rejection of the notion that internal wars are solely based on internal problems -- a position that 'de-internationalizes' responsibility for internal wars (Hendrickson, 1998).

Though there is a move to develop a comprehensive understanding of conflict, agencies who engage in peacebuilding are criticized for inadequately assessing power relations and issues around sovereignty and the nation-state (Ropers, 1998). Another area which warrants additional attention is humanitarian agencies' relationships to latent conflicts. Humanitarian agencies and donors need to tap into the extensive literature on peace and conflict (e.g. works by Chris Mitchell, John Burton, John Paul Lederach, and Gene Sharp) in order to progress their conceptual understanding of the issues.

6.4 Summary Of The Key Issues

- ! Outside the literature which directly relates to peace and conflict studies, the terms 'peace' and 'conflict' have generally been seen as being simply diametrically opposed entities with positive and negative values, respectively. However, they are complex issues which demand the attention of and an analytical approach by agencies and donors.

- ! Both peace and conflict are not value-free terms. They are rooted in people's perceptions, interpretations, expressions, and intentions. They are socially-constructed entities which make cultural sense. Therefore, interventions need to be based on sound contextualized analysis.

- ! An organization's understanding of peace and conflict will affect the type of intervention it carries out. The internal motivations and external pressures on an agency are influential in this process.

- ! An area for further research is the extent to which the type of peace pursued affects the success of an intervention.

- ! Evaluations need to examine the linkages between the agency's conceptual understanding of peace and the specific goals of the programme/project.

7. FINDINGS IN RELATION TO KEY NOTIONS

The purpose of this section is to examine how the evaluations dealt with the key notions of peace, peacebuilding, and conflict. The logic is that these notions should underpin the peacebuilding activities.

7.1 Peace

Peace is the aim of all these efforts. Yet it is an under-analysed concept in the reviewed samples. Of all the studies, only **study I** explicitly addresses the topic of peace. After working through definitions by former UN General Secretary Boutros Boutros-Ghali and the peace theorist Johan Galtung, **Heinrich (1997:9)** concludes that "'Peace' in a positive meaning, however, would include the absence of structural violence as well. 'Peace' is thus characterized by 'justice and the absence of violence.' In this context, 'justice' is broadly defined as a participatory and inclusive system of governance."

What peace are agencies trying to build? Whose peace is it? Who owns it? What are the motivations for doing peacebuilding activities? What does the local culture say about peace? Agencies need to answer these and other basic questions, and take responsibility for the complex implications.¹¹ The answers need to form part of a conceptual framework from which the work progresses. Agencies and donors need to develop a better understanding of what they are trying to achieve.

7.2 Peacebuilding

As mentioned earlier, Adekanye, Heinrich, and Ball are all experienced in assessing peacebuilding activities. Not surprising, then, that the studies by **Adekanye et al (1997)** and **Heinrich (1997)** detail the peacebuilding theory upon which their analysis is based. However, in neither of Ball's reports (**studies A** and **N**) is there a detailed discussion about peacebuilding, in a broader sense. In **study N's** footnote 14, the authors point out that they do not want to overburden the reader with the multiple classifications of peace-related activities (peace-keeping, peace-making, peacebuilding). Instead, the peace committees in South Africa were assessed on six interrelated functions which the committees set out to fulfil.

In **study H**, the approach is to place the case-study within the theory-framework of peace research. To do so, the evaluators looked at writings by Johan Galtung, Boutros Boutros-Ghali, and Michael Pugh. The focus is on defining peace-making and peacebuilding. They saw this as appropriate for the task at hand since it was required that they explore the ideas

¹¹ This is starting to occur within some agencies. For example, WHO/Division of Emergency and Humanitarian Action, sponsored by the Department for International Development (UK), are touching upon these issues as part of their 'Health as a Bridge for Peace' project.

and relationships which were decisive for NCA's engagement in and contributions to the Malian peace process (**Adekanye et al, 1997**).

In **study I**, which examines the Somalia experience, the first chapter sets the tone of the evaluation by looking at contemporary conflicts; perception of conflict; terminology; procedures and methods of conflict management; conflict dynamics; peacebuilding; and the challenge to peacebuilding. The evaluation, in recognition of the type of work it is assessing, analyses LPI's work from a clearly defined peacebuilding perspective. **Heinrich (1997:18)** writes:

The central concern of 'conflict transformation' and 'peacebuilding' approaches is not to search for 'solutions' but to initiate processes within the society affected by conflict and to empower actors within that society to become the owners of the peace process. The underlying guiding principle is that peace cannot be enforced from the outside. Peace must grow from the inside if it is to be sustainable.

Furthermore,

The fundamental issue is to be aware of the role of interests in conflict or peace and to know what the interests of the relevant actors are.

The other studies did not indicate an adopted conceptual framework from which they are operating; furthermore, information about the conceptual underpinnings of the interventions has not been relayed. As has been illustrated throughout this text, many of the studies do try to establish how the activities examined contribute to the peace process. The next step is needed so that the conceptual framework of the intervention is clear to the reader. Evaluations have to cover not just the 'how', 'when', and 'what', but also the 'why'.

7.3 Conflict

Studies J, K, and L, in particular, draw linkages between the agency's analysis of the conflict and the work carried out by that agency. **Study L**, for example, demonstrates that the international community was largely ignorant of the indigenous causes of the Sierra Leone conflict. This, in turn, shaped International Alert's approach to 'level the playing field' by working closely with the insurgent side and notifying the international community of the political corruption and distributive injustice pursued by the government.

Most of the studies, to varying degrees, describe the conflict's history. **Study E** notes the internationalized nature of the Mozambique conflict because of the influences of the Cold War and the regional conflicts with apartheid South Africa. **Study H** draws a complex picture by examining at the preconditions, accelerators and precipitants, and triggers of the Mali conflict. In this analysis, the evaluators look at the distribution of developmental and budgetary resources, poverty, international economic pressures, the impact of drought, and the fact that many young men had gained military experience abroad during periods of economic migration. In sum, they highlight the economic, political, ethnic, and geographical differences between north and south Mali. **Study N** highlights the latent and overt conflicts which the South African Peace Committees aimed to address. It also discusses the different

perceptions of conflict held by the white and black communities in South Africa.

Many of the studies clearly linked the objectives of the intervention to the agency's account of the causes of the conflict. However, this practice could be improved since several studies simply listed the conflict's history and divorced it from the intervention.

7.4 Summary Of The Key Issues

- ! In most of the studies, the intervention's conceptual framework is not evident.
- ! Agencies and donors need to develop a better understanding of what they are trying to achieve in terms of peace and peacebuilding.
- ! Greater efforts must be made to show the links between an agency's understanding of peace, peacebuilding, and conflict and the intervention that it is performing. Evaluations have to cover not just the 'how', 'when', and 'what', but also the 'why'.

8. CONCLUSIONS

This synthesis report has pulled together 15 evaluative country case studies with the aim of analysing the content of peacebuilding interventions by humanitarian agencies and the methodologies employed to evaluate those interventions. Below are the main findings and recommendations, with particular emphasis on accountability and performance issues.

8.1 Summary Of The Main Findings And Recommendations

Humanitarian agencies have to manage many congruent and conflicting external and internal pressures and motivations. In recent years a peacebuilding agenda has been added to the remit of a substantial number of humanitarian agencies, though the motives for doing so are difficult to determine. In part it may have been driven by the agencies themselves in a desire 'to do more than provide band aids' and actually work to build peace. In part it may also have been driven by donor organizations anxious to use every means and channels at their disposal to fund projects and programmes with the potential to contribute to peace. Subsequently, the degree to which the peacebuilding agenda is donor- or agency-driven is not obvious. It may never be evident.

What is clear is the fact that the undertaking of peacebuilding activities by humanitarian agencies cannot relieve donor governments of the obligation to find political and economic solutions to complex emergencies; track II activities cannot and should not be substitutes for track I activities. Internal wars are connected to global issues. These are problems which humanitarian agencies were not intended to solve and in all probability never will.

This synthesis report has examined the evaluations of actions by third party humanitarian agencies and also conflict resolution/transformation agencies, though it has focussed primarily on the former. It has found that such track II organizations can contribute in valuable and meaningful ways to peace processes. They seem to make a (mostly) positive

difference at the local level. However, in terms of the proportion of the population reached by such interventions, these actions are invariably small-scale and of very limited reach. Nevertheless it is quite possible that such local contributions in turn have a positive impact on wider and higher level peacebuilding efforts. More research is needed to identify the linkages between interventions at the local level and broader, non-projectised, processes. How do communities which achieve genuine progress in peacebuilding at the local level feed into, and affect the context for and attitudes towards, peace and conflict resolutions in other areas? At the crux are the issues of ownership and sustainability.

The reports reviewed revealed numerous ways in which interventions by humanitarian agencies can contribute to peacebuilding, including: initiating reconciliation processes between formerly warring local officials over issues of mutual concern (e.g. health); reducing the threat of banditry by creating programmes which attend to the special needs of former soldiers and their dependents; or providing information on electoral processes. Many of these programmes lie at the 'technical' end of the spectrum of peacebuilding activities. However, there is evidence from the reports to indicate that the more successful peacebuilding interventions by humanitarian agencies are those which meld together both technical and social aspects. Nevertheless, interventions by such agencies are unlikely *per se* to create peace and should not be thought of as having such potential. Peace requires changes at many levels and spheres - political, social, economic, legal, military, and cultural. It is wholly unrealistic to think that interventions by humanitarian agencies can make anything more than a limited contribution to such wider changes.

Within a framework which strives for increased coherence between key stakeholders, and thus the formation of cross-cutting informative alliances, there has to be a role for the societies which produce and fund humanitarian agencies. In many ways, international humanitarian organizations are the conscience of their societies and act in their name. It might be argued that the emphasis by such agencies upon the delivery of relief assistance to conflict-affected populations, and the limited emphasis given to public education and advocacy in their own societies, actually serves to disempower those societies. Recent initiatives by some humanitarian agencies to 'constructively engage' with their societies on conflict and ways of reducing or resolving it are a positive step.¹²

It is important to point out that the contributions of humanitarian agencies to peace processes should be in accordance with, and in ways which strengthen, the primary objectives of their humanitarian activities -- the very source of their legitimate involvement. Though the reports which focussed on humanitarian interventions did not highlight the negative consequences of incorporating peacebuilding activities, it was clear that peacebuilding should not be at the expense of an agency's humanitarian work. In other words, peacebuilding activities by humanitarian agencies should not supersede nor jeopardize their humanitarian assistance and protection work.

Conflict resolution/transformation agencies appear to have been successful in taking on the

¹² Oxfam's 'Cut Conflict Campaign' is an example of an agency moving in this direction.

more overtly political aspects of peacebuilding, such as mobilizing women voters; providing democracy-building trainings; and creating lasting alliances which reflect the diversity of civil society. However, an important lesson from the studies is that these agencies need to take care not to assume the role of track I actors. For both the conflict resolution and the humanitarian agencies, the problem lies in finding the right balance between taking innovative risks and adhering to the boundaries set by the type of agency.

Conflict resolution organizations (and the same case could be made for humanitarian agencies) have to be aware of donor interest in their successes to ensure that they are not overly swayed by such attention. The issue of having clarity over the relationship between principles and actions is relevant. This clarity has to be apparent throughout the organization, from head-quarters to field staff.

Humanitarian principles comes through as a key issue, particularly in the current climate for humanitarian agencies. Just over half the agencies (53% of the sample) either articulated their ethical stance/value base or it was a key feature of their work. **Study A**, in particular, noted that the humanitarian principles of the agency enabled it to carry out peacebuilding activities because they were aimed at facilitating its humanitarian activities. The debate around humanitarian principles cannot afford to simply negatively categorize and ostracize peacebuilding activities by humanitarian agencies. Such an exclusion neglects the positive contributions that are usually made during the early stages of peacebuilding. It also misses the opportunity to assess, in light of humanitarian principles, the limits and capacities of humanitarian agencies engaged in peacebuilding activities. The principles debate has to frame questions which challenge the extent to which peacebuilding activities should occupy humanitarian agencies.

Though the reviewed studies had a positive impact on peacebuilding, there is still room to improve practice. The two key issues are how they can best do this, and how evaluative practice can inform the process. The reviewed texts provide three cross-cutting themes: the need for flexibility; the necessity for appropriate peacebuilding-oriented training; and the importance of understanding that peace has to be 'owned' by the affected population. Common to all these is the point that quality staff should not be undervalued. Hence, it is important to improve the human resource capacities of agencies involved in peacebuilding activities.¹³

Both types of agencies, and humanitarian organizations in particular, can also improve their practice by progressing their conceptual understanding of the key issues of peace, peacebuilding, and conflict. Only one study out of 15 reviewed explained its understanding of 'peace'. Moreover, only two studies gave detailed attention to the broader conceptual issues

¹³ For example, Canada's Peacebuilding Initiative has at its core the three strategic objectives: 1) to build Canadian domestic capacity for peacebuilding through research, policy development, public consultations and training (45%); 2) to strengthen Canada's ability to contribute to multilateral peacebuilding mechanisms (44%); and, 3) to support catalytic peacebuilding projects in countries, or in policy areas, that fall outside the priorities for Canadian Official Development Assistance which respond to critical, emergency conflict prevention or post-conflict situations (11%). (DFAIT/CIDA, 1998;7)

behind peacebuilding activities, whilst a third focussed on the local understanding of that particular agency's peacebuilding mandate. The lack of a conceptual underpinning and analysis revealed by the cases reviewed is remarkable. Agencies working in volatile situations need to analytically understand the context, the aims of the intervention, and the processes for achieving those aims. The conceptual framework from which the work progresses has to be articulated, understandable and relevant to the donors and the field staff alike. This process has to utilize the knowledge of specialist literature, academics, and practitioners. Furthermore, steps have to be taken to standardize terminology.

Evaluators of peacebuilding interventions also have to bring specialist skills, experience, and knowledge. Evaluators need to draw clear linkages between the agency's conceptual understanding of peace and conflict, and its actions. Evaluation processes have to be relevant to the task at hand.

Research is needed to identify which of the OECD criteria, and the newer humanitarian-oriented sub-criteria, are useful for furthering the understanding of peacebuilding activities.¹⁴ Universal criteria will probably incorporate both, since peacebuilding activities straddle the divide between development and humanitarian activities. This paper suggests the potential use of the criteria of: appropriateness; timeliness; coherence; coordination; cost-effectiveness; connectedness; coverage; impact; sustainability; and effectiveness. These might be further modified and amended to suit the very specific context and objectives of peacebuilding activities. An advantage of these criteria is that they embrace the developmental (namely the peace by-product) and humanitarian aspects of peacebuilding by humanitarian agencies. The debate surrounding the development of appropriate criteria has to also address the issue of more specific criteria which embrace key variables such as the phase of the conflict, the degree of the peacebuilding effort, and the objectives of the intervention. Furthermore, two issues which peacebuilding criteria will have to incorporate are the need for greater emphasis on local ownership, and the need for ways of measuring secondary impact, namely how those affected by humanitarian interventions contribute to their peace processes. These criteria do not necessarily have to exclude established criteria. They do have to be utilized from a peacebuilding perspective. Specific peacebuilding criteria should be aimed at incorporating the long-term and more political nature of peacebuilding.

This ties into the question of when to assess an intervention. Sustainable peace requires a commitment to the long-term. Evaluations which inform an intervention's interim strategy are useful. Of the reviewed studies, 66% of the evaluations were conducted while the programmes were still in progress; however, many were winding down. Only two studies incorporated follow-up evaluations. Commitment to the long-term is, as yet, not evident. Since all of the evaluative reports are relatively new, time will tell if there is a commitment to draw out lessons from past interventions. This approach also indicates a commitment to the beneficiaries as primary stakeholders by returning to them to find out the lasting impact of the

¹⁴ Perhaps it would be appropriate for the OECD's Task Force on Conflict, Peace and Development to progress this debate.

interventions.

This research has not been able to answer the question as to whether or not peacebuilding activities divert resources from other humanitarian and development activities. Similar to Renner's (1995) findings, it did show that the larger interventions did concentrated on the tangible and technical aspects of peacebuilding. For example (unfortunately the only monetary example from the sample), 14% of Norwegian aid in Mozambique went to demining activities compared to 2.6% for peace and reconciliation. Peacebuilding, however, is not simply a technical exercise, satiated by material supplies. As this paper has shown, humanitarian agencies have a role to play on the technical side of peacebuilding, but this is not the only role to be played.

Hopefully, the confusion over budget lines and the use of a variety of actors are symptomatic of 'intelligent groping' for the theory and practice which will address the root causes of conflict, and contribute to the holistic creation of political, economic, social, legal, and cultural structures which promote lasting peace. Perhaps donors are being innovative by encouraging peacebuilding activities by a range of actors; if successful, calls against such 'diversions' of funds would be muffled. Alternatively, donors could within the same policy be pitting agencies against each other and ensuring that agencies have a stake in the status-quo. However there is no evidence to support such broad assertions.

The point that should not be lost in the confusion is that peacebuilding highlights the problems and limitations of the international aid system in the face of latent-, overt-, and post-conflict situations. These are the same or similar problems raised during the recent relief-development continuum debates, namely how the problem is defined and therefore resolved; the restrictions on flexible response and implementation; and insufficient learning mechanisms. For example, it can be assumed that some peacebuilding reports are confidential because of the sensitivity of the contents. However, others are kept from the public domain because agencies fear the consequences of 'bad press'. Fear, in this case, is not conducive to broader learning and sharing processes. Peacebuilding as a field has to learn from and contribute to humanitarian and development debates. It should be stressed again that it is this author's hope that peacebuilding is the product of intelligent groping for solutions rather than the blind reconstruction of the wheel.

This paper has stressed the responsibilities of agencies and evaluators to hone their understanding of the issues and to bolster their skills. It is also important to highlight the responsibilities of donors, as key components of the engine which drives the track II peacebuilding agenda. The 'projectization' of complex emergencies and the 'privatization' of aid are two examples of processes which donors wield influence over. Just as it is important to challenge agencies donning the peacebuilding fashion label, it is important to bring this same challenge to the donor community. Changes in procedures, structures, priorities, and requirements are being made by some governments. As a community, donors need to look at ways to encourage flexible agency responses; to create an environment conducive to the learning and sharing of practice and theory; to recognize the limits of track II peacebuilding; to commit to long-term peacebuilding strategies; and to develop the capacities and skills-base of agencies. Transitional thinking is needed by agencies and donors alike.

ENDNOTES:

1. Global Peace and Demilitarization Expenditures, 1989-94
(In million US dollars - US\$)

CATEGORY	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994
De-mining	10	10	197	200	238	241
Demobilization	46	28	38	54	56	52
Refugee Repatriation	77	101	160	172	252	463
Disarmament						
Nuclear	1,174	1,214	1,706	1,775	2,007	1,998
Conventional	25	26	144	351	321	529
Chemical	180	270	317	421	591	586
Aid to Former USSR	0	0	1,275	1,708	2,370	1,984
Other	126	124	199	218	206	246
Base Closures	NA	538	998	1,148	2,120	2,864
Conversion	93	114	511	1,302	1,609	2,707
Peacekeeping/ -building	749	677	760	2,149	3,450	4,080
World Court/War Crimes Tribunal	6	9	9	9	9	20
TOTAL	2,486	3,111	6,314	9,507	13,229	15,770

(Renner, 1995)

2. Overview of the peace-process related portfolio, Norwegian government=s contributions to Mozambique

Classification	Number of disbursements	Amount (000's NOK)
Refugees	29	68,694
Repatriation and rehabilitation	26	65,937
Demining	7	56,613
Demobilization	3	19,300
Elections and Democratization	15	22,137
Peace and reconciliation	9	9,958
Community development/grey area	65	137,777
Total	154	380,416
Total bilateral assistance 1992-95	629	1,716,622

(Suhrke et al, 1997:26)

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ANNEX 2: DEFINING KEY TERMS

Complex Emergency, Mackinlay (1996:14-15) uses the definition:

A complex emergency is a humanitarian disaster that occurs in a conflict zone and is complicated by, or results from, the conflicting interests of warring parties. Its causes are seldom exclusively natural or military; in many cases, a marginally subsistent population is precipitated toward disaster by the consequences of militia action or a natural occurrence such as an earthquake or drought. The presence of militias and their interest in controlling and extorting the local population will impede and in some cases seriously threaten relief efforts. In addition to violence against the civil populations, civilian installations such as hospitals, schools, refugee centers, and cultural sites will become war objectives and may be looted frequently or destroyed.

Conflict Transformation, according to Heinrich (1997:4-5), provides for a holistic perception of conflict, where conflict is no longer resolved or managed. It "emphasizes that conflict does not 'just happen', but conflict instead is the effect of deliberate decision-making and action. It is a 'human construct.'"

Multi-Track Diplomacy is defined by Lewer and Ramsbotham (1993:35) as:

Track I	Official government-government interaction.
Track II	Un-official, non-governmental, analytical, policy orientated, problem solving efforts by skilled, educated, experienced and informed private citizens interacting with other private citizens.
Track III	Buisnessman-buisnessman, private sector, free enterprise, multi-national corporations. (McDonald claims that the contribution by multi-nationals to international understanding and co-operation is much undervalued).
Track IV	Citizen-citizen exchange programmes of all kinds such as scientific, cultural, film, student, etc.
Track V	Media-media based efforts designed to expose and educate large segments of the population in conflict to the philosophy, ideas, culture and needs of the other nation, society or ethnic group with which they are in conflict.

Peacebuilding is a term used loosely to encompass a range of activities which aim to prevent, alleviate, or resolve conflict (Goodhand & Hulme, 1997). In general, peacebuilding aims to address the underlying causes of conflict and create institutional and socio-economic structures which promote lasting peace (Goodhand & Hulme, 1997)

Peace-making is the process of bringing warring parties to agreement using one or a combination of political, diplomatic, or military interventions (Goodhand & Lewer, 1998).

Peace-keeping is the process and procedures to monitor compliance to an agreement with the aim of fostering mutual confidence (Goodhand & Lewer, 1998). Activities commonly include

election and human rights monitoring and demobilization programs. Mackinlay (1996) notes that the term has been misapplied to non-UN interventions. Originally, the term was based on the principles:

- need for support by the mandated authority, the Security Council;
- requirement that the operation be deployed only with the consent of the warring parties;
- regulations for command and control of the force;
- balanced multinational composition of the force;
- restriction that forces be used only in self-defence; and
- need for complete impartiality in the performance of the functions of the force (Mackinlay; 1996:9-10).

Relief-development continuum, according to Duffield (1997:85), is the concept where humanitarian aid can, through creating dependency and undermining local capacity, actually reinforce underdevelopment and hence instability if not properly administered. Although based on earlier approaches to natural disaster, the continuum demands that relief, even in the highly polarised context of internal war, must be made developmental.®