



International Peacebuilding Alliance
Alliance internationale pour la consolidation de la paix
Alianza internacional para la Consolidación de la Paz



Investing in Peace

Annual Report 2005



As of 15 June 2006, WSP International officially changed its name and visual identity to International Peacebuilding Alliance, Interpeace



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In partnership with the United Nations

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Preface



INTERPEACE/JEAN-MARC FERRE

MARTTI AHTISAARI, CHAIR OF THE INTERPEACE GOVERNING COUNCIL



INTERPEACE/JEAN-MARC FERRE

MATTHIAS STIEFEL, PRESIDENT OF INTERPEACE

Partners for peace

When the shooting stops and peace agreements are signed the most difficult challenge starts: to build peace from the ashes of war. It is neither easy nor quick for societies torn by war and divided by mistrust to build a peace that will hold. The international community has long underestimated the importance and the complexity of this transition back to “normality,” and has done so with dire consequences: half of the countries emerging from war relapse back into armed conflict within five years.

We applaud thus all the more the creation of the United Nations Peacebuilding Commission and its related Support Office as one of the important achievements of the UN reform. Its creation recognizes the importance and the specificity of the challenge we face: normal instruments of funding and support will not do. We require a highly integrated approach that strategically combines the efforts of external and internal forces and facilitates the necessary transition from the classical peace operations through peace and nation building to the “normal” development work.

Successful peacebuilding rests on a dual process of healing and of empowerment, of people who are divided and traumatized and of societies that are fractured. They must find new ways to build a common future, a future that provides security of livelihood for all and institutions of governance that allow conflicts to be resolved in peaceful ways. Providing international assistance to these processes is both particularly important and particularly difficult given the imperative need for local and internal actors to play the leading role.

Fortunately, we are not starting from scratch. Much experience has been gained over the past years by the United Nations, by governmental agencies and by non-governmental organizations such as Interpeace (formerly WSP International). The Interpeace initiative has worked for more than a decade with local and international actors to build peace after war. It has gained precious operational experience as it learned to apply principles of participation and local ownership in practice in conflict and post-conflict contexts.

We are glad to share this experience and the lesson thus learned as we engage in strategic cooperation and partnership with the Peacebuilding Commission and local actors in the field. Evolving recently from WSP International into Interpeace – the International Peacebuilding Alliance – we have geared up to engage into such partnerships with a stronger institutional basis, to be effective at even higher levels of global relevance and impact. We are proud to serve and advance the common cause of peace.




Introduction



INTERPEACE/JEAN-MARC FERRIE

SCOTT M. WEBER, INTERPEACE DIRECTOR-GENERAL

In the end, it comes down to trust

Earlier this year, I had the opportunity to give a presentation in Geneva to a group of International Fellows taking a course on conflict prevention and mediation. Reading through their biographical notes prior to the meeting, I was struck that many stated unabashedly their chief motivation to be to “change the world”. Ever the positivist, I was enthusiastic and supportive, looking for ways to bolster, rather than deflate, their excitement for peacebuilding despite the state of world affairs. But as I walked them through an exposé of our work in Somalia, Rwanda, Burundi, Guatemala, Guinea-Bissau, Israel, Palestine and Aceh, I remarked to them that the difficulty of rebuilding these societies can easily seem overwhelming. And it should.

The task is truly monumental and exceedingly complex. As recent years have shown, even the unlimited resources, brainpower and influence of the United States, the sole remaining superpower, are humbled before the challenge of rebuilding Iraq. And Iraq is just one of the 40 or so conflicts or post-conflict contexts facing the world at any one time.

Unhelpfully, the path to peace is almost never clearly mapped out and those engaged in this work often feel that the terrain under their feet shifts unpredictably, and often. The tragic death of two of our dear colleagues in July 2005 is a painful reminder that this work is also very dangerous.

In the face of such challenges, it is all too easy to throw up your hands and to get depressed. Thankfully, peacebuilders aren't easily discouraged. They draw their energy and inspiration from the privilege of being able to effect positive change in the lives of millions of people. Peacebuilding is made even more exciting because extraordinary challenges attract extraordinary people. We see it in the leadership of each of Interpeace's local partners and teams. Their commitment to devote every bit of their energy to rebuilding their countries is infectious and their determination unyielding. A country torn apart by war can, after all, only build a new society on the wisdom, perseverance and ideas of its people.

Unfortunately, conflicts are steadily becoming more complex and difficult to contain within borders, as regional and international dimensions weigh in more and more heavily. The good news is that, amidst all the confusion, we know clearly what needs to be done; the single constant, if ever there were one, across all conflict prevention and peacebuilding efforts: *rebuilding trust at all levels*.

However inconvenient this may seem to some, you simply cannot buy or manufacture trust. It doesn't come in a bottle or a neat package you can ship from one country to another. It doesn't come with an instruction manual, a

screwdriver and some glue. And it most certainly does not materialize magically with elections or with the arrival of foreign peacekeeping troops.

After all, it is easy to disarm a soldier, but it is much more difficult to ensure that he won't resort to violence again when his future remains uncertain and his gun was his only source of pride and influence, not to mention income and protection. With cheap guns readily available in most parts of the world, the temptation for that former-combatant to slip back into his old ways are powerful. The goal is to reach a point where the soldier will have sufficient *trust* in the future not to *want* to resort to picking up another gun or machete and where he will believe (justifiably) that the national leadership will both protect him and provide him with an opportunity to prosper. Trust-building requires changing mindsets at all levels and can only be achieved through sustained dialogue, a great deal of sacrifice and a lot of hard work away from the media spotlight.

Building this foundation of trust in a fragile society is where Interpeace is most effective. We help societies to identify their main fault lines and then to find home-grown ways to deal with them. The approach and methodology we have honed over the last 12 years are powerful tools to bridge the gap between the aspirations of local people and their leadership, between political or armed groups that otherwise refuse to work together and between the international community and national authorities. And our continued close partnership with the United Nations has allowed us to achieve an ever larger scale of impact on the way the world responds to the challenge of post-war rebuilding in the first place.

Let's change the way we understand conflict and peace

One of the same International Fellows later asked me: "what advice can you give us that will help us make a difference?"

I told them that there is so much still to be done to improve our collective ability to promote sustainable peace. But where they can possibly have the greatest impact would be to change the way the world understands the nature of conflict and the factors that make a society "viable". The hope is that if you can change that understanding, the methods and resources applied to the task of building peace will also change for the better.

A society is viable and peaceful when it is equipped with the institutions, mechanisms (formal or informal), processes, legitimate governance and collective political identity that permit the diverse and often contradictory interests of its population to be managed openly and non-violently and where the basic human rights of every citizen are protected. If we accept this, we should naturally feel compelled to take a good look around because many seemingly stable countries don't meet these basic criteria and could well be the powder-kegs of tomorrow.

It is, after all, amazingly easy to undermine the stability of a country. All it takes is for the ground to be shaky, for there to be weak or illegitimate institutions, for an atmosphere of mistrust to persist and for a group, or even an individual, to seize the wrong opportunity at the right time.

In that sense, if we are serious about conflict prevention, then the scope of countries requiring our collective attention must necessarily widen to include those societies where the root causes of mass violence or state failure are in early stages of gestation. But what are the warning signs? Who is monitoring them? Even once identified, are the resources there to take action early on?

Why many peace agreements fail

In one's effort to improve understanding of the mechanics of peace and conflict, a place to start would be to take a fresh look at peace processes and agreements and why some hold and others not. A UN study in 2005 found that 40 per cent of countries emerging from conflict fall back into conflict within five years. The rate is 60 per cent in Africa. What is behind this?

Some of our own answers are:

- Most peace accords are not rooted in the people and their aspirations. They most often remain complex power-sharing negotiations and do not begin to address the core socio-political issues behind a conflict. For example, defining a national political identity, transforming a culture of impunity, overcoming a legacy of bad governance, or redressing the unequal distribution of resources.
- A great deal of effort is put into the preparation for and implementation of peace negotiations, but little attention is given to the long-term (10 to 15 years) stabilization efforts between the signatories and the many other political actors in the society who were left out of the negotiations.
- Because of the first and second points combined, when peace agreements are implemented they often generate new (unforeseen) conflicts that can derail the overall agreement. For example, the redrawing of provincial boundaries can change power dynamics between local traditional authorities on the ground, new access to resources can create new intra-party power struggles, or parties left out of peace deal can continue to undermine it.
- There is too much of an emphasis on the piece of paper and too little on instilling a culture of compromise and problem-solving.
- Because of the nature of peace negotiations and the practice that those with guns get a seat at the table, it is difficult to envisage a means of redesigning such processes to be more broadly consultative and inclusive. As important as the negotiation process itself is the initiation of grassroots

dialogue processes throughout a country to complement the formal negotiations and to give the people a voice.

- The international community's approach to peacebuilding should be process-sensitive and understand that the process of ensuring *broad local ownership* (which also means beyond just government) is as important as the content of the result. Local engagement tends to be government-centric and, for fear of diplomatic confrontation, shy away from the more difficult conflict-related issues that everyone knows lie at the heart of the problem. This is where broadening the participation and ownership in the process of setting priorities is most powerful. If the engagement of a broad spectrum of people in society is truly meaningful (both in scope and freedom from intimidation) then the results that emerge will have a *de facto* weight and legitimacy that no one group can deny. As Interpeace's experience shows, by engaging in such broadly consultative processes and using the right techniques, the society as a whole can define what it sees as the most pressing, and often controversial, issues to be addressed. Thus, quality participation breeds a sense of broad ownership and legitimacy that allows the conflict-related issues to be openly addressed.

Interpeace is working with its local and international partners to help improve the world's understanding of these challenges. We try at all times to ensure that the voices of local people, those who have to live with consequences of good or bad policies towards their societies, are not only heard but listened to.

2005 and beyond

As you read the following sections of this report, you will see that 2005 was a tremendously important year for the Interpeace family. We made groundbreaking progress in such places as Somalia, Rwanda, Guatemala, Israel and Palestine. We laid the groundwork for the initiation of new peacebuilding processes in Aceh, Indonesia, where 30 years of civil war and the brunt of the 2004 Tsunami still leave deep wounds; in tiny and fragile Timor-Leste; in Rwanda's southern neighbor Burundi; in Guinea-Bissau in West Africa, a region fraught with instability; in Peru, where the small gains in democratic governance are now at very serious risk; and finally in Central America on the very complex and dangerous phenomenon of organized youth gangs. In 2006 we are reaping the rewards of that hard work with new programmes starting in all of the above contexts in addition to new opportunities opening up in Liberia and Cyprus.

We have also laid the groundwork for the development, in partnership with International IDEA, UN Department for Political Affairs and the UN Development Programme, of a handbook for practitioners on Constitution-making

processes in post-conflict contexts, one of the fundamental challenges in building “viable” societies.

We also undertook the most important institutional reform process the organization has yet experienced, introducing changes at the senior management level, the decentralization of our programme management capacities and a transition to a new visual identity and name for the organization (for the first 12 years of our existence we were known as the War-torn Societies Project – WSP, and later as WSP International). With these changes in place, we are now in a position to manage a steady growth in our operational activities in order to respond more effectively to requests for our assistance around the world. Interpeace is already one of the most trusted organizations in the peace field and we need to continue to demonstrate that we are worthy of that confidence.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank our local partners and staff for the sacrifices and dedication that make them true peacebuilders for their societies and for their commitment to making the International Peacebuilding Alliance a meaningful Alliance. I would also like to thank our donors for their generous and faithful support. In particular I would like to single out the tremendous leadership that Sweden has brought to the Advisory Council over the last year. We look forward to working with Denmark as it takes over the leadership in November 2006. And lastly, I would like to thank the members of the Governing Council of Interpeace, who provide such strong backing and wise guidance to us in our challenging work. It is always reassuring to be able to lean on individuals with so much experience.

With an ever increasing base of support from governments and private individuals, Interpeace is making important progress in demonstrating that sustainable peace is achievable and that we are right to be hopeful for the future.

And, to you, the reader, I hope that you will find inspiration in the pages that follow to join us, in whatever way you choose, in our effort to forge a more lasting peace around the world.



Scott M. Weber
Interpeace Director-General

INTERPEACE around the world



Eastern Africa

1 Somali Region – Somaliland, Puntland, and South-Central Somalia

Local Partners: Academy for Peace and Development (APD) in Hargeisa, Somaliland; Puntland Development and Research Center (PDRC) in Garowe, Puntland; Center for Research and Dialogue (CRD) in Mogadishu (South-Central Somalia)

Purpose: The Interpeace Somali programme is engaging in a Somali-wide community-based reconciliation process known as the Dialogue for Peace, to address critical issues, build participatory forms of governance, and put a definitive end to conflict in Somalia. The programme also has a role in legislative change, mediation and civic education, all aimed at a positive transformation of this failed state.

Central Africa

2 Rwanda

Local partner: Institute of Research and Dialogue for Peace (IRDP), Kigali

Purpose: Since 2001, the IRDP has been playing a key role in helping the people of Rwanda to pick up the pieces following the 1994 Genocide and to generate research and concrete recommendations on the themes of genocide, history, rule of law, poverty and democracy.

3 Burundi

Purpose: An Interpeace programme in Burundi will provide actors with tools to collectively examine the challenges of reconciliation including ethnicity, justice and impunity, dealing with the past, land and property, and power-sharing.

West Africa

4 Guinea-Bissau

Local partner: National Institute of Studies and Research (INEP), Bissau, and in partnership with the UN Peacebuilding Support Office for Guinea-Bissau (UNOGBIS)

Purpose: To support the consolidation of the peace process and promote conflict-sensitive governance and willingness to address the root causes of instability in Guinea-Bissau.

Programme Development: In 2006-2007, other countries in West Africa may be explored, such as Liberia, Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea Conakry or Sierra Leone.

Latin America

5 Guatemala

Local partner: Strengthening Civil Society Capacity in Security Issues (FOSS)

Purpose: The FOSS project has created a space for key actors to discuss and formulate policy recommendations for reforming the Guatemalan security sector. It is also acts as a link between the state and civil society.

6 Peru

Purpose: Interpeace will establish a project in Peru to address the issue of democratic security, the role of the armed forces within society and within an emerging democracy.

7 Central America: Organized youth gangs

Purpose: Interpeace will use its broad-based participatory approach to address the problem of the *Maras*, transnational youth gangs often linked to organized crime across the region, aiming to identify and prioritize sectoral and national solutions to reduce conflict and crime.

Programme Development: In 2006-2007 additional programmes that Interpeace will launch include a project on Regional Security in Central America and an Early Warning project for Guatemala.



Asia

8 Aceh, Indonesia

Purpose: Strengthen the implementation of the MoU (Peace Accords) by supporting a local capacity for research-based problem solving that can identify and overcome tensions as they arise.
Programme Development: In 2006-2007, other countries in Asia may be explored such as Timor Leste.

Middle East

9 Israel

Partner: UNDP-Interpeace Joint Programme Unit, UNDP, and UN Office for Project Services (UNOPS)
Purpose: To work with groups traditionally excluded from the peace process, but who have a strong influence on Israeli society to develop a peaceful vision of the future and a plan to achieve this vision.

10 Palestine

Partner: UN Development Programme (UNDP)/ UN Office for Project Services (UNOPS)
Purpose: To promote dialogue within Palestinian society and across the whole spectrum of social actors, including those marginalized in previous processes, on a future vision of Palestine.

New York, USA

11 Interpeace Representation Office

Purpose: To act as a liaison between Interpeace and the UN Peacebuilding Commission and Support Office and other UN departments and agencies to channel communication with UN decision-makers and member states and to explore concrete cooperation in UN peacebuilding operations around the world.

Brussels, Belgium

12 Interpeace Liaison Office

Purpose: To position Interpeace as an important and recognized partner for the European Union and Commission in peacebuilding.

Geneva, Switzerland

13 Interpeace Headquarters

Purpose: The headquarters handles strategic planning, external relations, new programme development, reflective practice, communications, analysis, resource mobilization and finance and administration.

Nairobi, Kenya

14 Regional Office for Eastern and Central Africa

Purpose: The Nairobi office provides on going programmatic support to Interpeace's Eastern and Central Africa programmes and plays a lead role in programme development in the region.

Guatemala City, Guatemala

15 Regional Office for Latin America

Purpose: The Guatemala office runs Interpeace's Latin American Programmes. The office also plays a lead role in programme development in the region.

Interpeace in

Eastern Africa



THE SOMALI REGION: A year of challenge and tragedy

Early 2006 witnessed both an important reconciliation between the leadership of the nascent institutions of the Somali Transitional Federal Government (TFG) and some of Somalia's worst violence in almost a decade. This was coupled with the ravages of acute drought, which was beginning to create dire pre-famine conditions in the South and trigger the loss of nearly half the country's cattle and sheep. All of this presented immense challenges for a worn-out and destitute region that has been seeking to re-establish peace ever since the onset of civil war and the subsequent collapse of the Somali state in 1991.

Overall, the recent fighting in Mogadishu may be seen as part of the tumultuous longer term process of establishing peace and governance throughout the Somali region, a process that Interpeace has been actively supporting since 1996. "The situation in Mogadishu is a battle of wills to win over the people,"



ELDERS FROM GALKAYO DISCUSS THE PROSPECTS FOR A LOCAL PEACEBUILDING DIALOGUE.

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said one Interpeace representative, “as well as a proxy war which has gone well beyond the borders of Somalia.”

In contrast, Somaliland took another significant step towards democratic governance with peaceful parliamentary elections in September 2005: the absence of conflict during the process demonstrated a new level of maturity in the search for peace and governance by the Somali people.

From brutal assassination to democratic success

For Interpeace, involved in the region for the past nine years, 2005 has proven an exceptionally challenging, but also traumatic year. On the positive side, new dynamics have emerged with the holding of the Somaliland parliamentary elections in September in which Interpeace played a key supporting role. These proceeded largely peacefully and proved an impressive example of democracy in action. But there was also the targeted assassination of the Director of the Center for Research and Dialogue, Abdulkadir Yahya, on 11 July 2005 in Mogadishu (see page 20).

“His death was absolutely devastating,” said a Nairobi-based Interpeace representative and the strength of feeling was reflected in the public response to his loss. Yahya’s funeral in Mogadishu was followed by mass demonstrations and ceremonies warmly commemorating his work in support of peace and governance, but also loudly protesting his murder. Leading international figures, notably the United Nations Secretary-General and the President of the European Union, strongly condemned his brutal death.

Looking back at Interpeace’s work in the Somali region over the past decade, the Geneva-based organization has sought to support peacebuilding operations by establishing three local and non-partisan bodies. Their purpose is to open up a neutral political space (see page 104) for trust and dialogue, much in the same way Interpeace projects have done in other parts of the world.

Interpeace did this through the initial establishment of small team “affiliates,” which eventually evolved into more formal institutions. The first of these was the Puntland Development and Research Centre (PDRC), which was created in the late 1990s. This was followed by the creation in 1999 of the Academy for Peace and Development (APD) in Somaliland, the North-Western region which had declared itself independent in 1991, and the most recent – the Center for Research and Dialogue (CRD) – based in Mogadishu in South-Central Somalia in 2000.

The Interpeace Somali programme has been supporting the establishment and consolidation of peace for the Somali people for nearly ten years and is engaged on a number of fronts. As well as involvement in the long-term promotion of peace in known conflict-prone areas, the three institutions are called upon frequently to facilitate *ad hoc* meetings to avert or mitigate the outbreak

of violent strife elsewhere. Most recently, Interpeace has been asked by the President of the Transitional Federal Government and different local actors to support a locally-based reconciliation process in and around Mudug, an area of seemingly intractable conflict in which Interpeace is involved.



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PUNTLAND, SOMALIA.



PUNTLAND'S REGIONAL POLICE FORCE PROVIDES SECURITY AT A FOOTBALL MATCH IN GAROWE, NORTHERN SOMALIA.

As with other Interpeace-supported activities, such as the Institute of Research and Dialogue for Peace (IRDP) in Rwanda, the Somali programme recognises that its added value in such initiatives is predicated on these being community-led, with Interpeace and its partners providing support and guidance for engagement with a broad range of stakeholders in a dialogue for peace.

Entering a new stage of trust

Over the past two years, Interpeace's 27-month "Dialogue for Peace" project has served as a complementary initiative to ongoing efforts to consolidate peace and security in the Somali region, aiming to engender an extensive process of public consultation on peacebuilding and state reconstruction issues. A critical part of this approach was to lay the groundwork for addressing critical core issues and to build trust. "If peacebuilding is not integrated into state-building and recovery, you risk collapse, particularly given that there is so much misinformation and rumour which can disrupt the process," said an Interpeace representative. The participatory action research methodology (see page 102) provides a basis for engaging a broad range of stakeholders in discussions and recommendations on issues critical to promoting peace and recovery as well as state-building.

The three Somali partners lead the process in the Somali region, responding to the particular dynamics of each area. The small Nairobi-based team

provides management support and guidance, as well as actively supporting opportune and pragmatic ways of convergence amongst the three groups, all of

which have been strengthened by varying aspects of local and regional cooperation. Cross-regional collaboration has proved particularly useful in the support of reconciliation initiatives in critical conflict zones such as Mudug and Sool.

If peacebuilding is not integrated into state-building and recovery, you risk collapse, particularly given that there is so much misinformation and rumour which can disrupt the process.

Environmental protection, prisoner exchanges and capacity-building

Joint initiatives and experience-sharing provide opportunities to contribute toward alleviating other often-ignored aspects of social and political collapse. The APD, for example, has initiated various efforts to counter environmental devastation, notably uncontrolled tree cutting for charcoal. This began during the late 1970s following refugee influxes from the Ogaden in neighbouring Ethiopia, but was further aggravated by the lack of governance and the breakdown of traditional management systems resulting from years of prolonged conflict. The PDRC and CRD are keen to learn from the work of the APD in order to extend the benefits of environmental protection to other parts of the Somali region, where rampant tree cutting is destroying the natural habitat.

Ever since Interpeace first became involved in the region, the Somali programme has been nurturing a sense of “healing” by carefully managing its on-the-ground relationships. The Dialogue for Peace initiative was the first in which all three partners worked together on a single programme, representing a significant paradigm shift, which, in many respects, also mirrored positive developments in the Somali context. This has provided opportunities for the three partners to come together on a regular basis and enhance learning and collaboration.

In late 2004, for example, the Interpeace partners PDRC and APD became involved in helping obtain prisoner releases following a clash in the Sool region, part of the territory disputed between Somaliland and Puntland. Through discreet background contacts and mediation, the partners engaged with both sides to take photographs of their POWs and make them available to the other side in order to show who was alive and that they were being held and were safe. Following extensive behind the scenes negotiations between Somaliland and Puntland and the respective military commanders, 36 POWs were finally exchanged in December 2005. “There are a lot of situations where the local



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WOMEN LINE UP TO CAST THEIR BALLOTS AT A POLLING STATION IN HARGEISA, SOMALILAND. MORE THAN 250 POLITICIANS RAN FOR 82 SEATS IN SOMALILAND'S NEW PARLIAMENT ON 29 SEPTEMBER 2005.

partners may be at risk in sensitive negotiations, so it is important that they take the lead and are able to respond to windows of opportunity, particularly in areas of unresolved tension,” said an Interpeace representative.

By early 2006, Interpeace was entering its final phase of the Dialogue for Peace. As with other Interpeace programmes, these dialogues have sought to involve the different local players and populations with meetings filmed as documentary evidence and then screened as a means of public awareness outreach. The audio-visual programmes are further copied on DVD or cassettes and even sold in the markets, where they are proving exceptionally popular. Also, for example, the APD’s film documentary promoting participation in the Somaliland parliamentary elections was shown on Somaliland TV. The APD toured key urban towns and rural areas for public screenings as part of the civic voter education process. One of its best-known films passes messages of peace from Somaliland traditional elders, sharing some of their lessons on clan reconciliation with their brothers in the South. Another critical aspect of the process is the participation of women. The three local partners are all responding to demand by focusing on capacity-building and strategic planning workshops for women’s networks with particular emphasis on their role in decision-making and community mobilization and organization. At the same time, the groups are promoting educational needs, not only amongst the young, but also regional and district administrations where they offer training in conflict

management and leadership skills as a means of improving local governance and social services delivery. In Puntland, PDRC's work with the regional administration on public fund management has resulted in a proposal to the parliament to increase its budget allocation for social services from 3 to 15%, enabling improved salaries for teachers.

The three groups are actively involved in working with civil society and the business sector to address security and governance issues. In 2005, for example, CRD, PDRC and APD supported and provided guidance for numerous dialogues as a means of resolving conflict without violence. As a result, community-based initiatives

have managed to resolve or avert violent conflict in areas such as Gedo, the Juba Valley, Hiran and Galkaayo town, as well as during the Somaliland parliamentary elections. In Mogadishu, the CRD helped consolidate the

The three local partners are... focusing on capacity-building and strategic planning workshops for women's networks with particular emphasis on their role in decision-making and community mobilization and organization.

Medina Peace Agreement, including engagement of the business sector in talks with young militia on the opportunities presented by peace. The establishment by the three partners of small satellite offices in five key towns in late 2005 is already enabling the partners to respond more effectively to locally-based peace initiatives beyond the main cities in which they are located.

New obstacles, new dilemmas: The need for neutral space

The holding of peaceful parliamentary elections in Somaliland in September 2005 represented a critical milestone for the future – and for Interpeace. “We did not choose to become involved, but the Somaliland electoral commission and the international community opted to work through us. It was a massive challenge,” said an Interpeace representative. It also proved a massive achievement. While Interpeace supported the Somaliland electoral commission with technical and logistical advice and the provision of ballot papers, boxes and other materials, the APD worked in close liaison with civil society groups, the House of Elders, the media, political parties and others to ensure the public was informed through audio-visual and other forms of public outreach. The APD helped develop two Codes of Conduct signed respectively by the three political parties and the media organizations and undertook joint peace missions with other key stakeholders (such as the House of Elders) to potential flashpoints in order to encourage peaceful participation. The APD also

collaborated closely with the PDRC to minimise the risk of conflict in sensitive areas. Although some interest groups did not want the elections to go ahead, the fact that they were held, and with broad public participation – as well as coupled with no outbreak of armed conflict – was a huge success for the Somali people of the entire region.

In the South, the formation of the Transitional Federal Government represents a crucial step forward in Somalia's state-building process, while triggering shifts in the on-the-ground dynamics and presenting new challenges for Interpeace in maintaining its neutral space. Although the TFG is slated as a broad-based government of reconciliation for a 5-year transitional period, the request of the new Somalia President to the African Union in late 2004 for 20,000 peacekeepers was seen as provocative by some groups, and for others revived memories of the ill-conceived US-led UNOSOM military intervention of the early 1990s. Although the President's position catalysed a political struggle, ultimately the leadership of the nascent transitional federal institutions reached an agreement in early 2006 on the way forward.

Nevertheless, during much of 2005, with the international community fragmented, Interpeace faced particular challenges in maintaining (and being perceived to hold) a neutral political space. As in other conflict situations, it pushes for peace and reconciliation amongst all concerned. But even with clarity and full transparency, promoting an all-inclusive approach can be misrepresented as taking sides.

From January 2006 onwards, however, there has been a significant shift within the leadership of the nascent institutions of the Somali Transitional Federal Government, coming together in an effort to resolve a number of critical issues and identify a joint approach for the way forward. Reinforced by the Aden Declaration, they are striving toward a more conciliatory path which, in turn, has created a more positive landscape in which Interpeace can operate. This will enable Interpeace to focus in 2006 on further support for the work of its local partners. Their experience, commitment and ability to engage a broad range of key stakeholders in the process of Dialogue for Peace ensures that the three institutions remain in great demand.

The Somali diaspora: A mixed bag of influences

Another critical player with exceptional influence on the region, both in the form of remittances and investment, but also intellectual intervention, is the Somali diaspora from the United Kingdom, North America, Scandinavia, Australia and the United Arab Emirates. "Their connection is a natural one and they have been heavily involved. They have even been buying the dialogue videos, which are quite sought after. This has helped a great deal in letting people know more about the positive developments and opportunities amongst the Somali

community,” according to a Nairobi-based Interpeace representative. Diaspora connections with parliamentarians ensures that their views are clearly represented. And diaspora investment over the past 10 years in what is arguably one of the best mobile telephone systems in Africa, enables cheap international telecommunications and internet connectivity throughout the Somali region, including isolated small towns and villages.

Continued engagement with the diaspora is important since some members of the diaspora remain embedded in clan affiliations of the past in a manner that does not acknowledge, change or promote reconciliation on the ground. This can translate into a form of lopsided political and economic involvement which has more to do with the legacies of civil war and fragmentation than post-conflict recovery. “Many of the diaspora seem to think that Somalia is a wild and crazy place,” said an Interpeace representative – updating and engaging members of the diaspora in the process of reconciliation and social recovery can accelerate positive changes within communities on the ground in the Somali region.

Local peacebuilding: No short-term options

Amongst the key challenges of reconciliation and the consolidation of peace in the Somali region is high unemployment among young people. Many live on remittances, have few job opportunities, and those under 30 years old have no experience of a functioning society and government. The difficulties of adjusting from the long and highly destructive impact of internecine strife are another issue. Over the past few years, these problems are beginning to be more fully debated – on the internet and on some of the radio stations (both Somali and the BBC Somali Service). Somali television stations, for the moment, are restricted primarily to Mogadishu, Hargeisa, and Bosaso, so radio remains a critical source of information for the majority of Somalis.

“The local partners have their own mechanisms for putting information out, mainly through local and international media and the internet, but also the audio-visual documentaries. There is a lot of information, but from the point of view of the partners and Interpeace, we have to be very careful about what is made public in order not to undermine next steps. Otherwise we will lose the confidence of those who understand what we are trying to do,” according to an Interpeace representative. With the prisoner exchanges, for example, the partners deliberately assumed a low key role in order not to undermine the sensitive process. On the other hand, feedback is critical. The partners and Interpeace try to keep an ear to the ground for responses to their engagement in different initiatives. “We need to take into account the reactions from the different sides. It is important to know how our initiatives are perceived and what people are thinking.”

The consolidation of peace and reconciliation in the Somali region is a process that will continue to require time and meticulous perseverance. And it will take commitment and understanding from both the international community and Somalis themselves. This is where continued long-term investment in the process of the Dialogue for Peace is crucial.

For the moment, there is no significant direct funding by Western international donors to Somali institutions. For this reason, Interpeace sees one of its principal roles as continuing to serve as a vital conduit for support to those providing the necessary “neutral space” on the ground. “Interpeace is unique in that we seek to remain closely involved with our partners. We consider ourselves an ‘engaged’ conduit and do not simply sub-contract,” said an Interpeace representative. And as Interpeace often maintains, it is only by investing in the local peacebuilding processes, even if it takes years, that peace can be consolidated and future conflict prevented.

The Broken Masbaha

“There are times when people have to rise to the occasion. These are times when saviours have to emerge to lead the nation out of the quagmire. The saviour does not come from the sky, but has to emerge from our midst. We have all failed our people by not being able to move in that direction. It is time now for us to act with a shared vision and take up that challenge.”



ABDULKADIR YAHYA

– Abdulkadir Yahya, co-founder and director of the CRD, addressing the Mogadishu civic forum on 6 June 2005.

On 11 July 2005, Abdulkadir Yahya, the charismatic and energetic head of Interpeace’s partner organization in South-Central Mogadishu, the Center for Research and Dialogue (CRD), was assassinated at his home in the Somali capital of Mogadishu. According to many of those involved in the Somali region, this was a deliberate attempt to thwart Yahya’s persistent and resolute efforts to bring peace to the region. His funeral was followed by demonstrations and ceremonies in Mogadishu, Nairobi and the diaspora (including Washington) to commemorate Yahya’s work, but also to voice broad and ardent support for peacebuilding initiatives.

The following story, “The Broken Masbaha,” is recounted by Raghe Abdirahman in memory of Yahya.



The Masbaha is a traditional Muslim string of beads (or rosary) used by believers to count the words during prayers. For a pious Muslim, the breaking of this string of beads is not only physical, but also spiritual and mental.

The story takes place in Somalia, a largely desert country bordering the Red Sea and Indian Ocean in northeastern Africa. Its capital is the ancient port town of Mogadishu. Somalia is one of the few countries in Africa whose population has always been homogenous: all its inhabitants are Sunni Muslims with identical cultural customs. And yet, their country is suffering from long-time rivalry among the different clans and tribes. This culminated in civil war, inflicting, over the past decade and a half, much misery on its inhabitants.

Part of this strife dates back to the time when the former colony of Italian Somaliland was turned into a UN territory, but still under Italian control. United with former British Somaliland to the north, the territory was granted independence in 1960 and changed its name to Somalia. In 1969, the country's first president, Abdirashid Ali Shermaarke was assassinated and General Mohammed Siyad Barre took power. He changed its name to the Somali Democratic Republic. But there was nothing democratic about it. Barre established a socialist-style regime, dissolved the National Assembly, and banned all political parties except his own.

Over the years, fighting amongst the rival factions in Somalia intensified. In 1991, guerrilla fighters overthrew Barre, but with no proper government to replace the former dictatorship. To make matters worse, there was drought and famine in Somalia. Civil war was imminent.

From almost one moment to the next, Somalia turned from an organized country into one of total anarchy. Everything began to fall apart.

Until that time, a sizeable proportion of Somalis had lived in and around Mogadishu where the bulk of the country's resources were to be found. As the anarchy grew worse, however, people fled to the regions with many seeking refuge with their traditional tribes and clans. Local elite groups began to rule in each region.

In 1991, the tribes of four out of six northern administrative areas representing the former British Somaliland declared independence. They called themselves the Republic of Somaliland. The areas of Bari, Nugaal and part of Mudug established their own autonomous state, Puntland, which has been run independently since 1998, but also claims control over two other administrative areas, Sool and Eastern Sanaag. Although not officially recognized, Somaliland's and Puntland's detachment from Somalia contributed to violent conflict in what is known

as South Central Somalia, around the capital of Mogadishu. The United Nations, United States and other international forces had tried to operate in the region during the early 1990s, but paid dearly in human lives and finally decided to pull out, largely abandoning the region to its own devices.

Everyone knew that if one was ever again to find peace, the common dream of so many Somalis, it would be necessary to work in the most difficult and dangerous parts of the country, notably Mogadishu. Yet no one dared take the risk. The international community, not wishing to suffer even more casualties, firmly opposed it. In Nairobi, there was much fear and everyone seemed to regard the situation as hopeless. The UN had imposed a "Level 5" – the most dangerous security classification – on Mogadishu and forbade its employees to operate there. This is when Interpeace decided to turn to Yahya.

At that time, Yahya was working for other international organizations. He had already been wounded in the line of duty and had been flown to Dubai to recover. Yahya quickly sensed Interpeace's concerns and offered to help the organization understand the region better over the next six months as a prerequisite to starting an official project. Everyone continued to argue that it would prove an impossible task. But Yahya refused to believe this. He convinced Interpeace to send him on an assessment trip to the region, but as an external advisor. In the middle of the bitter fighting, when no international organization dared set foot in Mogadishu, Yahya set out.

After spending some time studying the situation in the Somali capital, he returned to Nairobi. His conclusion was that not only was it appropriate to work in Mogadishu, but also possible. Yahya prepared his report, including photographic evidence in the form of a film. This proved that despite all the doom and gloom by the sceptics, there were also clear signs of revival. Amid all the rubble, ordinary people were struggling to re-establish their lives and to create a new society. In every sense of the term, there was a renewal of life.

Yahya showed that Somalia, the country, had indeed failed. But that the Somali people had not. Yahya revealed that despite all the poverty and the fighting in and around the city, the communications system that had been re-established was one of the most advanced in Africa. And while there were no banks, there was a highly functional money exchange system. New towns and suburbs were emerging from the ruined buildings, littered on all sides with piles of rubble. Yahya succeeded in presenting a perspective far different from what most people considered to be the reality, namely that life had persevered beyond the ruthless killing and destruction.

Eventually, in 2000, Interpeace decided to launch a project with the support of the international community. But instead of using the name “War-torn Societies Project” a local organization, the Center for Research and Dialogue (CRD) was established. Yahya set up a team of enterprising and enthusiastic people, including Jabril, a diaspora Somali who arrived directly from Canada where he had lived and studied. After six months of ground-breaking work, more international groups joined the effort. In time, the process which had begun in Mogadishu expanded to other parts of the country, where today its work is known by virtually all Somalis.

The civilian population soon came to represent a vital aspect of the new partnership for peace. The media played a critical role in helping spread this vital message throughout Somalia, notably in Mogadishu. Yahya and his team became renowned for their peacebuilding efforts. Even international media, such as the BBC and CNN, featured their work. Their impact was astounding with almost everyone – politicians, warlords and other key players – participating in this new debate for peace. The international community quickly realised the importance of communicating their messages of stability and reconciliation through the team, primarily because of its close contacts with the Somali public on the ground.

Peace activists and intellectuals, too, found refuge with the project as a neutral and open “space” for talking, sharing ideas and creating a network in an effort to change the situation. Women in particular found support within the organization. The group restored hospitals largely with the help of women’s organizations, assisting people to move from place to place. They and other activists knew only too well how grateful the general public was to Yahya and his team. But they also knew that such actions had a price. And that this meant the sacrificing of lives in order to achieve one’s ideals of peace. Yahya’s life, everyone knew too well, was taken by evil criminals whose only desire was to keep the Somali community hostage and in a constant state of insecurity and chaos.

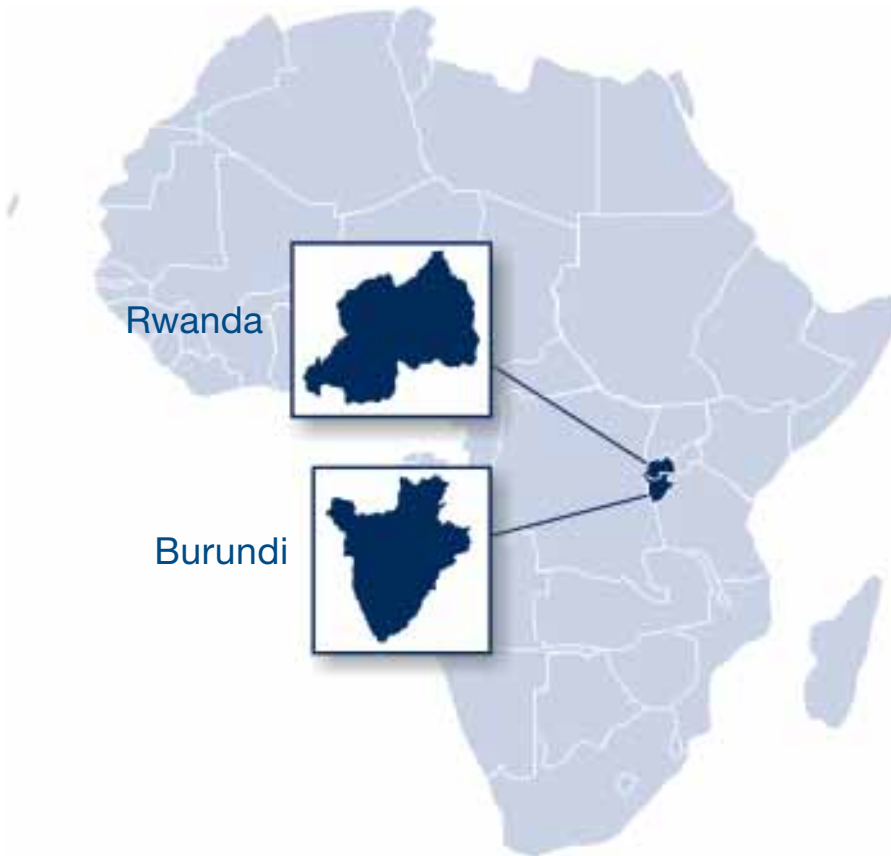
Yahya’s cruel murder proved devastating. It caused the string of the Masbaha to break, and all its beads to be scattered. These days, the team led by Jabril and Hassan Sheikh are collecting these scattered beads. Their hope – and the hope of many others – is to realise Yahya’s legacy by re-connecting all the parts of the Masbaha so that the prayer for peace can be heard.



– As told by Raghe Abdirahman at the Interpeace Global Gathering in Villars, Switzerland, November 2005

Interpeace in

Central Africa





RWANDA: Never again

Over the past several years, Interpeace's local partner in Rwanda, the Institute of Research and Dialogue for Peace (IRDP), has undertaken an enormous amount of research and public debate in the form of "dialogues" with regard to the country's ruthless genocide 12 years ago. Such legwork is crucial to help Rwandans understand what happened, and why, and what they need to do to prevent it from ever happening again. But to achieve this, both Interpeace and the IRDP now need to ensure that the message gets out.

As part of the Great Lakes region which barely 12 years ago endured Africa's most horrific genocide, Rwanda in 2005 was relatively well on the road to apparent normality. However, much of this remains highly precarious. Serious challenges remain given the country's difficulties in establishing a viable democracy, but also the historical absence of a culture of debate which prevents many Rwandans from openly exploring their past, particularly the genocide itself. As one European Union diplomat noted: "Things are looking somewhat better for Rwanda, but political and ethnic sensitivities are issues that still need watching. We have not seen the end of this story yet."

As in other countries emerging from conflict, sustainability remains a key issue with many Rwandans struggling to earn a living or to provide a decent education for their children. Tourism, potentially a significant source of income – and jobs – is making a comeback with backpackers and eco-trekkers now amongst the regular foreign passengers of aid workers, consultants, government officials and business people on the daily flights from Nairobi.

Foreign investment, too, mainly South African, East African and European, is cautiously on the rise. Nevertheless, as one Belgian businessman, himself born in Rwanda, noted, "there is a limit to what you can do. People are still very wary."

Much of Rwanda's infrastructure, which was destroyed or fell into disarray as the result of the genocide, is supported by international aid, a critical factor in the country's current rehabilitation as well as ability to provide salaried employment. Local business, mainly in the urban areas, is beginning to thrive albeit within limits. Many diaspora Rwandans or refugees are bringing back skills, including English which has emerged over the past decade as the country's second main 'outside' language after French. While the markets appear well-stocked in many towns, numerous products remain well beyond

the reach of most ordinary Rwandans, over 80 percent of whom still survive on subsistence farming.

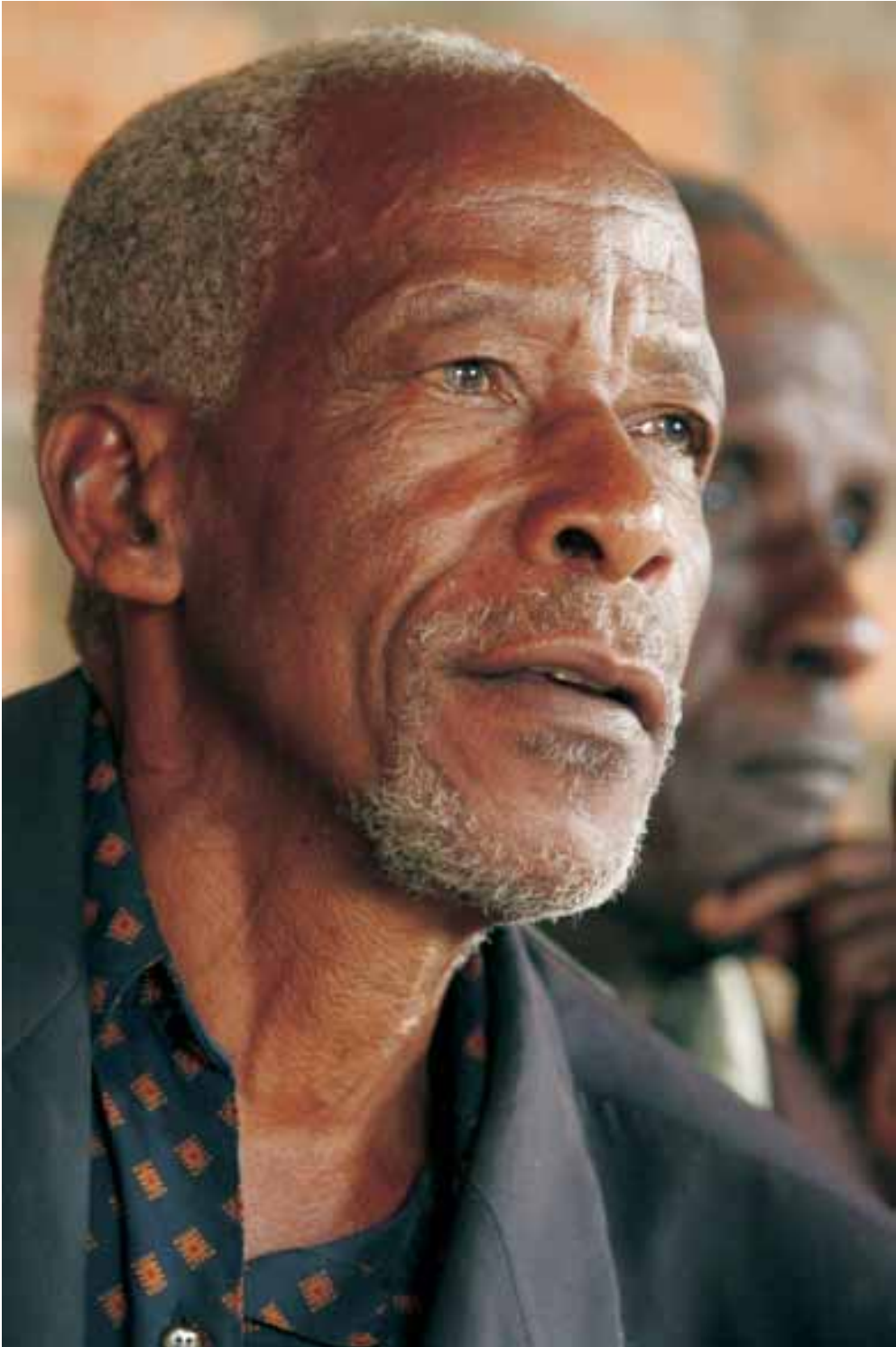
As before, the challenge to eradicate poverty remains one of the country's principal concerns. Furthermore, the population is expected to double in the next fifteen to twenty years to an estimated 18 million. This raises serious questions about Rwanda's economic and political stability – there is simply not enough land to sustain such a population – that could provoke a highly disruptive situation representing one of its most threatening issues in the years to come.

On the regional level, ties between Rwanda and neighbouring Burundi are good with citizens from both sides freely moving between the two countries. Their armed forces, too, are collaborating increasingly on joint military exercises. Cross-border trade with Tanzania is also on the increase. On-going conflict and other critical security factors in the Democratic Republic of Congo, however, continue to represent an open-ended question with regard to future stability in the region. So does the presence of hardcore *Interahamwe*, extremist Hutu rebels hiding out on the other side of the border. This despite significant recent returns from the bush of former fighters, many of whom have responded to special United Nations' sponsored radio programmes calling on them to come back and re-start their lives.

The need to confront the past

Perhaps the country's most critical issue, however, is the ongoing reluctance of many Rwandans, both Hutu and Tutsi to confront their past. Much like France during the post-World War II period, when it took nearly three decades to begin dealing with the collaboration or acquiescence of numerous of its citizens during the Nazi period, Rwandans still find it exceptionally difficult to explore the implications of the genocide. Or to speak openly about what happened. Facts are often distorted or not mentioned at all. One local magazine aimed at travellers carefully omits any reference to the events of 1994.

Nevertheless, such attitudes are changing. Part of the reason is because of the efforts of the Institute of Research and Dialogue for Peace (IRDP), Interpeace's local partner in Rwanda. As a truly independent organization in Rwanda, promoting reconciliation and "moral" recovery, the IRDP is playing a key role in developing a culture of open dialogue as a means of seeking peacebuilding solutions. The IRDP has been working since October 2001 to provide Rwandans with a mechanism for creating a neutral "space" or *uruvugiro* for dialogue and other initiatives including "dialogue clubs" to express themselves candidly and to comment on what impact the events of 1994 have had on their lives. The IRDP is also very effective at bringing the voices of local people to the attention of the upper level political officials and processes.



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A RWANDA GENOCIDE SURVIVOR TAKES PART IN A DIALOGUE CLUB ORGANIZED BY THE INSTITUTE OF RESEARCH AND DIALOGUE FOR PEACE.

“The violence we have known in our society has created enormous suspicion, so it is very difficult to develop a sense of confidence,” maintained Professor Pierre Rwanyindo Ruzirabwoba, the humble but plain-speaking Executive Secretary of the IRDP in Kigali. “Everyone is constantly wondering where you fit in and what is your agenda, who is supporting you?”

Curiously, Prof. Rwanyindo and other IRDP team members note, various critics have labelled the IRDP as being either pro- or anti-government. The fact is that the IRDP’s actions are carried out with full transparency in order to demonstrate its independence and commitment to the stability of Rwanda. The IRDP’s relationship with Interpeace is another critical asset for its efforts to remain above the fray. This goes back to 2001 following an evaluation trip by the Geneva-based organization to determine the need for such a programme. From the very beginning, Interpeace took the approach that the IRDP, which received its formal registration papers in 2002, had to be a local NGO with its own autonomy and, above all, independence.

Maintaining credibility: The importance of independence

“It was clear then that in order to be effective the IRDP had to be a local organization with local actors, even if working together with Interpeace, which has always maintained a low profile anyway,” noted Dr. Naasson Munyandamutsa,



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CHILDREN BRING WATER SUPPLIES TO THEIR HOME NEAR KIGALI, RWANDA.

IRDP Deputy Executive Secretary and Research Coordinator in Kigali at the organization's headquarters located in a narrow suburban sidestreet just down the hill from the Hotel Milles Collines, the original "Hotel Rwanda" of the renowned Hollywood film depicting the 1994 genocide. "From my own personal point of view, it is this autonomy that enables us to reflect and to determine needs. This is rare amongst most organizations, but it is something that the donors are encouraging." Dr. Munyandamutsa was Rwanda's first – and for a long time only – Rwandan psychiatrist dealing with post-conflict trauma issues.

Equally important, as a research-based organization, the IRDP considers it crucial to explore how all together, the general population, including the government, should manage the challenge of the post-

... every Rwandan is concerned with the genocide in one way or another, whether as a victim, protagonist, or silent onlooker.

genocide period. This touches on various pivotal issues, such as the nature of reparations for victims' families or the way the rule of law is implemented, including the traditional *Gacaca* participatory justice system for lower level perpetrators of the genocide and the more classical Arusha-style trials for its planners.

The unusual aspect about the Rwandan situation, Dr. Munyandamutsa and other IRDP representatives point out, is that the killings were not carried out by specialists. They were carried out by "Mr and Mrs Everybody." This means that every Rwandan is concerned with the genocide in one way or another, whether as a victim, protagonist, or silent onlooker.

For the IRDP, it is vital that all voices be heard and that constructive recommendations for the present and future are made. Nothing is forced and everything is based on what has been thoroughly researched and documented. This is one reason why the IRDP has attracted so many independent players, particularly Rwandan intellectuals, to its initiatives. Many come for what is now considered to be the only real *espace de dialogue*, neutral space for dialogue, in the country. It also provides a means of quashing rumours, which are part of oral tradition and have proven so detrimental in the past. According to Immaculée Ingabire, a women's rights activist and a participant in one of the IRDP organized debates, "We respond to IRDP's invitation and engage in debates because the Institute is really concerned with truth-telling in seeking solutions; keep it up."

"If one cannot assure a place for both accuracy and openness, where voices are respected and protected, then people would not come back," added Prof. Rwanyindo, who, dressed in a dark formal suit, meditatively touched his finger tips as he sat behind his desk. His sparsely furnished office with its view of one



© INTERPEACE/RYAN ANSON

A RWANDA GENOCIDE SURVIVOR TAKES PART IN A DIALOGUE CLUB ORGANIZED BY THE INSTITUTE OF RESEARCH AND DIALOGUE FOR PEACE.

of Kigali's many tree-lined hills reminds one why this rolling, verdant country is known as the "land of a thousand hills," the name also given to Rwanda's notorious genocide-provoking broadcast radio, *Radio Milles Collines*.

The way we have dealt with history has only created divisions and stereotypes. There is now a whole new generation of Rwandans and it is up to parents to tell the truth.

"It is vital to discuss these issues," he added. "The way we have dealt with history has only created divisions and stereotypes. There is now a whole new generation of Rwandans and it is up to parents to tell the truth, and the government must do everything possible to support this. We need to change our behaviour so it is crucial that history is written and assessed properly. This is the legacy we must leave our children."

Debating the past to imagine the future

Although the IRDP is constantly "climbing uphill," as Dr. Munyandamutsa put it, it is this focus that has become the organization's philosophical mainstay in Rwanda. "We began our work with the idea of observing what was happening on a daily basis in order to understand how people felt," he added. "Obviously, from the very beginning, we were concerned by the violence, as well as what we imagined might be the future, not on our own but together with all Rwandans. This may sound absurd, but for us it was very important."

Among its first initiatives, the IRDP formed dialogue spaces from which emerged the "Dialogue Clubs" to help facilitate gatherings in towns and villages. Ordinary people involved in the process expressed a strong desire to continue some form of open discussion prompting the creation of such clubs. These meet twice a month in five different regions. "Talking about research on genocide, we wanted to find out more about the planning of genocide and what really happened during the genocide and document it," said Jean-Claude Mugenzi, the IRDP's audio-visual researcher, a tall young man with a narrow face and wispy moustache. "We started doing this with debates, dialogues, and interviews, all of which we filmed."

By 2003, the stakeholders of the national group representing the biggest collection of "who's who" in Rwanda, but also grassroots representatives and the diaspora, had decided to focus its research on five principal themes. These included: the way Rwandan history is perceived; how should one deal with revisionism and present a factually-based assessment of this country's past; the consequences of genocide and how the atrocities themselves should be understood; democracy in Rwanda and what are the most appropriate forms of representation; the challenges of establishing effective rule of law in a country



© INTERPEACE/RYAN ANSON

THE TIG, OR COMMUNITY SERVICE PROGRAMME IS AN ALTERNATIVE SENTENCING INITIATIVE FOR THOSE TRIED BY THE TRADITIONAL GACACA COURTS FOR INVOLVEMENT IN THE GENOCIDE.

where many Rwandans do not understand their basic rights; and the reduction of poverty.

The IRDP approach is similar to other countries and regions where Interpeace supports projects. By holding meetings, usually one day long, with roughly 30 people per gathering at all levels, whether in villages, towns, government offices or the military, civil society organizations, schools and prisons, the IRDP has been creating open democratic spaces.

Over a three year period, the IRDP directly involved some 10,000 Rwandans in the dialogue process. IRDP staff locate the venues and then train facilitators, such as teachers, health workers or local leaders, whom they consider trustworthy and capable of bringing the community together. Documentaries illustrating the nature of the IRDP's work are shown at each meeting, often in school rooms but also outdoors, under a tree perhaps, or in a courtyard. An IRDP researcher is always present and each meeting has its own chair and time-keeper working with the facilitator. This is to ensure that no one person, so-called "talkers," dominate the proceedings.

The participants choose their own secretary to take notes. These are then compared with those taken by the researcher at the end of each session to encourage accuracy. Each IRDP team then meets in the evening at the

hotel to go over the day's proceedings and to exchange observations.

The gatherings are in turn discreetly filmed so as not to make people camera conscious (permission of those participating is also requested in

advance) as a means of providing documentary evidence, not only to facilitate research but also to reinforce the IRDP's credibility.

Most of the participants ignore the presence of the camera although they are sometimes nervous when one-on-one interviews are conducted as a means of probing issues more deeply. "This way, no one can accuse us of fabricating testimony," noted Mugenzi, a self-made documentary film-maker who proudly learned his craft on the job, but is now evidently keen on honing his cinematic skills. Pointing to a series of bookshelves in his office stacked with video cassettes of all the IRDP proceedings, he added: "You can say that you are independent, but you also have to prove it, so the videos are vital to our work."

Additionally, the IRDP have screened the documentaries to government officials, including the Office of the President, donor representatives, and the media as a way of demonstrating what people think. According to IRDP team members, outsiders usually fail to grasp the true nature and impact of the organization's work until they have seen the videos. The testimony is often passionate and emotional, even traumatic, even for IRDP members who witness such testimony on a regular basis.

In many respects, the ability to speak openly for individuals who until then have remained quiet is not dissimilar to the "Truth and Reconciliation" process in South Africa.

"But the filming also serves as a means of breaking the ice," added Mugenzi as he slotted in yet another documentary into the VCR to demonstrate the IRDP's purpose. "Much of what we were doing is very sensitive, very personal, so it is important to get people to speak. By showing what other people are saying lets them know they are not alone and encourages them to express themselves."

Participants at IRDP meetings often comment that this is the first time they have ever been able to talk openly about their innermost feelings. They also praise the IRDP for listening, and not lecturing. "For many people, this is an entirely new concept," said Irénée Bugingo, an IRDP researcher and a lawyer by training who says that the video documents, which are unique in Rwanda, are crucial assets to their work.

Much of what we were doing is very sensitive, very personal, so it is important to get people to speak. By showing what other people are saying lets them know they are not alone and encourages them to express themselves.

IRDP findings: Time to communicate the truth

Throughout 2005, the IRDP continued with its second phase of information gathering, notably the holding of numerous focus and working groups, but also the compiling of its research for the writing-up of its five reports. The research projects conducted from 2003 onwards were finally presented with further recommendations at the IRDP's National Group meetings of working and support groups between December 2005 and February 2006. The reports themselves were formally completed in February 2006.

Key recommendations

The complete list of recommendations will be distributed in the next phase of the IRDP's work, but some key recommendations include:

- **Democracy:** Developing school books and curriculum on civic education; establishing a mechanism for when heads of state leave office to avoid them "clinging" onto power
- **Rule of law:** Creation of an observatory for human rights violations and a space for discussion on human rights
- **History:** Evaluation of contentious periods of history including the origins of Rwanda, and the time periods 1950-1952 and 1990-1994
- **Genocide:** Refinement of a law defining genocidal ideologies, creation of a law on what type of reparation are possible, recording victims' testimonies
- **Economy:** Creation of a tax culture, development of water, energy and irrigation infrastructure

Implementing the recommendations: Seeking the best ways forward

Based on these, the National Group established a new list of priorities for the next three years. It decided, too, to place greater emphasis on more practical applications of these themes. This includes promoting more exchanges with the diaspora, a highly influential constituent of the Rwanda community, which it began conducting in 2004. IRDP activities will continue with "dialogue clubs," but will seek to develop more follow-up plus the creation of more permanent *fora*, and create a Centre for Peace with an audio visual library, conference rooms and other forms of public venue. "Our main work now is to see how we can best implement the various recommendations made at the National Group Meeting. And which points are worth exploring further with more debate," said Bugingo.

For example, the IRDP is still seeking ways of implementing these permanent *fora*. “They are a good idea, but how?” questioned Bugingo. Another challenge, he noted, is how to improve the effectiveness and justice of *Gacaca*, whose participatory concept amongst the grassroots has its attractions, but which appears to encounter serious problems with ensuring fair justice. According to the IRDP’s own research, particularly amongst the diaspora, there is strong criticism that the *Gacaca* represents “justice of the victors” and only concerns Tutsis. Others perceive the *Gacaca* as a offering a veiled amnesty for the killers. Furthermore, there is a lack of genuine participation. “In theory, everyone, even *Bazungu* (foreigners) are allowed to participate, but we have discovered that many people are too afraid, or, if they do come, they are too afraid of speaking, so there is a feeling that the truth is not being told,” added Bugingo.

There’s no point in doing all this work if you cannot make people aware of it. This has to be one of our priorities. It is also a matter of integrity.

Most important of all, however, the IRDP realised that much more effort needed to be placed on conveying this diverse information to Rwandans themselves, whether ordinary citizens or leaders. While the IRDP has been holding public screenings of its videos to focus groups in the countryside of around 30 people, this is clearly not enough. The challenge now is how best to present its findings to all concerned. “There’s no point in doing all this work if you cannot make people aware of it. This has to be one of our priorities. It is also a matter of integrity,” commented Prof. Rwanyindo.

One difficulty is convincing local media to cover IRDP issues on a regular basis. With Rwandan print, radio, and television outlets often struggling to survive, many journalists or producers require to be paid for their coverage, but there is also a certain auto-censorship, particularly with the country’s sole (state-run) television station, which is nervous about broadcasting what it considers to be “sensitive” issues. “We have an enormous amount of material, including ready-made films, but we have a very hard time to convince them,” lamented Mugenzi. The IRDP is now in the process of developing a comprehensive media strategy that will include conventional media, but also other forms of outreach and information support such as posters and comic books as a means of communicating its activities. Another is to seek neutral funding, perhaps through an international foundation or donor, which could be channelled in the form of grants directly to local media in return for providing public awareness programmes on IRDP initiatives.

The importance of getting the information out is that Rwandans need to be aware of how conflict tends to emerge if issues dividing people cause conditions

to deteriorate. And that hate or suspicion supported by factually wrong historical perceptions between two groups can lead to one group thinking it has more rights than the other. “For political leaders, it is always easy to blame everything that goes wrong on the minority,” said Prof. Rwanyindo. “But if people are properly informed, it is far more difficult to manipulate them.”

As part of its mandate, the IRDP will focus on new themes, notably mechanisms for fighting against revisionism. They also include the further development of properly documented history books. It will explore a more effective financing of the economy, power sharing, political reform, rule of law, and leadership within the government and military. The IRDP’s strength lies in serving as an independent conduit for voices from all corners of Rwandan society. “For IRDP to remain effective, it must be seen as a neutral space by all concerned, including the government, and not as a critical adversary,” said one Western aid representative.

The IRDP is strongly relying on continuing its substantive partnership with Interpeace given its experience and international presence, but also a source for funding, expertise and information sharing. “We know full well that if the powers that be wish to undermine us, they will think ten times before doing so,” said Dr. Munyandamutsa. “This is a major step forward from two years ago and shows how we are now increasingly appreciated today because of our work throughout the country. But it is all part of a long-term process.”

Ironically, one of the organization’s biggest risks is that the international donors may lose interest both in Rwanda and the activities of the IRDP. “Donors

all have their own agendas, and there is the danger that our reconciliation efforts are simply part of a ‘fashionable’ interest that may evaporate tomorrow,” warned Dr. Munyandamutsa. “But we must also remember that it is the lack of information,

or the wrong information, that creates the problems and allows events that previously occurred in Rwanda to happen again.”

For Prof. Rwanyindo, the IRDP may have achieved its initial objectives, but must now follow up on its recommendations. “We have had a lot of debate and we now have the results, which can help make the difference in whether our country succeeds or not. But how are we going to implement them? We cannot do this without proper support in the years ahead.”

... if people are properly informed, it is far more difficult to manipulate them.

We have had a lot of debate and we now have the results, which can help make the difference in whether our country succeeds or not.

BURUNDI: Engaging the people

The Arusha Peace Agreement of July 2001 provided a key incentive for the African Great Lakes country of Burundi to finally emerge from 12 years of civil conflict in which an estimated 300,000 people died. Over a million more Burundians were internally displaced or forced to flee the country as refugees. The civil war and other previous conflicts also have exacerbated tensions between Hutus and Tutsis and led to endemic poverty. Since then, Interpeace has been monitoring the political situation.

The peace accords had stipulated a power-sharing agreement for the creation of a transitional government over a 36-month period, a process which came to an end in 2005. This marked the start of a multi-level election period enabling Interpeace to carry out three exploratory missions assessing the need for a dialogue process as a means of overcoming specific

Relative security has returned to almost all of the country with only one rebel group still active...

obstacles to sustainable peace. The missions also explored the added value of Interpeace peacebuilding support efforts based on similar initiatives elsewhere and identified potential Burundian team members to undertake such activities.

Impressed by Interpeace's work with the Institute of Research and Dialogue for Peace (IRDP) in Kigali, key Burundian actors approached the Geneva-based organization to initiate a process not unlike that already established across the border with Rwanda. The recent elections clearly marked the possibility for peaceful transition with national reconciliation representing a top priority for the country's new president. Relative security has returned to almost all of the country with only one rebel group still active and with which the government is currently seeking to negotiate a settlement. At the heart of the current stability is a power-sharing deal, which provides the Tutsi minority a guaranteed representation both in government and parliament encouraging many Burundians to view the future with more confidence. In mid-April 2006, the government annulled a 34-year-long dawn-to-dusk curfew, yet one more symbol that the country is on the return to normality.

In early 2006, Interpeace's Regional Office for Eastern and Central Africa made several trips to Burundi to meet with the authorities, establish donor interest and undertake arrangements for the hiring of staff. Despite on-going efforts by various international aid and peacebuilding organizations, however, the country still urgently needs to begin addressing critical areas of tension, including ethnic division, impunity, equity, power sharing, corruption, absorbing



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BURUNDI. THROUGHOUT THE WORLD YOUNG GIRLS AND WOMEN AS VICTIMS OF SEXUAL ATTACKS FEAR COMING FORWARD TO COMPLAIN OR ACCUSE THEIR ATTACKERS. THIS ONLY ENCOURAGES THE CULTURE OF IMPUNITY.

the return of refugees and the endemic state of poverty. One particularly acute problem is that many returning refugees have found their homes and farms occupied by other people. While some local radio stations are active in promoting greater public awareness of the need to resolve these and other issues, Burundi still lacks a viable and independent media capable of properly informing the population. With Interpeace recognizing the importance of effective communications, the IRDP has suggested that many of its own experiences in Rwanda could prove useful in initiating a similar process in Burundi, including the development of an appropriate media strategy.

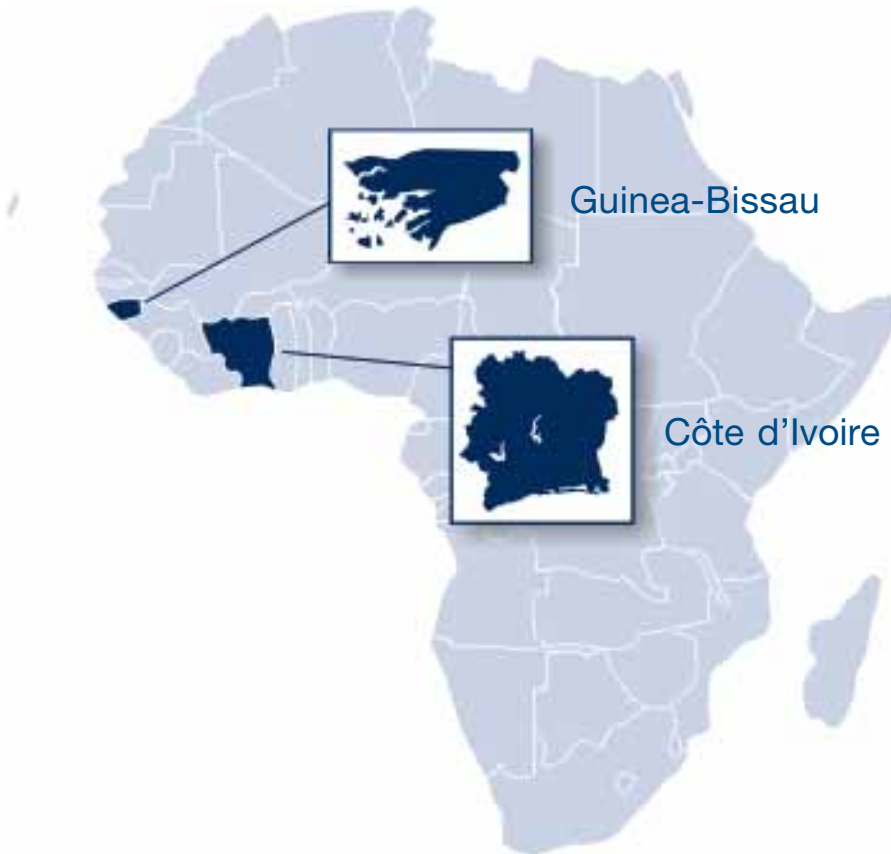
Based on its consultations, Interpeace has now proposed to undertake a number of activities in which it feels its approach and methodology can add significant value. These include systematically engaging the population across the country in a dialogue on the main challenges and obstacles to peace. Interpeace's interactive participatory research methodology will also help disparate resource people pool their knowledge and find consensus solutions. Further, the Interpeace approach will create impartial spaces for actors to share information based on the many initiatives undertaken in different areas – and

often involving different conditions – at the grassroots level. Finally, Interpeace will facilitate a multi-stakeholder process of reconciliation.

The proposed Interpeace programme would first seek through broad consultation to gather views of people from all walks of life to explore what remains to be done now that a peaceful political transition has been achieved and democratic institutions installed. As with Rwanda, it would then seek to establish a National Group representing different actors – government, opposition, civil society, religious leaders and the general public – whose objective it would be to prioritize the key peacebuilding issues that emerge during this initial mapping phase. Then, for each of the selected priorities, it will conduct over the next 18 months in-depth research and debate with key actors of Burundian society in order to come up with a list of recommendations.

Interpeace in

West Africa



GUINEA-BISSAU: Transition to peace and stability

Following its independence from Portugal in 1974, the West African nation of Guinea-Bissau – listed as one of the world’s 20 poorest countries – quickly embarked on a history of military upheaval and political instability. This began with the establishment of authoritarian rule in the 1980s. Several coup attempts and disputed elections preceded a military mutiny in 1998, immediately followed by a bitter civil war, widespread destruction and insecurity.

The second open elections in 2000 were followed by further internal strife, instability and a coup in 2003. In 2005 – following another nation-wide vote – former President Vieira was re-elected in what European monitors described as “calm and organized” despite certain armed incidents and claims of fraud. The political class remains divided, and the potential for violent instability is considered real.

But there seems to be now a growing pressure from political actors, civil society and the international community to restore economic development and lay stronger foundations for national reconciliation.

... there seems to be now a growing pressure from political actors, civil society and international actors to restore economic development and lay stronger foundations for national reconciliation.

Interpeace initiated a number of exploratory and preparatory activities in Guinea-Bissau from April 2005, at the invitation of the UN Peacebuilding Support Office (UNOGBIS) in the capital. Based on consultations with a wide range of interlocutors, needs and preliminary programme options were defined. The resulting ideas were further discussed with key national and international actors before deciding on the most effective approach inspired by the standard Interpeace methodology, but adapted to local conditions and needs.

Together with national partners grouped around the National Institute of Studies and Research (INEP) in Bissau, Interpeace prepared a two-year country programme, but the formal initiation was postponed to 2006 due to a temporary reduction in donor engagement after the 2005 elections. Together with other initiatives, the programme aims to help consolidate the overall peace process and promote social stability during the country’s post-conflict transition.

Activities will include conflict and actor mapping; participatory needs and policy assessments, particularly in support of the security sector reform process,



GUINEA-BISSAU. SUPPORTERS FOR PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE RALLY BEFORE THE 19 JUNE 2005 ELECTIONS.

collaborative relations with UNOGBIS in support of a comprehensive peacebuilding strategy, and an ongoing partnership with INEP in support of learning activities and possible regional linkages.

Nevertheless, social-political tensions remain. Past cycles of violence, unresolved reconciliation needs, and the structural weaknesses of current economic and governance systems are all contributing to a situation in which instability is likely to prevail unless properly addressed. Strengthening national conflict prevention and peacebuilding capacities is crucial for supporting Guinea-Bissau in its longer-term transition to stable development as well as more effective regional stability in West Africa.

CÔTE D'IVOIRE: A framework for dialogue

Since 1999, tensions have grown between actors in the North and South of the West African country of Côte d'Ivoire. A recent catalyst of internal crisis was the attempt to restrict the electoral eligibility of candidates from the North. Other dividing issues are land reform and property, citizenship reform, military salaries, unemployment and disparity of economic development between regions. An extremely biased and rumour-based media is another problem.

Helping deconstruct myths and preconceived ideas that generate xenophobia and conflict seems necessary [in Côte d'Ivoire].

Over the past three years, little progress has been made in finding a long-term solution with all three peace agreements signed by both parties since 2002 broken by at least one of them. The most recent, signed in Pretoria in April 2005, revived hopes that a political solution was possible, but violent confrontations started again, leading to the postponement of elections.

In this atmosphere, Interpeace began exploring the possibilities of developing a programme with the goal to facilitate a broad-based dialogue around key themes of peacebuilding. Helping deconstruct myths and preconceived ideas that generate xenophobia and conflict seems necessary. With the breakdown of the 2005 agreement and the closure of political space, Interpeace has decided to postpone its proposed activities.

However, many observers, both local and international, fear that even more violence could erupt unless a basic framework for national cooperation and dialogue is established. Interpeace remains prepared to contribute to consolidating peace in the country and the region.

Interpeace in

Latin America



LATIN AMERICA: The challenges facing emerging democracies

In contrast to the 1980s and early 1990s with its civil wars, dictatorships and repression, much of Latin America today has embraced democracy, holds relatively free and fair elections, and is marked by a relative absence of large-scale violent conflict. Nevertheless, throughout much of the continent there remains a troubling core of widespread poverty, inequality and insecurity. And in some countries, democracy exists as little more than a thin veneer, unable to cope with the negative effects brought about by organized crime, corruption, drugs, migration and a disaffected youth. In many respects, the failure to implement policies capable of resolving such issues represents the biggest threat to long-term peace and stability in the region.

Violence simmers just beneath the surface and frequently erupts with dangerous consequences. In Bolivia, the gap between government policies and social perceptions contributed to the outbreak of serious riots and mass protests in 2003, 2004 and 2005. In Guatemala today, there are more murders per 100,000 persons than during the height of the civil war. With critical state institutions often weak, the essentials of good governance needed to address such issues are fragile. This is further undermined by a general lack of effective interaction between the government and civil society. Unless such democratic institutions are strengthened, these countries risk spiraling downwards toward further social disintegration and insecurity brought about by human rights abuses, and violent crime.

It is this growing sense of inward violence, which is now the principal cause of death in countries like Brazil, Colombia, Venezuela, El Salvador and Mexico, that represents Interpeace's main concern for the region. Interpeace's Latin American programme, run through its Regional Office based in Guatemala City, has been active since 1996. It has an established presence in Guatemala and strong expertise in strengthening civil society's role in policy processes relating to security and security sector reform (SSR). Adapting the original Interpeace participatory action research approach to the specific political and social contexts of the region, Interpeace aims to contribute to good governance by facilitating dialogue between different sectors of society to develop consensus based policies on key issues.



FARMER IN GUATEMALA.

GUATEMALA: Developing democracy through improved security

In 1996, the Guatemalan government and the rebel Guatemala Revolutionary Unit signed a peace agreement which formally brought to an end 36 years of often vicious and sanguine armed conflict. Perpetrated under both military and civilian governments, the civil war resulted in the deaths or disappearance of more than 200,000 people, mainly civilians, and the exodus from their homes of some one million refugees. The Peace Accords also marked the ratification of a decade-long transition period, initially begun in 1985, designed to lead the way from military-style authoritarian rule to democracy.

While the signing of the accords may have strengthened an idealized concept of representative democracy, it failed to effectively instill a spirit of civilian involvement in Guatemala's 12 million people. It also resulted in a political dynamic with little or no communication between the government and civil society.

The overall result for Central America's largest and most populous country was a general weakening of state and democratic institutions, notably neglected or poor social policies, corruption and inefficient government. There was also a distinct lack of progress to overcome poverty or to reduce social exclusion, all of which underscored a strong and urgent need for the creation of organ-

ized ‘spaces’ enabling citizens to participate more effectively with the political system.

Although demilitarization represented a key element of the Peace Accords, the state security forces continued to exercise a disproportionate amount of influence on the country, largely because of the government’s lack of capacity. The military’s negative role was highlighted in 1999 when a UN-backed commission maintained that the state security forces were behind 93% of all human rights atrocities committed during the civil war. At the same time, the government undertook major cuts in the military forcing some 10,000 soldiers to disarm and retire.

New priorities: Cracking down on crime, corruption and poverty

The current administration of President Oscar Berger has made the implementation of the 1996 accords a priority, including crackdowns against crime, corruption and poverty.

This has been no easy task given that security has been rapidly deteriorating throughout much of the country with a dramatic rise in violent deaths in 2005, more – in fact – than at the height of the civil war. Rule of law has broken down in many areas with the growth of organized crime and drug trafficking.

The current context makes it vital that there be a constructive and productive relationship between political institutions and citizens to formulate more effective public policies.

Closing the gaps through dialogue

Civil society, which includes NGOs, civil associations, public foundations, professional guilds and workers’ organizations, has been developing the necessary ‘spaces’ to articulate a clear vision for strengthening state institutions.

Based on its successful experiences elsewhere, Interpeace is using its participatory action research approach which, implemented by national institutions, aims to ensure the full participation of government, civil society organizations and academic bodies. It enables participants to overcome rigid political positions and promotes the transformation of political and interpersonal relations from confrontation to collaboration.

Interpeace became involved in Guatemala soon after the 1996 accords. Its main focus has been to help implement one of the most difficult aspects of the accords, notably redefining the role of state security institutions in a modern democratic society and strengthening the influence of civil society. From 1999 to 2002, Interpeace worked closely on the project for a Democratic Security Policy (*POLSEDE*) with various institutions, such as the Latin American Faculty

for Social Sciences (FLACSO) and the Guatemalan Institute for Peace and Development (GIPD), but also the military, government ministries, and leading citizens to help determine policy recommendations.

From April 2002 until July 2004, Interpeace helped develop the Project Towards a Policy for Citizen Security (POLSEC), which focused on civilian security. This project sought to bring together all the main actors involved to develop a more effective response to the growing problems of organized crime, drug trafficking and violent street gangs. POLSEC originated from a

... civil society is far stronger today than before. The concepts of democracy and good governance have made firmer inroads into the thinking of ordinary citizens.

collaborative initiative between the Latin American Faculty of Social Sciences (FLASCO, Guatemala), the Association for Democracy Security (SEDEM), the National Commission for the Follow-up and Support for the Strengthening of Justice, UNDP, and Interpeace. The project's overall objective was to create an inter-institutional platform for the design of an integral citizen security policy.

FOSS: Improving security through institutional reform

Based on its previous experience with POLSEDE and POLSEC, Interpeace has since September 2003 been working on a project called Strengthening Civil Society Capacity in Security Issues (FOSS). This project is designed to strengthen the institutional and technical capacities of state institutions and civil society organizations specializing in security issues. Its overall objective has been to improve technical capacity, help elaborate public policy and establish mechanisms for citizen control and monitoring of the security sector.

By early 2006, after working nearly a decade in Guatemala, Interpeace partners maintain that civil society is far stronger today than before. The concepts of democracy and good governance have made firmer inroads into the thinking of ordinary citizens, while the military has in general accepted the need to acquiesce to civilian rule.

The FOSS project is providing administrative and technical support to the Security Advisory Council (CAS), a government body, set up in 2004 to provide advice on developing more concrete – and effective – security sector reforms within the framework of the 1996 accords. With support from the FOSS project, civil society representatives can officially advise the President and Vice-President on security through the Security Advisory Council. In addition, the Security Advisory Council provides technical advice to Congress and regularly lobbies legislators through a special liaison office that supports the work of Congress-



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MAYAN MARKET IN CHICHICASTENANGO, GUATEMALA.

sional security committees. The liaison office is also providing technical support to the National Commission for the Follow-up and Support for the Strengthening of Justice on the justice reform agenda.

The Ministry of Defense has shown itself much more willing to discuss security policy with universities, NGOs, and civilian experts. “We sat down to work out how we could transform a country where security used to be about protecting the state to one where it would protect the people,” noted Julio Balconi, a retired general and former Defence Minister. Many civil society organizations are now recognized by the state as qualified experts on security matters and are consulted regularly on reform policy questions. There is clearly a more open sense of communication between civil society and state institutions. “These channels are very important because for the first time the issue of security is seen as everyone’s responsibility,” said Pablo Trujillo, head of the Political Studies Institute, Francisco Marroquin University, in Guatemala City.

As a result of civil society pressure, for example, Congress approved a law creating an intelligence bureau against crime, much of it thanks to Interpeace’s support work. Both the government and the Presidency have specifically supported – and praised – Interpeace’s inclusive, consultative and consensus-based approach when drafting such legislation on intelligence sector reform. At the same time, because of concerns raised by civil society groups, Congress defeated a proposal against youth gangs that might affect civil rights in general.

Upon an official request of the government, FOSS was the lead organization, working with the government's Peace Secretariat, SEPAZ, in a dialogue process to develop a blueprint for a national security system. In February 2006, the President approved these recommendations.

Over the coming year, the FOSS project will work with all actors to facilitate the implementation of these recommendations.

The basic challenge for Guatemala in the coming years is the need to consolidate democracy as a mode of life. Only in this manner will it prove capable of promoting sustainable economic and social conditions.

In Guatemala, Interpeace is also designing a separate project for an early warning conflict prevention system at the national level that will focus on the role of civil society and the non-governmental sector in conflict prevention in Latin America and the Caribbean. This will help identify risk factors through dialogue that may lead to social strife, including those stemming from natural disasters.

The basic challenge for Guatemala... is the need to consolidate democracy as a mode of life.

A regional approach to security

Interpeace has elaborated plans for the creation of a regional security sector project. This aims to help forge links through open dialogue between civil society and the state, which, in turn, will contribute toward complementing and strengthening political and institutional frameworks. Overall, the process seeks to support governance and democracy in Latin America.

The regional project will have two dimensions. The first deals with the creation of national security networks in the context of a national dialogue in each country, while the second focuses on the development of a dialogue process between state and civil society at the regional level. This project will be developed in collaboration with the ongoing work of the Regional Central American Programme for Conflict Prevention (OEA-PCA) of the Organization of American States (OAS).

As a first joint activity with the OAS programme, a regional meeting was held in February 2005 on "Governance and Democratic Security in Central America: Collaboration Strategies between State and Civil Society." The objective of this meeting was to provide a forum for the exchange of ideas between state representatives and civil society actors as a means of improving security and democratic governance in the region.

PERU: A divided society

Over the past 20-odd years, particularly during the 1980s and 1990s, Peru has endured a brutal war between the government and the Maoist Shining Path and Tupac Amaru rebels in which an estimated 69,000 people have been killed. While the guerrillas have been blamed for many of these deaths, the military also has been responsible. Although the rebels have been largely neutralized now, violence in the form of killings and gang warfare continues. Much of this is linked to drug trafficking. With its population of 28 million, Peru remains one of Latin America's biggest producers of coca, the raw material for cocaine. Despite US government claims over the past several years that drug production has been reduced, reports in early 2006 suggested the production may actually be much higher.

As a society, Peru is deeply divided, both politically and economically. A ruling minority of elite families of Spanish descent control most of the wealth and power, while the bulk of native Peruvians of mainly Indian background remain excluded. Millions live in abject poverty.

For years, various governments, often alternating between democracy and military dictatorship and more concerned by their own political squabbles, have neglected the country's crucial economic and infrastructure needs. This has provoked public resentment and contributed heavily toward fuelling the guerrilla causes. As a result, there has been little effective rule of law, human rights protection, and democracy. The media, too, has found it hazardous to operate freely with outspoken journalists often killed or assaulted. Ongoing insecurity, too, has discouraged foreign companies from providing much-needed investment and jobs.

Amidst national efforts to overcome this legacy of authoritarian regimes and economic decline, security remains a key public concern. Improved security is seen as a prerequisite for reconciliation, social cohesion and policy effectiveness. In early 2005, Interpeace's Regional Office for Latin America initiated exploratory activities for establishing a project designed to address the issues of democratic security and the role of the armed forces within society. With support from national stakeholders, Interpeace undertook a feasibility study to determine the need for adapting Interpeace's methodology and applying it to this thematic area of security.

There is a need to develop a project in Peru. It would develop a network of public and non-governmental actors to assess alternative policy choices and devise a programme to strengthen the relationship between the state and society and to reinforce the role that human rights play in developing security policies.

The project is expected to be launched sometime in 2006.



GANG MEMBER, NICARAGUA.

CENTRAL AMERICA: Organized youth gangs

Over the past five years, *Maras*, or youth gangs which are often linked to organized crime, have spread throughout Central America representing a principal source of instability and a grave concern for current governments. Now present in some 30 US states, Canada, Mexico, El Salvador and Guatemala, the phenomenon originated largely amongst Latin American groups in the United States.

One of the most notorious gangs with some 25,000 members across Central America is the *Mara Salvatrucha*, or *MS-13*, which was spawned in Los Angeles in 1980. Another is the *Mara-18*, or *M-18*. During the brutal war in El Salvador, hundreds of thousands of people had fled to the United States to escape the violence. Many of the country's displaced children, some of them barely 11 years old, ended up involved with street gangs.

When the El Salvador accords were signed in 1992, the United States deported many of its unwanted refugees or immigrants. Returning to El Salvador and its neighbouring countries, they brought their gangs with them. The

Maras are now believed to be responsible for an epidemic of street violence throughout the region.

Several organizations are currently working on *Maras* issues, including groups of former gang members, but their approaches are not coordinated. The government approach is based on the phenomenon as being primarily of criminal concern. This perception of the *Maras* as a national security threat is now leading to increased involvement by the security forces, who have adopted a shoot-to-kill policy.

Other groups seek to work with the source of *Maras* violence, but are not seeking to respond to the links of the *Maras* phenomenon with other related issues, or to seek a solution through educational approaches.

For Interpeace, it is crucial to adopt a regional perspective as all are inter-linked by promoting a coordinated and integrated response to the problem. “Our approach is to bring all the key actors together and to implement a broad-based participatory approach to the problems of gang violence throughout Central America. It is a scourge that affects all these countries,” said Interpeace Director-General, Scott Weber in Geneva. “We need to identify the problems and then develop sectoral and national solutions, including the involvement former gang members willing to help in the process.” The project is expected to be launched sometime in 2006.



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A SHARP RISE IN GANG VIOLENCE HAS RESULTED IN A GREATER POLICE AND ARMY PRESENCE IN SAN PEDRO SULA, HONDURAS.



PAINTED FRESCO IN CHIAPAS MEXICO.

CHIAPAS, MEXICO: Exploring the possibilities

Over the past two years, Interpeace has undertaken exploratory work in Chiapas. During this period, the political space has changed dramatically. A clear polarization now characterizes relations between the Federal Government and the *Ejercito Zapatista de Liberacion Nacional (EZLN)*, the rebel movement that first emerged in 1994 and has consolidated its local power base and resistance in recent years. Growing tensions are expected in the run-up to state and federal elections in 2006 with the *EZLN* preparing alternative mobilization activities based on local support. One reason is the creation of local civil society initiatives aimed at reducing growing divisions between the government and the rebels. This “middle space” of NGOs and individual leaders is being currently strengthened with the intent of reducing local exclusion from any interaction between the government and the *EZLN*, but also larger policy processes.

Throughout 2005, Interpeace’s Regional Office conducted exploratory work and in-depth interviews with different segments of society: religious and economic leaders, farmer organizations, academics, and state and international

officials. Their findings were compiled in a report entitled *Chiapas: A Joint Vision of the Future* which has been given to the actors involved as a research tool.

Over the past two years... the political space has changed dramatically.

However, given the deterioration of the situation on the ground and the impact of other competing priorities, Interpeace has decided to suspend programme development in Chiapas until further notice.



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CHIAPAS: YOUNG GIRLS LAUGHING.

Interpeace in the

Middle East



ISRAEL: Developing a shared vision

With the beginning of an organized dismantling of Israeli settlements in the Gaza Strip, the surprising election of Hamas to the Palestinian leadership and a clear trend toward a unilateral definition of the borders by Israel, 2005 and early 2006 witnessed critical new developments in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. This changing context will determine to what extent, if at all, the two sides will begin moving toward a political solution resulting in a durable and broadly acceptable peace. Or whether the two sides will continue to remain at loggerheads with neither side demonstrating any real understanding for the needs, frustrations and rights of the other. Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas stated in May 2006, that his side was willing to resume peace negotiations, but that Israel had to decide between peace and settlements. "It cannot have both," he said.

From Interpeace's point of view, there is a need to learn the lessons from previous initiatives which have failed to produce significant results or to filter up to the political levels at the top. The traditional approach by outside actors for introducing peace to the Middle East dating back to the Oslo Accords of 1993 has been to try and bring Palestinians and Israelis together to negotiate.

This has largely failed given the economic and military imbalance that exists between the two sides. The Israelis have a highly efficient, conventional military force at their disposal which can respond rapidly with mobile cross-border interventions, while armed Palestinian groups have tended to rely on guerrilla and suicide tactics as part of their anti-Israeli resistance. Economically, too, Israel is able to control if not halt Palestinian movements for jobs, trade and farming. This obliges many Palestinians to rely on Israeli indulgence or international aid for survival. Finally, both Palestinian and Israeli societies are themselves divided, often making it difficult to elaborate broadly acceptable agreements at the negotiating table.

The issue now is whether Israel will agree to talk with the new majority-elected Hamas leadership in the Palestinian Territories and at what level of confrontation one can expect Israeli-Palestinian relations to evolve. Up for discussion, too, is whether the international community is capable of bringing sufficient pressure on both sides to ensure that the Palestinians will agree to



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SHAS CHAIRMAN ELI YISHAI, RIGHT, CONSULTS WITH BABA BARUCH AT A RALLY IN HAIFA FOUR DAYS BEFORE NATIONAL PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS IN ISRAEL IN MARCH 2006.

respect Israel's right to exist, but also that the Israelis halt as well as rescind their occupation of Palestinian lands. The United States, European Union and other countries have continued to insist that the border issues must be resolved according to international law, which includes the final status of Jerusalem and the fate of 3.5 million Palestinian refugees. So far, however, the international community has failed to exert much decisive influence over either party.

The decision by former Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon to dismantle all of his country's settlements in the Gaza Strip and a few other settlements in the West Bank – much against the wishes of many conservative Israelis – during the summer of 2005 offered an encouraging signal that Palestinians might now see a phased return of at least a portion of their lands. At the same time, however, the continued construction of Israel's 670 kilometre "barrier" in the West Bank restricting tens of thousands of Palestinians from accessing their lands or work places has only stressed Israel's intention to proceed with continued or expanded occupation of certain other parts of the Palestinian Territories in the name of security.

Following the general elections of March 2006, the new Israeli Prime Minister, Ehud Olmert, showed no signs of softening his approach to Hamas unless it agreed to respect Israel's right to exist and to announce an "end to terrorism."

Until then, he stipulated, his country would proceed to finalize its borders on a unilateral basis, with or without consultations with the Palestinians. This would include continued withdrawals, but also the formal annexation of major West Bank settlements and other parts of occupied Palestinian Territories considered vital to Israel's national security.

The Israeli Project: Developing a pragmatic and shared vision

Since September 2004, Interpeace has been working with Israeli communities traditionally excluded from the peacebuilding process to assist them to develop a long-term vision for their society and plans for how to best promote these visions. This project is implemented through the UN Development Programme-Interpeace Joint Programme Unit (JPU) (see box).

Interpeace is working with groups including the Jewish settlers in the occupied territories of the West Bank and Gaza Strip, the traditional-religious population through “SHAS”, an

UNDP-INTERPEACE Joint Programme Unit for Participatory Strategies in Peacebuilding and Development

The Joint Programme Unit (JPU) was established in mid-2005, in the context of a Management Services Agreement between Interpeace and UNDP, to complement Interpeace's NGO operations with initiatives that Interpeace and the UN Agencies agree to implement as UN projects. The overall objective of this unit is to provide support and guidance to such operations effectively and efficiently, and to contribute to strengthening the capacities for peacebuilding within the United Nations through the implementation of collaborative activities between its agencies and Interpeace. The JPU currently oversees Interpeace's project in Israel and will expand its activities in the 2006-2007 period.

ultra-orthodox social movement and political party, the Arab citizens of Israel, the “core” – the majority of the population through the municipal councils, and the youth – the next generation. The views of these groups have not been taken into account in previous peace processes. The overall objective is to expose these groups to the use of new language, notably, strategic dialogue, rather than violence. It also seeks to provide each group with the option and opportunity to have its voice heard on the geopolitical future of Israel, as they have not been heard in the past.

Since the beginning of the 1990s, Israeli society

has stressed its yearning towards a long-term settlement in the region, and a permanent solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. This yearning towards “peace” of any kind was habitually accompanied with a spectrum of opinions. The disputes within Israeli society have been consistent and have evolved around two central questions: what is the right way to reach peace? And what is a reasonable price to pay for it?

A minority of certain right-wing groups, including former Soviet Jews, believe that even Arabs with Israeli nationality and rights should be excluded, while others, such as left-wing activists, believe that a secular state cohabiting

Interpeace is helping groups within Israeli society to focus on common elements, rather than on differences...

peacefully with Arabs in their midst is the most realistic approach. Interpeace is helping groups within Israeli society to focus on common elements, rather than on differences, with the hope of reaching

some common ground and eventually a shared vision. This vision, or at least significant portions of it, is representative of the majority of the Israeli population, rather than of certain minority segments, as has been the case in the past. By taking part in its creation, this will allow all sectors of society to have ownership of the vision.

Easing the disengagement process

One such project designed to promote more effective dialogue amongst Israelis themselves was the Gush Katif initiative. Through a local NGO – *Kollot Banegav* – two female facilitators (a settler from Gush-Katif in the Gaza Strip and a left-wing activist from a kibbutz in the South of Israel) organized a joint communications’ workshop between the residents of Gush Katif, an area of Israeli settlements in the Gaza Strip, and left-wing supporters from kibbutzes and settlements in the Negev (“the neighbours on the other side of the Kisufim road-block”). The project was launched at a time of heightened tension following the announcement of former Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon of a unilateral disengagement from at least part of the Israeli-occupied Palestinian Territories, the first such pullout since 1967. The goal was to allow the settlers to express their opinions and beliefs to the people they deemed as the “opposers.” This helped to reduce the level of violence during the evacuation itself, with both sides agreeing not to use violence, which, in retrospect, proved in the many journalistic reports to have the most critical impact.

Former Prime Minister Sharon’s decision to evacuate the settlements out of the Gaza Strip provoked an intense debate throughout the country. Both right-wing parties and Israeli settlers from Gaza and the West Bank felt betrayed by



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FORMER PM ARIEL SHARON'S DISENGAGEMENT PLAN FROM THE GAZA STRIP AND NORTH SAMARIA. CHILDREN TALKING WITH SECURITY FORCES DURING THE EVACUATION OF MORAG SETTLEMENT.

Prime Minister Sharon, who had championed their cause for so long and was now seen to be “selling out.” Furthermore, the settlers felt even more isolated now than before, a belief reinforced by the fact that many now saw themselves as being sacrificed on the political altar.

The need for dialogue, but how to talk?

It was agreed to engage in dialogue on neutral ground and incorporating visits of the two groups to each other's “turf”. At first the left-wing participants refused to enter the occupied territories for the tour arguing that the Israeli presence there was illegal, while the settlers refused to sit down quietly and listen to the left-wing participants who questioned their very existence as a community.

Most people involved in a conflict seek to portray themselves as victims, maintained Project Coordinator, Gilad Ben-Nun, who oversaw the gatherings for the UNDP-Interpeace Joint Programme Unit. “The minute you stop being a victim, you have to be accountable for whatever you do... and the more you bring empathy into the fold, the more tolerant you become.” Interpeace initiated and facilitated the process with the help of the two women facilitators, Chagit Yaron and Sharon Leshem-Zinger.

Over a six-month period from early 2005 onwards, the two groups encountered each other regularly (4 hours for 17 weeks) as part of an often uncomfortable, passionate and sometimes bitter

dialogue, almost right up to the day when Gush Katif was dismantled by the Israeli government in August 2005. The point of the exercise was to help the 16 participants, all of whom were opinion leaders and who represented two of the most polarized groups in Israeli society, to understand each other better.

By the end, while both sides agreed that neither one nor the other had changed their political skins, they did feel much closer as human beings, and more receptive to the needs of each other. They established a Code of Conduct, which, they maintained, provided a lesson to be taken away for replication elsewhere.

At the time of writing, however, it is still too early to determine the overall impact of this initiative. The wounds of the settlers from Gush Katif, who have been transferred to temporary accommodation in different parts of Israel, are still fresh. It is difficult to heal given the plans for an upcoming withdrawal from the West Bank. Despite their pain, the Gush Katif settlers are aware of the importance of dialogue for the West Bank settlers and they are already collaborating with the UNDP-Interpeace Joint Programme Unit team and have a steering committee on the subject.

“Peacebuilding is a long-term matter that can take years to achieve because it is a matter of taking many small steps.” Ben-Nun noted. He also added that peace does not happen on its own despite all the many international agreements that have occurred both before and after the Oslo Accords. “Unless one is actively involved in the process, it will not happen.”

For Yaron, the right-wing facilitator who had worked in the past with Leshem-Zinger on the opposite side, the objective of such dialogues should not be agreement, but rather contact and understanding between the two sides, even if there are problems. While Yaron admits that she felt angry with the Israeli government, the media and the left-wing activists, particularly at a time (three days prior to the pullout) when her life was being shattered by the prospect of seeing her home dismantled and destroyed in the name of politics, she agreed that the workshop participants underwent “a process in which they had to acknowledge that the other side also consists of people with angers and pains just like themselves.”

For some time, Yaron said, she had believed that the only way to deal with this was through communication, particularly as a means of overcoming her conflict with Israel’s left-wing. “The hatred we felt coming from them forced us

Peacebuilding is a long-term matter that can take years to achieve because it is a matter of taking many small steps.



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A MASS DEMONSTRATION AGAINST THE DISENGAGEMENT PLAN AT RABIN SQUARE IN TEL AVIV.

to think of a way of action,” she said. This included a short-term goal of stopping the disengagement plan, but also a longer-term one of connecting with the Israeli people. She added, too, that her experience has taught her to understand, to listen, and to judge less, enabling her fellow men and women to make their own way forward. In the end, the settlers left without a fight but with the determination to remain together as a community. For their part, the left-wing activists vowed to help the settlers in their new lives. However, at the time of writing, it is too early to determine the impact.

Leshem-Zinger, the left-wing facilitator, said that taking a longer-term approach required an enormous amount of mental, spiritual and professional work, including focusing on the areas that one finds most difficult to handle. Her psychodrama studies also obliged her to notice the suffering and anguish of her fellow human beings. At one meeting, she added, one of the Gush Katif participants said he wanted to inflict an emotional scar on the soldiers involved in the removal process. “This pained me immensely,” she said. “After the meeting I went home and cried.”

Both Yaron and Leshem-Zinger as well as others in the group agreed, however, that unless there is communication amongst the different groups there will be no understanding. “There is a big opportunity here,” said Leshem-Zinger at the time. “We need to know how to move on, with great compassion on the part of both sides.” Added Yaron: “It is imperative that each person and each

side take responsibility for themselves and not place it in the hands of the other side.”

Building on the initial success of the Gush Katif initiative, the Israeli project would now like to launch a new round of dialogues in the West Bank, where more settlement removals are being planned. This was a unique dialogue and recognized by all concerned as having positively influenced the smooth undertaking of the disengagement process and avoided violence. Widely shared videos have had a powerful effect, all of which have contributed toward an easing of the political process. The project will also introduce a lessons-learned approach to try and ensure that some of the pledges made at the time of the meetings are actually followed up on.

With the closing of the Gush Katif initiative the settlers and left-wing activists involved in the Gush Katif dialogue agreed to volunteer to act as facilitators for such initiatives, and six of them already led six new groups that were established to replicate the success of the initiative. Additionally, in recognition of their work, the two facilitators from the non-governmental organization *Kolot Banegev* (Voices of the Negev) were named by the Israeli Financial newspaper “Globes” as amongst the top 50 most influential women in the country. Overall, it is certain that the credibility of this project has provided a significant stepping stone for other similar initiatives in the future.

Arab citizens in Israel

The Palestinian community in Israel is an indigenous minority living as citizens (18%) in the Israeli state. It has successfully retained its own defining identity features, such as the Arabic language, the Arabic culture, history, folklore and the Arabic–Palestinian social traditions. Those cultural traits are being maintained consistently to this day, albeit a divergence in characteristics from other Arab communities in the Middle East due to the cohabitation alongside Jewish society, which at large adheres to Western values and culture. By all accounts, Arab society in Israel suffers from discrimination, both in thematic and structural, as well as practical and budgetary terms.

When the matter of a constitution for Israel is on the agenda, Israeli Arabs stand at a crossroads. This population group must deal with the challenge of defining their identity in a country that intends to approve a constitution for a Jewish-Democratic state. One recent poll asserted that, if given a choice, the overwhelming majority of Israeli Arabs would vote to retain their Israeli nationality and would refuse to become part of a Palestinian state. The project believed that that was precisely the right moment for the Israeli Arabs to examine the matter of defining their identity, and first and foremost, to transfer the matter from the street into the legislature itself. The UNDP-Interpeace Joint Programme Unit programme is working in cooperation with the Committee of Heads of

Arab Local Authorities, and through the chairman of the Committee, Shawki Khatib, who also serves as Chairman of the Follow-Up Committee of Israeli Arabs and as head of the Yafiya municipality.

When the matter of a constitution for Israel is on the agenda, Israeli Arabs stand at a crossroads.

In 2005 a group of 35 local leaders, academics and religious leaders, both men and women, was established and held discussions about their role within the Israeli state and proposed ideas on the draft of a constitution for Israel, to grant equal rights to all citizens of Israel.

The group discussions were being led by Ghaida Rinawie-Zoabi. A central committee was established, made up of senior members of the community, who were publicly recognized to an extent sufficient to give real and respected validity on the one hand, and on the other, could bring the matters and central affairs of the communities they represent up for discussion. The results of their work will soon be presented to the Israeli public.

The first stage of the project was defined as the mapping process. The status of the Arab citizen's group in general, within the general society in which it exists was described, and the major internal issues that concern them were defined and explained.

The Israeli project is also finishing its first phase of engagement with SHAS, the main ultra-orthodox social movement and political party in Israel, and one which is part of the current governing coalition. For 2006 and beyond, following a blessing given to the project by Rabi Ovadiya Yosef the spiritual leader of SHAS and by Eli Yshay, the Chairman of the party in parliament and the Minister of Industry, the project would like to facilitate a dialogue process between the different groups that make up the party (the rabbis and the political activists) in order to educate them on the current geo-political situation and of the options, for helping them develop their vision for long-term and peaceful coexistence in the region.

PALESTINE: Building trust and credibility

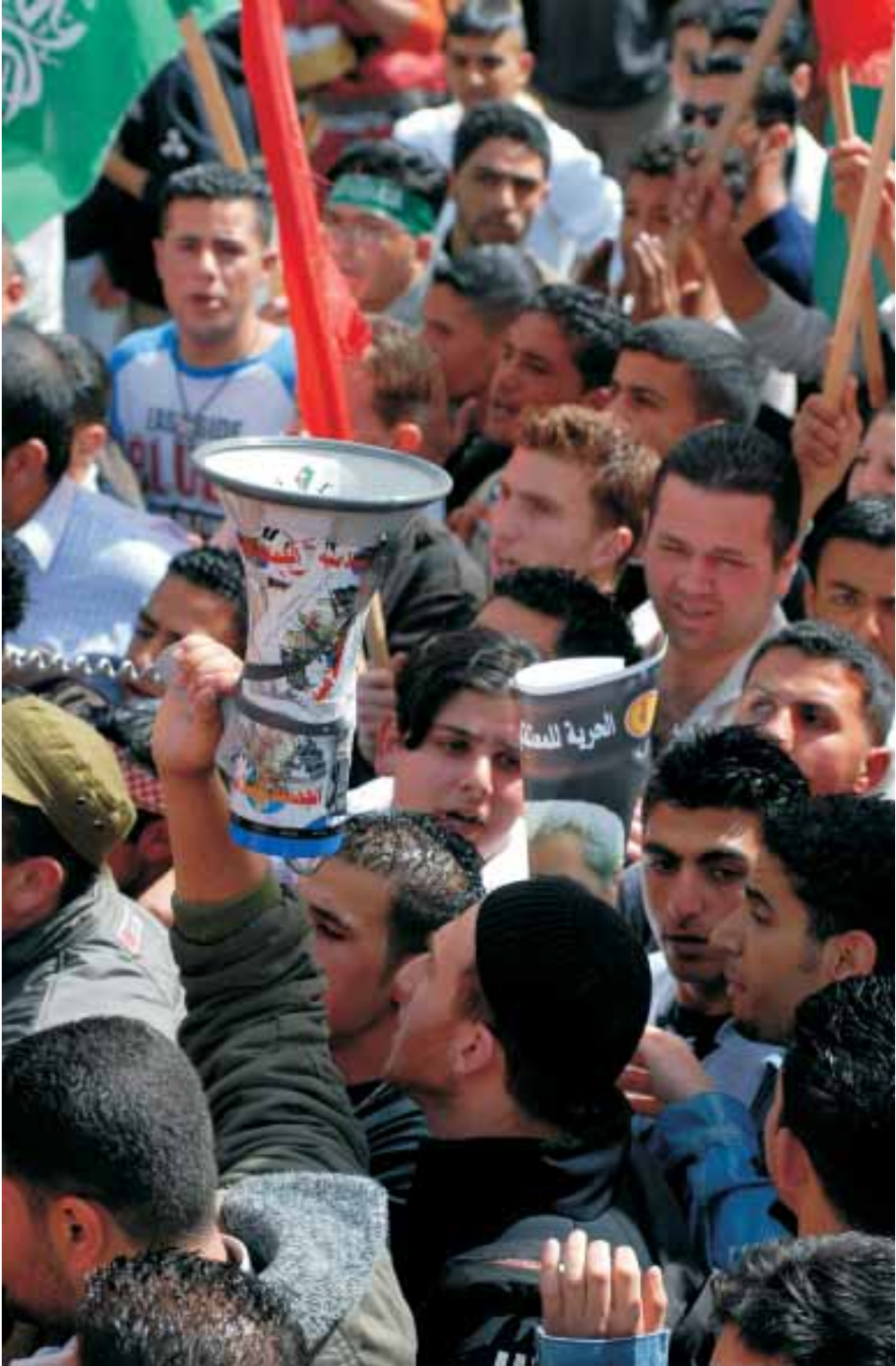
The multiplicity of developments since the Oslo process unfolded in 1993 has increased the fragmentation and complexity of problems facing Palestinian society. The worsening of existing problems and the emergence of new ones has considerably diminished the ability of Palestinians to articulate clearly a long-term vision for their future and their nation.

Since 2004, Interpeace has been working in Palestine under a UN umbrella with groups previously excluded from the peace process to help them develop a vision of the future. Interpeace believes that any settlement that is not inclusive of all societal actors will likely lead to a derailment of the consensus-building process.

For the Palestinian project, 2005 was essentially a trust-building phase involving all key groups. While Interpeace did not expect to emerge with any precise results, the project did establish significant credibility which is now enabling the Interpeace initiative to act as a convener and facilitator in the Palestinian Territories. In many ways, the project is highly similar to its counterpart in Somalia, where Interpeace is confronting a highly fluid political and security environment with constantly shifting rules of the game and changing assumptions. And yet, despite all the problems, such as renewed fighting in Mogadishu, Interpeace's initiatives have managed to make some headway contributing to relative stability in various other parts of the country.

Nevertheless, 2005 proved a "difficult and extremely tough year." For one, the project was constantly short of funds and, during a critical period, lacked a director. Instead of focusing on substantive matters, the team was obliged to spend much of its time seeking additional financial support. Given that Interpeace – as an organization – was also suffering from funding constraints, the project was obliged to let a number of its crucial staff go. "This was very frustrating and very bad for morale," noted Rana Taha, Project Coordinator. "The nature of our work requires an enormous amount of time investment. We constantly need to establish and re-establish relations with local people as part of our overall dialogue process. However, if you don't find the funds, then you risk the complete collapse of your initiatives."

A well-travelled young Muslim woman with short dark hair, Rana was born in Saudi Arabia of Palestinian parents, but with an educational background from both North America and Europe. As a result, she has been able to bring to the project a realistic and global vision of the issues involved. Very early on, she



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DEMONSTRATION IN RAMALLAH.

and her team understood the need to address issues of urgent concern at the local level. The Palestinian team began concentrating on local-level working

groups, including towns, villages, refugee camps and university student bodies, in three areas: Ramallah, Jenin and Hebron in the West Bank. The point of working in these three zones was to test the Interpeace methodology at the local level and to demonstrate practically its utility as a means of promoting credibility. In this manner, the project has been able to begin building both the commitment and trust required to focus more effectively on crucial mid- and long-term issues.

Clearly committed, she sees herself as a “true believer” in what she does arguing that everyone needs to be heard. “Particularly those who are secluded, and these are the majority of the Palestinian people,” she said. “I consider it my duty to bring out the silent people and to introduce them to the international community.” The role of the project, she maintains, is not to judge the actors involved, but to facilitate better understanding. Its role is to help provide Palestinians with a voice and to help translate this voice into a language that can be understood by all, be they the various and often adversarial Palestinian factions, the Israelis or the international community. “Our job is to help tell the truth as it is,” she declared.

By early 2006, following months of protracted institutional tribulations, the project suddenly found itself dealing with an entirely new political scenario. This was brought about by the unexpected Hamas victory at the 25 January 2006 territory-wide elections with nearly 78 percent of the vote. The result was even more of a surprise for Hamas, which had assumed that it would find itself once again in opposition.

Hamas’ rise to power not only drastically affected the political situation on the ground, particularly relations between Hamas and Fatah, but also provoked a slew of critical new ramifications on the relationship of the Palestinian Authority with Israel and the international community. Additionally, one of the most visible consequences of the advent of Hamas was the termination and withholding of international aid to the Palestinian Authority, which was its largest source of income.

I consider it my duty to bring out the silent people and to introduce them to the international community.

Supporting ordinary Palestinians: Which door to work through?

For years, the United States, the European Union and other Western countries have been promoting democracy in the Middle East. Suddenly, however, they found themselves awkwardly, even embarrassingly, confronting a new

Palestinian leadership not at all to their liking, but which had been swept to power on a wave of popular support. Furthermore, this overwhelming vote by ordinary Palestinians clearly expressed a profound degree of frustration with regard to Israeli occupation, but also the incompetence and corruption of the previous Fatah-dominated government.

Heavily pressured by the United States for a joint stance, the European Union, which had seemed willing to retain a closer link, soon acquiesced. The US-led response was to deny support for the Palestinian Authority, a move which quickly brought about a financial crisis with the new government unable to pay the salaries of more than 160,000 members of the civil service. It also threatened to alienate the Palestinians even further by undermining the territory's fragile social infrastructure, such as health services and schools, which, ironically, had been established largely with the help of Hamas.

Some governments, on the other hand, recognized the difference between Hamas' political and military wings, and pragmatically continued to provide support. A failure to do so, they feared, would bring about a whole new set of risks, including even more bitter animosity toward Israel and the West by ordinary Palestinians.

The Norwegians helped to pay salaries, but the question in early 2006 was: what will happen when the money runs out? By May, however, the EU, UN, US and Russia had agreed to channel funds through a "temporary international mechanism" which would avoid working through Hamas.

The Interpeace role

For the Interpeace team, who seek to deal with all players on the ground, the most difficult question for 2006 and beyond is: how to deal with the new political situation? The team even went as far as to question whether the project still had a role to play.

At the local level, the Palestinian project struggled throughout 2005 to prove itself on the ground. The teams had to demonstrate that what they were doing was indeed making a difference which was not an easy task given that so much of the project's work is focused on long-term effects with tangible results that are not always readily evident, if at all. More often than not, Interpeace plays an underlying and supporting role that can help facilitate dialogue in a manner that may only emerge much later in the game. "We spend a great deal of time meeting with people over a coffee or a beer, or holding workshops," explained Rana. "But such contacts are crucial to our work," she added, all of which contributes toward an improved understanding of each other by the various parties involved. Much, too, depends on trust and credibility.

One example of this was during the period leading up to the Palestinian elections in late 2005, one of the local groups insisted that no international

election monitors be allowed to participate; they even threatened to kidnap anyone who sought to do so. After much tricky legwork, the Interpeace team managed to convince the group that the presence of international observers would prove beneficial to the overall process. In a complete turnabout, the group agreed to allow a foreign presence. While Interpeace deliberately maintains a low profile with considerable behind the scenes manoeuvring, it constantly seeks to verify whether any of its initiatives have contributed toward changing attitudes.

Canvassing amongst the local groups involved with the elections clearly indicated that Interpeace was the only outside player involved and played a key role in obtaining the acceptance of outside observers, a move which later proved pivotal for verifying the election results.

Establishing dialogues: An increasingly accepted approach

While many Palestinians now appear to accept and understand the nature of Interpeace's work, much of the project's work during 2005 was similar to the cultivation of a young sapling. With appropriate commitment, Rana explained, it could one day grow into a sturdy, mature tree. But without such support, it could quickly wither and die. "So we had to manage expectations and show people at the local level that despite our problems, we could still be effective," she said.

Given Interpeace's restricted resources in Geneva, the Palestinian project sought to focus in 2005 on three different areas notably Jenin and Ramallah in the West Bank and Gaza by working with all groups regardless of political affiliation. Although the project was forced to halt its work in Gaza in July, it did succeed in bringing together the different groups, "It was a very curious situation," noted Rana. "They would readily meet socially, but no one dared discuss the real political issues or agenda at hand." This was all to change in 2006. The project also brokered certain critical initiatives, notably public debate over growing insecurity. In Jenin, for example, the project encouraged the different groups to discuss the proliferation of guns in the city, where there had been a complete collapse of the rule of law and gunmen felt they owned the streets and threatened ordinary people.

The future of Interpeace in Palestine

This current climate has made the situation increasingly difficult for Interpeace and has raised the need for very sober questions regarding the project's future. "The security situation is very much affecting our work leading to questions as to whether our work remains relevant. What have we got to offer?" asked Rana.



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PARTICIPANTS AT A CONSULTATION IN BUDRUS HELD BY THE PALESTINIAN TEAM.

The goal of the Interpeace is to bring Palestinians together and to think about the next 20 years. However, Rana points out, one also needs to question the point of democracy when so many Palestinians chose to lend voice to their concerns by voting for Hamas and yet having their freedom of expression negated or otherwise ignored. A further question, too, is whether the West's current reaction toward the elections is now undermining the peace effort.

So how does Interpeace's work remain relevant? For Rana, Interpeace needs to help explain what the vision should be for the future. Interpeace interviewers have talked to numerous people and they have expressed their concerns.

... the project is not seeking to establish Israeli-Palestinian dialogue, but to explore how fractured the different Palestinian groups have become, and how this can be improved...

"These are not answers we can give on our own." Interpeace established a steering committee with leading people representing all groups who act as advisors. Interpeace explains what it does, but

also now asks the Palestinians themselves what they intend to do. The project has already held meetings in Jenin and Ramallah. If people remain engaged, Rana argues, the process could make an enormous difference.

The Jenin committee, for example, proposed that all municipal leaders be involved rather than Interpeace seeking to visit all 70 communities. The project interviewers have sought to meet with everyone, including the governor, but also local representatives. "This is crucial for our credibility." During the elections, the project took great pains not to be associated with one group or the other. Interpeace representatives met with all candidates. Everyone was well-received and Interpeace was seen as acting as a conduit by providing access. "We see ourselves as in the position of explaining both views."

The project has enormous potential and has broad plans for 2006 and beyond. There is hope for considerable expansion of the project, particularly in Gaza. Travel restrictions, however, have made it very difficult to travel or to move about freely. Basically, the project is not seeking to establish Israeli-Palestinian dialogue, but to explore how fractured the different Palestinian groups have become, and how this can be improved, before seeking to embark on the future.

For this reason, the overall approach now is to focus more on intra-Palestinian dialogue in order to articulate a more inclusive longer-term vision.

Palestinians broadly recognize that Interpeace needs to talk to all groups as part of their credibility and efforts to build trust. The overall objective is to remain as neutral as possible in order to avoid criticism. The project is also concerned about the need to include the Palestinian refugees living in other Arab

countries, such as Jordan and Saudi Arabia, but for this the project would require more funds.

“For Palestine and many other transitional societies, what matters is not so much the institutions but the people. Ordinary Palestinians with whom we deal wish to know who we are, and how we are doing our work,” maintains Rana. There is a lot of socialising based on a huge network of people who are constantly meeting, first at a local level, then higher up. There are also many mobile phone conversations.

“Our policy is to have continuous working relationships. We do not wish to disappear for eight months and then suddenly re-appear. People need to know that we are around and available. They must also be aware, all the time, of what we are trying to do. This type of work is more necessary now than ever,” said Rana.

Overall, the team, who have developed joint papers with other organizations as part of a long-term vision up to 2030, consider the project’s continued existence as crucial to the international community’s own better understanding of the Palestinian situation. The West, notes Rana, embraces a different approach for reaching out to the Palestinians. From our point of view, she says, we need to touch something deeper and to come up with something different. “Both sides clearly need to define their roles, whether it’s the Palestinian’s own vision of the future or the way the West deals with the region. What is important, however, is to bring out the voices from within. Only then will one really begin to understand what is happening.”

Interpeace in

Asia



ACEH, INDONESIA: From disaster to dialogue

“This is a beginning of a new era for Aceh; much hard work lies ahead.” Issued by Martti Ahtisaari, Interpeace Chair, at the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the Government of Indonesia and the Free Aceh Movement (GAM) on 15 August 2005, this sobering statement gives a hint of the enormous challenge of supporting the regeneration of social and political relations in the province of Aceh.

In the aftermath of the devastating tsunami in December 2004 and the enormous international support and goodwill that followed, the Indonesian government and the rebel Free Aceh Movement (GAM) signed a peace deal. Brokered in 2005 this sought to end the 30-year-long conflict which cost an estimated 15,000 lives.



COMMUNITY CLEARING DEBRIS FROM TSUNAMI IN ACEH, INDONESIA.



CHILDREN PRAYING IN ACEH INDONESIA, FOR THE PEACE AGREEMENT THE DAY BEFORE THE SIGNING IN AUGUST 2005.

Representing a desire to help “rebuild Aceh again,” GAM leaders returned from Swedish exile to the Indonesian province for the first time since the start of fighting to witness progress in the implementation of the peace accords. Matching GAM’s willingness to lay down its weapons, the Indonesian security forces have withdrawn some 20,000 soldiers and 5,000 police.

Reconstruction initiatives are being carried out also with the support of international groups, but coordination and integration in support of local needs still require fostering.

Based on the need for an impartial space for dialogue and reconciliation – a concern voiced by all actors – Interpeace began to explore possible ways of supporting the implementation of the 2005 Memorandum of Understanding. Broad-based consultations with people from all walks of life would be used to identify public concerns and the challenges ahead, particularly in terms of power sharing, effectiveness of post-tsunami relief, reconciliation and economic development.

Research-based problem-solving will also help locate and clarify tensions as they arise. This will help promote the peace agreement amongst the local population and facilitate its full involvement in the process.

The process of dialogue would seek also to examine constructively the causes of outstanding issues affecting the stability of Aceh province, and their possible solutions. With international donors interested in supporting such a locally-owned initiative, further preparatory activities are planned for 2006.

TIMOR LESTE: Back to chaos

An Interpeace mission in April-May 2005 reiterated the need for providing local actors with a 'space' to examine patiently the deep divisions likely to affect the country's stability.

Weak donor support led Interpeace to freeze its preparations for a country programme, but contacts have been maintained and the potential remains for a quick re-engagement if conditions require it so.

At the time of publishing this Annual Report, Timor-Leste has descended back into chaos for precisely the reasons that Interpeace colleagues predicted back in May 2005. While a crucial opportunity to help prevent this recent collapse was lost, Interpeace is now re-engaging to support the recovery and longer-term rebuilding effort.

Post-Conflict Constitution-Making Handbook

In addition to supporting traditional country programmes, Interpeace is applying its tested methodology and field-based experience to the thematic area of post-conflict constitution making.



A POLL STATION VOLUNTEER IN HARGEISA CASTS HER BALLOT IN THE SOMALILAND PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS ON 29 SEPTEMBER 2005.

Historically, constitutions were imposed by political elites or the victors in battle, and usually made behind closed doors. Today, however, they are often negotiated and are seen as a key element to ensuring a smooth transition from war to peace. Most new national constitutions are developed in response to conflict. They can be drawn up when a new state comes into being, during the transition from an authoritarian to democratic regime or following peace settlements. Governments can also amend constitutions during a conflict to resolve separatist disputes to allow for power-sharing or autonomy.

The international community has often focussed on the content of a constitution rather than the process of drafting one. However, the process can make an important contribution to peacebuilding by:

- Providing a framework for a wide range of groups to develop consensus on how to address root causes of conflict or to deal with governance issues.
- Ensuring that factors contributing to the conflict are addressed and that the rights of minorities are reflected.
- Increasing the likelihood that the public (including former combatants) support the new constitution.

It is important that the process be transparent, inclusive and encourages wide spread participation. Evidence shows that constitution-making behind closed doors does not produce the most stable governments over the long term. Increasingly, states are educating, informing and consulting the public in order to ensure maximum participation in the process, which in turn gives a sense of national ownership and legitimacy.

Our programmes in Puntland, Southern and Central Somalia, Rwanda, and Israel are contributing to the constitutional-making process. Building on this experience, we are producing a handbook to help national governments and international organizations make informed decisions when amending an existing constitution, or drafting a new one. This will be produced by practitioners in collaboration with International IDEA, the UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the UN Department of Political Affairs. Drawing on case studies, the aim is to present a range of options, highlighting their advantages and disadvantages, and to identify some potential pitfalls.

It is a handbook by practitioners for practitioners. A website and resource library will also be developed to include the handbook, and other material on civil education, rules of procedure and links to experts.

Learning

Every organization needs to learn from its own experiences by constantly evaluating its programmatic and organizational performance. To achieve its mission, an organization also needs to communicate what it does and has achieved and what it has learned from its experiences. In late 2005, Interpeace established a Reflective Practice Unit to try to address these challenges.



COLLEAGUES SHARE LESSONS AT THE INTERPEACE 2005 GLOBAL GATHERING.



INTERPEACE COLLEAGUES LISTEN TO FIELD PRESENTATIONS DURING THE 2005 GLOBAL GATHERING.

Global Gathering 2005

Three years after its first Global Gathering, Interpeace successfully held its second Global Gathering, dubbed “GG05,” in Villars-sur-Ollon, Switzerland from 7-11 November 2005. The event brought together the Interpeace family from all over the world including representatives from current programmes in Guatemala, Israel, Palestine, Rwanda, Somalia (Puntland, Somaliland, Mogadishu), the Nairobi Office, and future programmes in Guinea-Bissau, Burundi, Timor Leste and Aceh as well Geneva-based staff, friends and associates of the organization, and members of the Advisory Council and Governing Council.

“GG05” was an overwhelming success. The event provided the Interpeace family with the chance to examine its values and working principles as well as the repositioning of the organization for the years to come.

Cross-team learning

Interpeace is making progress toward developing an active learning culture within the organization and with its partners. This includes the linking of its teams from around the world for cross-team learning and training and creating a community of national peacebuilding practitioners. Key events in 2005 included an internal seminar in Guatemala in September 2005 and the Global Gathering in November 2005.



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INTERPEACE COUNTRY TEAM MEMBERS EXCHANGE PEACEBUILDING EXPERIENCES AT THE 2005 GLOBAL GATHERING

Evaluation and measuring results and impact

Interpeace conducted review exercises of its projects in Israel, Somalia, Rwanda, and Guatemala. Steps have been taken to introduce results-based planning, management and budgeting into the organization at all levels. A Joint Programme Review Process was introduced to enable the organization to periodically review the progress made by the projects and at the same time to improve internal communications.

Sharing peacebuilding lessons

Interpeace also shared its peacebuilding lessons with other organizations.

Dialogue Handbook. Interpeace contributed to a Handbook on Dialogue developed by UNDP, International IDEA, the Organization of American States and the Canadian Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade, expected to be published late 2006.

Role of Parliaments in Conflict. Interpeace was also involved with a project of the Democratic Governance Group of UNDP, together with the Inter-Parliamentary Union, to draw attention to the relative neglect of the constructive role that parliaments in divided societies play or can come to play in conflict

management. Interpeace managed the case studies and regional paper for Africa with our partners from Rwanda and the Somali region, and with independent consultants from Liberia, Sierra Leone, Burundi and Zimbabwe.

Input into the UN Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) process.

Interpeace attended a lessons learned workshop in Turin, on how to integrate conflict sensitivity into UN planning and programming processes. The inter-agency workshop was co-organized by the UN Development Group, UNDP, UNICEF and DPA and facilitated by the UN Staff College. The overall objective was to provide an opportunity to share experiences, to derive lessons from them and identify good practices that can strengthen the work of the UN in this area. In that context Interpeace then commissioned a report entitled “Integrating Conflict Prevention and Peacebuilding into United Nations Development Assistance Frameworks (UNDAFs)” (June 2005), which is an annex to the workshop report.

Institutional reform

During 2005 period, Interpeace strengthened its financial footing and undertook important institutional reforms at the level of governance, senior management, administration and programme management.



SCOTT WEBER, INTERPEACE DIRECTOR-GENERAL EXPLAINS REFORM PROCESS TO THE ADVISORY COUNCIL OF DONORS AND UN AGENCIES IN VILLARS, SWITZERLAND.

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Affirmation of core values and working principles for Interpeace

During the course of 2005, Interpeace undertook an extensive consultative process to draft the core values and working principles that would guide the development of the organization. It was formally endorsed at the November 2005 Global Gathering. The Director-General and the Senior Management Team have made a strong commitment to the adherence and promotion of these core values and working principles throughout the organization at all levels.

Reform of Senior Management structure and new organigramme

A Senior Management Team was created, taking into account the importance of being consistent with the newly clarified working principles of the organization. These call for greater consultation and participation in decision-making, but also greater decisiveness. The Senior Management Team includes for the first time the Regional Directors, the Director of the new NY Representation Office and the heads of functional units in Geneva. It also includes the Director of the UNDP-Interpeace Joint Programme Unit.

This element of the reform was designed in order to ensure that the organization is guided in its decision-making by an understanding and direct connection with the priorities at the field level across the organization. The central axis also helps to ensure that all Headquarters units act in support of field programmes.

The regional offices also have been strengthened to take on more authority in programme management and greater portfolios of projects. The Nairobi Somali Programme Support Office has been transformed into a Regional Office for Eastern and Central Africa with responsibility for Somalia, Rwanda and the development of programmes in Burundi. The Latin America Regional Office, which for the moment is only managing Guatemala-based programmes, is now developing more of a regional portfolio. As part of the reforms listed below, both regional offices will be undergoing transitions from their current UN status to come under the NGO structure. This process will be complete during the course of 2006.

The reforms led to the creation of a Reflective Practice Unit and a Programme Support Unit which includes a dedicated capacity for programme development. The renamed Administrative Support Unit (formerly Resources Management Unit) is also undergoing important changes to strengthen its capacity-building role. Finally, a Stakeholder Relations Unit has been created (but not yet staffed) to manage and coordinate external relations, fundraising and communications.

Creation and staffing of a NY Representation Office and a Liaison Office in Brussels

Interpeace has created a New York Representation Office with the primary function of developing and strengthening Interpeace's institutional relations with key UN departments and agencies. Greater information flow and integration of the office with the regional offices and field teams remains an important priority. The New York office is also managing the project on post conflict constitution-making processes.

A Liaison Office in Brussels has been established in partnership with the Crisis Management Initiative (CMI) and staffed by a part-time Director and an Assistant. The role of the office is to strengthen relations with the European Commission and European Union, to bridge between activities in the field and decision-makers in Brussels and to pursue funding possibilities with relevant departments.

Reforming Interpeace's UN and NGO structures and the creation of a Joint Programme Unit

Interpeace has undergone the process of clarifying and then structurally separating out its activities from those that should be run through the UN. This transition process proved complex, but very helpful in consolidating the management structures of accountability in the organization.

A major milestone in that process was the creation and staffing of the Joint Programme Unit for Participatory Strategies in Peacebuilding and Development, an agreement between Interpeace and UNDP that is implemented through UNOPS.

Immediately upon its creation, the Joint Programme Unit assumed full responsibility for the management of the Israeli project, but over the course of 2006 and 2007 will develop other programmes of cooperation with UN agencies and bodies at the field level to integrate the approach into the UN's work.

Creation of a safety and security policy for Interpeace

While Interpeace's work has focused almost exclusively in dangerous post-conflict, and more recently in ongoing conflict situations, the organization lacked a policy on the safety and security of its staff and partners. The deaths of two colleagues in Somalia and Nairobi in July 2005 brought this inadequacy into full focus. As a result, Safety and Security Policy was approved and is being implemented.



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MARTTI AHTISAARI ADDRESSING THE PARTICIPANTS AT THE LAUNCH OF THE NEW NAME AND LOGO OF INTERPEACE.

Financial statements



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Report on summarized financial statements to the management of

WSP International

We have audited the financial statements of WSP International for the year ended December 31, 2005 from which the summarized financial statements were derived, in accordance with International Standards on Auditing. In our report dated June 15, 2006, we expressed a qualified opinion on the financial statements from which the summarized financial statements were derived, as described in the following paragraph:

Dialogue for Peace Expansion Supplement Project expenditures were not supported by original accounting documents, as the original documents were submitted to the Development Alternatives Incorporated (DAI) for financial reporting to the US Agency for International Development (USAID). We were unable to satisfy ourselves as to the authenticity of the photocopies of the accounting documents by other audit procedures.

Despite this qualification we recommended that the financial statements submitted to the Council be approved.

In our opinion, the accompanying summarized financial statements are consistent, in all material respects, with the financial statements from which they were derived.

For a better understanding of the organisation's financial position and the results of its operations for the period and of the scope of our audit, the summarized financial statements should be read in conjunction with the financial statements from which the summarized financial statements were derived and our audit report thereon.

KPMG Fides Peat

William D. Laneville
Auditor in Charge

ppn Karina Vartanova

Geneva, June 16, 2006

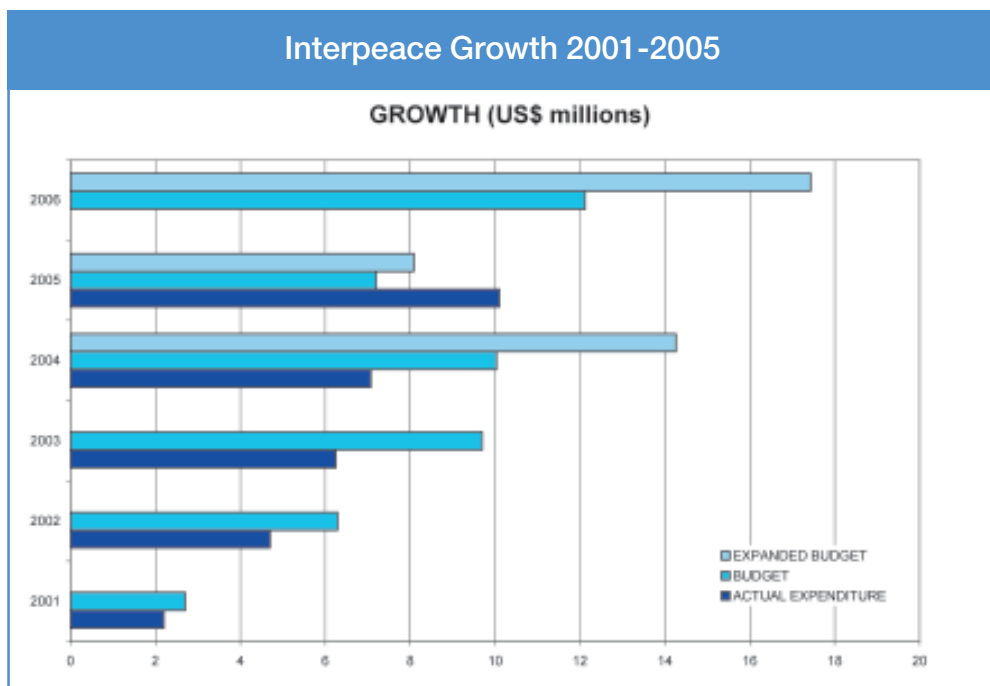
Enclosure:

- Summarized financial statements

Financial situation

Growth

As in previous years, the activities of Interpeace grew considerably in volume and turnover. Actual expenditure exceeded the Programme of Work and Budget approved for the year, which had been pared back due to the financial problems experienced during 2004.



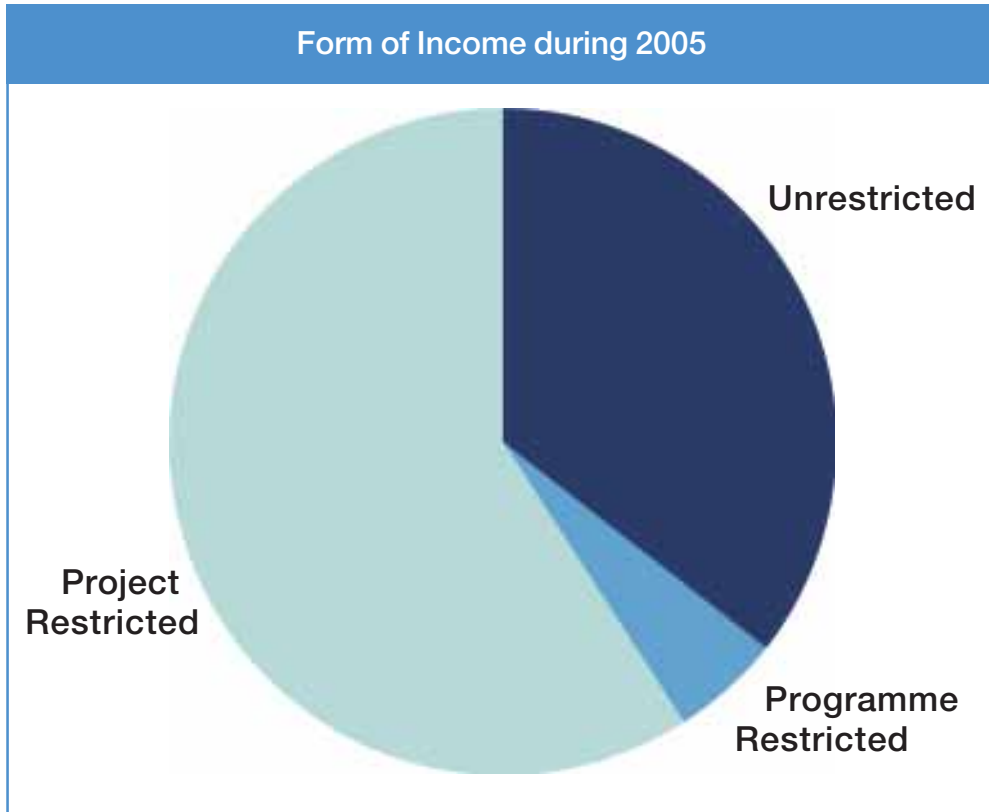
The budget refers to the cost of ongoing programmes. The expanded budget includes on going programmes and projected new programmes during the course of the year. The actual expenditure refers to actual expenditure.

Actual expenditure grew by 43% compared with 2004. The existing programme activities expanded considerably, particularly in Somalia. In addition a lot of exploratory work was undertaken during the year, which should lead to new projects commencing in the course of 2006.

Form of income

The ideal form of income for Interpeace is unrestricted funds allocated generally to the Programme of Work and Budget approved by the Governing Council. Unrestricted funds allow for essential flexibility in programme implementation.

Such funds amounted to 35% of total income in 2005, compared to 41% in 2004. The drop in 2005 reflects the increased size of the Programme of Work and Budget, rather than a fall in unrestricted funding. Other income is earmarked for a particular regional programme or for allocation to the approved budgets of Interpeace-sponsored projects in the field.



Sources of financial support

Some 97% of all income received originates from public sector bodies such as ministries of foreign affairs and development cooperation agencies. New donors in 2005 are Japan, Development Alternatives Inc. and the Open Society Institute which – in addition to Belgium, Canada, Denmark, the European Commission, Finland, the Ford Foundation, France, Ireland, Italy, Norway, Slovenia, Sweden, Switzerland, UNDP, the United Kingdom, the United States and other non-governmental donors – have contributed US\$10.7 million to fund Interpeace's programme in 2005. The intention is to considerably increase the share of funds mobilized from the private sector, for example through the current fundraising drive in the United States.

Cash flow

In contrast to 2004, Interpeace did not need to make any new borrowings from a credit agreement it has with a private supporter. It is a no interest line of credit generously extended against firm pledges made to Interpeace by a Swiss family. Residual borrowings in 2004 were repaid in early 2005.

Partnership with the United Nations

The contractual relationship with the UN is regulated by four Management Service Agreements (MSAs) with three offices of UNDP – the Arab Bureau for the Somali programme, the Latin American Bureau for regional projects and other activities in Latin America, and UNDP Geneva for the Israeli and Palestinian projects and headquarters functions.

New financial management

Institutional reform measures relating to financial management that commenced in 2004 were consolidated in 2005. These concentrated on three interdependent elements:

- organization restructuring;
- strengthening fundraising capacity including ongoing efforts to diversify sources of funding;
- strengthening financial management, separating the core budget and its objectives and the programme budget for financing field operations.

Interpeace Summarized Financial Performance – Calendar Year 2005 (US\$)

Income and Expenditure		
	2005	2004
Income		
United Nations	57,907	0
Governments	9,196,119	5,108,550
Trusts & Foundations, NGO and Other	193,853	171,170
Bank Interest and Exchange Gains	37,138	14,221
Income Received Directly to the UNDP TF / MSAs (1)	1,078,970	1,618,191
In-kind	121,757	0
Total Income	10,685,744	6,912,132
Expenses		
Personnel	2,504,157	2,582,368
Travel and Related Expenses	954,775	484,671
Equipment Purchases	245,733	109,134
Office Running Expenses	1,345,271	570,901
Operating	4,635,216	2,847,642
Grant	0	100,000
Financial Expenses	212,903	95,425
UN Management Fees	197,067	284,638
Total Expenses	10,095,122	7,074,779
Net Income / Expenses	590,622	(162,647)
Carryforward from Previous Year	(278,097)	(115,450)
Closing Balance December 31st (2)	312,525	(278,097)
Balance Sheet (as at 31 December)		
Assets	2005	2004
Current Assets		
Cash and bank	1,800,726	2,226,084
Project Income Receivable	329,553	318,434
Other Receivables and Prepayments	54,640	1,767
Advances to Affiliates	440,476	123,572
Unspent funds in UNDP Trust Fund / MSAs (1)	1,060,053	1,398,456
Deposits	32,929	0
Total Assets	3,718,377	4,068,313
Liabilities		
Payables and Accruals	654,744	473,725
Donor Income Received in Advance	2,418,301	2,213,906
Amount Due UNDP Trust Fund (1)	135,352	833,982
Short Term Credit Line	0	781,940
Provisions (short term)	197,455	42,857
Total Liabilities	3,405,852	4,346,410
Net Assets (2)	312,525	(278,097)
Notes		
1. The UNDP - Trust Fund and Management Services Agreements (MSAs) constitute part of Interpeace accounts.		
2. The closing balance in 2005 includes an unrestricted reserve of 200,000; the remainder is the balance of the Interpeace Bridging Fund, established in 2002 as a restricted project.		
The closing balance in 2004 includes an unrestricted deficit of 390,622; the remainder is the Interpeace Bridging Fund.		

How to help

Flexible funding makes an impact

To ensure sustainability and impact of our activities, we encourage donors to enter into flexible and, whenever possible, unrestricted multi-year commitments in line with the Good Humanitarian Donorship Principles.

Interpeace is seeking two types of funding from donors to allow for maximum impact and results in our worldwide peacebuilding activities:

Unrestricted funding. Interpeace needs a secure and predictable level of flexible unrestricted funding in order to function effectively. Unrestricted funding is key to the success of Interpeace and our field programmes. Such funds amounted to 35% of total income in 2005, compared to 41% in 2004. The drop in 2005 reflects the increased size of the programme, rather than a fall in unrestricted funding. Other income is earmarked for a particular regional programme or for allocation to the approved budgets of Interpeace sponsored projects in the field.

Regionally earmarked funding. We encourage donors to move from **country-specific** earmarking (for example: Rwanda) to **regional programme** earmarking (for example: Central Africa). This will enable greater flexibility on the ground to ensure that our dynamic peacebuilding programmes take root and can successfully develop over time.

Interpeace depends on the firm support of the donor community and generous private benefactors to carry out its important work. We encourage you to support us in our peacebuilding activities around the world.

In the United States, all donations to Interpeace are fully tax deductible to the extent allowed by law. If you are in the US, and would like to discuss making a donation, please contact our Headquarters at:

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www.interpeace.org

Who's who

Governing Council

Martti Ahtisaari (Finland) **Chair**

Former President of Finland; Special Envoy of the UN Secretary-General to lead the status talks on the UN administered Serbian province of Kosovo

Mohamed Sahnoun (Algeria) **Vice Chair**

Special Advisor to the UN Secretary-General for Africa

Matthias Stiefel (Switzerland) **President**

Founder and former Executive Director of WSP International

Zainab Bangura (Sierra Leone)

Chief Civilian Officer, United Nations Mission in Liberia

Georgina Dufoix (France)

Former Minister of Health and Social Services of France

Thomas Greminger (Switzerland)

Representative of the Host Government on the Governing Council; Head of Political Division IV (Peace Policy) of the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs

Michael Møller (Denmark)

Representative of the UN Secretary-General on the Governing Council; Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General to Cyprus

Jonathan Moore (United States)

Former US Ambassador to the UN in New York

Hisashi Owada (Japan)

Judge, International Court of Justice in The Hague

Jan Pronk (Netherlands)

Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General for the Sudan

Anthony Travis (United Kingdom) Honorary Treasurer

Partner, Cabinet Gainsbury and Consorts

Advisory Council

Our activities are funded entirely through voluntary contributions from donor countries and private donors.

Members of our Advisory Council of donors and UN agencies include:

Belgium
Canada
Denmark
Finland
France
Ireland
Japan (observer)
Netherlands
Norway
Slovenia
Sweden
Switzerland
United Kingdom
United States
UN Department of Political Affairs
UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
United Nations Children's Fund
United Nations Development Programme
United Nations Office for Project Services
European Commission

The troika of former, current and future Chairs allows for continuity in decision-making.

Former Chair: Finland (2004/5)
Current Chair: Sweden (2005/6)
Future Chair: Denmark (2006/7)

Senior Management Team

As of July 2006

Scott Weber Director-General

Veronique Tournier Chief of Staff

Jerry McCann Regional Director for Eastern and Central Africa

Ana Glenda Tager Regional Director for Latin America

Per Sjögren Acting Head of Administrative Support

Koenraad Van Brabant Head of Reflective Practice and Learning

Michele Brandt Director, Representation Office in New York

Bernardo Arévalo de León Director, Joint Programme Unit (Ex Officio)

Dominique Hempel Special Advisor on Legal and Policy Matters

Vacant Head of Stakeholder Relations

Vacant Head of Programme Support

Interpeace teams in action



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Frequently Asked Questions

1. What is Participatory Action Research (PAR)?

Participatory action research is a consultative research methodology designed to address specific issues. “Research” is not conducted in the traditional sense of the term where outside experts are sent to conduct research, study their subject and then take their findings home to write a report. Rather with participatory action research, local people are both the researchers and the subjects of the research. The research is carried out by local people, for local people.

2. What are the criteria for setting up a project?

We receive requests to set up projects from a range of sources – donors, national governments, UN agencies, international organizations and Governing Council members.

Before accepting, we assess whether our approach will have a positive impact on building a lasting peace and whether the time is right to intervene. We consult a broad range of sources, talk to people at the national and international level, and conduct exploratory visits.

We go ahead if the security and political situation permits, if the key national players are willing to participate in the process and if the necessary human and financial resources are available.

3. How do you set up a team?

We identify a local consensus figure who has a reputation for fairness, independence and is respected by all the parties. We also identify a team of local researchers and facilitators. This is one of the most important elements in the preparation of a project since the team's credibility and reputation is key to its success. If possible, we partner with an existing NGO or research centre or create a local entity.

4. What are the steps you go through?

The team starts by listening and collecting the views of all groups and sectors of society from the President down to the local villagers in all corners of the country.

They document the history of the conflict, detailing the current state of relations between people, defining a vision of a future peaceful society and outlining the most important obstacles to the development of such long-term peace.

The team brings together many different internal and external parties from the government, opposition, civil society, private sector and even the diaspora.

We help them to agree on priorities and to define the five or so most important problems to be tackled for the country to find stability. These five areas become the work plan for the project, which we facilitate by helping the main parties find sustainable solutions to the conflict.

5. Why do you use video in your work?

The country teams use video to stimulate debate, to facilitate discussion across time and distance and to inform participants on progress. If for social, political or geographical reasons groups can't or won't talk directly to each other, showing taped conversations of one group to another can act as an important first "bridge" of contact. The video recordings can also "protect" the teams, by distancing them from the views expressed and reinforcing their independent status.

The footage is also used in documentaries that have been shown to donors, governments and used by the media.

6. How are your programmes reviewed and evaluated?

Periodic reviews and evaluations are an integral part of our programmes. They are carried out by Interpeace and by external evaluators. We believe that learning from our mistakes as well as highlighting best practices is key to our future development.

7. What happens when the programme ends?

Interpeace is committed to ensuring that local people and organizations carry on the work after the end of the programme. It is vital that there are local actors who can help manage new conflicts if they arise.

This is why we create local institutions to carry on long-term conflict-prevention work. As our work expands into new countries, we encourage these local institutions to form a network that can learn and draw from each other's experiences.

8. What is unique about the Interpeace approach?

It is all about giving local people a sense of ownership and giving them a say in how their society reshapes itself. We only work with local actors who consult widely with all sectors of society, bringing groups together that may never have

met or talked to each other before, so that they can come up with solutions that are culturally, politically and socially right for their country.

We don't parachute in and out. We are there for the long-term and come to ask the right questions rather than to give pre-formulated answers.

9. What is a neutral space?

Interpeace teams bring people together that have often refused to talk to one another. In this context, it is very important for people to feel comfortable to express themselves freely and openly, without fear of retribution.

Interpeace strongly believes that in order to resolve conflict, all parties must be involved in the peacebuilding process. Because of our inclusive approach, our teams gain credibility and are perceived as neutral and transparent. Combined with strong facilitation and conflict resolution skills, these key elements create an environment where all views can be shared, and people can open up for dialogue. This is what we often refer to as a "neutral" space.

10. Is the approach always the same?

We do not believe that "one size fits all", so the approach based on certain core values is adapted according to each country's needs and context.

11. What have been your major achievements?

Peacebuilding is, by its very nature, difficult to measure. However, below are some examples that give a flavour of what has been achieved.

- a. In Mozambique, Israel and Rwanda, groups who for years had not talked to each other met for meaningful dialogue. In Israel, dialogue between settlers and peace camp leaders led to a reduction of tension and violence during the Israeli pull-out from Gaza in 2005.
- b. In Guatemala, former warring parties are now working together constructively to forge a common national security system.
- c. In Somaliland, as a result of our advocacy we contributed to the establishment of a Ministry of Family Affairs and Social Development.
- d. Armed leaders were persuaded to return to the Somali peace process in 2004.
- e. Broad participation in Somaliland elections in September 2005 following voter education and mediation on location of polling stations in disputed territories.
- f. Prisoners of war exchanged in Somaliland and Puntland following assistance from Interpeace partners in the two areas.

- g. In Rwanda, we created channels for dialogue between exiled Rwandan diaspora and decision makers in Kigali. We are facilitating a national process on examining the origins of the Genocide.

12. Where are you planning to work in the future?

Later in 2006, we are planning to establish new programmes in Burundi, Guinea-Bissau, Indonesia and Peru; a project on the youth gang problem in Central America; and another with the United Nations and International IDEA on a post-conflict constitution handbook.

We are also exploring the possibility of working in Liberia, Timor Leste, Cyprus, Afghanistan, Cote d'Ivoire, Haiti and Sierra Leone.

Contacts

We have offices around the world which work closely with our local partners in facilitating lasting peace.

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