Preventing deadly conflict in divided societies in Asia: the role of local NGOs
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Preventing Deadly Conflict in Divided Societies in Asia
The Role of Local NGOs

Academisch Proefschrift

ter verkrijging van de graad van doctor
aan de Universiteit van Amsterdam
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prof. mr. P.F. van der Heijden

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Elisabeth Everdina Scheper
geboren te Amsterdam
Promotor: Professor Dr. Cees J. Hamelink (emeritus)
Faculteit der Maatschappij- en Gedragswetenschappen

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In memory of two civil society leaders, friends and champions of peace:

Neelan Tiruchelvam.

Sri Lankan human rights lawyer and Member of Parliament for the TULF, who worked tirelessly for a just resolution of the ethnic conflict and a peaceful co-existence based on mutual respect and appreciation of cultural diversity. He died in a suicide bomb attack while driving to his Colombo office on 29 July 1999; and

Munir,

Indonesian human rights lawyer and member of the Commission to Investigate Human Rights Violations in East Timor, who tenaciously investigated the role of the State, military and rebel groups in human rights violations and disappearances. He died from arsenic poisoning on a flight to the Netherlands to further his academic studies on 7 September 2004.

"We can not glorify death, whether in the battlefield or otherwise. We, on the other hand, must celebrate life and are fiercely committed to protecting and securing the sanctity of life, which is the most fundamental value without which all other rights and freedoms become meaningless."

From the last speech in parliament of Dr. Neelan Tiruchelvam on 15 June 1999

"Human rights in the sense of human solidarity has created a new universal and equal language going beyond racial, gender, ethnic or religious boundaries. That is why we consider it a doorway to dialogue for people of all socio-cultural groups and all ideologies."

From Munir’s acceptance speech at the Right Livelihood Awards ceremony in Stockholm on 9 December 2000
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I. Introduction and Executive Summary

1.1 The origin of the study

My international development career began at the Directorate for International Cooperation of the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and I spent among others four years as Deputy Country Representative in Kathmandu, Nepal. In 1989, I switched to the international non-governmental sector to work on the intersection of sustainable development and human rights with local civil society and international advocacy groups and headed the East and South East Asia Bureau of Novib (Oxfam Netherlands) for the next ten years. After nearly two decades of professional engagement in structural poverty eradication and human rights work, I decided to devote a year to reflection, academic study and debate as a fellow at the Weatherhead Center for International Affairs (WCFIA) at Harvard University in 2000/1. My initial research -on the role of the military and religion in preventing deadly conflict- was soon extended to include local NGOs in Asia. It developed into a full PhD research, when I got involved in an Asian United Nations University training initiative and the University of Amsterdam endorsed my PhD candidature in April 2002.

The past two decades (1983 – 2002) have been a time of marked global change and economic transformation: from Asian Miracle to Asian Crisis. When I first began to work in South East Asia, the mood was euphoric and the development community optimistic: the “Asian Miracle” was unfolding with impressive economic growth rates, the Cold War was drawing to a close and the process of economic globalisation had been initiated. But in the mid 1990s the tables turned as the Asian economic bubble burst. The severe economic crisis resulted in declining gross domestic product (GDP), mass protests and the toppling of well-established regimes. In the wake of the crisis, fragile democratic transition processes were initiated, violent civil conflicts broke out and large numbers of Asians were pushed back to or deeper below the poverty line as development indicators plummeted.

Of the twelve Asian countries where I have spent most of my professional career, five have been severely affected by deadly conflict in recent years. Some experienced civil war as a result of problematic decolonisation processes or geopolitical developments fuelled by the Cold War. In others the democratisation and development processes were destabilized by the increased concentration and collusion of power between the political, military and business sectors. In recent years, the “war on terror”, the U.S. led response to the terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon of 11 September 2001, has further complicated the troubled Asian development outlook and fuelled conflict. The new challenges highlight the vulnerability to deadly conflict of Asian societies, which are historically divided by ethnicity and religion and speak to the need of a re-examination of local development and poverty eradication strategies.

Working on eradication of poverty with the poor in Asia made me realise new approaches need to be developed to prevent violent deadly conflict at community and provincial levels, as part of overall poverty eradication strategies, because:

- Most serious threats to the life and security of poor people come from within their society at the hand of their fellow countrymen, rarely from unpredictable foreign “enemies”;
- Ethnicity and religion are hardly ever the cause of deadly conflict but they are often manipulated to provide a means for ethno-nationalist leaders to mobilise support;
- Armed communal violence is on the rise and jeopardises the fruits of many years of development work in marginalized communities;
- Victimisation of non-combatant civilians, women and children, as a deliberate strategy of armed groups, has changed the nature of conflict and thereby reduced the chance to negotiate peaceful settlements:
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- The mechanisms of State, judiciary, security forces, and of communal and religious institutions, meant to protect civilians in times of crisis, usually fail to do so at decisive moments;
- Violent conflicts do deep and lasting damage to local communities, by destroying both the physical infrastructure and the social tissue, and it often takes generations to overcome the resulting anger, hatred and distrust.

In the late 1990s the need for conflict prevention began to dominate the Asian sustainable development debates, as result of a series of simultaneous events: the intensification of the civil war in Sri Lanka; the violent clashes between the Maoist rebel movement and the State in Nepal; the increased impunity in the wake of the 1997 'coup' in Cambodia; the fall of Manaplaw and the retreat of the Karen National Army in Myanmar; and the political transformation and deadly communal conflicts in Indonesia and East Timor. At the same time the world at large became aware that the protective quality of distance is quickly fading and the ever-prevalent risk of deadly civil conflict in poor, developing countries now impacts on all corners of the globe. These events forced governments, civil society, NGOs and international aid agencies to reflect on how societies could be better equipped to anticipate and pre-empt deadly conflict. This PhD dissertation aims to contribute to this debate by studying the role of local NGOs in preventing deadly conflict in four divided societies in Asia (Cambodia, Sri Lanka, Indonesia and Myanmar) and distilling success factors that would increase the effectiveness NGO conflict prevention work.

Deadly conflict in divided society and the threat to global security

In the 21st century deadly conflict prevention has become more than a moral obligation of the international community, because as economic and technological globalisation advance, extreme inequality, deprivation and violent conflict anywhere have serious implications everywhere. In the 1990s, with the Cold War over and technological and financial means at hand to initiate an historic economic and social globalisation process, the international community expected to concentrate on eradicating absolute poverty and improving global human security. A decade later, the failure to match rapid economic and information globalisation trends with better and more equitable governance, has instead increased the income and justice gap between rich and poor nations. A growing number of intrastate conflicts in poor societies are on the brink of violent escalation and the war on terror is diverting resources from international development efforts and has had no effect on reducing the security risks. Increased peace keeping and preventive diplomacy have had some encouraging results over the past decade, but have not made serious contributions to eliminating the causes of deadly conflicts.

The nature of deadly civil conflict is changing radically. Grievance-seeking minority groups are adjusting to the new reality of failing states. Their awareness of inequality and expectations for a better future are rising with advancing global networking technologies. Rebel leaders are increasingly involved in illegal international trafficking of drugs, arms, gems and humans to maintain their military operation and secure their lifestyles. Negotiating lasting peace settlements with under-performing governments is becoming a less favourable strategy, because it is unlikely that these agreements can be enforced in failing state contexts. The growing business partnerships between international mercenaries, commercial arms traders and armed rebel groups in marginalised countries pose an unprecedented additional security risk and prolong deadly conflicts.

Third party intervention to prevent or end deadly conflict has also become increasingly complex too. Negotiations require working with weak governments, which lack legitimacy and resources.
and unwilling rebel groups who have more to gain from illegal trade interests and humanitarian aid—both of which would end with a peace settlement. Private interest in deadly conflicts makes them progressively harder to settle peacefully. In the twentieth century, the average duration of an interstate war was twenty months, as opposed to 120 months for civil wars. In the period of 1990-2000, 104 intrastate conflicts occurred. Only 14 conflicts (or 16 percent) ended in a negotiated peace settlement, while half of the conflicts were settled through military victory, and one-third was ongoing or in stalemate at the end of the decade. Sadly, seven of the 14 negotiated peace settlements did not hold and deadly conflict had resumed within five years.\footnote{According to the same study, only 15% of the 43 conflicts that ended in military victory resumed. From Monica Toft - Civil War course. Harvard, KSG School, spring semester, 2000.}

Another troubling development in deadly intrastate conflict is the deliberate targeting of non-combatants, women and children, both as strategy in armed combat and to support the livelihood of warring fractions. Armed groups and the military forcibly recruit civilians to secure labour and support needed to cater to the needs of the fighters, work in natural resource exploitation often the main source of income, and provide porter and sexual services to the troops. The privatisation of deadly conflict further aggravates the suffering and trauma of trapped civilians, particularly children, who have nowhere to turn for protection. Local non-governmental organisations (NGOs) are increasingly called upon as last resort to respond to humanitarian needs and gross human rights violations. They try to feed and council traumatised victims, document atrocities committed by both sides and advocate for non-violent conflict resolution and disarmament. This dual role often gets them into double trouble with the authorities and armed rebel groups alike, putting a heavy strain on their workers and resulting in a high burnout rate.

**Aftermath of 9/11 and the war on terror**

The attacks of 11 September 2001 posed an additional challenge to the world. Some scholars, like theologian Karin Armstrong, perceive the attacks as the ultimate privatisation of war: a group of individuals using non-military means to wage a massive terror attack against a group of innocent civilians in a perceived enemy state. They show how causes of deadly conflicts in remote countries can pose direct threats to the security of any nation on the globe, regardless of its wealth and technical sophistication. Moreover, they illustrate how religion, ethnicity and nationalist sentiments can be re-interpreted and exploited to foster a global fear for the “clash of civilisations”, in which deeper economic and political causes of envy and warfare are underrated.

In his article entitled “Making our way back to humanity” the seasoned American Mennonite peace builder John Paul Lederach (2002, p. 9-16) identified five shattered security myths in the 9/11 aftermath. First, the global community is now fully connected to the North and problems of the world have become everyone’s problem. Second, security is no longer a matter of protecting national borders against visible invading enemies. Third, more and larger weapon systems will no longer provide protection and what exactly increases security is unknown. Fourth, suffering, poverty and political marginalisation of people and their cry for respect and inclusion is likely connected to security in the North. Fifth, the historic belief that the West can “do it alone” no longer holds. Lederach therefore argues that seeking solutions and addressing global human security will require global cooperation, mutual understanding and respect.

Two years later the renowned businessman and philanthropist George Soros took the debate on the need for global dialogue and cooperation in response to recent terrorist attacks a step further in his commencement address at Columbia University on 17 May 2004. He argued that with the
decision to declare a literal war on terror, Americans became victims turned perpetrators. Since 9/11 the war on terror has claimed more innocent victims than the terrorist attacks. The invasion of Iraq was justified by connecting Saddam Hussein and the suicide bombers of September 11th and claiming that Iraq was in possession of weapons of mass-destruction. When both claims turned out to be false, President Bush argued that Iraq was invaded in order to liberate the Iraqi people. Soros postulates that a world full of tyrants that take unilateral and arbitrary action against some countries only, has actually made it more difficult to solve the terrorist problem. The terrorists have hit upon a weak point in the American collective psyche: they have made the US fearful. The Bush administration has fostered that fear. “By declaring war on terror, the President could unite the country behind him, but fear is a bad counsellor. As a fearful giant that is lashing out, the US is creating innocent victims and innocent victims generate the resentment and rage on which terrorism feeds. (...) By succumbing to fear, the US is doing the terrorists’ bidding: unleashing a vicious circle of violence”. Terrorism will never disappear and globalisation has rendered the world increasingly interdependent. Maintaining peace, law and order, protecting the environment, reducing poverty and fighting terrorism are among them. Thus Soros concludes: “Instead of engaging in pre-emptive actions of a military nature, we ought to pursue preventive actions of a constructive nature, creating a better balance between carrots and sticks in the prevailing world order.”

The relation between terrorism and religious fundamentalism has long been a research focus of theologian Karen Armstrong. In her book the “Battle for God” (2000) she perceives religious fundamentalism as a religious reaction against the trend of secular modernism in the home societies. The recently emerged fundamentalists’ groups are modern movements in Armstrong’s view, whose roots cannot be traced back to ancient religious traditions. Others refer to these groups as “revitalization movements” as religious and cultural reactions opposing the rise of secular modernism. Because they live withdrawn from modern society, they are more flexible and their networks can regroup to suit their goals. If these movements decide to engage in a Jihad or holy war, the violence is often first directed against their fellow countrymen. The history of fundamentalism shows that it is dangerous and thus unwise to ignore these movements. However, rigid suppression is likely counterproductive because it confirms the fear of nearing extinction that the fundamentalist leaders promote. Exploitation of fundamentalist movements for other political purposes, as a tactic to divert attention, has proven to be very difficult too. Armstrong recommends to study fundamentalist movements closely and to engage their leaders in dialogue when ever possible to pacify their potentially violent approaches.

The “Preventing the Next Crisis” study (2003) assessed the impact of economic disparities on terrorism and concluded too that there is no direct connection between terrorism and absolute poverty. International terrorist interventions are very complex undertakings that require middle class, well educated cadres, which are usually found in economically and democratically stagnating countries. The study warns for two additional threats in the wake of the 9/11 attacks: the number of failed states has gone up and the global democratisation trend seems to slow down. In this respect it is important to consider geopolitical influences, which can have a major impact on deadly conflict in the South, as the next section will reveal.
The geopolitical importance of Asia during the Cold War cannot be understated because it is the part of the world where the Soviet Union, China and the Koreas are located. The struggle over political spheres of influence began with the surrender of the Japanese imperial army that ended WWII. A wave of decolonisation swept over the continent in the late forties. While the French and Dutch—who were economically weakened after five years of German occupation—fruitlessly attempted to regain control over their former colonies through force, Great Britain and America tried to align the liberated nations through active support of their aspirations for independence. In the early 1950s the West became involved in the Korean War while the USSR and China expanded their political alliances with Myanmar, Indonesia, India and Vietnam. Political parties, farmers unions and labour movements with Marxist affiliations emerged and won elections. In the early sixties when concern over the spread of communism grew (the falling domino theory), western military operations were initiated in South East Asia and marked the next chapter in the Cold War.

Direct military intervention is the most visible attempt that third parties can make to influence a country’s political development and change its ruler. The military intervention can range from military threat and covert operations to direct military invasions. While Biekart (1999) argued that in Latin America the lasting effects of military interventions by third parties on the democratic process were only marginal, in Asia the results were different. France and the USA lost their successive Vietnam Wars (1953 and 1972) and the 'dominos did fall': a process that was likely aided by these failed covert operations and war atrocities in which an estimated 3.4 million Vietnamese and 700,000 Cambodians, mostly civilians lost their lives. In 1975 the North Vietnamese army defeated and annexed South Vietnam with support from the USSR, while the Khmer Rouge came to power in Cambodia with Chinese support and installed a terror regime that

Source: [http://www.sitesatlas.com/Maps/Map5/Asia.htm](http://www.sitesatlas.com/Maps/Map5/Asia.htm)
left 2 million people dead. As the Mekong delta came under Marxist rule. it was isolated by the international community through a diplomatic and economic boycott that lasted till the late 1980s.

Meanwhile, Indonesia and the Philippines returned to the Western cradle in the mid 1960s after a series of violent military operations against presumed Marxist organisations, that left hundreds of thousands sympathisers dead. Over the next three decades the Presidents Suharto and Marcos received unprecedented international economic and political support for their autocratic rule, which rapidly eroded the young democratic systems. These events had a dramatic impact on the emerging civil society, actually wiping it out, and affecting State-NGO relations still today. In post Cold War Asia, economic and military support to less democratic regimes remained a popular strategy to secure regional stability for economic liberalisation and growth.

The war on terror has a direct impact on this part of Asia as well. Jemaah Islamiyah (JI), the South East Asian terrorist organisation based in Indonesia, was one of the groups held responsible for the Bali nightclub bombing in 2002 and the Jakarta Marriott Hotel bombing in 2003. According to the International Crisis Group (2003), the Indonesian police has succeeded in seriously damaging the network by the arrest of several top leaders, but JI remains active and dangerous. More than 200 other suspects with possible links to terrorist organisations are now in custody in Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore, and the Philippines. JI today has spread across the huge archipelago and its members probably number in the thousands.

New information suggests that JI is set up as a military organisation and most senior members of the central command were trained in Afghanistan in the late 1980s and early 1990s, before JI formally existed. Early JI leaders convened training camps in Mindanao from 1996 to 2000 and depended on a small circle of Muslim boarding schools to propagate its teachings. Today the JI is held together not just by ideology and training, but also by an intricate network of marriages that makes it like an extended family. Since 9/11 and particularly since the October 2002 Bali bombings, their strategy has become more destructive than constructive, e.g. attacking the US and allied nationals as pro-active enemies of the Islam. While JI did receive funding from al-Qaeda, it is an independent organisation and most if not all operational decisions are taken locally. Its fund-raising is largely local too. JI’s goal remains to establish an Islamic state in Indonesia. Geopolitical influences are still of great importance to peace, justice and development in Asia in the 21st century.

Militarization in Asia

Analysis of the geopolitical influence on deadly conflict in the region revealed its lasting impact on the context of local conflict prevention. Three implications need highlighting. First, there is a lack of civilian and political control over the armed forces. As there were few inter-state conflicts to deal with during and post Cold War and the biggest national security threat was perceived to come from local Marxist groups, the armed forces became actively involved in civic governance of remote areas and home security tasks, be it in official capacity (Indonesia and Myanmar) or ‘informally’ (Cambodia). The independence of the armed forces and their lack of accountability are enhanced by lucrative returns from military - business partnerships, often in the exploitation of natural resources (timber, mining, gems) with transnational corporations. In Indonesia, public

3 In Indonesia in 1966, the year after a ‘failed’ coup, nearly one million political and civil society leaders with assumed communist sympathies were killed and General Suharto took power. He was appointed president in 1967 and the military set up an official mirror governance system in the provinces. In the Philippines in 1969, President Marcos, who supported the US position on the war in Vietnam, was re-elected amidst allegations of electoral fraud. In 1972 martial law was declared and the parliament suspended; the president obtained absolute powers in 1973.
spending on defence is officially less than 1.5% of GDP, but that budget covers less than 20% of the actual security forces expenses because the armed forces (Tentara Nasional Indonesia or TNI) was bestowed with natural resource concessions to earn additional income in the 1960 and 1970s. The Junta of Myanmar is, with its forty years in power, not only the longest ruling military government in the world but is also renowned for having privatised state economic interests for personal gain of the military leadership.

Second, as a consequence of the Asian Cold War history and the lack of accountability, the average army size is still very large and the percentage of high ranking officials in the army is high. As a result, the defence spending of poor Asian countries puts a huge claim on annual national budgets and diverts funds from more urgent development priorities, like education, health and rural development. Since 1996, Cambodia has been unsuccessfully attempting to demobilise one third of its 140,000-person army, which still claims 29% of its annual national budget. In Sri Lanka, years of civil war have constrained public transparency in the name of national security interests. Multiple emergency regulations and special court orders make all military information classified and provide immunity to politicians and the military alike. As a result, there is no transparency with regard to how 25 percent of the national budget or 5.2% of GDP is spent. There are no figures available on military spending in Myanmar.

Third, human security is not the paradigm of choice of the armed forces in the four countries. Acts of political violence against civilians have been left largely unpunished. In Cambodia high-ranking army officials committed 80% of the officially recorded land grabbing cases that took place in 2000. In Indonesia, well documented cases of murder, rape and sexual harassment of Aceh citizens by the armed forces in the 1980s and 1990s remain unpunished. In Myanmar an estimated 500,000 poor people a day are forced to provide 'voluntary labour' to the military and this continues despite the ILO banning Myanmar from its General Assembly in the year 2000 on slave labour charges.

The transition to more participatory, just and democratic governance systems in the four countries is seriously hampered by the collusion and misuse of power by those who are mandated to provide protection and security to the people. The prime threat to livelihood and security of poor people comes from within their own society. Sustainable conflict prevention strategies should, therefore, focus on strengthening the local capacity, networks and systems to analyse conflict and protect citizens so that they can secure a life in dignity. Different actors and stakeholders at the community, provincial and national levels need to be better equipped to engage pro-actively in conflict prevention and thereby secure the hard earned social and economic development gains.

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1 The approximate size of the armed forces in Cambodia is 140,000; in Sri Lanka 240,000; in Indonesia 350,000; and over 400,000 in Myanmar.
1.2 Local NGOs preventing deadly conflict: the four research propositions

This study aims to make a contribution to the discourse on the role of local Development NGOs in preventing deadly conflict, through an analysis of deadly conflict causes. State – NGO relations and success factors for the work of local NGOs in four divided societies in Asia. The importance of civil society in building cohesive communities is widely acknowledged, as its work can reduce hatred and violence, and encourage attitudes of concern, social responsibility, and mutual aid within and between groups. In difficult economic and political transitions civil society organisations are of crucial importance in alleviating the dangers of deadly violence. (Carnegie Foundation, 1997) Civil society comprises all organisations and networks that operate outside the official government sphere, including professional associations, trade unions, charitable groups, political parties, religious organisations, press, cause-oriented movements, social clubs and non-governmental organisations. The significance of civil society today is primarily defined through its relation to democracy. Steinberger (2001) argues that the value of civil society lies in the hypothesis that if civil society is strong and if citizens band together for the common good on a sense of community or programmatic trust and efficacy, then this trust and efficacy will translate into overall trust in the political process and democracy and leads to diffusion of the centralized power of the State. Civil society is thus an essential element of a political pluralist society – the diffusion of power that is the hallmark of modern democracies.

Non-Governmental Organisations are private, non-profit, professional organisations concerned with public welfare goals a distinct subset of civil society and a distinct subset of civil society. (Clarke 1998) They specialise in areas such as poverty eradication, sustainable livelihoods, primary health care and education, environment, human rights, gender equity and indigenous people. The critical role of NGOs in conflict mediation and reconciliation has gained global recognition since the end of the Cold War in the 1990s. NGOs are key partners for government and international aid organisations, because they are willing to play many roles that governments are unable or unwilling to perform. UN Secretary General Kofi Anan stressed in a press release (SG/SM/7201 28 October 1999) that the relationship between the UN and civil society has changed beyond all recognition:

“Information technology has empowered civil society to be the true guardians of democracy and good governance everywhere. Oppressors cannot hide inside their borders any longer. A strong civil society, bound together across all borders with the help of modern communications, will not let them. In a sense, it has been the new superpower - the people determined to promote better standards of life in larger freedom.”

In the same vain UNDP Administrator Mark Brown added that UNDP partnerships with civil society organisations were going to be as important as its partnership with governments in shaping the future of international development. (Fukuro Par, 2000, p.2)

Yet five years later local NGO actors still do not have much political clout when it comes to the actual recognition of and involvement in conflict prevention and development efforts; not in their home countries nor in the international diplomatic arena. Case in point are two mega studies on conflict prevention published in 2003: ‘Breaking the Conflict Trap’ by the World Bank, and ‘Preventing the Next Wave of Conflict’ by the Woodrow Wilson Center, one of the Washington DC based official think tanks.5 Neither multi expert teams included civil society in their conflict

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analysis, nor did they identify local NGOs as stakeholders in peace building processes. Which begs the question: are local NGOs rightfully omitted here, because their efforts and achievements have made little to no contribution to preventing deadly conflict in their societies? Or do local NGOs remain uncharted terrain on the mental map of powerful think tanks and multilateral institutions and does their significant political role in their home countries make them less desirable partners? This study postulates it is the later and supports Gidron et al (1999, p.277) conclusion in their articles and book on violent conflict and the role of local peacebuilding NGOs: “The lack of theoretical and empirical work on peace and conflict resolution NGOs hinders our ability to understand what roles these increasingly important organisations can play in conflicts around the world.”

In spite of diverging opinions on the quality of local NGO work in developing countries, friend and foe continue to agree that a strong civil society and a professional, well functioning NGO sector are essential actors in building participatory, democratic, peaceful and just societies. The Carnegie Foundation concluded in 1997 already that “Responsible leaders, key inter-governmental and non-governmental institutions, and civil society can do far better in preventing deadly conflict than the current epidemic of violence suggest” (p.xvii). This narrows the question down from the whether NGOs can do conflict prevention to the how: how can the partnership between local NGO and the State and international stakeholders be build and/or enhanced to make efforts to prevent deadly conflict more successful?

To this end the study has formulated four core research propositions:

- Deadly conflict in Asia is the result of deliberate exclusion, inequality and the lack of human dignity and can only be prevented through changes in local policy and practise that facilitate sustainable development, social justice and forms of inclusive governance;

- As privatisation of conflict is in an early stage in Asia, deadly conflicts can still be resolved through peacefully negotiated settlements provided the State commits to it “prime duty holders” role -laid down in various UN Covenants- and provides human security to all its citizens, while it grants the necessary political space and fundamental rights to NGOs to work in a supportive and democratic environment;

- Local NGOs are key partners to the State and the international community in building cohesive and democratic societies and the impact of their work is enhanced when three critical success factors are incorporated in their programme strategies and institutional set-up (social capital building, strategic networking and organisational integrity);

- (Re)building the mutual trust in State - NGO relations is a deliberate and sensitive local process of reconciliation that involves multiple stakeholders at different levels in the society and in which international aid agencies can only play a limited role.

To do justice to the unique local characteristics of deadly conflict in divided societies and the wide variety of NGO responses, and to allow for the formulation of general conclusions on conflict prevention in Asia, a comparative analysis of four countries was undertaken. Cambodia, Sri Lanka and Indonesia were chosen as case countries because all had a troubled nation building past. went through exceptional intrastate conflicts and have well established NGO sectors, whose experiences might help to determine success factors for conflict mediation and prevention work.

report addresses the importance of NGOs only twice, when it criticizes the attitude of international NGOs in global advocacy and the achievements of NGOs in promoting effective democratisation processes.
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Myanmar was chosen as fourth case country, because it faced a similar post WWII nation building challenge, but it ended up with an entirely different deal. The longest ruling Junta on earth has severely curtailed civil society since taking over in 1962, has denied freedom of association and has forced local NGOs to work in exile. The first two parts of this study attempt to explain this marked difference in governance history and show how the local NGO void in Myanmar benefited the Junta to stay in power and prevented local democratisation initiatives to come to fruition. However, Myanmar had to be excluded from the success factor exploration in the third part of this study, as in the absence of an in-country local NGO sector no comparative analysis could be made. ¹

The study consists of three parts. Part one opens with an analytical framework, defining key concepts of conflict, ethnicity, nationalism, exclusion, social cohesion, human security, peace building and NGOs (Chapter II). Next, it presents the nature and causes of deadly conflict in Cambodia, Sri Lanka, Indonesia and Myanmar and identifies national and minority peoples at elevated risk. Political developments since post WWII independence, national building struggles and historic and contemporary grievances and cleavages were analysed to determine whether deadly conflict in Asia has been progressively privatising, which would make peaceful conflict resolution increasingly difficult. (Chapter III) Social and economic causes and consequences of deadly conflict are considered in Chapter IV. Concluding the political space for negotiated settlement and structural political, social and economic transformation still exists, the study moves to the second level of analysis and reviewed the State – NGO relations in historic perspective to gain insight where the collaboration faltered and how the relationship got strained. (Chapters V and VI) The third and last part of this study researches the work of 32 local NGOs in Cambodia, Sri Lanka and Indonesia and explores success factors and indicators that would potentially enhance the effectiveness of NGO development and conflict prevention work. (Chapter VII) Sixteen case studies of successful joint local NGO initiatives to mediate and prevent violent conflict are presented in Chapter VIII to illustrate the success factors and come to eight lessons learned. The final Chapter IX reviews the four research propositions to provide a set conclusions and recommendations for future research and action.

¹The use of Myanmar and Burmese does not imply a political bias and may be confusing. This dissertation uses the country’s official name, as the Union of Burma was renamed Myanmar by the Junta in 1988. Most citizens and local NGOs continue to refer to their country as Burma and local NGOs in exile wish to be identified as Burmese NGOs.
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This study analyses the role of local NGOs in preventing deadly conflict in four divided societies in Asia and identifies factors that can enhance the success of NGO work. It aims to contribute to the discourse on the role of local Development NGOs in peace and development efforts and hopes to encourage fostering of diverse stakeholder partnerships by providing empirical evidence of their mutually beneficial nature. To understand why deadly conflicts are difficult to prevent, why key stakeholder interaction – especially between the State and NGOs – is problematic and what needs to be done to foster constructive partnerships, this study explores three distinct issue sets: the causes of deadly conflict in divided societies; the State-NGO relations in historic perspective and the role of local NGOs in preventing deadly conflict in Cambodia, Sri Lanka, Indonesia and Myanmar.

The study addresses four core propositions:

- Deadly conflict in Asia is the result of deliberate exclusion, inequality and the lack of human dignity and can only be prevented through changes in local policy and practise that facilitate sustainable development, social justice and forms of inclusive governance;
- As privatisation of conflict is in an early stage in Asia, deadly conflicts can still be resolved through peacefully negotiated settlements provided the State commits to it “prime duty holders” role -laid down in various UN Covenants- and provides human security to all its citizens, while it grants the necessary political space and fundamental rights to NGOs to work in a supportive and democratic environment;
- Local NGOs are key partners to the State and the international community in building cohesive and democratic societies and the impact of their work is enhanced when three critical success factors are incorporated in their programme strategies and institutional set-up (social capital building, strategic networking and organisational integrity);
- (Re)building the mutual trust in State - NGO relations is a deliberate and sensitive local process of reconciliation that involves multiple stakeholders at different levels in the society and in which international aid agencies can only play a limited role.

The study posits that sustainable development interventions are likely more durable and effective in preventing deadly conflict and building peace both nationally and globally, because their main goal is to eradicate poverty and injustice and their programme strategies attempt to redress structural causes of inequality, injustice and indignity. The analysis of deadly conflict and historic grievances and social and class cleavages in the four countries concludes that historic and cultural grievances are the driving force behind deadly conflicts, rather than greed motives or private interests of rebel leaders and could be redressed peacefully if the political will exists. Rebel groups are still more inclined to seek a negotiated end to the conflict than to fight indefinitely for cessation, with the LTTE in Sri Lanka as possible exception.

Geopolitical influences have played a major role in the recent history of deadly conflict in Asia. Sri Lanka, Indonesia and Myanmar have struggled since independence in the late 1940s with the self-determination aspirations of ethnic groups –mainly national peoples– within their borders. Because the complicated nation-building processes were poorly managed by the States, frustrated self-determination aspirations have become a major cause of recurring deadly conflict over the past fifty years. Cambodia provides a unique conflict context, as its deadly conflict is the result of locally clashing Cold War alliances. The impact of the Cold War dynamics is still evident in Cambodia, Indonesia and Myanmar, as all countries went through a militarization process that deeply affected the societies. The armed forces became actively involved in the civic governance of remote areas, as the main national security threat was perceived to come from local groupings.
with Marxist or capitalist orientations. Safeguarding national unity was the armed forces’ main goal and NGOs working in remote territories and/or on politically sensitive subjects (i.e. human rights) experienced repression. Forms of extreme State repression of NGOs in the 1960-70s, in which over a million civil society leaders died, made way to more political savvy approaches in the 1990s, often through denial of the freedom of assembly and expression. Only Myanmar continues to prohibit an independent local NGO sector to operate, which has dramatically reduced the societies’ ability to advocate for change towards more equitable, democratic and inclusive governance.

This conclusion prompted a deeper analysis into the capability and effectiveness of the State in interacting with its civilians. NGOs and other stakeholders as a key factor in preventing future deadly conflict. Societies with a good mix of vertical linking social capital between the State and citizens (or good governance) and horizontal social capital or bridging relations among diverse communities are known to be more resilient to deadly conflict. Though local NGOs are key partners to the State and the international community in this process of building cohesive and democratic societies, the NGO country overviews show that the collaboration is actually limited. The troubled ‘organisational integrity’ of the State in the four countries has been one of the main impediments to prevent deadly conflict from recurring. Many NGOs were founded during or as a result of deadly conflicts, in an effort to protect and support beneficiaries that were victims of impunity, violence or exclusion. The absence of the rule of law, militarization, impunity and corruption however, have hindered effective NGO development and conflict prevention work and aggravated existing grievances and cleavages. Governments have generally four concerns when partnering with local NGOs: the lack of official NGO legitimacy and accountability; the control over the ‘end message’ in NGO partnerships; the potential damage to their image when partnering with the ‘wrong’ NGOs; and doubts about the impartiality of NGOs in representing fairly the interests of those other than their own constituencies. As a result, bilateral and multilateral aid agencies tend to award their donations largely to international NGOs, instead of local NGOs, because they are presumably more impartial, less corrupt and have stronger delivery and management capacities. Moreover, the UNDP, World Bank and some bilateral agencies are increasingly engaged in operational field programmes to rebuild grass roots civil society directly. The efficiency and long term sustainability of the international civil society building programmes in the four countries is questionable however, in view of the historically troubled relationship of the State and local NGOs.

The comparative analysis of the responses of 32 local NGO to prevent escalation of deadly conflict meant to distil local specificities, regional commonalities and best practises. In the third part of the study the Burmese NGOs in exile were not included in the analysis, because the repressive State policies force local NGO to work in exile. NGO responses were remarkably similar across the three countries in terms of issue setting and institutional responses, but implementation differs distinctly because of the diverse political, geopolitical and stakeholder contexts of the conflicts. NGOs have built horizontal networks in communities to overcome group identity divides and promote peaceful co-existence through economic cooperation and local participatory governance. Vertical networks were built to strengthen good governance, exercise human rights, increase the participation of marginalised constituencies and improve collaboration between different stakeholders. The NGO efforts to generate cultural capital—by reframing sustainable peace messages to generate public acceptance, proposing alternative conflict solutions, reiterating respected values and norms, etc—proved to be another vital contribution to defuse tensions and build new peace constituencies. Low human security remains the prime threat to effective social and economic grassroots work of NGOs. The process of balancing asymmetric political power relations in democratising societies can be influenced by the international aid community, if the State is concerned about its international credibility. Seven
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approaches of local NGOs to increase their leverage with the society, State, stakeholders and the international community are identified. These approaches can serve as success indicators: because they enhance the chances of success of development and social justice work of local NGO, even if the political space is hostile. The seven indicators are grouped in three success factors:

1. Social and cultural capital: NGO’s ability to build sustainable horizontal bridging and vertical linking social capital and to frame alternative peace and justice messages;
2. Strategic actor networking: engagement in joint national NGO campaigns and exercising soft power through international advocacy;
3. Organisational integrity: NGO leadership and its organisational integrity.

Lastly, the study assesses the organisational integrity of the interviewed NGOs, based on the degree to which horizontal bridging and vertical linking social capital were reflected in the NGO programmes, beneficiaries, actor networks, staff composition and internal governance systems. Cambodian NGOs appear more proficient in horizontal social capital building than their sister NGOs in Sri Lanka and Indonesia, as they can rely on strong national NGO networks to balance poor State-NGO relations and they face fewer identity obstacles in this country with a high ethnic and linguistic homogeneity. Indonesian and Sri Lankan NGOs have stronger vertical than bridging (horizontal) capital building capabilities, which mirrors respectively the weakness of the NGO grassroots movement and the power of the military, and the deep ethnic divide after twenty years of civil war. Applying the model to the thematic specialisation of NGOs shows the expected result: training, single issue and advocacy NGOs tend to possess stronger vertical capital, while community development and most women’s NGOs have stronger horizontal social capital building capabilities. Twelve cases studies illustrate successful joint NGO programmes and campaigns to promote good governance, build conflict resolution mechanisms, mobilise broad peace movements and solicit international support for policy change. Eight lessons can be learned from these cases. The study concludes that (re)building of mutual trust in State-NGO relations requires a deliberate and sensitive local process of (re)conciliation that involves multiple stakeholders at different levels of society, and in which international aid agencies can only play a limited role: more research and pilots are required to this end. Five sets of recommendations to key stakeholders --local NGOs, State, international aid agencies, women, military and religious leaders-- provide a number of suggestions how this process could be initiated.

This study consists of three parts. Part I identifies the ethnic minorities at risk in the four case countries and analyses causes and potential remedies of deadly conflict in each country since its post WWII independence. (Chapter III - IV) Part II reviews State-NGO relations in historic perspective, identifies State interventions to control the local NGO sector and explores the division of roles and responsibilities among stakeholders. (Chapter V - VI) Part III analyses the work of 32 local NGOs in Cambodia, Sri Lanka and Indonesia in preventing escalation of deadly conflict. It assesses their conflict analysis, strategies, projects, social capital building capacity and organisational integrity; it concludes with an inventory of success factors that may enhance the quality of NGO work in conflict prevention. The case studies of joint NGO initiatives illustrate the political opportunity structures, the diversity of NGO contributions and the three success factors, with related indicators and concludes with a series of lessons learned. (Chapter VII - VIII) The final chapter summarises the main conclusions per each of the four research proposition and formulates five sets of practical and transformational recommendations for each of the main stakeholders: local NGOs, States, international community, women, armed forces and religious leaders. (Chapter IX)
II. Deadly conflict and Non Governmental Organisations: the analytical framework

2.1 Conflict, identity and inequality

Conflict is intrinsic to human society and a consequence of human co-existence. While this study deals with prevention of deadly conflict, non-violent conflict is understood to be a positive force for change, acting as an agent of reform, adaptation and development. The conflict definition that reflects this research most accurately comes from the work of Rubin, Pruitt and Kim (1994, p.5): “Conflict means perceived divergence of interests or a belief that current aspirations of different individuals or groups cannot be achieved simultaneously.”

Fry and Bjorkvist’s (1997) work on culture, conflict and violence provides three important insights into the nature of and culturally defined coping with conflict. First, they argue that conflict is not synonymous with aggression, which is defined as verbally, or physically inflicting harm or causing pain (physical, psychological and/or social) to another person. Coping with conflict can be done in a variety of ways: deny its very existence, negotiate a mutually desirable solution, compromise, threaten verbally, attack physically or appeal to a third party. Second, when dealing with conflict in the multi-ethnic societies in Asia, its cultural dimensions must be understood. Culturally specific ways of perceiving and responding to conflict may remain invisible as unquestioned social assumptions of the members of a culture. It is also useful to view conflict in terms of general strategies, each consisting of a set of more narrow tactics, which vary in terms of possible outcomes and perceived feasibility for the parties, involved. These strategies include: contending—high concern for one’s own outcomes and low concern for other’s outcomes; problem solving—high concern for both one’s own and other’s outcomes; yielding—low concern for one’s own and high concern for other’s outcomes and avoiding—low concern for one’s own and other’s outcomes. Fry and Bjorkvist’s research concluded that most cultures tend to favour particular strategies, but the problem solving strategy is likely the most effective in conflict resolution because, unlike contending, yielding and avoiding strategies, it aims at solutions that reconcile needs or interests of both sides.7

Most societies have developed mechanisms to deal with conflict and prevent it from turning violent. Levi-Strauss (1990) explains that conflicts of different natures are latent in every society and that the reason why norms are formed is to prevent latent and potential conflicts. Norms are defined as ritualised ways of handling conflict. Every society has rules and etiquette, the neglect of which leads to sanctions. Illiterate societies too have systems of social control, although they may not have written laws. When individuals or groups are systematically deprived of their right to have their concerns heard or see their hope of favourable conflict resolution diminished, they may break the society’s rules and resort to violence despite the risk of sanctions. Response to conflict in this study is understood as the result of an analysis of the situation and a conscious, culturally determined strategic choice that is expected to provide the best result in a given context with a specific set of power relations.

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7 Rubin et al. (1994, p.168-173) identify three problem-solving approaches: 1) compromise; 2) arbitration—a mutually agreed procedure to decide who wins; 3) integrative solution. They conclude that usually the most desirable approach is an integrative solution, as these tend to last longer and benefit the interests of both parties and the welfare of the broader community.
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Conflict, identity and exclusion

Exclusion, discrimination and repression tend to strengthen most people's identification with their kindred and motivate them to seek collective remedies to redress injustice. Ethnicity, nationalism and religion fuel the identity of groups and are often assumed to be causes of conflict. There exists a complex relation between ethnicity, nationalism, religion and conflict. The theoretical framework of the Harvard Divinity School's course on Religion, Nationalism and Peace provides four helpful definitions:

- Ethnicity is a subjective belief or consciousness of common descent (Weber)
- Religion is a divine reality, linked to governance, which enforces one view of life over others (Weber, idem)
- Nationalism is an impulse of people to assert control over what they believe to be their own territory (Little, 1996)
- A nation is an "imagined community with territorial limitation, political sovereignty and legitimacy and with deep horizontal comradeship with equality notions" (Anderson, 1991).

There is much debate over the definition of ethnicity. Little argues that the essence of ethnicity is passed on by birth in a lineage with genetic characteristics and blood bonds. But equally important is the subjective belief of people that they are a part of this gentle --the chosen people—and of its imagined community. As an imagined community, nationalism is therefore best understood as a combination of nation, blood ties and religion. Anderson (1991) presents three models of nationalism in his book on 'Imagined Communities': civic, popular or ethnic, and official nationalism. On a continuum, ethnic and civic nationalism are on opposite ends. Civic nationalism dominates in nations that share common national interests as their highest goal. The "Old Democracies" of the West fall toward the civic end of the continuum. Ethnic nationalism at the other end of the continuum prevails in autocratically ruled and poorly governed states where elites primarily serve the interest of the ethnic group in control of political power, usually but not necessarily the majority ethnic population. Because the "imagined community" is limited to an ethnic lineage, as opposed to wider national interests, political leaders are inclined to stress the uniqueness of blood ties, culture and religion as mobilising factors in their public speeches to keep their supporters vigilant and 'divide and rule' the nation.

Scholars have held opposing views on the intrinsic nature of ethnic and religious identity too. There are three schools of thought. The "primordialists" view ethnic identities as more essential and transcendent than others and therefore believe that groups defined by ethnicity or religion are more enduring than other collectives, nation-states included. A renowned proponent of this line of thought is Samuel Huntington (1996) and his "Clash of Civilisation" theory. The "constructivist" view on the other hand sees ethnic identity as 'enduring social constructions that matter to people who share them', but is not necessarily the driving force for group action. Lastly, the "instrumentalists" view ethnicity as one of several identity sources. It gains social and political

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8 Source: Little, D. Religion, Nationalism and Peace, fall semester 2000 at the Harvard Divinity School. 9 Huntington's book "Clash of Civilisation" was first published in 1994 and strongly influenced US foreign policy over a decade. Huntington argues that historically the world's major civilisations have been deeply and structurally divided. As distinct religious traditions provide the unique core value system to each of these old world civilisations, Huntington sees religion and not ethnicity as the prime, dividing factor. Post 9/11 this theory (popularly also known as the "West against the Rest") became subject of fierce debate at Harvard's Center of Foreign Affairs and Divinity School. The counter arguments entailed three main criticisms. First, the concepts of civilisation and ethnicity cannot be equated and are hence confuse the debate. Second, the impact of (ethnic) nationalism on group identity is underrated. Third, the inventiveness of governments to use and misuse religion as a rallying factor, is overlooked.
significance only at times when ethnic symbols are manipulated by political entrepreneurs in response to threats or opportunities.’

The Minorities at Risk (MAR) project elaborates on the notions of ethnic groups and ethno-political conflict and studies core variables determining the emergence of ethno-political conflict among 275 ethnic groups worldwide. Gurr (2000, p.4-12) distinguishes three forms of discrimination (economic, political and cultural), which result in material inequalities, lack of (political) empowerment, endangered minority cultures and social victimisation. Skilful leaders can build on ethnic sentiments to mobilize support for protest campaigns or rebellion. In line with the constructivist view, Gurr poses that ethnic identities are not primordial but are nonetheless based on common values, beliefs and experiences. Ethnic identities can be invoked to sustain movements serving ulterior material or political interests.  

The MAR project provides comprehensive insight into the motivation of ethnic groups and the decisive factors in taking up arms to achieve justice. Globally, only 25% of the 275 minority groups opted for rebellion in 1995, while another 25% were not active at all. The empirical evidence shows that the chance that ethnic groups will initiate political or armed action depends on four variables: the salience of the group identity, the collective incentives, the capacity for joint action and the external opportunities. Though the MAR project concluded that most civil conflicts do have an ethnic dimension, it is important to stress that ethnicity alone never provides a sufficient explanation for conflicts turning deadly. Tharoor (1999), the UN Assistant Secretary General, concludes “Civil conflict is usually the result of failing political leadership. There are always more prosaic motives of ethnic leaders to be considered... Indeed it would be safer to proceed from the assumption that politics is at the root of most contemporary conflicts”. He states furthermore that opportunistic political leaders find in ethnic conflict. “The ideal vehicle to preserve or enhance power or to distract their citizens from other domestic failures, often when ethnic division is nowhere as profound as it is being claimed.”

The Carnegie Commission on Preventing Deadly Conflict published a series of studies on different dimensions of conflict in 1997/1999, several of which were studied for this research. The study on Sustainable Peace (Peck, 1999, p.10-13) opens by setting the global context of conflict perception that shows a marked difference in Northern and Southern perspectives on the origins of conflict. For most poor nations in the South, development is the main peace and security issue. There is a sense that decolonisation left the North in control of the resources and trade relations, depriving the South of equal market access and thereby of a fair chance to attain sustainable development. For most nations in the North, the national security paradigm remains the core focus when they relate to conflict, and “carrot and stick” policies are preferred to entice weak Southern leadership. It is, however, more likely that integrative solutions are needed to structurally redress the situation. With “systematic frustration of human needs” as a major cause of conflict, communal groups mobilise along cleavages, such as ethnic, religious or clan lines to express grievances and seek redress. Causes of protracted social conflict are mostly found in historic or contemporary grievances that can lead to demands for political autonomy, greater political access and participation, and exercising economic and socio-cultural rights. Peek conclusions support the MAR project findings as she identifies five factors that determine whether groups will mobilise and express grievances: the ethnic geography; the leadership and political organisation of the group; changing circumstance in the political environment;

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10 Gurr’s definition of an ethnic group is “people who share a distinctive and enduring collective identity based on common descent, shared experiences and cultural traits (which could include customary behaviour and dress, religion, language, physical appearance, region of residence, traditional occupation and a history of conquest and repression by different peoples). Gurr, T.M. People versus the State, 2000, p.4.
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demonstration effect of efforts of groups in similar circumstances or neighbouring countries; and lastly, the specific group identification and grievances.

In this study ethnic identity, based on common values, beliefs and experiences, is not only perceived as a liability, but could be explored as an asset as well. Ethno-nationalist leaders can manipulate it to ignite violent conflict, but in civic nationalism shared values have been mobilised to resolve identity conflict for the common good. Ethnic conflicts are seldom caused by ethnicity or religion, but are usually the result of prolonged, deliberate policies of favouring some and excluding other identity groups in a country. Poverty does not cause deadly conflict, but wilful and systematic exclusion and inequality—both on national and global level. To prevent deadly conflict successfully, it is therefore crucial to overcome social cleavages as well as historic and contemporary grievances in a divided society.

Conflict, inequality and social cohesion

Two recent constructs, social capital and social cohesion framework and the human security paradigm make a direct connection between poverty, governance, equality and inter-group relations. These key factors largely determine conflict and provide the context for the conflict prevention and civil society and NGO framework applied in this research.

The rebuilding of social cohesion is a central theme of the work of Nat Colletta, the former founding manager of the World Bank’s Conflict Prevention and Reconstruction Unit. His models for conflict prevention elaborate on the importance of vertical linkage between the State and its citizens (good governance) and horizontal social capital building and bridging relations among communities in multicultural societies. The chances of violent conflict eruption are higher, if the quality of both is poor. If the governance structure is characterized by inequality and an unequal distribution of power and opportunity, the State’s capacity to manage civil conflicts is sharply reduced. The lack of organizational integrity and synergy of the State, or poor vertical social capital, are often key causes of conflict. On the other hand the lack of horizontal relations between different ethnic groups in a multicultural society can erupt into hostilities if one group is seen as monopolizing resources and power to the disadvantage of the others. “And if within these cultural groups, high levels of homogenous social capital bonding occur, differences in access to resources and power may further aggravate tensions between those in control and those excluded.” (Colletta, 2000, p.16)

Colletta postulates that violent conflict is trigged by the presence of strong exclusionary bonds and disempowerment combined with a lack of horizontal bridging and vertical linking social capital. “The weaker the social cohesion, the weaker the reinforcing channels of socialization (value formation) and social control (compliance mechanisms). Weak societal cohesion increases the risk of social disorganization, fragmentation and exclusion, potentially manifesting itself in violent conflict.” Hence, peacebuilding initiatives should work simultaneously on good governance, decentralization and participation, and responsible market penetration (vertical axis), as well as on empowering and bridging horizontal relations among and between different communities (horizontal axis). This will strengthen civil society, mutual trust and social cohesion and thereby the conflict prevention ability of the society as a whole. As a consequence, Colletta

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11 Social cohesion refers to two broader intertwined features of society: the absence of latent conflict whether in the form of income/wealth inequality; racial/ethnic tensions; disparities in political participation; or other forms of polarization; and the presence of strong social bonds—measured by levels of trust and norms of reciprocity: the abundance of associations that bridge social divisions (civic society) and the presence of institutions of conflict management, e.g. responsive democracy, an independent judiciary, and an independent media.” (Colletta, 2000, p.4)
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(2000, p.29) concludes "The emergence and growth of the civil society, as key mediating agents between communal groups, governments and markets is central to a nation’s capacity to manage social and economic transformation peacefully and mediate conflict." 12

Conflict, globalisation and human security

Another approach to State-civil society responsibilities in conflict prevention is the concept of human security and the effort to formulate a new global security paradigm. The issue of security was traditionally defined as State-oriented and military in nature. National security was, therefore, the justification for the strengthening of military capacity to defend against ‘external’ threats. The terrorist attacks of 9/11 proved that modern weapons to protect a nation’s borders can no longer avert danger. Despite the focus on external threats, for most people the greatest threat to security comes from internal adversaries, resulting in disease, hunger, environmental contamination and even domestic violence. Hence, security can no longer focus only on nation states and military deterrence, but needs to include the fulfilment of economic, social and political rights of individuals around the globe.

Human security sees individual security as the prime objective and its focus includes other definitions of security, such as economic, food, health, personal, environmental, community, cultural and political security. The UN work on human security attempts to redefine and conceptually integrate the three international conflict prevention tasks of preventive diplomacy, military co-operation and development assistance and to set new parameters for the development of genuine global governance that should be based on a “human dignity regime.”

Colletta (2003) examined the emerging global human security paradigm through an analysis of key development variables that impact human security, poverty and conflict. He identifies three human security dimensions, using Amartya Sen’s concepts of freedom from want and fear, and adding the notion of despair:

- The development dimension of human security includes risk, vulnerability and insecurity resulting from poverty; especially poor access to productive assets (land, capital and knowledge) and basic services (health, education and clean water), gender disparities and other forms of inequality (freedom from want).
- The governance dimension underscores that poverty (relative deprivation), income and asset inequalities accompanied by weakened institutions, failed governance or a lack of respect for political and individual rights, greatly increase the probability (risk and vulnerability) of human insecurity and violent conflict (freedom from fear).
- The societal cohesion dimension captures the social-psychological aspects of security, including a sense of dignity, identity, efficacy and hope, re-enforced by an institutional and social network of support based on interpersonal trust and societal cohesion (freedom from despair).

Adopting the human security approach along these lines would have three implications. First, addressing human security in the sense of ‘freedom from fear’ implies that the State runs the transparency, efficiency, and accountability of public institutions and effectively manages

12 In a 2001 publication on social cleavages and cohesion in Asia, Colletta likewise concludes that the 1997 economic crisis in Asia did not so much cause the conflicts, but rather revealed the weaknesses of the social cohesion and poor governance. Hence he argues that: “A cohesive society is characterised by far more than absence of conflict, whether latent or overt. A functioning, efficient and transparent State; respect for human rights and justice; a socio economic system based on distributional equity and high levels of social capital are fundamental characteristics of a cohesive society.” (Colletta, 2001, p.4)
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finances, goods and services, including an efficient and non-corrupt bureaucracy. Furthermore, it requires the exercise of the rule of law, protection of human rights and the distribution of justice.\textsuperscript{13} When States view development as a means to achieve equity and human well being next to material advancement and not as an end in itself, it will be conducive to a sustainable conflict prevention agenda. Second, the traditional means of conflict prevention, like early warning, preventive diplomacy and deterrence (the carrot and stick approach) are challenged by the new approach of “foundational prevention.” Foundational prevention initiatives in and between divided communities need to focus on “root causes, social and economic disparities and on new partnerships between governments, local authorities and international organisations and civil society should be developed.”\textsuperscript{14} (Van Ginkel, 2000, p. 74-76)

Lastly, globalisation has made political space as well as economic and social relations transcend the framework of national boundaries. Multilateral governance must adjust to the changing global realities, as security is now shifting from a traditional emphasis on armaments and territorial threats of force to a transnational set of development-related threats ranging from human rights to health and livelihood and environmental impacts. Colletta (2003, p.10) argues “International Financial Institutions (=IFIs) need to respond to these challenges in order to remain relevant to the world’s poor.” Human security, in the global sense, is increasingly interconnected with sustainable development and multilateralism. It is necessary to realign economic and social policies, as well as technical and financing instruments, to the new global realities. It may also be necessary to cut to the core of the new multilateralism, as demanded by the rising anti-globalisation movement, and to revisit the legal charter and governance of the IFIs.

Conflict, gender equality and prevention

It is widely acknowledged that there is a causal connection between gender and war. Distinctly different gender roles are bestowed to men and women in deadly conflict situations. Goldstein (2001) found two explanations for gendered war roles highlighted in the conflict literature. First the small but innate biological differences in average height, strength and roughness of play. Second, the strong cultural moulding of boys into tough, brave men, who feminise their enemies to encode domination. The conclusions based on this simple dichotomy are usually quite lenient towards the role of women in deadly conflict and perceive women rather as victims than as co-perpetrators. In-depth studies by both Goldstein and Burke (2000) into warfare and gender roles however, reveal more complex gender roles and responsibilities.\textsuperscript{15}

Gender biased violence during deadly conflict affects women and girls most, as they stay in their communities to care for their families and preserve village life. In 2001, USAID published the final report of a comprehensive, multi year study into Women and Women’s Organisations in Post Conflict Societies, including Rwanda, Cambodia, Guatemala, El Salvador, Georgia and Bosnia and Herzegovina. The study concluded that the impact of conflict on women and gender


\textsuperscript{14}Indeed, the implications of the human security paradigm may be unsettling to many, especially insofar as they suggest policies of equity and distribution that may run contrary to mainstream political economics, at both the national and international levels. Similarly there is little agreement on what politics will realise this conceptual paradigm. Where there is agreement, there is rarely the political will to bring the necessary leadership or resources to bear upon the challenge.” (Idem)

\textsuperscript{15}Text in this section draws in part on articles written at Harvard and for conferences on conflict and the role of women in 2002. See Scheper (2001) and Scheper (2002).
Deadly conflict and Non Governmental Organisations: the analytical framework

relations are three fold and conflict prevention and reconciliation work needs to address these three areas simultaneously:

1. The socio and psychological impact, including violence against non-combatant civilians, of which close to 95% are women and girl children; internal displacement, of which 90% are women and children; and communal violence leading to lasting bitterness, anger and hatred.
2. The economic impact, including targeted destruction of civilian property leading to increased poverty and starvation; and prolonged internal displacement; and
3. The political impact, including redefinition of female identities in society, both as victims and as perpetrators and increased access for women to political power. (USAID, 2001)

The most traumatising factor for women in conflict is the lack of physical security, both during the conflict and the post-conflict stage in which militias are demobilised. Rape is systematically used as a tool of warfare and repression worldwide. This lack of physical security keeps women trapped in their homes, unable to move around freely. Moreover, in post-conflict situations, many women are forced by circumstances to engage in prostitution, the only available means of income. With family structures damaged by death and trauma, the sharp increase in female headed households and the incidence of domestic violence post conflict, aggravate the trauma and lead to problems including depression, chronic fatigue, and stress. In addition, women are confronted with economic restrictions in conflict situations, which lead to further decline in their status. Lack of property rights makes surviving female-headed households lose their land and prevents them from getting access to bank loans. In most post-conflict societies the number of women entering the labour market increases temporarily, but many lose their jobs in the formal sector once ex-combatants return to civilian life. The resulting feminisation of poverty leaves more women malnourished and deprived of basic education and health services. At the same time, the political impact of war on women can be positive too, as war can provide an opportunity to expand their public roles and run local political institutions. While some disenfranchisement occurs in the reconstruction phase, often political headway is made overall and more women participate in politics than before.

While women are clearly most victimised by deadly conflict, they have also been instrumental in perpetuating deadly conflict. Most of the peace building literature lacks a thorough war analysis and many debates are overshadowed by a couple of cherished myths. In particular, the beliefs that men are more inclined to aggressive behaviour because of genetic codes, testosterone levels and male bonding, while women’s slighter build, female hormones and nurturing roles in society predispose them to oppose war, which explains their virtual absence in the army and on the battlefield. Goldstein (2001, p.412) poses in his book entitled “Gender and War” that a radical shift in gender role perception is necessary to prevent deadly conflict in future. He sadly concludes that real peace and real gender equity both remain generations away:

"War is a pervasive potential on the human experience that casts a shadow on everyday life- especially on gender roles- in profound ways. To think into the future beyond the war systems requires breaking out of psychological denial regarding the traumatic effects of war on human society. War is not the product of capitalism, imperialism, gender, innate aggression or any other single cause. Rather, war has in part fuelled and sustained these and other injustices."

Three dilemmas complicate advocacy for more gender balanced and effective participation of women in conflict mediation and peace negotiations. First, women face a major dilemma when trying to change the warfare system. Women who join the military usually find themselves rather perpetuating the system because they have limited opportunity inside the armed forces to impose change. Women who join the peace movement on the other hand, often form the core of peace organisations, risking to ‘feminising civil society peace building efforts in turn re-enforcing
Preventing Deadly Conflict in Divided Societies in Asia

militarized masculinity. Second, women tend to reproduce gendered war roles --in an effort to be good mothers according to society’s norms--. Women who raise boys especially face the dilemma to raise boys, risking that someday they might be overrun by other societies that continue to raise warriors. Third, peace scholars and activists promote the “if you want peace, work for gender justice” approach, which proved successful in bringing together strategic allies in the peace movement (women, labour and minorities). However, it rests on the assumption that injustices cause war and fails to acknowledge that the causality runs reverse as well. Deadly conflict perpetuates gender injustice and hence changes in attitudes towards war and the military may be the most important strategy to reverse gender inequity in the society as a whole.
2.2 Conflict prevention and local NGOs

Conflict prevention, peacebuilding and the costs of war

In the post Cold War era, the UN and the international community became increasingly active in peace keeping and peace making operations in war torn societies. Their involvement included the use of military force for deterrence, or in peace keeping (enforcing peace agreements) and peace making (to separate the conflict parties so that they do not inflict harm). These peace strategies were focussed on conflict management, but experience suggests that such strategies do not necessarily lead to lasting peace. Hizkias Assefa (1999) concluded, in his study of various reconciliation processes, that conflict management approaches generally tend to focus more on mitigating or controlling the destructive consequences that emanate from a given conflict than on finding solutions to its underlying causes. As a result, unless the need for change is internalised by all parties in the conflict, the change is likely to be only temporary.

What kind of settlement will be most acceptable to contending parties depends on their specific situation and objectives. Gurr (2000, p.151) makes a distinction between settlements aimed at access or autonomy. Disadvantaged people usually aim at increased access measures that give them a greater opportunity to protect and promote their shared cultural, political and material interests within their society. Ethnic minorities, on the other hand, are more likely to seek greater autonomy, which implies a collective governance of their own affairs in the context of an autonomous region or decentralised State. The Carnegie Commission on Deadly Conflict distinguishes five areas of interests when identifying sustainable peace settlements: 1) negotiate territorial agreements to provide autonomy (regional autonomy/ federalism/confederacies), 2) improve political access to (political) decision making, 3) address economic discrimination, 4) address cultural grievances and 5) develop institutional mechanisms that support reform. (Peck, 1999, chapter 4)

In the mid 1990s, in response to these failures, peace building work slowly came into vogue and focused on the need for locally owned, culturally appropriate and long-term oriented sustainable peace processes. The Canadian International Aid Agency (CIDA) was one of the leading early actors at the time and defined peacebuilding as the effort to strengthen the prospects for internal peace and decrease the likelihood of violent conflicts. The overarching goal of peacebuilding is to enhance the indigenous capacity of a society to manage conflict without violence and build human security. Peacebuilding programmes thus focus on the political and socio-economic context of conflict rather than on the military or humanitarian aspects.

While there is a growing recognition of the moral obligation of the international community to promote and support global human security, public doubt remains as to whether deadly conflict prevention is possible at all, given the many failures of conflict mediation. In their book on NGOs and conflict prevention, Rothenberg and Nicolaidis (1996, p.27-31) summarize the "anti-prevention rhetoric" in three sets of arguments. Some perceive conflict prevention as a delusion because the future chains of events cannot be foreseen, making it purely wishful thinking. Others claim conflict prevention is a perversion: external intervention exacerbates the crisis and will only delay necessary adjustments, which are often achieved through military victory. Lastly there are those who see conflict prevention as a diversion because it diverts money and energy from structural development work and the costs are too high. To counter these criticisms, the Carnegie Commission on Deadly Conflict (1999) devoted one of its studies to the costs of conflict and found ample empirical evidence to prove that prevention is far more efficient than peace keeping or peace enforcement:
"Our main conclusion can be stated straightforwardly. In every case we examined, conflict prevention actually cost or would have cost the international community much less than the conflicts themselves. (...) Our view is that the case for conflict prevention is a compelling one. This is in part because internal costs of conflicts frequently and generally become international costs. Deadly conflicts are rarely hermetically sealed. Moreover the costs of prevention efforts are much lower than the actual costs imposed on outside powers. (...) The question is not whether international powers will become involved in trying to stop deadly conflicts, but when and how. The burden of proof should henceforth be on decision makers who oppose conflict prevention activities." (Brown, 1999, p.221-230)

Conflict prevention, civil society and local NGOs

Local development NGOs—the subject of this study—are private, non-profit, self-governing organisations (Korten, 1990) and are a distinct subset of civil society organisations. Their main goal is to improve the quality of life of disadvantaged people and work for structural change that eradicates poverty and promotes social justice and equity. Their strategies include community mobilisation, delivery of basic social services, research, training and advocacy, often in a combination of activities. These NGOs aim to provide their beneficiaries or member groups with the capacity to act or advocate autonomously from the State for the common good, at national or local levels or on specialised themes. Hence, they provide sources of pluralism in the society, which could prevent the State from resorting to autocratic or authoritarian governance practices. It is their advocacy work often puts NGOs at odds with governments and international financial institutions. NGOs are at the core of the civil society in many Asian countries and where they are not permitted to exist by law, like in China and Myanmar, their functional equivalents are beginning to emerge.\textsuperscript{16}

Local NGOs play an increasingly important role in conflict prevention and peace building initiatives, as underlined by the now popular “Multi Track” and “Track Two” diplomacy. Diamond (2000, p.78) defines multi track diplomacy as “a systems approach to peace building that embraces a large network of organisations, disciplines, methodologies and venues for working toward the prevention and resolution of violent conflict around the world.” Complementary to Track One Diplomacy (the official process), it comprises peace efforts by actors such as the media, churches, schools and artists, and is based on twelve principles: relationship building, long term commitment, cultural synergy, partnership, multiple technologies, facilitation, empowerment, action research, invitation, trust, engagement and transformation. (Van Tongeren, 2000, p.128)

The Carnegie Commission on Preventing Deadly Violence (1997) identified three categories of NGOs that offer especially important potential contributions to the prevention of deadly conflict: human rights and advocacy groups, humanitarian and development organisations and a small but growing number of conflict mediation or Track Two NGOs.

“Human rights, Track Two, and grassroots development organizations all provide early warning of rising local tension and help open or protect the necessary political space between groups and

\textsuperscript{16}In Asian societies with a Confucian tradition, in which the State is ideally presented as a benevolent elder intervening for the good of his people, the space the State allows to NGO work can be quite limited. Here basic concepts of privacy and individuality have culturally different meanings, and the universality of the UN human rights covenants is not acknowledged. NGOs are often viewed as a threat to autocratic governments, as their programmes may undermine or question State policies. To preclude the growth and influence of independent NGOs, State sponsored semi-official mass organisations were set-up both to provide a mass support base for state policies and to pre-empt formation of NGOs that might oppose such policies. These so-called QUANGOs (quasi-autonomous non-governmental organisations) are not part of the indigenous civil society and are, therefore, excluded from this study.
the government that can allow local leaders to settle differences peaceably. Non-governmental humanitarian agencies have great flexibility and access in responding to the needs of victims (especially the internally displaced) during complex emergencies. Development and pro-democracy groups have become vital to effecting peaceful transitions from authoritarian rule to more open societies and, in the event of a violent conflict, in helping to make peace processes irreversible during the difficult transitions to reconstruction and national reconciliation."

(Carnegie Commission, 1997, p.xxxviii)

The main Track Two actors are local NGOs, because they are rooted in or work in close collaboration with local communities under fire, which gives them a better position to engage with multiple actors. McDonald (1999, p.166) poses that the strength of this ‘unofficial’ diplomacy lies in its ability to address the root causes of conflict and to involve all parties in the process of rethinking peace:

"By allowing face-to-face communication, track two diplomacy helps participants arrest the dehumanisation process, overcome psychological barriers, focus on relationship building and reframe the conflict as a shared problem that can be resolved collaboratively. (...) Track two is transformational, posting a worldview in which power politics is superseded by mutual empowerment; identity groups at least join if not replace the nation-states as the loci of power; basic human needs and not the strategic interests set the agenda; collaboration and inclusiveness replace competition and exclusivity; international relations are seen as ongoing relationships between all people, not crisis or situational relationships between governments."

A recent award winning comparative study into the work of local peace and conflict resolution NGOs in Northern Ireland, Israel/Palestine and South Africa reached similar conclusions.17

The very characteristics that make Track Two diplomacy so worthwhile (unofficial, informal, mutual understanding, involving all contesting parties) do, however, create serious challenges for Track Two actors as well. Landrum Bolling, advisor to the Harvard linked Conflict Management Group, highlights five challenges. First, local NGOs might be “amateurs who can cause damage” because they sometimes have limited knowledge and professional background in conflict management. Second, NGO peacemakers have a higher vulnerability to be manipulated by armed parties compared to Track One actors. Third, because they maintain close relations with the constituencies, local NGOs are thought to have more difficulty in maintaining balance and even-handedness in peace talks and risk acting as advocates for one of the parties in conflict. Fourth, NGOs are often not equipped to deal with the intense emotions of people directly engaged in conflict: deep psychological issues such as victim hood, mourning and forgiveness. And lastly, NGOs should be aware of dealing with ethical issues, as intervening in conflict carries innate moral concerns over power, ethnocentricity and the personal agendas of mediators. (Havermans, 2003, p.167)

Despite these concerns, the contributions of Track Two diplomacy remain crucial, even though its potential has not yet been fully realised; in particular, the NGOs’ capacity to build both horizontal and vertical social capital between communities and actors. John Paul Lederach (1999) reviewed two decades of peace building efforts and concluded there is hope for future accomplishment, if three gaps can be overcome. The first gap is the lack of vertical integration of peace initiatives. Most peace building work has been aimed at improving relationships by getting counterparts of relatively equal status to meet with each other. The emphasis on this type of dialogues has fostered mainly horizontal relationships and lacks responsive and coordinated relationships up and down the levels of leadership, which is much needed in societies affected by violent conflict. The second gap deals with the lack of structural transformation after peace agreements are signed.

Lederach observed that though peace processes have delivered a reduction of direct violence, they have rarely achieved the aspirations of desired structural change and the concomitant needed social and economic justice required for sustainable peace to last for most affected minority populations. The last gap refers to the tendency to conceptualise peace as an end product, instead of a dynamic, ongoing process of transformation. The word resolution lends itself to suggest the goal is to end something not desired and overlooks the importance of parties committing to the permanent relation building needed to facilitate the structural transformation process. Hence, Lederach concludes, in line with Colletta, Van Ginkel, the Carnegie Commission and other quoted experts that:

"Third parties need to reorient their investment (including funding, research and practice) and no longer be negotiation centric only, but focus on developing practices to create collaborative non-violent processes of structural change." (Lederach, 1999, p.34)
2.3 Research Methodology

This study combines three research approaches: historic and political conflict analysis, qualitative field surveys and participatory action research. First, the intrastate conflict context was researched by means of a qualitative historical and political analysis, using multi disciplinary data (social, cultural, political, economic and religious) to study historic developments since the end of WWII, social cleavages in the four societies and their historic and contemporary grievances (chapters III-V). My first year at Harvard University was spent to study deadly conflict with diplomatic, military and religious experts at the Weatherhead Center for Internaitonal Affairs, the Kennedy School for Governance and the Divinity School. In subsequent years, I fostered relationship with experts at the University of Amsterdam and the Columbia, George Washington- and the Georgetown University in New York and Washington DC, to further my literature study and the deadly conflict analysis.

The selection of case study countries was made on pragmatic grounds. Using my professional experience as a baseline for this study, there were twelve Asian countries to consider. China, Vietnam and Laos disqualified because of the absence of a genuine local NGO sector. Bangladesh, Thailand and Malaysia were dropped because of their lower risk of intrastate conflict (not withstanding the fact that there are a few minority groups at risk there too). Of the remaining six countries, the Philippines was excluded because of the intimate connections between local NGOs and political parties, which is unusual in the Asian context, while Nepal was excluded when the political situation became highly troubled in 2001 after the assassination of the entire royal family.

Cambodia, Sri Lanka and Indonesia are appropriate case study countries because all have well established NGO sectors and went through different deadly conflict experiences that might help to determine the successes and failures of NGO work. Myanmar was added as a fourth case country to analyse why a different governance structure emerged, in the face of nation building challenges similar to Indonesia following independence, and how this affected the local NGOs. Civil society activities in Myanmar are severely curtailed since 1962 and hence noprofessional local NGO sector exists. There are a number of shared characteristics that make a comparative analysis of NGO responses in Cambodia, Sri Lanka, Indonesia and Myanmar particularly interesting:

- All four countries have a similar timeline as far as colonisation, independence and postcolonial (or decolonisation) struggle are concerned. This shaped the social cleavages in the societies, as well as the birth and development of their civil societies to a high degree (see annex on timelines). Three of the four countries have a multi-ethnic and multi-religious composition, which has been a source of conflict since independence.
- All four have experienced geopolitical significance, be it for totally different reasons (see Chapter III) that have maintained above average interest by the international community in their local political affairs. This had lasting implications (both positive and negative) for their development processes during and after the Cold War.
- All four have influential military traditions, in which political and business interests and security interests were tightly interwoven.

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18 At three crucial stages in the research a reduction of case countries was debated with the University of Amsterdam research supervisor. The sheer volume of data and research information was too much to process for a doctoral candidate. Moreover, the width of the research data (four countries, 32 local NGOs and 12 national campaigns) obviously limits the depth of the analysis. However, it was decided that the multi country data and insights provide richness to the study of this relatively new field that would have been lost if two case countries were left out.
And lastly, all four have known severe deadly civil conflicts since independence in which millions have lost their lives. All four are at high risk of escalating tensions at any time.

The qualitative field survey among 32 local NGOs and six international development agencies in three Asian countries represents the second methodology ( Chapters VI-VIII). An interview checklist was designed to address four sets of core questions relating to each NGO’s history, its links with other actors, its conflict analysis and its conflict prevention work. The interviews were conducted at three levels. First, the executive management of the participating NGOs was interviewed. Next follow-up meetings with specific staff members and limited field visits took place, in which recent reports, specific approaches, staff manuals, extension materials, etc. were discussed. Lastly, similar conflict and peace building materials were collected and discussed with staff from donor agencies like Oxfam, UNESCO, CIDA, UNDP and the National Human Rights Commission in Indonesia. Four of the 32 interviewed NGOs went through an institutional transformation process in the course of this field research, which hampered the interview process but resulted in important insights of NGO responses to conflict. In the case of three other NGOs, external circumstances (e.g. security situation in Ambon in 2002) interfered with the interview process and three alternative NGOs were interviewed. In February and December 2003 six Burmese NGOs based in Rangoon and on the Thai border were interviewed as well. But their working conditions deviate too much to justify inclusion in the comparative analysis. Some recommendations on desired future NGO research in Myanmar are included in the final chapters. For details on NGO selection see table 1 and annex I.

A simple regression analysis was applied to the five core characteristics of the interviewed NGOs to search for correlations between maturity, size, type, core business, outreach and gender programming, but none were found. This supported the notion that NGO characteristics tend to be fairly unique, as they evolve from their inception history and seem highly influenced by the political developments in the respective countries. Because it was hard to distil common Asian success factors based on the individual NGO interviews alone, a next tire of NGO programme analysis was added to the research. In consultation with the interviewed NGOs, twelve national-level joint NGO campaigns were selected, in which one or more of the interviewed NGOs participated. These campaigns can be grouped in four categories, each reflecting a distinct peace building strategy: good governance and democratisation, independent conflict settlement mechanisms, people’s mobilisation for peace, and international policy advocacy. These national campaigns did show many similarities in nature and approach and thus facilitated some cross-country comparative analysis.

The field interviews took place from late 2001 to mid 2002, a year in which—with the exception of Cambodia—conflict prevention prospects looked brighter in South East Asia. There was a ceasefire negotiated and peace talks got underway in Sri Lanka: the opposition leader Aung San Suu Kyi was released from house arrest in Myanmar with promise of a speedy resumption of political dialogue; East Timor regained its independence and communal violence in Indonesia was slowing down. The conditions appeared promising for greater ‘track two’ involvement of local NGOs to strengthen the peace building work in their societies. While the interview series commenced, the situation began to change dramatically. The war on terror fuelled jihad sentiments in Asia and bomb attacks on civilians in Indonesia, Philippines and Thailand left hundreds dead. Both the State and the international donor community increasingly sidelined the NGO sector in Sri Lanka and Indonesia in efforts to speed up peace building programmes. Selected follow-up interviews with NGO leaders in 2003 were required to reflect changing long-term vision on the role of NGOs in preventing deadly conflict.
Partnership can vary over the years.

Lastly, additional in-depth information was collected during several weeks of participatory action research in Sri Lanka (October 2000, Nov-December 2001, May 2002, March-April 2004) and Cambodia (February 2002, February and November 2003) as local election observer, as presenter at gender, conflict and development conferences; and as member of project identification teams. A total of seven weeks were spent in the field with six of the 32 interviewed NGOs (COMFREL, ADHOC, PAFFREL, SETIK, LST and MDDR). The field research in Indonesia was twice hampered, due to the local conflict situation and personal circumstances. As a result, no participatory action research could be realised in the Moluccas, but the value and quality of the interview results was deemed important enough to keep Indonesia in the NGO review part of this study.

### Table 1 NGOs interviewed for this study in Cambodia (C), Sri Lanka (S) and Indonesia (I)

#### Community development NGOs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organisation name</th>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Started</th>
<th>Size</th>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Expertise and country (C/S/I)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PADEK</td>
<td>Member</td>
<td>1987</td>
<td>Large</td>
<td>Provincial</td>
<td>Rural Development (C)</td>
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<tr>
<td>WFP</td>
<td>Service</td>
<td>1993</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Training</td>
<td>Women Development (C)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sor Sor Trung</td>
<td>Service</td>
<td>1996</td>
<td>Small</td>
<td>Training</td>
<td>Comm. Development training (C)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SETIK</td>
<td>Member</td>
<td>1988</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Provincial</td>
<td>Comm. Dev and Human Rights (S)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sarvodaya/ Seeds</td>
<td>Member</td>
<td>1960/89</td>
<td>Large</td>
<td>National</td>
<td>Rural Development and micro credit (S)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VYMA</td>
<td>Service</td>
<td>1988</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>National</td>
<td>Muslim Youth vocational training (S)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Women Dev. Centre</td>
<td>Service</td>
<td>1985</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Training</td>
<td>Tamil Women Development (Jaffna) (S)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kalyana Mitra</td>
<td>Service</td>
<td>1988</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>National</td>
<td>Women development, gender justice (I)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baku Baai</td>
<td>Member</td>
<td>1999</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Provincial</td>
<td>Conflict resolution in Moluccas (I)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WALHI</td>
<td>Member</td>
<td>1985</td>
<td>Large</td>
<td>National</td>
<td>National Environment NGO network (I)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

#### Civil Society building NGOs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organisation name</th>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Started</th>
<th>Size</th>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Expertise and country (C/S/I)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ADHOC</td>
<td>Service</td>
<td>1991</td>
<td>Large</td>
<td>National</td>
<td>Political, civil &amp; economic rights (C)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Legal Aid Cambodia</td>
<td>Service</td>
<td>1995</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Provincial</td>
<td>Legal aid &amp; law/ constitutional reform (C)</td>
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<tr>
<td>CPD</td>
<td>Service</td>
<td>1996</td>
<td>Large</td>
<td>Training</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>WMC</td>
<td>Advocacy</td>
<td>1996</td>
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<td>Advocacy</td>
<td>Women equality (C)</td>
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<tr>
<td>COMFREL</td>
<td>Service</td>
<td>1982</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>National</td>
<td>Voter education &amp; election monitoring (C)</td>
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<td>MDDR</td>
<td>Service</td>
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<td>Medium</td>
<td>Provincial</td>
<td>Social, economic, cultural rights (S)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Law Society Trust</td>
<td>Service</td>
<td>1998</td>
<td>Small</td>
<td>National</td>
<td>Tamil women equality and rights (S)</td>
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<tr>
<td>FHD</td>
<td>Service</td>
<td>1985</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Training</td>
<td>Conflict mediation training (S)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ahimsa</td>
<td>Service</td>
<td>1998</td>
<td>Small</td>
<td>Training</td>
<td>Election monitoring, peaceful co-existence</td>
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<tr>
<td>PAFFREL/MFFE</td>
<td>Service</td>
<td>1994</td>
<td>Large</td>
<td>National</td>
<td>Political civil, labour and env rights (I)</td>
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<tr>
<td>LBH</td>
<td>Service</td>
<td>1975</td>
<td>Large</td>
<td>Provincial</td>
<td>Women equity and rights (I)</td>
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<tr>
<td>APIK</td>
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<td>1992</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Provincial</td>
<td>Political rights and disappearances (I)</td>
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<tr>
<td>KONTRAS</td>
<td>Service</td>
<td>1998</td>
<td>Small</td>
<td>Advocacy</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

#### Advocacy NGOs

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Organisation name</th>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Started</th>
<th>Size</th>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Expertise and country (C/S/I)</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>WGWR</td>
<td>Advocacy</td>
<td>1998</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Training</td>
<td>Disarmament and demobilisation (C)</td>
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<td>NGO Forum</td>
<td>Advocacy</td>
<td>1987</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>National</td>
<td>International policy advocacy (C)</td>
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<tr>
<td>CRM</td>
<td>Advocacy</td>
<td>1980</td>
<td>Small</td>
<td>Advocacy</td>
<td>Constit. reform &amp; pol/civil rights (C)</td>
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<tr>
<td>UTHR-J</td>
<td>Advocacy</td>
<td>1980</td>
<td>Small</td>
<td>Provincial</td>
<td>Tamil political and civil rights (S)</td>
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<td>NPC</td>
<td>Advocacy</td>
<td>1994</td>
<td>Small</td>
<td>Advocacy</td>
<td>Peace building &amp; communal harmony (S)</td>
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<td>Koalisi Perempuan</td>
<td>Advocacy</td>
<td>1998</td>
<td>Large</td>
<td>National</td>
<td>Women in politics development (I)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kommun Perempuan</td>
<td>Advocacy</td>
<td>1998</td>
<td>Small</td>
<td>National</td>
<td>Violence Against Women (I)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INFID</td>
<td>Advocacy</td>
<td>1979</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>National</td>
<td>International Policy Advocacy (I)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

19 In June 2002, the conflict situation on Ambon and military security measures to prevent further violence made doing participatory research on the Moluccas impossible. A year later, upon arrival in Jakarta in December 2003 to update the research and follow-up on interviews, I broke my leg in a street accident and had to be repatriated to the Netherlands.

20 Area illustrate the NGOs prime geographic area of work. Provincial and National indicate NGO work is concentrated in a few provinces or based on a nation wide grass roots network. Training and advocacy indicate the NGOs do not have a permanent geographical basis, but their training or advocacy initiatives primarily determine their geographic partnering, which can vary over the years.
III. Deadly conflict in four divided societies in Asia

3.1 Brief introduction of Cambodia, Sri Lanka, Indonesia and Myanmar

Cambodia, Indonesia and Myanmar are located in South East Asia, while Sri Lanka is part of the South Asian subcontinent. These two regions have quite distinct characteristics with Myanmar providing the link geographically, historically and culturally. The four case countries’ landmasses and populations differ substantially. On one extreme is Indonesia, which comprises 17,500 islands (of which only 5,707 have names), has a total size of 1.9 million square kilometres and a population of 220 million. It is nearly thirty times the size of the island of Sri Lanka, (66,000 sq. km) which has 18 million people. Myanmar (677,000 sq. km) is the second largest of the four case countries in terms of population size with 48 million and Cambodia (181,000 sq. km)—as in many other respects—the third with 12 million people. Over 75 percent of the population lives in rural areas in each of the four countries.

The ethnic composition in Indonesia and Myanmar is highly diverse (Figure 2) and multiple languages are spoken. Their unique geography (multiple islands and multiple mountain ranges, respectively) adds to the endurance of unique regional specificities. Government initiatives to relocate poor majority people to remote zones have not had the desired unifying effect in either country. Cambodia and Sri Lanka, on the other hand, each have one majority ethnic group composed of over 80% of the population and two smaller minority groups: ethnic Vietnamese and Chinese in Cambodia and Tamil and Muslims in Sri Lanka. Their geography (river deltas, dry zones and a few compact mountain zones) and smaller overall size appear to pose fewer challenges for control by security forces but rebel movements have managed to last for years and to negotiate favourable conditions.

Figure 1 Ethnic or linguistic composition, by country

Religious composition is also diverse in all four countries (Table 2). In Asia, Buddhism was introduced from India between 400 and 1100 AD, while Islam spread with Arab traders in the 14th century. Hinduism predates both religions in all four countries and Hindu minority pockets have survived, except in Cambodia. Christianity came with European spice traders and colonialists beginning in the 16th century and although its leadership plays a prominent role in Asian societies the actual religious constituencies are quite small.

Source: Merriam-Webster. 2001. Online Atlas, http://www.m-w.com/maps/moremapsnyt.html, specific country pages. These pie charts are indicative of the ethnic composition as they are based on data from the 1990s, which may not be fully accurate. Also note that for Indonesia, language groups are used instead of ethnic groups. Other sources identify the following ethnic groups: Javanese 45%, Sundanese 14%, Madurese 7.5%, coastal Malays 7.5% and other 26%. 

21
3.1.2 Location and geopolitical influences

Sri Lanka and Indonesia are island nations along busy international sea trading routes and richly endowed with natural resources that were of special interest to Renaissance Europe (tea, coffee and spices). Myanmar and Cambodia are part of the greater Mekong region, a region historically highly traversed and traded, with powerful ancient kingdoms and a long tradition of interstate warfare. While French and British colonial rule effectively governed the smaller countries of Cambodia and Sri Lanka, the Dutch and British rulers in Indonesia and Myanmar were concentrated in prime trading locations (e.g. capitals, ports, cash crop estates), while basic services, trade and tax relations with other parts of the country were managed through agreements with traditional local leaders and partnerships with Christian missionary orders. This governance system raised strong self-determination expectations among local ethnic leaders at the time of independence, which arrived quite abruptly upon defeat of the Japanese Imperial Army by the Allied forces in 1945.

This region was significantly affected by the Cold War and suffered from interstate warfare under the Japanese, French and Americans from 1940 to 1972. Cambodia was unwillingly drawn into the Vietnam War in the 1960s, in which over 700,000 civilians lost their lives. The American defeat was followed by the Vietcong victory over South Vietnam in 1975 and the Khmer Rouge revolution and genocide, which landed the region on the international diplomatic and economic boycott list of the USA and its allies, as part of the ‘Trading with the Enemy Act’ that lasted till the end of the Cold War. To meet its reconstruction and development needs Cambodia managed to secure support from Vietnamese, Russian and Eastern European countries. The end of the Cold War era brought a close to the international boycott and the UN Transition Council prepared the first free national elections in 1993. Myanmar allied itself with China after the 1962 coup and further alienated the international community when the Junta refused to hand over power to the newly elected government in 1988.

The countries have retained their geopolitical significance. Lately the Mekong region became notorious again as hotbed of illicit international trade and trafficking in drugs, small arms and human beings. Cambodia’s Prime Minister Hun Sen has been in power for over 25 years and maintains close relations with North Korea and China. Myanmar’s military autocratic rulers are at forty years the longest ruling Junta in history, who continue to provide a land route and harbour

---

Table 2 Religious composition, by country

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Main Religions</th>
<th>% Buddhist</th>
<th>% Muslim</th>
<th>% Christian</th>
<th>% Hindu</th>
<th>Total population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cambodia</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>06</td>
<td>01</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>12 million</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sri Lanka</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>07</td>
<td>08</td>
<td>02</td>
<td>18 million</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indonesia</td>
<td>01</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>09</td>
<td>04</td>
<td>220 million</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Myanmar</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>05</td>
<td>04</td>
<td>05</td>
<td>48 million</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

facilities at the Indian Ocean to China that wishes to be in close strategic reach of neighbouring India without having to climb the "roof of the world." Indonesia on the other hand shifted its socialist course after the coup of 1965 that ousted President Sukarno and brought General Suharto to power. He became a staunch ally of the West and received military and economic support from the USA. Indonesia's unprecedented economic growth, also known as the Asian Miracle, was mirrored by a repressive and fraudulent administration, whose human rights violations were left unattended, because the international community did not intend to disturb the fragile Cold War power balance in the region. The Asian economic crisis of 1997 toppled the regime and a process of democratic transition started that is still ongoing.

Sri Lanka is a small country off the southern coast of giant India, which is currently overtaking China as most populous nation of the world. Sri Lankan domestic affairs have been deeply influenced if not dominated by Indian politics. Its strategic location in the Indian Ocean is enhanced by a big natural deep sea harbour of Trincomalee, but this asset could not be exploited due to the deadly conflict that has been ongoing in the North East for over 20 years now. The Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (=LTTE) is a professional, well armed local rebel movement with political and commercial relations all over the globe. that came under increased international surveillance only since the 11 September 2001 attacks. Despite this protracted conflict, Sri Lanka is the only case country that knows an uninterrupted democratic tradition, never had a military coup, but the recurring ethno-nationalist and religious party politics increasingly undermine the democratic process and lead to further militarization of the society. Table 3 provides a quick country overview of conflict history, poverty and rights indicators.

### Table 3: Conflict history, poverty, exclusion and rights indicators at first glance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Conflict history</th>
<th>Cambodia</th>
<th>Sri Lanka</th>
<th>Indonesia</th>
<th>Myanmar</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Year of last colonisation</td>
<td>1863</td>
<td>1815</td>
<td>18th century</td>
<td>1850</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>By whom</td>
<td>French</td>
<td>British</td>
<td>Dutch</td>
<td>British</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WWII Japanese occupation</td>
<td>1941</td>
<td>1948</td>
<td>1942</td>
<td>1942</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year of Independence</td>
<td>1953</td>
<td>1945/1948</td>
<td>1948</td>
<td>none</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deadly inter-state conflict since independence</td>
<td>1964-72</td>
<td>none</td>
<td>1975</td>
<td>none</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coups d'etat since independence</td>
<td>1970, 1975,</td>
<td>none</td>
<td>1965</td>
<td>1958, 1962,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Military or armed rebel induced)</td>
<td>1997</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1988/1990</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1975-79</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1980-89</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Nature of intrastate conflicts:**

- Armed ethnic rebellion
- Postcolonial conflicts
- Natural resource conflicts
- Armed secession movements

**Population in 2002:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Size of the population</th>
<th>12 million</th>
<th>18 million</th>
<th>220 million</th>
<th>45 million</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>% of the population living below the poverty line</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of the population living in rural areas</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>85%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Refugees:**

- Internally displaced persons
- Diaspora as result of intrastate conflict

**Access to protection:**

- Approximate size of national security forces
- % of national budget spent on defence (official)
- Independence of the judiciary
- Availability of free legal aid for poor
- NGOs providing protection to poor and minorities

**Civil and Political Rights:**

- Year of signing of UN human rights covenants
- Presence of political prisoners

![Table 3](image-url)
3.2 Asian Minorities at Risk: societies at the brink of deadly conflict

Minorities at Risk project

The “Minorities at Risk Project” (MAR) is a valuable academic database that can provide a better understanding of the incidence, causes and risk factors of grievance seeking groups. This study defines ethnic identity as based on common values, beliefs and experiences. This can be manipulated by leaders to ignite violent conflict but can also be employed to resolve conflict through peaceful means. To prevent intrastate conflict successfully, structural policy changes are needed and these require an understanding of the social and political cleavages in the society and an analysis of the historic and contemporary grievances. Deadly conflict is not caused by poverty alone but by wilful and systematic exclusion and inequality on both a national and global scale.

The MAR project has been monitoring the political activity of 268 minority groups “at risk” around the world for twenty years and helps shed light on the world of ethno-nationalist movements. Ethnic groups are defined as people who share a distinctive and enduring collective identity based on belief in common descent and on shared experiences and cultural traits. Ethno-political groups are identity groups, whose ethnicity has political consequences, resulting either in differential treatment of group members or in political action on behalf of group interests. (Gurr, 2000, p.5-7) MAR’s longitudinal database on violent conflict not only maps conflict history, incidence, causes and eruption potential in a comprehensive way; it also attempts to provide an insight into the motivation and decisive factors that lead ethnic groups to take up arms to get “justice”. Minorities at risk are defined as minority groups that have collectively suffered or benefited from systematic discrimination in relation to other groups in the same state. Advantaged minority groups are also included, because they can assume and abuse power as well, and can become quite vulnerable when their power wanes.

The MAR project has produced two major books. Published in the midst of the Balkan civil war in 1993, the first book concluded that never before had the world seen such widespread and intense societal warfare, which bodes ill for the future. Seven years later, the second book gracefully reversed these conclusions. The turbulence that had accompanied the end of the Cold War in the early nineties has subsided and three positive trends were highlighted. First, the number and magnitude of armed conflicts within and among states had reduced by nearly half since the early 1990s; second, conflicts over self-determination were being settled with ever greater frequency when ethnic groups could gain greater autonomy and power-sharing within existing states; and lastly, democratic governments outnumbered autocratic governments by two to one and continued to be more successful than autocracies in resolving violent societal conflicts.

The challenge to prevent deadly conflict therefore lies in sustaining these three positive trends that are understood to be the result of concerted efforts to build and strengthen democratic institutions in post-communist countries and the global South and of increasingly successful settlement negotiation of revolutionary and ethnic conflicts. However, the MAR project concluded in 2000 that these positive trends could be off set by three persistent obstacles:

- Virulent armed conflict in parts of Eurasia and Africa have the potential for metathesis into neighbouring states;
- New and transitional democracies everywhere are at the risk of reverting to autocracy;
- Lack of economic development undermines democratic institutions and breeds violent conflict.
Deadly conflict in four divided societies in Asia

Two MAR research components are applied here. First, its comprehensive analysis of ethno-nationalist or self-determination movements is summarized and applied to the four countries to give a baseline of the ethnic identity situation. Second, the "Peace and Conflict Ledger" that measured the peace building capacity of 160 nations on over the past fifty years, is expanded.

National and minority peoples at risk

The MAR project starts out with assessments of global trends in violent conflict and correlations between democracy and peace building. It shows that the magnitudes of warfare declined significantly during the 1990s in countries in the top four levels of development. In the bottom quintile however, the trend is essentially flat. In these countries, which include most of Africa, high incidence of conflict during the last 20 years of the cold war continued through the 1990s. This evidence suggests that Africa, along with very poor and non-democratic states elsewhere in the world, will continue to experience serious warfare in the future and will pose a series of challenges to those responsible for maintaining regional security and preventing humanitarian disasters. Poor societies are at risk of falling into no-exit cycles of conflict in which ineffective governance, societal warfare, humanitarian crises and lack of development perpetually chase one another. With regards to Asia, the MAR project concludes:

"Asia has experienced greater magnitudes of societal conflict than any other world region. During the first half of the Cold War conflicts in Asia were mostly political and concentrated on Indochina. Ethnic warfare increased throughout the Cold War to a peak in 1991 after which both political and ethnic war show a significant decline, parallel to the global decline." (Gurr, 2000, p.10)

The MAR project postulates that a country's capacity to build and maintain 'social peace and security' depends almost entirely on the characteristics of its polities (autocratic, transitional or democratic). To make their case, first the 'average annual risk' of armed political or ethnic conflict is calculated for each of the three types of polity from 1959 through 1999 to prove that democracies have had substantially less violent conflict than autocracies and that autocracies have been less violent than transitional regimes. Democracies have a better track record of negotiating an end to armed insurgency for self-determination than autocracies. However, it is important to point out that the self determination aspirations of minority groups, are not reduced under more democratic governance systems but here self determination movements are more likely to use conventional political strategies than rebellion. While this may lower risk of rebellion, the continued presence of self-determination movements implies that these divided societies remain vulnerable to deadly conflict.

To determine whether ethno-political groups are at risk, the MAR project assesses whether groups meet either or both of two criteria: first, the group collectively suffers or benefits from systematic differential treatment vis-à-vis other groups in the society, given the assumption that persistent disadvantages either originated in or are reproduced by social practices and public policies of advantaged groups. Second, the group is the basis for political mobilisation and action in defence or promotion of its self defined interests. In 1990 the MAR project identified 233 ethno-political groups at risk that made up 17.3 percent of the world’s population (see Table 4). In 1998 this number had increased to 275 groups or 17.4 percent of the world population.23 Disadvantaged and politically active minorities can be found in 116 of the world’s 161 larger countries. Twenty percent of these minority groups at risk are Asian (43), but in terms of absolute

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23 It includes only groups numbering at least 100,000 persons (and, for instance, excludes indigenous rainforest tribes) and also includes advantaged (privileged) minority groups (e.g., the Chinese in Indonesia) (Gurr, 2000, p.9-13).
numbers of affected people, the picture is much less favourable: according to the MAR study 13.4 million or 77 percent of the world’s minorities at risk in the 1990s lived in Asia.

The MAR study makes an important distinction between national peoples and minority peoples:

- National peoples are regionally concentrated groups that have lost their autonomy to states dominated by other groups but still perceive some of their cultural and linguistic distinctiveness. Their political aim is to protect or re-establish a politically separate existence.
- Minority peoples have a defined socio-economic or political status within a larger society based on some combination of race, ethnicity, immigrant origins, economic roles and religion and are concerned mainly with protecting or improving that status.

Each main category consists of three distinct groups, see table 5. In 1998 a total 59 Asian national and minority peoples were at risk, spread over 24 countries. 61 percent of them are national peoples. Most Asian national peoples’ conflicts involve indigenous peoples’ claims, while the Asian minority peoples’ conflicts cluster mainly around communal issues. Hence, indigenous peoples and communal contenders make up nearly two thirds of all self-determination movements in Asia whereas they are 44 and 55 percent of the world’s total, respectively. (Gurr, 2000, p.19)

Table 5 National Peoples and Minority Peoples in Asia and the World in 1998

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>National peoples</th>
<th>Asia</th>
<th>World</th>
<th>Minority peoples</th>
<th>Asia</th>
<th>World</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ethno-nationalists</td>
<td>10 28%</td>
<td>41 27%</td>
<td>Ethno clashes</td>
<td>04 17%</td>
<td>43 35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nat. minorities</td>
<td>06 17%</td>
<td>44 29%</td>
<td>Comm. Contenders</td>
<td>14 60%</td>
<td>68 55%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indig. Peoples</td>
<td>20 56%</td>
<td>66 44%</td>
<td>Religious sects</td>
<td>05 22%</td>
<td>13 11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total no of groups</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>151</td>
<td>Total no. of groups</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>124</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The four case countries in this study however, deviate from the Asian average. First, ten out of the total of twelve high-risk groups (or 83%) are national peoples: five indigenous peoples, four ethno-nationalists and one national minority. Second, the only two minority peoples groups are ethno-clashes (Chinese business sector and stateless low cast Tamil estate workers) and their risk prognosis is low compared to the national peoples. Third, there are no communal contenders at risk identified in the case countries.

Table 6 details the twelve ethnic groups at risk. Seven groups are in the highest state of risk (0.7 score), including the Tamils in Sri Lanka, four ethnic groups on the eastern and western borders of Myanmar and two secessionist movements in the far west and far east of Indonesia. This large concentration of high-risk national peoples groups in the case countries, poses a major challenge to the government to negotiate sustainable and peaceful solutions. The regional concentration, the strong sense of cultural and linguistic distinctiveness and historic claims to (re-)establish an autonomous political existence further complicates the nation building process.

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24 Source: Gurr, 2000, p.12.
Deadly conflict in four divided societies in Asia

Table 6 Twelve minority groups in the four case countries and their risk factors

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Minorities at Risk</th>
<th>Cambodia</th>
<th>Sri Lanka</th>
<th>Indonesia</th>
<th>Myanmar</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>National peoples</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethno-nationalists</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Karen 0.7</td>
<td>04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National minorities</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Shan 0.7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indigenous peoples</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cham</td>
<td>-4.4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Rohinga 0.7</td>
<td>05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Chin 0.7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Kachin –0.5</td>
<td>Mon –1.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Minority peoples

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ethno clashes</th>
<th>Indian T 0.03</th>
<th>Chinese –1.3</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Comm. contenders</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religious sects</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Given the high number of national peoples groups in Asia and their long standing differences with the States, it is not surprising that the level of political action of minority groups in Asia is higher than average. The MAP mapping of the movements’ intensity and size of its resources revealed that Asia housed 55% of all large scale rebellions in 1995. The figures moreover indicate that national peoples groups in the four case countries are more mature movements with higher involvement in terms of number of people and financial resources. Finally, Asia seems to score high on the extremes: one third of the minority groups are not active politically or militarily, but nearly half of the minority groups are engaged in some form of rebellion. (see table 7).

Table 7 Summary of political action by Asian minority groups at risk

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Political action</th>
<th>Asia</th>
<th>World</th>
<th>Asia/World</th>
<th>Case C/Asia</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total no. groups</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>275</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>12 (20%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inactive</td>
<td>19 (32%)</td>
<td>71 (26%)</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>04 (30%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mobilisation</td>
<td>08 (14%)</td>
<td>86 (32%)</td>
<td>09%</td>
<td>01 (08%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demonstrating or rioting</td>
<td>05 (09%)</td>
<td>40 (15%)</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rebellion</td>
<td>25 (43%)</td>
<td>71 (26%)</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>07 (58%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Large scale rebellion</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>55%</td>
<td>04 (33%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It is important to note that the signing of a ceasefire agreement makes a deep impact on the MAR scoring but it does not imply that these groups are no longer equipped to engage in armed conflict. The Kachin National Army for example signed an agreement with the Myanmar Junta in 1992, but remains heavily armed. Likewise, the LTTE retains it combat force, though it signed a ceasefire agreement in February 2002; the peace talks have been on hold since April 2003. The political follow-up processes initiated over the past five years to bring lasting democratic solutions to these regions, are still in early stages and the armed groups remain well stocked and prepared. The MAR project reaches a similar conclusion:

"... If working within the system fails or gains only symbolic, minor or short-term concessions, support for militancy will likely increase and grow even more resolute. Forecasting dynamic increases and decreases in the strategic use of protest and rebellion is a more difficult research task than identifying the structural risk factors that determine whether each tactic is present or absent (Gurr, 2000, p.228)."

The MAR project identified four indicators that can determine whether a group will initiate political action:

25 The risk indicator signifies the risk of further rebellion or escalating current rebellion based on conditions measured in 1998. A score of over 0.5 signifies a substantial risk for violent conflict (PVS, appendix D, p. 321-337).
Preventing Deadly Conflict in Divided Societies in Asia

- The salience of a group's identity (e.g., level of economic and cultural discrimination);
- The collective incentives (e.g., governmental repression and loss of autonomy);
- The capacity for joint action (e.g., group capacity and territorial factors); and
- The external opportunities (cross border, international political support, and spill-over of regional conflicts).

Before moving to the case countries, the other component of MAR’s ethnic conflict monitoring work, needs some introduction.

Peace and Conflict Ledger

Since the 1990s, the MAR project monitors the democratisation processes and the State’s ability to deal with insurgent groups, by means of the Peace and Conflict Ledger. This ledger rates 160 countries using six indicators. The State’s capacity to manage conflict and build peace is considered high (given the green flag) when it has:

1. Avoided armed conflicts in recent years;
2. Managed (meaning dissuaded) movements for self-determination;
3. Maintained stable democratic institutions;
4. Represents a durable regime type;
5. Produces substantial material resources; and
6. Is free of serious threats from its neighbouring environment (p.2).

Failing to qualify on some or most of these indicators results in a respective yellow or red flag score. The six red, yellow or green scores are then added up and the majority colour determines the end score, without an internal weighing of indicators. The scores for the countries in Central, South and East Asia made Gurr reach three conclusions. First, Central Asia is the world’s second most serious crisis zone after Central Africa. None of the five red flagged countries in Asia (see table 8) has the institutional capacity or resources to deal effectively with conflict prevention. Since the War on Terror hit the region, volatility has only increased. Second, most countries immediately to the West and East of the Asian heartland are in the yellow zone, because of a combination of conflict generating traits and weak conflict management capacities. Third, the few green flagged countries are almost exclusively located in the East Asian subcontinent.

These Asian Peace and Conflict Ledger’s scores however, paint a rather positive picture. This might be caused by the propensity of the indicators to measure the nature of governmental institutions rather than the performance. Furthermore, the Ledger does not take social cohesion or equity indicators into consideration. Would three indicators be added which better reflect the State’s predisposition to respond to conflict with violence, the end scores change substantially: 1) the record of systematic human rights violations: 2) the incidence of absolute poverty (40% or more living below the poverty line is red); and 3) the degree of ethno-linguistic fractionalisation. Applying these additional criteria to Asian countries results in an increase from three to seven red flag countries, a reduction from 12 to 10 yellow flag countries and a reduction in green flag countries from eight to six. A closer look at the scoring of the four case countries on their institutional capacity to manage deadly conflict can be found in the relevant country sections below. For the complete Asia overview of the six MAR indicators and the three additional rights and civil society scores see Table 8 below.

26 For details of the country scoring, see the cleavage and grievance analysis in the later part of this chapter.
Table 8 Peace and Conflict Ledger score sheet for Central, South and East Asia, 2001

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Overall PCL Score</th>
<th>Country</th>
<th>MAR indicators</th>
<th>Proposed Additions</th>
<th>New scores</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Red</td>
<td>Afghanistan</td>
<td>R R Y? R R Y R R</td>
<td></td>
<td>Red</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Red</td>
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Legend
MAR indicators:
AC= avoid recent armed conflict
SD= manage self determination movements
RT= maintain stable democratic institutions
RD= durability of the political system
SR=societal resources, but measured is presence of substantial material resources
N=neighbourhood, being free from serious threats from external environment
Rights and civil society indicators
HV= country systematically violates human rights
AP= prevalence of absolute poverty
ED= ethno-linguistic diversity

*Yellow indicates there is serious risk for violent ethnic conflict, but in these cases, the numbers (total members of ethnic groups and battle deaths per annum) are too small to make it into the academic definition of deadly conflict.
** Although green is given to North Korea, this type of scoring does not redress extreme poverty and injustice when governments manage to silence all forms of dissent effectively.

In sum, the MAR research provides an invaluable long-term database on minorities at risk around the world. The data analysis of the minorities at risk and the State’s ability to manage conflicts in the four case countries confirms there is a serious risk for violent conflict. The countries show a higher than average risk with 83% of the regionally concentrated national peoples movements, which hold historic grievances over lost autonomy, cultural and linguistic distinctiveness and strive at a politically separate or autonomous existence. To control and resolve these strong self determination aspirations would require highly skilled, accountable and participatory governments. Unfortunately, the adjusted Ledger scores for the four countries show three red flags and one yellow, implying the peace building capacity of the four governments is limited.
3.3 Conflict, cleavages and grievances in Cambodia

Post colonial warfare and the regime of General Lon Nol

Since the fall of the kingdom of Angkor in the 13th century, political disruption and successive conflicts have plagued Cambodia. Central governance was introduced with the imposition of French colonial rule in 1863. During WWII Japan occupied Cambodia from 1941-45, after which France re-imposed its protectorate in 1946 with a new constitution that permitted the formation of Cambodian political parties and some limited international representation. Armed rebellion against the French rulers occurred throughout the colonial period, until Cambodia won its independence in 1953. The new Kingdom of Cambodia was led by Prime Minister Prince Norodom Sihanouk and initially made good progress in health, education and employment. During the 1960s, however, the country began to destabilize as a result of economic difficulties, corruption and geopolitical turmoil in the Mekong region. In 1965 Sihanouk broke off relations with the US and allowed North Vietnamese guerrillas to pass through the border areas in support of their military campaign against the US-backed government in South Vietnam. Four years later the US began secret bombing campaigns of Cambodia to destroy North Vietnamese forces. These carpet-bombing raids killed some 700,000 Cambodian civilians, destroyed numerous farms, and rendered much of the land deserted because of unexploded ordnance and chemical defoliation. (Ebihara, Morland, and Ledgerwood, 1994; Nee 1995)

In a US-backed coup in 1969, General Lon Nol deposed Sihanouk, who fled to China where he formed a life long alliance with the Chinese authorities and the Khmer Rouge to prepare for his return. Lon Nol proclaimed the Khmer Republic and sent the army to fight enemies on two fronts: the North Vietnamese guerrillas at the border areas and the local communist-backed armed groups, of which the Khmer Rouge was one. Gradually, the army lost territory and a state of emergency was declared in 1972, which paved the way for state-supported counter-terror tactics against the peasant population, like splitting, relocating and destroying villages in combat zones. Amidst the violence the Khmer Rouge found fertile ground to build its movement among the ranks of poor uneducated youths. The attacks on the Lon Nol forces were stepped up and slowly but surely, the countryside was overtaken. While the world watched in horror as the North Vietnamese troops overran South Vietnam and took Saigon, the young impoverished peasant fighters united by the Khmer Rouge reached Phnom Penh and declared the Republic of

27 Source: http://go.hrw.com/atlas/norm.htm/cambodia.htm
Democratic Kampuchea on 25 April 1975. Sihanouk briefly became head of state, but resigned in 1976 to be replaced by Khieu Samphan, with Pol Pot as prime minister.

**Khmer Rouge revolution and the Peoples Republic of Kampuchea**

The Khmer Rouge (KR) immediately initiated radical societal reforms. Pol Pot, "Brother Number One," renamed 1975 year zero. The country was sealed off, urban centres were deserted and its citizens forced to work in rural labour camps to develop its agricultural potential. The educated elite, religious leaders and business men were arrested and put to death in prison camps in a highly disciplined and documented, yet gruesome manner. Only a handful of Cambodia's elite, who managed to flee the country, survived. In a second migration wave in 1977, the Khmer Rouge leadership, known as the Anka, dissolved and relocated entire villages around the country. Farmers lost their possessions; families were split up and assigned to different camps around the country. Forced marriages organised by the KR leadership further broke down the family and community networks and solidarity. Opposition to the KR leadership was brutally suppressed: most dissidents were tortured or executed on the spot, usual with a blow to the back of the skull to save bullets. In four years of KR rule, approximately two million Cambodians died from political violence, exhaustion, starvation and disease.

Aware of the crimes against humanity, the international community looked on, unwilling to intervene after it diplomatically isolated the Mekong region in the wake of the Vietnamese "unification" in 1975. At last, the Vietnamese government intervened: in late 1978 it sent well-trained soldiers in lighting assault and took over Phnom Penh in January 1979. Pol Pot and the KR cadres withdrew to the mountain ranges on the northern and western border with Thailand and the People's Republic of Kampuchea was formed. The government-in-exile, including the Khmer Rouge and Sihanouk, retained its seat at the United Nations.

Throughout the next decade the Vietnamese-backed Cambodian government continued to fight the Khmer Rouge guerrilla warfare with the help of Vietnamese military advisors. Hundreds of thousands of Cambodians fled to camps across the border in Thailand. In 1980-82 a period of natural disasters (floods succeeded by severe droughts) struck Cambodia and exacerbated the suffering of the Cambodian people. With the international embargo in place, only international relief and development NGOs could provide disaster relief aid and for years they took care of food, medicine and fertiliser donations. In 1985 Hun Sen became prime minister. As the country began to recover gradually, these humanitarian programmes matured and by the mid-1980s a few agencies were allowed to open offices in country. Other than this limited assistance, political and civil rights remained curtailed and contact with foreign aid workers prohibited until 1989.

**Paris Peace Accords and the return of the Kingdom of Cambodia**

In 1989, as the global political perspectives at the end of the Cold War era evolved, mounting international pressure led the Vietnamese military advisors to withdraw from Cambodia. Hun Sen

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28 Novib started its relief work in 1980 with food shipments that were continued with support of the Dutch government for years. Furthermore from 1983 to 1990, Novib organised huge annual fertiliser shipments at the request of the Dutch government. In 1985 the Novib/Oxfam field office was opened and in 1987 the PADEK (Partnership for the Development of Kampuchea) program, a consortium of five northern NGO donors under Novib coordination, was established. At the start of the UN transitional government in 1991, PADEK had 15 foreign experts and 80 local staff deployed in four rural provinces and in the Phnom Penh slums; it was active in economic and infrastructural development projects, like housing, agricultural development, micro banking and water supply.
Preventing Deadly Conflict in Divided Societies in Asia

tried to attract foreign investment by abandoning socialism—the nation was re-named the State of Cambodia. Buddhism was re-established as the state religion and a transitional government, assisted by the UN and France, negotiated with the KR and a few smaller resistance groups and signed the Paris Agreements in October 1991. Prince Sihanouk returned after 13 years of self-imposed exile. As part of the Agreements, the United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia (UNTAC) was established for a two-year period to oversee the implementation of the agreement, the repatriation of refugees, the initiation of economic reconstruction programmes and the organisation of the first democratic elections in 1993. The election results were close and the international community pushed for the formation of an equal power share coalition government of the FUNCINPEC (Royalist Party) and Cambodian Peoples Party (CPP), headed jointly by Prince Ranariddh and Hun Sen, while Sihanouk was restored as king. The government-in-exile lost its seat at the UN and, in 1994, thousands of Khmer Rouge guerrillas surrendered in a government amnesty.29

The dual CPP-FUNCINPEC political leadership model, which was repeated at each and every ministry level, did not work out well. It paralysed much of the country’s economic reconstruction efforts because it encouraged corruption and collusion practices and it made international donor commitments fall far behind expectations. In 1997, the power struggle between Hun Sen and Ranariddh led to a coup that effectively ended the dual government and enhanced CPP’s political control. The FUNCINPEC’s leader Prince Ranariddh fled the country, to return only weeks before the next national elections. The July 1998 election was a CPP victory marred by reports of widespread voter intimidation and put Prime Minister Hun Sen in firm control of the recovering state, while Ranariddh became president of the National Assembly. The first ever communal elections in February 2002 further consolidated CPPs power through victory in all but 23 of 1,620 communes. This trend was sustained in the national election of July 2003 with another firm victory for the CPP which further strained its relations with other political parties. It took 11 months to get a new cabinet in place.

Bad governance has deeply affected Cambodia’s development efforts; several key donors ended their bilateral aid relations in the late 1990s, poverty levels have remained unaltered (40 percent lives below the poverty line and 60 percent of the rural population is now landless); illegal exploitation of natural resources continues and the country, which has very limited health services, is being hit hard by the spread of the HIV/AIDS virus.

Peace and conflict ledger and minorities at risk

Cambodia’s overall MAR score on the Peace and Conflict Ledger is red, as the capability of its government to build a peaceful society is deemed very limited, because armed conflict is pervasive, while the autocratic regime does not have the institutional means or resources to deal effectively with it. Only three of the nine indicators score other than red: avoided armed conflict and limited neighbourhood threats (both yellow) and no ethno-linguistic diversity (green). Only the indigenous Cham people of Muslim faith are identified to be at elevated risk, but their capacity to claim their rights is very small.

One of the striking aspects of the Khmer Rouge genocide, in which two million people perished, is that it was technically not genocide because neither ethnicity nor religion was a factor in the persecution and assassination of defenceless civilians. The Cambodian population is among the

29 In 1996 two top KR leaders, Leng Sary and Khieu Sampan, were granted amnesty by Royal pardon. Pol Pot died of old age in his jungle hideout in 1998.
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most homogenous in Asia. with 89% of Khmer origin. speaking the same language and living subsistence rural lives in extended families. The legally correct term for the atrocities is crimes against humanity. The risk of ethnic conflict remains minimal, as nearly 90 percent of the Cambodia population is of Khmer origin. The MAR study identifies only one national minority group, the Vietnamese, but they are at an extremely low risk of mobilising for revolt: -4.4.

Meanwhile, the perpetrators of the Khmer Rouge crimes against humanity remain unchallenged. Not until 1999 were two former KR leaders arrested, but the royal amnesty of the two surviving key leaders remains unquestioned. In June 2003, a UN accord for a Khmer Rouge Tribunal was finally signed. It is to be held in country by a combined local and international group of judges and prosecutors. but little progress has been made. The militarization, however, continues and Cambodia still spends 30% of its annual budget on defence; it has the highest number of colonels and generals per soldier and has seen three richly endowed World Bank led demobilisation programmes have not been successful, due to lack of political will and corruption.

Historic, cultural and class cleavages

A. Historic and post-colonial grievances

- Historically, before the arrival of the French in 1863, Cambodians did not have a clear concept of nationhood; borders drawn on a map did not define Cambodia. Sanghean Bit (1991) argues that the nation concept was "embodied in a cultural version of political geography", where the Khmer language was spoken and where their rulers ruled. Nation was thus closely tied with ethnicity. Villages seemed independent entities, with local leaders managing their own affairs and paying occasional tribute to the royal court. When more collaboration was needed (i.e., for ceremonies or to meet a common threat) the response was situational and short term. As a consequence, Cambodia never developed enduring but flexible institutions within its society to mediate its relationships with forces of foreign influence.

- French colonial rule engendered a deep sense of distrust among Mekong nations by recruiting Vietnamese as Cambodia’s colonial officers (the Vietnamese were considered more clever and able) and offering educational opportunities in France only to Vietnamese, while Cambodians could study in Vietnam. This, some local scholars argue, gave Cambodians a sense of second-class citizenship that deeply wounded its national pride.

- The Vietnam War spilled over into Cambodia in 1969 and indiscriminate carpet bombing rendered an estimated 700,000 dead. It was a war over foreign ideologies, which had no basis in natural resources richness or ethnic conflict among the people. The indiscriminate brutality against civilians, however, added to the frustration, chaos and emergence of anti-regime rebel groups who, in the absence of geographic or ethnic identities, used ideology to mobilise their supporters. Cold war alliances made it easy for communist-oriented groups, including the KR. to obtain Chinese support. The brutality of war eroded ethical values and made the radical system change, indicated by the declaration of year zero, an apparently acceptable choice amidst all madness.

- The formation of the Khmer Rouge started as a post-colonial grievance against the US-backed Lon Nol regime and the small, well-educated and French-oriented elite. Although the KR killed most of the elite, those who escaped to France, Australia and the US in 1975, returned in the 1990s, after the UNTAC period, to rebuild the country. The distinction between the Khmer Khmer (who stayed inside and endured all the hardships) and expat Khmer (who led better lives in the rich West or in the UN/Thai refugee camps) is still felt in all walks of life.
Preventing Deadly Conflict in Divided Societies in Asia

B. Cultural and religious cleavages
- Four decades of war and political violence have eroded moral and ethical values and deeply limited the ability to resolve conflict humanely. Various local experts postulate that traditionally the Cambodian culture was innately violent and hence, it is the Cambodian culture that created the Khmer Rouge, not the KR that created the culture of violence. The top down tradition in governance and conflict resolution in the Cambodian culture further reinforces the use of violence. Hence the “seeds of violence come from our own culture and structure”, concludes one of the leading conflict training practitioners in Phnom Penh.30
- The argument for a culture of violence contradicts the harmony-oriented social behaviour of the Khmer society, which is based on Buddhist principles. In his book “The Warrior Cult”, Bit (1991) examines the historical roots of the inherent conflict between Cambodian social and psychological behaviours. Buddhism is ‘a unifying force in creating a strong sense of national identity and is one of the basic institutions of society’, yet at the same time Buddhism, as practiced by the overwhelming majority of Cambodians, is more ‘an expression of the Cambodian way of life than a separate institution or faith’. Cambodian culture places high value on harmony in personal relationships and in the functioning of society at large. Core Buddhist values of non-violence and compassion were, however, overshadowed by elements from prior indigenous and Hindu religions, like accepting ones’ present incarnation because it can not be changed. Bit concludes that the leadership and power concepts in Cambodia are based on Hindu concepts and emphasize supreme authority and unquestioning obedience to authoritarian governance.
- The Cham, the cultural and religious descendents of the medieval Cham Kingdom that once stretched over parts of Cambodia and Vietnam, was seriously affected by the Khmer Rouge terror. This indigenous Muslim minority has an ancient oral tradition, refuses to use written Arab or English Koran texts and struggle to maintain their unique identity. Their numbers have become small and their living conditions are poor. The use of violence in Kampong Chchanang province, where most Cham people live, is among the highest in the nation.

C. Social cleavages and class conflict: labour and land
- Ethnic Chinese Cambodians have historically been over represented in the trade and transportation business, as elsewhere in Asia. Their associations were first in trouble in the 1960s, when their Friendship Association was closed down. Envy over their economic success is growing and is at times manipulated.
- A second endangered minority group are the Cambodians of ethnic Vietnamese origin, who live in the eastern border areas and along the rivers. Most are landless fishermen and they are among the poorest in Cambodian society. They are prone to economic and political violence and are generally mistrusted by the Khmer majority.
- New political elite developed during the Kampuchea period and post 1997, under the leadership of Hun Sen, who managed to consolidate its power base through the cooption of the army and business sectors. With a weak and corrupt judiciary, most state violence goes unpunished and impunity prospers. Their international allies are few and mostly found among like-minded regimes in the region, of which only a few remain. As many of Hun Sen’s allies were involved in the Khmer Rouge movement, there has been a great reluctance to convene an international tribunal and to this day none of the KR perpetrators were convicted. This unresolved past has perpetuated political impunity and left deep scars on Cambodian society.

30Source: Interview with the director of Conflict resolution program in Phnom Penh, 15 February 2002.
3.4 Conflict, cleavages and grievance in Sri Lanka

Post-colonial ethno-nationalist politics

The post-independence history of Sri Lanka has been filled with intense and often violent struggle between different groups vying for political power. Sri Lanka was first colonised by the Portuguese and the Dutch in the 17th century, but after 1815, British rulers exercised control over the island, then known as Ceylon. The British brought in low cast Indian Tamil labourers from southern India to work in the newly established tea, rubber and coconut plantations in the nineteenth century. The more highly educated indigenous Tamil population held most of the colonial positions. During WWII Ceylon was spared from combat and at the time of the hand over of power in 1948, ample effort and thought had been put into the transfer. Unfortunately, the small but resource rich nation faced a major challenge: how to institute and exercise majority rule while safeguarding minority rights and living up to the promise of democracy in a multi-ethnic society with a population consisting of 74% mostly Buddhist Sinhalese, 18% Tamils (Hindu and Christian) and 7% Muslims.

The 1947 Soulbury Constitution introduced a unitary, majority form of government to Sri Lanka but Article 29 provides a constitutional guarantee against discrimination towards ethnic minority groups by placing restrictions on the parliament in its legislative scope concerning ethnic and religious minorities. This constitutional guarantee was, however, violated in a series of political acts starting in 1948 with the adoption of the “Ceylon Citizenship Act”. The first Sinhalese majority parliament deprived the Indian Tamil community of its citizenship rights, under the pretext that this group had been brought in by the British colonial rulers in 1848 as migrant workers for their tea estates and should now return to India. Over the next few years, regional and ethnic-based power sharing was rejected by the parliament in favour of an increasingly centralized, presidential system of government. At this time, the indigenous Tamil population, which enjoyed privileged positions under British rule, first protested against the legalized discrimination against ethnic minorities and the relocation of Sinhalese to thinly populated Tamil areas in the East.

31 Source: http://go.hrw.com/atlas/norm.htm#srilanka.htm
Preventing Deadly Conflict in Divided Societies in Asia

Exclusion, inequality and creation of contemporary grievances

Sri Lankan politics changed dramatically when Singhalese culture, religion and language were touted as unifying factors in post-independence politics. This was a response to the Buddhist revivalism and the Singhalese language movement (Swabhasa) and exploited the spreading unrest among the semi-educated unemployed and poor farmers. The “Sinhala Only” movement was largely comprised of rural teachers, retailers and Buddhist monks, with whose support the Sri Lanka Freedom Party (SLFP) came to power in 1956. Under Bandaranaike’s presidency, majority rule became synonymous with serving the interests of the majority population. This political transition coincided with the release of a report by the “Unofficial Committee of Inquiry” entitled “The Betrayal of Buddhism.” The report warned of threats to Buddhism and Singhalese culture and argued that the preservation of this cultural heritage was vital for the survival of the country and therefore the principle responsibility of the State. The “Sinhala-Only Act,” passed by the Sri Lankan Parliament in July 1956, made Singhalese the sole official language of the country, replacing English as the bridging language and downgrading the status of the Tamil language. In addition to the one language rule, the Act standardised higher education and restricted the public service employment opportunities of Tamils. On top of these discriminatory measures, the parliament approved a large-scale Singhalese land development and migration project in the Tamil dominated Eastern province (the “dry zone”).

The language and public employment restrictions were the breaking point for the Tamil minority. Initially they took up non-violent protest in the Gandhian tradition in front of the Parliament building to reclaim lost rights, demand equal status for the Tamil language and lobby for constitutional changes which would give Tamil-majority areas in the north and east autonomous powers within a federal, undivided State. Tamil parliamentarians organized sit-ins in the public parks in Colombo and tarring over the new Singhalese only lettering only buses running through the Tamil-speaking North and East. The government responded with brutal force, which triggered more anti-Tamil riots throughout the country. The unarmed Tamil demonstrators got frequently attacked by organized thugs while the police did not intervene (Ackerman and Duvall, 2000, p.460-463). In 1959, when President Bandaranaike tried to calm the nation and proposed to accommodate some of the Tamil grievances, he was assassinated by a Buddhist monk. Singhalese only policies were continued under the leadership of Mrs. Bandaranaike, who came to power after her husband’s assassination. She took Singhalese politics to the next level with the 1972 constitution, in which Buddhism became the national religion and the centralized political majority control was consolidated, denying demands for regional autonomy.

Having exhausted all peaceful, inclusive, political means, the Tamil United Liberation Front (TULF) was founded as a political party in 1976 and called for a separate Tamil State articulated in the Vaddukodrai Resolution to be the ‘Free, sovereign, secular, socialist State of Tamil Eelam based on the right to self-determination inherent to every nation.” This new ethno-nationalist political orientation hardened the positions along ethnic lines. The parliamentary elections of 1977 were the first violent elections and were won by the United National Party (UNP). President Jayawardene initiated a new era of State-sponsored communal violence. In 1979, as the Singhalese-Tamil conflict escalated, a state of emergency was proclaimed and the “Prevention of Terrorism Act” (PTA) introduced. This act is commonly understood to be responsible for the militarization of the ethnic conflict, as it justified grave human rights abuses by the security

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32 Chelvanayakam, (also known as ‘the trouser-ed Gandhi’ insisted that their aims could only be achieved by “weapons, which call for strength of will and honesty of purpose” as in India, where freedom was obtained by this righteous power. However, Ackerman and Duvall point out that Chelvanayakam’s Gandhian methods were not adapted to the Sri Lankan situation in which the “oppressor” was not a foreign power but an ethno-nationalist government elected by the Singhalese majority.
forces, including illegal arrests and detentions, torture, disappearances and sexual assault of Tamil women. Tamil youths, disappointed by the lack of political success in ending discrimination, formed resistance groups in the Tamil-majority North and East regions and soon thereafter decided to pursue their cause through armed combat.

Civil war: 1983 – 2002

Communal violence turned into civil war in 1983, when Tamil guerrillas in Jaffna attacked a convoy and killed thirteen soldiers. Widespread riots by retaliating Sinhalese mobs in Colombo and other cities in the South lasted for five days left hundreds of Tamil civilians dead and rendered thousands more homeless. The security forces neither protected Tamil civilians from the mobs nor persecuted Sinhalese perpetrators afterwards. In the aftermath of these traumatic events, all members of Parliament were asked to swear allegiance to the unitary Sinhalese Buddhist nation. Many Tamil parliamentarians refused and were forced to step down; this drove the remaining non-violent political Tamil equal rights movement underground. The most powerful militant Tamil group was the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) led by Prabhakaran, and it became the leader in a secessionist war against the state in the 1990s. This highly disciplined, well-trained paramilitary group initially received support and training from outside sources, which supposedly included the Indian army and Lebanese Hamas. While the young Tamil guerrilla ranks grew, more soldiers were sent to the North to protect the unity of the country. In 1985 the government launched a large military campaign in the North and East to target Tamil militants and it resulted in huge casualties on both sides. It caused a steady stream of internally displaced persons, who fled to refugee camps in the border provinces, and international refugees who managed to escape to Europe, Australia and Canada and soon formed a powerful Diaspora. India’s Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi brokered peace talks between Tamil groups and the Sri Lankan government in Bhutan’s capital Thimpu in 1985. The Tamil side—represented by the Eelam National Liberation Front (ENLF; including Prabhakaran), People’s Liberation Organization of Tamil Eelam (PLOT) and TULF—presented a four-point agenda as the basis for negotiations, better known as the four “Thimpu Principles.” Although these principles still resonate today, no agreement was reached.

Beyond Thimpu, negotiations between the two governments continued and resulted in the Indo-Lanka Accord of 1987, which contained key elements for a peaceful settlement that are still on the table today: the establishment of a provincial council system, devolution of centralized political power to the regions, and an interim merger of the North and East provinces. Part of the Accord was the deployment of the Indian Peace Keeping Forces (IPKF) to separate the battling parties in the North East. Although Tamil politicians had been involved in the Accord talks, none of the Tamil militant groups had been consulted. Therefore, upon its signing, the LTTE withdrew from the political process altogether and attacked the IPKF in late 1987. Meanwhile in the South, the Sinhalese government, the main political parties and the general public were divided over the issue of devolution of power. The creation of provincial councils was especially perceived as a threat to Sinhalese unity that could lead to a permanent division of the country. The SLFP initiated a political protest against the Accord and the UNP, while the Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna (JVP) launched an armed insurgency. The Sri Lankan government then faced combat

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33 India’s direct interest stems from fear that the Sri Lankan Tamil secession struggle would spill over to Tamil Nadu.
34 The four “Thimpu Principles” recognize: Tamil as a distinct Sri Lankan nationality; the right to full citizenship and other fundamental democratic rights; Tamil homeland and guarantee of territorial integrity, and the inalienable right of self-determination of the Tamil nation.
from two sides: from the Tamil insurgents in the North East and from the Singhalese Marxist guerrilla’s in the South. Thousands of innocent civilians lost their lives in the process (over 30,000 deaths in the South alone), while huge numbers of refugees moved around the country to find safe haven.

In late 1988, the newly elected UNP President, Ranasinghe Premadasa (a vocal opponent of the Indo-Lanka Accord) and the LTTE agreed to a ceasefire. After fourteen months of negotiations, the LTTE-UNP alliance ended upon reaching their shared, immediate goals: in March 1990 the Indian Peacekeepers withdrew from Sri Lankan soil and the North-Eastern Provincial Council, where moderate Tamils had won political control, was disbanded. At the same time the JVP guerrillas in the South were ‘pacified’ when six of the seven JVP leaders were captured and shot while attempting to flee’ security forces. Phase II of the Tamil Eelam war started only three months later: the LTTE resumed its armed combat with the security forces and began to eliminate the leadership of the smaller Tamil armed groups (Eelam People’s Revolutionary Liberation Front EPRLF, PLOT). At the same time, President Premadasa was busy managing the situation in the South after the JVP demise and attempting to silence the vocal NGO peace advocates through the installation of the Presidential Inquiry Commission into NGO work. With the successive assassinations of Rajiv Gandhi in 1991 and Premadasa in 1993, both attributed to the LTTE, another unsuccessful chapter in recent Sri Lankan peace negotiation history was closed.

By August 1994 the nation had grown tired of war and the continued state of emergency. The new progressive political coalition (People’s Alliance) came to power with a balanced peace agenda. A third Bandaranaike (Chandrika Kumaratunga, the daughter) was elected Prime Minister and a third ceasefire came into effect amidst great anticipation of a just peace at last. Alas, only six months later the ceasefire was broken by the LTTE and an embittered government went for an all out “war for peace” strategy. Kumaratunga attempted a two-track strategy, launching the “devolution package”, a constitutional reform proposal, in August 1995 while the war continued. She argued that these constitutional reforms were for the Tamil people, while the military offensives were directed against the LTTE. But she failed to gather the two-third parliamentary majority required for constitutional reforms and the dual strategy failed. In July 1998 the LTTE showed its power and determination by bombing the highest security area of the Temple of the Tooth (the most sacred Buddhist shrine in Sri Lanka). This disrupted the venue and, to the embarrassment of the Sri Lankan government, the preparations for the celebration of 50th independence anniversary. After a failed attempt to take Kumaratunga’s life in 1999, the LTTE became internationally black listed as a terrorist organisation and the war further intensified.

**Ceasefire, peace negotiations and ethno-nationalist polarisation**

The fourth ceasefire and peace negotiations commenced two months after the most violent national elections ever, which were held in December 2001. The UNP Prime Minister, Ranil Wickramasinghe, negotiated a ceasefire, offering LTTE regional autonomy in the North East if they agreed to lay down their arms. With Norwegian politicians as peace brokers and the Norwegian military as peace monitors, the ceasefire took effect in February 2002. Three rounds

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35 While the physical damage to the temple was minimal—part of an outer wall collapsed and there were no casualties—the symbolic value of the attack is immeasurable, especially to the Buddhist Mahā Sangha. Besides being the holiest Buddhist shrine in Sri Lanka, the Temple of the Tooth is also one of the seven holy shrines in Asia because it keeps one of the relics of the Buddha (the tooth) and is a place for international pilgrimage.
of peace talks were held before the process stalled in April 2003, over the sole representation of the Tamil people by the LTTE and the set up of an interim administration for the North and East.

To create a sound economic basis for the nation’s post-conflict reconstruction, the UNP launched an equally speedy, neo-liberalist economic recovery programme, including the privatising of state corporations and relaxation of tax legislation, to attract international financial institutions, aid agencies and private companies to invest in Sri Lanka. These major economic policy changes led to increased unemployment and a sharp increase in the cost of living in 2003 and opposition to the UNP government grew. Meanwhile, the Sinhalese nationalist parties and Muslim factions had joined together to claim their part of the peace negotiations. President Kamaratunga dissolved the parliament and called for elections, which were held on 2 April 2004. The PA/JVP alliance won against all odds; the large victory for the socialist JVP party suggested it was primarily the dissatisfaction with the economic reform policy that led to the UNP loss. The ceasefire has held since then, but remains fragile because the coalition government is divided according to ethno-nationalist interests, which makes a united political stance in future peace negotiations increasingly difficult. Meanwhile a rift has occurred in the LTTE ranks as well and may have lasting implications for the future of the highly privatised, efficient armed rebel groups.

**Peace and conflict ledger and minorities at risk**

Sri Lanka scores yellow overall in the Peace and Conflict Ledger, which analyses a regimes’ capability to build peace. Two red scores identify the governments’ failure to manage self-determination movements and to avoid armed conflict. The two green flags are awarded for Sri Lanka’s durable regime type and for maintaining stable democratic institutions. In reality, Sri Lankan regimes have alternated between periods of autocratic and democratic rule, which would validate a score of yellow at best. In addition, democratic values have been eroded by the perpetual state of emergency, the PTA, the legalised exclusion of part of the population and the culture of political violence. A third green score also needs review; being an island does not preclude the presence of geopolitical threats. India and Tamil Nadu have had a serious impact on the progress of the war and peace negotiations and their involvement justifies a yellow flag. With two red, three yellow and one green, the picture starts to alter. When the three additional indicators are added, three more red scores appear, landing Sri Lanka in the endangered category. Given the current deadlock in the peace process, it is conceivable that the war in the North and East could not only resume, but be more deadly than anything seen thus far.

The MAR study monitors two minority groups at risk, but it is wise to add the Muslims as a potential third group at risk in the grievance analysis. The Tamil population in the North and East are categorised as a national people in the MAR and, at 0.7, at high risk. The Indian Tamil are identified as a communal contender in the MAR study and at low risk for revolt, because of their low level of organisation. However, as a destitute minority group they remain very vulnerable to violence from both other ethnic groups and the state.

**Historic, cultural and class cleavages**

**A. Historic and post-colonial grievances**

- The Tamil population in the North and East holds historic and contemporary grievances against the ruling Sinhalese majority governments for their policies of exclusion and discrimination.
Preventing Deadly Conflict in Divided Societies in Asia

- The LTTE has been fighting for an independent home land for the Tamil population in the North and East since 1983, effectively running parts of the region since 1991. They have developed a global network of business enterprises and coordinators who collect donation for Diaspora Tamils in North America, Europe and Australia. Furthermore, they are involved in illicit trade in arms and drugs. As a privatising private armed movement known for their professional suicide commando’s and Sri Lankan war record, they are, on the list of terrorist groups in five countries. Claiming to be the sole representative of the Tamil people, they engaged in combat with fellow Tamil armed groups in the 1980s and eliminated all but the Eelam People’s Democratic Party (EPDP).

- The Southern part of the country that is predominantly Sinhalese has twice endured violent anti-separatist, Marxist-inspired insurrections, in which no Tamil or Muslim groups were involved. In 1970-71 and 1987-89 waves of political violence took place and involved the JVP, People’s Liberation Front, and various State agents, ranging from the Sri Lankan armed forces, the police, the Special Task Force (STF) to numerous paramilitary groups, all of which committed brutal acts of murder, torture and mutilation. These periods of terror are still deeply felt in the collective consciousness of the Sinhalese people (Senaratne, 1997, p.59-72). The JVP reinvented itself as a political party in 2000. It sees itself as a Marxist people’s alternative to macro economic, neo-liberalist policies and formed an alliance with the People’s Alliance in the 2004 election. It is currently in charge and opposes transition of power to the LTTE.

B. Cultural and religious cleavages

- The Muslim minority is targeted by the LTTE in the Eastern province and by Sinhalese in the Central Highlands. In view of negotiations for sole representation by the LTTE, increasing contemporary grievances are building among Muslims who feel sacrificed for Buddhist Sinhalese peace purposes; they are demanding some form of autonomy in the East.

- Buddhist senior clergy has been active in protecting Sri Lankan unity in different forms. from the “Sinhala Only” movement in 1953 to the recent formation of the Jathika Hela Urumaya (JHU) party, which won 10 seats and was formed so that they could participate in the political debate on the regional autonomy for the North East.

- There is a culture of violence in governance and politics. Growing ethno-nationalist politics have led to violent elections and violent parliamentary proceedings in recent years. There is great concern over eroding moral values and the use of violence after twenty years of war, states of emergency, the PTA and other undemocratic policies that undermine civil and political rights.

C. Social cleavages and class conflict: labour and land

- The Indian Tamils, a minority people and communal contender according to the MAR, were brought to Sri Lanka by the British colonial authorities about a century ago to work in the tea and rubber estates in the central highlands. They were affected by Sinhalese ethno-nationalist politics immediately upon independence in 1948, when their rightful citizenship was denied and they were asked to return to India. Two decades later India agreed to take only a handful back, which left over 700,000 people stateless and confined to the tea estates where they were born and are de facto bonded labourers. An alliance between the LTTE and Indian Tamils was never forged because of marked cast difference (high versus outcast) and the absence of a common history. In the 1990s, a citizenship scheme was finally set up and approximately 400,000 Tamils were finally granted Sri Lankan identification. Lack of education, poverty, alcohol abuse, domestic violence and discouragement by the estate leadership makes indigenous civil society in Central Highlands vulnerable and weak.
3.5 Conflict, cleavages and grievances in Indonesia

Post colonial independence struggle

After the defeat of the Portuguese and British Royal fleets, the Dutch established colonial rule over what eventually became Indonesia in 1670. The initial attention was focussed on the spice trade when the ‘Verenigde Oost-Indische Compagnie’ (= VOC) established a trading monopoly in partnership with local leaders. In the 19th and 20th century the Dutch colonial powers became increasingly involved in local governance and engaged in armed confrontations around the archipelago to unify the Dutch East Indies; fighting battles in some provinces and granting “zelfbestuur” (i.e., self governance) to others. The occupation of Indonesia by the Japanese Imperial Army in 1942 marked the end of the Dutch rule. Upon surrender of the Japanese, Indonesia proclaimed independence on 15 August 1945. The Dutch, however, were in desperate need of their old trade revenues to rebuild their own infrastructure after five years of German occupation and refused to acknowledge the new political reality and re-established colonial rule. The two “politionele acties” (police operations) in 1947 and 1948, aimed at countering the fierce resistance, were unsuccessful and resulted in the inevitable Dutch exit in December 1948.

Dutch Guinea (West Papua) however, remained under Dutch control until 1962, when in August the "New York Agreement" was signed between the Netherlands and Indonesia and ratified by the UN General Assembly next 21 September 1962. The indigenous Papuan population was never consulted. It stipulated that the Netherlands was to withdraw from West New Guinea and transfer authority to the United Nations Temporary Executive Authority (UNTEA) on 1 October. The UNTEA was to hand over the governance of West New Guinea to Indonesia on 1 May 1963, under the condition that the Papuan population would, within six years, determine in a free and fair manner, whether they wanted to remain under Indonesian control or chose independence. In a much dispute and rather selective consultation of 1,000 Papua elders in 1969, it was decided that West Papua would become officially part of Indonesia as the province of Irian Jaya.

In the early years of the young nation series of ethno-nationalist rebellions emerged. These groups had joined the national independence struggle in 1945, assuming they would gain autonomy or independence for their province, but this did not occur. (See Map 8) According to Steward and Fitzgerald (2001, p.69) an estimated 30,000 people were killed in the deadly

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36 Source: http://go.hrw.com/atlas norm.htm indonesi.htm
Preventing Deadly Conflict in Divided Societies in Asia

conflicts in Aceh, Central Sumatra, South Kalimantan, Sulawesi and the Southern Maluccu between 1950-1960.

Map 5 Political map of Indonesia on 1 December 1948

Indonesia: Situation on December 1, 1948

Old and New Order Regime

President Sukarno and several other leaders of the Indonesian resistance movement (the Old Order) ruled for nearly two decades upon independence. Despite serious efforts to develop a more democratic rule in the 1950s, e.g. by allowing more press freedom, taking over economic interests from Dutch companies and promoting political pluralism, the regime faced major problems. Aspiring new local ethnic leaders voiced increasing demands for autonomy, politically exploiting the growing inequality between Java and the other islands. Another major problem was the weak control over the military, especially over local commanders. Sukarno’s decision to establish military councils met with rejection and military rebellion in Sumatra in the late 1950s. In response, Sukarno introduced the policy of ‘guided democracy’ to overcome the differences between key actors and regions of the country. Governing power was increasingly centralised in state institutions and political parties were instructed to follow the government political policy or dissolve. The mounting pressure reached its peak in October 1965 when seven high-ranking officers were kidnapped and killed and the Communist Party (Partai Komunis Indonesia =PKI) was quickly accused. Within days a number of civil organisations with military support formed a coalition to purge the PKI, its mass organisations and other left-winged groups. In what became the most violent chapter in Indonesian history, PKI members and presumed sympathisers were hunted down, arrested and killed without legal process (ELSAM, 1999, p.152). Over the next two years more than 600,000 trade unionists, peasant leaders and community leaders lost their lives.\textsuperscript{38} In addition thousands were arrested, incarcerated as political prisoners and held for up to 15 years under deplorable circumstances on remote islands like Buru.

\textsuperscript{37} Source: \url{http://www.gimonca.com/sejarah/sejarah08.shtml}

\textsuperscript{38} Estimates of the deaths in 1965-1966 vary dramatically: from a low 78,000 to a staggering two million. The actual figure is believed to be well over 600,000 (Sulsityo, 2000, p.29).
Amidst all the organised chaos, the New Order regime came to power through a coup in 1965. General Suharto was proclaimed President in 1966 and managed to consolidate power swiftly by building close alliances with the military and the private sector. With political opposition effectively eliminated, new dissenting voices were skilfully co-opted or silenced and the infamous and persistent KKN culture (kollusie, korrupsi e and nepotism) was born. Individual liberties were curtailed or suspended under the pretext of preserving Indonesian territorial integrity and economic prosperity. The international community paid hardly any attention to these human right atrocities. ELSAM (1999, p.153) argues that it was the heightening tension of the Cold War, Sukarno’s affiliation with socialist countries and his antagonism towards the US that explain the scant international attention these gross human rights violations received. Military intervention in all aspects of society was facilitated in the “Dwi Fungsi” (dual function) policy, which gave the ABRI (Armed Forces of the Republic of Indonesia) the role of both defender of the national security and developer of the political system. Military personnel were placed in important government positions, like that of the vice-president and key ministers, were granted allotted seats in parliament and formed a governance structure parallel to the civilian administration that ran all the way up from village headman (Babinsa), to sub-district (Koramil) to district (Korem) and up (Lay, 2003, p.12). The New Order regime also controlled the political process by using its bureaucracy to have its Golkar party candidates elected, allowing only a few token state-approved political parties to compete. Civil society was discouraged from regrouping through prohibition of the freedom of assembly and the freedom of expression, among others.

In the 1980s and 1990s Indonesia experienced a period of unprecedented economic growth that brought great prosperity, and improved health and educational services. But the revenue was not distributed fairly among the different islands and ethnic populations, nor was the economic growth based on environmentally sound and sustainable development strategies. With an emerging middle class, a new NGO sector arose in the 1980s that questioned the development policies, even though civil and political freedoms continued to be curtailed and civil society remained weak. The Indonesian development model, dubbed the “Asian Miracle”, became a model for economic development in Asia. However, democratic checks and balances were increasingly lacking and official corruption reached such alarming rates that Indonesia became known as a world’s worst ‘kleptocracy’ and landed on the top of corruption watch lists.

Domestic and international protests over unsustainable and harmful natural resource exploitation and persistent human rights abuses intensified after the East Timor Dili massacre in December 1991, but they were systematically rebuked and no political action was taken. The Dutch bilateral aid relations were discontinued in 1992 and aid agencies asked to leave the country overnight, because of ‘their interference with internal political affairs’. The power of the New Order regime and the military however, had begun to decline because it failed to respond to growing middle class demands for more political freedom. In 1993, Suharto invited the Islamic groups into the political debate through the formation of the Indonesian Muslim Intellectual Association. But the effort to realign political and economic powers came too late to save the regime. The Asian economic crisis of 1997 acted as a catalyst for political change on all fronts: economically, politically and socially. Indonesia was thrown into a turbulent transition process with spontaneous mass demonstrations, formation of new political parties and expansion of civil society; but economic crisis, increasing social violence exposed the weak social cohesion and countered these positive developments.

**Transformasi**

A dramatic increase in inflation and unemployment ignited street protests and riots across the country in 1998. In Jakarta, students from five universities coordinated their protests and took to
the streets in mass demonstrations. When these protests turned violent in May, six students were killed in clashes with security forces, spinning off violence around town and almost 1,200 people were killed in bloody street riots, among others in Glodok, the Chinese neighbourhood of Jakarta. Suharto was forced to step down after thirty years of autocracy. The Interim President, Habibi, was charged with organising the democratic elections of 1999 while deadly confrontations raged between ethnic and religious groups in Moluccas and Kalimantan. The progressive Muslim leader and Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) chair, Mr. Abdurrahman Wahid, became the first democratically appointed President, by the newly elected Parliament.

This complex democratic transition process commenced during the worst economic crisis in Indonesia's history and it runs on three parallel tracks:

- Political transition: from an autocratic system of governance to a democratic one;
- Economic transition: from a centralised patron-client and cronie capitalist economy to a rule-based market economy; and
- Governance transition: from a centralised socio-political system to a decentralised one, based on principles of regional autonomy.

As in many countries undergoing democratic transition, the weakening of the Indonesian state continued. Since 1998 Indonesia has seen a succession of ineffective Presidents (four hand-overs in five years) who have failed to tackle both official corruption and restructure the armed forces. The economic malaise has resulted in negative growth, widespread unemployment and a decline in education and health facilities. Moreover, deadly communal conflicts erupted in 1999 in at least nine provinces around the country, most notably in the Moluccas and Kalimantan. Indonesia also became the stage for terrorist attacks and Ache’s struggle to secede led to new martial law and security operations there in 2003. As a result, the economic malaise continues and absolute poverty has tripled from 12% of the population living below the poverty line in the mid 1990s to 35% in the summer of 2002.

The hastened political decentralisation process that was initiated in late 2000, in an attempt to curb violent social and communal unrest around the archipelago, has further complicated this complex transition. No time was given to first build or strengthen the local political institutions that are needed to tackle local governance issues concerning division of responsibilities and the coordination of authority, finance and security between Jakarta and regions. Furthermore, the distribution of the revenues from the natural resources, both within the new autonomous provinces and amongst the different Indonesian regions, remains a matter of continued political debate. (Tadjoeddin, 2002, p.11-13)

In the past, episodes of major political change in Indonesia were accompanied by outbreaks of deadly social violence. A government in transition is not only vulnerable, but it creates conditions that are conducive to violence and destabilisation. But widespread violent conflict since 1998 has resulted in far smaller numbers of fatal casualties than in previous decades. While some deadly conflicts are rooted in historic grievances, the eruption of deadly violence appears to have been motivated by local resentment over a combination of economic and social issues and ill perceived government responses. Furthermore, some conflicts were instigated through outside intervention and have continued for years. For example, the conflict in Southern Moluccas intensified with interference from the Islamic Jihad and the lack of security forces. Similarly, tensions between

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59 The national GDP contracted 13.2% in 1998 alone. This is equalled only by the impact of the Great Depression in the US and Europe following the 1929 stock market crash. It took a decade to recover from that event and there was no added burden of political transition. Source: UNDP/GOI, Indonesian Human Development Report 2001.
Deadly conflict in four divided societies in Asia

Maluccu refugees and the local villagers in Poso (East Sulawesi) were aggravated by fundamentalist Muslim groups that exploited their religious differences.

A study by UNSFIR\textsuperscript{40} entitled “Anatomy of Social Violence in the Context of Transition” attempts to analyse the intensity, nature and location of social violence in Indonesia over the past decade. Table 9 indicates that the most lethal form of intrastate violence is communal violence, which accounts for 77% of all casualties, followed by separatist violence, amounting to 20%\textsuperscript{41}.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Social violence</th>
<th>No. incidents</th>
<th>Of which w/ death</th>
<th>Number of deaths</th>
<th>% of total deaths</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Communal violence</td>
<td>465</td>
<td>262</td>
<td>4771</td>
<td>76.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Separatist violence</td>
<td>502</td>
<td>369</td>
<td>1370</td>
<td>22.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State-community violence</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Industrial violence</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>0.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>1,093</td>
<td>654</td>
<td>6,208</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A closer look at communal violence shows that the most deadly form of communal violence is related to ethnicity, religion and transmigration, which accounts for 68% of all communal violence related deaths. The most deadly single event was the May 1998 riots in Jakarta, which resulted in 1,202 casualties. (See Table 10. Source: UNSFIR, 2002, p.28 and p.39)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Communal violence category</th>
<th>Deaths</th>
<th>% of total</th>
<th>Incidents</th>
<th>No. of cities/districts affected</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ethnic, religion, migration</td>
<td>3,230</td>
<td>67.7</td>
<td>233</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 98 riots</td>
<td>1,202</td>
<td>25.2</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Differences in political views</td>
<td>156</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Civil commotion (tawuran)</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Issue of “dukan santet”</td>
<td>156</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Competing resources</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The food riots</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>4,771</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>465</td>
<td>116</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Peace and conflict ledger and minorities at risk

In his study on minorities at risk, Gurr follows four groups in Indonesia, three of which are national peoples: East Timor, Aceh, West Papua, and one which is a minority people: the ethnic Chinese. East Timor gained independence in 2001, after two years of UN transitional governance. The political transformation lead to increased aspirations for regional autonomy and a declining grip on national security. Historic cleavages re-emerged and contemporary ones sprang up. Indonesia did not succeed in avoiding armed conflicts, nor did it manage the self determination movements successfully. Furthermore, although Indonesia had durable institutions for thirty years, the New Order autocratic style did not stimulate these institutions to be flexible and responsive agencies that could adjust to the political transition process easily.

\textsuperscript{40} UNSFIR, the United Nations Support Facility for Indonesian Recovery, is a research institute established in Jakarta in 1999 to assist the government and international community in research for policy development.

\textsuperscript{41} UNSFIR based its research on a decade long newspaper article analysis. The number of deaths due to State-community conflicts is, therefore, undoubtedly dramatically higher than the 59 persons stated because of the prolonged military repression and past and present restrictions on freedom of the press.
Preventing Deadly Conflict in Divided Societies in Asia

In the 2001 Peace and Conflict Ledger, Indonesia scored as a yellow flag country, which translates into a democracy with some risk. Its risks arise because it has trouble controlling secession movements and has a new political system (two red scores); it has difficulties in avoiding armed conflict, has limited resources to overcome the crisis and is located in a somewhat unstable neighbourhood (three yellow flags), but it has long standing democratic institutions (green). In reality, the regime has not been able to prevent deadly conflict and there is a growing militant Islamic Jihad that engages in terrorist attacks on internal foreign interests (the bombings of a Bali night club frequented mainly by foreign tourists in October 2002 and of the Marriott hotel in Jakarta in May 2003). Other cross-border issues include the ongoing stream of Asian mainland economic refugees passing through to make their way into Australia illegally; the illegal labour migration of Indonesians to Malaysia and the Muslim armed struggle in neighbouring Southern Philippines. In sum, as in many other countries in transition, the Indonesian government seems weakly positioned to prevent or deal with intrastate conflict effectively. Even without measuring scores on human rights violations, absolute poverty and the degree of ethno-linguistic factions, it would not be hard to consider Indonesia in the red zone.

Historic, cultural and class cleavages

A. Historic and post-colonial grievances

- There are two armed separatist movements, in Aceh and West Papua that are demanding unconditional independence and whose claims are based on historic grievances. Aceh, which fought bitter wars for independence with the Dutch colonial rulers in the late 19th century, was deeply affected when the promised “special region status” was not granted to them by President Sukarno despite their support for the struggle for independence from the Dutch in 1950. West Papua, on the other hand, was incorporated by the Republic of Indonesia in 1963. Its majority Christian population had anticipated assistance from the international community to gain independence but did not see its aspirations reflected in the referendum of 1962. Other regional autonomy movements, of which there are many with diffuse demands that range from a larger share in natural resource revenues, to enhanced political status and voice in decision making, to federal solutions that require constitutional amendments.

- There are many regional autonomy movements with diffuse demands that range from a larger share in natural resource revenues, to enhanced political status and voice in decision making, to federal solutions that require constitutional amendments. The legacy of Javanese political and social repression is aggravated by the severe human rights abuses committed by the Indonesian Army over past decades (Malley, 2001). Like the contemporary grievances against the ruling Javanese elite have emerged in a third province, Riau in Central Sumatra, with a growing but yet unarmed separatist movement. The resource rich province has claims based on economic injustices (natural resource exploration) with some historic connotations; and hence they oppose control over and unequal distribution of economic and natural resources by the Javanese elite.42

42 A main problem that Indonesia has been facing since independence is nation building. In his essay “Can We Find Indonesia” Sulisty o unmask five historic fallacies that shape the illusion of a state today. First, there was no Old Indonesia before the colonial era; it is an ‘imagined community.’ Second, Indonesia never had a harmonious, peaceful environment and conflicts have never been managed openly. As a result potentials for conflict mount until they explode in ‘uncontrolled situations’. Sulisty o posits that this cultural heritage of collectively running amok ignited much of the post-1997 violence. Third, Indonesia was not born from the womb of a revolution in which people joined hands to make the sun of joint power more than its separate components; instead the revolutionary attitude of its leaders has justified an attitude of survival of the fittest. Fourth, Indonesia was never a rich country. Last, transformation does not automatically lead to democracy. (Sulistyo, 2003, p.1-4)

56
B. Cultural and religious cleavages

- Many historic and contemporary grievances are reinforced by cultural, ethnic and religious differences. The Papuan and Timorese people of East Indonesia have Melanesian roots and most adopted the Christian faith during the Dutch colonial times, unlike the ruling majority Malay Muslim population, which is largely concentrated in Java and Sumatra.

- The Aceh Adat leaders on the far western tip of Indonesia have traditionally adhered to more conservative interpretations of Islam, including Sharia law, and never identified with the progressive Malay Islamic tradition of mainstream Malaysian and Indonesian political leaders. Hence they have managed to maintain a strong sense of identity and belonging to a "gentile". This was further enhanced by the brutal suppression of any dissenting voice by the Indonesian military (TNI), especially in the 1980s and 1990s.

- The Moluccas was, for centuries, the nucleus of the VOC spice trade and the region developed close ties with the Dutch rulers. Most KNIL soldiers (i.e., colonial army) were of Christian Maluccu descent and chose to move to the Netherlands upon independence in 1949. There they nurtured dreams of an independent state and formed the Republic of South Moluccas (RMS), after armed opposition to the Indonesian State failed in the 1950s.

- Kalimantan, on the other hand, was covered by pristine rainforest until recently and its indigenous communities, located in remote valleys, led fairly undisturbed lives. The collusion of power between the political military and business sector has resulted in callous exploitation and the destruction of natural resources. In addition, in the 1970s land was grabbed to make way for huge transmigration projects for poor Muslim farmers from overpopulated Java. Years of frustration and discrimination resulted in a series of brutal communal fights between indigenous people and migrants in 1997-1999.

- A different cultural cleavage and historic tension exists between the ethnic Chinese and indigenous Indonesians, whose relationship also deteriorated in the 1990s. It culminated in the May 1998 riots with targeted attacks on Chinese properties around the country, which lasted for months and caused great loss of human lives and material goods. As a result approximately 150,000 people, 70,000 of whom are believed to be ethnic Chinese, left the country. (UNSFIR, 2001, p.39) Economic envy is cited as the main cause for the anti-Chinese conflicts. Chinese control approximately 75% of the local economy (retail sector, local transportation sector and commercial imports) but they are less than five percent of the population. Part of this wealth was accumulated through their political affiliation with the New Order regime in the 1990s, bringing them political returns as well, which led to more envy.

C. Social cleavages and class conflict: labour and land

- During the New Order era, after the labour and peasant organisations were crushed in the 1965 coup, it became very hard to advocate for improved labour and land rights. Labour groups saw some relaxation of the restrictions in the late 1980s because of strong international pressure but in the mid 1990s the restrictions were reinstated and labour leaders incarcerated. This explains, to some extent, the broad public support for the 1998 student democratisation movement and protest demonstrations, which ultimately led to the fall of the New Order regime.

- As for the land conflicts, their nature differs in urban and rural areas. In urban areas the core issues are land titles in slums and evictions of farmers for urban and industrial expansion. In the rural areas, the main conflicts arise around indigenous people and unsustainable natural resource exploitation (massive logging: major mining of gold, copper, iron, gems: oil exploration). There are also serious land title issues in transmigration zones around the country; these zones were created for poor rural Muslim families from overpopulated Java to reduce that island's unemployment problems.
3.6 Conflict, cleavages and grievances in Myanmar

Post colonial national peoples’ insurgency

Armed conflict erupted in Myanmar immediately upon its independence in 1948. Historically, Myanmar was never a cohesive nation. It was formed as result of a series of trade agreements and three colonial wars in the 19th century. Authoritarian British colonial rule managed to keep the nation together for a century. To control the recurring small and large insurgencies by different ethnic minority groups at the borders, the British applied divide and rule tactics. Strong ethnic sentiments were exacerbated by induced immigration of Indian professionals to work in the colonial government or to take up intermediate professional positions and occupations. The British, Indians and Chinese managed to progressively control the economy, relegating the indigenous Burmese essentially to agriculture and petty trading. Through the introduction of a monetary economy, most traditional Myanmar business interests got marginalized, creating divisions and antipathies that still resonate in society. Indian moneylenders gained an effective monopoly over non-institutional credit and in the wake of the Great Depression in the 1930s, many Burmese both were forced to foreclosure and lost their land to foreigners or became deeply indebted. The retrieval of Burmese control over its economy became a central, legitimising theme for the government since.

The Union of Burma was politically fragile since its inception. It was negotiated compromise to provide the British with a legitimate nation to which to hand over the power. The charismatic leader General Aung San had negotiated the new Constitution in the year prior to independence, but he was assassinated in July 1947. The Constitution placed central power with the Burman majority population, which composed two thirds of the population and gave limited local

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43 Source: http://go.hrw.com/atlas/norm_hm/myanmar.htm
44 Burma was renamed Myanmar by the military Junta in 1988. This study uses the official name even though most development experts continue to use the name Burma and groups in exile are still going by that name.
45 The Burmese colonial Army was composed of 13 percent Burmese, 37 percent Indians and the remainder ethnic minority recruits from mountainous areas, who were placed in ethnically based regiments along the periphery, on the model established by the British in India. (Steinberger, 2000)
authority to a number of minority areas. Most ethnic minority leaders did not recognise the
majority Burman government as their new central government that was perceived as an extension
of colonial rule. Within the first year of independence, the ethnic minority people lost hope that
regional autonomy could be achieved through participation in the new democratic process. Ethno-
nationalist revolts broke out in the border provinces in 1949 and groups with Marxist sympathies
began to mobilise in Myanmar’s heartland, the Irrawaddy delta.

In the early 1950s, much of rural Myanmar was wracked by deadly conflict. Two factions of the
Burmese Communist Party and the People’s Volunteer Organisation, consisting of World War II
veterans, went underground, as did the armed Karen, Karenni, Mon and Pao movements. In an
attempt to provide adequate protection in the rural areas bordering the conflict zones, the
government encouraged the formation of village defence forces. They were helpful in restoring
government control, but abuses of power, like the burning of villages by government troops to
keep them from falling into rebel hands, became common.46 Myanmar enjoyed a form of
democratic rule from 1948 to 1958 and from 1960 to 1962: a military caretaker government
briefly held power from 1958 to 1960. The Junta took over power in 1962 and remains in charge
today.

Protracted ethnic conflict and militarization of Myanmar

Deadly conflicts of varying intensity dominated life in Myanmar for the next fifty years. There
are six main factors explaining why these conflicts have not been resolved.47

1. Abolition of democratic rule and institution of military rule
The fragility of the Union was evident from the beginning. For example, the constitution allowed
the large Shan State and the smaller Kachin State (the latter having its independence recognized
by both the Burmese and the British in 1876) to secede from the Union after a ten-year trial
period. Secession was, however, never a practical option. The government did use the threat to
the territorial integrity of the Union of Burma, would the right to autonomy be claimed, as the
justification for the 1962 military coup. The Junta governed by decree until 1974, when military
rule was legalized in the form of a unitary constitution run by the military with a single-party,
Marxist oriented political system. There was a fictive balance between the seven minority ‘States’
(provinces) and the seven Burman ‘divisions’ (provinces as well). Elections were organised in
1988, because the Junta felt confident that its party would win. The landslide victory of Aung San
Suu Kyi’s (ASSK) party led the military to annul the election results and clamp down brutally on
mass demonstrations, putting the leader under house arrest. The State Law and Order Restoration
Council (SLORC) was established and its 1997 successor, the State Peace and Development
Council (SPDC), is still in power.

2. No commitment to a common solution involving all ethnic parties and interests

46 Interestingly each of these ethnic nationalist movements had a different origin. The ethnic tensions between the Karen
and Burman were fuelled by the Karen’s involvement in the British colonial army to put down Burman revolts. The
Karenni Movement emerged in part as a revolt to the Karen, their mega neighbour ethnic group, because they feared
being evicted from their traditional lands. Other ethnic groups, like the Kachin and the Wa, have close ethnic ties with
Chinese minority groups and used their ethnic connections, geographic remoteness and poppy culture as justification
and means to separate themselves from Central Myanmar and its majority government.
47 This analysis is in part based on a presentation by M. Boyle, Min Win, and E. Scheper at the Kennedy School of
Government (Harvard University) which was entitled “Prospects for Burmese Democracy: An Opportunity for a New
The first wave of ethnic armed insurgency upon independence and the second wave commencing after the 1962 coup, aggravated the fear of loss of territorial integrity and generated conflicts among ethnic insurgent groups over whose claim was most valid. The Junta successfully prolonged the British divide and rule strategy, in which each group battled and negotiated with the Burman government independently and often at the cost of the others. The ceasefire with the Kachin National Army allowed the Junta to devote its full attention to fighting the Shan and Karen, and the “liberated” territory of Manaplaw fell in 1997.

3. Lack of constitutional guarantees to safeguard security of minorities
The inequality built into the original constitution of the Union of Burma, guaranteeing some ethnic groups autonomous status and denying the interests or rights of others, proved a major disaster from the onset. An additional problem was that the Shan and Kachin could not have been assured that the constitution would protect their rights, because the powers of the State and ethnic groups were not clearly delineated in the constitution. After the 1962 coup, political parties were outlawed, private newspapers closed and businesses and industries across the country nationalised. After long drawn out battles, the Kachin were the first ethnic group to negotiate an autonomy status successfully under a ceasefire agreement in the early 1990s. It was important for the SLORC, both politically and militarily, to have a ceasefire partner in the remote Northern provinces bordering China, as not to stretch the capacity of the armed forces over too large a geographic area and too many battlefronts. Additional ceasefire agreements were signed in the late 1990s with i.e. Mon and Karenni and negotiations with the Karen are currently under way.

4. Economic deprivation and exploitation after the Junta consolidated its power
After the Kachin ceasefire, the military regime could consolidate its power and started to generate a disproportionate share of the economic profits from trade and investment in Myanmar. The growing concentration of resources and investments in the central Myanmar provinces, while remote provinces remained deprived of the essential basic provisions, further aggrieved ethnic groups. From one of the richest Asian nations at the time of independence, Myanmar sunk to one of the thirty poorest nations on earth in just 25 years.

5. Asymmetry of negotiating power between warring fractions
Negotiations between warring parties in a deadly conflict are likely to be successful only when there is a rough parity of interests and capabilities. In Myanmar, the military regime holds a disproportionate share of political, economic, diplomatic and military power, in part because of its long-standing association with China. None of the ethnic insurgencies have been strong enough to challenge the military regime on purely military terms, and constant in fighting among the ethnic groups ensures the military regime’s preponderance of power. In the absence of local peaceful or military solutions, hope has been redirected to the international community to pressure the military government to step down and end the abuse and deprivation in Myanmar.

6. Geopolitical importance and ineffective third party intervention
Given the historic territorial tensions between India and China, the position of Myanmar as a proxy to maintain the power balance between them is of key importance. After independence, during the late 1940s and early 1950s, India provided assistance to Nu’s Democratic Government to protect it from collapse. China initially supported the Communist Party through the 1970s, but switched its support to the military regime in the 1980s. India has, therefore, remained a more peripheral actor.

Myanmar’s strategic alliance with China precluded structural interventions from outside actors until recently. The US trade ban, issued in 1988, has many loopholes for multilateral investments especially in natural resource exploitation. The effectiveness of the diplomatic pressure from the
Deadly conflict in four divided societies in Asia

European Union has likewise been hampered by Germany and France’s refusal to support the international economic investment boycott. The United Nations has been taking moderate steps to intervene, in part because China wields a veto on the Security Council. Numerous attempts by the US to put Myanmar on the agenda of the UN Security Council have failed because of China’s objections. At last, in 1999, the ILO suspended Myanmar from its General Assembly meetings for its continued widespread use of forced labour. In November 2003 a UN General Assembly resolution was adopted to call for restoration of democracy and exercising of human rights. The special UN rapporteur on Myanmar visits twice a year, while the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) dialogue (led by Thailand) organises forum discussions on a regular basis. Unfortunately, these diplomatic efforts have thus far shown few results.

Peace and conflict ledger and minorities at risk

In the Peace and Democracy Ledger, Myanmar’s total yellow flag score is largely based on the Junta’s success in curbing secession movements, which reduces the risk of deadly violence to moderate. The previous analysis, however, begs a different scoring. MAR’s regime type and durability scores are too optimistic: the regime is supposedly in a transitional stage between autocracy and democracy (yellow) and is considered to have high durability of political institutions because they were established before 1985 (green). However, this durability is based on totalitarian rule and militarization of the society and does not imply Myanmar has the ability to deal with conflicts in a peaceful manner. On the contrary, conflict is being suppressed. Furthermore, the transitional stage of the regime might stretch over a prolonged period, as there is no genuine political drive to allow for increasing political diversity. Taking the human rights indicators into the equation makes the picture gloomier. The question of durability without democracy becomes apparent. While the Junta has managed to suppress the armed struggle, aspirations of independence have not waned and ethnic identities have only been reinforced. Thus, as long as the autocratic regime is not willing to look for durable solutions to historic and contemporary grievances, the country remains vulnerable to deadly conflict.

The MAR overview of minorities at risk in Myanmar identifies two ethnic self-determination movements (Karen, Shan) and four smaller indigenous peoples’ groups fighting for regional autonomy (Rohinga, Chin, Kachin, Mon). This study would move the Kachin to the self-determination category and add the Wa to the latter group. Disenfranchised by the government, the poorly organised Rohingas are very vulnerable. Some smaller ethnic groups along the Chinese border are deeply involved in illicit trading of drugs and arms, with security forces as trading partners. At the same time, the low risk scores for the Kachin and the Mon is based on their signed ceasefire agreements with the SPDC in the 1990s, but it does not imply that their combat capacity waned.

Furthermore, Myanmar has the longest ruling Asian Junta (forty years in power) that abolished democratic institutions, annulled fundamental constitutional rights and drained the nation’s natural resources for military and personal gain. As a result, Myanmar’s economic ranking toppled from one of the richest Asian nations upon independence to one of the thirty poorest countries in the world at present. The Junta’s poor governance record has led to UN economic sanctions and UN special rapporteur monitoring since 1986, while the ILO banned it from its General Assembly in 2000 for its widespread forced labour practices. Another inconsistency in the MAR scoring is the geopolitical impact: given longstanding cross-border issues with the Chin and Rohingya minority groups, plus the extent of the illegal trade in drugs, weapons and humans, Myanmar justifies a yellow score. Adding the three red scores on human rights, poverty and ethnicity indicators would make Myanmar score red on seven out of nine indicators.
Preventing Deadly Conflict in Divided Societies in Asia

Historic, cultural and class cleavages

A. Historic and post-colonial grievances
- Regional autonomy and self-determination aspirations of ethnic minority groups were poorly addressed in the decolonisation process and toughened political elites to promote their ethno-nationalist ideals. Less than a year into independence, the opposition leadership lost faith in the democratic process, which was dominated by a Burman majority, and opted for armed struggle.
- Various ethnic secession movements (Kachin, Shan, Karen, Karenni, Mon and Chin) soon started to fight each other as well, over seemingly minor historic issues, which played into the hands of the military power to take over governance in 1962.
- Myanmar has the longest ruling Junta, and civil governance and military responsibilities are colluded in every walk of public life. Military personnel and relatives are furthermore favoured when it comes to employment, education opportunities, housing and health care.

B. Cultural and religious cleavages
- Opposition to the Burman dominated Buddhist government has been accumulating for forty years. The Karen, Kachin and Karenni leadership, which are largely Baptist Christian and strongly identify their faith as a unifying factor in the battle against the Burman military regime, are the main opposition.
- Inter-group conflicts exists among all ethno-nationalist groups, and is especially targeted against the Kachin, who were the first to sign a ceasefire accord in 1992, negotiated a much better deal than groups that fought for a decade longer and their action freed up armed forces resources to increase combat on other fronts (e.g. the fall of Manaplaw).
- The Rohingas, a Muslim minority in the Arakan State, are a very vulnerable exploited group; refugees were forcibly returned from neighbouring Bangladesh in the mid 1990s, after which they have been receiving support from the UN and international NGOs.

C. Social cleavages and class conflict: labour and land
- Forced labour has long been a major issue. At any given time at least 500,000 people are forced to work in state projects or provide services to the military.
- The Junta’s diplomatic and economic alliance with China has led to a steady influx of Chinese businesses and rural migrants. Cultural concerns and envy complaints are increasingly heard, especially in the northern parts of the country.
Deadly conflict in four divided societies in Asia

3.7 Comparative summary of cleavages and grievances

Table 11 summarises the key grievances and cleavages that have influenced intrastate conflict in the four case countries. Grievances and cleavages are often multi-dimensional and combine issues of ethnic identity with religion and governance. There are seven key factors that recur in the analysis: ethnic exclusion, nation building, ethnic majority governance, historic insurgency, a culture of violence, geopolitical influences and religion.

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<th>Table 11 Comparative summary of cleavages and grievances</th>
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<td><strong>Grievances</strong></td>
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<td>Historical, regional</td>
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Ethnicity is a major factor in the exclusion and inequality practises that have caused many deadly conflicts in Asia. Because of the lack of strong bridging relationships between ethnic groups, ethno-nationalist leaders have been tempted to favour their own group members over others. In some countries, like Sri Lanka, this was initially a reaction to past colonial favouritism. In others (Indonesia and Myanmar), it was part of an autocratic attempt to build a new nation where there was none before the colonial era.

Three of the four countries have been facing major nation building challenges since independence. In chapter II a nation was defined as an imagined community with territorial limitation, political sovereignty and legitimacy and with deep horizontal comradeship and notions of equality. These traits were lacking in Cambodia, Indonesia and Myanmar and still pose major problems for the building of social capital and social cohesion, as chapter IV will highlight next.

Politics in three countries are dominated by senior representatives of the majority ethnic group (Singhalese, Javanese and Burman), which creates resentment and loss of faith in the democratic system among minority ethnic groups. Constitutional provisions at the time of independence to prevent ethnic majority rule in Sri Lanka and Myanmar did not protect minority rights and were overturned within the first decade. Centre versus periphery sentiments were further fuelled by unsustainable exploitation of natural resources (logging, mining), the revenues from which remained with the government and international partners (so-called eco-violence). Large state supported transmigration programmes aimed at relocating poor ethnic majority peasant families to less densely populated remote areas had clear ethno-political undertones as well. The large Mahaweli irrigation scheme in the North Eastern dry zone of Sri Lanka relocated primarily poor Singhalese peasant family to a predominantly Tamil area. Likewise, Javanese peasant families were relocated to Kalimantan, Sulawesi and West Papua in large state supported agricultural colonization projects. Another ethnic tension was aggravated when Chinese business dynasties managed to broker good relationships with the regimes in three countries; this helped to further their economic enterprises and provided them with some political influence as well. This increased society’s envy and wealthy Chinese business families across Asia have been subject of anti-government riots in recent years.
Japanese forces occupied Cambodia, Myanmar and Indonesia during WWII and the insurgency groups continued their armed struggle when the colonial rulers reclaimed their protectorates in 1945. Some armed groups joined in the national effort with the understanding that they would obtain the right to self determination upon the ‘liberation’ but in both Indonesia and Myanmar, these expectations or commitments were bluntly rejected at independence and further suppressed under the pretext of nation-building. This reinforced historic grievances and ethnic identities of contesting groups and kept them vigilant, which further complicated the nation-building process.

Concern over a growing culture of violence was highlighted in three countries throughout the interviews. In Cambodia its roots are thought to be imbedded in ancient Angkor culture and hence centuries old, but in Indonesia and Sri Lanka it is believed to be linked to the armed struggles since independence. The insurgencies have polarised political parties, militarized the society and promoted social bonding among identity groups. The cultural tradition of not dealing with conflict openly is thought to have aggravated the deadly outcome of conflicts over the past fifty years in Cambodia and Indonesia. In Sri Lanka, the culture of violence seems more a consequence of the recent civil war and would, therefore, be somewhat easier to address if the political will is there.

Geopolitical influences deeply have impacted the nation-building process in the case countries. The Indochina Wars had a devastating impact on Cambodia’s social cohesion. Although ethnic and class differences were minimal, insurgent leaders managed to mobilise poor and deprived rural youth using political ideologies to fight the different governments backed by France and the US. In its aftermath Cold War alliances with either western governments (e.g., the New Order regime) or community governments (e.g., the Chinese-backed Myanmar Junta) provided international and military resources to build and prolong autocratic rule. This allowed for the denial of the most basic civil and political rights at the cost of many lives as well as large scale corruption and nepotism practices. Recently, the war on terrorism has added a new dimension to geopolitical involvement in Asia, especially in Sri Lanka, Myanmar and Indonesia. As a result of the intrastate conflicts and international support, militarization is on the rise in all four countries, and the lack of accountability of the armed forces is increasingly alarming.

Religion appears of influence in violent conflict, but is often linked to the ethnic identity of a group, not the other way around. There are three exceptions: in the three majority Buddhist countries, small traditional Muslim minority groups have missed out on participation in development efforts and belong to the poorest groups in the country. Second, in Sri Lanka the Buddhist clergy has mobilised itself politically, winning 10 seats in parliament in the 2004 national election, and is very vocal in promoting an anti-secessionist, Buddhist nationalist agenda. Likewise, the JVP, the Sinhalese Buddhist Marxist party, moved from armed struggle to the political arena and became the third largest party in Sri Lanka in the 2003 national election.

In sum, exclusion and inequality in the context of ethnic diversity, nation building and militarization are major causes of grievance in all four case countries. However, there are other studies that claim the incidence of deadly conflict will decline and exclusion and inequality factors can be overcome, when sustainable levels of national economic development are reached, because civil wars occur almost exclusively in the poorest and most marginalised countries. Chapter IV will review two recent mega conflict studies by the World Bank and Woodrow Wilson Center, which postulate that the lack of economic development is the major conflict risk and apply their findings and sets of risk factors to the four case countries.
IV. Social and economic causes and consequences of deadly conflict

4.1 Breaking the Conflict Trap

Lack of economic development as key cause of deadly conflict

In the late 1990s the World Bank Group launched a research programme to study the economics of civil war, crime and violence. The programme produced several papers (e.g., Collier, 1999; Collier, 2000; Collier and Hoeffler, 2002) that form the basis of the comprehensive study entitled “Breaking the Conflict Trap: Civil War and Development Policy” (Collier et al., 2003). The research meant to ‘answer the question why the World Bank should focus on civil war’ and confirmed that the consequences of civil war are devastating for countries. Violent conflict is development in reverse that affects primarily civilians in marginalized developing countries and therefore legitimates a key role for the international community in conflict prevention. Development aid could be an effective instrument to prevent violent conflict. Civil war is not so much a challenge to development, but is better perceived as a failure of development. Hence, the Conflict Trap postulates that the global incidence of civil conflict is high because the international community has done little to avert it—a decision that is grounded in two wrong beliefs: let them fight it out and nothing can be done (Collier, 2003, p. ix-xi, p.1 – 3).

Collier posits that civil wars typically create “a persisting legacy of poverty and misery.” They destroy critical infrastructure, investor confidence and social capital; they displace people and make diseases such as HIV/AIDS and malaria thrive among military personnel and displaced and vulnerable populations. Moreover, civil war undermines the economy and budgets are shifted from productive investments to military expenditure. These effects cripple the ability of already marginalized countries to develop and create a ‘conflict trap’ in which countries repeatedly fall back into deadly conflict, despite attempts to escape. At the regional level, civil wars create destabilizing neighbourhood effects. Globally, civil wars contribute to illegal trade in drugs and arms, a loss of investors’ confidence in the South and put war-torn countries at risk of becoming recruiting grounds for international terrorist networks.

The principal drivers of civil war identified by the study are low economic growth, dependence on natural resource exports, and prior deadly conflicts. Countries with low, stagnant, and unequally distributed per capita incomes, which remain dependent on primary commodities for their exports, face dangerously high risks of prolonged conflict. In the absence of economic development neither good political institutions, nor ethnic and religious homogeneity, nor high military spending provide significant defences against large-scale violence. The authors argue that the relationship between ethnicity and conflict is more complicated than commonly acknowledged and present evidence that countries with high levels of ethnic and religious heterogeneity are actually less likely to experience bloodshed than homogeneous countries, unless one group holds an absolute majority over several smaller groups or a society is split into two equal but polarized identity groups. The study’s recommendations largely focus on addressing the economic roots of civil war to minimize destabilizing effects of dependence on natural resources and include promote economic diversification, combat corruption, enhance political reform, reduce excessive military spending and restrict the ability of rebel groups to profit from natural resources. Moreover, the study promotes greater transparency and enhanced international scrutiny of the natural resource revenue streams and politics of countries at risk of conflict.

The study was well received, but criticism was voiced too, which centres around four issues. First the study’s evidence is largely based on extensive statistical analyses and bases far reaching conclusions on moderate correlations. Second, much emphasis is placed on the dependence on
natural resources as a cause of deadly conflict as it makes countries more vulnerable to external price shocks and provides an impetus for rebel movements to seek secession and/or find financial backing for their operations. All natural resources are lumped together in this study but natural resources have different characteristics and potential for conflict. For example, valuable resources like minerals and timber, which because they are geographically concentrated and governments typically own or otherwise control, are much more likely to produce so-called ‘resource curses’ than more diffuse resources such as cropland or freshwater. Third, the study views greed as the principal motivation underlying natural resources’ role in civil war. Although Collier emphasizes that civil wars arise from a combination of greed and grievance, no study was made of the link between natural resources and grievances. Kahn (2003), on the other hand, argues that significant case study evidence shows that environmental degradation and economic dislocations caused by unsustainable resource extraction often led to greater support for rebel organisations. He recommends that conflict prevention policies should include methods to prevent or mitigate causes and harmful side effects of natural resource exploitation.

Lastly, ‘Breaking the Conflict Trap’ suffers from a so-called “bottom-up” bias: Collier assumes that the three major risk factors associated with civil war (poor economic conditions, natural resource dependence and prior conflict) all direct violence upwards toward the government or sideways toward other groups. However, while conflicts may play out this way: often deadly conflict or large-scale violence is initiated or exacerbated by threatened political leaders who instigate bloodshed between social groups to preserve or expand their political power. The human security and human rights dimension of conflict prevention is totally overlooked. The very risk factors identified by Collier could moreover threaten the viability of a regime and trigger more top-down conflict, but this possibility is largely ignored too. Kahn therefore recommends that a very different mix of policies will be required to prevent States from instigating conflict. Moreover, some rebellions may be justifiable responses to repressive regimes and policies designed to suppress potential rebellions may strengthen the hands of ruthless leaders, leading to greater hardship and more armed resistance in the long run.

These limitations of the Conflict Trap analysis is probably related to the particular mandate of the World Bank\textsuperscript{48}, which prevents the Bank from addressing domestic political matters and obliges it to work principally for the benefit of its member governments. It may explain why there is little attention in this hefty report for the role of civil society and track two diplomacy; the only non-state local initiatives mentioned in the study are the rebel groups and one implicit recommendation for a ‘package of complementary solutions’. The failure to disclose the World Bank’s operational limitations makes the opening preamble of the report rather presumptuous:

‘Most people think that they already know the root causes of civil war. Those on the political right tend to assume that it is due to long-standing ethnic and religious hatreds; those in the political center tend to assume that it is due to a lack of democracy and that violence occurs where opportunities for the peaceful resolution of political disputes are lacking, and those on the

\textsuperscript{48} The Bank is guided by the following principles in undertaking any activity under this [Development Cooperation and Conflict] policy:

a. The Bank is an international organization with a mandate, defined in its Articles of Agreement, to finance and facilitate the reconstruction and development of its member (...) In view of its mandate, the Bank does not engage in peacemaking or peacekeeping, which are functions of the United Nations and certain regional organisations. 

b. The Bank's Articles of Agreement explicitly prohibit the Bank from interfering in the domestic affairs of a member or from questioning the political character of a member; only economic considerations are relevant to the Bank's decisions. Thus, the Bank does not operate in the territory of a member without the approval of that member. Its intervention may take place at the request of the government in power. 

c. Finally, under the Bank's Articles, its resources and facilities may be used only for the benefit of its members."

Social and economic causes and consequences of deadly conflict

political left tend to assume that it is due to economic inequalities or a deep-rooted legacy of colonialism. None of these explanations sits comfortably with the statistical evidence. Empirically, the most striking pattern is that civil war is heavily concentrated in the poorest countries. War causes poverty, but the more important reason for concentration is that poverty increases the likelihood of civil war. Thus our central argument can be stated briefly: the key root cause of conflict is the failure of economic development.” (Collier, 2003, p.53)

The Conflict Trap recommendations are meant to guide future multilateral conflict prevention interventions and could have policy implications for inclusion of key stakeholders. In this respect, the Conflict Trap’s conclusions seem to contradict official World Bank policies on conflict assessment, prevention and engaging civil society in its work.

“The Bank’s contribution to conflict prevention is two-fold. It supports strategies and activities that aim at making countries more resilient to the eruption and escalation of violent conflict, and programs that address the sources of conflict. Building resilience to violent conflict involves the strengthening of participatory and inclusive social processes and institutions that may help manage conflicts in non-violent ways.”

The World Bank strategy to “building resilience and strengthening inclusive, participatory social processes and institutions” underwrites the importance of the role of civil society in conflict prevention. The ‘Promoting Enabling Legal Environments for Civic Engagement’ project states the Bank’s “continuing recognition of the significance of civil society contribution to development, and the corresponding need to help create opportunities for more effective civic engagement.” Civil society organisations (CSOs) are seen as important actors in the building of necessary social consensus for economic reforms and long-term development, in fostering transparency and accountability of public institutions (including combating corruption and ensuring poverty-focus of the budget), and in the efforts to fight inequality and exclusion.

Greed or Grievance: economic motives behind minorities’ quest for justice

Collier’s economic development conflict argumentation needs closer examination, to complement the analysis on political, social and cultural cleavages and grievances of the previous chapter. Economic and social costs of civil war are devastating to any country, but especially to marginalized countries, which are statistically at a 15 times higher risk of getting involved in armed civil conflict than OECD countries. The “Conflict Trap” identifies seven main conflict related problems: large flows of refugees and internally displaced people, increased military expenditures, reduced per capita income (an average of 15%), flight of capital and Diaspora, destruction of infrastructure, loss of life and a reverse economic development trend. Collier makes a convincing case that the old attitude of “let them fight it out among themselves” gives a “license to a few thousand combatants and a few dozen of their leaders to inflict widespread misery on millions of others.”

Lack of economic development is also tied to the greed motivating rebel movements. The report explains the appeal of the “entrepreneurs of violence” to the poor masses as follows:

“Low and declining incomes, badly distributed, created pools of impoverished and disaffected young men who can be cheaply recruited by ‘entrepreneurs of violence.’ In such conditions the


50 The document continues to explain that: “Indeed an “enabling environment” for civic engagement is understood to mean the set of inter-related conditions—such as legal, bureaucratic, fiscal, informational, political, and cultural—that impact on the capacity of NGOs and other civil society organisations to engage in development processes in a sustained and effective manner, whether at the level of policies, programs, or projects.” Source: World Bank NGO Unit, Promoting Enabling Legal Environments For Civic Engagement, A Project Of The NGO Unit, not dated, p.1-2.
State is also likely to be weak, non-democratic and incompetent, offering little impediment to the escalation of rebel violence, and maybe even inadvertently provoking it. (...) Disputes often fall along ethnic and religious divisions, but they are much more likely to turn violent in countries with low and declining incomes.” (Collier, 2000, p.4).

Collier concludes the prospect of financial gain is seldom the primary motivation for rebellion, but it can be a satisfactory way of life and hence make civil wars last longer. Global changes in information and transportation technologies have made civil wars easier to sustain by allowing rebel groups to raise finance and acquire armaments more easily. Collier’s data analysis furthermore suggests that international third party intervention through diplomatic, military and economic means have been unsuccessful. Hence, marginalized countries land in the conflict trap: over half of all civil wars resume within five years, while the countries are still struggling to overcome the severe economic and social decline of the past conflict, a process that usually takes one or two decades.

Collier and Hoeffler’s “Greed and Grievance in Civil War” and Elbadawi and Sambanis’ “How much war will we see?” were both published as World Bank policy research working papers in 2001. They provided sophisticated statistical analyses and aggregated presentations in which, unlike in MAR data, individual country and rebel group scores cannot be traced. They concluded that grievance often united rebels, but greed (economic viability) commonly drives rebel movements to enter or prolong deadly conflict.

“Rebellion may be explained by atypical severe grievances, such as high inequality, a lack of rights or ethnic and religious division in society. Alternatively, it might be explained by atypical opportunities for building a rebel organisation. Opportunity may be determined by access to finance, such as the scope for extortion of natural resources, and for donations from a Diaspora population. Opportunity may also depend upon factors such as geography: mountains and forests may be needed to incubate rebellion, we test these explanations and find that opportunity provides considerably more explanatory power than grievance. Economic viability appears to be the predominant systematic explanation of rebellion.” (Collier et al, 2001)

The Conflict Trap characterises armed rebel movements as organisations that typically have between 500 and 5,000 members. Rebellion thrives on group grievances and rebel leaders to form a “plausible and legitimate smokescreen for less reputable agendas” to promote ethnic grievances. Most successful rebel organisations now rely substantially on resources generated from business interests maintained alongside military and political operations. These businesses are mostly involved with exploitation of natural resources with high economic returns (e.g., gems. drugs). Rebel military organisations face severe difficulties in maintaining cohesion and, in response, they become hierarchical structures and confine recruitment to a single ethnic group. A group’s main energies may be devoted to a power struggle within the ethnic group and a common strategy is to assassinate moderate political leaders of the interests it purports to represent. Political and ethnic agendas piggyback onto ‘what is basically an attempt to expropriate resources.’ (Collier, 2003, p.63) Rebellion is persistent because governments cannot afford to give in to violence and even if they are willing to concede to rebel demands, they may not have credible means of committing to the agreement. Rebellions have gradually changed their character, becoming less political and more commercial. Collier names rebel groups “violence entrepreneurs”, who whether primarily political or commercial, may gain from war to such an extent that they cannot credibly be compensated in a peace agreement.
Social and economic causes and consequences of deadly conflict

Table 12 Collier’s comparison of political and armed opposition group characteristics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Opposition movements</th>
<th>Political</th>
<th>Military (armed groups)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Governance</td>
<td>Democratic</td>
<td>Hierarchical, charismatic leaders</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Management style</td>
<td>Participatory</td>
<td>Highly disciplined, punishment for dissent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personnel</td>
<td>Voluntary, part-time</td>
<td>Combatants on payroll, full time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Infrastructure</td>
<td>Basic</td>
<td>Expensive equipment, diverse skills required</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nature of activities</td>
<td>Political</td>
<td>Political, military, business (finance operations)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

However, Collier’s description of present day rebel movements is not directly applicable to the armed minority groups in the four case countries. Though the MAR study found that many Asian minority groups opt for rebellion and Collier confirms that Asia has persistently had the highest incidence of civil war, there is only one rebel group that meets Collier’s criteria: the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam in Sri Lanka. The other armed groups that match the required size and professional degree of military organisations, like the GAM in Aceh and the Kachin and Karen National Armies are neither launched by neighbouring country governments to create havoc nor do they benefit structurally from illegal natural resource exploitation to fund their operations. The Diaspora from Cambodia did not aim to build strong domestic resistance movement, but was effective in pressuring the French, US and UN in the late eighties to end the economic blockade and initiate a political transition process.

Deadly conflict risk factors examined and applied

To comprehend why the analysis does not hold in the four case countries, thirteen deadly risk factors identified by the Conflict Trap report are reviewed below:

1. Failure of economic development
Civil war occurs almost exclusively in marginalised countries with low, stagnant and unequally distributed per capita incomes that have been in economic decline remain dependent on natural resources and primary commodities for their export revenue and with a history of poor political institutions and often high military spending. (p.53 and 126)

2. Neighbour effects
There are four main spill-over effects: 1) the flow of refugees destabilises border areas and increases the risk for spread of infectious diseases; 2) the regional economic impact creates transportation difficulties, reduces cross border trading opportunities, and affects the regional image and reduces (foreign) business investments; 3) military budgets in this context increase by at least 2 percent; while 4) the regional illegal arms and drugs trafficking spiral out of control.  

3. Existence of a majority ethnic group
Statistics show that substantial ethnic and religious diversity significantly reduces the risk of civil war. Although ethnically more diverse societies are commonly seen as fragmented, ethnicity does provide an effective basis for social networks. Therefore diverse societies may be less atomistic than homogenous countries. Limited ethnic differentiation however can be a problem. If the largest ethnic group in a multi-ethnic society forms an absolute majority (between 45 and 90 percent of the population), the risk of rebellion is increased by approximately 50 percent. (p.57)

4. Past histories of civil wars
Once a society has had a civil war, its risk of rebellion goes up sharply. A typical country at the end of a civil war has 44 percent chance of returning to deadly conflict within the next five years. This risk fades at about one percentage point a year. (p.58 and 83)

5. Natural resources/regional secession movements
Statistically, secessionist rebellions are considerably more likely if the country has valuable natural resources. with oil being particularly potent. (p.60)
6. Partial democracy and durability of democratic institutions
In line with the Peace and Conflict Ledger. Collier’s statistics show that autocracies are apparently as safe as full democracies, with ‘partial democracies’ at a higher risk. The average duration of a democratic political system in a low-income country is only nine years. (p.64)

7. Colonial legacies
Colonial legacy does appear to be highly significant in accounting for differences in recent growth performance, but has no significant explanatory power in relation to either the risk or duration of the conflict (The two measures commonly used to measure colonial legacies are inequality of household incomes and inequality in the ownership of land). (p.66)

8. Military viability (geography)
Countries with sparsely populated rural areas are at higher risk of rebellion. Also, some evidence suggests that rebellion is more likely in countries with extensive mountainous terrain. (p.71)

9. Government’s capacity to deter rebel movements
As Gurr highlighted, deterring rebellion in its early stages requires an effective local government and a willingness to share information on the part of the population. Collier adds that rebel movements typically kill people they suspect of being informants, making it hard for citizens to provide rebel information to the State, also knowing there is little State security provided. (p.72)

10. Existing rebel business interests
Armed conflict is expensive and rebel movements need to generate income to pursue their cause. Collier identifies two main sources of income: donations (from Diaspora or foreign nations) and business interest, e.g., mining, drugs (coca and opium), kidnapping and arms smuggling. Collier concludes that “loot is not usually the root motivation for conflict, but it may become critical to its perpetuation, giving rise to the conflict trap”. Business interests have made sustaining conflict easier, because rebel groups generate revenues without support from foreign powers. (p.79-82)

11. Diasporas
War triggers a rather persistent emigration of the higher skilled work force. Once one group has left, chain migration follows, which can create a large Diaspora living in rich countries. The risk of Diasporas to increase the chances of repeated conflict is through their inclination to finance extremist organisations in the home countries either by choice or by force. (p.84)

12. Legacy of past violent conflict atrocities (killings and property loss)
Collier calculated that on average about half of the risk of repeat conflict is explained by characteristics present before the conflict started. The other half is due to events that happened during the conflict that have disturbed the balance of assets in the society (loss of property). The legacy of atrocities and killings built up hatreds and the need for vengeance. (p.88)

13. Post Cold War newly independent countries
The end of the Cold War neither increased nor decreased the risk of rebellion. But it did result in a surge of newly independent countries with a much higher risk of conflict than other countries because they combine a number of risk factors: low income, weak institutions and colonial legacy. (p.160)

Applying Collier’s criteria to the four case countries provides a mixed picture. Six of the thirteen indicators score low (one or no score): failed economic development, neighbour effects, partial democracy, colonial legacies, military viability, rebel business interest, and newly independent countries. There is only one factor that scores in all four countries, the legacy of past atrocities, which has a direct connection with the trust in the authority’s capacity and willingness to mediate and redress the consequences of deadly conflict in their societies. The colonial legacies and inability to deter rebel movement score three times, because colonial powers advanced certain minority groups over others (SRL) or because minority groups were not given promised autonomous status upon the end of the liberation struggle and independence (IDO and MYM).
Social and economic causes and consequences of deadly conflict

Table 13 Applying Collier’s risk factors to the four case countries

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Risk factors per country</th>
<th>CAM</th>
<th>SRL</th>
<th>IDO</th>
<th>MYM</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Failed economic development</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>1/3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neighbour effects</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>1/3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Majority ethnic group (45-90%)</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>2/2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Past history of civil wars</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>2/2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regional concentration of natural resources</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>3/1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partial democracy/durability of institutions</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>1/3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colonial legacies</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>3/1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Limited military viability</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>1/3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government’s inability to deter rebel groups</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>3/1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rebel business interests</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>1/3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diaspora</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>2/2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Legacy of past atrocities</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>4/0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newly independent countries</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>0/4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>6Y7N</td>
<td>5V8N</td>
<td>3Y10N</td>
<td>6Y7N</td>
<td>21Yes/31No</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The remaining four indicators (majority ethnic group, past civil war, natural resources, and Diaspora) have each two or three scores, but do not show much inter-correlation in the scores for the four countries. For example, the majority ethnic group indicator does not score consistently with the history of civil war or with the colonial legacy indicator. Another example is that despite the lack of ability to deter them, the rebel movements did not acquire major business interests that made them self-sustainable in Cambodia, Indonesia and Myanmar, except in the geographically least likely of all: Sri Lanka.

Table 14 Additional conflict risk factors

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Risk factors per country</th>
<th>CAM</th>
<th>SRL</th>
<th>IDO</th>
<th>MYM</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High value natural resource: (oil/gem/timber/drugs)</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>3/1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unsustainable resources exploitation (eco-violence)</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>3/1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Top-down violence (State/elite conflict manipulations)</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>4/0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>3Y</td>
<td>1Y2N</td>
<td>3Y</td>
<td>3Y</td>
<td>10Yes/2No</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Adding the three omissions mentioned in chapter 4.1 as additional indicators provides some additional insight. Table 14 shows that the Sri Lankan Tamil conflict is distinctly different from the others. As a small country without major physical barriers and lower value natural resources, it seems to suffer less directly from illicit natural resource exploitation, be it from State or rebel movement side. Surprisingly, the LTTE did manage under these unfavourable circumstances to develop into a highly professional militant insurgent group with deeply vested business interests around the world, fuelled by free or forced contributions from a global Diaspora that is reluctant to return home after 19 years of civil war. As the analysis of risk factors for the four countries does not provide a consistent scoring pattern, and further study would be required to determine why the conflict variables are country specific and whether there are other factors not covered by Collier’s that explain deadly conflict in Asia more accurately.

51 The economy shows signs of failure due to prolonged conflict in Myanmar, Sri Lanka and Indonesia, but at the start of the conflict only Cambodia had a prolonged poor economic performance record and widespread absolute poverty.
52 CAM: Khmer 89%, SRL: Singhalese 77%, IDO: Javanese 34%, MYM: Burman 66%
53 Mixed scores: 80% of the population lives in rural areas and military structures are highly decentralized and well organized in all case countries. Therefore only Myanmar’s score is positive.
54 Highly valued natural resources: gems, timber and drugs in CAM; all three in MYM, oil, gems and timber in IDO.
4.2 Preventing the Next Wave of Conflict

In response to 9/11, another comprehensive conflict prevention research project was launched by the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars in 2002. Fifty renowned North America based scholars and practitioners studied in five working groups over a period of one year how the next wave of conflict could be prevented and how non-traditional threats to global stability could be better understood and remedied. The release of the final report in October 2003 coincided with the announcement of a new partnership between the Wilson Center and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) to explore the connections between conflict prevention and development assistance. The study focused on non-traditional threats to the national security of the United States and sought insights in the ways in which national security and global stability are compromised by six trends: economic and social disparities, failures in political and economic governance, demographic trends, environmental degradation and natural resource shortages, and health crises. This report was studied to identify additional conflict risk indicators and to review the recommendations on the role of non-state actors, particularly NGOs, in preventing violent conflicts. Although no additional conflict indicators were found, the conclusions of the study review are summarized here, because they reflect current thinking on conflict prevention.

WWIC assumes that conflict and instability are increasingly driven by non-traditional factors like failures in governance, health crises and environmental degradation. The impact on security of most non-traditional threats is still indirect, but there is an increasing risk of broad instability. Local economic stagnation, environmental degradation, demographic shifts, urbanisation, failures in governance and declining health status are all resulting in increasing pressure on governments around the world. More sophisticated and frequent international exchange of information and communication raises awareness of global disparities in income and influence and increases the ability to ferment and sustain disputes through the infusion of funds and ideas. To reverse the trend to instability, a broader appreciation of the opportunities that exist is needed. To work proactively fending off non-traditional threats to security could shift the nature of the relationship between North and South, the report posits. Such a shift to a culture of prevention will have to be accompanied by boarder recognition of the fundamental importance of development assistance to foreign and national security, and the need to build the conflict prevention capacity. Fundamental interdependence of programmes to promote democracy and economic growth must be recognised. Economic restructuring efforts need to more explicitly aim at reducing disparities in income. Finally, any effort to combat non-traditional threats will require greater willingness and ability to work with and through multilateral organisations.

The working group proceedings on economic and social disparities and on political and economic governance provide five interesting conclusions that complement the World Bank and MAR studies. The “Next Wave” looked into the impact of increased economic openness of countries as part of the globalisation process and concluded that in general it leads to higher GNP per annum growth figures but it did not reduce inequality. On the contrary: inequality in income increased in 70% of the 53 research countries, while unemployment rose substantially in all researched countries because the economic expansion could not keep up with the population growth. New information technology is heavily biased towards the North, where 80% of the online connections are situated. This widens the already worrying gap in access to resources and information, as the Internet is becoming a major source of trade and knowledge. One third of the world’s population is illiterate and growing income disparities nationally and globally will widen the knowledge gap.

The group also tried to assess the impact of economic disparities on terrorism and concluded that there is no direct connection with absolute poverty. International terrorist attacks are very complex undertakings, requiring middle class, educated cadres, which can be found more in
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Economically and democratically stagnating countries. It could not reach a conclusion as to whether cultural ‘misunderstandings’ can be identified as conflict cause, because the subject is ill researched, but the presumption is that the modern information technology is certainly and important tool for jihad movements. In terms of governance, the wake of 9/11 provides two additional threats. First there is a slowing global trend to democracy and second there is an increasing prevalence on failed states. The authors focus extensively on the lack of accountability of political leaders in many young or maturing democracies and highlight the dramatic economic and moral leadership implications of systemic corruption.

The “New Wave” conclusions regarding the role of non-state actors are less than flattering and the recommendations are close to hostile. The only extensive mention of NGOs is in the chapter on global governance and relate to the risks posed by efforts to intervene in fostering good governance. On global governance, the report stresses the lack of accountability of international advocacy NGOs to the Southern constituencies they are claiming to represent. Furthermore, it posits that well organised NGOs from Northern countries have greater access to participate in multilateral consultations because they have mastered the rules and best approaches to interacting in these forums. The report is equally critical when it comes to evaluating the role of international aid in fostering good governance. Not only is the overall size of the aid too limited to have the desired effect, the impact of the efforts to promote the role of civil society in good governance is deemed questionable. The authors claim that while the aid “to foster and sustain public interest groups has multiplied the number of NGOs existent in developing nations, there is no compelling evidence of broad political change as a result. Additionally, because support for advocacy groups tends to favour those espousing certain political perspectives and goals, donor support does not apolitically promote the free flow of ideas. It is fairly clear that in isolation, efforts to promote advocacy NGOs do not play a major role in promoting democratisation.” (WWISS, 2003, p.44-47)55 While the recommendations do call for greater local participation in the formation and ownership of government and for more efforts to build bridges across ethnic groups, local civil society is not named as a potential counterpart in these efforts. In sum, no new indicators were found in this study, but its critique on ineffective NGO contributions to good governance and the impact of development aid on NGO formation has been included in the analysis of the local NGO sectors in the four countries in chapter VI.

55One paragraph down, research by the Center for Strategic and International Studies and the Association of the US Army is quoted which concluded: “too often international support for reconstruction has been limited to supporting formal election processes and a wide range of NGOs. The result has been the reversals to the peace process and extensive loss of money, lives and credibility.”
4.3 Social cohesion and the role of key actors in conflict prevention

A third and final study reviewed in this chapter is the work of education expert and post conflict reconstruction specialist Nat Colletta, who worked on multiple UN and World Bank assignments around the world until he founded and managed the Conflict Prevention and Reconstruction Unit in the World Bank from 1995 till 2001. Complementary to the two previous studies, Colletta’s research primarily analysed the relationship between key actors in deadly conflict and sought inclusive approaches to rebuild socially cohesive post-conflict societies that involve all stakeholders: civil society, NGOs and the business sector. Moreover, despite his close liaison with the World Bank, his work does include critical analyses of State actors that fuelled conflict with autocratic, exclusionary and exploitative rule. This dual focus makes Colletta’s conflict prevention constructs invaluable for this analysis.

In “Violent Conflict and the Transformation of Social Capital” Colletta and Cullen (2000) make a comparative analysis of civil society, market and State engagement in preventing deadly conflict in post conflict societies. Chapter II.5 introduced Colletta’s conflict prevention model, which elaborates on the importance of vertical linkage between the State and its citizens and good governance, with horizontal social capital building and bridging relations among communities in multicultural societies. Using a comparative study of four post-conflict societies, the authors analysed the role of civil society in post-conflict prevention in relation to the State and business sector. It is one of the rare World Bank conflict documents to review the role of civil society in conflict prevention systematically. It provides some valuable insights that broadened my thinking about objective NGO success factors and as such complements the conflict analysis that started with social, political and cultural causes in chapter 3 and continued with economic development causes in chapter 4.

Colletta and Cullen conclude that in each of their four cases studies both bonding and bridging types of social capital emerged in civil society during and immediately after the conflict, either in the form of mobilisation for social protection or through economic rehabilitation and development activities. In crisis, people usually turn to what is most familiar (their family, neighbours and the community). Traditional types of social capital usually, like religions functions (pagodas) and funeral associations, tend to return in their original form when the conflict is waning. Coping mechanisms can be internal or external and range from traditional horizontal social capital relations, such as family, extended family or clans, to more formal bridging relations. They can sometimes include vertical organisations such as religious groups, local governments and markets. Civil society reactions to conflict and its legacies vary by country and type of warfare. Less complex societies such as rural cultures are believed to have shorter recovery periods, unless overly intrusive external intervention damaged or displaced traditional coping mechanisms, which makes the society more vulnerable to recurring violence.

The interface of the State with social capital and conflict is complex. Colletta’s research shows that the overpowering presence of the State in Cambodia as well as its absence in Somalia led to disruption of most social relations in the society. Hence, the lack of ‘organisation integrity and synergy of the State’ was identified as the key cause of all examined conflicts (Table 15). The governments were not able to perform its basic responsibilities and were remote from its constituency, either because of anarchy or authoritarian rule. In Cambodia for example. State penetration was ideologically driven, but its consistent goal was to retain power by the political elite under conditions of increasing inequality, exclusion and indignity.
When the governance structure is characterized by inequality and an unequal distribution of power and opportunity, the State’s capacity to manage civil conflicts is sharply reduced. On the other hand, the lack of horizontal relations between different ethnic groups in a multicultural society can erupt into hostilities if one group is seen as monopolizing resources and power to the disadvantage of the others. Because the impact of globalization (the local-to-global transition) on developing countries often tends to nourish the seeds of inequality and exclusion already planted during the colonial era and enhanced by post-independence political elites. Colletta recommends that the building of cross-cutting horizontal social capital is even more crucial to strengthening the local conflict prevention capacity:

"In each of these conflicts, the State commandeered national power and supported exclusionary and unequal political regimes. To strengthen state hegemony, government actors waged war against constituents and engaged in divisive plays, blocking the formation of cross-cutting, bridging social capital, while utilizing instability that may have resulted from the effects of globalization to further their cause. (--) Trust in the state needs to be rebuilt, and leaders will have to prove their legitimacy by instituting just and transparent political, social and economic systems that are inclusive and participatory. " (Colletta, 2000, p.91)

In an ideal situation there is a balance between civil society, State and market penetration that nurtures primary bonds, encourages bridging and cross cutting ties and supports State functioning and the State’s relations to its people. A good mix of horizontal cross cutting ties and vertical linkages strengthens the social cohesion of a society and make it more resilient to deadly conflict. Sustainable peace-building initiatives should therefore work simultaneously on good governance, decentralization and participation, and responsible market penetration (vertical axis), as well as on empowerment and bridging horizontal capital among and between different communities (horizontal axis). Civil society plays a key role in this process, as mediating agents between communal groups, governments and markets and is thus central to a country’s capacity to cope with conflict and transformation in a peaceful way.

The analysis of the vertical and horizontal social capital capacity of the State and civil society in the four countries in this study indeed reflects the unique character of each conflict, but common trends emerge as well. Three of the four countries have functioning multi party systems, but it is under considerable pressure due to the conflict legacy and ethno-nationalist party politics. The States need to rebuild the trust with its constituencies, but this is not an easy task. The capacity of political parties to find bridging compromises for the common good has been deeply affected by the conflicts. Cambodia faces a decade long face-off between the CPP, in power for 25 years, and the Funcinpec, related to the Royal family and the French oriented elite. This dual governance system failed badly and ended in the coup of 1997. Since then, the CPP is consistently winning more ground in successive elections and is showing increasingly autocratic tendencies. Due to the weak parliamentary control, the military has managed to maintain and expand its power and successive demobilisation programmes have failed.

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Table 15 Organisational integrity of the State

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Synergy</th>
<th>State-Society</th>
<th>State Capacity and Effectiveness</th>
<th>High</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Predation, corruption (rogue states): Cambodia</td>
<td>Cooperation, accountability, flexibility (developmental states)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>Anarchy (collapsed states): Somalia</td>
<td>Inefficiency, ineffectiveness (weak states): Rwanda</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

When the governance structure is characterized by inequality and an unequal distribution of power and opportunity, the State’s capacity to manage civil conflicts is sharply reduced. On the other hand, the lack of horizontal relations between different ethnic groups in a multicultural society can erupt into hostilities if one group is seen as monopolizing resources and power to the disadvantage of the others. Because the impact of globalization (the local-to-global transition) on developing countries often tends to nourish the seeds of inequality and exclusion already planted during the colonial era and enhanced by post-independence political elites. Colletta recommends that the building of cross-cutting horizontal social capital is even more crucial to strengthening the local conflict prevention capacity:

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In an ideal situation there is a balance between civil society, State and market penetration that nurtures primary bonds, encourages bridging and cross cutting ties and supports State functioning and the State’s relations to its people. A good mix of horizontal cross cutting ties and vertical linkages strengthens the social cohesion of a society and make it more resilient to deadly conflict. Sustainable peace-building initiatives should therefore work simultaneously on good governance, decentralization and participation, and responsible market penetration (vertical axis), as well as on empowerment and bridging horizontal capital among and between different communities (horizontal axis). Civil society plays a key role in this process, as mediating agents between communal groups, governments and markets and is thus central to a country’s capacity to cope with conflict and transformation in a peaceful way.

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56 Source: Colletta, 2000, p.80
In Sri Lanka, the instrument of snap polling was used three times in only five years to seek voters' approval for the leading party's position on the desired peace settlement with the LTTE. In the wake of 20 years of civil war and increasingly violent election processes, the bridging capacity of Sri Lankan politics further declined with the proliferation of ethno-nationalist parties. Ten ethno-nationalist parties, including armed rebels turned Sinhalese Buddhist Marxist politicians (JVP): the 'sole representatives' of the Tamil people in the North and East (TNA): three Muslim fractions; the Indian Tamils estate workers party (All Ceylon Workers party) and the Buddhist Monks party (JHU), that won approximately 40 percent of the vote in the April 2004 election. No cabinet can govern without negotiating alliances with one or more of these parties, which greatly complicates the peace negotiations and places the ceasefire under serious threat.

In Indonesia, the situation is even more complicated, as the country is in the midst of a triple transformation process, changing from an authoritarian regime to a constitutional democracy, from a command to a market economy, and from a centralized and exclusionary to a decentralised and participatory administration. Managing Indonesia's rich cultural and social diversity is a key challenge to sustaining its political and economic development. On the social side, Indonesia has moved from an emphasis on "unity in diversity" (Binnika Tunggul) of the early post independence years, to one of "unity and uniformity" (Persatuan dan Kesatuan) of the New Order years, to the current emphasis on "one people, one nation" (Kesatuan Bangsa). But sustainable peace and development processes depend also on sound institutions. Transforming basic mindsets, values and functions of political, economic and social institutions requires a strategic and integrated approach. The hastened political decentralisation process that was approved in 2001 to prevent further outbreaks of communal violence has been strengthening ethnic bonding in provincial governance, harbouring the threat of exclusionary practices in future. Given the continued political and economic turmoil, it should not be a surprise that there is an increasing sentiment to call upon strong leaders from the past to bring back stability and economic prosperity. The election victory of the Golkar party in the April 2004 national election and the nomination of two former Indonesian Generals as Presidential candidates (one of whom is indicted by the East Timor tribunal for war crimes) for the August 2004, can be explained in that light.

In all, the prospects do not look promising in the case countries and short-term trust building and interest bridging initiatives of the State towards NGOs are not expected. Would the ideal mix of vertical and horizontal cross cutting relations exist, a strong business sector and civil society would be in the position to mitigate and help the States regain focus. Unfortunately both sectors have suffered from years of conflict, economic stagnation, mistrust and corruption too. Due to poor economic performance and protracted violent conflict, private business investments have faltered over the past decade and foreign investors moved away. The local NGOs continue their work under challenging circumstances and face constraints in bridging political differences to work for the common good as well. The lack of progress and level of obstruction of their work has lead to a fatigue among both NGOs and their donors in Sri Lanka and Indonesia.

If building cross-cutting horizontal and vertical social capital is indeed the most crucial factor to strengthen the local conflict prevention capacity, then what specific contributions are local NGOs making to that effect? The case countries paint a diverse picture. In Cambodia, local NGOs only have permission to operate since 1992 and the sector has since boomed with the guidance and protection of the international community which funds NGOs to secure grassroots basic delivery

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systems and some checks and balances in the troubled democratisation process. Sri Lanka on the other hand has a historic pluralist civil society tradition and the government never succeeded to curtail the NGO sector to their liking, though they tried on various occasions. Indonesia is somewhere between Cambodia and Sri Lanka. Many indigenous civil society leaders lost their lives in the 1965-67 massacres and it took the civil society 15 years to recover and regroup from the 1980s. The mature NGO sector suffered greatly from State interventions and limited freedom of assembly and expression. It deeply affected NGO work because it was hard for most to build and maintain horizontal, bridging relations in the society.

Facing the new political reality, mature Sri Lankan and Indonesian NGOs find it hard to adjust and have been undergoing a kind of institutional “midlife crisis” since 2002. They feel left out by the State in peace-building processes; they have lost many senior staff members to operational peace building programmes run by multilateral organisations, and struggle to re-invent their mandates, strategies, programmes and international donor connections. Part three of this study will first look into the history and dynamics of the NGO scene in Asia (chapter V) and then provide an overview of the NGO sector per country (chapter VI), before analysing the role of local NGOs in preventing deadly conflict and protecting civilians and identifying the main factors that influence the success of this NGO work (chapter VII). The final chapter presents twelve case studies of successful, national joint NGO peace building initiatives (chapter VIII).
V. State - NGO relations in Asia

5.1 NGO generations, missions and governance

Non-Governmental Organisations are private, non-profit, professional organisations concerned with public welfare goals a distinct subset of civil society and a distinct subset of civil society. Five generations of local NGO strategies can be distinguished (Korten, 1990 and Gidron, 2002), which reflect the evolution process from relief and charitable agencies to development, rights, advocacy and conflict resolution organisations working for structural policy and practice change.

- First generation NGO strategies are welfare based and involve direct delivery of services (food, health, shelter, etc.) to meet an immediate deficiency or shortage among a beneficiary population;
- Second generation NGO strategies attempt to develop the capacities of communities to better meet their own basic needs;
- Third generation NGO strategies focus on sustainable development systems, looking beyond the community proper as well and aiming at structural changes in policy and practise;
- Fourth generation NGO strategies aim to build a global people’s movement for self-development and developed out of frustration with “repair” work and institutional resistance or hostility against NGO work.
- Fifth generation strategies that came in vogue in the late 1990s, promote peace building and conflict resolution, but have different organisational means to achieve this objective.

International aid agencies classify development NGOs according to either their mission or their organisational structure. The classification by mission stresses goals of the programmes:

1. Direct poverty eradication: Direct poverty eradication refers to direct support to the “poorest of the poor” to improve their basic living conditions and end absolute poverty. Community organising, vocational skill training, income generating, micro credit, sustainable land use, environmental protection, disaster preparedness, housing, health and education are the most common project foci.

2. Civil society building: Civil society building NGOs aim to build strong, representative and cohesive groups with locally rooted accountability systems to address specific problems of deprivation, exclusion and injustice in a society. Women’s movements, human rights organisations, free legal aid services, trade unions, environment watches and ethnic minority networks are among these groups. Training, documentation and extension work is central to this approach and information gathered is fed to NGOs with missions that fall in the last category, advocacy for local change.

3. Advocacy to change policies and practices in the home country: Advocacy for policy change is intertwined in the two previous categories as well, but is an essential approach in its own right for which specific skills are needed. The assumption underlying their support for national advocacy for policy change is that local NGOs are not meant to replace the government or take over part of their role, instead development NGO work can provide an excellent breeding ground to explore and test alternative approaches which may be more effective. Ideally, such best practices should be taken over by official development policy and programmes, and tenacious advocacy work is required to convince government experts, ministries and parliamentarians of this. Furthermore, professional NGO advocacy work is essential to monitoring good governance and
maintaining political and civil rights; their political pluralist role is essential in functioning democracies.\textsuperscript{18}

The third way of classifying development NGOs is by the nature of the organisation:
1. Mass or member organisations
2. Service delivery organisations
3. Research or advocacy institutes

While research institutes tend to focus primarily on advocacy for policy change and service organisations focus largely on income generation, basic service provision and civil society building, the mass and member organisations can be active in all three areas simultaneously. The general image of local NGOs in developing countries is that of a poor people’s membership organisation, but in reality most of the internationally sponsored local NGOs are not-for-profit service organisations, committed to serving the poor.

In the 1990s, the pressure on local NGOs to play a bigger role in basic social service delivery to the poor increased as the result of several of factors. First, NGO programmes in remote areas tend to be more cost effective and cheaper, particularly when compared to the public sector or international aid agencies. Second, governments of poor nations are under pressure by international financial institutions to reduce their public spending and hence were forced to downsize their public service apparatus. Third, local NGOs are recognized for their greater effectiveness and ability to involve local communities through participatory and more socially sustainable approaches. Fourth, international aid agencies are expressing increasing interest in collaborating with local NGOs because they are looking for alternative partners outside government circles, especially where bad governance, corruption and impunity prevail. With the increased role for local NGOs, came a set of conditions from international agencies. In particular, as the roles and responsibilities of local NGOs in service provision expand, the pressure is mounting to live up to the three good governance principles commonly preached by NGOs to the State and corporate sector: legitimacy; transparency and accountability.

Legitimacy (credibility) refers to rightful representation, participation and ownership of the NGO’s constituency. Ideally, planning and implementing sustainable poverty eradication programmes are done in close consultation with the intended beneficiaries and facilitate maximum ownership, empowerment and smooth hand over. Community ownership is vital to the success of every development project. Leadership of mass organisations should be subject to (re-) election and independent, representative NGO boards should oversee the executive leadership of service organisations. Advocacy groups, who speak on the behalf of the poor, should consult their constituencies to seek their opinions and support them in both the selection of topics and in the dynamics of the dialogue with authorities whose policies are targeted for change.

Transparency and accountability are closely linked to an NGO’s legitimacy and leadership; NGOs need to be transparent in planning, decision-making, remunerations and management procedures and to be publicly accountable. Bilateral and multilateral donor funds are largely generated through direct income taxes, while private foundations obtain financial donations from both the general public and governments. When NGOs begin to manage public funds, they take on added responsibilities. Professional accounting and public disclosure of the annual audited financial statements are minimum requirements for local NGOs that receive international development assistance.

\textsuperscript{18} The ideal allocation of funding resources to achieve the sustainable development country objectives for organisations like Novib (Oxfam Netherlands) is: 65% direct poverty alleviation, 25% civil society building and 10% local advocacy for policy change.
It is important to realise that putting these fair but tough conditions on local development NGOs comes with a price. Most international aid agencies are eager to fund indigenous, community-based member organisations that design, implement and evaluate their own programmes, but this is often an illusion. Directing one's focus and financial resources to the poorest in a marginalised society implies targeting undereducated groups who live in remote and deprived places without dependable means of existence. These people lack resources, skills and often the political room to organise professionally: they lack the ability to generate State support or mobilise external (international) funding; and they lack the networks and knowledge to lobby their government for better treatment. In recent years it has become increasingly difficult—if not virtually impossible—for small indigenous member organisations to obtain international donor assistance. Indigenous minority groups in the rain forest or informal self help sex worker networks in Asian capital slums, for example, lack the professional expertise and experience and do not have the funds to recruit skilled staff. Hence, most of these deprived groups are unable to meet planning, proposal formulation, and monitoring and financial accounting requirements. And although national research and advocacy NGOs often include the minority people's issues in their national and international advocacy agenda, minority representatives are seldom found among their core staff. Meanwhile, the more effective service delivery NGOs are invited to increase their reach in terms of both beneficiaries and geographical coverage, with the risk of becoming quasi-governmental institutions, especially in countries where official service provision is weak. This professionalism of aid flow has rocked the NGO sector at the very core of its existence and the innate civil society advantages are at stake. This catch-22 is elaborated below.
5.2 History of local NGOs in Asia

The local NGO sector in Asia emerged in four distinct historic courses (Schepers, 2003). In countries like India, Sri Lanka, Malaysia, Indonesia, Philippines an active local NGO scene began to emerge in the post WWII independence. It started in the 1950s with a core of charitable, health and education oriented organisations, often with religious origins or affiliations. Out of this, a more diverse, politically savvy and internationally connected NGO sector evolved in the late 1960s and 1970s that was conscious of poverty and injustice issues. But it was not until the mid-1980s that this NGO sector became more structurally engaged in national development cooperation and quickly expanded in size, operation and professionalism.

A second group of Asian countries (i.e., China, Laos, Myanmar, North Korea and Vietnam) had limited colonial ties and went through a process of violent inter- and intrastate conflict, leading to a radical political transformation towards one-party governance systems in the 1950s and 1960s. The regimes in these countries legally and proactively discouraged any form of private initiative and political activism and controlled the press and other information flows, severely curtailing civil society. State-organised and State-controlled mass organisations were the only associations permitted and were usually mobilised by professional group: farmers, industrial workers, soldiers and veterans, civil servants and women. Their main purpose was to support State ideology and socio-economic policies. They could not, therefore, play an independent, pluralistic mobilising role. Voluntary NGO work was not permitted and the attitude of the regimes towards the concept of an independent professional NGO sector was hostile; citizens were denied the right to organise, meet and express themselves freely.

In response to growing international criticism from a globalising world and to avoid missing out on substantial development aid flows and beneficial trade agreements, most of these countries now allow international NGOs to operate, albeit usually under tight State control of budgets and geographic spread and only in the provision of relief goods and basic needs (income generation, education and health). The presence of international NGOs can have a positive influence on the eventual emergence of a local NGO sector, for instance through on-the-job training of local staff members, who can mobilise local NGOs once legal restrictions are relaxed. However, because these countries are protected by their economic and geopolitical importance, they have managed to buy time and the international community has been lenient in pushing for dramatic reforms in the political and civil rights arena. The local political discourse is still impaired by the discussion of the universality of rights, Asian values, religious intolerance and political prisoners and a quick relaxation of the civil society restrictions is not expected.

Half way between these two extremes is a third group of countries (i.e., Cambodia, Nepal, Bhutan, Mongolia and Central Asian countries), each of which went through a process of radical political transformation in the 1960s and 1970s but had to reverts back to some form of political pluralism as the result of intrastate rebellion, regional war, international isolation and political pressure, natural calamities or, and this was most often the case, a combination of these factors. Commonly, international relief NGOs were first invited to assist transitional governments in responding to emergency needs after large natural or manmade disasters devastated the infrastructure. These NGOs hired and trained local staff to implement infrastructure rehabilitation and reconstruction programmes and, in due course, the young, trained cadre either established their own NGOs or 'localised' the international NGO with gradual phasing out of control by expatriate staff. Under international pressure, most of these countries liberalised regulations on the freedom of Association and Assembly in the early nineties, after which the local NGO sector

59 Source: http://www.sitesatlas.com/Maps/Maps/Asia.htm
mushroomed and international funding of local NGO initiatives became a popular alternative to inefficient government grass roots projects. The resulting competition for funds between NGOs and the State has created additional animosity in the historically tense State-civil society relationship.

Lastly, a special category of countries exists in which development NGO work was never actually prohibited but was strongly discouraged by autocratically run regimes (i.e., Japan, South Korea, Thailand, Singapore and Pakistan). Working for the poorest and advocating for social transformation and structural economic reform was considered a form of political extremism because it broke cultural taboos against publicly criticising national leaders and centralised governments. As a result, staff of local NGOs foreclosed any professional career in the commercial or governmental sectors. Moreover, the authorities put tight restrictions on receiving international financial aid and there was hardly any funding, public or private, available to them locally. As a result, the local NGO scene in these countries is typically composed of highly principled, research-oriented activist leaders with limited grassroots outreach and limited experience in basic social service provision. Since the early 1990s, attitudes have gradually changed here as well and appreciation of the contribution a strong civil society can make to a nation’s social cohesion is rising (e.g., the NGO response to the Kobe earthquake in 1994 resulted in a new appreciation of civil society work in Japan). But in sharp contrast to the overall level of development of their countries, these local NGOs still struggle to attract professional staff, manage effective poverty eradication programmes and secure sizable and sustainable development funding.
5.3 Freedom of Association, Assembly and Expression

Having a clear mandate, skilled staff, good management and adequate funding is necessary for the success of NGOs, but if the political space to work is not guaranteed, all NGO work will suffer. Local NGOs active in advancing human rights, justice and sustainable development have all experienced difficulties with their governments at some point and had to assert their rights to associate and to represent and provide services to their constituencies. These infringements can range from simple bureaucratic measures like complicated registration processes and tedious security regulations (e.g., requiring permits for any public activity) to incarceration, public scrutiny, confiscation of work materials and closing of offices. Currently, local NGOs do not have the right to associate freely in five Asian countries and in nine others the NGO sector is barely one decade old, as freedom of association was granted only recently. Even in countries where the NGO scene is well established, popular and legal battles with authorities over political freedoms are recurring events. Obviously, NGOs working on human rights violations, corruption and impunity are in frequent confrontation with the authorities, especially when they engage in international advocacy to convince UN agencies and the international community to apply diplomatic pressure or punitive economic sanctions to make the government change its policies and practices.

In Asia, where the universality of human rights is still debated and Confucian ethics or interpretations thereof do not encourage public condemnation of one’s leaders, critical local NGOs are particularly vulnerable to State intimidation and intervention. Women’s organisations aiming to end gender discrimination have regular battles with the religious leadership and preservers of cultural heritage. Environment and community development organisations are caught in dire straits when their work provides proof of corruption, illegal exploitation of natural resources and forced indigenous community labour. At times government agencies join with NGOs to catch perpetrators and monitor the situation in remote provinces (e.g., to observe illegal natural resource exploitation by multinational corporations or illegal cross-border trafficking operations) but usually the main perpetrators are in government service or have their actions condoned by bribed officials and are, therefore, protected by authorities. When governments decide to silence NGO criticism and political activism, three political and civil liberties are likely to be curtailed: the freedoms of association, assembly and expression. These rights are laid out in the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), articles 19, 21 and 22:

Article 19
1. Everyone has the right to hold opinions without interference.
2. Everyone shall have the right to freedom of expression; this right shall include freedom to seek, receive and impart information and ideas of all kinds, regardless of frontiers, either orally, in writing or in print, in the form of art or through any other media of his choice.
3. The exercise of the right provided for in paragraph 2 of this article carries with it special duties and responsibilities. It may therefore be subject to certain restrictions, but these shall only be such as are provided by law and are necessary: a) for the respect of the rights and reputations of others; b) for the protection of national security or of public health or morals.

Article 21
The right for peaceful assembly shall be recognized. No restriction may be placed on the exercise of this right other than those imposed in conformity with the law and which are necessary in a

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60 Countries with no local NGO sector are China, Vietnam, Laos, North Korea and Myanmar; and with an NGO sector that is a decade or less old are Cambodia, Nepal, Bhutan, Mongolia, East Timor and four Central Asian countries.
democratic society in the interests of national security or public safety, public order, protection of public health or morals or the protection of the rights and freedoms of others.

Article 22

1. Everyone shall have the right to freedom of association with others, including the right to form and join trade unions for the protection of his interests.
2. No restrictions may be placed on the exercise of this right other than those which are prescribed by law and which are necessary in a democratic society in the interests of national security or public safety, public order, the protection of public health or morals or the protection of the rights and freedoms of others. This article shall not prevent the imposition of lawful restrictions on members of the armed forces and of the police in their exercise of this right.

In the mid 1990s human rights NGOs from six Asian countries conducted a comparative field survey of the “Three Freedoms” in each of their countries to assess how the essential prerequisites for NGO work can be secured and how State-NGO relations have developed over the past decade. The aims of this survey were to study the legal and regulatory framework for NGOs and its enforcement in different Asian countries (to develop a regional database, to mobilise support to promote respect for the three freedoms and to contribute to the larger debate in Asia and globally on the role of NGOs in development. The initial research focussed on the Freedom of Association only, but the Indonesian legal team convinced the group that the freedoms of Assembly and Expression needed to be included, because being prevented from meeting publicly and speaking and exchanging ideas freely proved to be the most efficient tools to suppress NGO work in Indonesia, where freedom of association is, in principle, guaranteed in the constitution. The report formulated these three critical rights as:

“It is the premise of the study, strengthened by the experience of the last two years, that NGO advocacy is critical to democratisation, and that the three basic freedoms of association, assembly and expression are critical to the well being of NGOs. Freedom of association enables NGOs to have a legal identity, hire staff and raise funds without fear of being closed down. Freedom of assembly allows them to hold meetings or sponsor public gatherings. And freedom of expression enables them to make known their concerns about policy developments through writing, speech and other media. The three are interlinked (Forum Asia, 1999, p.10).

When the study commenced, Asia’s economic boom was at its peak and growing desires had emerged among the new middle class for more political participation. Civil liberties and government accountability and for an end to official corruption. Asian NGOs lobbied for civil and political rights and criticized their governments for halting political liberalisation, social justice reforms and equity demands under the pretext that national interests prevail over individual rights to secure sound economic growth. Meanwhile the income gap between rich and poor widened and environmental degradation became a threat to sustainable long-term development. Only two years later Asia went through the devastating economic crisis of 1997 and both local reformists and the international community acknowledged that one of the many factors contributing to the Asian crisis was the lack of governmental accountability and infringement on basic political and civil rights that limited the checks and balances, in particular infringement on the three freedoms. Responses from governments were diverse. It seemed that in the countries worst hit by the crisis (Indonesia, Thailand and South Korea) new appreciation for the three freedoms emerged with the new political leadership, while in Malaysia, which was also rather

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61 The coordinating NGOs were: ADHOC (Cambodia), Human Rights in China (HRIC), Hong Kong Human Rights Monitor (=HKHRM), Institute for Policy Research and Advocacy (=ELSAM-Indonesia), Alternative Law Research and Development Inc (=Alterlaw – Philippines), Law and Society Trust (=LST, Sri Lanka), Union for Civil Liberty (=UCL – Thailand) and Forum Asia (Regional Asian human rights network, the coordinator).
badly affected, the government began a systematic crackdown of the reform movement and imposed tighter restrictions on the three freedoms to prevent the reform movement from gaining ground. In countries less affected by the crisis, like those in mainland Asia, civil and political freedoms remained restricted, while in South Asia threats to the three freedoms came more from emergency regulations to curb internal armed conflict.

The six-country survey highlights a number of conditions that directly affect the protection of the three freedoms and the ability of NGOs to function freely. The study concluded that the lack of independence of the judiciary and the use of emergency regulations are the two conditions that have most hampered the exercising of the three freedoms. In terms of government regulations of NGOs, the survey demonstrated that even authorities that make little effort to prevent NGOs from associating often try to impose regulations to control and, if necessary, obstruct their activities. Besides limiting freedom of speech and public demonstrations, authorities also applied politically charged registration procedures and tried to restrict and control foreign donations to local NGOs.

Although the participating NGOs agreed that there are benefits to the proper regulation on NGO registration, because it protects their legal right to operate, the specific circumstances in each of the countries are so unique and the lack of independence of the judiciary varies to such an extent that no general recommendation for NGO registration could be formulated. The authors did, however, agree on a set of eight minimum requirements that would uphold the independence of NGOs and enable them to fulfil their role in civil society and to make contributions to the process of development:

1. To determine their organisational structure, membership and operating principles freely;
2. To select their officials and staff freely;
3. To obtain legal status through procedures that are quick, simple and inexpensive, but which should not be conditional for the exercise of freedom of expression, association and assembly;
4. To determine their own vision and goals, and set their own priorities;
5. To establish and maintain relationships with other NGOs of their choice, both foreign and domestic, and to reject enforced association with other organisations;
6. To exchange information freely with individuals and organisations at home and abroad, as well as with government and international organisations;
7. To raise funds or seek assistance without impediment;
8. To have government actions or interventions—regarding their legal status, governance or activities—subject to review by independent courts and to have the same rights to legal recourse as any organisation, whether commercial or non-profit. (Forum Asia, 1999, p.256)
5.4 Right to development and role and responsibilities of State and NGOs

The UN covenants on development and basic human rights provide furthermore guidance on the roles of the State, NGOs and the international community in development and peace building processes. According to the UN Commission on Human Security, to protect people—the first key to human security—their basic rights and freedoms must be upheld. This requires concerted efforts to develop national and international norms, processes and institutions, which systematically address insecurities. Efforts cannot be makeshift; they must be comprehensive not compartmentalized, and preventive not reactive. (Sengupta, 2002)

The Declaration on the Right to Development (RTD) was adopted by the United Nations in 1986, almost 38 years after the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which constitutes both civil and political rights (Articles 1 to 21) and economic, social, and cultural rights (Articles 22 to 28). Global consensus over the interdependence of civil and political rights and economic, social, and cultural rights could not be reached in during the Cold War era. Therefore, two separate covenants, one covering civil and political rights and the other covering economic, social and cultural rights were drafted, given the status of international treaties in the late sixties and came into force in the late seventies. A new consensus emerged at the Second UN World Conference on Human Rights in Vienna in 1993, reaffirming the 1986 Covenant on the right to development as a fundamental human right and that its protection and promotion are the first responsibility of the State. The RTD furthermore stresses the collective responsibility of the international community to provide poor countries with the means and facilities to end poverty. Moreover, RTD provides recommendations on inclusion and equity that are of key importance to sustainable conflict prevention work:

*The right to development is an inalienable human right by virtues of which every human person and all peoples are entitled to participate in, contribute to and enjoy economic, social, cultural and political development, in which all human rights and fundamental freedoms can be fully realised. (RTD, Article 1, paragraph 1)*

Arjun Sengupta, the independent expert to the UN Commission on Human Rights, highlights four essential principles embedded in the Declaration’s opening articles:

1. Development is a human right that is inalienable: it cannot be bargained away, even though the justiciability of some rights may be hard to operationalise (like the freedom from fear or the right to adequate housing).
2. Development refers to a particular process of development: “Article 2, clause 3, States the constant improvement of the well-being of the entire population and of all individuals, on the basis of their active, free and meaningful participation in development and in the fair distribution of benefits there from.” Article 8 elaborates that the measures for realising the right to development shall ensure equal opportunity for all in their access to basic resources, health services, food, housing, employment and in the fair distribution of income” (2000, p.2). The article furthermore stresses that the realisation of RTD also requires women to play an active role in development processes and appropriate economic and social reforms need to be carried out with a view to eradicating social injustices.
3. Development is an inclusive process, in which “Every human person and all peoples” are entitled to participate, underscoring the importance of individual over State interests; and
4. Development is the prime responsibility of the State; as “the prime duty holder” the State has the duty, both individually and collectively, to formulate international development policies.

62 UN Covenants are legally binding for signatories, while the UN Declaration of Human Rights is not.
63 The Declaration on the Right to Development was ultimately signed in 1986, with the United States maintaining a lone dissenting vote questioning the legitimacy, justiciability and coherence of this right. This set back the start to operationalise the Right to Development by several years. See Arjun Sengupta (2000).
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and to provide poorer countries with appropriate means and facilities to promote rapid poverty eradication. (Sengupta, 2001, p.1-4)

In his third and fourth report to the Commission, Sengupta (2002, p.12-15) elaborates on the specific roles of State and civil society. Nation-states have the prime obligation for realizing the development rights of their individual right-holding citizens. In the human rights literature, these are associated with the State obligations to respect, protect and fulfil and imply abstaining from ‘carrying out or tolerating any violation of the right in question by agents of the State’. Steiner and Alston (2000, p.1322) identify five State obligations: respect the rights of others; create institutional machinery essential to the realization of rights; protect rights/prevent violations; provide goods and services to satisfy rights; and promote rights, through advocacy and education.

The obligation to protect and promote human rights, however, lies not only with States and national or international institutions. NGOs are recognised to play an important role in the implementation of human rights. Sengupta (2002, p.11) states: “Indeed, when the rights are to be realized in a participatory manner, with participation of the beneficiaries in the decision-making and benefit-sharing, with accountability and transparency and in a widely decentralized process, NGOs may have to play an even more crucial role in monitoring the programmes and delivering the services and may often replace the existing bureaucratic channels of administration. They may also have to play an advocacy role as well as engaging in grass-roots mobilization and organizing of beneficiaries to participate in decision-making.”

Much of the operationalisation of the RTD is still under debate, especially regarding the obligations of the State and international institutions’ to endorse the rights approach to development in their overall work. The UN Commission on Economic and Social Rights is developing and testing the so-called “Development Compact” approach, to which developing countries and their funders sign up on the basis of national development programmes that specify the obligations of the national authorities, civil society and the international community. The RTD provides a good framework to clarify State-NGO relations and task division in development and conflict prevention. States must take steps towards fulfilling their international obligations by adopting legislation that incorporates the rights contained in international and regional human rights treaties in their domestic law, and should ratify these treaties if they have not done so already. They must appoint a national human rights commission and other authorities that can adjudicate on complaints of human rights violations. Lastly, the State should also allow NGOs to operate freely and participate at all levels of the consultation and adjudication process. (p.20-22) However, issues of funding, identity and accountability of NGOs in Development Compacts are quite complex. Sengupta recommends reviewing the functions of NGOs and of international civil society carefully.
5.5 Democratic deficit, global governance and soft power

Over the past decade, media and information have become important vehicles for the new phenomena of "Soft Power." The term was first coined in Joseph Nye's 1996 book "Bound to Lead," in which he defines soft power as the capability that you get when someone wants to be like you. His later articles in Foreign Affairs magazine argue that soft power is the ability to achieve goals through attraction rather than coercion. It works by convincing others to follow or getting them to agree to norms and institutions that produce desired behaviours. Soft power is highly relevant for the third and fourth generation NGO strategies of building a global peoples' movement and advocacy for policy and practice change (see section 5.1).

Due to technological advancements in computers, software and communication, the costs of transmitting and conveying information have dropped significantly. As a result, larger numbers of people have gained access to the information highway and acquired the ability to transmit large quantities of information quickly and efficiently. While this increased flow of information has both negative and positive effects, Nye asserts that it actually has a decentralizing and democratising influence. Perhaps the most significant way the information revolution encourages democracy is by empowering civil society and increasing the number of non-governmental agents. Through the Internet, individuals and small groups are able to form networks and communities to promote their interests. Non-governmental organisations bring these interests to the forefront and challenge government action for change. The increased information flow not only gives NGOs easy access to valuable and insightful information, it also makes this information accessible to wider constituencies. This enables NGOs to monitor governments and international actors more effectively and lobby for increased accountability and transparency.

Because NGOs tend to represent both national and global public interests, they are uniquely placed to address the trans-national issues that are becoming more prominent with advancing globalisation. NGOs are able to operate in multiple States, regardless of borders and political and cultural divides, bring issues to global attention and play an important role in global governance in the 21st century. This is especially important as the impact of globalisation continues to erode the traditional role and power of the sovereign nation state. NGOs have the soft power to draw various governments into debate and to pressure them into altering policy or governmental norms. Nye argues that strong civic participation, freedom of expression, transparency and accountability are essential for true democracy. With the information revolution, these principles have gradually begun to spread worldwide and this should make it easier for various nations to find common ground and facilitate cooperation. Nye concludes that the international community needs only to take advantage of this and utilize its soft power to govern effectively. There are, however, those who are sceptical of Nye's views and hesitant to embrace this approach.

Tinker (1999, p.99), for example, argues that international NGOs and bilateral agencies create an alternative decision-making structure within states when they promote NGOs as the panacea for correcting all the inequities and problems encountered when governments of low income countries pursue rapid economic growth. The implications are that national NGOs have a mechanism to "end-run" the State through their international networks and connections to international NGOs and in that process undermine the sovereignty of the State. While many governments in developing countries feel a loss of control, NGO networks and coalitions are propelled by expectations of greater power and prestige. On the positive side one could argue that citizens, often constrained from political participation by authoritarian governments, can influence policies that directly affect their daily lives through their participation in NGOs, which can help to create a political culture and the social capital necessary to sustain democracy. Unfortunately, in most of these countries local NGO work is prohibited and international NGO
work restricted because citizen activism and international interference is a main concern of authoritarian regimes. Tinker concludes that the transition of NGOs from relief to sustainable development organisations is a significant accomplishment and contribution to the development world, but she remains critical of NGO involvement in global governance because of the tendency among articulate NGOs to focus on advocacy and criticism of current international and national policies, rather than practices.

The common uneasiness to partner with the NGO sector among State officials and scholars is not entirely fair. NGOs have been quite successful in filling part of the widening institutional and geographical void for people and communities who want to exercise their rights. Over the past two decades, NGOs have constructively contributed to both international and national discourses on issues of global importance, such as poverty, gender equality, peace, environmentally sustainable development and human rights. For example, NGOs actively influenced the formulation of the CEDAW (the convention on the elimination of all forms of discrimination against women) in 1979 and the 1989 UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. Furthermore, NGOs proposed new institutional arrangements to shape UN responses to human rights abuses, like the creation of special working groups (e.g., on Arbitrary Detention) and the position of Special Rapporteurs. More recently, NGOs have successfully advocated for similar structures in other multilateral organisations like the creation of the World Bank Inspection Panel in 1993 and the lobby of the Women’s Caucus on Violence against Women in War situations, which managed to get eight severe forms of systematic sexual violence officially recognised and approved as crimes against humanity in the constitution for the newly established International Criminal Court. Other examples include the successful and world famous campaign to Ban Landmines, which won the Nobel peace prize in 1999, and the Jubilee 2000 campaign for debt reduction for the poorest nations.

At the same time, ambiguity regarding State-NGO relations partnering remains, especially on the part of States. In his opening speech to the Federation of Commonwealth Office Conference on Leadership, held in London on 6 January 2003, David Green (the Director-General of the British Council) expressed the uncertainty that overtakes state institutions when they attempt to seek closer relations with NGOs as follows:

"NGOs are independent, organic organisations, with many different structures and objectives. Increasingly, like multinational companies, they are becoming international in scope and ambition, successfully engaging and or antagonising governments across the world. And those who seek to coerce them for specific ends may find the experience as rewarding as harnessing zebras for use on a children’s pony trail. But the global reality is that diplomacy today must recognise NGOs as effective players who can mobilise public opinion rapidly, and spread opinions - all made that much easier through ICT [information and communication technology. Some commentators argue, as Mark Leonard has done, that - and I quote - "embassies should be re-tailored to become lobbying and policy exchange organisations which link up political parties and think-tanks across borders to create public policy space; engaging with the domestic politics of other countries, linking up with NGOs to change public opinion."

Quizzing the audience at the opening of the conference session on NGO collaboration on the need for the Foreign Commonwealth Office to “do more with NGOs”: Green summarized the key dilemmas of State-NGO collaboration.

“We have to assess where it is appropriate and where it is impractical. Much of the co-operation so far has been at the centre. Where it has taken place in country; it has often been as a demonstration of "soft" power – of capacity-building of NGOs, to improve human rights in country, or to strengthen civil society in state’s coming out of the shadow of Communism. (...) How far is it compatible with traditional diplomacy, particularly in an international environment where

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64 Such as rape, sexual slavery (comfort women), sexual mutilation, forced marriage and forced pregnancy.
a priority has been put on the ‘war against terrorism’? (..) And how can we categorise NGOs? They are a diverse sector with differing goals, modi operandi and their own international networks. Most function totally within the law but some rely on direct action. Their reputations may be high in the UK, but much lower in the countries where they function on the ground. They may be popular with the dispossessed and unpopular with governments – conversely, they may be plugged into urban elites, but unknown to the poor – and indeed, unwittingly, they may sustain patron client relations."

Three dilemmas that were addressed by working groups at the conference were phrased as:

• Should and can we effectively create partnerships with NGOs in order to gain greater credibility with overseas publics? The term ‘diplomacy by stealth’ carries an undertone of crouching behind the greater popularity of NGOs. Does this not carry dangers of dilution of message and lack of control of the final message?
• Can we engage NGOs as a means of reducing the appeal of anti-globalisation movements to the politically disaffected?
• Should we seek to engage NGOs, because they enable us to demonstrate we are a pluralistic society that welcomes a diversity of views? Will this be understood in certain societies, or viewed with resentment, particularly if the NGOs’ views and tactics are considered co-terminus with those of Her Majesty’s Government?

Green’s opening remarks clearly illustrate not only the reserve of state institutions to partnering with the NGO sector but also candidly reveal the State’s agenda. Earlier chapters revealed similar sentiments regarding the acknowledgement of the need to work with NGOs, in spite of the lack of enthusiasm to do so. The Commonwealth governments’ concerns illustrate the wider debate among UN member states on inclusive governance. Four main concerns seem to trouble States most. First, the legitimacy of NGOs as unofficial sector is a worry: who is the NGO leadership representing, what checks and balances are in place to guarantee accountability and transparency. States try to ‘separate the good NGOs from the bad’ through excessive registration and regulation in an effort to protect the State from NGO interference in official affairs. Second, there is concern on the control over the end message in State – NGO collaboration, as NGOs are known to be vocal about government performance and might be sympathetic to actors that are in conflict with the State. Third, as a consequence, there is concern over potential damage of NGO criticism to the public image of the governments, both in their home country as well as in relation to Southern governments, known to be less civil society minded. Four, there is the access issue. Governments would like to reach out to for example anti-globalisation movements or reform minded individuals in the Middle East, who are being suppressed by their governments and can not be reached through official channels. In these cases States tend to be concerned over the impartiality of NGOs and their diplomatic abilities

These concerns resonate the official criticism on NGO partnerships in Track Two peace building diplomacy (see chapter II.6) that among others stressed NGO amateurism, manipulation and the lack of even-handedness because of NGO’s close relations to certain constituencies: all of which relate to questions of legitimacy, leadership and control, image and access. The next chapter will analyse the local NGO sectors in Cambodia, Sri Lanka, Indonesia and Myanmar in detail and illustrate how more effective State-NGO collaboration can be facilitated.
VI. Local NGOs in Cambodia, Sri Lanka, Indonesia and Myanmar

This chapter provides an overview of the local NGO sectors in Cambodia, Sri Lanka, Indonesia and Myanmar and describes their history, the impact of violent conflict on their work, who-does-what, State-NGO relations, NGO effectiveness and international aid flows to NGOs. The concluding section provides the background for the analysis of the NGO conflict analysis and response section of the interviews, which is the subject of chapter seven.

6.1 NGO sector at its tenth anniversary

History

Cambodia is traditionally a conservative, agricultural society, characterised by a system of reciprocal relationships between clients and patrons that offers protection in a context where State safety nets are absent. The family forms the basic unit in a typical agricultural society and plays the primary role in meeting the economic, social and emotional needs of its members. Beyond the family, and to some extent beyond the village, societal organisation has been historically weak. This summary is based on the extensive historic analysis of the emergence of civil society in Cambodia done by Yonekura (1998). Under French rule (1868-1953), Cambodians were actively discouraged from self-organisation. Labour unions were banned and even the formation of the Association of Cambodian WWI veterans was opposed. During WWII however, the French organised paramilitary youth groups to fight the Japanese occupation. Upon independence from France in 1953, civil society continued to face obstruction under the rule of Prime Minister Sihanouk (1953-70). Trade unions were not permitted until 1956 and the security forces and Sihanouk's Socialist People's Movement harassed democratic and communist political opponents. After the 1958 election victory, Sihanouk turned his attention to newspaper journalists (like Pracheachon) and members of the Khmer Workers Party. Political leaders were assassinated and candidates and campaign staff were subject to such intimidation, that none stood in the election in 1962.

When the US-Vietnam War broke out in 1962, Sihanouk opted to preserve Cambodia's neutrality and asked US troops to withdraw in 1963. After South Vietnamese military attacks led to civilian casualties on Cambodian soil, Sihanouk broke off diplomatic relations with the US in 1965, accepted aid from China and North Vietnam and youth groups began to demonstrate in anti-US, anti-capitalist protests. Still Sihanouk continued to curb the communist movement and several hundred community leaders disappeared in this period: they were probably assassinated. Among growing opposition, the 1967 Samlaut farmers' rebellion against impending tax collection by the armed forces in North West Cambodia was brutally crushed, numerous farm families were forcibly relocated and as many as 10,000 peasants were killed. The ethnic Chinese community came under attack and the government shut down the Khmer-Chinese Friendship Association in 1967. Saloth Sar (Pol Pot), Ieng Sary and Khieu Samphan, who were to become Khmer Rouge leaders, were among the opposition leaders to flee to North Vietnam in the 1960s. Civil unrest became wide spread and the Communist Party of Kampuchea (CPK) officially declared armed struggle against Sihanouk in late 1967. The intellectuals, businessmen and army leadership initially welcomed the US supported Lon Nol coup in 1970 but the farmers, students and communist sympathisers had little faith in this political shift and continued their armed protest while the critical media voiced their concerns. In 1972 General Lon Nol declared martial law as deadly combat with local armed insurgent groups spread to multiple fronts. In 1975, the few remaining civil and community organisations were closed down by the Khmer Rouge, who nationalised all possessions, forcibly relocated 80% of the population and systematically killed

government officials, professionals and religious and civil society leaders who had not fled the country.

From 1979 to 1990, the Vietnam backed regime continued the one party rule that left no room for private initiative. The international diplomatic and economic boycott prolonged the country’s isolation and boosted the absolute control of the State and armed forces over the people and the economy. Toward the end of the Cold War, peace negotiations began in Paris and, as a sign of good will, a new law was approved in 1989 that provided for some freedom of association, expression and religion. The first local NGOs gained permission to work only in late 1991, after the signing of the Peace Accords and while the UNTAC interim government was being set up. These new NGOs were initiated by three sets of actors: newly released political prisoners under the terms of the Peace Accords (ADHOC), well educated and connected Diaspora leaders who returned to Cambodia (Khemara) and local leaders who had run basic needs projects in the UN run refugee camps on the Thai border.

Impact of conflict on NGO sector

Three decades of local and regional deadly conflict left indigenous civil society completely obliterated by 1979. To bypass the international boycott, European governments provided large donations to international NGOs like ICRC, Oxfam, Novib and CIDSE so that they could supply relief goods, seeds and fertilizers to the Cambodian people who were starving and traumatised from the conflict and faced a famine due to a series of droughts and floods in 1980. By the mid 1980s the Cambodian government granted several of these international NGOs permission to set up local offices and bring in some foreign experts to assist its ministries with technical advice and training in the implementation of infrastructure programmes. However, because direct contact with the local population was not permitted in the 1980s, community-based, sustainable livelihood projects were only initiated when the peace talks began and the restrictions on the freedom of association were relaxed.

The legacy of deadly conflict continues to impact the Cambodian NGO sector. Three main trends can be identified. First, international NGOs with operational programmes still dominate the NGO scene in Cambodia. Their number tripled from 68 in 1992 to 200 in 2002, 80 percent of the total foreign aid budget available to NGOs working in Cambodia is awarded to international NGOs (see section on aid flows for more details). Lack of technical capacity and managerial experience is generally mentioned as the main argument to justify this imbalance. The lack of transparency, checks and balances increases the risk of corruption in local NGO work. Lastly, donor agencies assume that international NGOs are in a better position to protect their operations against ongoing impunity involving high-ranking State officials.

Second, there is a marked divide in the NGO scene between the “Khmer-Khmer” and “Expat-Khmer” led organisations. A good number of local NGOs were founded by returning Cambodians who had spent one or two decades in exile in France, the US and Australia or who had lived and worked in the refugee camps. While their commitment to contribute to the reconstruction of Cambodia is acknowledged, there is animosity among local NGOs founded and run by leaders who stayed put and survived all the hardships. The latter perceive the former with some distrust because they have lost connection with the Khmer society by not having lived through the life altering experiences while in exile. Furthermore, most “Expat Khmer” NGO leaders obtained advanced education and lavish financial backing from their Diaspora country governments for their work. As a consequence, their programmes are more focused on service provision and

56 The only bilateral assistance Cambodia received between 1979 and 1990 came from Vietnam, the USSR and Eastern European countries, governments that were no champions of civil society in their home countries.
policy research while those of "Khmer-Khmer" NGOs, which are generally closer to the rural constituencies, are more membership oriented and active in community development work or mobilisation of specific beneficiaries (e.g., sex workers, battered women) with at best some vertical policy advocacy. This came about in part because "Khmer-Khmer" NGO leaders had little access to formal education and received training mainly in country from international NGOs in the late 1980s and 1990s. Their financial backing comes largely from private European aid agencies.

A third result of the conflict that makes Cambodia deviate from the other case study countries is the comparatively smaller number of membership NGOs. One of the main reasons, besides the young history of the Cambodian NGO sector, is the continued grip of the State and armed forces on daily life, especially in rural areas. With the CPP in power for 25 years now, Hun Sen the longest ruling Prime Minister in Asia and its historical network of loyal village leaders still going strong, it is hard for ordinary citizens to join civil organisations. The number of local associations is growing, but these small community groups find it extremely difficult to obtain financial support. Locally there is none available, because they fail to partake in the programming opportunities the new decentralisation policies provide to them (being unaware of procedures).

Who does what?
The first twelve local NGOs emerged in 1992 but their numbers started to grow rapidly after 1994 when international aid funds started opening up to local initiatives at the close of the UNTAC mission (231 local NGOs by 1996). A second jump in numbers occurred after the 1998 elections that closed a period of high political insecurity: the local NGO sector grew from 118 to 360. Since then there has been moderate net growth of approximately 12 NGOs a year. The number of village associations continues to rise too. In 2002 there were over 400 local NGOs and nearly 600 associations registered with the Cambodian Government. (See Figure 2)

**Figure 2 Growth of local and international NGOs in Cambodia since 1992**

![Graph showing growth of local and international NGOs in Cambodia since 1992](image)


An estimated 13,000 Cambodians are employed in both local and international NGO programmes. In addition, over 40 formal and informal NGO working groups convene at regular intervals on issues of common interest to coordinate and improve the effectiveness of their work.
They are usually geographic or thematic in nature and focus on issues including the environment, gender, community development and socio-economic rights. Informal networks of operational NGOs exist in almost every province and the Cambodian NGO Forum and the Cambodian Coordination Committee (CCC) work in close consultation with these networks, which play an increasingly important role in contributing to an informed dialogue on development practises and policies. There are no data to classify NGOs according to the nature of the organisation.  

The CCC 2003 report provides a sectoral breakdown of NGO projects in nine categories, grouped for this study in the NGO classification presented in Chapter V (Please note that policy advocacy is not identified as a separate category:

- Community development and BSS: 64%
  - 22% rural development
  - 17% education/training
  - 15% health
  - 10% agriculture/environment
- Civil society building: 26%
  - 14% social development
  - 7% human rights
  - 5% organisational development
- Humanitarian aid: 6%
- Others: 4%

Geographically, both local and international NGO programmes cover most provinces, with the highest density in Kandal, Battambang and Phnom Penh. The provinces of Kampong Chham and Banteay Meanchey are close runner-ups. Only a few NGO programmes are found in the six remote, sparsely populated, rainforest clad and mountainous provinces in the North East and South West of the country. (CCC, 2002)

State-NGO relations
Given Cambodia's turbulent recent history, the State-NGO relations have been challenged. The new constitution, drafted under auspices of the United Nations Transitional Authority Committee (UNTAC), granted the full three freedoms and in 1993 the new government signed the UN Covenants on political and civil rights and on socio, economic and cultural rights. New local NGOs proved serious competition for the ineffective local government that was involved in fierce bipartisan political combat. This affected both the State's capacity to mobilise foreign donor funds and retention of qualified local personnel because NGO salaries were generally double those in the government sector and their work environments were more conducive to structural development work. The progress in building civil society building came under threat with the coup of July 1997. The increasing State intolerance of dissent and criticism and the continued political and military rivalry between members of the ruling coalition, created an atmosphere of fear and intimidation throughout the country. It undermined the free exercise of political and civil rights, including the three freedoms, especially in rural areas. The commune elections of 2002 and the national elections of 2003 brought renewed victory to the CPP and more political turmoil.

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The CCC 2003 report classifies the local NGOs in four main categories: 1. Development organisations involved in education, health, credit, income-generation and other rural and urban development activities aimed at improving the lives of poor people; 2. Democracy and Human Rights organisations committed to promoting democratic principles and respect for human rights through policy, training and other advocacy work; 3. Support Service organisations focusing on human resource and organisation development training activities, as well as facilitating networking and advocacy related activities; 4. Community based organisations and associations that are taking on a more active role in participating and directly managing their own development processes.
State control of the three freedoms limited the activity of NGOs. Of the three freedoms, the freedom of association was the least challenged over the past decade. However, recent law reforms, registration and intimidation practises now threaten this as well. Some NGOs face difficulties in the registration process and are forced to pay huge bribes in anticipation of foreign aid contributions. Human rights, legal aid and women’s organisations, which question State performance on a regular basis, are especially likely to be threatened by authorities, their staff taken for questioning, materials confiscated and meetings interrupted.

The freedom of expression through print media is better guaranteed than that through broadcast media, though the 2002 Human rights reports presented a long list of cases of intimidation of journalists. In 2003 three journalists were shot and killed in broad daylight by unknown gangs. State control of the radio and TV broadcasting is quite strategic, with eighty percent of the population, most of whom are effectively illiterate, living in rural areas. Access to information through newspapers and other written publications is thus limited to the vast majority of the nation by both physical access and literacy. The freedom of assembly has been under pressure since 1997. The law on demonstration is vague and obtaining permission is extremely difficult. This lack of clear legal guidance empowers the government to take arbitrary measures against demonstrators and suspend the right to assembly for prolonged periods if state security so demands. Furthermore, small demonstrations are often disturbed by hired, armed youth gangs who intimidate and violate protesters. (Forum Asia 1999, ADHOC 2002)

NGO results

Given their unique history and close interaction with international aid agencies, local NGOs in Cambodia are well versed in current development issues; as a result, participatory planning methods, gender equity components, conflict prevention and human rights advocacy efforts, small arms lobbying and general development advocacy can meet up with the work of mature NGO sectors in Sri Lanka and Indonesia. The senior NGO leadership is well connected internationally, quite proficient in the English language and oriented to modern media as a result of Cambodia’s unique transition process and the international attention it has received over the past decade.

At the same time, three major problems jeopardize the efficiency and effectiveness of NGOs in Cambodia: the imbalance between international and local NGOs, the competition between ministries and NGOs over resources and the political violence and corruption. Starting with the international NGOs, the imbalance affects NGO effectiveness at the core. Most international NGOs spend about half of their country budget on field offices, trainers, monitoring staff and overhead, putting a strain on the efficiency of the NGO work in Cambodian. International NGOs not only spend their own resources on their operational programmes, but they are more successful than local NGOs in obtaining additional bilateral and multilateral funding. This international aid donor bias is explained by three factors: the ability of international NGOs to absorb large donations, the fear for political partiality of NGOs and the presumed susceptibility of local NGOs to corruption and/or corrupt local officials.

The Phnom Penh Post reported a case of registration corruption at the Ministry of Interior in their 10 August 2004 issue. Paraphrased: The Ministry of Interior (Mol) is allegedly requiring local NGOs to pay registration bribes of up to $500, or face delays of up to three years in the processing of documents. The Literature Association of Sweden-Cambodia lodged a complaint with the government after Mol officials told them last June that amendments were required to their documents, but the registration process could be fast-tracked for a fee of $500. Mr. Sak Setha, Deputy Director General of the Administration Department at the Mol, admitted to the Post that corruption did occur but he denied bribes were as high as alleged: "I recognize that my employees have sold application forms for 10,000 to 15,000 riel, but not $500." A draft law on local associations and non-governmental organisations was written in early 2002, setting out processes for registering with the Mol, but is not yet official legislation. The official registration is free and the procedure should take six weeks. International NGOs need to register with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.
Preventing Deadly Conflict in Divided Societies in Asia

Corruption is a society-wide problem. With persistent absolute poverty, short-term planning frames and a poor example set by political and military leaders; the NGO sector has suffered from corruption and lack of accountability too. Cambodian NGOs have acknowledged the importance of strengthening their governance structures and management systems to ensure transparency and accountability, particularly to the communities and people with whom they work. A local NGO working group developed the “NGO Code of Ethics” in 1996; it is a form of self-regulation to promote quality and professional standards within the NGO community. All members of the CCC signed up to this Code, publish annual reports and report to external boards. In the same spirit and in an effort to strengthen civil society’s contribution and to encourage greater citizen participation in the development of the country, local and international NGOs jointly advocated for a supportive legal framework for NGOs, which would both structure the NGO sector and protect it against illegal intrusion. This has not rooted out corruption but it has resulted in the moral commitment of the NGO leadership to uphold the highest standards.

Lastly, the competition between ministries and NGOs is another long-standing issue that jeopardises the sustainability of development efforts. Cambodian ministries are grossly under-funded, poorly staffed and subject to corrupt leadership. Their efficiency and horizontal networking with grassroots constituencies is poor because they lack both the essential means (e.g., no vehicles, no petrol) and vision by their largely incompetent staff. Larger local NGOs do make systematic efforts to include government officials in their training and development programmes, but the process is frustrating and the temptation to “do it yourself” is ever present.

Aid flows to NGOs
Contrary to common perception, the Cambodian NGOs receive a level of foreign contributions similar to that in other countries because 80% of foreign aid to NGOs is directed to international NGOs. In 2002 77 US dollars million went to a total of 200 international NGOs, while 407 local NGOs divided 19.3 million $US. It is interesting to note that while the number of local NGOs nearly doubled between 1996 and 2000, the foreign aid budget allotted to them remained more or less the same. Only in 2002 did the local NGO budget substantially increase. Even at 2002 figures, the average annual budget of the 407 local NGO stands at 47,000US$, which is only 12% of the average for their international counterparts (385,000US$). (See figure 3)

Figure 3 Summary of NGO contributions in million US$
6.2 NGO challenge to revive civil society after 20 years of civil war

History
Some local scholars argue that organised civil activism in Sri Lanka dates back to pre-colonial times. Its rich and diverse civil society is reflected in the local NGO sector. Most NGOs predate the more recent international aid agencies interests in strengthening civil-society. Local membership NGOs active in community development and education emerged in the 1950s and 1960s, while human rights and interracial justice groups were founded in the late 1970s and early 1980s in response to ethno-nationalist inspired, exclusionary policies, which raised widespread protest that spiralled into violent clashes and culminated in the armed conflict in the North and East. The role of the Sri Lankan NGO sector has evolved since independence with the changing political times. From 1956–1965 and 1970–1977 Sri Lanka had socialist governments that promoted so-called “State capitalism,” in which large private enterprises (like the tea and rubber estates) were nationalised and basic social service delivery was monopolised by the State as the sole actor in welfare and development activities. Bastian and Fernando (2003, p.27) conclude that this policy mindset only shifted after 1977, when the State policy toward private service delivery changed and international and local NGOs were allowed to receive foreign aid donations and shoulder part of basic service delivery. As a result, both foreign and local NGOs proliferated; Wickramasinghe (2001) estimates that 65 percent of the local NGOs were established after 1977.

Impact of conflict on NGO sector
Sri Lanka has been immersed in a civil war since 1983, which has had a deep impact on the development of the local NGO sector. The indigenous NGO scene of the North and East is all but destroyed by the armed confrontations and intimidation tactics of the warring parties. During the first ten years of the war, many Tamil political and civil society leaders lost their lives (many in inter-group confrontations) or fled to settle abroad or hide in the South. International NGOs and the ICRC have been working in the war zones since the ICRC was officially admitted into the country in the late 1980s. They have recruited and trained a new local cadre of potential future NGO leaders. Meanwhile, the handful of remaining local NGOs can be found in the politically more articulate Jaffna peninsula, work under strict control of the LTTE, which was instrumental in the foundation of several new, associated NGOs (e.g., TRRO, Roots). Attempts by local and international NGOs to revive civil society in the impoverished, under-organised, multi ethnic Eastern province, have been hampered by the lack of experienced leadership and the fear of forming associations in areas unofficially controlled by the LTTE. North- and East-based reconciliation programmes run by NGOs from the South are mostly event or campaign based and subject to continued criticism from both the warring sides and the Tamil population at large, which feels Southern NGOs are not doing enough to redress their predicament. The 2002 ceasefire agreement led to a frenzy of project identification missions in 2002 in anticipation of massive international reconstruction and peacebuilding donations. But when the peace talks stalled in April 2003 and snap polls brought an alternative cabinet to power in April 2004, the North East reconstruction planning came to a standstill.

NGOs in the South were affected as well. Rural development NGOs had to cope with increasing poverty in the South and lack of resources, as a result of global macro economic reforms and diversion of the state budget to the war. Most human rights and communal harmony (the term commonly used in Sri Lankan for peaceful co-existence) NGOs in the South were formed in the 1980s and worked to mobilise their constituencies in the South to rally for peaceful resolution to the Tamil conflict. The NGO leaders came from all walks of life: law makers and lawyers formed the Civil Rights Movement (CRM, 1977); social workers, artists and journalists initiated the Movement for Inter-Racial Justice and Equality (MIRJE, 1982); state high school teachers who had lost their jobs because they protested against the State violence in 1983, launched the
Movement for the Defence of Democratic Rights (MDDR) and Women for Peace held peace marches to parliament every Friday for two years (1987). They all came literally under fire at different stages of the conflict, but most notably during the violent armed JVP uprising in the South (1987-89) and during the Presidential Inquiry Commission in the Premadasa era (1991-93). All NGOs survived these attacks on their existence and most continue their work in some form. The existence of local NGOs was deeply affected by the war in two fundamental ways: it affected the NGO’s ability to attract young leadership and limited the ability to network horizontally to maintain cross community ties. Chapter VII will elaborate on these trends.

It is important to reiterate that at the heart of the Sri Lankan conflict lays a crisis of the State. The DFID conflict report (2001) perceives the “Singhalisation” of the State as a manifestation of a deeper problem of the failure of the State to institutionalise politics, which eroded the institutions and norms governing democratic behaviour.

“Dynastic politics and a concentration of political power are symptomatic of the widespread belief that political power is derived from patronage rather than from performance. The undemocratic, personalised and exclusionary nature of the Singhalese politics has been a significant factor in the evolution of the JVP conflict. Growing poverty in the Deep South (the JVP power base), political and social exclusion, an inability of the state to devolve power and deliver, as well as the growing corruption proved to be a combustible cocktail. Increasingly, conflict is managed through the state’s security and counter-insurgency armed groups, rather than through inclusive institutions and democratic practices.” (DFID, 2001, p.31-33)

Who does what?
Fernando (2003) estimates that the numbers of local NGOs active in Sri Lanka varied from a low of 293 local and 50 international NGOs (which included only professional development NGOs) to a high of 10,000 (including village associations). The Department of Social Services estimates that there are 2,167 NGOs and Community Based Organisations (CBOs). The 1995 IRED NGO directory, which is the only reliable and detailed source (albeit outdated), classified local development NGOs into six sectors (humanitarian assistance was not part of this inventory):

- Community development: 54%
  28% participatory development and empowerment
  26% social welfare
- Civil society building: 19%
  11% human rights
  9% environment
- Policy advocacy: 8%
  8% research
- Others: 12%

Geographically, most NGOs are headquartered in the South. The IRED directory reports that even though 159 (or 50%) of the ‘professional’ development NGOs claim to be national level NGOs, only a small portion of them has programmes throughout the country. The geographical spread of NGO projects is clustered around Colombo and in the North East border regions that separate the warring parties and hold most internally displaced people: Jaffna, Killinochchi, Mannar, Puttalamp and Vavuniya. Fernando suggests this NGO concentration reflects neglected government development duties and sizable foreign humanitarian aid funds available to international NGOs to care for the victims of the war. Local NGOs in the poor southern provinces of Sri Lanka have been complaining that little assistance is directed to them because most international aid is directed to humanitarian needs. The donor assistance in the South is concentrated in four districts that have suffered most from macro economic policy changes: Hambantatota, Moneragala, Badulla and Nuwara Eliya. (Fernando, 2003, p.19)
Local NGOs in Cambodia, Sri Lanka, Indonesia and Myanmar

In the North and East, eight major international humanitarian NGOs dominate the scene with large operational programmes in the North East. Some of these NGOs also work in the South. They are the NGO partners of choice to most aid agencies because of their presumed neutrality, their international logistic operation networks and their institutional experience. In addition, most of these NGOs, including Save the Children Fund UK, Oxfam GB, Forum and CARE, make small grants to local NGOs and community groups working in conflict affected areas but they bring in little or no funding of their own. Multi- and bilateral aid agencies have subcontracted the small grant making programmes to NGOs as part of the relief efforts to international NGOs as well because external monitoring of such grants in conflict zones is next to impossible.

State-NGO relations
The relationship between NGOs and the Sri Lankan State has always been asymmetrical, in favour of the latter. In the first two decades following independence, however, there was limited interaction but this changed as the ethnic conflict hardened in the 1970s. The Presidential Commission of Enquiry into NGOs marked the lowest point in State-NGO relations. The Commission, founded in 1991 by UNP President Premadasa, publicly accused leading local NGOs of “misuse of funds, political mingling and destabilizing the country.” NGO peace building work that promoted peace with justice for the Tamil people was targeted in particular. The investigation started with the Sarvodaya Shramadana Movement and MIRJE, but was soon expanded to a wider NGO circle, including most human rights NGOs. International donor pressure took some of the political heat off the process and after the assassination of President Premadasa, the Commission was dissolved with a low key report. Only a year later, in 1994, the same NGOs played a significant role in the electoral victory of the political People’s Alliance, which came to power with a pro-active peace agenda. At the same time, two national NGO networks became increasingly active in voter education and election monitoring in an attempt to strengthen the peace process through democratic means. Optimism and an opening of space marked this period for NGOs.

Unfortunately, the ceasefire held for only six months; the war resumed in April 1995 and the PA President Kumaratunga soon shifted to a “war-for-peace” campaign that put the peace building NGOs in the wrong corner again. Major confrontations followed over the next five years, including the break up of the first locally convened conference of the International NGO Forum and a movement by the PA government to direct confrontation vis-à-vis local NGOs after the Provincial Council elections of 1998 and the National elections of 2000. Accused of widespread election malpractices, violence and misuse of power by officials, President Kumaratunga lashed out in the media, claiming the NGO statements were driven by foreign donors and calling upon major bilateral aid agencies to stop their funding of NGO good governance projects. In the most violent national election ever (2001), which gave voters a choice between all-out war and negotiated peace, the UNP won and negotiated a ceasefire in February 2002. As a result of the polarised State – NGO context and the unorthodox (controversial) negotiation strategy that combined high speed peace negotiations in the North with radical neo-liberal economic reforms in the South to jump start the Sri Lankan economy, the local NGO sector and civil society at large bypassed and excluded from the peace and development dialogue over the next two years. This ultimately weakened the people’s support for the government when tough peace settlement issues came to the table in 2003; the UNP was defeated in a snap poll in April 2004.

The Sri Lankan three freedoms analysis conducted by a group of human rights NGOs in 1997 concluded that the marked problems had been with the freedoms of assembly and expression. Years of State of Emergency and the Prevention of Terrorism Act (PTA) have curtailed civil and political freedoms and led to gross human rights abuses. In 1999, a law made NGO registration
with the Sri Lanka NGO secretariat mandatory. By 2003 nearly 400 local NGOs had registered and 167 applications were in process. So far no cases of problematic registration have been reported, but with the ceasefire in jeopardy and the PTA still in force, the NGO sector is on alert.

Freedom of expression remains under threat. The main newspapers are controlled by the government, as are the main TV stations. Security laws and imminent threats of resuming war severely limit liberty of the press. Intimidation and assassination of journalists is a recurring feature in Sri Lankan society and leads to varying degrees of self-censorship. In a country with high literacy rates and well-developed infrastructure, NGOs have managed to circulate their reports to wider audiences through alternative means, often working closely with academia. Information dissemination in conflict zones and in the impoverished central highland provinces is, however, problematic and, in the absence of free and fair, factual information, local leaders with ulterior motives regularly manipulate ethnic tensions.

Wickramasinghe (2001, p.84) pointedly recapped State-NGO relations over the past three decades in three phases: from indifference in the 1970s, to ambivalence in the 1980s, to open confrontation in the 1990s. In the early 21st century, it seems that the stage of indifference is recurring among officials, given the lack of State investment in Track Two peace diplomacy efforts. Will this sequence continue to repeat itself in future?

NGO results
The NGO sector has long played an important role in the human rights and social justice debate in the country, alternating between the national "moral" conscience pressing for non-violent resolution to the conflict and the watchdog. International advocacy work, most notably during the annual sessions at the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights in Geneva, was quite successful in putting pressure on the Sri Lankan government to respect the civil rights of its citizens and allow the ICRC to operate freely in the war zones. The backlash against local advocacy NGOs by extremist Sinhalese groups is interpreted by DFID as an indicator of NGO effectiveness. However, the political violence more likely came in response to the successful international agenda setting of sensitive human rights issues, which does not necessarily prove the effectiveness of local NGOs to build alternative cultural capital at home. (see chapter VII)

With regard to basic service delivery, local NGOs scaled-up their development activities in the 1990s and became key implementing partners (or sub-contracted agencies), for example in the World Bank-supported Janasaviya Trust Fund, a national poverty-alleviation programme that aimed to redress the negative impact of the Structural Adjustment Programmes on the rural poor. Its successor, the Samurdhi programme, was critical of NGO performance in the Janasaviya and changed the partner strategy in 1996, trying to and partner with build village associations. Several major NGOs did not participate in either programme because they rejected the subcontractor status and had been vocal in criticising the IMF/World Bank promoted macro economic policies and programmes. As an alternative source, several NGOs developed micro credit banks in the 1990s, including Sarvodaya's SEEDS programme and Alterbank, a women's banking programme.

69 They recruited 3,000 unemployed educated youth to work as village level coordinators and establish networks of local community based groups. The programme became a bureaucratic disaster, as the village associations lacked the management and oversight structures of professional NGOs and needed too much oversight while their delivery capacity was small. (Fernando, 2003)
Aid flows to NGOs
Sri Lanka has historically been one of the highest per capita development aid recipient countries. Aid in the 1960s and 1970s was focused on support to the State. Since the deadly conflict started in the 1980s, donors have also been providing humanitarian aid to the North East. One of the defining characteristics of aid in Sri Lanka is its spatial division between relief and rehabilitation aid to the North East and development assistance to the South. Three donors provide 85% of development funding to Sri Lanka: the World Bank, Asian Development Bank (ADB) and the Japanese International Cooperation Agency (JICA). All three are known to provide only limited support to local NGOs.

The main NGO donors are bilateral agencies from Great Brittan, Canada, the Netherlands and Scandinavia and international funding NGOs like Brot fur die Welt, CIDSE, Novib, Christian Aid and others. Aid agencies support NGO activities in a range of sectors including sustainable livelihoods programmes, micro credit, human rights, peace and reconciliation, the media and election monitoring. Through the 1990s, bilateral donors increased the proportion of aid directed toward NGOs. This partly reflected international policy shifts towards governance and State-civil society partnerships. It may also have been a result of the changing political climate. Several donors also supported the building of civil society in other ways.

As there is no comprehensive registration system in place yet, the size of the direct funding to local NGOs can only be roughly estimated. The government’s NGO investigation Commission estimated in 1993 that 22% of the total foreign aid was received by local NGOs. However, the NGO Forum calculated that US$ 25 million went to NGOs in 1995, resulting in a figure of less than 5% (according to the World Bank Sri Lanka received US$ 540m in foreign aid in 1995). Due to Sri Lankan economic growth rates, changing donor priorities and a crisis in the local development NGO scene in the late 1990s, the donor contributions to NGOs show a steady downward trend (excluding the relief operations in the North East). In 2004 Sri Lanka was to receive app. US$ 340 million, which would make the contribution to local NGOs amount to less than US$ 20 million. The international donations to humanitarian aid work of UN, IRCI and international NGOs in the North and East amounted to US$ 17.8m (DFID, 2001, p.10)

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70 DFID’s 2001 conflict assessment lists among others: The Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) allocated money toward a Good Governance and Institutional Strengthening (GGIS) project and established a Human Rights Fund and a Peace Fund. The Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA) funds a Centre for the Study of Human Rights at the University of Colombo. The Asia Foundation is focusing on human rights and democratisation Issues. The Norwegian Agency for International Development (NORAD), an important donor of civil society strengthening activities in addition to working with the government, helped establish the National Integration Policy Unit (NIPU) through the Ministry of Ethnic Affairs and National Integration.

71 Please note that the contributions to international NGOs active in humanitarian work are most likely all excluded from these figures as they are operational programmes. The DFID report quotes a figure of 17m US$ relief aid extended in 2000. The foreign aid figures were taken from the World Bank Millennium Goals Sri Lanka profile: http://devdata.worldbank.org/idg/IDGProfile.asp?CCODE=1&K&A&CNAME=Sri.lanka&SelectedCountry=1&KA
6.3 NGO renaissance in wake of three decades New Order regime

History
The first formal Indonesian civil society organisations emerged during the Dutch colonial period. They were charitable associations working for the poor, often in education and religion. Muslim religious leaders established Muhamadiyah in 1920 to provide education to poor Muslim children who failed to enter the formal (colonial) school system. Following independence, civil society began to flourish. Ethno-nationalist groups advocated for regional autonomy in the early 1950s, new farmers and workers unions emerged and grew strong in the late 1950s, while grassroots village associations were formed around the country. The events of 1965, however, changed the context of Indonesian civil society forever. In the chaos surrounding the gradual military takeover that brought General Suharto and his New Order regime to power in 1966, around the country over 600,000 local civil society leaders accused of Marxist sympathies were killed. The massacres intentionally shattered the local leadership and paralysed the local NGO and trade union sector and it took nearly 15 years to begin to recover.

The New Order regime applied a strict “Security Approach” that relied on coercive, bureaucratic and strict military measures to prevent open violent conflict. On top of the dramatic loss of civil leadership, the government systematically replaced local Adat leadership with Javanese bureaucrats who were to represent the interests of the central government. This further eroded the local capacity to mediate violent conflict. Private grassroots or special interest group initiatives were suppressed, while at the same time business, religious and intellectual elites were co-opted and favoured. This proved an effective approach to uniting the nation and controlling society for the next 30 years but it did not build a nation that was able to bridge the deepening cultural cleavages or resolve its social conflicts (Malley, 2001).

In the late 1970s new community development NGOs were formed to address the poor socio-economic conditions in Java and Sumatra. As Indonesia entered a period of unprecedented economic growth in the 1980s, NGO formation proliferated in response to emerging development and social justice issues, ranging from economic distribution issues to human rights, gender and environment. A new generation of NGO leadership emerged from former student activists groups in Bandung and Yogyakarta and established NGOs that aimed at becoming the “third pillar” in the country’s political system (in addition to the State and business sector). This created tension with the old NGO leadership, which had focussed more on service delivery within the system. In Benturaden in 1990, a strategic consultation of local NGOs was held to find an answer to the increasing State development hegemony. A six step action plan was adopted to strengthen the vision and mission of local NGOs, which failed to obtain the support of the big NGOs. (ADB, 1999, p.13) The rapid expansion of the NGO sector is also attributed to a rift between the older and younger leadership in mature NGOs that led young leaders to break away and form new NGOs, as well as to efforts of civil society leaders to seize opportunities to generate community employment and access international development aid.

By 1999, nearly 8,000 local NGOs were working across the country and 100 at the national level. Mansur Fakih, a renowned NGO expert, divided the local NGO scene before 1998 into three groups: those that adapt, those that reform and those that strive for transformation. The first group adapted to the development policy of the government and participated in the basic service delivery work without a clear institutional vision. The reformers aimed at strengthening civil society in the context of the authoritarian, growth oriented development ideology of the New Order regime. A minority of NGOs focussed on transformative change and challenged the macro-

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\[72\] Traditional village governance system
economic development ideology of the New Order regime by, for example, engaging in participatory research methods and producing reports for international advocacy purposes. (Lan, 2002)

**Impact of conflict on NGO sector**

When the radical political transition suddenly materialised in 1998, space for civil society opened up overnight. Mature NGOs, like YLBHI, ELSAM and WALHI, which played an important role in the NGO pro-democracy movement during the Suharto era, tried to reposition and adjust to the new reality. The newly elected Wahid government adopted part of the NGO reform agenda and absorbed a number of former activists in government, including President Wahid. The NGOs also partnered more closely with student activists and community associations in their programmes. When the impeachment process of President Wahid unfolded in 2000, confusion over the NGO role in the transformation process grew. At an online conference "Addressing the Sources of Insecurity in Indonesia" convened by the Harvard Program on Humanitarian Policy and Conflict Research in June 2001, some participants voiced the sentiment that local NGOs lack a clear mission and this creates confusion about their role in an era of reform. They made a connection between the historic sectoral focus of NGOs and their capacity today.

> "Causes such as biodiversity and the environment are viewed as safe non-political terrain, and are thus popular with international donors. This focus has encouraged Indonesian NGOs to frame, if not always to conduct, their activities in these terms, rather than to confront issues such as class inequality or land struggles. Some believe that this tendency may have compromised their ability to represent the interests of local communities."  

Other NGOs were formed as a direct response to the political transition; they aimed to address the violent turmoil surrounding it and work on the electoral process. The National Commission on Prevention of Violence against Women (Komnas Perempuan) for example, was established by Presidential Decree in 1998 after strong joint lobbying by Indonesian women’s NGOs. Komnas Perempuan summarised six types of violence whose impact on women the programmes tried to address in their report to the UN Beijing +5 conference in 2000: 1) Separatist movements (Aceh and West Papua); 2) Inter-religious and interethnic conflicts between indigenous people and immigrants, as the result of years of strife over control and access to resources (Kalimantan, Moluccas, Sulawesi); 3) Religion manipulated to become a tool of violence (Aceh, Moluccas, East Java); 4) Orchestrated violence in "military zones" (Timor, Aceh, West Papua); 5) Arbitrary arrests and executions, especially between late 1998 and mid 1999, as one of the last acts of the New Order regime (nationwide); and 6) Racism towards the ethnic Chinese population (Java).

Local NGOs in Aceh, Moluccas and Papua have been persistently documenting human rights abuses and disappearances, promoting continued tolerance of Islam and seeking a negotiated end to the violence. Yet an Indonesia - Harvard Internet conference in 2001/2 concluded that NGOs in the region remain weak, with a low capacity for making connections both among themselves and with other actors, including the international media. Intimidation from both GAM and the State limits the ability of Aceh NGOs to criticize actions, reveal human rights abuses and affect self-censorship. Like the Tamil groups in Sri Lanka, NGOs in Aceh face a dilemma of allegiance to warring parties that hinders their ability to empower civil society and has prevented them from receiving support from international donor governments who support the territorial integrity of Indonesia. The 2001 facilitated dialogue between GAM and the government did not involve NGOs and further frustrated the attempts of the NGO community to play a role as peacemakers.

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Preventing Deadly Conflict in Divided Societies in Asia

The Ford Foundation conducted a survey in 2001 into the response of local NGOs to the challenges posed by the transformation and found NGOs focussed on three areas of conflict: First, NGOs aim to expose and discredit systematic acts of political violence, like campaigns that appeal to religious, ethnic, class or nationalistic and xenophobic sentiments. Second, conflicts over natural resources are a main cause of conflict. NGOs support (indigenous) communities affected by multinational or domestic private sector activities: maltreatment and abuse cases include illegal land expropriation, labour exploitation and severe environmental degradation as a result of unsustainable mining and logging practices. NGOs facilitate agreement negotiations for affected groups, seek redress for abuses through legal aid, advocate for legal reform, and try to mitigate immediate consequences through community development and social services projects. Lastly, NGOs are concerned about increasing acts of terrorism, the war on terror and the Islamic Jihad. Their responses include raising public awareness, initiating dialogues involving religious leaders and human rights advocates as well as providing humanitarian aid to victims of raids, bomb attacks and violence against women. Human rights and peace building NGOs continue to operate under close State scrutiny, as proved by the deportation order of ICG’s regional director, based in Jakarta.⁷⁴

In the new millennium, many new NGOs and associations have been formed to advocate for the needs and rights of particular communities and to respond to the Decentralisation Act that took effect in 2001 and promotes participatory planning and decision making of development programmes at the provincial level. Furthermore, international aid agencies expanded or established new programmes in Indonesia to promote good governance, strengthen civil society and democratic institutions, protect the environment and work with indigenous people. As large sums became available, NGOs formed by civil groups were joined by those founded by former civil servants, businessmen and military leaders. Lacking a clear civil society vision, NGO ethics, legitimacy and management experience, and many new NGO projects have been prone to corruption and failure. Amidst wide speculation and accusations of fraud and corruption, international aid agencies are now reconsidering their approach and look for international NGOs to act as go-betweens or to take over the implementation of civil society building projects. Many older NGOs feel UN and international agencies share part of the blame because they invested large amounts of funding without a vision of the future of civil society in Indonesia. Now the good name of the local NGO sector is at stake and the trust between development stakeholders needs to be rebuilt.

Who does what?
At the start of the transformation process approximately 8,000 local NGOs were active in the country. According to Kastorius Sinaga, this number grew to 13,400 officially registered NGOs in 2001. The UNSFIR (2001) reached a more moderate conclusion in the same year and estimated that the number of professional NGOs increased from 1,200 in 1997 to 1,270 in 2000. Growth is

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⁷⁴ ICG’s Southeast Asia Director Sidney Jones and Analyst Francesca Lawe-Davies were ordered to leave Indonesia "immediately" on 1 June 2004. The letter made no specific charges against Jones and Lawe-Davies but stated that they were in violation of immigration laws. The order follows public statements by National Intelligence Agency head, General Hendropriyono that ICG’s reports were “not all true and damage the country’s image”. No member of the government took responsibility for initiating moves to expel Jones and her assistant, but early this year a letter from the National Intelligence Agency (BIN) to the Ministry of Labour resulted in a freeze on work permits for ICG staff. The ICG never saw that letter, but it is understood it stated BIN was unhappy with ICG reports on Aceh and Papua. Since establishing its Jakarta office in 2000, ICG has published 37 reports and briefing papers on conflict related issues, including Aceh, Papua, the Jemaa h Islamiyah terrorist movement, communal violence and the transition from military to civilian rule. ICG’s President, former Australian Foreign Minister Gareth Evans, said “the expulsion order is outrageous and indefensible, utterly at odds with Indonesia’s claim to be an open and democratic society, and is bound to damage Indonesia’s reputation far more than ICG’s”. (Source: www.icg.org)
Local NGOs in Cambodia, Sri Lanka, Indonesia and Myanmar

concentrated in sectors related to media, trade unionism, legal aid and gender. UNSFIR concludes that NGO work is still concentrated in particular geographic areas and involves only a small part of the civil society at large. See attached charts for the growth of NGOs in top sectors and sectoral NGO work around the country.

An ADB report (1999) on the Indonesian NGO sector divides it in four categories:

- National level/grass roots development NGOs (basic needs service delivery)
- National level/grass roots mobilisation (empowerment oriented community development);
- National level/human rights and social justice NGOs;
- Local level/awareness building NGOs.

State-NGO relations

From the onset, the New Order regime responded unfavourably to the emergence of development NGOs and the pro-democracy movement. The State had already organized mass organisations like the SPSI (All Indonesia Workers Union), the HKTI (Indonesian Peasants Association) and similar unions for other groups like students, youth and civil servants. The ADB report (1999, p.20-22) summarizes three additional reasons for building tensions: the deep difference on desirable development models, people’s participation, etc.; the lack of recognition of NGOs as partners in development; and the uneasiness over the delivery capacity of NGOs in remote areas.

The State collaborated with a couple of larger rural NGO networks in-service delivery programmes, while NGOs promoting alternative development strategies were restrained in their activities. Law 8/1985 was specially designed for that purpose and laid out four rules: all NGOs had to affirm the Pancasila state-ideology principles in their statutes and defend it in their work (the so-called Aza S Tunggal); all NGOs needed to apply for registration with the government, which could be denied, or else risk scrutiny by security forces; all NGOs had to work under a single umbrella organisation; and finally all NGOs could be dissolved if they are deemed disruptive of public order (Art. 13 and 14). The latter rule instructed international funding agencies to obtain prior State approval on major funding decisions as well, but only the locally represented agencies abided by that rule. (ELSHAM, 1999) Because State approval would have been withheld from most civil society building NGOs and even from many NGOs from the reform school, most NGOs never applied. This made them subject to harassment by the security forces that raided offices, confiscated dossiers and intimidated NGO staff.

Another tension rose over the use of the term NGO. The State denounced the term as being too politicised and creating the impression that they could take over or interfere with government responsibility. Hence, the term Lembaga Swadaya Masyarakat (LSM or self-reliant community institutions) was introduced. NGOs from the transformation school opposed the term, arguing that the name implied that they could only function as support partners to government policies, as a kind of social worker, instead of creators of and activists for alternative development programmes independent from government.

NGO results

The effectiveness of NGO work is under attack. The mature NGOs were criticized in 1999 for lacking a clear vision and mission in the political transformation that took everyone by surprise. Some NGOs decided to support the new Wahid led regime and ran into problems when the President was impeached. On the other hand new NGOs received substantial donor support in the early days, without having a solid vision and legitimacy with the constituencies they were supposed to represent. Inefficiency and corruption increased. In response, the international community increased its funding for good governance and civil society building programmes to UNDP, World Bank, ADB, etc and made them “gate keepers” for NGO financial support.
Preventing Deadly Conflict in Divided Societies in Asia

(Lounela, 2002) However, the multilateral oversight over civil society creates several problems, as they have top down and bureaucratic systems. Their overhead costs are huge and their policy to post UN volunteers in civil society programmes instead of highly skilled professionals. Another international aid strategy to avoid working with inefficient State and local NGOs, is to provide direct funding to local governments under the Decentralization Act and to provide donations in kind to NGOs (e.g., in Aceh, NGOs could sign up to receive a standard package, consisting of a computer, a bicycle, a phone, etc. in 2002). Most local NGOs however, still remain committed to the cause and continue their work under less favourable circumstances.

Another setback for the mature pro-democracy NGO group was the departure of many of its senior leaders. An increasingly popular donor strategy is to engage in operational programmes, either directly or in collaboration with the UN. To staff these multiple good governance, democratization and conflict prevention programmes, experienced NGO leaders were offered leading management and advisory positions, which many accepted, disappointed as they were with the direction the rapidly expanding NGO sector was taking and keen to accept the challenge in Indonesia’s crucial transition phase to try and make participatory governance work. Some experts forecast that it will take the local NGO sector ten years to rebuild the expertise.

Aid flows to NGOs
Efforts to mobilise domestic funds have generally been unsuccessful in Indonesia; except for the larger, rural development networks, like Bina Swadaya that are oriented to service delivery. They have partnered with the government and large international funders because they have the professional staff to manage their sizable operations. Many leaders of smaller NGOs were connected to the larger NGOs in the past, but the size of their operations is much smaller. They became popular in the 1990s, because they are considered more connected at the grassroots level and combine horizontal project strategies with vertical advocacy work, either done by the same group or in networking with advocacy NGOs. (ADB, 1999)
6.4 Civil society void and NGOs in exile

History
While the British colonial rulers permitted the formation of independent Burmese organisations, a rich civil society developed only after independence and predominantly in the major cities and towns. When violent conflicts broke out around 1950 between the State and different minority groups, political movements like the Burma Communist Party and the Karen nationalist movement went underground. Still, civil organisations continued to mushroom in places like Rangoon and Mandalay. There were numerous library clubs, student organisations and professional associations. As literacy and the interest in politics were widespread, universities organised public debates, speakers corners appeared in public parks and the Burma Journalists' Association provided a forum for promoting press freedom. The first limits on civil society occurred during the brief interim government of General Ne Win in 1958; journalists and writers were imprisoned, several newspapers were closed and restrictive colonial press laws were reinforced. (ICG, 2001) After Prime Minister U Nu was voted back into office in 1960, civil society lobbied hard to restore political and civil rights but their hopes were crushed two years later when the military coup of March 1962 effectively ended democratic rule. Within weeks, the Parliament and Supreme Court were dissolved, the Constitution suspended and the Revolutionary Council under leadership of General Ne Win took full executive, legislative and judicial authority.

The military Junta gradually replaced independent civil organisations like the Burma Journalists' Association with government-controlled associations or put them under military leadership (e.g., the National Workers', the Peasants' Associations). Student protests were crushed and the historic Rangoon University Students' Union was outlawed. A year later, large industries and business enterprises, as well as private schools and missionary hospitals were nationalised. In 1964, the National Solidarity Act banned all political parties except the newly formed Burma Socialist Programme Party (BSPP). The Printers and Publishers Registration Law of 1962 instituted State censorship over all publications and is still enforced today. Freedom of expression effectively ended in 1969, when the last private newspapers were closed leaving only government-controlled papers. (ICG, 2001, p.4)

Civil society organisations re-emerged as part of the nationwide pro-democracy protest in 1988, with a surge in student organisations, political groupings and print media. After the SLORC retook control in September, it clamped down on most groups, although new political parties were allowed to participate in the 1990 election. After the results were discarded, the military regime declared most political parties illegal. Peaceful protests were brutally crushed and many of the new democracy leaders were assaulted and imprisoned. Others leaders fled to the border and sought protection in areas controlled by the armed ethnic resistance movements. The National League for Democracy (NLD), under the leadership of Aung San Suu Kyi (ASSK), has struggled to restore democracy ever since. ASSK won the Nobel Peace Price in 1992 but remains in and out of house arrest even today.

Impact of conflict on the NGO sector
With the abolition of political and civil rights in 1962, it was impossible for a professional local NGO sector to develop inside the country. As a result of prolonged diplomatic pressure, the military regime allowed a limited number of international aid organisations to work inside the country beginning in the late 1980s. As in Cambodia in the 1980s, bilateral and UN agencies offered special grants to international NGOs to work inside Myanmar because the international diplomatic boycott of the SPDC makes direct bilateral involvement nearly impossible and UN involvement limited. In the absence of an active indigenous civil society and local NGO sector,
the operational programmes of international NGOs working inside Myanmar have long been controversial. International NGOs face three dilemmas in this respect, which are explored below.

- **The humanitarian dilemma**
  International humanitarian aid goods and projects meant for poor and deprived civilians are heavily "taxed" when they are channelled through either the military institutions or the ethnic NGOs related to the armed fractions at the border camps. Thus, even the most basic humanitarian aid directly supports the military leadership of the different armed parties. International NGOs have to work in close partnership with the SPDC and local military, which fairly unilaterally decide on geographic and sectoral priorities. The operational international NGOs argue that in times of humanitarian crises they are obliged to serve those in need, regardless of the political consequences, and hope their work will provide some minimal protection to the poor and will lead eventually to political transformation.

- **The leadership dilemma**
  Working with the ethnic leadership is also not always sustainable either. Ethnic minorities in Myanmar are historically extremely divided, both within and between groups: they are united mainly by the armed struggle for autonomy. The senior leadership of most ethnic organisations has a military background, is mostly male. Baptist insurgent leaders of the first hour. and has few connections to the wider world and thus limited means and capacity to explore alternative means of conflict resolution. The absence of strong, second line leadership resulted an alienation of young constituencies. Lastly, the position of women in most Burmese ethno-nationalist organisations is low, even though they have been performing military and community tasks over the forty years of struggle. Hence, neither the official nor the minority leadership situation seem to provide a viable context to nurture participatory and responsive civil society.  

- **The legitimacy dilemma**
  Most international NGOs that have moved in since 1997, work on disaster management and basic needs with large budgets co-funded by the UN, EU and other donors. But unlike in Cambodia in the early 1980s, it is not natural disaster that brings people to the edge of starvation in Myanmar. Most of the disasters are man made and result from targeted exclusion and discrimination of certain groups in defined geographical areas. Hence, the presence of international NGOs is not only financially supporting the autocratic regime that blocks any move towards democratisation, it furthermore legitimises the SPDC as an equal partner in development and as such weakens the impact of the international diplomatic efforts and economic boycott.

**Who is where?**
There are five types of NGOs working in and on Myanmar:

1. **Burmese NGOs in exile in Thailand and India**
   This category includes professional groups, student movements and indigenous people's NGOs (Mon Human Rights, Karenni Evergreen), which operate principally from the Thai border and

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75 Furthermore, the more conservative Christian leadership of international NGOs united in the BBC encourages aid workers to promote their religious values among a predominantly Buddhist constituency when they provide basic services, which poses both ethical and practical dilemmas. For example, countering the rapid spread of HIV/AIDS virus among the youth in the border camps in the 1990s became a religiously sensitive issue when ethnic leaders and Baptist NGO workers decided to combat infection through moral behaviour training instead of safe sex promotion. As premarital abstinence was alien to the Mekong hill tribe culture and an uprooted, extended refugee community does not provide much social control, this strategy was doomed to fail.
Local NGOs in Cambodia, Sri Lanka, Indonesia and Myanmar

Chieng Mai. They are engaged in documentation and advocacy (Burma Issues, Images Asia), basic service delivery (Dr. Cynthia’s medical projects) and environmental or legal advice, aid and training (Burmes Lawyers Council and Karenni Evergreen). They work with minority groups in the refugee camps and provide trainings (unofficially) inside Myanmar as well. These NGOs have been receiving funding from progressive European NGOs and the Open Society, and indirectly from the European Union and some American foundations. These NGOs in exile have no legal status and are condoned by the Thai government as long as they do not create security problems. Thai PM Thaksin Shinawatra has restricted the movement of these NGOs in recent years, while the negotiations with the SPDC for political transformation and the release of ASSK are ongoing. As a result, the area of operation is now limited geographically to the wider Mae Sot region and most NGOs have moved their offices here.

2. Civil society initiatives inside Myanmar

Independent NGOs and professional associations can technically register under the Companies Act. Few do so for fear of drawing unwanted attention. Small community groups, such as funeral associations that help poor people cover burial expenses; women’s groups, sports clubs and religious associations do not need to register as long as their activities are local and specific. In the late 1990s, leaders in the Shan and Kachin states, who had been part of ceasefire negotiations in the early 1990s, launched local initiatives; their mostly Christian leadership is therefore known and approved by the SPDC. A handful of such NGOs obtained permission from the SPDC to receive foreign funding and have set up small coordinating offices in Rangoon. Shalom and the Meta foundation, for example, are both working on sustainable community development and conflict mediation training in Rangoon and Kachin provinces and in other areas upon request. The former ICRC country director who had developed a close relationship with the SPDC and was asked to stay on to advice in the transformation founded another peacebuilding initiative, the Center for Humanitarian Dialogue. The scale of each of these groups is small and the nature of their work exploratory.

3. The Burmese Border Consortium (BBC)

The BBC is a consortium of international NGOs with a mostly Christian religious vision and mission, that manages large relief, health and education programmes in refugee camps on the Thai-Myanmar border. It is primarily protestant in origin and supports all refugees in need. Their prime counterpart is the Karen National Union and its relief and development agencies located around and between Mai Sot and Mai Sarieng.76 BBC works closely with Medicine Sans Frontier (MSF) France and the ICRC to provide basic services to over 120,000 refugees. These refugees do not have an official status but the Thai authorities have condoned the camps over the past 25 years.

4. International relief and development NGOs inside Myanmar

In 2003, 29 international aid agencies were operating inside Myanmar, 16 of which were subcontracted by United Nations agencies. Most international NGOs, like MSF-Netherlands, Action Contre le Faim, PACT, CARE, Worldvision, ICRC and Save Children Foundation have focused on providing safe drinking water and sanitation, supporting access to education and health care, starting community-based projects and micro-loans and confronting the HIV/AIDS crisis. MSF and ACF have also been running large-scale humanitarian and health programmes for forcibly returning Muslim refugees in Arakan State. Assistance from these NGOs increased from

76 The leadership of the Karen is Baptist too. British and American missionaries evangelised the minorities in the eastern border regions in the late 19th century, after Myanmar had become part of British India. These missionaries were the first to provide healthcare and education to the poor hill tribes and the bond with the international missionary network and the ethnic leaders is still strong.
US $4.5 million in 1999 to more than US $7 million in 2000. Ten UN agencies have programme offices in Myanmar.77 The UN Service Office identified multiple challenges for international agencies working in Myanmar, including: bureaucratic inefficiencies; scrutiny; access to ethnic minority areas; corruption; control over delivery; discrimination; sustainability; inter-agency cooperation and human rights violations. (Burma UN Service Office. March 2003)

5. International Human Rights NGOs

These international NGOs are either regional, mostly notably Forum Asia and Altscan based in Bangkok, or agencies based in Europe and US. e.g., Human Rights Watch, International Crisis Group, Amnesty International and Burma Centre Netherlands. They focus on documentation, publication, networking and advocacy.

6. Burmese opposition in exile

Finally there are various political opposition networks in exile, like the HCBW in New York, NCUB in Thailand, Free Radio Burma (Oslo) and the related Burma Forum, a donor consortium of largely American philanthropic agencies that funds civil society projects on Myanmar.

State-NGO relations

The military regime continues to restrain civil society in Myanmar severely. There is no freedom of association or assembly. The SLORC Order 1/91 prohibits civil servants and their family members from joining political parties, labour unions or other associations not approved by the government. Since 1988, it is prohibited for groups of five or more people to meet in public to discuss anything considered anti-government. The State control even extends to the family home: any guests, including relatives, spending the night at one’s home must be registered with neighbourhood authorities. Freedom of expression has been effectively curtailed since 1969. Because the SPDC rules by decree, there is no independent judiciary and civil and political rights are not acknowledged; seeking legal recourse is not an option. But more importantly, due to the long standing military rule, international isolation and suppression of private organisations (42 years), there is little understanding in present day Myanmar of what civil society can do to promote political change and provide democratic checks and balances.

The ICG report on civil society in Myanmar (2001) contends there is an even deeper problem with democracy and democratic values. Key features of Myanmar’s early political culture have shaped the attitude of government and citizens towards politics and their respective role in it today. The concept that a healthy democracy requires opposition parties as watchdogs in Parliament was not shared. The British rulers allowed political parties to contest elections for a legislative assembly, but the Governor reserved the right to veto decisions. Thus, politicians felt that the only profound way to show opposition was to boycott the system and so they did shortly after independence. Moreover, like elsewhere in Asia, political parties tended to rally around magnetic leaders rather than issues, which continues the old patron-client systems.

Against all odds, there are still regular protests and public demonstrations, resulting in arrests and long prison sentences. The Association for Assistance to Political Prisoners (AAPP), based in Maiz Sot, estimates there were 1,500 political prisoners in 2003, 50 of whom have been in prison for more than 10 years and 65 of whom are of advanced age. Since 1988, 83 persons have died in

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77 The UN system entities in Burma include: the UN Development Program (UNDP); the UN Children's Fund (UNICEF); the UN Populations Fund (UNFPA); the UN International Drug Control Program (UNDCP); the World Food Program (WFP); the Food and Agriculture Program (FAO); the World Health Organization (WHO); the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR); the Joint UN Program on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS); and the UN Information Center (UNIC).
Local NGOs in Cambodia, Sri Lanka, Indonesia and Myanmar

prison due to maltreatment, torture and illness. Students who violate non-demonstration orders are usually tried by military courts and sentenced to up to seven years in prison. After some years they can opt (or are coerced) to sign the so-called 401/31 form, which reduces their sentence in return for a criminal record for life.78 Most political prisoners are held for assumed violations of the Association Act, which used to lead to 2 to 3 years in prison; in recent years, sentences for this have also increased to seven years according to the AAPP. Other political prisoners include renowned journalists who are accused of conspiracy and serve long sentences including time in labour camps.79

NGO results

Since the freedoms of association, assembly and expression have been denied for four decades, professional Burmese NGOs can only work in exile. Because this study deals with local NGOs and their work in preventing deadly conflict at community and national levels, only the small groups of local Burmese development NGOs on the border qualified for interviews. They work mainly on human rights, health, capacity building and international advocacy at refugee camps, where working cross-border is relatively easy ethnically and geographically, or in the capital cities of the neighbouring countries of Thailand and India. Their security situation remains problematic; they have no legal status and the Thai and Indian authorities treat them as illegal immigrants80; they are in a situation similar to that of refugees.81 As illegal aliens, they have to work with utmost diplomacy to organise meetings and trainings to work on protection of political and economic Burmese refugees in Thailand, a group that is badly treated and extorted by the police and business sector. Without official documents these NGOs have no opportunity to travel freely or to study or attend international events and conferences.82

Work under these circumstances is extremely difficult and cannot be compared with the NGO work in the other case countries. Interaction with the State as main actor, when it comes to deadly conflict prevention, is virtually absent. Burmese NGOs in border areas have achieved major accomplishments in the areas of legal awareness, constitutional reform drafting, training of ethnic youth leadership and building horizontal social capital among ethnic minority groups, but the circumstances in which they work are unique. Therefore the analysis of the role of local NGOs in prevention of deadly conflict that is presented in the next two chapters will not include Burmese NGOs. However, the final chapter includes a recommendation for future research on Myanmar’s civil society, as most Burmese NGOs feel poorly represented and vastly misunderstood in international publications; an opinion shared by this author.

78 Source: Interviews with Mr. Bo Kyi, AAPP Director, and three recently released student activists who wish not to be named, at the AAPP offices in Mai Sot, 4 December 2003. They were part of a group of 8 students who were put under surveillance and were systematically interrogated over a period of 6 months after partaking in a small campus demonstration on 2 December 1996. On 27 August 1997 they were arrested, tortured and interrogated at Isan Prison and convicted by a military court to 7 years. They were forced to sign the ‘201’ form, (BS: no that is different law), were released after five and a half years but were unable to return to the university or find work; they fled to the border 6 months later. Because they were incarcerated in the most notorious prison of Myanmar, ICRC representatives made a visit to them twice. Most political prisoners do not receive any attention.

79 There are over 50 labour camps and 43 prisons spread all over the country.

80 Thai authorities have vivid memories of the prolonged presence of UNHCR which ran refugee camps for Laotians and Cambodians on its eastern borders in the 1970 and 1980s. Furthermore, the Thai-Myanmar border is classified as a national high-risk security zone and the Thai armed forces prefer to stay in full control.

81 Some argue that the presence of 120,000 refugees provides a convenient buffer between the two plus-size armies that engage in armed skirmish on a monthly basis.

82 The foreign staff working for these NGOs runs the same risk. Several have been blacklisted, deported from Thailand and barred from re-entering the country.
6.5 Conclusions in regional perspective

The history of NGO formation in the four case countries knows four common denominators: militarization, troubled nation building, patron-client relationships and suppression of civil society. Sri Lanka is unique in the way the history played out. Here militarization and suppression of civil society in the North and East of the country were the result of the civil war and only materialised in their present form during the second decade of war, in the 1990s. In Cambodia, Indonesia and Myanmar on the other hand, militarization of society began shortly after independence, initially in an effort to stabilize the country and prevent it from disintegrating as numerous ethnic minority fractions demanded autonomy or independence through either peaceful or violent means. The political orientation of the regime was not a decisive factor in the choice of strategy. The rise of military power in Indonesia and Myanmar occurred during the same era but went in different directions. In 1962 the Socialist Republic of Burma was proclaimed after a military coup, while General Suharto, who also came to power in a military take, established the Western oriented New Order regime in 1966. Cambodia had both types of coups in a period of only five years: 1970 saw General Lon Nol come to power with American military support and surrendered to the Chinese-backed, communist Khmer Rouge in 1975.

The attitude of these military regimes towards civil society and dissenting voices was, however, quite similar: in Indonesia and Cambodia hundreds of thousands of civil society leaders were killed in the turbulent political transition the year after the military took over (1965 and 1975, respectively) and NGO work was restricted for the next 15 years. The Myanmar military government, the longest ruling Junta on earth, successfully isolated the country from the international community and worked over the next decade to abolish NGO work systematically. NGOs in Sri Lanka on the contrary, worked relatively undisturbed in the first 30 years of independence. It was not until the war over Tamil Eelam hit the second phase that inter- and intra-group violence led to the virtual elimination of the indigenous NGO sector in the North and East of the country, while human rights and peace building NGOs in the South entered a period of confrontation with the State in the early 1990s.

Deadly conflicts have been recurring in all case countries and their impact on NGO work is deep. Cambodia is still suffering from the impact of the violence of the pre-UNTA C period: the democratic process is weak and corruption and impunity are rampant. Local NGOs were allowed to form again in 1992 and received abundant support (be it more technical than financial) from the international community as alternative and more effective venues to reach poor communities. However, a decade later international NGOs with operational programmes still dominate the development scene, receiving 80% of the foreign development aid extended to NGOs. In Sri Lanka, the ethnic conflict led to the foundation of many human rights and peaceful co-existence NGOs in the 1980s. As the war progressed, their relationship with the State and armed groups became increasingly confrontational and, as a result, they are not involved in the current peace process. Indonesian NGOs bounced back in the 1980s but retained a tense relationship with the New Order regime that controlled civil society by denying freedom of assembly and speech. Unprepared for the sudden political transition and the deadly communal violence, local NGOs grappled to adjust to the new reality. Mature NGOs initially collaborated with the newly elected government in 1999, until the impeachment process changed the political scene again. Since 2000, international NGOs and UN and bilateral aid agencies alike have descended on Indonesia in droves. They set up operational programmes, which "brain drained" the experienced but frustrated local NGO sector, while new NGOs and associations mushroomed to participate in the decentralised policy and decision making. Burmese NGOs are few and mostly in exile. Since the end of the Cold War, the SPDC has allowed UN agencies and international NGOs to run tightly
controlled programmes inside the country but the transition to a more democratic form of government has been slow and the prospects for local NGOs remain grim.

Numbers of local NGOs vary widely between publications, depending on the definition applied and whether or not community based associations are included.\(^3\) There seems to be a similarity in the size of local ‘professional NGO sectors’: 407 in Cambodia (CCC), 297 in Sri Lanka (IRED) and 1207 in Indonesia (UNSFIR). Myanmar has only 29 operational international NGOs.

It is harder to provide comparative data on sectoral specialisation, as figures vary widely. The majority (64 percent) of the Cambodian NGOs work in community development and sustainable livelihoods: similar figures appear in local NGOs in Sri Lanka, though the percentage is lower (54) because an additional 12 percent is focussed on humanitarian work. Most professional NGOs are based in the capital or central regions (Phnom Penh/Kandal; Colombo; Jakarta/Java), while a second cluster is concentrated in the (former) conflict zones (Battambang, BMC; Vavuniya, Mannar, Kilinochchi; Moluccas, Aceh, Sulawesi). International aid flows to local NGOs are lower than generally assumed. Cambodian NGOs received 19.3 million US dollars in 2002, showing a slow but steady growth, but Sri Lankan NGOs saw their contributions drop from 25 million US$ in 1995 to below 20 million in 2003, as a result of aid being donated to humanitarian efforts or redirected to Central Asia and Africa. Financial donations to Indonesian NGOs are harder to calculate, as no registration system existed until the late 1990s. In all four countries, foreign donors award much larger amounts to international NGOs, which are believed to be more impartial and less corrupt and to have larger delivery capacity and more management experience.

Generally lacking are clear strategies on how the international community expects this indirect funding will strengthen the local civil society. In spite of the good intentions of both donors and NGO conduits, it seems the NGO channel is more used as a service delivery mechanism.

A professional NGO sector plays an important part in the development of civil society and the prevention and management of political and social tensions during political transition periods. But the post cold war opening up of military regimes in Asia did not lead to democratic transition and increased space for NGO. First, there is no hard evidence in Asia that democratisation reduces the deadly conflict risk. In Cambodia and Indonesia, the political transition actually reinforced the position of the military, as the turmoil, frustration and deadly conflict that accompanied the transition made some call for a return to strong arm tactics. Even Sri Lanka, a Constitutional democracy which has had regular elections and an active civil society since 1948, has nurtured entrenched ethnic divisions and the culture of violence and militarization are now on the rise there too. Second, the collusion of power between military, politicians and the business sector has been perpetuated and has weakened the power of the democratic institutions. Militarization, impunity and corruption seem to pose a huge constraint to effective conflict prevention and development work; if not actually aggravating grievances and cleavages.

Of the three freedoms, the freedoms of assembly and expression have been effectively used by the States to restrict local NGO work. Except for Myanmar, the freedom of association has only recently become an issue of concern again, as all countries have renewed and sharpened their laws on NGO registration, making local NGOs more vulnerable to State interference and official corruption. Freedom of assembly remains problematic in all countries, as security laws are enforced to temporarily limit the rights of civilians to protest and armed thugs beat up small labour and peace demonstrations regularly. Freedom of speech remains State controlled in Sri

\(^3\) Most research data include community associations, but this study does not. As explained in chapter 2, the NGOs that are the subject of this research require a certain level of formal organisation, planning, project implementation, checks and balances and steady external donations to be key players in development processes. Except for Cambodia, recent and reliable data are lacking. Inclusive NGO figures add up to 6,000 in Cambodia, 2,167 in Sri Lanka and 8,000 in Indonesia.
Lanka and Myanmar, while journalists in Cambodia and Indonesia struggle to find a balance between self-censorship and confronting impunity.

The ‘war on terror’ has also influenced the democratic space in Asia, but in a mixed way. As in Europe and North America, the war on terror challenges political and civil liberties and the work of critical NGOs is continuously under threat. There is a tendency to reinforce militarization. In Indonesia, the tension over the ongoing armed conflicts on the eastern borders is heightened by the growing activities of the Islamic Jihad. The Muslim fundamentalist threat was used by authorities to launch the military campaign in Aceh. On the other hand, increasing international concern has forced States and armed groups in other countries to find negotiated solutions to prolonged deadly conflicts. Strong international pressure on the LTTE helped draw them to the negotiation table in 2001. Myanmar faces increased pressure, especially from China, which is increasingly worried about the illicit cross border trade in arms, drugs and people. In Cambodia the effects seem limited as yet, but as a rogue state it is suspected of harbouring weapons, drugs traders and mercenaries. In addition, the Muslim insurgency in neighbouring Thailand is on the rise and may pressure Cambodia to clean up its act. But amidst these international peace building efforts, concern over the lack of local NGO impartiality and professionalism have hampered their involvement in the peace negotiations and limited strengthening of the track two process as a whole. This is a worrying trend that will be discussed at length in the next chapter.

Although NGOs have come a long way, State-NGO relations in the four countries are still primarily determined by their post-independence grievance and cleavage history. There is a lack of mutual trust and misconceptions about NGOs prevail. Most NGOs emerged in response to specific needs that were not addressed, due to the failure of the State to protect its citizens. When conflict is high, NGOs working on building civil society suffer most. Their relations with the international community provide some protection but it also causes further strain on the State – NGO relationship. There is a need to acknowledge the specific roles and task division between the State and NGOs in the development process and to get the minimum requirements in place to provide a proper baseline for effective conflict prevention and development work.

The USAID study (2000) of women’s organisations in post conflict societies noted a marked increase in number of women’s NGOs (see Chapter 2.5), as a result of the overall increased female political participation; of disillusionment with existing organisations which lack a gender agenda; of the post-conflict democratisation that provided more political space for NGO work; and lastly in response to large sums of international donor assistance that poured in. In this research set-up there was no room to research women organisations in detail, but this trend seemed to hold for both Indonesia and Cambodia, where new women’s NGOs focus on support to victims of violence, trauma counselling income generation, on female participation in governance and politics, and on prevention of violence against women. In Sri Lanka and Myanmar, the number of women organisations seems to have remained stable. As new NGOs they exhibit the common institutional weaknesses like lack of management experience and accountability, and the lack of communication and cooperation among NGOs, being absorbed by their work.

The results of NGO sector work is hard to judge objectively, let alone compare across countries. Most NGOs seem better at building sustainable vertical social capital than horizontal. Building sustainable bridging social capital across ethnic divides proves difficult for State and NGOs alike. The protracted conflicts eroded this capacity further and strengthen the tendency to ‘preach to the

84 In the next chapter a special section is devoted to seven women’s organisations; three of which were established in response to the violent conflict. Two focus on community development, one training, one human rights and three advocacy, combined with training and information dissemination.
converted’ or each others constituencies. Most NGOs wholeheartedly acknowledge their work is not good enough, but where can improvements be made? Can NGOs be effective when their basic freedoms are restricted? Is the scepticism with which they attempt to self-regulating their sector and increase legitimacy and accountability correct? Can NGOs be under-funded and yet expected to deliver the same or better results than equally under-funded governments? And is the increasing involvement of international NGOs indeed a sustainable way of strengthening local civil society or is it leading to more competition over limited resources in conflict areas? And are, as is often assumed, international NGOs indeed a-political, non-partisan, more professional, more accountable and transparent and therefore better partners than government and local NGOs in post conflict reconstruction programmes? The next chapter will make an attempt to begin to answer some of these questions by means of an in depth analysis of 32 NGO interviews.
VII. Role of local NGOs in preventing deadly conflict

This chapter presents the results of 32 interviews with local NGOs and international organisations in three countries that were held from December 2001 to August 2002, with selected follow-up visits in 2003. The sheer numbers indicate that the interviews did not intend to evaluate NGO work in the field; their prime value was to learn how NGOs have organised themselves and their constituencies around the key conflict issues and how they have built networks with other actors to meet their goals. These strategic and tactical NGO choices are more determining for the NGO space to operate and thereby its chances for success, than the NGO's sectoral expertise. The interviews inventoried NGO problem analyses and programmatic responses to prevent escalation of deadly conflict, to distil action oriented social capital building strategies, and reviewed strategies to protect the institutions and constituencies from undesired State and armed forces interference. The NGO problem analyses and responses are summarized in section 7.1 and 7.2. Section 7.3 adds second level of analysis, through the assessment of the interviewed NGO reactions to political opportunities and of their capacity to build social cohesion through bridging and good governance networks. The final section identifies seven success indicators that facilitate a more effective role of NGOs in preventing deadly conflict and attempt to rank the interviewed NGO’s organisational integrity that reflects the institutional social cohesion building capabilities.

7.1 Causes of violent conflict according to local NGO analysis

Local NGO directors and management teams were asked to identify the kind of violent conflicts they face and that are at risk of turning deadly. The discussion usually started with an inventory of the most immediate problems faced by NGO beneficiaries and was later broadened to other actors and the wider conflict context and to the NGOs efforts to prevent conflict escalation. The respondents were asked to elaborate their appeals to official conflict mediation mechanisms and expand on their collaboration with key society actors, like the police, judiciary, local politicians, and religious leaders.

Most respondents opened by listing economic and political problems of exclusion, inequality, human rights violations, and bad governance. These perpetuate the use of violence in conflict resolution and sustain the propensity for deadly conflict in society. All NGO leaders in Cambodia, a country in post-conflict transition since 1991, identified a comprehensive poverty and injustice agenda. They pointed to the underperformance of the government and international aid agencies in providing basic development needs and human security to Cambodia’s poor. Sri Lankan and Indonesian NGOs were more concerned with recent deadly violence outbreaks and differentiated between causes of structural conflict and immediate concerns. In Sri Lanka the ceasefire and stalling peace process were stressed whereas in Indonesia, the pace and direction of the political, economic and governance transition were highlighted. Life in both countries has been deeply affected by the ethnic violence. This was strongly reflected in the Sri Lankan NGO conflict analysis—all structural problems were directly related to the conflicts in the North and East.

Annex 1 provides details on the selection of NGOs and the interview process. Most NGOs were initially surprised to be part of conflict prevention research, as they perceived peacebuilding work to be specific to the small group of NGOs involved in conflict mediation and peace campaigns. Ten additional interviews are not used here. Seven Burmese NGO interviews will not be included, because the absence of a free in-country local NGO sector makes the context of NGO work in exile fundamentally different. Lastly, three interviews were left incomplete, because the NGOs were or got into an institutional crisis and withdrew their participation.
Table 16 summarises the NGOs' conflict analysis for each country. It shows recurring problems that are closely related to main conflict causes identified in chapters III and IV: exclusion and inequality, political violence, militarization, lack of trust among identity groups, and the impact of violence on women.

**Table 16 NGO conflict analysis for Cambodia, Sri Lanka and Indonesia**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cambodia</th>
<th>Sri Lanka</th>
<th>Indonesia</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Armed conflict ended in 1991 with signing of Paris Peace Accords and the UNTAC governance</td>
<td>Concerns over ceasefire and peace process</td>
<td>Concerns over triple transition processes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Widespread absolute poverty and lack of basic services</td>
<td>- Division among political parties</td>
<td>- KKN (Corruption, collusion and nepotism)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Increasing conflict over land use and landlessness</td>
<td>- Lack of civil society involvement</td>
<td>- Militarization and political violence to 'manage' conflicts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Mistrust in society</td>
<td>- Human rights abuses ignored</td>
<td>- Flawed decentralisation process</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- No rule of law, no independent judiciary</td>
<td>- Ownership of the peace process (influence of the war on terror)</td>
<td>- Weak civil society in transition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Political violence and militarization</td>
<td>Specific Tamil NGO concerns: LTTE as sole representative</td>
<td>- Illegal arms trade</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Corruption and weak State governance</td>
<td>- Human security of Tamils</td>
<td>- Tension among identity groups</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Culture of violence spreading in communities</td>
<td>- Lack of political and civil rights in the North East</td>
<td>(e.g., forced conversions, Muslim perpetrators unpunished)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Low status of women (poverty, trafficking, domestic violence, illiteracy)</td>
<td>- Proliferation of small arms</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Lack of demobilisation progress</td>
<td>- Poor partnership between the State and NGOs</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Indonesian and Sri Lankan NGOs shared immediate concerns over the conflict transformation processes, which reflect the countries' flawed nation building history (see Chapter III). Sri Lankan respondents stressed concern over the internal strife between the LTTE and other Tamil organisations and local community leaders in the North and East; this has led to excessive human rights abuses, high human insecurity and concerns over ownership of the peace process. Indonesian NGOs showed more concern over the State's response to intrastate conflicts and the fear that the former autocratic New Order regime may exploit the fragile political and economic transition process to return to power. Hence the role of the armed forces and the KKN are key issues for Indonesian NGOs.

Both Sri Lankan and Indonesian NGOs expressed disappointment over the exclusion from the recent peace and transformation processes by their governments. While they acknowledged local NGOs have been slow in adapting and responding to the new political reality, about half of the respondents assumed that governments and the international community have ulterior motives for bypassing local NGOs and giving low priority to multi-track peace diplomacy processes. In Sri Lanka, the UNP coalition initiated exclusive Track I peace talks to 'speed up' this complex
negotiation process and obtain some tangible economic results first before facing the highly sensitive issues of human rights, representation and self determination. This approach of economic liberalisation before peace alienated NGOs and the population at large. The lack of broad-based support for the peace process made the ruling coalition vulnerable and enabled political opposition parties with an ethno-nationalist agenda to defeat them in the snap poll of April 2004. In Indonesia, the progressive NGO sector felt caught in the middle when they were persuaded to support the political transition programmes of the newly elected President Wahid in 1999, but fell out of favour just two years later when President Wahid was impeached and Vice President Megawati took over. They were labelled too partisan by the government, multi- and bilateral aid agencies to be suitable partners in post conflict reconciliation programmes.

In all the Cambodian and Indonesian interviews the lack of an independent judiciary, the power of the armed forces (which are partially self-financed) and wide spread official corruption stood out. In Sri Lanka, the independence of the judiciary is under threat too, as result of the Prevention of Terrorism Act and the trend to refer politically sensitive cases to the Supreme Court, which is slow in ruling on them. However, Sri Lanka’s democratic institutions, though damaged, have thus far survived the protracted conflict and it remains the only country in this study without a history of military coups. NGOs in Cambodia and Sri Lanka share a deep concern over the ‘culture of violence’ spreading in political and community life alike. The absence of rule of law in Cambodia makes people more inclined to take justice into their own hands and mob killings of petty thieves are now recurring events. NGO surveys in several poor and remote provinces, like Svy Rieng and Kampong Chchanang, revealed that over 70% of community conflicts in 2002 were settled by violent means; a situation aggravated by community mistrust, trauma and the ready availability of small arms.

Political violence was of concern to all respondents. While it has terrorized the North East of Sri Lanka since the 1980s, the culture of violence began to spread to political institutions and communities in the South with the deadly JVP uprising in 1987-89. In the past decade this has resulted in increasingly violent elections and deadly clashes among identity groups over land and labour issues, especially in the multi-ethnic Central Highland and Eastern provinces. A widening culture of violence is also inflicting Indonesian politics, but it is of a different nature. Here the newly formed political parties struggle to carve out a place in a democracy in transition that faces additional challenges like the supervision of the hastily initiated decentralisation process in 2000 and the growth of the Islamic Jihad. In this process of shifting political alliances, NGO respondents feared the Golkar party has an edge over other parties given their political experience, relations with the armed forces and business sector and access to financial resources (e.g., few investigations into graft accusations against former Golkar politicians have been completed and brought to court and those that have were largely dismissed or delayed).

Ethnicity was important to communal violence in Sri Lanka and Indonesia, but was not identified as a cause of conflict in Cambodia. The concerns of particular identity groups (ethnic and/or...
religious) were raised primarily by the four NGOs that represent their special interests. These respondents were purposefully included in this study because of the marked difference in their institutional set-up and programmatic choices. In Sri Lanka, the Tamil and Muslim NGOs, as well as select vocal Tamil staff in national NGOs, sensed an abandonment of their cause by civil society in the South. The desire for peace is so strong that national NGOs based in the South seem hesitant to jeopardise the peace process and kept criticisms on the peace process to themselves, like the LTTE's human rights violations or the government's failure to encourage community participation in the peace process. The Tamil staff expressed disappointment over the rising public view that it may be best for LTTE, other Tamil self determination movements, Tamil politicians and civil society to resolve the issues among themselves after regional autonomy is granted. Because the Sinhalese authorities and NGOs have failed to protect Tamil civilians over the past decades, they have lost the legitimacy to speak for them.

That might explain why it took more than a year and numerous violations of the ceasefire before Sri Lankan NGOs and UN agencies like UNICEF started to voice concerns over the LTTE's autocratic rule, the extra judiciary killings and the denial of the rights of citizens of the North East for example to exercise their civil and political right to choose their own political representatives. Ironically, two of the interviewed Tamil NGOs that work in LTTE controlled areas supported the careful Southern approach, because an 'even-handed positioning' is vital for their institutional (and personal) survival. This fragile equilibrium in Tamil civil society enhances the isolation of Tamil NGOs in Sri Lankan civil society. There is deeply concern over the civil society void in the North East after indigenous organisations were dismantled in two decades of war. This absence of independent civil groups has enabled the LTTE to claim sole representation of the Tamil people and to control governance of the North and East. This will leave little room for 'peace with justice' solutions that will include and safeguard the interests of other ethnic minorities like the Muslims and of dissenting voices among the Tamil population in the North East.

Religion was not identified as a major cause of the conflict by the respondents, although a majority of respondents highlighted the role of two specific religious groups that pose a serious threat to sustainable conflict prevention. In Sri Lanka, the highest Buddhist leadership council, the Mahasangha, comprises five of the most venerable Buddhist abbots who represent different monastic sects. Subsequent to the successful Buddhist lobby to change the Sri Lankan Constitution in 1972 (turning Sri Lanka into one unified, Buddhist nation), the Mahasangha has vehemently opposed peace solutions that include cessation or federal autonomy to the North and East. About half of the interviewed NGOs have worked with Buddhist clergy in their programmes, but mostly in grassroots initiatives. It has proven very difficult to engage senior Buddhist leaders in a broad-based peace agenda. At the same time five respondents praised the constructive inter-religious contributions of the Catholic leadership in conflict zones (see chapter 8.3). In summer 2002, when the interviews were conducted in Indonesia, concerns were raised by all respondents over the role of Jihad groups in the escalation of violence in the Moluccas; and over the intentions to officially introduce Shari'a law in a number of provinces.

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90 The Minorities at Risk study identified nine identity group in the three countries (see Chapter 3.2): in Cambodia: Cham and Vietnamese; in Sri Lanka: Tamils, Moors and Indian Tamils, and in Indonesia: Aceh, Moluccas, Papua and Chinese.
91 In May 2002, two months into the ceasefire, I visited the Jaffna peninsula with a small team of the local voter education and election monitoring network and assessed the possibilities to initiate good governance and civil society building programmes in the near LTTE controlled areas in the North. These sentiments were already widely shared in the North of Sri Lanka and only intensified after the peace talks were postponed in April 2003. At the final editing stage of this dissertation in October 2004, the talks had still not resumed. The Jaffna interview list is wider than the few mentioned in annex 3, but several key Jaffna Tamil civil society leaders did not wish to be named, because of their sensitive relationships with both sides of the conflict (i.e., national civil society and the LTTE).
Role of local NGOs in preventing deadly conflict

Women and girl children were identified by almost all respondents as most affected by violent conflict. Seven women’s NGOs and networks were interviewed, three of which were recently established to mediate the impact of deadly conflict on women. Three interviewed women’s NGOs have adopted a gradual gender empowerment approach, while the four other have transformational, gender equity missions. The increase in sexual violence against women and girls in conflict situations, limited participation of women in political life and the position of women under the proposed enforcement of Shari’a law are the key concerns of NGOs in Indonesia. The impact of the protracted conflict on poverty, female migrant labour and the feminisation of poverty are central issues in Sri Lanka and Cambodia. In Cambodia the increased incidence of domestic violence and the spread of HIV/AIDS are additional burning issues that disproportionately affect women. Four NGOs pointed at the aggravated risk Tamil and Acehnese women run, because they are facing threats from both sides of the conflict; the military that used violence against women as tactic to control restive areas as well as autocratic militant groups that deny women equal access to and participation in public life and forcibly recruit youth women in their force. Both the GAM and the LTTE are known to have female recruits, though only the latter has female members in its suicide bombers squads (i.e., the Black Tigers) and both have an all male senior leadership.

Internally displaced people, as result of violent conflict and/or political violence, are the special target group of several human rights and community development organisations. In Sri Lanka, poor Tamil peasant families who were forcibly resettled from the Central Highlands to the North East in the late 1980s, were expelled by the LTTE in recent years and remain in border refugee camps, while poor Muslim petty traders and peasants who fled the East under pressure of the LTTE live with relatives in the overcrowded Putlam district. In Cambodia, large scale illegal land grabbing, often involving high level military officials who start cash crop and export oriented commercial farms, has led to the displacement of many farm families. (see chapter 8.2) NGOs in natural resource rich Indonesia attempt to defend the rights of indigenous people to protect land tenure and end unsustainable exploitation of natural resources (eco violence).

In sum, while the interviewed NGOs are quite diverse, they share a set of key characteristics. Their constituencies and beneficiaries have all suffered from deadly conflict in recent years. Trust has been lost and the society’s social cohesion is weakening. Ethnicity and exclusion practices have divided communities. The State is not providing basic human security as protracted intrastate conflicts have eroded democratic systems, divided political parties often according to ethno-nationalist lines and diverted resources to military expenditure. Impunity and corruption are rampant in absence of a rule of law, making poor and marginalised people increasingly vulnerable and open to manipulation. First and second generation human rights have been restricted to silence dissent. The universal principle that women and displaced suffer most from violent conflict is valid here too. Local NGOs working on these issues came under fire from the State of armed groups or both and those working in the conflict zones have great difficulty to survive.

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92 The Foundation for Human Dignity (=FHD) in Sri Lanka: a legal aid agency dealing mostly with socio, economic rights and some VAW cases, Komnas Perempuan: the National Commission on Prevention of Violence against Women, established by Presidential Decree in 1998, and the Koalisi Perempuan, a national women’s platform established in 1998 as well, to promote women’s participation in politics and public life, both from Indonesia.

93 Political participation of women in Sri Lanka is among the lowest in Asia and declining. Contrary to the common belief that a well educated female population leads to higher participation of women in public and political life, Sri Lanka has a literacy rate of 90%, 46% female university students and had the world’s first ever female Prime Minister, Mrs. Sirimavo Bandaranaike who came to power in 1960.
7.2 Local NGO responses to prevent escalation of violent conflict

NGO responses vary at different stages of the conflict. During violent conflicts, people tend to turn to what is most familiar: their family, their neighbours, their village, which reinforces ethnic identities and results in enhanced group identity. Loss of horizontal bridging social capital and damage to the cohesion and trust in the community. At this stage, the role of NGOs is largely confined to relief work, documentation of atrocities and advocacy for an end to the killings. Basic forms of community social capital, like religious communities and funeral associations are likely to re-emerge when the violence is waning. Upon cessation of violence, NGOs initially work to mobilise and rebuild trust in communities, create networks for social protection and provide basic services. Economic rehabilitation and micro credit activities play an important role in bringing people together. In the subsequent reconstruction phase, NGOs direct their attention more to strengthening local leadership capacity, rebuilding civil society, setting up mechanisms to protect citizens and promoting peaceful coexistence.

To measure the effectiveness of NGO work is difficult in any case and even harder for this study, because of its regional approach and diverse NGO survey population. Recent literature reviews identified four limitations in the assessments of NGO effectiveness in conflict prevention work. First, NGO assessments are more subjective and normative, because their effectiveness is largely defined by the evaluator. This can also lead to a lack of buy-in by the involved actors. Second, the comparative assessment of conflict prevention and peace building work at national and cross national levels is problematic, because of cultural and political differences in the understanding of the causes, remedies for and prevention of deadly conflict. Third, it is difficult to prove causality, because it is hard to isolate and articulate effective contributions of one NGO in a complex peace building processes. Lastly, timing is a crucial factor in assessing the success or failure of NGO work. Periods of political crisis tend to affect NGOs and social movement organisations in both positive and negative ways; new opportunities can be grasped or NGO legitimacy can be lost after an initial success. At least eight of the 32 interviewed NGOs went through major changes that affected their work during the three year time span of this study. If this research had been conducted before 2001—prior to the 9/11 attacks, prior to the 2002 CPP election victory, prior to the Sri Lankan ceasefire in 2002, prior to President Wahid impeachment in 2001, etc.—the impact of NGO work might have looked quite differently. As Gidron (2002, p.204) noted: “In other words, each major time period in the life cycle of a social movement organisation is characterised by a particular political context that influences a movement’s ability to succeed.”

In the final section of the interviews, NGO leaders discussed their current programmes aimed at mitigating structural causes of conflict, vision of peaceful co-existence, bottlenecks, skill acquisition and institutional vertical actor networking and horizontal cross community linking. NGO responses are summarized in Table 17, using the NGO core business categories that were presented in chapter V to cluster the entries.

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The interview results showed a marked similarity in strategies among NGO categories across the countries. However, the project implementation was quite nation specific, determined by local circumstances and the unique actor sets. At community level, NGOs in all three countries work to strengthen communities in affected areas by building inclusive, voluntary community networks aimed at crossing identity (ethnic, religious or class) divides. In Cambodia, community

<table>
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<th>Table 17 NGO responses to conflict challenges</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Cambodia</strong></td>
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<td>Community development</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Village association building</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Training in conflict resolution and mediation</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Community capacity building to participate in decentralised development governance</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Peace education: (disarmament, domestic violence and demobilisation)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Civil society building</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Conflict mediation training:</td>
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<tr>
<td>(state officials, military and civil society leaders)</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Human rights protection:</td>
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<tr>
<td>legal aid, complaints programmes, violence against women, land disputes</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Good governance promotion:</td>
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<tr>
<td>voter education, monitoring decentralisation of decision making, legal training army</td>
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<td>- Women's advancement:</td>
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<td>protection, training, women in politics at local &amp; national level)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Advocacy</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Human rights atrocities and political violence</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Land and natural resource exploitation disputes</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Law and constitutional reforms</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Good governance: eco-violence, corruption, elections</td>
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<tr>
<td>- International advocacy for sustainable development and policy reform</td>
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<tr>
<td>Peace building</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Community based conflict analysis and resolution training</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Awareness and disarmament of light weapons and small arms</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Advocacy for and monitoring of demobilisation of national army</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Research and documentation of violent conflict causes, lobby for law and policy reform</td>
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| **Sri Lanka**                                  |
| Community development                         |
| - Shramadana Village development              |
| - Vocational training and micro credit for poor Tamil women and Muslim youth |
| - Building spiritual inter-ethnic movement through public mediation session, developing youth movement and inter-religious leader collaboration. |
| - Promoting communal harmony: North-South community exchanges, communal harmony |
| Civil society building                        |
| - National peace campaigns:                   |
| (promote bipartisanship, public dialogues at universities) |
| - Human rights/legal aid:                     |
| promote women’s equity, migrant workers, war widows, violence against women, child soldiers, press freedom, end PTA and emergency laws, to protect rights of refugees |
| - Good governance promotion:                  |
| voter education, election monitoring, peaceful co-existence |
| - Rebuilding civil society in North and East: training, exchange and network building |
| Advocacy                                      |
| - Participation of NGOs and civil society in peace negotiations |
| - Human rights agenda in peace settlement and transition process |
| - Free and fair election in NE |
| - Safeguard political and civil rights in NE |
| - Poverty and ethnic conflict in Central Highlands and the Deep South |
| Peace building                                |
| - Community based conflict resolution training |
| - Alternative peace agenda publications, media statements |
| - Peaceful co-existence village exchanges and democratisation |
| - Mass meditation |

| **Indonesia**                                 |
| Community development                         |
| - Sustainable livelihoods and land tenure with indigenous communities |
| - Building women support teams to address vulnerability, poverty, care for victims of violence |
| - Community peace building:                    |
| Baku Basi, safety zones, reconciliation (Moluccas), |
| - Community capacity building to participate in decentralised development governance |
| Civil society building                        |
| - Participate, advise government panels |
| - Human Rights/legal aid:                     |
| disappearance, land and labour cases, women’s rights, violence against women |
| - Good governance:                           |
| monitoring local governance, monitoring corruption, voter education, legal training police |
| - Women’s equity:                            |
| prevent violence against women, promote women’s participation in politics, counselling, conflict mediation training and legal aid |
| - Diverse civil society building (Aceh) |
| Advocacy                                      |
| - Press freedom |
| - Truth and reconciliation commission, disappearances, TNI watch, emergency laws |
| - Constitutional and law reform |
| - Indigenous rights: prevent eco-violence |
| - Participatory governance |
| - Anti-corruption watch |
| - International advocacy for debt relief and policy change |
| Peace building                                |
| - Community-based conflict mediation training |
| - Neighbourhood reconstruction and reconciliation programmes |
| - Documentation, alternative peace agenda, media statements, UN lobby |
| - National dialogue on peaceful development scenarios for 2010 |

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development NGOs focus on three strategies: building sustainable community organisations, training village leaders in conflict analysis and mediation techniques and making people aware of decentralisation and legal rights. Partners in Development of Kampuchea (=PADEK) for example encourages the development of self-reliant village associations that focus on poverty reduction, micro credit, capacity building, housing, sanitation and democratisation. Each village association has management and conflict resolution groups and mobilises village leaders to be represented in PADEK’s provincial general assemblies and to participate in the decentralised district development planning process. In Sri Lanka, the national Sarvodaya Shramadan Movement built village committees based on Buddhist voluntary community service principles in 6,000 villages.

Indonesian initiatives include sustainable livelihood cum environmental protection programmes run by the members of the Indonesian Forum for Environment (=WALHI), the umbrella organisation that unites over 140 local environmental and sustainable development associations around the country. Because the network combines the grassroots sustainable livelihood work of its local association members with national and international lobbying by the Jakarta-based coordinating office, they have attained remarkable results. For example, they were instrumental in the agreement reached in 2001 with Rio Tinto, which forced the multinational mining company to rehabilitate the mining site in Kalimantan (clean up polluted soil, provide new infrastructure, invest in community development programmes) and compensate villages for lost property before withdrawing from the region. Like PADEK, WALHI has incorporated capacity building training programmes for local leaders to participate in and monitor the new decentralised governance processes. Furthermore, Indonesian NGOs like Kalyana Mitra have run some innovative post-conflict reconciliation programmes, through the formation of neighbourhood women’s support teams in places deeply affected by the communal violence. These teams cooked meals, nurtured and counselled victims of sexual violence, and assisted human rights lawyers from legal aid NGOs like APIK to gather information documenting sexual harassment and rape cases. Discarded by the government, military and courts because of insufficient proof, the documents were included in the country report of the UN Special Rapporteur on Violence against Women in 2000 and subsequent years.

Ten of the 32 interviewed NGOs provide training to strengthen the conflict mediation capacity of village leaders. NGOs in Cambodia and Indonesia attempted to involve district officials in conflict mediation training programmes. In addition to these horizontal trust and capacity building programmes across identity groups, nine NGOs in Cambodia and Indonesia incorporated awareness raising and capacity building projects to promote people’s participation in newly initiated Decentralisation Acts. The objectives are to make village associations aware of the opportunities granted under the new decentralisation laws; more specifically to increase their opportunity to influence provincial and district decision making on development programme priorities and to obtain grants for basic social services and infrastructural works in their community. For example, the Commission for Free and Fair Elections (=COMFREL), the Cambodian voter education and election monitoring network, is active in providing ongoing training to village leaders and monitoring the village participation in decision- and grant-making processes (see chapter 8.1 for a case study). WALHI has developed a programme directed at its membership, village leaders and the new district and provincial leadership, to increase the environmental and good governance awareness in local planning and decision-making.

Grassroots mediation trainings are given by Padek, Women for Prosperity (=WFP), ADHOC, Sarvodaya Economic Enterprise Development Services (=SEEDS), Ahisma, Kalyana Mitra, Baku Baaí, Walhi, Komnas Perempuan, Remdec. The Cambodia Center for Peace and Development is specialised in conflict mediation training, but does not work directly with village leaders in their regular programme as their approach is quite sophisticated.

PADEK, SST, WFP, COMFREL, WALHI, Komnas Perempuan, Koalisi Perempuan, Remdec.
The gradual effects of rural development projects are, however, frequently jeopardized by external factors that threaten the lives of peasant families. In Cambodia, land grabbing, poor health conditions and the lack of public services are major threats to rural livelihoods; marginal farmers suffer from lack of access to regular bank credits at normal rates, from cheap imports from neighbouring countries and from the absence of off farm employment. Female migrant employment is rising as a temporary solution to the income declines. In Sri Lanka and Indonesia, young female workers are travelling overseas in ever-larger numbers to serve as domestic workers in the Middle East and East Asian countries. They fall victim to corrupt migration officials or human traffickers and often face sexual harassment and underpayment in their workplace. In Cambodia, most women have little choice but to enlist in the entertainment and sex industry, due to the very low female literacy rate, and girls as young as twelve are sent by their parents to the cities to work in bars and brothels. Local NGOs work on prevention and remedies, providing awareness, legal aid, safe houses for battered women, economic programmes for reintegration and advocacy drives to change policies and increase protection. This work on women’s rights and gender equity is vital to prevent abuse and exploitation. NGOs in Cambodia and Indonesia make a direct link between violence against women and good governance. Participation of women in politics is very low and even declining in Sri Lanka. Programmes include training on leadership, conflict mediation, women in politics, and legal aid to female migrant workers in Indonesia and Sri Lanka and to victims of trafficking in Cambodia.

Human rights and legal awareness NGOs in the three countries stressed that all their projects are aimed at mitigating the impact of conflict on the poor. National human rights associations like the Indonesian Legal Aid Foundation (=LBI), Cambodian Human Right & Development Organisation (=ADHOC) and Movement for the Defence of Democratic Rights (=MDDR) run legal awareness training, documentation and official complaint programmes in which the poor are assisted with filing complaints to appropriate government authorities. Furthermore, they produce annual human rights reports and lobby the State and international community for law reform and structural policy change to end exclusion and discrimination of systematically deprived citizens. Seven interviewed NGOs provide free legal aid and handle cases related to land and labour disputes, indigenous and minority rights, sexual harassment, political rights (like arrest under emergency acts and political prisoners) and manmade environmental disasters. Moreover, in Sri Lanka and Indonesia, MDDR and the Commission for Disappearances and Victims of Violence (=KONTRAS) have specialised units to investigate disappearances and handle habeas corpus cases. In recent years, local human rights NGOs gained national and international recognition for their expertise and dedication through their participation in official commissions investigating human rights abuses, like the 1991 and 1999 East Timor atrocities, the May 1998 Jakarta riots and illegal exploitation of natural resources, like the independent forest crimes monitoring in Cambodia. Moreover, several NGO leaders were elected by National Assembly members to the National Human Rights Commissions of Indonesia and Sri Lanka, and in Indonesia are chairing the Commission for a second term in a row.

A final important area of community and rights based NGO interventions pertains to concerted national NGO network efforts to promote good governance and democratisation. In all three countries projects were encountered on voter education, election monitoring and promotion of people's participation in decentralised governance. The advocacy-based interventions of NGOs aim at preventing conflict through building sustainable and just societies. Advocacy human rights NGOs are most active in constitutional reform (especially with regard to protection and self-determination solutions), anti corruption drives and debt reduction. Other advocacy initiatives include land disputes mitigation mechanisms, disarmament, demobilisation, promotion of people’s participation in long-term policy decision making, and acceptance of truth and reconciliation processes (Sri Lanka and Indonesia) and the genocide tribunal in Cambodia.
In recent years, peace building NGOs have been growing in number and public appeal. Conflict researchers have developed a keen interest in their work, as they are thought to be more effective in conflict resolution work than NGOs with a wider development role in civil society. To gain insight in the complementary role of NGOs with exclusive conflict mediation and peace building missions, one conflict resolution/transformation NGO and one horizontal peace building NGO were interviewed in each country. The conflict-resolution NGOs were established in the late 1990s and are training and research institutes. Although their approaches, skill levels and actor networks vary widely, they share a common aim of reducing the use of violence in resolving conflict at community and national levels and making the state system more responsive to the human security needs of the people. Violence, in their analysis, is often political in nature and used as a tool to mobilise support along ethnic or religious lines for ethno-nationalist aspirations.

Only the Centre for Development and Peace (=CDP), a Cambodian knowledge, training and research centre that trains government officials, security forces and NGO leaders, saw the causes of the violence in inherited cultural and psychological characteristics of the Khmer society. Ahisma (Hindi for ‘non-violent resistance’) provides trainings mostly at provincial and community level in Sri Lanka, mostly training of trainers for village leaders and grassroots NGOs. Similarly, Baku Baai (local dialect for ‘mutual friends’ or ‘buddies’) was also a grassroots initiative initiated by local NGOs which had been working in South Moluccas before deadly communal conflicts broke out in 1999. The exploitation of religious differences for national ethno-nationalist purposes in this historically peaceful remote province of Indonesia, left grassroots communities deeply divided and distrustful. The Baku Baai programme in Ambon brought former Christian and Muslim neighbours back together to create safety zones and slowly expanded peaceful co-existence networks to neighbouring areas.

The three national peacebuilding NGOs vary widely in approach and nature. This reflects the local specificities of conflicts and the unique messages needed to mobilise diverse grassroots constituencies in national peace and reconciliation movements that are capable to bridge ethnic divides. In Cambodia, the Working Group on Weapons Reduction (=WGWR) emerged out of a loose network of peace and human security oriented NGOs and has a broad NGO membership network. The proliferation of small arms is identified as a key factor in the alarming increase in violent conflict resolution practises in family and community life. Demobilisation and reintegration of soldiers from the National Army, as well as awareness and training of soldiers in international law and practise on the use of force is perceived as another key priority to facilitate the democratisation process and reduce the incidence of political violence. WGWR programmes include awareness raising (e.g. in schools), community programmes to hand in arms, training in peaceful conflict resolution, monitoring of World Bank funded demobilisation, media spots and training of the armed forces. The National Peace Council of Sri Lanka (=NPC) is dedicated to supporting a negotiated solution to the ongoing war in Sri Lanka. Rejecting the ‘Peace through war’ tactic that both sides have relied on as fall back option in the three ceasefire and peace negotiation periods over the past 15 years, the Council promotes the view that the only lasting solution to the conflict is a peaceful, negotiated settlement. Established during the 2nd ceasefire in 1994, the Council aims at catalyzing a People’s Movement for Peace, to create an environment for renewed negotiations and at addressing post conflict issues in a manner that bring sustainable peace and social justice. This small advocacy group works as a clearing house for information.

97 The conflict resolution NGOs are: the Center for Peace and Development, Ahisma and Baku Baai.
98 "The Khmer Rouge did not bring violence to Cambodia, but the Cambodian culture created the Khmer Rouge."
Quote from the interview with CDP Director, February 2002, Phnom Penh.
99 The national peace building NGOs are the Working Group on Weapons Reduction, National Peace Commission and Komnas Perempuan.
Role of local NGOs in preventing deadly conflict

networks with civil society organisations and rights and democratisation oriented NGOs and makes publications and media statements to promote an end to the killing and encourage just peace solutions. The Indonesian National Commission on Prevention of Violence against Women (=Komnas Perempuan) was established by Presidential decree in late 1998 as result of the active lobby of local women NGOs. Its aim was to remedy the violence against women that occurred in the intrastate conflicts during the political transition (1997-2000) and prevent future calamities. KP runs programmes on documentation, retribution, training, advocacy and networking.  

In sum, the interviewed NGOs have responded to deadly conflicts that affect their constituencies in various ways. Some NGOs were established as result of deadly violence, while others adjusted their institutional networks and/or their programme strategies to find structural solutions to conflict and increase the security of their beneficiaries. NGOs in Cambodia, Sri Lanka and Indonesia choose similar programmatic responses, but the implementation shows striking differences, reflecting the diverse political, geopolitical and stakeholder context of these conflicts. Community development NGOs worked on rebuilding of economic livelihoods and social tissue in rural communities, but their work is often jeopardised by external influences on which they have limited influence.

Civil society building NGOs interviewed in this study included mostly training, human rights and women NGOs. All human rights groups emerged in the wake of deadly conflict and most work on a combination of grassroots and good governance programmes to improve the protection and security of the poor. As constituencies of women’s organisation have been most affected by the violence, these NGOs have all adjusted their programmes to deal with new challenges. In addition they work on structural changes, among others to increase female participation in politics and increase protection. Lastly, civil society building NGOs have been active in attempting to rebuild civil society in the former conflict zones, where either the State or armed groups or both have deliberately destroyed the indigenous self organisation and conflict mediation capacity. Advocacy NGOs aim at changing State policies and practices and often use their international connections to overcome the absence of local venues to participate in national development debates. They work on good governance, corruption, law reform, national debt, indigenous and civil and political rights.

Lastly, a new category of peace building NGOs was interviewed, three peace building think tanks and three conflict resolution training groups. While their peace building mission is most strait forward, they hardly ever directly mediate conflict, but build capacity of local NGOs and government and at best provide a national platform for joint action on a specific conflict issues. The fostering of bridging relations between divided identity groups at community level, as well as the national networking to change State policies and promote good governance proves vital for the success of NGO work. The next section will further analyse the social cohesion building capacity of local NGOs.

106 Another interesting Indonesian peace building initiative of a national level was the Masa Depan (Indonesian for ‘future’) dialogues, a national level scenario planning exercise bringing all key actors in 23 cities around the table to discuss future priorities for a prosperous and secure Indonesia in 2020. In Chapter 8.1, one of the cases is devoted to this initiative.
7.3 Social cohesion building capacity of local NGOs

The important contribution of NGOs as social and cultural capital builders was introduced in chapters IV and V. An effective NGO sector can make invaluable contributions as a third party, enabling dialogue and strengthening the social cohesion of the society, which reduces its susceptibility to violent conflict. In the quest to represent and defend their constituency’s interest, the 32 interviewed NGOs indeed needed to challenge the authorities using professional venues; they mobilised and associated poor people and built national wide or sectoral networks with other civil society actors. In this process, local NGOs created social and cultural capital to advance their causes. Social capital is manifesting in the multiple networks that NGOs build in the society to enable effective mobilization of their constituencies and key stakeholders for political action. Cultural capital is generated through NGO efforts to create public acceptance, legitimacy and institutionalization of alternative values, norms and peaceful and socially just approaches to conflict resolution and development. (Gidron, 2002) The NGOs make moral claims that are in opposition to the dominant political views and actively seek to change the powerful forces that fuel and maintain violent conflicts and prevent peace. This puts them at great risk of antagonism from the State, armed forces and other opposing groups.

Hence State–NGO relations are very important in determining and understanding NGO success, as Chapters V and VI already proved. Gidron (2002, p.17-18) applied the social movement theory and analysed political opportunity structures (POS) to explain how peace building NGOs grow and decline as a result of opportunities available or denied in their political environment. The four dimensions of political opportunity structures were examined in the interviews too and include:

1. The openness and inclusiveness of the political system;
2. The State and/or non-state actors’ capacity and propensity for repressive behaviour towards private initiative;
3. The stability of elite alignments that typically under gird a polity;
4. The presence of elite allies with NGOs to enable influencing the political process.

The political system has neither been open nor inclusive in the three case countries, though local gradations exist. The capacity and propensity of State and rebel movements for repressive action towards dissenting voices has been prominent in all countries. The Peace and Conflict Ledger indicate the State performance and durability of democratic institutions and was developed by the Minorities at Risk project based on six indicators to provide a tool to monitor State capability to manage violent conflicts peacefully. (see chapter 3.2) The Ledger rated Indonesia at medium risk in 2002, as it had difficulties with managing secession movements, had limited resources available to overcome the crisis, was in the midst of a political and economic transition and was located in an unstable geographic region. These risk factors however are supposedly offset by Indonesia’s long established democratic institutions. My analysis questioned the capability of Indonesia’s democratic institutions after 30 years of New Order autocratic rule and expressed more concern over the State’s human rights record and active involvement in intrastate combat, which weakens its authority to deal effectively with and prevent violent conflict elsewhere.

Sri Lanka was identified at a medium risk too; the State’s failure to manage self-determination movements and avoid armed conflict was balanced by the durability of its regime and stability of its democratic institutions. My analysis added that consecutive ethno-nationalist regimes have alternated between autocratic and democratic rule and eroded core democratic values and rights through the prolonged Emergency Acts, legalised exclusion of minorities and a culture of political violence. The impact of majority ethno-nationalist politics has kept the most democratic and least militarized case country engaged in the longest civil war and deeply eroded its capability to settle self-determination aspirations peacefully.
The role of the State in deadly conflict in Cambodia is another enigma. The Peace and Conflict Ledger concluded that Cambodia’s capacity to build a peaceful society is limited by the pervasive armed conflict and an autocratic regime that does not have the institutional means or resources to address it. The nation’s propensity for violent conflict is puzzling as it is the only case country where ethnicity is not an issue: Cambodia has one of the most homogenous populations in Asia with 89% of Khmer ethnic and linguistic origin. Other nation-specific conflict indicators, for example those offered in ‘Breaking the Conflict Trap’, do not resonate either, in view of its accessible geography, largely rural population and State capacity to ‘manage’ rebel movements. Natural resources like gems and timber helped sustain rebel groups and the deadly conflict till the late 1990s, but was never a reason for groups to mobilise and fight for cessation. In fact, cessation was never an issue: the conflicts were always aimed at overtaking the country’s national leadership. Here, external geopolitical influences created an environment for the Khmer Rouge to grow -as the only case country that was involved in an interstate conflict since independence- and the legacy of past atrocities seems to be determining factors that perpetuate violent conflict today. The only common conflict denominators, Cambodia shares with the other two countries, are its troubled nation-building history, the autocratic State response and militarization.

Colletta’s comparative post-conflict country research concluded that the lack of ‘organisational integrity and synergy of the State’ was the key factor in determining the openness of a political system and its social cohesion building capacities. Colletta (2000, p.91) stated that the State ‘waged war against constituents and engaged in divisive ploys, to strengthen state hegemony’ thereby ‘blocking the formation of cross-cutting, bridging social capital, while utilizing instability that may have resulted from the effects of globalization to further their cause.’ An application of Colletta’s theory of organisational integrity of the State to the case countries (Table 18) shows that Cambodia with an autocratic regime and strong military to silence dissent has restricted its interaction with its citizens and has put an effective top down governance system in place to service the regime. Sri Lanka and Indonesia have functioning democracies that facilitate more State – community interaction, but are organisationally too weak to prevent poor governance practises and fail to provide security and sustainable livelihoods for all their citizens. As a consequence, in all case countries the human security is low.

| Table 18 State integrity in four case countries, after Colletta (2000) |
|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| State-Community | State Capacity and Effectiveness |
| interaction     | Low (anarchic states): | High (predation, corruption (rogue states): |
|                 | Anarchy (collapsed states): | Cooperation, accountability, flexibility |
| Low             | inefficiency, ineffectiveness (weak states): | Cambodia and Myanmar |
| High            | Sri Lanka and Indonesia | |

To strengthen its conflict prevention ability, the State needs to rebuild the trust with its citizens and guarantee human security to all. Transparent, efficient and accountable public institutions and non-corrupt bureaucracy are prerequisites to exercising the rule of law, protecting human rights and carrying forward a sustainable development approach that aims to achieve equity and human well-being, next to material advancement. Both Colletta and Gidron conclude that an enabling environment for effective NGO peace building work is best fostered in an inclusive democracy with a strong civil society: provided other attributes are in place as well, including resources, competence, and vertical and horizontal linkages.

Chapter VI revealed that the interviewed NGOs form part of a larger fairly pronounced NGO sector. However, the combination of troubled nation building, ethno-nationalist politics, geopolitical influences and militarization led to frequent restrictions of civil and political rights, which seriously hampered the development of healthy civil society in Asia. The country analyses
identified several periods of extreme and violent repression, in which NGO work was all but impossible and many civil society leaders lost their lives (in Indonesia from 1965-1975, in Cambodia from 1975-1991 and in the North and East of Sri Lanka since 1987). In Myanmar the State repression of civil society has been so effective that the local NGOs sector can still not operate other than in exile and is therefore excluded from the NGO analysis and success indicator analysis in this chapter. The NGO overviews in chapter VI further illustrated how freedom of expression and assembly were often restricted in an attempt to hamper or prevent NGO initiatives, while internationally the appearance that fundamental rights were honoured was maintained by leaving the freedom of association untouched. All respondents affirmed that State restrictions have interfered with their work, but most felt they had managed to devise alternative strategies to accomplish their work and convey their message. The interviewed NGOs were modest about their contribution to ending conflict, corruption, exploitation, etc., but were adamant that their work benefited their direct constituencies and added to a national dialogue, presenting views and enabling voices that would otherwise not be heard.

This brings us to the two dimensions of political opportunity structures that determine the NGO environment. These dimensions highlight the role of the local elite and suggest that the negative impact of exclusive political systems and intolerant and repressive State attitudes could be remedied by a favourable elite alignment and elite ally networks that would enable NGOs to influence the political process in constructive ways. In Sri Lanka and Indonesia, the strong post-colonial elite and business sector alignment with the present regimes is not easy to crack. However, liberal intellectual and religious leaders did publicly side with local NGO campaigns during periods of strong State repression (e.g., in the late 1980s and early 1990s), which strongly enhanced the public credibility of NGOs. At times NGOs have also managed to forge alliances with the political opposition on an ‘end to war’ or ‘end to corruption’ ticket. For example, in Sri Lanka in 1994, NGOs and the progressive political elites united with an “End the Killing” agenda in the Peoples Alliance to defeat the long ruling UNP. However, respondents said these close alliances turned against them when the political climate changed. When the Sri Lankan ceasefire was broken in 1995, the PA changed its agenda to “War for Peace”, tainting NGO relation with both the PA and UNP leadership. Likewise in Indonesia, local NGOs who supported President Wahid’s political transformation agenda in 1999 were sidelined by both the Megawati government and the international aid community upon Wahid’s impeachment.

In Cambodia, post-colonial elite was largely annihilated in the early days of the Khmer Rouge rule (1975-79). The strong power base of the Cambodian Peoples Party, which dates back to the Vietnam supported post Khmer Rouge era and has firm roots in the army, has gradually sidelined the French oriented elite, who returned from exile in the early 1990s. Local NGOs have thus far failed to forge alliances with CPP elite, which is understandable given its tradition of autocratic governance and lack of appreciation of individual rights and civil society initiatives. In search of external support to level the asymmetric local power base, Cambodian NGOs successfully built regional and international networks with Asian sister NGOs, academic institutions and multilateral aid agencies and private development foundations. This strategy proved quite effective in protecting most local NGO sector from dramatic State interventions, but has soured State-NGO relations even more. International alliance building proved beneficial for advocacy and human rights NGOs in Indonesia as well, but worked differently in Sri Lanka for geopolitical and local political reasons. Chapter 8.4 relates of the three national NGO advocacy networks and analyses the remarkable differences in their durability, target audiences and framing of issues.

Sensitive framing of key issues is of crucial importance in building cultural capital. The process of framing refers to the NGOs “assigning meaning to and interpret relevant events and conditions in ways that are intended to mobilize potential adherents and constituents, to garner their support
and to demobilize antagonists." (Gidron, 2002, p.19) In framing conflict analyses and proposed solutions, the use of "sacred" values that are non-negotiable to either or both contesting parties should be avoided and values that are of mutual interest should be stressed. If NGOs succeed in getting their non-violent, just peace message to resonate and be accepted by a wide audience, they can develop and provide alternative cultural tools that enable new dialogue and negotiation. Therefore the Mobilizing Peace authors assessed the extent to which NGOs succeeded in building lasting cultural capital by institutionalizing alternative conflict prevention frames in the public discourse. Without such framing, they may have little direct political result because of powerful political forces (i.e. the State, armed groups as well as the international community).

To this effect, Gamson's work on the role of social movements in cultural change was applied. It builds on the importance of changing the cultural symbols and language that are used to address conflict. Gidron analysed the public discourse, particularly in the mass media, to determine two measures of success: the cultural acceptance of NGOs as legitimate authorities, indicated by their "gaining the status of a regular media source whose interpretations are directly quoted" and the new cultural advantages "as indicated by the prominence given to the social movements preferred frames as compared to antagonistic frames (i.e. how the movement defines and views the nature of the conflict, its causes and remedies as compared to antagonistic frames") (Gamson, 1998, p.68) Mobilizing for Peace confirmed that the most important contributions of P/CROs were threefold: they were able to create images and symbols that provided new and novel frames for the definition and resolution of conflicts; they were instrumental in introducing new social action tactics into the dominant cultural toolkit; and they managed to attain media coverage and thus gain acceptance in public discourse. "There is little doubt that P/CROs succeeded in introducing and institutionalising alternative conceptions, symbols and vocabularies to address the conflict. These alternative frames enabled both the public and political interest groups to address the intractable conflicts in novel ways and to push for peaceful solutions. (...) Their role can be summarized as preparing the public for a new reality of peace by demonstrating the unsatisfactory character of the current political situation (and showing that alternatives are possible), and creating and legitimizing a new language of peace." (p. 214-220, p.232)

Comparing Gidron's peacebuilding NGO conclusions on cultural capital building with the work of the interviewed NGOs in this study, leads to a number of interesting conclusions. First, in all three countries no independent media existed for extended periods in recent history. (see chapter 5.3) Even with the greater levels of free expression in Indonesia and Cambodia in the 1990s and during Sri Lanka's prolonged ceasefire, media freedom remained problematic with regular killings of Cambodian journalists in 2004, a series of criminal defamation law suits against Indonesian editors,101 and firm control of the major newspapers and TV stations by the Sri Lankan government. Self censorship in this context seems an unavoidable consequence, which further limits access of independent NGOs to the public media. In this light it is not surprising that the Three Freedoms NGO research group concluded in 1999 that of the three freedoms,  

101. Many journalists ... were prosecuted under the law for criminal defamation. They were the lucky ones; others were subject to assassinations and murder attempts. But the public is aware the government used the laws of defamation to stifle the press to cover their own shortcomings. Some journalists and others convicted for criminal defamation, for contempt of court or under parliamentary privilege laws got into power later. This was important in giving the issue a wider public debate and resulted in the repeal of the laws. The criminal defamation laws should be repealed, because there is no actual physical damage caused. Press freedom is ultimately the freedom of all people, not just for a few journalists ... If the media runs a story about alleged corruption in the government; it should not be considered a threat. It is for the betterment of the nation as a whole" From interview by Muminggar Sri Saraswati with Sri Lankan attorney Suranjith R.K. Hewamunna and Sydney-based barrister James Nolan, who were observing trials again the Tempo editors in the Jakarta Post of 20 August 2004.
restriction of the freedom of expression proved most effective in hampering NGO work. Interviewed NGOs responded with monitoring of the State abuse of the media during election campaigns and defending the interest of journalists and the free press in court. Second, as political decision making is still highly centralised in the case countries, interviewed NGOs have been quite successful in directing the public discourse through influencing the agenda setting of major international forums, like the annual World Bank-led aid pledging meetings and the annual hearings of the UN Commission on Human Rights in Geneva. NGO respondents acknowledged the invitation to participate in official human rights investigation commissions, demobilisation and illegal logging monitoring teams and constitutional reform committees would not have occurred without international recognition and pressure. This higher profile has increased their access to national media, as authorities in their field of expertise. Third, a majority of the respondents confirmed the success of their work is influenced by the quality of their in-country networks. Linking actors at various levels in vertical networks and broadening their outreach by fostering horizontal, geographic or sectoral partnerships, in other words the building of social capital, was seen as important to determining the success and sustainability of NGO work.

Success in one area may, however, create problems in other areas. For example, NGOs that are more successful in building social and cultural capital tend to experience more intrusion by the State agents. Two kinds of NGOs are at elevated risk of State repression. The first group is membership NGOs that are well rooted in society through close involvement of its grassroots and/or association constituency in planning and implementation, and that promote strategic alliances involving multiple key actors through a combination of horizontal bridging work among communities and vertical good governance work. The second group are NGOs that specialise in sensitive development work, like contesting human rights abuses or eco-violence, and that engage in international advocacy and networking. Charitable and emergency relief oriented NGOs on the other hand, usually face less State intervention (except when selecting geographic locations), because their work is temporary, more service delivery oriented, and not well rooted in local communities. These aspects make relief and charitable work less geared towards advocating for structural policy and practice change. Community development NGOs are positioned somewhere in between. Their work is usually geographically defined with limited vertical linkages to decision makers at national and international levels. In general, government control is more relaxed here too, unless their geographic reach extends to the national level and their mobilising force potentially becomes a threat to the State.

Horizontally and vertically well-connected NGOs could be perceived as a threat to the integrity of the State, because they are able to accumulate professional expertise, a broad constituent support base and a strategic network of key stakeholders, including foreign actors, all of which are hard for States to control. States furthermore tend to become concerned when NGOs reach the capacity to mobilise large grassroots constituencies, which gives them both public credibility and a critical mass to demand structural policy and practice changes. While restrictions on the freedom of assembly and resource mobilisation, as well as political violence might succeed in intimidating grassroots NGO constituencies, the work of small, highly specialised NGOs aimed at issues like constitutional reform, debt relief and monitoring the impact of eco-violence proves much harder to manage. These NGOs often possess means of networking, outreach and discussion that are beyond State control (e.g., internet, academic exchange, international conferences). In addition, their international connections make the State more vulnerable to public criticism.

Half of the interviewed NGOs have faced some severe, direct obstruction and intervention by State agents over the past ten years. (See Table 19) Examples of State repression include intimidating beneficiaries; intimidating, questioning and arresting NGO staff; temporarily closing of NGO offices: confiscating archives and materials: abstaining from providing police protection
to NGO offices under mob attack: discouraging foreign donors from providing funding: launching public fraud and security investigations in violation of the rule of law. Would attacks (including murder) by armed groups that occurred prior to 1995 also be considered, Table 19 would include four additional NGOs (two human rights, one peace building and one advocacy NGO). As expected, the human rights NGOs are at the highest risk, as are national election monitoring networks, peace building groups that work on disarmament in conflict zones and those mobilising indigenous and Sinhalese grassroots associations at the provincial or national levels.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Specialisation</th>
<th>Comm. Dev.</th>
<th>Human Rights</th>
<th>Eco-Violence</th>
<th>Democratisation</th>
<th>Peace building</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cambodia</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>04/10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sri Lanka</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>06/12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indonesia</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>06/10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>16/32</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

State responses to sensitive NGO programmes in all three countries have mostly concentrated on limiting their freedom of expression, which makes it hard for NGOs to share their views with a wider audience in-country. Local grassroots membership NGOs with a high level of technical expertise and a large beneficiary network, in other words those possessing strong horizontal and vertical social capital, have been subjected to restrictions on freedom of assembly as well. For seven months after the 2003 national elections, large public gatherings, celebrations and demonstrations were prohibited in Cambodia. The freedom of assembly that was granted after thirty years of extreme restrictions in 1998 is again under threat. Large public meetings in sensitive areas in Sri Lanka need State and/or armed group approval too. Tables 20 and 21 show how NGO legitimacy, sectoral expertise and exercised levels of State control have played out.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Highly specialised NGO work with high vertical actor linking</th>
<th>Low NGO membership legitimacy</th>
<th>High NGO membership legitimacy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Type of freedom restricted</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Freedom of Expression curtailed, fear for damage to the State’s international image that might affect its aid relations and foreign business investments.</td>
<td>-International advocacy networks that lobby UN and bilateral Aid agencies -National Environmental lobby -Constitutional HR work (law reform, usually highly specialised, non-membership work)</td>
<td>-HR membership work, especially land &amp; labour (class cleavages) -Political and civil rights -Democratisation, voter education/election monitoring</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grassroots service NGO work with lower vertical actor linking</th>
<th>Low NGOs membership legitimacy</th>
<th>High NGOs membership legitimacy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Type of freedom restricted</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Few restrictions (as assistance is temporary)</td>
<td>-Emergency relief and rehabilitation organisations -Charitable groups</td>
<td>-Rural development NGOs -Basic social service delivery NGOs</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Good examples of building horizontal bridging social capital were sampled during the research too, but many NGOs find it hard to sustain these initiatives over long periods and to expand them to reach the critical mass required to make grassroots interventions sustainable. For example,
running social service and micro credit programmes for the poorest alone is insufficient to foster strong and caring community networks and rebuild trust in the society. Respondents identified two main reasons. First, it proves hard to build strong community ties to overcome differences in race, religion and class, when political violence and impunity persist. Colletta (2001) concluded that when governance structures are characterized by inequality and unequal distribution of power and opportunity, the State’s capacity to manage civil conflicts in a peaceful manner is sharply reduced. This is the case in all three case countries; their citizens remain vulnerable to attacks from authorities in the absence of well functioning official protection mechanisms like an independent judiciary, a service oriented police force and democratic state institutions. Many respondents highlighted the return of patron-client relationships in rural areas, especially in Cambodia and Indonesia. This strong bonding social capital form, characterised by asymmetrical power relationships, perpetuates inequality and dependency in poor communities. Furthermore, poor exclusionary governance increases the risk of inter-group violence, for instance if one group is seen to monopolise resources and power to the disadvantage of the others, and is likely to keep cessation sentiments among identity groups alive. Second, NGOs working on horizontal peaceful co-existence initiatives that go beyond economic livelihood projects, encounter difficulties in raising resources for these long-term efforts. In Sri Lanka, the North-South youth exchange work, a vital initiative designed to bridge the geographical and mental gap among adolescents and build a new generation, failed to impress nor interest the government, business sector and international community and most projects were postponed after the first post-conflict year.

A majority of respondents share the view that vertical social capacity building work and the promotion of good governance is most vital at this point in their country’s history. The capacity of political parties to bridge their differences for the common good has been deeply eroded by the recent deadly conflicts. Past and present militarization is perceived as a major threat by 100% of the Cambodian respondents, 60% of the Indonesian and 33% of the Sri Lankan respondents. Weak parliamentary control has allowed the military to maintain and expand its involvement in local governance and business engagements. Since 1998, successive Cambodian demobilisation programmes have failed to date to restructure and substantially reduce the size of the army and 30% of the national budget is still spent on defence. Likewise, in Indonesia the plans to reform and increase the accountability of the TNI remain high on the political agenda, but little progress has been made since the impeachment of President Wahid in 2001.

The prolonged State-NGO tensions make international aid agencies increasingly reluctant to work with either side in post-conflict situations. The CIDA, UNDP and FORUT respondents labelled local NGOs in Sri Lanka and Indonesia as partisan, inexperienced in modern conflict mediation techniques and too susceptible to intimidation and corruption. Therefore these foreign agencies felt more confident working with international NGOs, which are considered more efficient at delivering services and more focused on economic and basic needs provision programmes. In the North East of Sri Lanka, eight international NGOs and two UN agencies now run the entire relief and rehabilitation operation. The NGO consortium of the North East -that used to coordinate the work of local and international NGOs- ceased to function in 2001, as funding to local NGOs dried up. In Indonesia internationally funded conflict resolution programmes in the Moluccas, Sulawesi and Aceh are run by operational UNDP programmes and international NGOs like Mercy Corps, Oxfam International and the Henry Dunant Foundation. In Cambodia, 200 of the 600 operational NGOs are international aid agencies that absorb 80% of the annual foreign donations to NGO work.

102 From interviews with Terje Heggerens, FORUT Asia coordinator in Colombo 6 May 2002; Stephen Weaver, CIDA/ Canadian Embassy 1st Secretary in Jakarta, 13 June 2002; and David Galligher, UNDP Conflict Resolution Programme Director in. Jakarta. 17 June 2002
Bringing in international expertise during highly violent communal conflict is often a wise short-term emergency approach in an effort to end the killing, supply much needed basic social services to destitute victims and transfer conflict resolution skills to a variety of actors. However, the research revealed that that at the time of the interviews in 2002 and 2003, this post-conflict operational post-conflict reconstruction work of international NGOs, UN and World Bank in Sri Lanka and Indonesia lacked a clear institutional vision on rebuilding local civil society. Their short-term peace capacity building interventions seemed primarily aimed at reducing the political risks of local conflict prevention work in the context of low State integrity. Direct transfer of peace building skills to grassroots groups intended to foster a new community based civil society in post communal conflict situations. However, there was no successful track record of this approach, the political implications of civil society building were seemingly not acknowledged and thus the international programmes failed to grab the unique opportunity to try to “normalise” and expand productive State-local NGO relationships at this crucial political transformation stage. Even if a new civil society could be built through foreign operational intervention, its long term sustainability will eventually be in jeopardy too, unless a fundamental change is fostered in the State-NGO partnerships (and in the case of Sri Lanka, the LTTE-NGO relationships too). In terms of cost efficiency, the international peace building intervention is quite unsustainable too, as operational costs incurred to run temporary head and field offices in post-conflict zones, to cover foreign salaries and overheads, comprise of well over 50% of the budgets. Moreover, chapter VI showed the detrimental effects of the “brain-drain” of local NGOs, induced by these international agencies when they recruit senior field based staff with experience in civil society building work and knowledge of local culture/language is essential. In North East Sri Lanka and Indonesia, this has counter productive consequences as it has weakened local civil society networks to the point where the local NGOs in the North East of Sri Lanka have now lost most of their international funding base.

In sum, most interviewed NGOs built horizontal networks in communities to overcome identity divides, improve livelihoods, promote peaceful co-existence and create an economically fairer and socially just society. Others concentrated on vertical network building to strengthen good governance, increase human security of their deprived constituencies and improve collaboration between different stakeholders. NGO respondents concluded that vertical social capital building efforts are generally more visible and easier to sustain than horizontal bridging social capital initiatives. Most of the difficulties encountered when NGOs try to sustain their horizontal networks over a longer period, come from external factors beyond their control. Low human security threatens the impact of social and economic grassroots work, like active village associations falling apart through forced evictions or peasant families’ subsistence livelihood being undermined by expenses incurred to care for HIV/AIDS infected family members. Cultural capital building proved another vital NGO contribution to defuse tensions and build new constituencies; e.g. reframing sustainable peace messages to generate public acceptance, proposing alternative conflict solutions, reiterating respected values and norms etc. The last section of this chapter presents seven indicators that may make local NGO work more successful in preventing deadly conflict: to this end social and cultural capacity building approaches are combined with organisational characteristics and programme strategies.
7.4 Success indicators for NGO conflict resolution and prevention work

The final section of this chapter presents and tests seven potential success indicators that would make local NGO conflict prevention programmes more effective. It furthermore attempts to establish the connection between the NGO’s organisational integrity and its capability to build horizontal and vertical social and cultural capital, which would make a major contribution to fostering socially cohesive societies. The seven tested indicators are: durable bridging community networks (horizontal social capital); strategic vertical networks of key actors to promote good governance; peace with justice, human security and sustainable development messaging; international advocacy and knowledge networks (exploiting soft power); high profile NGO leadership; joint National NGO campaigns; and enhanced NGO organisational integrity.

1. Build durable cross-community networks (bridging social capital)
2. Build strategic vertical networks of key actors to promote good governance
3. Formulate and promote alternative just peace messages that stress shared values, norms and inclusive solutions.

These first three success indicators for local NGO work in conflict prevention were elaborately discussed in the previous sections. If these three strategies are successfully applied, they will likely address the three gaps in peace building efforts identified by Lederach (see chapter III). First, the strategic vertical actor networks can overcome the common lack of vertical integration of peace initiatives that tend to bring together counterparts of relatively equal status to meet and agree. Second, increased social and cultural capital will contribute to a process of structural transformation towards greater social and economic justice and inclusive governance. While most peace accords commit to undertake such transformative measures, in reality they are hardly ever implemented, which jeopardise a lasting peace. Third, framing of peace message as a dynamic, ongoing process of transformation and not an end in itself, will facilitate a change in the public perception. That in itself will reinforce the fostering of durable cross community networks.

Because repressive State-NGO relationships may dramatically reduce the effectiveness of NGO work, the interviewed NGOs engaged in various strategies to neutralise uncooperative State interference. Some bilateral aid agencies concluded that successful framing of the peace message, as reflected in heightened public interest (media coverage) and/or repressive State response is sufficient proof that NGO work has been successful. USAID, for example, monitored the effectiveness of their funding to LBH, Indonesia’s largest human rights organisation, in the mid 1990s by the number of newspaper entries, regardless of their content (135 times a year was considered successful); DFID identified violent public counter protests to the international human rights advocacy work in Sri Lanka an indicator of its success. However, this study seeks success indicators for NGO contributions to prevent deadly conflict, which implies a focus on approaches oriented to structural change. This makes measuring output and outcome alone insufficient; direct and indirect effect on intended beneficiaries or target audiences must be considered as well.\(^\text{103}\)

\(^{103}\) In professional development work four levels of results are distinguished. Output is the immediate service delivered or activity undertaken: the training is convened, a report is written, a village meeting organised etc. Outcome looks into the immediate beneficiaries: were the right number of persons with the right background in the full training, was the report sent to the intended audience, did all village members participate. Output and outcome indicate activities were undertaken according to plan, measuring their results can be done at three levels. Direct results are close to outcome: trainees applied some of their new skills in their work. Newspapers write articles on the reports, village association initiates a new project. Indirect results measure the effect on the target audience: is a public debate starting in the newspaper, are the skills of beneficiaries augmented, has the village income increased. The last, most interesting and hardest to measure in impact: has the economic success brought the village closer and built trust? Did public discussion result in a change of government policy, etc. Here the burden of causality is often hard to prove.
4. Exercise soft power through international advocacy and knowledge networking

The concept of exploiting soft power was first introduced in chapter V with Nye’s definition of soft power as the ability to achieve goals through attraction rather than coercion. NGOs use soft power by convincing others to follow or getting them to agree to norms and institutions that produce desired behaviours. The lack of space for an open dialogue on structural policy change with authoritarian States made advocacy NGOs look abroad and seek foreign allies to balance asymmetric power relations. International NGO networks provide alternative venues to citizens barred from political participation to influence the decision making on policies that directly affect their daily lives. Increased citizen involvement in turn can help to create a political culture and the social capital necessary to sustain the democratisation process. On the other hand most international affairs specialists tend to stress the negative implications of national NGOs mechanisms, like Tinkler (1999) who argued that NGO ‘end-run’ the State through their international advocacy networks, undermining the sovereignty of the State and making it lose control over development aid negotiation processes (see chapter 5.5). However, this strategy is listed as a legitimate indicator for successful conflict prevention work when States with low organisational integrity refuse to provide human security to their citizens and intimidate NGOs who seek structural change and enhanced State accountability.104 Direct effects of this strategy are the NGO representation at international donor meetings, participation in multi/bilateral aid agency policy consultations, invitations to partake in inspection panels and monitoring committees, referencing NGO reports in UN reports etc. Indirect effects include policy changes, through law reform and shifting international donor commitments, and practise changes, like institutionalising special conflict resolution commissions.

Building international advocacy and knowledge exchange networks proved very helpful to NGOs in Cambodia and to a lesser extent to those in Indonesia. Local NGO leaders are now standard invitees at the annual donor pledging meetings, participate in UN and World Bank country strategy planning meetings and are on advisory panels of bilateral aid agencies. Their representation has a mutually beneficial aspect. Most multi and bilateral agencies are bound by their own constituencies to maximise people’s consultation in the policy formulation process, something which is hard to organise when the State has an authoritarian nature. International advocacy in Indonesia focused on addressing State and armed forces’ involvement in ecoviolence and on unsustainable development practises, including debt issues. Networks like INFID and WALHI were successful in mobilizing strategic allies in Europe and Japan (the sources of the bulk of Indonesia’s development aid), exposing atrocities committed by the multinational mining corporations with the support of State actors and mounting international pressure to end environmentally unsustainable and socially unjust practices. INFID’s debt relief studies in the 1990s made the World Bank invite them for consultation prior to the donor pledging meeting it chaired. Interestingly, political rights abuses were not high on INFID’s international lobby agendas. Local NGO leaders walked a fine line, in terms voicing international public criticism, without jeopardising the local NGO work at home.

Sri Lankan international advocacy by contrast focussed mainly on a human rights and peace agenda, with the UN Human Rights Commission and European bilateral agencies as main audiences. The International NGO Forum documented political and civil rights abuses committed by State and non-State actors, and facilitated testimonies to the annual UN Commission on Human Rights in Geneva. In six years of active existence, the economic lobby agenda remained

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104 Two of the nine interviewed human rights NGOs saw their Executive Directors killed over the past five years – Dr. Neelan Tiruchelvam, Founding Director of the Law and Society Trust by a suicide bomber in 1999 and Munir, Founding Director of KONTRAS, the committee investigating disappearances, by arsenic poisoning in 2004.
limited and the Forum was never invited by the World Bank for any consultation. Chapter 8.4 relates the experiences of the three advocacy networks and their impact on State – NGO relations.

5. Run strategic joint national NGO campaigns

A fifth strategy to enhance the NGOs position in the asymmetric State-NGO power equation is to organise national level joint NGO campaigns. Joint NGO campaigns can provide a nationwide coverage (e.g. election monitoring networks work in all provinces) and/or a complementary mix of professional expertise (e.g. the Cambodian land tenure project brought together law, community development, advocacy and conflict resolution experts). While comparing individual NGOs across the four countries did not provide valuable strategy correlations, the interviews revealed that there is marked similarity and universal benefit in joint national level campaigning. Similarities are found in organisational set-up, profiling the issues, raising public interest and support for the issues, and providing added security to NGOs and their beneficiaries, especially when it comes to work on political and civil rights, corruption and democratisation. When respondents were asked to identify successful initiatives, they often mentioned projects that were related to national campaigns. Few NGOs dared to claim their work resulted in lasting structural change (i.e., indirect results and impact) in the livelihoods and wellbeing of their constituencies and other beneficiaries, given the human insecurity context that prevails in all case countries.

The most institutionalised joint national NGO campaigns are the voter education and election monitoring networks (COMFREL and PAFFREL) in Cambodia and Sri Lanka, in which 10 and 5 national NGOs work together respectively, and hundreds of smaller village organisations are involved in the grassroots work. To keep the network active in between the elections and to exploit the extraordinarily effective nationwide NGO collaboration, both COMFREL and PAFFREL have taken on additional issue sets, closely related to their good governance and democratisation work, including monitoring of the decentralisation acts, monitoring of the media and promoting peaceful co-existence and civil society building in post-conflict communities. One of the reasons for the success of these networks is the combination of building a broad bridging constituency across community, while strategically linking with key State and non-state actors at provincial, national and international levels (horizontal and vertical social capital). Successful issue-based networks include the land and small weapons working groups in Cambodia, the Komnas Perempuan in Indonesia and the national lobby campaign for acknowledgement and protection of internally displaced through admittance of the International Red Cross in Sri Lanka. Though their advocacy efforts are directed to influence vertical actors, their research is based on grassroots capacity building and information generation and advocacy work directly represents and benefits the beneficiaries. This vastly increases the legitimacy of the advocates and enhances the chances for a wider acceptance of proposed good governance messages and related policy changes.

Lastly, there is a special category of joint national campaigns that aims to promote sustainable peace by mobilising national audiences that are as broad and diverse as possible. The goal of these peace movements usually is to build public ownership and acceptance of terms of the peace agreements under negotiation, including the negative terms. Broad NGO peace campaigns in both Cambodia and Sri Lanka have often included renowned Buddhist monks and laymen and the use

105 The three large election monitoring networks that were founded in Indonesia in 1999 were not included in this study because they differ fundamentally in institutional nature and funding. Their inception was heavily influenced by massive foreign funding (USAID alone allotted $65 million to the local monitoring of the first free elections in 1999). Joint national election monitoring NGO networks like COMFREL and PAFFREL have as important added advantage, in that the diverse professional backgrounds and constituencies of the members makes it next to impossible for one member or a single political party to hijack the network for political purposes.
of meditation techniques to provide legitimacy and safety to the sometimes dangerous mass gatherings. Examples are the 1993 peace walk in the Northwest of Cambodia in which activists traversed the battle ground where the army and armed groups engaged in combat, or the peace march in Jaffna in early 1990, to protest the assassination of a renowned pro-peace Jaffna University teacher. As these horizontal initiatives lacked a firm vertical linking, it proved hard to keep the momentum after the march itself was over. Another major problem was the downside of the commendable diverse background of the organisers, who besides NGOs included religious leaders, business leaders and housewives with apolitical, strait forward pro-peace messages. As the conflict intensified and the individual party interests came to play a larger role in politics, the peace movements came under attack, sometimes literally, like the Women for Peace Friday marches in Colombo in 1990, and the Phnom Penh peaceful demonstration protesting the coup in April 1997, in which several protesters including a monk were killed by security forces. Uneasy with the heightened political profile of their peace work, the diverse coordinating committees fell apart and the peace marches ended. The case study in chapter 8.3 analyses how such events ended the third and last resurrection of the broad peace movement in Cambodia.

Cross-NGO collaboration is highest in Cambodia, on the rise in Indonesia, but remains problematic in Sri Lanka, where positioning on the details of an eventual peace accord for the North and East seems to perpetually divide the local NGO community (see also chapter VI). In Indonesia, despite NGO collaboration on eco-violence in international advocacy, there have been no broad based people's peace movements, most likely because of Indonesia's size, island geography and the prohibition on civil society mobilisation efforts by the previous New Order regime. Differences in cultural traditions between Buddhist and Muslim protest practices may be a factor too. The peace demonstration void has been filled in recent years by Indonesian students, who play a much more active role in good governance and democratisation protests than in the other countries. Students of five universities united their protests in 1998, after spontaneous protests began concurrently in response to the Asian crisis a year earlier. They obtained support from human rights, workers and women NGOs and when the weeklong mass protests ended in a shoot out with security forces that killed eight students in May 1998, the New Order regime was toppled. The joint Indonesian Ngo peace building initiative chosen for the case studies, is the Masa Depan scenario dialogue for Indonesia 2010, which was a unique, highly professional, vertical peace constituency building exercise that focussed on bringing together key actors around the country. Sadly, it lost momentum in the political fallout surrounding President Wahid's impeachment in 2001.

6. Attract and sustain high profile NGO leadership

Given the highly politicised nature of conflict resolution and prevention work in the three case countries, the presence of strong, high profile leadership is an important prerequisite to mobilising both financial and human resources and building and sustaining strategic horizontal and vertical networks. This is however a conflicted success strategy, as strong personalised leadership can negatively affect the organisational accountability and transparency, especially in Asia with its Confucian values and respect for the State. In the article “Trees die from the top” (2002), Hailey points out that the expanding role and significance of non-profit and civil society organisations cause increasingly complex managerial problems for NGO leaders. They are forced to work with very limited resources in uncertain and volatile political and economic environments. As NGO work is expanding and its experienced leadership is brain-drained by the State and international agencies, there is a growing deficit in leadership abilities and NGOs face problems replacing leaders who move on to business and government positions. Failure of sustained leadership may lead to dysfunctional programmatic results and even to organisational collapse of local NGOs.
Preventing Deadly Conflict in Divided Societies in Asia

Yet, charismatic leadership is a key factor in conflict prevention work in a low human security environment. The Mobilizing for Peace study defines charismatic leadership as one of four main conclusions (next to the centrality of foreign funding, NGO professionalisation and the existence of a ‘fairly developed NGO sector’). Charismatic leaders have strong convictions regarding the objectives of their NGOs and they manifest leadership abilities to attract followers in a hostile and risky environment. Gidron concludes that charismatic leaders were most prominent and most crucial for the NGO survival in South Africa, where the NGO sector went through decades of dramatic political isolation or radicalisation. (Gidron, 2002, p.230)

Charismatic NGO leadership seems indeed a key success indicator in all three countries in this study as well.¹⁰⁶ Ten of the 32 NGOs have strong charismatic leaders, eight of whom were among the NGO’s founding elders. Not surprisingly, these are NGOs that face a hostile environment: four human rights groups (ADHOC, LBH, KONTRAS, UTHR-J) and four national networks working on good governance and democratisation (WGWR, PAFFREL, Koalis Perempuan, WALHI). Sixteen other NGOs combine strong individual leadership qualities with a representative, well connected and often charismatic board of directors. For example, the COMFREL (election monitoring) board and press committee comprises four charismatic heads of the leading human rights organisations. The annually rotating Young Men Muslim Association (=YMMA) directors are all self financed, from the Muslim business community and remain attached to the organisation as advisors and fund raisers for life. Remdec’s (civil society capacity building NGO) managing directors are guided by an active high profile eight member board of mostly charismatic civil society leaders with complementary professional expertise. This combination provides high profile, professional feedback and increased political protection to the participating NGOs. The remaining seven NGOs have managing directors who share managerial responsibilities with their professional staff, which is possible because these groups focus more on professional services, like legal aid, gender training and drafting background advocacy documentation.

Timing has indeed been a crucial factor in this study too. The impeachment of President Wahid impeachment had a deep impact on the Indonesian NGO sector’s attempt to (re)connect with the State and subsequent to the 2002 interviews. seven of the ten interviewed NGOs have changed leadership and lost most of their experienced management staff in the process. This led several respondents to conclude that it will take a decade for the local NGO sector to rebuild its capacity. Most departing NGO leaders joined the well endowed multilateral conflict resolution and reconstruction programmes, while two other charismatic leaders founded new organisations that aimed at targeting official corruption and human rights abuses by the military (Transparency Indonesia and Imparsial). Two human rights organisations faced a stand-off between its board and executive management over setting new agendas and advocacy strategies mainly vis-à-vis the State and armed forces in 1999, leading eventually to the dismissal of the executives and in case of LBH, the implosion of the national human rights institute that stood as a beacon of justice for 25 years. Fortunately, the Indonesian NGO sector is blessed with a steady influx of new young activists who are ready to take over; therefore, while it will impact the programming in the short term, it does not necessarily threatens the organisational survival.

Sri Lankan NGO leaders face an entirely different context. Polarisation between NGO leaders and political parties over peaceful solutions to conflict over the past decade, led to them being bypassing in recent peace initiatives and a growing fatigue among the now middle-aged leaders. This affects the ability of NGOs to frame the message successfully (how many times can an issue

¹⁰⁶ As the NGO selection for this research was based on their level of professionalism and organisational development, weak leadership did not occur.
be reinvented?) and to mobilise resources. Interest among young student leaders to join and take over management positions is limited; they are put off by the entrenched positions of civil society leaders. Likewise, donor fatigue has set in since the late 1990s and most international aid agencies have been transferring their development (as opposed to relief and rehab) grants to the latest Asian hotspots in Central Asia and the Middle East. Eight of the 12 interviewed NGOs have lost part of their historic funding base in recent years. One of the first ‘victims’ was the respected Movement for Interracial Justice and Peace that among others produced an independent, nationwide bilingual weekly newspaper for over a decade. It closed down in 2002, three years after its long time leader Charles Abeyesinghe died of heart failure. Two exceptions to this rule are the Law and Society Trust (=LST) and International Centre for Ethnic Studies, which kept the legacy of the assassinated Tamil human rights lawyer and peace activist Neelan Tiruchelvam alive with many young lawyers, students and artists joining in its research work; and the People’s Action for Free and Fair Elections (=PAFFREL) which has managed to mobilise foreign resources, brought together large NGO networks and trained 45,000 new local election monitors, including many young village workers. Their case is presented in chapter 8.1.

Cambodia to conclude has an NGO sector that is only a good decade old, but charismatic leaders are already concerned about their ability to groom young leadership. An influx of young workers is not a problem, because the NGO sector provides employment and educational opportunities that are otherwise lacking in the country. But since the 1997 coup, the political intimidation and physical threats to the senior management of high profile rights NGOs have been mounting, which, combined with the lack of human security and the cultural tradition of patron-client relationships, increases dependency on strong charismatic leadership. This dependency, which seems to be an unavoidable strategy to counter a rogue State opponent, may indeed weaken the NGO’s self governing ability in the long term.

7. Aim at maximum NGO organisational integrity

The final indicator used to assess the success of NGOs is their organisational structure. The third research assumption, based on Colletta’s social cohesion building constructs presented in chapter 4.3, is that NGOs that work simultaneously on good governance, decentralisation, participation and sustainable economic development policies (vertical axis), and on grassroots empowerment and bridging social capital between different communities (horizontal axis), will likely be more successful when these capacities are reflected in their own organisational structure. A multi ethnic, gender balanced and regionally representative composition of the management, staff and governing board, combined with constructive vertical network kinks with other key stakeholders (including State actors), would make a more lasting contribution to the society’s social cohesion and thereby its resilience to deadly conflict. NGOs with such high organisational integrity and public legitimacy would also be better equipped to partner with the State to improve its communication with the people and rebuild a more democratic and human security oriented society. Three other success factors outlined above provided insight into some aspects of the organisational integrity of NGOs: its leadership, international advocacy networks and national campaigns. Table 22 identifies four groups of NGOs, by relating their organisational integrity to their potential conflict resolution and prevention capacity. Table 23 scores the organisational integrity of the interviewed NGOs.

The four boxes of the matrix of Table 22 provide an interesting mix of organisations and countries, as does the breaks down per sectoral expertise and country of origin in Table 23. Because of the qualitative nature of the indicators, some score require explanation. The four NGOs with both low horizontal and vertical capital scores face special situations. At the time of the 2002 interview, Ahisma had just recently established its small conflict training office; LBH
had imploded after protracted internal disputes, and WDC and FHD’s work suffered from serious restrictions by the LTTE. These latter NGOs, both working on women’s rights and development in Jaffna, could be labelled success stories because they were among the few indigenous NGOs in Jaffna that had survived the LTTE onslaught, but paid with relative isolation and hence their horizontal and vertical networks are weak. Other NGOs that were difficult to score include the high vertical/ lower bridging social capital groups of NPC, UTHR and KONTRAS. These three peace building and human rights groups have close grassroots contacts and sympathisers, but lack firm horizontal structures (but not necessarily grassroots connections) because their work is too political and/or dangerous. Their high vertical social capital scoring is justified by their small offices made up of highly skilled professionals who have a wide international reach through their well informed, analytical reports.

Table 22 Organisational integrity of NGOs and their conflict resolution and prevention capacity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Relation State and non-state constituencies</th>
<th>Low vertical social capital</th>
<th>High vertical social capital</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Low bridging social capital capacity</td>
<td>The NGO selection of this study excluded NGOs with poor horizontal and vertical capital. NGO’s with limited ethnic focus may end up in this category because they lack bridging multi ethnic capital and are isolated in vertical actor networking as well.</td>
<td>NGOs with a strong constituency and horizontal capital building focus. They can be vulnerable to external attacks from State and non-state actors alike, as they lack the vertical connections to protect against political interventions. Conflict resolution capacity at district level can be impressive, but structural change capacity can be limited.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High bridging social capital capacity</td>
<td>NGOs with highly specialised skill sets, usually professionally well connected with essential vertical links and high profile presentations at forums, etc. However, their capacity to deal with acute conflict is limited, as these third generation NGOs tend to have weaker community roots and networks.</td>
<td>NGOs with strong constituency connection and representation. They combine membership service delivery with vertical networking and lobbying. These NGOs seem best equipped to deal both with structural prevention and mediation of acute conflicts.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 23 Scoring of the interviewed NGOs on their organisational integrity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Actor Synergy</th>
<th>Low bridging institutional NGO capacity</th>
<th>High bridging institutional NGO capacity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Low vertical social capital</td>
<td>Cambodia: none</td>
<td>Cambodia: SST, WMC, WFP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sri Lanka: FHD, WDC, Ahisma</td>
<td>Sri Lanka: MDDR, SEEDS, YMMA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Indonesia: LBH</td>
<td>Indonesia: Kalyana M, Baku Bani, Apik</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High vertical social capital</td>
<td>Cambodia: LAC, CDRI, CCC</td>
<td>Cambodia: COMFREL, ADHOC, WGWR, PADEK</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sri Lanka: LST, CRM, NPC, UTHR-J</td>
<td>Sri Lanka: PAFFREL, SETIK</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Indonesia: INFID, KONTRAS, Koalisi P, Konnas P, Remdec</td>
<td>Indonesia: WALHI</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

At the high horizontal capital end, Sarvodaya/SEEDS, MDDR and YMMA all score relatively lower on vertical social capital building, because as unique grassroots movements, their access to a wider audience is limited. On the high vertical and high horizontal social capital building end, the scoring for PADEK, SETIK and WALHI may raise questions. The rural development NGO Padek was awarded a high vertical social capital score because of its innovative village general assembly system, which allows beneficiaries and government officials at provincial levels to influence and question PADEK’s planning and reporting, which adds to its transparency and accountability and builds trust with key actors. SETIK combines its community development work in Sri Lanka’s volatile Central Highland Province with ongoing high level inter-religious peace dialogue, involving clerics from all religions. WALHI -best known for its environmental advocacy to end eco-violence- is an umbrella of 140 grassroots association and works to
Role of local NGOs in preventing deadly conflict

In 2002, WALHI collaborated with two legal aid NGOs to seek retribution for loss of property and livelihoods of indigenous people. Organised workshops on the effects of and opportunities offered by the new decentralised governance and it exchanged knowledge and best practices between members.

Table 24 Results of interviewed NGO organisational integrity per country and sector

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NGO sector synergy</th>
<th>NGO horizontal social capital Low</th>
<th>NGO horizontal social capital High</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total number of NGOs 16</td>
<td>Total number of NGOs 16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>NGO vertical social capital</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Box A: Sectors:</td>
<td>Box B: Sectors:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Human Rights NGOs</td>
<td>Origin: CAM 0</td>
<td>2 Human Rights NGOs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Gender NGO</td>
<td>SRL 3</td>
<td>3 Comm. Dev. NGOs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Training NGO</td>
<td>IDO 1</td>
<td>3 Women NGOs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total NGOs 13</td>
<td>Total 4</td>
<td>1 Peace building NGO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>NGO vertical social capital</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>Box C: Sectors:</td>
<td>Box D: Sectors:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Human Rights NGOs</td>
<td>Origin: CAM 3</td>
<td>1 Human Rights NGO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Women’s NGO</td>
<td>SRL 4</td>
<td>2 Comm. Dev. NGOs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Training/advocacy NGOs</td>
<td>IDO 5</td>
<td>3 Good governance NGOs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total NGOs 19</td>
<td>Total 12</td>
<td>1 Peace building NGO</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The analysis of the country and sectoral scores per matrix boxes A to D provides some additional insights (Table 24). The NGO scores in Box A reflect mostly the impact of the civil war in Sri Lanka on NGO work (three of four NGOs with exception of LBH). Box B shows that high horizontal capital scores were spread equally over the countries. These NGOs are mainly women and community development NGOs that have firm rooting in and bonds with their grassroots constituencies. The high vertical capital building score of NGOs in Box C are in line with Table 22 as well, with a dominant presence of NGOs specialised human rights (constitutional reform, court cases, disappearances), capacity building training and advocacy. The NGOs in Box D have managed to build both strong vertical and horizontal social capital and seem best equipped to play an important role in resolving and preventing deadly conflict in divided societies. All seven NGOs have a more representative organisational structure, because of their actively involved membership and/or general assembly constituencies. The larger representation of Cambodian NGOs in this category reflects the relative openness of the NGO sector and its networking tradition. (See chapter 6.1)

The lower score on either the vertical or horizontal social capital building axe for NGOs in box B and C does not mean that all is lost; on the contrary. Highly specialised services to the poor that involve for example land disputes cases in court, law reform drafts and senior leadership training, require a staff composition and organisational structure determined by technical skills and professional networks. These NGOs have quite a different organisational set-up than those running village rice banks, water and sanitation projects, women’s credit groups or vocational training for marginalised youth etc., in which ethnic and geographic representativity is key. However, NGOs that are strong in either horizontal or vertical capital building can make their work more effective, if they forge strategic partnerships with service and advocacy NGOs. This will give grassroots associations access to decision makers at the national level, and likewise increase the grassroots legitimacy of service provision and advocacy NGOs. This is especially important for NGOs that cater to the needs of a particular target group, like marginalised women (victims of sexual violence), excluded ethnic groups (Tamil migrant workers) or specific geographic areas (Moluccas). Because of their specific focus, their staffing tends to represent a more narrow section of society and mainstreaming the interests of their beneficiaries on the national development agenda may prove more difficult. Hence they run a higher risk of being marginalised along with their constituencies, even within the nation’s NGO sector.
In sum, the degree to which the State allows political space for NGOs to act in democratic ways, shapes NGO success considerably. The process of balancing asymmetric powers in developing, democratising societies can be influenced by the pressure of international aid agencies on the State, especially if the State is concerned about its international credibility. The last part of this chapter identified and reviewed seven strategies that local NGOs can apply to increase their leverage with civil society, key stakeholders, the State and the international community. A combination of these indicators will enhance the chances of success of NGO development and social justice work, even if the political space is hostile to critical civil society initiatives. The seven indicators can be summarized in three success factors.

The first success factor reflects the NGO’s ability to build sustainable bridging and vertical social capital and frame alternative peace and justice messages. The analysis showed that building bridging and vertical social capital increased NGO’s rooting in society and enhanced their legitimacy. Both are crucial to strengthening the NGOs’ ability to frame alternative peace, justice and development messages in a way that appeals to broad constituencies and opens new space to think about alternative conflict resolution venues.

The second success factor relates to the NGO’s ability to build and sustain strategic actor networks to enhance their effectiveness for which two indicators were identified: the use of soft power through international advocacy and the engagement in joint national NGO campaigns. The purpose of both networks is to build a “critical mass” in the society that will enable NGOs to widen their constituencies, strengthen the advocacy voice and in the process generate some level of protection for their beneficiaries and their own organisations against impunity and State or armed group repression.

The third and last success factor refers to the NGO’s organisational characteristics for which two indicators were chosen: the NGO’s leadership and its organisational integrity. As peace, participatory development and justice programmes proved highly contentious and prone to repression, charismatic leadership is extremely important to get the message across and to mobilise constituencies and resources, essential for NGO survival. The NGOs’ organisational integrity and staff composition, indicate whether NGOs “walk the talk”; they do when their institutional social capital reflects bridging social capital in their staff composition, and vertical linking in their internal governance and accountability systems.

The NGO organisational integrity analysis matrix made an attempt to rate the institutional social capital of NGOs, judging whether bridging social capital is reflected in their staff composition, programme development and internal governance and whether vertical social capital is reflected in their accountability systems and their collaboration with multiple stakeholders on national and international level. Cambodian NGOs scored relatively higher on the bridging social capital, which reflects both their reliance on national NGO networking in the face of poor State – NGO relations, as well as the limited ethnic division in the country. Indonesian and Sri Lankan NGOs scored higher on vertical capital than on bridging social capital, which mirrors respectively the weakness of the NGO grassroots movement and the power of the military, and the deepened ethnic division after twenty years of civil war. Relating these scores to the NGOs thematic specialisation showed probable results: training, single issue and advocacy NGOs tend to have stronger vertical capital building capacity, while community development and women’s NGOs tend to have stronger horizontal social capital building capacities. Of the seven interviewed NGOs (or 22%) that scored high on both, the strong presence of good governance and democratisation NGOs stands out. Chapter VIII presents twelve case studies of successful NGO conflict prevention initiatives that illustrate the application of the success factors.
VIII. Four thematic case studies of joint national NGO campaigns

8.1 Good governance and democratisation

Commission for Free and Fair Elections in Cambodia

COMFREL is a network of twelve local NGOs that has been educating voters and monitoring elections since its official recognition as one of three independent observer networks by the National Election Committee (NEC) in 1997. Its mission is to help create an informed and favourable climate for free and fair elections. To this end COMFREL lobbies and advocates for a suitable legal framework, educates voters and monitors the election process to both discourage irregularities and provide comprehensive monitoring data to enable an objective, non-partisan assessment of the election process. COMFREL’s national network extends to the village level nation-wide, with 35,000 volunteer extension workers and observers covering almost 95% of polling stations. It uses the existing provincial and community infrastructure of member organisations that specialise in areas including human rights, community development, and women’s programmes. The volunteers are both local NGO staff and trained villagers. They engage in voter awareness and pre and post election monitoring on an ongoing basis.

The election monitoring network was initiated by three local NGO leaders. A training workshop was convened in Phnom Penh in 1996 with assistance of European NGOs and Forum Asia—a regional human rights organisation. NGO networks from Thailand, Philippines, Sri Lanka and Bangladesh shared their experiences in national election monitoring and discussed organisational models, strategies and programmes currently used around Asia. The workshop resulted in the formation of both COMFREL and the Asian Network for Free and Fair Elections (ANFREL), which has become an authority in its own right through its election observing and support for local NGO networks around Asia.

COMFREL’s Board of Directors, which consists of the Executive Directors of the 12 member NGOs, supervises the work of the Executive Committee and Central Office that coordinates all communication, trainings and supply of materials to the NGO networks in the provinces. Provincial Executive Groups organise the work of the District Contact Persons and Commune Activists and conduct trainings with technical assistance from the Central Office. In addition, the Central Office runs national awareness campaigns and the media monitoring unit and monitors voting decisions of elected members of parliament. It produces press releases, monthly updates and, during elections, comprehensive reports. COMFREL receives funding from a variety of European and American bilateral aid agencies and international private foundations, including Japanese peace foundations.

To build a national network of 12 NGO partners that reaches all corners of the country, to protect it from external pressure and to keep the volunteers active and committed between elections, is an ongoing struggle that requires ample managerial attention and a charismatic leadership. Election monitoring is a labour intensive, ongoing undertaking, which makes partnering with existing NGO field facilities and staff indispensable. The multiple NGO involvement in turn raises issues of cross NGO quality standards and balancing programmatic priorities. Another challenge was to acquire professional skills to advocate for electoral law reform, and develop voter education and monitoring programmes, in order to meet the international standards of election monitoring and to engage in a meaningful dialogue with the government and the National Election Commission. To this end, European donors provided regular backstopping services by two senior EU election specialists in 1997 – 1998, who had done similar work in Russia, South Africa and the Balkans.
Since its inception, COMFREL has monitored three national elections. For the last exercise, the National Elections of 2003, the National Election Commissioner issued 30,793 accreditation cards to local COMFREL observers. The 2003 election was the least violent, allowed for more party dialogue and saw an increased number of female candidates, though unequal access to media remained problematic. Over the preceding five years the network membership was consolidated and COMFREL developed a good reputation, both nationally and internationally. To exploit the benefits of this well run, nationwide volunteer network, new programmes have been introduced, like the monitoring of the voting behaviour of members of parliament performance relative to their election promises and the strengthening of the decentralisation process.

The Commune (District) elections, held in February 2002, gave Cambodian citizens the first ever opportunity to elect their commune councils. Surveys revealed that although 50% of the people believe that the commune council affects their life more directly than the national government, the workings of the commune council were not clear. (COMFREL, 2002) As was to be expected, the first years of the newly elected commune councils were marred by numerous problems. Counsellors lack adequate knowledge of project planning and financial systems to manage commune development funds professionally, which delays dissemination of budgets and results in low quality development plans and non-transparent financial systems. Furthermore, the commune councils lack experience in monitoring and evaluating their projects, which prompts fears that contractors delivering poor quality work will not be held liable and commune corruption will flourish. Moreover, female representation in the commune councils is very low.107

To strengthen the civic-mindedness and educate key stakeholders about the operations of the commune council, COMFREL convened twenty public forums around the country in 2002/2003, in which the Commune Councils, the Village Development Committees, local NGOs and citizens participated. The aim of the public forums is to promote public awareness and participation in the development planning process at the district level; improve the relationship and trust between the commune council and the local citizens; and explore local recommendations to resolve community conflicts. Local public forum officers were trained in commune council law and sub-decrees to serve as a knowledge source to both the local citizens and new commune councils. In 2003 an internal COMFREL evaluation concluded that local policy forums had been successful, but continued education about the ‘true meaning’ of democracy and monitoring of the decentralisation process is needed to strengthen the relationship between the council and its citizens. In addition, COMFREL aims to strengthen grass roots civil society to hold the commune council members accountable for addressing the local needs and to provide bottom up checks and balances to the decentralisation process. To this end, the village groups need training and cross-interest-group networking, which is usually the work of NGOs. But recent surveys indicate that only few community development NGOs have initiated decentralisation projects, because the majority admitted that their knowledge of commune council operations was “only fair or poor.”

Limited female participation in the political process and decentralised planning is another key issue.108 With newsletters, radio/television spots, workshops and seminars about gender equity, 107 Women were elected to 954 councillor positions out of 11,261 (eight percent) in 1,621 council across the country. Source McGrew, Laura et all (2004) - Good Governance from the Ground Up, p.20.
108 “It is clear from previous interviews and analysis of participation in democracy, that women must be included in the process. (...) The majority of Cambodians believe that women should vote in accordance with the advice that men in their lives give them. Communities and many families believe that men best perform the job of the commune government. This is because of the historical role of the commune councils often were involved in military decisions and traditional Khmer culture does deprecate the opinions and participation of women. Female independence in voting is an essential start to including women and increasing the wider concept of political participation by women. Without a strong, independent female voice half of the population will continue to be marginalized. The idea that men
COMFREL attempts to overcome the limited gender awareness that results from high illiteracy, to empower women candidates to create a political system that represents everyone. Its work is further hampered by the lack of ministerial efforts to mainstream gender at the commune level. For example, the Provincial Departments of Women and Veterans Affairs (PDWVA) did not visit commune councillors to assist in the selection and appointment of commune council gender focal persons (GFP), as the guidelines instruct. As a result, only a handful of GFPs were operational in 2003. Next to working with PDWVA to get the GFPs in place, COMFREL has been lobbying both the NEC and political parties in every National Election to set a quota of 30% female parliament members and to have the electoral law amended to that effect.

While COMFREL’s work has received much praise, it continues to encounter serious problems with State officials. There is still a “deep-rooted suspicion and opposition to the legitimate, desirable and necessary involvement of civil society in elections” and its involvement in future elections is by no means guaranteed. Both during the Commune Elections of 2002 and the National Elections of 2003, COMFREL had to fend off attacks for four months running up to Election Day, to preserve their right to free expression and assembly and implement their voter education programme. Another major concern is the emergence of election monitoring NGOs with political party affiliations that wish to protect and promote their electoral interests. In 1998, local COMFREL observers at the polling and counting stations were almost replaced by newly formed NGO networks sympathetic to the ruling parties and the NEC. Only through the insistence of the international aid agencies that funded the election process, was the accreditation of politically affiliated organisations withdrawn. In 2003 a similar incident happened, when a collective of 76 pro-CPP local NGOs were registered to monitor elections.

In sum, local election monitoring in Cambodia has brought tense State-NGO relations to the fore. The network of 12 NGOs has a number of key advantages: it provides an efficient nationwide network, reduces the risk of political hijacking, adds to its legitimacy and public acceptance, and facilitates contact with horizontal and vertical constituencies. The NEC has repeatedly attempted to restrict the freedom of expression and assembly of local NGO monitors and international pressure was required to guarantee access to the polling stations. But the strategic choices of COMFREL to work on democratic inclusion, decentralisation and gender equity, along with political violence and abuse of political powers, makes its work extremely strategic.

inherently have more knowledge and intelligence must be eradicated from the social norm.” (COMFREL, Annual report 2002)


110 The NEC’s Secretary General issued a letter (no. 07.1459/03 NEC, dated July 15, 2003) to stop COMFREL’s activities in monitoring the neutrality of the electoral authority at all levels, stating that those activities were affecting the electoral authority and violated the election law, regulations and procedures of the NEC and the Code of Conduct of Observers. It was not clear which articles were violated by COMFREL’s activities. As a result of this letter, electoral authorities at provincial and local levels obstructed COMFREL programmes in some provinces. For example in Svy Rieng the PEC issued a letter (no. 07.131/03) to end COMFREL’s activities and confiscate observers’ working papers (checklists) in five communes. The PEC Chairman in Kratie threatened COMFREL provincial staff and warned them to tear down their signboards. (COMFREL, 2003, chapter III)

111 The Eye of Justice” comprised four alliances and attended ‘unpublicised meetings with CPP Prime Minister prior to the election’. Other pro-CPP NGOs are known to exist, such as the “Pagoda Boys” who often attend counter demonstrations in support of the government. They often challenge demonstrations by trade unions or political parties and engage in violent action. COMFREL asks in their reports whether political leaders with deep suspicion of NGOs. are now opting for this strategy because direct opposition or suppression of local NGOs is no longer possible? And concludes these are disturbing signs for Cambodia’s democracy. (COMFREL, 2003-II)
People’s Action for Free and Fair Elections in Sri Lanka

People’s Action for Free and Fair Elections (PAFFREL) is a 15 member strong NGO coalition that aims to strengthen and expand democracy and good governance island-wide. The umbrella organization was formed by a group of community development and human rights NGOs in 1987 to monitor the Presidential Election of December 1988. Several other NGO election monitoring networks that emerged in the 1994 elections, when NGOs were deeply involved in developing alternative conflict resolution strategies, joined PAFFREL in the late 1990s. PAFFREL provides practical assistance to NGOs and citizens groups to advance democratic values in every district, build political and civic committees, safeguard elections and promote citizens’ participation, openness and accountability in governance. The General Election of April 2004 was the 14th electoral process monitored by PAFFREL and for the first time, it included all but one district in the North East with a record 40,000 volunteers. Yet, it took PAFFREL 15 years and 13 elections to receive full accreditation from the National Election Commission in 2004.

The network brings together a unique set of NGO actors, ranging from well connected Christian NGOs and nationwide Buddhist and Muslim community organisations, to human rights groups and grassroots peasant movements united in the MFFE. Its Board of Directors and National Coordinating Committee are composed of representatives of the member NGOs, which delegate tasks to the District Committees responsible for the coordination of community activities. PAFFREL receives mostly short-term project grants from bilateral donors, including Japan, Australia, US, Norway, the ILO and a host of international NGOs. Special documentation grants have enabled PAFFREL to publish a small library of booklets on democratisation, codes of conduct, historic election overviews etc.

PAFFREL monitors have faced more subtle political challenges than in Cambodia, likely as a result of the country’s long democratic tradition. However, during the violent National Elections of 2000 and 2001, voter intimidation reached historic proportions. Monitors were subjected to serious intimidation by party officials and had tires punctured, reports confiscated and their homes visited by armed supporters of contesting political parties. Impunity and political violence are central issues in PAFFREL’s work alongside the restoration of democratic process in the war torn North East. Therefore, additional programmes were initiated to promote minority rights and peaceful co-existence and conflict resolution at the community level. In 2003 PAFFREL started a Women’s Programme to promote participation of women in party politics. Although Sri Lankan women have been entitled to vote and be elected since 1931 and female literacy is among the highest in Asia, cultural values restricting mobility of women and a gender division of labour are often blamed for limited female participation in politics. During election monitoring visits, however, political parties explained that it is hard to attract female candidates because the culture of violence that has crept into politics puts women off.

112 PAFFREL coordinates its work with the Movement for Free and Fair Elections (MFFE) (a wide network of grassroots level organizations), the Sarvodaya Shramadana Movement, the National SEDEC, the Conference of Religious Major Superiors, National Conference on Religion and Peace (NCRP), Marga Institute, Conference of All Ceylon Young Men’s Muslim Associations, Centre for Society and Religion, National Peace Council and Community Education Centre.

To foster dialogue among stakeholders to seek consensus over federalism as a durable peace solution and to reverse the culture of violence, PAFFREL implemented the “Bridging the Gap between Conflict and Peace: A Stakeholders’ Perspective” project in 2003. Ten broad-based, provincial dialogues were convened to develop a constructive, participatory problem analysis and identify priority issues, and to strengthen capacity of civil society and of the government to engage in a pro-active and strategic dialogue. A national convention in Colombo concluded the series, in which a total of 859 grassroots leaders, women and youth NGOs, government officials, security personnel, religious leaders and political activists participated. The Convention adopted a declaration that included recommendations for a new peace agenda, a new political culture and the promotion of equity regardless of race and livelihood.

Similarly, the “Promoting Co-existence in Areas of Inter-ethnic Tension in a Democratic Process” project intends to facilitate a process of transformative change from protracted conflict and violence towards sustainable peace in the 12 districts most affected by the war. Grassroots networks of NGOs, women’s groups, religious leaders, youth and citizens are set-up and trained to promote peaceful co-existence. These groups are geared to intervene in violent conflict situations and build mutual confidence through shared efforts and activities. A last example of PAFFREL projects is the “Broadening Sri Lankan understanding of Federalism”. Although the ceasefire is tenuous, the LTTE’s apparent willingness to accept a federal solution to end the conflict is a major step forward that calls for a deeper public understanding of the concept of federalism. Launched to share examples of successful federal structures elsewhere and seek multi ethnic recommendations on federalism, human and minority rights, the project is to host 25 workshops and run national poster campaigns and radio broadcasts.

In short, PAFFREL has managed where many NGOs have failed in present day Sri Lanka; it brought together a wide network of NGOs, multi-religious and -ethnic stakeholders and volunteers, and has monitored elections even in the most troubled communities in the North East. Charismatic leadership, accurate framing of messages and ample foreign assistance have contributed to this remarkable achievement. “To agree to disagree” is another vital strategy that has helped to keep this network together. Consequently, quality standards are not met equally across the country and managing the network is a serious burden on the small central management. Furthermore, as one’s strength is often one’s weakness, this unique good governance network risks being seriously overburdened with multiple conflict resolution and peace building training programmes. Several prominent international aid agencies are now partnering with PAFFREL to this end, including the National Endowment for Democracy, Berghof Foundation, International Labour Organisation. PAFFREL scores high on all seven success indicators: horizontal and vertical networking, charismatic leadership, foreign networking, alternative framing of the peace with justice messaging and joint national campaigns that include State actors. PAFFREL’s horizontal networks include a more varied constituency than COMFREL, but to keep this wide audience in line, PAFFREL’s workshops and training focus more on principles and skills, unlike COMFREL where for example the commune council issues are framed in more practical, grass roots oriented messages, which are de facto more critical of the State. This is another example of the need to frame messages and strategies to suit local circumstances.

Masa Depan: national scenario building dialogue for Indonesia 2010

The transition process from an authoritarian to a democratic government is full of loopholes that can result in a return to authoritarianism if it is not successful. In late 1998, shortly after the political transition of power to Interim-President Habibi, a group of ten individuals with various
academic, NGO and political backgrounds formed the Masa Depan Working Group to convene a national scenario building dialogue. The initiative was inspired by the South African scenario building process of 1991, which raised public consciousness and is believed to have been the key to South Africa’s success in resolving prolonged conflict within the country. In recent years, national scenario planning exercises have been undertaken in Canada, Japan and Singapore, hence technical assistance was obtained through the Singapore Scenario Planning office and the company that advised them (Castle Group). Komnas Ham agreed to play the role of the independent host and a well-connected Steering Group managed to obtain both financial and technical support from various international aid agencies and companies (including USAID, Novib, the Singapore Government and Scenario Planning office and two mining companies: Rio Tinto and Yayasan Sosial Chevron & Texaco Indonesia).

The choice for the scenario formulation methodology was based on the wish to facilitate a wide public dialogue among key stakeholders in society. The Working Group firmly believed that such discourse, which had been absent for decades, would form the basis of a strong civil society and would improve State – civil society collaboration. Scenario building, Masa Depan (2000) explained, is a good instrument better suited as it develops an understanding of what can happen and how different planned and unplanned events will influence outcomes. In this process, the consciousness of future choices among the participants and their role in it grow. Four of the nine steps of the scenario building process are crucial: identify the key stakeholders, identify and select the critical driving forces and design a matrix of probabilities, which leads to the composition of a scenario narrative. Unfortunately, the Working Group scenarios did not foresee the sudden turn of events and the final scenario presentation remained largely unnoticed amidst the political turmoil.

In the pre-dialogue phase, twenty Indonesian facilitators were trained (including the initiators), 14 cities and districts were selected and the plan was introduced to the different actors in these districts/cities to solicit their feedback and convince them of the importance of participating in the initiative. The Masa Depan dialogues brought seven stakeholder groups together: government, military, business sector, academics, political leaders, NGO activists and ‘marginal groups’, including victims of relocation, former political detainees and the handicapped. They were given three days to formulate agents of change\(^{114}\), plot the matrix and formulate four scenarios. The dialogues became rewarding but emotionally intense exercises, as they brought together actors who had not talked to each other for decades (military, former political prisoners, religious leaders, feminist activists, local government and NGO leaders). A third of the trained facilitators dropped out in the process, because they could not cope with the emotions brought to the fore in the dialogues, which further increased the burden on the Working Group. From May 1999 till June 2000, 14 dialogues and 6 colloquiums were convened around the country.\(^{115}\) In July, the Working Group compiled and synthesized all 64 scenarios into a draft document with four core scenarios. A major challenge was to summarize the wealth of information into a brief document without losing the local nuances. Some participants felt the end report was too technocratic and blamed the foreign experts advising the Working Group for this. While the dialogue participants appreciated the process and gained insight into other stakeholders’ perspectives, the scenario

\(^{114}\) Driving forces or agents of change are defined as conditions or situations that could develop with a range of positive and negative potentials. In all, 12 critical driving forces were identified, each of which influences the four scenario’s in a unique way: 1) political system; 2) law; 3) economic policy orientation; 4) public attitude towards pluralism; 5) balance of power between centre and regions; 6) role of military in non-military affairs; 7) orientation of education system; 8) gender ideology; 9) public response to globalisation; 10) governments’ attitude to religion; 11) community involvement in democracy and 12) people’s bargaining position with government.

\(^{115}\) Dialogues were convened in Bogor, Berastagi, Mataram, Batu, Samarinda, Pekanbaru, Bedugul Kupang, Semarang, Jakarta, Celebes, Palangkaraya, Pontianak and Yogyakarta.
process did not provide venues to continue the dialogue among diverse stakeholders. The national workshop in Bogor reviewed the draft and added information on Aceh and Maluku in July 2000 and presented the following four scenarios:

Table 25 A quadrant of four possible scenarios for Indonesia 2010 (Source: Masa Depan, 2000, Annex F)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scenario</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Into the crocodile pit</td>
<td>“Indonesia in 2010 is like the Tanjun tree with withered blooms. Its leaves yellow and soon to fall, its boughs are dry and brittle its twigs.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>On the edge</td>
<td>“Indonesia is a setting sun. The sky is red as if soaked in the blood of Indonesian people, the victims of government and military cruelty. Indonesia is like a ship shattered in a storm.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slow but steady</td>
<td>“Indonesia in 2010 is like a teak tree that sprouts slowly but grows stronger as time goes by. Sometimes it sheds its leaves but is boughs and twigs remain sturdy and withstand all changes in weather.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paddling a leaky boat</td>
<td>“Afraid that the disintegration of Indonesia would result in major bloodshed, all parties agree to come to the negotiation table. The result is broad regional autonomy and complete democratisation. Economic development pushes ahead.”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Interestingly, the two dominant drivers of this model translate into vertical social capital and the State organisational integrity, with the horizontal axis representing the continuum from authoritarian to democratic governance and the vertical axis the continuum from pro-growth economic development (fast but exploitative and unequal) to pro-equity (slow but based on participation and inclusion). The final scenario document was launched on August 1, 2000 with its submission to the Annual MPR meeting (the Indonesian Senate) and simultaneous dissemination to the wider public through a well planned media campaign. Unfortunately, the launch coincided with the major political crisis and all attention went to the impeachment process of President Wahid, which became effective two weeks later. The Masa Depan (2001, p. 33) preamble “the risk is higher when the direction of the transition is unclear and when recurring crises can not be effectively solved, and the uncertainty, frustration and pessimism about the future increasing” became reality within two years of its inception and momentum for the dialogue process was lost.

The initiators of the Masa Depan dialogues made a conscious decision to run the initiative as a group of individuals, in an effort to ensure institutional dependence and maximum participation of all stakeholders. While this “non-aligned” group indeed managed to get a highly diverse stakeholder turn out at their 14 dialogues, it also implied that the dialogues would be one time events, leaving an eventual future dialogues to the initiatives of participating stakeholders. However, the complicated nature of the subject matter, the diverse actor backgrounds and the political turmoil in the country, prevented such spontaneous follow-up. When the much-awaited national presentation coincided with the impeachment process of the President, the Masa Depan scenarios received very little attention. The absence of organisational safety nets and institutional ownership prevented the re-launch of the scenarios at a later stage. During my interviews with officials and bilateral agencies only two years later, very few people had heard of the initiative.

In sum, even though the Masa Depan dialogues score high on horizontal and vertical social capital and alternative framing of the message, it could not sustain these gains because of the deliberate absence of an institutional context. In this respect Masa Depan looks institutionally more like a peace movement than the previously described good governance networks. Its major asset was the multi actor dialogue in such a decisive, early stage of the political transition. Would it have fostered continued government - civil society dialogues if President Wahid had remained in office? Or could the scenarios have been ‘rescued’ if they had been anchored in civil society? One of the interviewed initiators did not think these were relevant questions. The purpose of scenario building was to start a multi stakeholder dialogue that stimulated self-reflection and new ideas; the 14 dialogues proper achieved that goal.
8.2 Independent conflict resolution mechanisms

Land Dispute Settlement Commissions and Independent Forest Crime Monitors

At the end of the 20th century access to land has become problematic for the first time in Cambodia's history. Land tenure conflicts put a heavy strain on rural livelihoods and result in increasing social discontent. The management of natural resources is unsustainable and land disputes are one of the major sources of conflict in Cambodia today. Most peasants had to abandon their land during the Khmer Rouge revolution and upon return a decade later disputes arose with new occupants. Legislation did not (and does not) recognise the pre-1979 land rights and many returning farmers have found their land occupied by military claiming titles or by people who have bought the land from the military. Boua (2001) poses that due to the Khmer Rouge legacy and UNTAC's inability to disarm and demobilise the warring parties, the armed forces were able to keep control over vast areas of land in 1993 and even expanded their land possessions until the last KR fraction finally surrendered in 1999.116

While the UNTAC safely repatriated some 360,000 refugees to Cambodia before the general elections in 1993, their re-integration in society was far less successful. Large numbers of mostly rural refugees did not receive land titles as part of the repatriation process and most were rendered landless shortly afterwards. A recent Food and Agricultural Organisation (FAO) report (2004) describes how in 1992 the first land registration provided every claimant (there were 4.5 million applicants) with a receipt as proof of a fulfilled claim. People often treated this receipt as a land title and used it as collateral, which resulted in numerous disputes. The poor technical quality of land administration, overlapping land titles, absence of an independent judiciary and low legal literacy among the rural poor created an ideal context for land grabbing by powerful people. The land insecurity negatively impacted overall economic development performance over the last 10 years, left poverty levels unchanged and led to further concentration of land in fewer hands.117

One in every thirty Cambodian households is involved in a land dispute, including some very large disputes that are the result of granting agri-business concessions over thousands of hectares on which hundreds of families live and farm.118 LAC reported that 80% of land cases handled by its lawyers in 2002 involved land grabbing by high-ranking officials, members of the armed forces, and businessmen. Furthermore, there are currently 15 timber concessionaires in Cambodia, which operate 21 concessions and effectively control 4,239,528 hectares of land or 26% of the country. Three million Cambodians reside within 30 kilometres of a logging area and rely in some way on a forest-based product. Illegal logging and tendering of forest concessions are largely controlled by the armed forces without proper transparent regulatory frameworks. (Global Witness. July 2002)

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116 To this day, the Royal Armed Forces (RAF) control vast amounts of land along route 4 (Phnom Penh to Kompong Som) where they were based in the 1990s. The same is true for FUNCINPEC officials in the north-west and the Khmer Rouge cadre in Anlong Veng and Paulin. (Source: IFAD, Social Assessment of Land in Cambodia. A Field Study, prepared for the Ministry of Land Management, Urban Planning and Construction by the Cambodia Development Resource Institute, July 2001, p. 31)

117 The average land holding, which used to be around one hectare per family, is getting smaller. The top 23% of people, who own more than one hectare, own 70% of Cambodia's cultivated land. The bottom 40% of people who own less than one hectare collectively own only 10% of cultivated land.

118 In December 2001, the total area under agricultural concessions leased to 40 companies was 809,296 hectares or roughly one-third of the land under agricultural production. The latest government policy and reform package (Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper, Socio-Economic Development Plan I and II) calls for an increase in export oriented agribusiness, which will lead to further concentration of land in a few hands. (Boua, 2001, p.3)
In an agrarian society where 85% of the population are farmers with little or no land and no off-farm income opportunities, many rural families are forced to migrate to urban areas or to send their children to work in factories or the sex industry.\(^{119}\) In the absence of State support or protection poor peasants are forced to seek protection elsewhere and it is not surprising that traditional patron-client relations have reappeared in the 1990s. Since 1991, land tenure and natural resource exploitation (eco-violence) problems have been among the main concerns of the many NGOs working on rural livelihood and basic rights. In the mid 1990s the CCC/NGO Forum (see 8.4) established a special working group on land and sustainable development issues and lobbyed the government and international donors to create independent dispute resolution mechanisms. In 1997 a smaller group of international agencies initiated the Cambodia Land Study Project, coordinated by Oxfam GB.\(^{120}\) Two major NGO campaigns are presented below: 1) the ‘forest crimes’ monitoring unit and 2) advocacy for land dispute settlement committees.

**Independent Monitor of the Forest Crimes Monitoring Unit**

On the 25th January 1999 Prime Minister Hun Sen issued a 17 Point Declaration outlining actions to crack down on illegal logging in Cambodia. The Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (MAFF) and the Ministry of Environment (MoE) were to implement the Declaration and report back to Cabinet. However, the annual Consultative Group Meeting a month later, under pressure from NGOs and the international community, expressed the need for an independent monitoring unit to institutionalise systematic detection and reporting. The establishment of the Forest Crimes Monitoring Unit in December 1999 was heralded by the government, international donor community and NGOs as a huge step forward in the battle against illegal logging in Cambodia. The Forest Crimes Monitoring and Reporting Project was the world’s first to audit independently the performance of two government agencies in charge of monitoring forest crimes. It received global praise at environmental forums as a potentially effective model to combat forest crimes involving State and non-state actors. Global Witness (GW), a London based NGO specialised in the role that natural resources play in conflict and corruption, was chosen as Independent Monitor, because it had monitored the Cambodian forestry sector since 1993 and its work (e.g. to end the conflict diamond trade in Africa) was internationally renowned.

The main responsibility of GW as Independent Monitor was to conduct field inspections of concession operations to gauge the level of illegal logging and report to the Prime Minister and the international donor community through the Focal Point at the Council of Ministers. The information was then passed on to the MAFF for appropriate action. Unfortunately the MAFF did little to persecute forest crimes. Still some positive results were achieved over the first three years, like the cancellation of forest concessions held by companies involved in illegal logging, like the Malaysian GAT. As the Global Witness reports grew increasingly critical and tension rose, MAFF Minister Chan Sarun terminated GW as independent monitor in February 2003. The main justification given was GW’s criticism of the government’s handling of peaceful village protests against the Forestry Action Plan on 5 December 2002, in which one protestor died. In March 2003 the tensions escalated when the Cambodian government filed a criminal complaint

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119 The UN Human Development Report of 2003 calculated that 55% of the men and 75% of the women had not completed primary school.

120 In the first year, the research team worked with the Cambodian Bar Association to have pro-poor articles included in the new Immovable Property Law; with local human rights NGOs and journalists building a data base of land disputes and a system of monitoring; and with a few international donor agencies funding four case studies on different causes of landlessness: 1) abuse of power, 2) dysfunction within the legal system, 3) poverty trap, and 4) large scale development projects. This body of research was well received, in community and national level dialogues during and after the research, issues relating to the rule of law and the abuse of power were the prominent factors.
against GW’s Co-ordinator in Cambodia on charges relating to the 5 December incident. The case was withdrawn following strong pressure from the international community. The independent forestry monitoring mandate was endorsed and funded by the FAO and ADB, but international aid agencies could not protect Global Witness when it clashed with the authorities. GW was replaced by a commercial monitoring company with no Cambodian experience later that year. The illegal logging continues.¹²¹

**Land Dispute Settlement Commissions**

After years of NGO land tenure studies, land law reform proposals and international lobby for alternative policies and practices, Prime Minister Hun Sen included resolving land disputes as one of the main target areas in the 1999 reform agenda. Provincial Commissions for Resolving Land Disputes were established to deal with land tenure complaints, under guidance of the National Commission and Hun Sen’s personal chairmanship. The provincial commissions were supposed to bring together key government actors at the provincial level (governor, police, military, cadastre, MAFF and the courts) and provide a ‘rule of law platform’ for civilians and NGOs to have their land complaints heard. While hopes were high at first and NGOs like CDRI/CDP, LAC and ADHOC worked closely with the commissions to develop this new system and the local capacity to do investigations and rule in complicated cases (CDP gave conflict resolution training to two commissions), the commissions met irregularly and have taken very few decisions. Three years later frustration has set in and NGOs fear that this land conflict resolution mechanism is destined to share the Forest Crime Unit fate. In the interviews we tried to analyse what went wrong and concluded that two sets of problems exist: the composition and the agenda setting of the provincial commissions is thwarted and the two local authorities in charge of dealing with land tenure cases, the court and Cadastral Commission, are not performing their duties.

In an Oxfam survey of five provinces, military and provincial officials dominate the Provincial Commissions, which likely discourages complaint submissions as very few cases are resolved in favour of farmers (IGC, 2000). ADHOC’s provincial reports tallied 1,485 land disputes cases involving 4,943 families in 2003. ADHOC lawyers handled 148 larger cases in 2003, involving land disputes between poor peasants and the armed forces (31%), local authorities (29%), private companies (25%), and commune leaders (22%). These land disputes covered thousands of hectares and thousands of displaced families.

Disputes can be divided into those over land titles and those over unregistered land for which no official certificates exist. The latter are to be dealt with by the Cadastral Commission that has offices in all districts and provinces. ADHOC research revealed that of the 722 land dispute cases before the Cadastral Commission in 2003, only six cases saw resolution with 174 families receiving compensation. Most cases before the Cadastral Commission face delays and inactivity because of limited budgets to conduct land dispute investigations, lack of clear procedures and political pressure. Land disputes involving legal certificates issued by the Cadastral Commission need to be resolved in court. None of the cases ADHOC lawyers filed and defended in provincial and municipal courts in 2003 were resolved by December. A number of 2002 land dispute cases defended by ADHOC saw court decisions late 2003 by which date the families were already

¹²¹ Earlier that year on April 30th the Coordinator was physically attacked outside the Global Witness’ office in Phnom Penh by two masked-men armed with sticks. Meanwhile the forest crimes continue. In a press release of July 9, 2004, Global Witness deplored the Cambodian Government’s decision to authorise the Cambodian-Chinese company Green Rich to initiate a plantation project of 18,000 hectares inside the Botum Saker National Park in South West Cambodia. This commercial concession blatantly violates Cambodian legislation, notably the 2001 Land Law, the 1993 Royal Decree on Protected Areas and the 1994 Ministerial Decision on Protected Areas.
evicted and had migrated to Phnom Penh. Most ADHOC and LAC lawyers wrote in their case reports that court rulings are commonly in favour of land certificate holders, because the courts do not investigate cases, nor do they verify the legality of certificates with the Cadastral Commission. Furthermore, they note that court decisions are influenced by corruption in court proceedings and result in violent evictions upon court ruling. The lawyers stress that these unjust evictions not only violate the peasant families’ right to an income, but also their right to housing, right to food and right to live in dignity.

Clearly, neither of natural resource nor the land conflict resolution mechanism that were set up within the government structures after years of active NGO lobby and international pressure, has managed to provide protection and legal recourse to the poor. This made many NGO respondents conclude that it is hard to make lasting contributions to building sustainable horizontal social capital as long as State integrity remains problematic and basic human rights are violated. In ADHOC’s words:

"Land is a basic right for farmers and is a necessity for survival. Failure of land rights was a defeat for poverty reduction, especially considering that it was made a priority by the Royal Government in its second mandate (1998-2003)." (ADHOC, 2004)

Internally Displaced Persons and the International Committee of the Red Cross

Sri Lankan NGOs have long been active in providing constructive inputs to finding a peaceful resolution of the armed conflict. On the recommendation of human rights NGOs in Colombo, an older case in which NGOs played a crucial role is presented here, namely the joint agreement by the national NGO lobby to a permanent in-country presence of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC). The lobby was coordinated by the Civil Rights Movement, a human rights NGO with a wide membership of lawyers active in government, universities, civil society and human rights NGOs with a focus on monitoring the rule of law and constitutional reform. Over a period of eight years, CRM coordinated three national ICRC advocacy campaigns at crucial stages of the armed conflict to raise public acceptance for the adherence to principles of humanitarian law in civil combat. The first campaign was launched in July 1987, at the time of the signing of the Indo Lanka Peace Accord. The aim of the campaign was to “persuade governmental authorities and the general public of the importance of accepting the ICRC’s offer to perform its traditional humanitarian functions in our country” (CRM, 1990). A second campaign followed in July 1990, when the JVP uprising had ended in the South and the ceasefire in the North East that resulted in the withdrawal of the Indian Peace Keeping Forces and the abolition of the Provincial Councils ended and the war resumed. This campaign emphasised the role of ICRC in “confronting acts of violence against defenceless persons”. Lastly, in September 1995, when the third ceasefire was broken and the war intensity reached new levels, a third ICRC-related campaign was launched to bring attention back to the internally displaced it sought “to persuade all parties to the armed conflict to observe basic humanitarian principles” (CRM Briefing No 2 of 1995).

122 Initially another case was chosen. In 1994 a progressive alliance of political parties entered the elections with a strong peace agenda (the People’s Alliance) and worked with a group of human rights NGOs on a set of law reforms that would form the basis for a major constitutional amendment to allow for regional autonomy and acknowledge a degree of self determination to the Tamil people of the North East. In a related initiative by the Law and Society Trust a global comparative project was launched to study 12 successful confederate solutions to minority peoples’ conflicts (including Spain, Australia, Canada and South Africa) and to come up with practical recommendations for the Sri Lankan situation. Unfortunately, this process of NGO law reform, research and advocacy was poorly documented and two key NGO coordinators passed away in 1999, making it impossible to write the case as part of this study. The ‘devolution package’ was adopted by the PA government late 1994, but failed to obtain the mandatory 66% majority in parliament required for constitutional changes in August 1995.
Preventing Deadly Conflict in Divided Societies in Asia

Human rights advocacy in a country at civil war, where extra judiciary killings were commonplace, required carefully positioning and framing of the issues. Working on constitutional reform and introducing international law and good governance practices proved a constructive means to table sensitive human rights issues locally and internationally. The Sri Lankan government has been more susceptible to global public opinion and international law, because it has a long democratic tradition and was never caught up in the Cold War dynamics that supported autocratic regimes in Cambodia, Indonesia and Myanmar.

The July 1987 campaign took off with the CRM report entitled “The Geneva Conventions and the International Committee of the Red Cross: the Relevance to Sri Lanka”. Its purpose was to raise the awareness on the Geneva Conventions, International Humanitarian Law and the role of the ICRC in “monitoring the application by signatory States of the Geneva Convention”. Great emphasis was put on the neutral and private nature of the ICRC, with its staff of Swiss citizens, its responsibility to “offer services to belligerents (a party engaged in war) for the benefit of the victims of conflicts” and its mandated confidentiality implying that it would not publicly expose human rights violations and it would only report to the government. It made the case that humanitarian law equally applies to intrastate conflicts, as armed opposition groups are bound by humanitarian standards and stressed that inviting the ICRC did not imply an international recognition of the LTTE or other armed groups. This report legally countered most of the State arguments used to turn down repeated ICRC’s requests over the prior five years to open a permanent office. CRM called for immediate humanitarian assistance to Tamil civilians caught in the cross fire in the North and East, displaced in ill provisioned refugee camps or detained under humiliating circumstances, and for an investigation into the large number of people reported missing or disappeared. CRM mounted a national campaign to promote public discussion about the Geneva conventions in government, civil society and universities and international aid agencies were lobbied for support.

In 1987, 1988 and 1989 the ICRC renewed its offer for assistance and voiced its concern over the rising tension and political violence in the South. CRM’s advocacy had created a better local understanding of the role of the ICRC and, with pressure from the international community, the Sri Lankan government finally allowed the ICRC to open an office and fulfil its humanitarian mandate in Sri Lanka in October 1989. ICRC activities were initially confined to the South where Tamil and JVP suspect prisoners were visited, missing person cases documented and training courses conducted on humanitarian law for armed forces. Upon the withdrawal of the Indian Peace Keeping Forces, the ICRC opened an office in Jaffna in April 1990 and commenced its relief and rescue work in the North and East, organising emergency supplies, evacuating wounded combatants and refugees across the lines of fighting and visiting prisoners. During its first year (until December 1990) the ICRC registered 20,655 detainees in over 400 places around the country and received 16,000 requests for tracing disappeared persons, mainly in the South.

In July 1990 CRM launched a follow-up campaign. “Now that the ICRC is an important actor in the scene of conflict and devastation that has engulfed our society, it is necessary that we gain a clear perception of its role. (...) We can seek to gain maximum benefit from its presence, by ensuring that all concerned afford it full cooperation to effectively perform its humanitarian tasks” (CRM, 1995). Special attention was drawn to acts of violence directed against defenceless persons, especially in their extreme form: terrorism and “the treat it poses to human values as it dehumanises the societies that are exposed to it”. The ICRC continued its humanitarian work with

123Pre 1989, the ICRC did send short missions to Sri Lanka, published annual reports and remained in contact with the SRL government to voice its concern continuously.
refugees and paid special attention to people detained under emergency regulations and the Prevention of Terrorism Act. In 1992 alone, ICRC visited nearly 10,000 persons in more than 500 places of detention. However, it was denied access to prisoners held by the LTTE. Meanwhile, a number of international NGOs opened relief and rehabilitation programmes in the North and East, resulting in a consortium of eight agencies today.

In April 1995, when the civil war entered its third phase, ICRC’s work was well known in Sri Lanka. CRM simply published a briefing paper that summarized the ICRC’s work over the past five years, emphasizing its unique role in the monitoring of prisoners and disappeared persons, and called on all parties to respect humanitarian law. The ICRC’s strict neutrality, low profile and confidential reporting to the government, open its work to criticism. The LTTE didn’t acknowledge ICRC neutrality, never allowed ICRC access to its prisoners and accused the ICRC of such acts as setting up refugee camps close to army positions and providing a human buffer. However, the ICRC’s work did result in a dramatic reduction in the number of disappearances in the 1990s and detainees who were visited by the ICRC on a regular basis sensed some protection that no other civil society organisation could provide. However, structural changes in the attitude of the warring parties were few and the Prevention of Terrorism Act was still in force in 2004, two years into the ceasefire.

National Commission to Prevent Violence against Women

The concept of a National Commission to prevent violence against women was conceived by a group of Indonesian women’s organisations in the wake of sexual assaults on ethnic Chinese women and girls during the May 1998 riots in Jakarta. Indonesia had slumped into a deep economic recession after the Asian Crisis of 1997 and while mass protests demanded a change of government, ethnic clashes broke out around the country. Civilian mobs besieged Glodok, the old Chinese quarter of Jakarta on 18 May for 24 hours attacking innocent ethnic Chinese civilians, burning properties and raping over 750 women and girls. All this happened under the watchful eye of police who did not intervene to protect civilians. Pro-democracy protests intensified and President Suharto resigned by the end of the month. As the rape reports were dismissed by the authorities and the military, Indonesian women’s organisations requested that Interim President Habibii field an independent investigation and endorse measures that would increase the physical safety of women. An independent investigation over the summer confirmed the need for new approaches to prevent sexual violence and the National Commission to prevent Violence against Women or Komnas Perempuan was formed by Presidential Decree in October 1998.

Komnas Perempuan has the mandate to publish and disseminate reports to the government, civil society and the general public and works in close collaboration with the respected National Commission on Human Rights (Komnas Ham), to reinforce their mutual interest in promoting a gender-sensitive approach to basic human rights protection. As an independent national body it has to seek its own funding. To overcome the significant gap in perception of the violence against women (VAW) problem between government and civil society, Komnas Perempuan set three main objectives: first, increase public understanding of all forms of violence against women; second, create a conducive environment for the elimination of violence through legal and policy reform; and third, strengthen capacities for prevention of and dealing with the consequences of

124 An independent legal investigation team assembled sufficient evidence to bring 193 cases to court, but no lawsuits were filed. The government and military dismissed the evidence instantly, while many of the mostly young women and girls who had been raped were sent abroad to family in Malaysia and Philippines, to hide the ‘shame’ their rape had brought on the family.
Preventing Deadly Conflict in Divided Societies in Asia

VAW through national, regional and international networking, consultations and exchanges. Five programmes have been implemented: national mapping of VAW cases and database development (KP coordinates the documentation done by NGOs and associations around the country); service to survivors (KP supports skill development in trauma counselling & reconciliation); witness protection in court cases; VAW response and prevention (including development of training programmes for civil servants, security forces and civil society); and institution building.

In 2000 at the UN Beijing +5 Conference Komnas Perempuan made a plea for women who had suffered individually or in groups from armed conflict related sexual violence (rape, harassment, sexual slavery), without having received any protection or legal recourse. Sexual violence has been used as a systematic tool of terror and control in military zones by the armed forces for decades. Overall rape rates have structurally increased in Jakarta since the May 1998 riots, and domestic violence has intensified dramatically since 1997. In addition, so-called ‘acts of terror’ are on the rise, in which religious laws and norms effectively exclude women from protection, recourse and representation. Many Indonesian women’s organisations have responded to the VAW crisis by taking initiative to mediate the impact of violence. They provide emergency assistance, set up trauma teams, document atrocities, campaign for peace and protection, organise women’s groups in conflict areas, and influence national policies and mechanisms to end the impunity and to build capacity to prevent VAW.

However, even with the public acknowledgement of the problem by the State and a National Commission, it proved difficult to bridge the sexual violence ‘perception’ gap and few politicians, military and civil servants take these gross gender biased human rights violations seriously. Of the multiple issues that need to be addressed to improve the status and protection of women in Indonesia, Komnas Perempuan systematically highlights two: the victimisation of women and the absence of women at the negotiation table. KP’s national VAW database shows that the impact of security forces abuses on civilian population is far greater than the impact of communal violence. In military zones like Aceh and West Papua, rape has been used as a systematic tool of torture to intimidate the population. Furthermore, strong evidence connects the sexual violence women face in situations of armed conflict to patterns of domestic violence that women face in everyday life during peace time. “The power of religion and culture as tools of violence demonstrates how women’s victimisation during armed conflict is rooted in the norms and values developed in peace times”. (Komnas Perempuan, 2000, p.4) In terms of the second major bottleneck, the absence of women at the negotiation table. KP concludes that Indonesia is still far removed from a final reconciliation with past human rights abuses and gross injustices. “When participation happens, it is only because women’s groups push themselves upon the decision makers and insist on their voices being heard. Every single progress in women’s involvement is a product of a conscious and targeted struggle against the dominant current” (idem, p.7). It is telling that the three years of the female President Megawati had little impact on the work of Komnas Perempuan and the National Election of April 2004 saw few female candidates running and even fewer elected.

The lack of political clout of Komnas Perempuan and the highly sensitive nature of its mission and data leave the VAW database and training modules underused. Other studies have also concluded that only when political representation of women is seriously boosted, can lasting political solutions to the prevention of VAW be expected. In 2002/3 KP held an extensive self evaluation with its membership to study alternative strategies. Meanwhile, Komnas Perempuan continues to advocate with the international community to maintain pressure on the Indonesian authorities to promoted inclusive and gender equal social, political and economic transformation towards peace, democracy and justice.
8.3 People’s mobilisation for peace

The peace case studies relate to the broad people’s peace movements in Cambodia and Sri Lanka. Both brought together individual peace activists, religious men and women, and local NGOs and were among the few nationwide horizontal social capital building campaigns. No similar initiatives could be found in Indonesia during the interviews in 2002.

Dhammayatra peace walks in Cambodia

The concept of the Dhammayietra peace walks was launched by Venerable Maha Ghosananda in 1991. This Cambodian monk who had devoted his life to Buddhist study in India, Japan and Thailand was trained in non-violent peace building by the Nipponzan Myohoji sect in the 1960s. He moved to the Sakeo refugee camp on the Thai-Cambodian border in 1979 to provide spiritual guidance to the refugees who had survived the Khmer Rouge genocide. Over the next decade Maha Ghosananda set up small Buddhist temples in other refugee camps and assisted camp leaders in initiating spiritual education and cultural preservation programmes. The peace walks emerged from the Coalition for Peace and Reconciliation that was established by a group of Cambodian and foreign aid workers in Taprya, near the “Site 2” refugee camp in 1989. While Maha Ghosananda was their chief inspiration (‘spiritual director’), he was never formally a member of the Coalition. (Yonekura, 1999) However, his personal prestige and leadership was central to the launch and the moral authority of the peace walks. The peace walks generally lasted a couple of weeks and depended heavily on the contribution of villagers to provide food and accommodation for the peace walkers, who marched with no luggage and little money. Maha Ghosananda participated in several of the early peace walks and motivated and inspired the participants with broad and spiritual peace messages: “sharing loving kindness to end the killing”.

Table 26 Dhammayatra Peace Walks routes and participation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DMY</th>
<th>Starting date</th>
<th>Route</th>
<th>No. participants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1st</td>
<td>13/04/92</td>
<td>Poipet to Phnom Penh</td>
<td>450</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd</td>
<td>05/05/93</td>
<td>Siem Reap to Phnom Penh</td>
<td>3,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3rd</td>
<td>24/04/94</td>
<td>Sisophon to Angkor Wat</td>
<td>1,800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4th</td>
<td>08/05/95</td>
<td>Poipet to Vietnam</td>
<td>750</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5th</td>
<td>10/05/96</td>
<td>Southern provinces</td>
<td>600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6th</td>
<td>20/03/97</td>
<td>Pailin to Banteay Mancheay</td>
<td>300</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The popularity of the Dhammayietra was high in the early 1990s and drew large numbers of participants, both individuals and representatives from organisations from all over the country and abroad. The walks generated wide media coverage and public interest. The first three walks occurred in the North-western provinces, where Khmer Rouge insurgents continued to combat the Cambodian armed forces. As the situation in the country began to stabilise and the UNTAC authority was handed over to the newly election government, political tension started to rise and the momentum of the Dhammiyeta became hard to maintain. (see Table 26) When two peace walkers were killed in cross fire exchanged between rebels and the army in 1994, the participation dropped further the next year. An attempt to revive interest by broadening the peace walk message and including environmental preservation concerns in 1996 failed to attract new

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125 Venerable Maha Ghosananda was born in 1929 in Takeo and became a monk at the age of 8. After completing his doctoral studies in India, he studied with the Japanese monk Nichidatsu Fujii, founder of the Nipponzan Myohoji sect devoted to world peace. In 1965 he left Cambodia again, to become a disciple of a Thai meditation master Achaan Dhammadaro in an isolated forest monastery in Southern Thailand. In 1979 he initiated spiritual education and cultural preservation programmes in the Thai border refugee camps. He was elected Supreme Patriarch by a small gathering of remaining Cambodian monks and laymen in Paris in 1988 and retired in 1993. (Ghosananda, 1992, p.15-21)
crowds and the participation dwindled. Upon the military coup of July 1997 public protests were prohibited and the political situation became increasingly volatile; consequently the multi actor peace coalition fell apart.

Metathor, the ‘Forum for Peace through Love and Compassion’, emerged from the remains of the Dhammayietra coalition. It was established by a group of Cambodia peace activists who were interested in long-term structural peace building and did not perceive the annual peace walks as a sustainable way forward.\(^{126}\) They gathered a broader platform of NGOs and individuals and began to organise peaceful protests against the increasing political violence in major cities. Metathor intended to become a centre for individual peace activists, monks and NGO workers who wished to engage in long-term activities. In time the group joined in pro democracy events as well, until it took part in a demonstration for free and fair elections in Phnom Penh in 1998, which was violently dispersed by the security forces. In the face of this unexpected violent opposition Metathor fell apart too, much to the dismay of some local NGO members that had facilitated the peace work from their good offices. They concluded that individual peace activists “refuse to share responsibility” when projects go wrong and “lack the commitment to overcome differences”.\(^{127}\) (WGWR, 2001, p.16)

A third Cambodian peace initiative rose from the ashes of Metathor and was named ‘Cooperation to Reduce Violence for Peace’ (CRVP). To overcome past differences, a more formal NGO structure was formed with a single secretariat to facilitate the network, its meetings and events. However, this cross-actor peace network was even shorter lived. The political context polarised further in 1999, with the surrender of the last Khmer Rouge fraction and the further consolidation of power by the CPP after its victory in the 1998 elections. This polarisation highly politicised the peace building work. Individual peace workers were very uneasy with the idea of taking more politically outspoken positions while remaining non-partisan. Wary of the political violence directed against them, CRVP tried in vain to keep peace and politics separate. From the onset disagreements among members over the political nature of the network’s peace activities paralysed the secretariat’s work. In 1999, when the larger NGOs withdrew their financial support to the secretariat for lack of progress after a year, the CRVP closed.

In the interviews with three former peace initiative participants, there was reluctance to review the past as to why the two follow-up networks failed to muster adequate levels of cooperation from the broader civil society and individual peace activists. These NGO leaders had moved on and managed new NGO portfolios, which included some grassroots peace building initiatives, like the Working Group for Weapons Reduction collaboration with the peace building projects of the American Friends Service Committee. The respondents agreed, however, with the conclusion that the key to sustaining peace movements over time lies in accepting the intrinsic link between peace work and structural change and carefully managing the risk of meeting with violent opposition. The peace building study undertaken by the Working Group for Weapons Reduction also concluded that “Peace work in inseparable from politics. Cambodians have experienced a

\(^{126}\) This insight was confirmed during the 2002 interview with Yonekura, who concluded that the Dhammayietra contribution to laying the foundation for a more peaceful society had been small. Its main value was “in the present” for villagers who felt their plight supported and most of all for the walkers personally, who felt great spiritual awakening and deep gratitude to the poor people who shared the little food they had with them. Source: interview with Yonekura Yukiko. Phnom Penh, 29 November 2003.

\(^{127}\) The WGWR identified a second reason for the failure of the broad Cambodian peace networks, related to the different hierarchies in civil society. Individual peace activists felt uneasy with bigger NGOs who were perceived to dominate strategy discussions and to use their funders’ position to determine peace events. The peace building study concludes that the handful of examples of effective peace building experiences usually involve initiatives of a few individuals working together already in an existing project or for a single organisation.
long history of political violence. Traumatized by that experience, Cambodians do not want to have any direct involvement with anything perceived as political.” (WGWR, 2001, p.17)

**Peace campaigns in Sri Lanka**

Building broad based peace constituencies to promote peaceful co-existence is also a recurring theme in NGO conflict resolution work in Sri Lanka, but multi actor nationwide movements were short-lived there as well. In the late 1980s with Indian peace keeping forces in the North and JVP resistance in the South, a broad ‘Women for Peace’ movement united individual women, small grass roots women groups and professional women NGOs. Women wearing white scarves walked every Friday to the parliament in Colombo to demand an end to the killing and a peaceful resolution of the conflict; a strategy loosely based on the model of the Mad Mothers of the Plaza de Mayo. A few times a year the Women for Peace group would walk in other parts of the country, like Jaffna. To show their solidarity with female headed households in conflict affected areas, the group also collected food donations from families and businesses in Colombo and other vicinities to distribute as food packages. However, under President Premedasa’s leadership the Indian peace keeping forces were sent home and civil war resumed in 1990.

As in Cambodia, political changes politicised the peace movement and individual peace activists felt increasingly uneasy with the messages and the danger that their peace work attracted. In 1991, a Presidential inquiry commission was inaugurated to publicly investigate local human rights organisations and peace groups, which were accused of malefeasance, supporting armed rebel groups and threatening national security. The Women for Peace coalition fell apart. The involved NGOs, like the Women Media Collective, continued to include the peace agenda in their regular work, but the multi actor nature of the work could not be sustained.

Other peace campaigns came and went. The National Peace Council was founded in 1995; a couple of months after the People’s Alliance had won the national elections with a pro-peace agenda. NPC aimed at building a broad peace movement and generating public understanding and acceptance for peace settlements that would bring justice, including some form of self governance, for Tamil people. Constitutional reform requires a two third majority in parliament but the major political parties could not reach a consensus on solutions to the ethnic conflict. With international support from the World Bank and others, NPC organised multi ethnic, social sector consultations around the country with business leaders, journalists, refugees, soldiers and NGOs. Even though the war resumed only six months later, President Kumaratunga chose to pursue a dual strategy of combating armed rebel groups, while negotiating a peaceful resolution to the conflict with the Tamil population and the debate on the constitutional reforms continued.

In partnership with International Alert, NPC organised study tours to South Africa, the Philippines, Northern Ireland and Bangladesh for 70 politicians between 1996 and 1998, to ‘help generate new thinking and new relationships”. (Perera, 2001, p. 408) Unfortunately, the conflict overtook NPC’s exposure work as well. As the war intensified the Constitutional reform failed to generate the majority vote in the Singhalese dominated parliament and the People’s Alliance changed its pro peace strategy to an all out “War for Peace”. In 2003 the NPC was still working on its core message to bring about a just peace. Its international work with professional groups and politicians required sophisticated knowledge of conflict resolution and reconciliation strategies and NPC evolved into a think tank for peaceful conflict resolution over time. However, a change of leadership a few years ago strengthened NPC’s strategic links with the local NGO movement and it is now collaborating with grass roots peaceful co-existence programmes and human rights initiatives of NGOs like PAFFREL, MDDR and Sarvodaya.
Two other grassroots peace building initiatives with strong charismatic leadership also deserve mention, although they are run by a single NGO. In January 2002 the Sarvodaya Movement, under the spiritual leadership of its founder and president Dr. Ariyaratne, announced a mass peace campaign to bring a final end to the nation's bloody civil war. The peace campaign consists of two parts: expanding the Consciousness of Peace through hosting large peace meditations and the Village to Village: Heart to Heart campaign. The purpose of the peace meditation is to change the consciousness about war and peace—"to make war unthinkable and peace inevitable"—and to create a powerful effect on the "psychosphere", the collective consciousness of the nation. The "Village to Village Link-up Programme" links 1,000 villages in the war-torn North East to 1,000 villages in the South as sister villages to receive support with skilled and unskilled labour and materials to rehabilitate houses, tanks, schools, toilets and places of religious worship. The aim is that in the process villagers will overcome their fear, anger, animosity and prejudice, and opportunities will be created to express caring, concern and loving-kindness toward each other.

The Sarvodaya peace programme is unique in its ability to mobilise a huge turnout at the mass mediations (170,000 in 1999, close to 300,000 in 2002 and 300,000 in 2004) and the spirituality of its peace message, compared to the peaceful co-existence and just peace messages of other NGOs. Also, it may well be the only NGO that has ever set goals that are to be achieved in 100 and 500 years. Sarvodaya emphasizes the need to address the "internal war":

"Sri Lankans are at war within themselves. Evidence of a society experiencing internal war is all other forms of non-war related violence and deliberate self-harm. Depression is the foundation for internalized violence (including alcohol, drugs, deliberate self-harm) and for externalized violence (including rape, murder and war). Sri Lanka is an island of victims. Some of the victims of the war are those killed or wounded in military action. We must also learn to see the perpetrators of violence as victims. Some are the victims of an economic system which does not address widespread poverty. Others are the victims of violent and repressive living environments that turn loving children into combatants and suicide bombers. Some victims are victimizing others, creating a terrible cycle of victim-villain-violence. Sri Lanka needs a peace that addresses both the internal and external "war", the totality of despair in this society."

Yet at the same time, Sarvodaya's Buddhist philosophy and mass peace meditations have immediate political implications in a society in which ethnic and religious divides prevent efforts to evolve into an active, self sustainable grass roots peace movement.

SETIK is a multi actor grassroots peacebuilding network that is concentrated in the Central Highland districts of Kandy, Nuwara Eliya and Matale. This high mountain range, dotted with lavish tea and rubber plantations, houses a mix of low cast Indian estate workers, Sinhalese peasants and Muslim petty traders. Poverty is pervasive as land and off farm employment is scarce. Literacy is low and political leadership is concentrated along ethno-nationalist lines. Conflicts between ethnic communities are multiple and have historically been settled by violent means. SETIK is the Human Rights Secretariat of the Diocesan Commission for Justice, Peace and Human Development based in Kandy. It works on human rights, justice, sustainable development, protection of children and women and peace building. Founded and managed by the Catholic Diocese, it is multi religious in mission and includes religious leaders from all denominations and their constituencies in its work. SETIK is also multi lingual and all staff members master at least two of the three Sri Lankan languages. Its outspoken justice and peace approach lands SETIK in conflict with the authorities at regular intervals. For instance, its work to protect estate teenagers from sexual harassment by estate and security officials forced it to take rape cases up to the Supreme Court; its election monitors investigating election fraud and election related murders were physically intimidated by armed gangs and leading politicians. including

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128 Source Dr. Ariyaratne email letter. see also http://sarvodaya.org/PeaceInitiative_SarvodayaPeoplesPeacePlan.htm
two Ministers residing in Kandy district in 2002; and in April 2003. SETIK came under attack from the National Human Rights Commission's (NHRC) coordinator in Kandy for recording complaints of human rights violations.129

In this volatile environment, SETIK believes that an end to the ethnic conflict may hinge upon a willingness to listen, especially to victims of war. In this way it searches for truth about a shared, bloody past and a willingness to acknowledge the implications of a 'just settlement for all based on the rule of law'. In the words of its former director Father Nandana: "We need to look for sustainability of peace. We can only have this if all have equal rights and if there is justice through radical reforms. If this necessity is not recognised, we will have peace for some time, but it will not last." This just peace agenda is woven into its work and that of its constituencies. Multi religious Peace Steering Committees have been set up at regional, district and provincial levels; they meet on a bi-monthly basis, monitor the situation and mediate conflicts when they arise. Youth are SETIK's main target group as grooming new leadership is a key strategy. Programmes include workshops on the ideology of peace, on the progress of the peace negotiations, language classes, cultural exchanges, media campaigns and peace rallies. Learning how to build sustainable peace networks is a work in progress.130 The low profile grass roots nature of their peaceful co-existence and justice work, and its foundation in existing local multi religious structures has enabled SETIK to continue highly sensitive human rights work under critical circumstances and to build a strong membership base.

SETIK's low national visibility also poses a different critical bottleneck to its work: unlike PAFFREL, NPC and Sarvodaya, SETIK faces serious fund raising problems and many of the planned peace projects had to be scaled down to a core human rights and peace agenda. While strong in legitimacy and accountability, its leadership thinks they failed to invest in international donor contacts and its inter-religious image may make aid agencies wary about its development capability and hidden agendas. This is regrettable, because SETIK is the only NGO network in this four country research that genuinely works on to mobilise all local religious actors as proactive conflict mediators who are responsible for sustainable peace with justice in their marginalised communities. It stands out as an impressive example.

129 The coordinator wrongfully claims that only NHRC branch officers and the Supreme Court have the right to take complaints from the victims of violations, such as victims of torture.
130 After peace exchange trips by Sinhalese civilians to the North proved counter-productive, 28 Tamil students from Mannar and Vanni districts were invited to the Central Province for a two-week trip. "That we go and stare at people in the North like animals in the zoo proves bothersome for them", said Father Nandana in an interview with the JRS in 2002, "So instead we brought some students from Vanni to Kandy, to show them a world they had never seen before and to get the community involved. The students themselves told us they wanted to go for this trip; many of them never go out of the camps (for displaced people) at all." Source: Jesuit Refugee Service (2002) - Bridging the ethnic divide Sri Lanka, 05-06-2002, Special Report (Vatican City, JRS); and interviews with Fr Nandana Managuna, 30 November 2001 and Fr. George Sigamoney, 1 April 2004.
8.4 International advocacy for policy and practice change

INFID, NGO Forum on Cambodia and International NGO Forum on Sri Lanka

Cambodia, Indonesia and Sri Lanka all have active international NGO advocacy networks, which have played an important role in international diplomacy at some point in the nation’s history. The International NGO Forum on Indonesian Development (INFID) is the oldest such network. It was first established as the INGI (Inter-NGO Conference on IGGI Matters) in June 1985, by a group of Indonesian NGOs and their NGO donor partners in the Netherlands. Its international secretariat was based in The Hague, because the Dutch government held the permanent chair of the annual Indonesian donor consultation and pledging meeting, the so-called IGGI. Its purpose was to advocate for more equitable and environmentally sustainable development policies through dialogue and advocacy with the international agencies that fund these programmes. This was important because official in-country venues to influence development priorities set by the Indonesian government were absent.

In 1992, after Dutch bilateral development aid was unilaterally terminated by President Suharto, in response to strong Dutch criticism of the East Timor human rights abuses (Dili massacre of December 1991), the World Bank took over. It renamed the IGGI the Consultative Group for Indonesia (CGI), and moved the meetings to Washington DC. At that time, the INGI was renamed INFID, but the dual secretariat structure was maintained, with an office in Jakarta and an international office in The Hague, until 1998: frequent raids by the Indonesian security forces necessitated a shadow archive outside the country. In 1998 the research coordination and documentation work moved to Jakarta and a new lobby unit was formed close to the European Union in Brussels. In 1993 a second INFID liaison unit that focuses on environmental and debt issues was formed by member NGOs in Tokyo. Given the close connection to the annual donor conference and the repressive attitude of the Indonesian New Order regime towards NGO advocacy work, INFID has been focussing on an economic development agenda with a strong environmental component (debt relief, sustainable land use, pro-poor programmes, etc). It produces research documents and annual advocacy reports, with a set of recommendations for the annual CGI meetings.

The NGO Forum on Cambodia was established in 1987 by a group of International NGOs running operational relief and reconstruction programmes in Cambodia. The Forum started as an international initiative because no local NGOs were in existence at the time. During its first five years the Forum met in European and Asian donor countries, because travel to Cambodia was restricted and the Forum’s main purpose was to end the economic boycott and seek diplomatic and financial support for an UN transition government. Reports on the socio-economic situation inside the country were widely disseminated and bilateral aid agencies, the UN and EU were systematically lobbied. As Cambodia had been internationally isolated for over ten years, grass roots development data were virtually non existent; the Forum managed to fill this void and gained the attention and appreciation of the international community. It was invited to provide policy recommendations based on its long experience years’ of relief work with the local authorities.

After the signing of the Paris Peace accords and the start of the UNTAC, a huge influx of international NGOs emerged in 1991. In response, the Coordinating Committee of Cambodia (CCC) was established to assist new coming NGOs and promote mutual cooperation. This new network rapidly became the national NGO focal point for the UN, embassies and other international agencies and gradually “took over” the international advocacy role from the Forum.
In 1993 the CCC obtained official accreditation to the annual donor pledging conference (ICROC) that was held in France and Japan alternately.131 Meanwhile, the nature of the Forum’s work changed dramatically during the UNTAC period. Its new local NGO members were in urgent need of programme development skills and the Forum set up a series of trainings and working groups on key topics (like environment, micro-credit, gender, land disputes), in which international and local NGOs worked together to enhance the quality of their work. Given the volatile political process and the Khmer Rouge legacy, the CCC/Forum’s advocacy agenda focussed primarily on economic development, environmental degradation and participatory and inclusive, sustainable development approaches. Furthermore, the CCC/Forum has consistently promoted gender equity and asked for attention to the feminisation of poverty.

The International NGO Forum on Sri Lanka had an entirely different history. Not only is it the youngest of the three, established in December 1989, but it ceased to exist in its original form in 1995. It was founded by a group of International donor NGOs from Great Britain, Norway, Germany, France and Netherlands, that was deeply concerned over the intensifying war in the North East and the serious human rights violations in the South during the JVP uprising. Many local NGO leaders had gone into hiding after repeated threats on their lives from the LTTE, JVP or the Sri Lankan army or all three. While the situation deteriorated and international action was deemed necessary, serious donor and media fatigue kept Sri Lanka out of the headlines in Europe. The International Steering Committee launched a year long campaign in 1990 to get Sri Lanka back in the European newspapers and on diplomatic agendas. It worked with journalists, universities, churches and ministries to convey a simple message: an end to the killing. A Sri Lanka news service was set up at the British Refugee Council for journalists in Western Europe and the Ambassador’s meeting in Colombo took an active interest in the Forum’s documentation work. While the International Steering Committee worked in close consultation with local human rights and women’s NGOs from the onset, the Sri Lankan Steering Committee could only be established three years later, after the political violence in the South declined. Even then, however, the Forum continued to face strong opposition of the Sri Lankan authorities and ethno-political groupings, like nationalist Buddhist organisations.

In 1993 the agenda was diversified to address economic development issues and membership increased both locally and internationally with NGOs from Australia and US joining the lobby. However, conflict dominated the Forum till the very end when the war resumed and the political opposition to the Forum’s peace with justice agenda mounted in 1995 to the point where local NGOs decided there was no added value to them from international peace advocacy and the Local Steering Committee was dissolved.

Aims, audiences and advocacy strategies

INFID intends to “to give voice to the perspective and common concerns of the people represented by NGOs involved in Indonesia vis-a-vis governments, multilateral development agencies and the private sector. INFID aims to facilitate communication between NGOs inside and outside Indonesia in order to promote policies to alleviate structural poverty and to increase the capacity to improve conditions of the poor and disadvantaged in Indonesia.” The Cambodian

131 The Cooperation Committee for Cambodia is a membership organization of over 100 NGOs committed to facilitating the exchange of information among the development community in Cambodia. In part their mandate overlaps with the Forum, as they focus on local capacity building and policy research in key sectoral areas. However, they share an office building and collaborate closely when it comes to convening seminars, publishing, etc.
Forum has a single goal: “The rights of poor and vulnerable groups in Cambodia are recognized and supported by the policies and practices of Cambodia’s government and donors, and by the wider community.” The SRL Forum no longer exists, but had a three-pronged agenda: to stop the human rights violations and to promote peace with justice and sustainable development policies.

INFID has two main objectives: 1) to ensure that the formulation and implementation of national and international policies on development in Indonesia, including those related to lending that creates debt dependency, investment and trade, are in the interests of the poor and disadvantaged, and based on principles of peace and justice; and 2) to create conditions allowing for the strengthening of democratic life through broadening people's participation in, access to, and control of development in Indonesia. The objectives of the Cambodia Forum are to share information, debate and advocate on priority issues affecting Cambodia’s development; to highlight the impact of development processes and economic, social and political changes on Cambodians and to contribute to an informed and empowered population that participates in a strong and vibrant civil society. Furthermore, the Forum identified seven core values that the members need to underwrite: economic and social justice; respect for human rights and democracy; gender equality; peace and non-violence; sustainable use of natural resources; respect for cultural diversity; and development with equity.

INFID’s target audiences are donor governments, multilateral development agencies, local governments, community leaders, the media, parliament and the private sector. Current advocacy campaigns include: debt relief, CGI and trade monitoring (especially IMF, World Bank, ADB and WTO initiatives), democratisation and a strong NGO network, inside as well as outside Indonesia, to advocate for the rights of the disadvantaged in development and oppose lending that creates debt dependency, investment and trade. The Cambodia Forum’s audiences are all local: NGOs and associations, ministries, local authorities and locally based international aid agencies. Four permanent sectoral networks are currently active: environment (awareness, pesticides and river protection), development (policy, gender, trade and economic development) and land tenure and livelihoods (land reform, resettlement and forest livelihoods). Detailed research or follow-up work (like organising events) is carried out in smaller working groups.

The Sri Lanka Forum was founded to address the apprehension over the civilian victims and local NGO leaders under fire. It therefore prioritised the right to life and a political and civil rights lobby agenda and focussed its lobby on the annual sessions of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights in Geneva. It lobbied delegations facilitating local witnesses to provide testimonies etc. UN surveillance of human rights violations added to the reduction of extra-judiciary killings in the North and South in the early 1990s. The Forum also successfully probed the unlawful procedures applied by President Premadasa’s Inquiry Commission into the NGOs set up, which publicly accused a group of charismatic NGO peace advocates of malfeasance, corruption and support to armed insurgents without providing any hard evidence. The Commission used a reverse legal procedure: presuming the accused guilty until they proved the contrary. The Forum asked the International Commission of Jurists to observe the trials and the Ambassadors’ meeting sent representatives as well. Soon the procedures were adjusted and the hearings were closed to the public. After President Premadasa’s assassination, the pressure on NGOs waned and the commission finished its work in silence. In 1993, the Forum expanded its membership both in Sri Lanka and in the US and Australia, hired its first permanent lobbyist and diversified its agenda to include the social consequences of the privatisation of the tea estates and the termination of poor farmer subsidies as part of the Structural Adjustment Programme. However, the dialogue attempts with the World Bank ended in failure, as limited local economic expertise was available to assist the mostly human rights and community development NGO members of the Forum and hence their reports did not meet the Bank’s quality standards.
Four thematic case studies of joint national NGO campaigns

The first public SRL Forum conference held in Sri Lanka was closed down by pro Singhalese, anti peace protests and a group of armed thugs in 1994. The LTTE had keen interest in the Forum too, though its military orientation prevented them from becoming member. They did attempt to reap political gain and legitimacy from its peace with justice mission and critical dialogues with the Sri Lankan authorities. Representation of members of armed groups at the Forum’s events was a tricky from the Forum’s inception and became a breaking point in 1995 when the war resumed, the PA military “war for peace” campaign began and the Local Steering Committee withdrew from the Forum for diplomatic and security reasons. With the withdrawal of local NGOs, the Forum’s legitimacy ended, though a small European NGO group continued its lobby work from London till the end of the decade.

Membership and resource mobilisation

All forums have a number of similar features that reflect their civil society nature and allow them to operate despite hostile environment. First, they combined local and foreign NGO membership. Over 100 NGOs participate in INFID, approximately 50 from Indonesia and 60 from 14 other countries. The Cambodia Forum has 70 member NGOs that run operational programmes inside the country: 31 international and 39 local NGOs. The Sri Lanka Forum was smaller in size and had on average 60 participating NGOs, divided equally between international and local NGOs: its lose membership structure reflected the high human security risks that come with human rights lobbying. Only the Steering Committee members are usually highly visible ‘members’ of the network and would speak in public on behalf of the Forum. Second, the Forums had a dual steering committee system (local and foreign) that met twice a year to set the advocacy agenda and prepare for lobby events taking place simultaneously around the world. Steering committees are also responsible for management, fund raising, financial reporting and other administrative responsibilities. Ad hoc working groups are formed around priority themes to mobilise research data and brainstorm appropriate recommendations for alternative sustainable development approaches. Some of these working groups became more permanent knowledge centres, like the debt group in INFID and the environment group in Cambodia. A secretary maintained contact between meetings; but as the research and advocacy agenda grew, secretariats turned into lobby units with full time staff. Annually, large international conferences are organised for the full NGO membership and the general public. In the early years these forum conferences could not be held locally, either because the government would not give permission (IDO and CAM) or for security reasons (SRL), and were hosted in Europe, Australia, Japan and the US. The first Cambodia Forum conference was held in Phnom Penh 1992, but INFID had to wait 14 years before an international conference could be convened in Bali in 1999. The SRL Forum’s first locally held international conference in Batticaloa in 1994 was also its last.

Both INFID and CCC/Forum have ‘localised’ their advisory and management structures over the past decade. The CCC/Forum is based in Phnom Penh and increasingly focuses on domestic advocacy issues; it was run by expatriates till 1996 when the International Steering Committee resigned and the local Management Committee became the chief decision making body. From 1997 to 2001, the CCC/Forum changed its predominant language to Khmer and Cambodian staff began leading the CCC/Forum’s activities. Its local staff was expanded to improve technical backstopping of grassroots NGOs in the provinces and to help them build advocacy links to the national level to address issues like landmines, illegal logging, fisheries rights, micro credit, women’s rights and democratisation. The localisation of INFID’s office structure occurred around the same time. While international NGOs have played an important counterpart role throughout INFID’s history, the network has always been carried by a core group of approximately 15 local
Preventing Deadly Conflict in Divided Societies in Asia

NGOs with strategic connections to the academic and business world (unlike the other two Forums). In 1997 a ‘Committee of Six’ was elected from among the two steering committees and worked out a process to transfer the international INFID archives and tasks from The Hague to Jakarta and Brussels. Moreover, it reviewed the local policy planning and management structures to assure maximum security and accountability for the extended Jakarta office. The transition process was completed in late 1998 and coincided accidentally with the Transformasi. In May 2000 INFID was registered as a foundation in Indonesia.

All three forums were initially funded by a group of international NGOs, whose policy included funding international advocacy work to promote policy changes, because the domestic political systems did not allow for democratic consultation in policy planning. Core NGO donors of the forums included mostly British, German, Dutch and Norwegian agencies, like Brot fur die Werld, CAFOD, Christian Aid, CCFD, Diakonia, Ford Foundation, Hivos, Novib, Oxfam Belgium and Red Barna. As the forums gained legitimacy and were invited to observe or speak at consultative group meetings and UN human rights hearings, bilateral governments became increasingly interested in funding their policy research and advocacy projects. In 2003 INFID and the CCC/Forum received additional support from Oxfam Cambodia, Asia Foundation, JVC, DFID, SIDA, USAID and CIDA. The Cambodia Forum’s budget for in 2003 was US$ 558,000. The INFID budget for 2003 was expected to be close to US$ 700,000.

Advocacy contribution to preventing deadly conflict

While proving overall impact of NGO advocacy work is a tricky business, the three advocacy networks related here have had a major influence at crucial times in their nation’s histories. The short lived, but well planned concerted advocacy efforts of Sri Lanka Forum members was quite effective during its first two years. It got the human rights abuses and the suffering of ordinary citizens back in the European media headlines and on agenda of major bilateral agencies. For three consecutive years, special measures to increase the local human security situation in Sri Lanka were on the agenda of the UN Commission on Human Rights. While this renewed attention did not directly end fighting at the battlefield, the two key players—the Sri Lankan Army and the LTTE—became more cautious in committing human rights violations, for example when the Sri Lankan PM made the voluntary statement to the chair by the Sri Lankan PM in 1993 to prevent UN human rights’ rapporteur visits. Similarly, the Forum mobilised the European Ambassadors and reputed law institutes to complain about the unlawful procedures of the 1991 Presidential Inquiry committee; this prevented incarceration and the closing down of NGOs with a peace activist agenda and was successful in fund raising for the first national election monitoring campaign in 1994. The Forum’s upfront lobby to end human rights atrocities, extrajudiciary killings and promote peace was both a sign of strong in-country civil society, as well as the cause of its premature collapse after only five years. Walking the tight rope of impartiality between warring factions at times of war and in the presence of a large and active Diaspora may not be sustainable over a prolonged period. The SRL Forum fell apart when the war over Tamil Eelam entered its third phase in 1995 and disagreement over issues like local ownership of (or control over) the message, networking with rebel representatives and public representation in international conferences made membership too sensitive for Sri Lankan NGOs. Concluding the international steering committee lacked the empathy and hands-on conflict information to represent them adequately, the Sri Lankan Steering Committee withdrew from the Forum and the public limelight and continued their human rights and peace advocacy work with caution as part of their ongoing NGO mandate.
Not surprisingly, the CCC/Forum and INFID also had to be very cautious in addressing the local human rights situations in their lobby agendas. Because civil society was weaker and the role of the military in daily governance more prominent, the forums at best raised human rights issues indirectly until the mid 1990s, when the wave of political transformation swept through the region. The CCC/Forum had its hey day in the late 1980s, when it was virtually the sole authority on sustainable development work inside Cambodia. It played a very important role in the moral lobby to end the international diplomatic isolation and economic boycott under the “Trading with the Enemy Act,” which prevented a country ravaged by genocide and natural disasters from receiving proper development assistance and moving to a more democratic governance system.

The publication of the book “Punishing the Poor” (1988) for instance, made a deep impression on the conscience of Northern governments. With the Paris Peace Accords in negotiation, the Forum briefed bilateral and multilateral donors and directly influenced their development policy formulation. With humanitarian needs and democratisation objectives always high on the agenda, issues pertaining to political and civil rights, abuse of State power and other controversial topics could not be raised. At the time the international NGOs worked in close partnership with the Cambodian government and were conscious of human rights abuses. They felt an end to the international blockade would force the government to open up to more democratic participation and accountability, which would reduce human rights violations. A dramatic transformation of the CCC/Forum’s organisational focus occurred in the 1990s, when in response to the request of local members it became a development capacity building network. This reflects the strong local ownership of the organisation and the accountability of the expatriate leadership to its membership. In the course of this study it was impossible to assess the quality of their current capacity building work in the provinces, but some strategic national campaigns can be mentioned: the ban the landmines campaign, the small arms and light weapons reduction working group, the involvement in land disputes research (see 8.2), the advice on NGO regulation and promotion of ethical standards for NGO governance and work to foster direct vertical links between grass roots and government.

The INFID, to conclude, was most influential in its mid career phase. In the context of the New Order regime and a highly militarized society, INFID opted for a more technocratic advocacy approach and focussed on economic development issues with second generation human rights components. The high quality of its debt research and the impact of unsustainable State development choices on poverty eradication and environmental degradation for example made INFID an annual debating partner with bilateral donors and IFIs like the World Bank. Its tradition of less direct involvement in political and civil rights issues and grass roots civil society building work is visible today: INFID is publicly more oriented to research and international advocacy and has not been challenged to rethink its mandate. Beside its debt relief work, INFID promoted environmental research work in support of local member NGO networks like WALHI and ELSAM, to lobby for socio-economic indigenous minority rights and an end to eco-violence. Its advocacy power in the 1990s was manifested in its strategic advocacy partnership building with Japanese NGOs to confront Japanese corporations and authorities involved in unlawful logging and mining practices in West Papua and Kalimantan (Freeport and Rio Tinto). The 1992 international INFID conference was held in Odawara and was the first of its kind in a country with strong reservations against public NGO advocacy. The conference was well received and resulted in various local awareness-raising and lobby initiatives and the opening of the INFID liaison office in Tokyo. Furthermore, the liaison office had local spin off effects and raised awareness on eco-violence elsewhere, resulting among others in the formation of the Japanese Mekong Watch Committee in 1994 that undertook joint lobby campaigns with Oxfam International for the Mekong and China region in 1998.
In sum the policy advocacy networks have played an important role in giving a voice to alternative views of development and peace that would otherwise not have been heard. Of the seven success indicators, strategic vertical networks of key actors, alternative development and peace messages, mobilisation of soft power through international connections and joint NGO campaigning have proved valuable. Support of charismatic leadership and elite members of society have also been important in boosting the legitimacy of Forums, but with the exception of a few years in INFID, the day-to-day lobby was largely led by expert teams. The organisational integrity of the Forums reflected the situation they tried to address at the time, and thereby the historic State - NGO relationship. Only the CCC/Forum network transformed its role—to that of capacity builder. This is uncommon as most advocacy networks have a limited life span and either wind down or merge with other advocacy groups to adopt an alternative lobby agenda.

8.5 Lessons learned

The twelve NGO initiatives discussed in this chapter were selected, because they reflect the seven success indicators in a variety of combinations, they show advanced organisational integrity and they focus on strengthening governance and enhancing stakeholder collaboration. Examples of strong national cross-cutting or bridging social capital building are the Dhammayatra peace walks; the Sarvodaya mass peace meditations and the Mada Depan scenario building dialogues. These broad based people’s initiatives managed to engage NGOs, peace activist, academics, government officials and businessmen alike and raise public support for a pro-peace message at tense times. Unfortunately, it proved hard to sustain these horizontal broad based peace networks over time. With the polarisation of the positions of political opponents in the conflict, the broad based peace and reconciliation work in all three countries got politicised and family activists, officials and business representatives withdrew.

Four other initiatives managed to sustain their bridging community networks by building vertical actor networks simultaneously. SETIK in Central Sri Lanka managed to sustain its bridging, multi-religious grassroots peace activities by engaging the top level leadership in their province and beyond. This provided some protection to human rights defenders where others had failed. Strategic linking with a wide set of stakeholders enabled the two election monitoring networks, COMFREL and PAFFREL, to protect a nationwide network of respectively 38,000 and 42,000 local volunteers during sensitive and at times violent election processes. This moreover enabled them to diversify their programmes to include complementary governance initiatives, like the strengthening of the commune decentralisation process in Cambodia and the community dialogue programmes on peaceful co-existence in Sri Lanka. The diverse and long-term approach of the Cambodia NGO working group on land issues combined grassroots research, economic projects and legal aid with law reform and international lobbying, and has resulted in the establishment of conflict mediation mechanisms within the State structure to address problems in the Ministries.

Lastly, six initiatives showed the variety of strategies that depend on vertical social capital building to strengthen governance and link State and grassroots actors. The National Peace Council and Komnas Perempuan serve as think tanks, data banks, training centres and public campaigners to find alternative ways to end the civil war peacefully and prevent sexual violence against women, respectively. The Civil Rights Movement launched a public campaign and mobilised the international community to convince the State to accept the Geneva Conventions and acknowledge the rights and increase the protection of internally displaced and political prisoners during civil war. All three managed to frame ethic values of dignity, rights and protection in ways that made the issues acceptable again for all parties involved. Soft power, the
ability to achieve goals through attraction rather than coercion, was also successfully applied by the three national advocacy networks.

What lessons can be learned from these experiences? First, it is clear that NGOs with strong cross-cutting or bridging and vertical social capital building skills have a higher chance of being successful than those that focus more on technical approaches or professional service delivery expertise. This likelihood is further enhanced when social capital is reflected in their own organisations (“walking the talk”). The multi-lingual and multi-religious SETIK staff and the decentralised and volunteer-based monitoring structures of the national election networks are examples that show the effectiveness of this approach.

Second, the fostering of strong joint national NGO campaigns to further good governance and conflict resolution and prevention work is an essential strategy. This help NGOs overcome human resource and financial restrictions (for example in case of maintaining national monitoring networks) and overcome deficiencies in stakeholder networks (for example lawyers working with community development NGOs to research land grabbing problems with peasants). Furthermore, these joint NGO campaigns add to the legitimacy of the message and can go a long way toward balancing the asymmetric power relation with the State. A united, well informed and well connected civil society is hard for States in this day and age to discard or violently repress and is hence of prime importance to sensitive and risky conflict prevention and human rights work.

Third, the cases show that the capacity of NGOs to build effective stakeholder relations is strongly affected by their historic relationship with the State. In the most extreme cases, NGO sectors were prohibited and their leaders killed, imprisoned or deported (Cambodia under the Khmer Rouge, Indonesia in the early New Order days, and currently in North East Sri Lanka and in Myanmar). As result of international pressure, the NGO sector reappeared in Cambodia, but its relation with the State remains tense. That makes it harder to work with key stakeholders in government service, the business sector, religious institutions and academia. Cambodian NGOs compensate for this void by working more closely together and with the international community. In Sri Lanka and Indonesia the State repression of NGOs was more ‘strategic’ in the past two decades, focusing on restricting freedoms of assembly and expression. Here NGOs have been more successful in linking with academics, the middle class business sector and religious leaders (for example the NU and academic support to INFID, the business and officials support to Masa Depan and religious support to NGO work in Sri Lanka). However, their capacity to mobilise grassroots constituencies was dented and remains problematic today. The (re)building of mutual trust in State-NGO relations requires a deliberate and sensitive local process of reconciliation at different levels.

Fourth, international advocacy to exert pressure on the national government to end harmful practices and change policies has proven useful in the absence of democratic venues in country. Forums tried to fill the void in local participatory democracy by researching, debating and documenting their alternative policy recommendations, systematically lobbying governments, bilateral aid agencies and the UN and holding them accountable for their own development policies and rights principles. The State-NGO relations strongly influenced the messaging of international advocacy forums. The power of the military in Indonesia made the INFID adopt a more technocratic economic development agenda, while the Sri Lanka Forum was able to lobby with a strong peace and human rights agenda, because the mature NGO sector was more respected and the security forces were in favour of a peaceful settlement at the time. However, this main peace message proved unsustainable in the long run.
Fifth, a focus on a narrow “end the killing” peace message or on conflict resolution capacity building alone is unlikely to reap success even in the medium term regardless of how well the NGO initiative is framed, professional and connected to multiple actors. In the case countries, and likely in world at large, peace is politics and it cannot materialise without social justice. A just peace requires structural economic, social and political change to end inequality and indignity. While the three peace capacity building NGO cases show pioneering work in highly sensitive areas, they are providing motivational resources at best, as their aim is to build capacity and goodwill among government officials and local NGOs, which need to provide the required changes.

Sixth, the only successful deadly conflict prevention approach is sustainable development and inclusive good governance. Cambodian community development NGOs are rebuilding community trust through restoring livelihoods and setting up village credit associations; in the land title project they associated with lawyers and advocates at the national level to find alternative ways to protect their beneficiaries from land grabbing where the State apparatus failed. COMFREL utilises its election monitoring network to train commune council officials and villagers alike to make decentralised governance a bottom up force for the common good.

Seventh, even the best NGO development and conflict prevention work will only have marginal effect, if the State, parliament and the armed forces do not fulfil their prime duty holder’s role of providing human security to all citizens. The degree to which the State allows political space for NGOs to act in democratic ways shapes their success. The influence of the international actors on the State is limited when States are less concerned about their international credibility. The cases showed that official exclusion, impunity, corruption and indignity are prevalent in all countries. Strategic NGO efforts promoted new conflict mediation and reconciliation mechanisms within the government’s jurisdiction to overcome bottlenecks due to poor governance (like the Land Dispute Settlement Commissions, Forest Crimes Monitoring Unit, ICRC, Komnas Perempuan and Masa Depan). However, none of these hard fought initiatives have thus far provided actual protection to the poor nor have they resulted in a major change in the governance practices.

Eighth, women are most prone to inequality, exclusion and indignity and deadly conflict has aggravated their plight. They face physical, economic and social insecurity, but have no political power to redress it. The land case described how land loss makes peasant families destitute and forces primarily women and young girls to migrate to the cities or abroad to compensate for the lost income. Sexual harassment and domestic violence have been on the rise in all case countries since the 1990s as result of economic crises, communal conflict, militarization and civil war. Komnas Perempuan’s Presidential acknowledgement of the problem did not change the political will to act to increase women’s protection. Attempts to redress the under-representation of women in politics for example by COMFREL and PAFFREL, have met with unfavourable cultural and social climates and Ministries for Women Affairs in all countries are the weak and most under-resourced institutions.
IX. Conclusions and recommendations

9.1 Summary and conclusions

After two decades in international development cooperation I was awarded a fellowship at Harvard University in 2000 to reflect on and write about my professional experience. My retreat coincided with a surge of deadly intrastate violence that swept through Asia, which forced governments, civil society and international aid agencies to adjust their strategies to better equip poor, developing societies to pre-empt deadly conflict. At the same time the world became aware that the protective quality of distance has disappeared in the globalising world and that the ever-prevalent risk of deadly civil conflict in poor nations now threatens to affect peace and security in every part of the globe. The terrorist attacks of 11 September 2001 and the subsequent ‘war on terror’ have reinforced the sense of global insecurity, which poses a serious challenge to world peace, co-existence and security, but also generates profound new opportunities.

This study analyses the role of local NGOs in preventing deadly conflict in four divided societies in Asia and identifies factors that enhance the success of NGO work. It aims to contribute to the discourse on the role of local Development NGOs in peace and development efforts. By providing empirical evidence of the mutually beneficial nature of partnerships between key actors in (inter)national conflict prevention initiatives, it hopes to encourage their development. The lack of empirical research on and documentation of the work of local NGOs in conflict prevention has hindered the formation of genuine, mutually beneficial collaborations between key actors in international peace-building initiatives. To understand why deadly intrastate conflicts are hard to prevent, why key stakeholder interaction – especially between the State and NGOs – is problematic and what needs to be done to foster constructive relations, this study explores three distinct issues: the causes of deadly intrastate conflict; the State-NGO relations in historic perspective and the role of local NGOs in preventing deadly conflict in Cambodia, Sri Lanka, Indonesia and Myanmar.

Part I of the study identifies the ethnic minorities at risk in the case countries and analysed causes and potential remedies of deadly conflict in each country since its independence (chapter III - IV). Part II reviews State-NGO relations in historic perspective, the measures applied to control NGOs and the division of roles and responsibilities among stakeholders (chapter V - VI). Part III analyses 32 local NGOs and their work in preventing deadly conflict. It assesses their conflict analysis, their projects, their social capital building capacity and organisational integrity; it ends with an inventory of success factors that may enhance the quality of NGO conflict prevention work. The NGO case studies illustrate the political opportunity structures, joint NGO campaigns and three success factors, which are broken down into seven indicators. It concludes with a summary of the lessons learned (chapter VII - VIII). The final chapter summarises the major conclusions per each of the four research proposition and formulates five sets of practical and transformational recommendations for each of the main stakeholders.

The study aims to address four core propositions:

- Deadly conflict in Asia is the result of deliberate exclusion, inequality and the lack of human dignity and can only be prevented through changes in local policy and practise that facilitate sustainable development, social justice and forms of inclusive governance;
- As privatisation of conflict is in an early stage in Asia, deadly conflicts can still be resolved through peacefully negotiated settlements provided the State commits to it “prime duty holders” role -laid down in various UN Covenants- and provides human
security to all its citizens, while it grants the necessary political space and fundamental rights to NGOs to work in a supportive and democratic environment:

- Local NGOs are key partners to the State and the international community in building cohesive and democratic societies and the impact of their work is enhanced when three critical success factors are incorporated in their programme strategies and institutional set-up (social capital building, strategic networking and organisational integrity);
- (Re)building the mutual trust in State - NGO relations is a deliberate and sensitive local process of reconciliation that involves multiple stakeholders at different levels in the society and in which international aid agencies can only play a limited role.

The study opens with a presentation of key definitions of deadly conflict (culture, identity, religion, exclusion, social cohesion, gender-based violence and human security) to set the stage for its first assumption: that deadly conflict is commonly caused by deliberate systematic discrimination and exclusion of particular identity groups and aggravated by unsustainable and unequal national development policies and practises. The study posits that sustainable development interventions are likely more durable and effective in preventing deadly intrastate conflict and building peace both nationally and globally, because their main goals are to eradicate poverty and injustice and their programme strategies attempt to redress structural causes of inequality, injustice and indignity.

The analysis of deadly conflict and historic grievances and social and class cleavages in the four countries addresses two concerns: are peaceful conflict resolution opportunities in Asia seriously challenged by the progressive privatisation of deadly conflict and which resolution options could enhance the local conflict prevention capacity. It concludes that historic and cultural grievances are the driving force behind deadly conflicts in the four case countries, not economic (greed) motives or personal gain. Class cleavages add to the ethnic tension and can negatively affect social cohesion, but have not directly caused deadly violence. Sri Lanka, Indonesia and Myanmar have struggled since independence in the late 1940s with the self-determination aspirations of ethnic groups – mainly national peoples– within their borders, which posed a threat to the national unity. Because these complicated nation-building processes were poorly managed by the States, frustrated self-determination aspirations have become a major cause of recurring deadly conflict over the past fifty years in all three countries. Cambodia provides a unique conflict context, as the country with the ethnically most homogenous population that experienced genocide in 1975. Its post-colonial intrastate conflict intensified as it got caught between the two clashing Cold War alliances, when the Vietnam War spilled over in 1969.

Ten national peoples and two ethnic minority groups are currently at elevated risks to deadly conflict in the four countries, but other marginalised people are deeply affected by impunity and poor governance as well. Most armed rebel groups represent and defend national peoples' interests based on regional, historic and contemporary grievances which could be redressed peacefully, if the political will existed. Due to the protracted conflict, all four countries have large and powerful armed forces that play a role in the governance on remote conflict zones as well. Rebel groups are therefore still more inclined to seek a negotiated end to the conflict than to fight indefinitely for cessation, with the LTTE as possible exception.\textsuperscript{132} The grievance and cleavage analysis provided vital insights into the historic roots causes that have divided the four countries.

\textsuperscript{132} The only exception may be the LTTE in Sri Lanka, which has developed into a highly professional global network for Tamil independence particularly in the North East. The autocratic local governance system leaves no room for dissent or democratic participation by the Tamil population whose interest they are defending. The LTTE condition to control the interim government has hampered the peace negotiation's progress.
At independence in 1948, the new regimes in Indonesian and Myanmar faced the challenge of unifying their new nations covering vast, diverse geographical territories with multiple ethnic and linguistic groups that had never been single countries before. Armed resistance against former colonial powers and Japanese occupiers during WWII had enhanced the identity and self-determination aspirations of national ethnic peoples; when their expectations were discarded at independence, the first ethno-nationalist movements took up arms as early as 1949. Both countries ended their experiment with democracy and shifted to autocratic rule by the mid 1960s with the support of dominant world powers: the New Order regime in Indonesia receiving economic and military backing from the US and the Junta in Myanmar from China and India. The predominantly Javanese and Burman political and military leadership curtailed political and civil rights, abolished political parties, silenced civil society, replaced traditional leaders and gave the armed forces a prominent role in the domestic governance and natural resource exploitation of remote, restive provinces. These unpopular measures aggravated the resentment, mistrust and opposition towards the central government and further damaged the society’s social cohesion. In Indonesia, after 30 years the New Order regime, internally weakened by corruption and nepotism, imploded in the wake of the Asian economic crisis of 1997 that had caused economic depression, widespread poverty, unrest and deadly communal violence. A complex triple (political, economic and social) transformation process began in 1999. The SPDC in Myanmar remained China’s staunch ally and is the longest uninterrupted ruling Junta in history. Historic grievances and self-determination aspirations remain unresolved.

Sri Lanka’s troubled nation building process had a different origin. Here the rule of law was bent to justify exclusion and discrimination. Despite great British precaution to grant Tamil minorities territorial rights under the 1947 Soulbury Constitution, one of the first Acts passed by the new Singhalese majority parliament was the Ceylon Citizenship Act of 1948, which denied citizenship to the Indian Tamil minority, largely workers in the tea- and rubber estates. As ethno-nationalist majority politics flourished, the governance was increasingly centralised and indigenous Tamil minorities got systematically disenfranchised. The Sinhala Only Act of 1959 and Constitutional reform of 1972 were turning points for Tamil politicians: the TULF adopted a separatist agenda in the 1970s. While Sri Lanka remained a functioning democracy, escalation of the ethnic conflict was unavoidable with the emergence of Tamil militant groups in Jaffna and led to civil war in 1983 that lasted 20 years. Peace talks since have made little progress as the contemporary grievances of the Tamil people remain unaddressed and the authoritarian rule of the LTTE in the North and East challenges peaceful and democratic solutions through federal governance structures.

Cambodia stands out as a unique conflict. During the Vietnam War, armed rebel groups formed to overthrow General Lon Nol, who came to power in an US supported coup in 1969. The militant groups received financial and military support from Vietnam, China and the USSR. A combination of post colonial grievances and geopolitical factors led to the Khmer Rouge victory in 1975 and a genocide in which two million lives were lost and that remains without closure today. The Vietnamese army invaded Cambodia in 1979 to end these atrocities and helped form a new government. At the height of the Cold War and traumatised by the defeat of the Vietnam War, the international community decided to isolate Cambodia economically and politically under the “Trading with the Enemy Act”. Devastated by years of war, Cambodia deepened its ties with Vietnam and the USSR over the next 15 years. The impact of its long standing autocratic, isolated, Marxist rule continues to affect the democratic process in Cambodia.

Geopolitical influences have thus played a major role in the history of deadly conflict in Asia. The impact of the Cold War dynamics is most visible in Cambodia, Indonesia and Myanmar. As a result, all countries went through a militarization process that deeply impacted society. The armed
forces became actively involved in the internal governance of remote areas, as the main national security threat was perceived to come from local groupings with Marxist (or non-Marxist) orientation. Safeguarding national unity was the armed forces’ main goal and NGOs working in territories controlled by the army experienced repression. The lack of civilian and political control over the armed forces has been enhanced by significant self-financing of the armed forces, through returns from mining concessions, exploitation of natural resources (timber, gems) and partnerships with transnational corporations. As a result, the armies in the four countries remain large, demobilisation programmes have failed, the National Budget is affected (average defence expenditure is close to 30% per annum) and the security forces’ involvement in impunity and corruption cases is a cause of grave concern.

To explore possible conflict resolution options and provide a baseline to test the local NGO contributions and success factors in Part III, the conclusions of three leading conflict studies were applied to the case countries. These studies assess different aspects of the local capacity of the State to manage and resolve deadly conflict in divided societies peacefully, as well as root causes of conflict, including grievances, economic marginalisation, globalisation and weak social capital and cohesion. The ‘Peace and Conflict Ledger’, the ‘Conflict Trap’ and the ‘Next Wave’ studies provided valuable criteria for the conflict analysis but they failed to paint a complete picture of the capacity of States to deal with grievance redress seeking movements. The studies appear to underestimate the State’s intent and willingness to create a conducive, democratic environment in which sustainable, participatory and just development can thrive. Taking good governance and human rights indicators into consideration, only the Sri Lankan State seems technically equipped to resolve deadly conflict peacefully. Yet, this is the country engaged in the longest civil war and it has failed to overcome the deadlock in the ongoing peace negotiations. The powerful ethno-nationalist political and religious elites have used the democratic system to exclude minority groups and the rule of law has failed to provide human security to all citizens.

This conclusion prompted a deeper analysis into the capability and effectiveness of the State in interacting with civilians. NGOs and other actors as a key factor in preventing deadly conflict. Colletta’s horizontal and vertical social capital and cohesion constructs from a fourth study provided a good model to assess the vertical linkages between the State and citizens or good governance, and the horizontal social capital or bridging relations among communities in these ethnically divided societies. Societies with a good mix of both are more resilient to deadly conflict. Hence peace-building efforts will be more sustainable when they work simultaneously on inclusive governance and participatory decentralization, and on empowering bridging capital among identity groups. The troubled ‘organisational integrity of the State’ in all four countries has indeed been the key impediment to prevent deadly conflict from recurring. Cambodia and Myanmar rank as rogue states with high levels of corruption, exclusion and lack of civilian protection. Their exclusionary political regimes have repressed their own constituents under the pretext of strengthening state hegemony and in the process they deliberately damaged bridging social relations between communities. Sri Lanka and Indonesia have inefficient and ineffective governments with growing corruption, political polarisation and low people’s participation in governance (weak states). In all cases the trust between State and civilians is low.

The first and second proposition thus verified (deadly conflict prevention is still possible if State-citizen relations are transformed structurally and grievances are addressed). Part II of the study proceeds to address the third proposition which poses that local NGOs are key partners to the State and the international community in building cohesive and democratic societies. Because the organisational integrity of States is low. State-NGO relations were reviewed in historic perspective, including the instruments and tactics applied by each side to influence the power equation (respectively through the use of the three freedoms, soft power and international
advocacy). The study combined the actor analysis of the UN Declaration on the Right to Development with the human security paradigm and track-two diplomacy principles to conclude that the responsibilities of stakeholders in development and deadly conflict prevention are indeed clearly defined and agreed upon.

However, the local NGO sector overviews reveal that collaboration between the State and NGOs is limited and that most local NGOs have experienced State restrictions at some point. Many NGOs were founded during or as a result of deadly conflict in an effort to protect and support beneficiaries that were victims of impunity, violence or exclusion. The NGO’s sectoral and geographic specialisation often indicates the kind of conflict causes it attempts to address. The absence of the rule of law, militarization, impunity and corruption hinder effective NGO conflict prevention and development work and aggravate existing grievances and cleavages. Periods of extreme State repression occurred in Cambodia, Indonesia and Myanmar between 1965-1977, when many leaders were arrested or killed, offices closed and civil society organisations outlawed. Conservative calculations estimate that well over a million civil society leaders were killed, though none of these extra-judicial killings have ever been investigated. Over the past two decades State repression of critical NGO work has become more politically savvy. For example, it now uses the denial of the right of assembly and expression by confiscating materials, breaking up meetings, blocking access to media and physically intimidating staff. The local NGO void in Myanmar has dramatically reduced the societies’ ability to advocate for change towards more equitable, democratic and inclusive governance.

The foundational NGO history has thus fostered tense State-NGO relations. This makes the shift towards a partnering role with the State at times of political transition difficult. Attempts of the State and NGOs to join forces in Sri Lanka and Indonesia during major political shifts in 1994 and 1999, respectively, backfired and the new, unstable political alliances faced insurmountable differences within two years. The collusion of business, military and political interests has survived the political transitions in Cambodia and Indonesia and continues to weaken the power of government institutions. While Cambodian NGO sector, that re-emerged only a decade ago, is going strong and form a serious alternative to lacking State services in rural areas, the ban on local NGOs in Myanmar continues and only a handful of Burmese NGOs work in exile. The mature local NGO sector in Sri Lanka and Indonesia seem to be in a state of decline after decades of State repression and opposition. They lost senior staff to the international agency’s operational programmes, face difficulties in attracting new leadership, are losing long term donor relations and become more isolated.

All 32 interviewed NGOs depend on financial donations from foreign aid agencies. Because the governments of the four case countries also benefit from foreign aid and the selected NGOs meet internal accountability criteria, this resource dependency is not perceived to be intrinsically problematic. However, local NGOs do struggle perpetually with structural under-funding, which translates into understaffing, lack of professional expertise and constant adjustment of programme plans. The wide spread corruption in the four societies has affected the NGO sector as well. The interviewed NGOs have undertaken to strengthen the NGO sector and their own institutional accountability through initiatives like drafting and signing codes of ethics, setting up general assemblies of grassroots constituencies, publishing public annual reports and financial statements etc. Transparency Indonesia ranked the Indonesian NGOs at 2.4 on its December 2004 corruption index, which translates into one of the least corrupt sectors: this compares to political parties (4.4), tax revenue (4.3) and the TNI (3.8). (Jakarta Post. 10 December 2004)

The NGO sector reviews further reveal a shift in the post-conflict conflict prevention programme strategies of international aid agencies. Bilateral and multilateral aid agencies tend to award their
Preventing Deadly Conflict in Divided Societies in Asia

donations largely to international NGOs, instead of local NGOs, because they are presumably more impartial, less corrupt and have stronger delivery and management capacities. Moreover, the UNDP, World Bank and some bilateral agencies are increasingly engaged in operational field programmes to rebuild grass roots civil society directly in an apparent attempt to ‘quick-fix’ post-conflict situations. Alternatively, international agencies attempt to by-pass politicised and corrupt State and NGO agencies by channelling their funding through international NGOs. However at the time of the interviews in 2002, these conflict reconstruction and prevention programmes, for example in North East Sri Lanka and in the Moluccas, lacked a clear civil society building vision and strategy and were financially highly inefficient and unsustainable. They had a detrimental effect on the local NGO sector, as they caused a brain drain and weakened the political leverage of local NGOs vis-à-vis the State and armed groups, damaging their protection and funding base.

The study therefore concludes that while local NGOs are proclaimed key stakeholders in deadly conflict resolution and prevention work in the UN Covenants and multilateral policy documents on rights, development, security and peace, in practise there are few operational partnerships. International aid agencies share four concerns when considering to partner with local NGOs: the lack of official legitimacy and accountability; unclear control over the ‘end message’; the potential damage to the image of governments if one partners with the ‘wrong’ NGO; and doubts about the impartiality of NGOs in representing fairly the interests of those other than their constituencies. While these are all realistic concerns, they remain equally valid when international aid agencies collaborate with State agencies and/or international NGOs in conflict zones, as peace building and conflict prevention initiatives are politically charged activities regardless of the partner organisation’s geographic origin. International NGOs and multilateral agencies recruit local NGO staff to implement their field programmes, which are equally prone to bribing and political pressures from officials and armed rebels. Even if international agencies manage (at a price) to build genuinely new, uncorrupted village associations as seeds of a new civil society, there is no guarantee that these new groupings are to fare differently in dealing with a repressive State system. Rebuilding State-civilian relations and a strong, professional NGO sector requires the involvement, political will and transformation of both actor sets.

Part III of the study embarks on a comparative analysis of local NGOs and their deadly conflict response in three countries to distil local specificities, regional commonalities and best practises. Though six Burmese NGOs were interviewed in Rangoon and on the Thai border, these results were not included because the political context was too different as to render relevant conclusions impossible. The NGO conflict analysis mirrors many grievance and cleavage conclusions in chapter III. Programmatic responses were remarkably similar across countries in terms of issue setting and institutional responses, but implementation differed distinctly because of the diverse political, geopolitical and stakeholder contexts of these conflicts. NGOs built horizontal networks in communities to overcome identity divides and promote economic cooperation and peaceful coexistence. Vertical networks were built to strengthen good governance, exercise human rights, increase the participation of poor constituencies and improve collaboration between different stakeholders. The vertical networking is easier to sustain than horizontal bridging social capital initiatives, which involve larger numbers of people and are more prone to external interference beyond NGO control. The NGO efforts to build cultural capital—by reframing sustainable peace messages to generate public acceptance, proposing alternative conflict solutions, reiterating respected values and norms, etc.—proved to be another vital contribution to defuse identity tensions and build new peace constituencies.

Low human security proved the prime threat to the success of social and economic grassroots work of NGOs. The political space allowed to NGOs shapes their conflict prevention strategies and effectiveness to a large extend. The political opportunities structures have four dimensions:
the openness and inclusiveness of the political system: the State or armed groups' propensity for repressive behaviour towards private initiative; the stability of elite alignments; and the presence of elite-NGO alliances that influence the political process. The process of balancing asymmetric political power relations in a newly democratising society can be influenced by the international aid community if the State is concerned about its international credibility. NGOs in Sri Lanka and Indonesia gained certain protection and national political leverage due to international support, but in rogue states like Cambodia and Myanmar international pressure has had less impact.

In the interviews seven indicators were identified that reflect different local NGO strategies and approaches to increase their leverage with the State, civil society, other local stakeholders and the international community. These approaches can serve as success indicators because they enhance the chances of success of NGO development and social justice work, even if the political space is hostile. The seven indicators were grouped in three success factors:

1. Social and cultural capital: NGO’s ability to build sustainable horizontal bridging and vertical linking social capital and to frame alternative peace and justice messages;
2. Strategic actor networking: engagement in joint national NGO campaigns and exercising soft power through international advocacy;
3. Organisational integrity: NGO’s leadership and organisational integrity.

The study next assesses the organisational integrity of the interviewed NGOs, based on degrees to which bridging and linking social capital were reflected in the NGO programmes, beneficiaries, actor networks, staff composition and internal governance. The model needs further study and refinement, but the initial results are promising. Cambodian NGOs appear more proficient in horizontal social capital than their sister NGOs, as they rely largely on national NGO networking to balance poor State-NGO relations and also face fewer obstacles in an ethnically and linguistically homogeneous country. Indonesian and Sri Lankan NGOs have stronger vertical than bridging capital capacities, which mirrors respectively the weakness of the NGO grassroots movement and the power of the military, and the deep ethnic divide after twenty years of civil war. Applying the model to the thematic specialisation shows the expected outcome: training, single issue and advocacy NGOs tend to have stronger vertical capital, while community development and women’s NGOs have stronger horizontal social capital. Only seven NGOs (or 22%) have equally high bridging and linking social capital building capacities, both in their work and institutionally, and included good governance networks, community development and grass roots human rights NGOs.

Twelve case studies illustrate successful joint NGO programmes and campaigns to promote good governance, build conflict resolution mechanisms, mobilise broad peace movements and solicit international support for policy change. Eight lessons can be learned from these cases. First, NGOs with strong cross-cutting and vertical social capital building skills have a higher chance of being successful than those that focus on technical approaches or professional service delivery expertise. Second, joint national NGO campaigns can overcome human resource and financial restrictions and complement omissions in stakeholder networks of individual NGOs. Furthermore, a united NGO message adds legitimacy, is harder to discard or violently repress and thus adds protection to sensitive and risky conflict prevention and social justice initiatives. Third, its historic relationship with the State strongly affects the capacity of NGOs to build effective stakeholder relations today. Fourth, international advocacy to mobilise external pressure on the State to end harmful practices and change policies is effective in the absence of democratic venues in-country. Fifth, single “end the killing” peace messages or conflict resolution capacity training cannot sustain broad people’s movements, because of the political polarisation of the peace process. Sixth, cohesive societies with effective conflict prevention capacity can only be built through the promotion of sustainable development, social justice and inclusive governance.
Seventh, even the best NGO development and conflict prevention work will only have marginal results if the State, parliament and armed forces do not fulfil their prime duty holder’s role of providing human security to all citizens. Eighth, Asian women are most prone to inequality, exclusion and indignity and deadly conflict has aggravated their plight, as violence is gender biased. However, political parties provide very limited access, participation opportunities and actual support to women who were seeking retribution. Hence here too a more fundamental shift in approach is required to end gender biased violence and exclusion.

To conclude, as the study verified its third proposition, preventing deadly conflict in the four divided societies is still deemed possible, but the immediate outlook is not optimistic. While peaceful settlement of historic and contemporary grievances of mostly national peoples seems attainable, the capacity and intent of the State to create participatory, equal and inclusive societies remains unconvincing. Local NGOs showed moral capacity, creativity and resilience, but they are also seriously weakened by the protracted violent conflicts and low human security. An undermined civil society combined with growing official corruption, absence of rule of law, militarization and ethno-nationalist polarisation does not bode well for minority national people who wish to see their historic and contemporary grievances redressed. Without a fundamental shift in governance orientation and key stakeholder collaboration, incentives for ethnic rebellion will likely increase again, as collective grievances aggravate, salience of ethnic identities is enhanced, and the capacity for joint action increases, among others stimulated by external, cross border opportunities. The high number of contesting national peoples in Asia and their long standing conflict with the State has resulted over decades in more mature armed insurgent movements that are more experienced in large scale rebellion (in 1995, 20% of the world’s 22 large scale rebellions took place in the four case countries). The fourth and last proposition, posing that the building of mutual trust in State-NGO relations is a deliberate and sensitive local process of reconciliation that involves multiple stakeholders at different levels of society, and in which international aid agencies can only play a limited role, requires high priority and more research and experimentation. The study therefore concludes with five sets of recommendations to different key stakeholders to suggest how such a process could be initiated.
9.2 Recommendations

Recommendation 1:
Exercising the right to development and promote peaceful co-existence: roles of local NGOs

"Human rights in the sense of human solidarity has created a new universal and equal language going beyond racial, gender, ethnic or religious boundaries. That is why we consider it a doorway to dialogue for people of all socio-cultural groups and all ideologies." (Mumr, 2000)

This study researched the distinct roles of local NGOs in preventing deadly conflict. NGOs foster unique horizontal networks in communities to overcome identity divides promote peaceful co-existence and create an economically fairer and socially just society. They also build vertical networks to strengthen good governance and rule of law, improve collaboration between different stakeholders and increase human security of their poor constituencies. NGOs often encounter difficulties in sustaining the bridging community networks crossing ethnic divides over time, due to persistent external threats to the life and security of marginalised people. Political violence, impunity and corruption harm the effectiveness of social and economic grassroots work. Furthermore, cultural capital building (e.g. reframing sustainable peace messages to generate public acceptance, proposing alternative conflict solutions, reiterating respected values and norms) is a vital NGO contribution to defusing tensions and building new constituencies... Lastly, NGOs play a key role in preventing deadly conflict, as mediating agents between communal groups, governments and the international community. They are, therefore, central to a country’s capacity to cope with conflict and transformation in a peaceful way; five recommendations can strengthen this role:

First, NGOs have to consciously incorporate conflict analysis and prevention strategies in their programmes, to strengthen the quality of their bridging social capital building work in the communities. The rights-based approach provides a good framework for increasing the human security and dignity of the marginalised and deprived in the society. Second, NGOs need to put more concerted efforts into collaborating with one another to reach larger audiences, overcome resource deficiencies and actor omissions and make their work more effective. Third, NGOs need to strengthen their organisational integrity to reflect bridging capital in their staff and beneficiary composition and to reflect good governance in their internal management, accountability and transparency towards their constituencies and the State. The grooming of young charismatic leadership also requires more attention. Fourth, as effective mediating agents between State and civilians, NGOs have to include government officials in their programmes and their efforts to dialogue with the State should be geared towards strengthening the democratic institutions under the rule of law. NGOs need also engage with rebel movements, especially in a human rights dialogue. The Burmese Lawyers Council in exile, for example, is drafting a new constitution in close consultation with the NDL and leaders of the national ethnic communities and insurgent groups on the Thai border. Fifth, NGOs need to document their best practices more diligently to build case files of constructive peace and development work; to this end they need to forge partnerships with universities and international research institutions to share the burden and strengthen their skills.

Recommendation 2:
Providing human security and dignity for all: the role of the State

"We can not glorify death, but must celebrate life and are fiercely committed to protecting and securing the sanctity of life, which is the most fundamental value without which all other rights and freedoms become meaningless." (Tiruchelvam, 1999)
Providing human security and dignity to all is the prime role and responsibility of the State. This study defined three human security dimensions: 1) the development dimension: reducing risk, vulnerability and insecurity resulting from poverty, gender disparities and other forms of inequality; 2) the governance dimension: reducing the risk of violent conflict as result of weakened institutions, failed governance or a lack of respect for political and individual rights; 3) the socio-psychological dimension: providing a sense of dignity, identity, efficacy and hope, which is re-enforced by an institutional and social network of support based on interpersonal trust and social cohesion.

To enhance its capacity to provide human security to all, the State needs to first strengthen its organisational integrity and interaction with the citizens. Rogue and weak states will not be able to end official corruption, regulate the military, provide equal political opportunities to women and create an inclusive and democratic environment in which civil society and local NGOs can bloom. Second, the State needs to provide political space to NGOs to do their work properly and find new ways to engage in a constructive dialogue with local NGOs as part of the larger process of strengthening its integrity and providing protection to the poor. The freedom of association, assembly and expression are basic rights, laid down in the constitutions of most Asian countries. The use of soft power, modern communication techniques, globalising institutional relations and professional joint national NGO campaigns make it increasingly difficult for States to silence critical NGOs that demand equal rights and equal participation in the society; hence the time to explore new venues has come. Third, corruption and impunity have become major threats to the stability and sustainability of many nations in Asia. Without an immediate intervention by both the State and the international donor community to seek an end to these practises and reinstate the rule of law, all conflict prevention and development efforts are doomed to fail in the long run.

**Recommendation 3:**

**Overcoming the “harnessing zebras” syndrome: the role of the international community**

"NGOs are independent, organic organisations with many different structures and objectives. Increasingly, they are becoming international in scope and ambition, successfully engaging and/or antagonising governments across the world. And those who seek to coerce them for specific ends may find the experience as rewarding as harnessing zebras for use on a children’s pony trail. But the global reality is that diplomacy today must recognise NGOs as effective players who can mobilise public opinion rapidly." (Green, 2003)

This quote of the Director General of the British Council best summarises the dilemmas the international community faces when partnering with NGO in practice. Three changes are required to overcome the “harnessing zebras syndrome” and to embrace NGOs as real partners in development. First, the international community has to live up to its commitments to reduce global poverty. In its “Paying the Price” report, Oxfam International (2004) calculated that in real terms the aid budgets of rich countries are half of what they were in 1960. The average aid budget of wealthy countries was just 0.25% of the national income in 2003 (just 0.14% for the US or one-tenth of what it spent on the Iraq operations). Unless the international aid donations are increased by at least $50 billion, debts of the poorest nations are cancelled and fair trade agreements are agreed upon, the Millennium Development Goals that were recently agreed on by

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133 None of the G8 countries such as the US, Germany and Japan have realised the pledge made in 1970 to provide 0.7% of their gross national incomes in aid. In addition, only 40 percent of the funds that are officially counted as development aid actually reach the poorest countries. Poor countries meanwhile have to pay $100 million a day in debt repayments.
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all members of the United Nations (alleviating poverty, providing education for all and halting the spread of major diseases by 2015) are not going to be met.

Second, if maintaining peace, promoting the rule of law, protecting the environment, reducing poverty and fighting terrorism are indeed global priorities to promote peace and end terrorism, then the international community needs to transform structurally the dynamics of development aid into a reciprocal donor-recipient relationship based on mutual respect. A possible model is the so-called “development compact” that is currently being developed by the UN Economic and Social Commission under the leadership of Dr. Sengupta. He proposes that country-specific development co-operation conducted through such “compacts” need to focus on the basic rights to food, health care and education first. Partnerships with NGOs to meet the national development plan objectives are an integral part of the “compact”. When the States not only ensure a reasonable rate of economic growth, but also make growth sustainable and end human rights violations, donor countries and international aid agencies must ensure that all discriminatory policies and obstacles to access trade and finance are removed and that the additional costs of implementing those rights is properly shared. Third, multilateral, bilateral and non-governmental agencies need to operationalise good governance and civil society building policies in national strategies and include local NGOs and their capacity strengthening. In the post-conflict reconstruction programmes, rebuilding the indigenous civil society and reconciling State-NGO relations should have high priority in the process of rebuilding cohesive societies. To this end international research institutes and think tanks would do well to undertake empiric research into the role of NGOs in preventing deadly conflict and advise international aid agencies to design a more sustainable global peace building vision. Lastly, the international community needs to rethink its strategies and ongoing programmes on demobilisation and disarmament that have failed to foster a more accountable and human security oriented military force in Asia. Especially in the light of the war on terror that re-emphasizes the national security paradigm; strategic collaboration with the armies in South East Asia could play a role in the transformation of their mandate as well.

Recommendation 4:
Reversing the “gender inequality causes war” logic: the role of women and girls

“War is a pervasive potential on the human experience that casts a shadow on everyday life -especially on gender roles- in profound ways. To think into the future beyond the war systems requires breaking out of psychological denial regarding the traumatic effects of war on human society. War is not the product of capitalism, imperialism, gender, innate aggression or any single cause. Rather, war has in part fuelled and sustained these and other injustices.” (Goldstein, 2001)

To increase the physical, economic and social protection of women in divided Asian societies requires three changes. All gender roles in deadly conflict should be acknowledged. As much as violence in war is gender biased, women play an equally important role in maintaining the war system. Flipping the “if you want peace, work for gender justice” maxim is insightful, as it changes the perception of the impact of war on societies. Pervasive deadly conflict has shaped

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134 Sengupta argues: “Developing countries must accept the primary responsibility of implementing programmes for realising the right to development, covered by the compact, with all necessary policies and public actions. [I]t is particularly important to ensure equality of treatment. In a development compact, the developing countries will have to take up obligations regarding fulfilling and protecting human rights,... through establishment of national human rights commissions, which will investigate and adjudicate on violations of human rights. What is necessary is political will, the determination on the part of all countries, to implement the RTD in a time bound manner through obligations of national action and international co-operation.” (2001, p.13-15)
developing societies for centuries, defined gender roles and will likely perpetuate gender injustice. Gender inequality will persist until the society’s orientation and attitude towards armed conflict and security changes. Prolonged deprivation of hope and exposure to gender biased violence erode basic human values to the point that it threatens the core value that unites us all: human dignity. Human dignity is the inner driving force that enables humans to strive to survive and accomplish (van Ginkel, 2000, p.79). It is the last value that any human wants to lose. Therefore, the first recommendation is to work on the transform the culture of violence by developing alternative approaches to promote peaceful co-existence and shared human values to pave the way for a process of genuine justice and reconciliation in divided societies.

Second, as long as women only marginally participate in village, national and global politics, it is unlikely that peace and justice minded women’s NGOs can bring about structural transformation to create peaceful societies that provide secure environments for women and girls. Women NGOs have made commendable headway in getting violence against women in war situations and gender injustice on the national and international agendas and yet little change has come about in laws, policies and practices. To increase the political participation of women, special quota need to be set in national elections, national commissions etc to secure at least 30% participation of women. However, gender balanced participation in conflict mediation and peace negotiations requires more than setting quota and fulfilling the moral obligation to include victimised women in post-conflict settlement mediations to seek retrribution and protection must be continued. But to begin to change gender roles structurally youth --young girls in particular-- should be systematically involved in peace negotiations to grant them a say in the rebuilding of their own society. Marchal and the ‘Peace is Every Child’s Right’ Action Plan (2000) argued this can best be done through promoting youth participation in the negotiation of practical provisions in peace agreements, through the provision of training and through funding other forms of economic livelihood for young people to replace the incentives to participate in conflict and through inclusion of NGO advocates for children in the peace process.

Third, the international community should pay extra attention to strengthen the local capacity in conflict prevention awareness and mediation skills of women organisations and at grassroots level especially in post-conflict situations. Working with women in deadly conflict situations is a stressful, traumatising and lonely job. It is therefore very important to facilitate South-South networks that enable female NGO staff, who work under extremely difficult circumstances with victims of sexual violence, to share their experience, learn from each other’s successful approaches, get re-energized and hence reduce the risk of burn-out.

Recommendation 5:
Addressing the socio-psychological and spiritual dimensions of peace: the role of the military and spiritual leaders

“Sri Lanka is an island of victims, where all are victims of the war. The perpetrators of violence are victims too, of poverty or of violent and repressive living environments that turned them into combatants and suicide bombers. Some victims are victimizing others, creating a cycle of victim-villain-violence. Sri Lanka needs a peace that addresses both the internal and external "war", the totality of despair in this society.” (Ariyaratne, 2004)

Lederach (1998) argued that post-conflict societies need to address four levels of transformation, each reflecting a dimension of human life: political, economic, psychological and spiritual. In this transformation, new roles, relationships and goals need to be defined. The political dimension addresses tasks like demobilisation and the future role of armed forces. The economic dimension
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Deals with providing a fresh start for former combatants by resolving unemployment problems and the future distribution of resources. The socio-psychological dimension exists primarily at the transformative level, as individuals seek to deal with grief, loss, anger, trauma and identity questions, while finding new social roles in peace time. Lastly, the spiritual dimension, often overlooked, deals with the process of remembering the past while changing for the future, and seeks restoration and healing for both individuals and society. Bringing peace to the “internal war” of a society, relates to the human behaviour of coping with conflict and the need for (re)socialisation of non-violent citizens. The need for spiritual and psychological healing to build cohesive and resilient societies needs to be recognised, and both victims and perpetrators should be included in such healing process. The Masa Depan scenario planning dialogue case is an example of a possible model. Second, education that promotes non-violent conflict resolution, trust building and peaceful co-existence should be promoted. Religious institutions in Asia play an important role in the teaching of moral values and therefore are important stakeholder in peace building efforts.

Third, this study showed that the use of violence still pays off in Asia. The impact of humiliation on the perpetuation of violent conflict deserves more consideration. Rogue States, self financed armed forces, frustrated insurgent groups and ethno-nationalist religious leaders are unlikely to participate unconditionally in transformational peace processes, if they fear their dignity is not safeguarded. Acts to humiliate contesting groups in order to humble and silence them, usually resulted in viscous cycles of humiliation and counter-humiliation. Dynamics of humiliation have been shifting currently from honour-humiliation (implying asymmetric power relations) to dignity-humiliation (based on the notion of equal dignity), with the latter bound to being more salient, as globalisation, universal human rights and the information revolution intensify feelings of dignity-humiliation, regardless whether they are based on actual or imaged indignity. Including dignity-humiliation sensitive and remedial strategies in conflict prevention efforts will increase the understanding of entrenched position of main actors in intrastate conflict and could be also instrumental in building relationships, based on mutual trust and respect, between State and civil society. Humiliated hearts and minds. Lindner (2004) concludes, might be the “real weapons of mass destruction” in a globalized and interdependent world.

Future research

This PhD research was a self-funded and solo undertaking, which has clearly limited the depth and the breath of the research. Many components require further study to gain better insight into effective local conflict prevention strategies. Six areas are proposed here:

1. Expand and develop the NGO organisational integrity model as a useful tool in the partnering process for other stakeholders and for the “development compact”.
2. Research best practices of sustainable horizontal social capital building programmes; for example in a comparative study of the impact of micro credit programmes on communal conflict prevention in Bangladesh and Cambodia (do micro credit programmes de facto

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135 Aggressive behaviour is an intentional act, not an inner state, carried out with the explicit purpose of causing physical or mental pain to another individual. It has three dimensions: hostile intent, injurious behaviour and emotional state (instrumental aggression. The protracted and unpredictable nature of political violence is psychologically most damaging as it affects the human capacity to trust and plan ahead (See Cairns 1996 and ADHOC 1999). Prolonged conflict in divided societies deeply erodes the moral values and ethics system of society.

136 Lindner (2004) poses that the phenomenon of humiliation gained significance as a result of two recent trends. First the advancing globalisation process has promoted a new, more relational global reality and second, the widening global acceptance of the universality of human rights implies a shift in focus from national security interests to individual rights to protection and well-being.

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build bridging social capital or are special conflict prevention components required?); or in a comparative analysis of joint national good governance campaigns with a special focus on promoting people’s participation in decentralisation processes.

3. Develop a pilot programme for State-NGO dialogues to (re)build mutually beneficial and respected relations.

4. Study the way the “war system maintains gender inequality” and “dignity humiliation dynamic” with Indonesia as a case: for example to study the history of the TNI and its approach vis-à-vis Komnas Perempuan.

5. Evaluate the collaboration between international and local NGOs in post-conflict reconstruction programmes in historic perspective; for example the evolution of the NGO consortium for the North East and the Moluccas.

6. Undertake a similar comparative NGO in conflict prevention study in the Middle East (Israel, Palestine, Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, and Syria) to support the role of civil society in the peace process that is currently at a crucial stage.
9.3 Epilogue

At the completion of the study in the fall of 2004, several major political events occurred in all four countries, which may make the readers wonder whether the analysis and conclusion need adjustment. Therefore, this epilogue reviews the latest events chronological order, even though none of these political opportunities have led to new conflict resolution initiatives yet.

Sri Lanka: No war and no peace

In the course of 2004 the iron unity of the LTTE began to show cracks. On 24 October 2004, Mr. Tamilchelvam, the Head of the political wing of the LTTE denied reports of a second split in their organisation. It was the first time that a senior LTTE leader has reacted to reports of a rift in the rebel movement. Last March, the former Eastern Commander of the LTTE, Mr. Muralitharan aka Colonel Karuna, broke away alleging favouritism by the rebel leadership. Karunatharan lost his territorial base near Batticaloa after heavy fighting with the LTTE last May and went underground, but intra-group clashes are continuing in the eastern region between the LTTE and fighters loyal to Mr Karuna. Meanwhile the peace talks, which broke down in April 2003, have not resumed. The LTTE voiced concerns over a possible new Indo-Sri Lanka defence pact, while the Sri Lankan government is divided over the LTTE demand for interim rule of the North East. In late November addressing an audience on LTTE Martyrs’day, Prabhakaran threatened to return to war if the government does not resume peace talks based on the rebels’ demand for self-rule. A week earlier President Chandrika Kumaratunga had urged the Tamil Tigers to be prepared for talks, saying she was ‘not prepared to go back to war’. MP Rauf Hakeem leader of the Muslim Congress demanded a Muslim seat at the negotiation table on Human Rights Day to defend their interests. The financial stakes are also high. The international donor community pledged a $4.5 billion dollar post-conflict reconstruction package in Tokyo in 2003, but the release of the funds is directly related to progress made in the peace negotiations. Part of the budget is to be disbursed under directed LTTE control.

Yet, despite these rich carrots and sticks, it seems that the present situation of no war and no peace is comfortable for the government and the LTTE, as both stand to meet with fierce opposition of their constituencies if they “give in” at the negotiation table. A main obstacle to the resumption of peace talks is the position of the government’s key coalition partner, the JVP, which threatens to leave the coalition if peace talks resume on the basis of the LTTE demand for an interim self-governing authority in the North East. However, sources of instability make analysts wary of complacency. The government accuses the LTTE of killing Tamil opponents and recruiting child soldier, especially around Batticaloa since the Karuna fraction split. The LTTE in turn blames the government for assisting renegade former Colonel Karuna and for supporting counter attacks on LTTE supporters. On 19 November Senior Judge Mr. Sarath Ambeepitiya, who in 2002 had sentenced Mr. Prabhakaran to 200 years in jail in absentia over the 1996 bomb attack on Colombo’s Financial District, was killed by unidentified gunmen. The next day, after an emergency meeting the President announced the death penalty is reinstated with immediate effect for rape, murder and narcotics dealings. Capital punishment had not been enforced in Sri Lanka since 1976.

Indonesia: Golkar’s come back, political corruption and military revival

Indonesia held two national elections in 2004: in April it chose members of the House of Parliament and the newly formed Senate, and in July and September it elected a President in two
rounds of direct elections, for the first time in history. Contrary to expectations, the elections were peaceful with high voter turn out. The Golkar party made a major come back became the largest party and won speaker seats for both the House and the Senate, much to the dismay of the other political parties. The opening sessions of the House were delayed for weeks; the opposition parties protested against Golkar’s majority vote, which had its party members chairing all twelve special House committees. Golkar failed however to regain the Presidency. General Wiranto, their candidate, who was still under legal investigation for alleged East Timor atrocities, did poorly in the July elections and the progressive General Yudhoyono beat the contesting President Megawati convincingly in the second round.

On 7 September 2004, the long time LBH lawyer Munir, founder of KONTRAS and IMPARSIAL and member of the Commission to Investigate Human Rights Violations in East Timor, suddenly died on a Garuda flight to the Netherlands to further his studies at the University of Utrecht. Only two months later, on 9 November, the Dutch authorities released the autopsy report, which found 46 ìg of arsenic in his urine, blood and stomach, far above safe levels of 3.5 ìg/day. The Indonesian police launched a criminal investigation, but despite the autopsy findings, the National Police chief of detectives General Suyitno said “it was still too early to conclude the rights activist had been intentionally poisoned.” Police questioned dozens of people, but did not name any suspects. President Yudhoyono, who initially agreed to set up an independent team to investigate Munir’s death, later reneged.

Meanwhile, political pressure successfully led to continuation of the Indonesian Military (TNI)’s territorial role and the physical presence of soldiers under a territorial command in the regions. The TNI’s territorial command needed to be maintained “to boost the country’s defences and protect its territorial integrity”. Priority will be given to regions that are prone to conflict and at danger of incursions by foreign powers. “Priority will be given to regions that need the presence of troops down to the lowest level”, the interim coordinating minister political and security affairs Hari Sabarno told the Jakarta Post (30/11/04). The military bill stipulates that the TNI’s main duty is to fight wars and engage in military operations other than war, including fighting separatist rebels and terrorists, guarding border areas and vital objects, as well as engaging in humanitarian operations. Military analysts and NGOs expressed concern over the decision to maintain the military’s “territorial role”, as it could lead to a repeat of the intimidation that occurred in the past. On 17 November President Yudhoyono extended the civil emergency in Aceh by six months, “...to maintain the momentum and sustainability of steps that are getting closer to their aims, we will extend the currently prevailing status.” (The Jakarta Post, 17/11/04) Aceh has been under martial law or civil emergency since May 2003, when talks between the government and the rebel Free Aceh Movement broke down. The civil emergency allows authorities to enforce curfews and restrictions, and order house searches. Recent official figures state that almost 7,000 suspected rebels have been killed or captured since the operation began.

On 10 December 2004, Transparency International Indonesia (TII) presented its corruption index that ranked the House and political parties first, scoring 4.4 out of a maximum 5 points, at which point an institution can be categorized as “very corrupt”. Institutions with low levels of corruption were NGOs (2.4) and the media (2.6). The military placed in the middle ranks with an index of 3.3, just above educational institutions (3.2). In 2003, the judiciary was found to be the

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137 In cases of murder by way of arsenic poisoning, victims are exposed to a large amount of arsenic, with the symptoms apparent within 30 minutes of exposure. The symptoms of arsenic poisoning are vomiting and diarrhoea coupled with garlic-like breath, stomach cramps and excessive sweating. As the poison’s effects progress, the victim experiences a seizure and then shock, dying within a few hours. (The Jakarta Post, 9/11/2004)

138 The corruption index is a global system that reflects public perception of public institutions. Indexes for the customs and excise office, the judiciary, police and tax office were 4.3, 4.2, 4.2 and 4.0 respectively.
Conclusions and recommendations

most corrupt institution with political parties in second position\textsuperscript{139}. TII recommends demands for greater accountability from both political parties and the House to prevent them from becoming the new hallmarks of corruption. “The law on general elections and political parties must be amended so as to require more rigid accountability of electoral candidates.”

Myanmar: Internal divide in the Junta

On 19 October 2004, Myanmar’s Prime Minister Khin Nyunt was ousted (“permitted to retire for health reasons”) by a more conservative member of the ruling military Junta, Soe Win. But there was little doubt that his departure is the result of a power struggle that had been going on for months. In this closed society it is hard to know what happens internally. Khin Nyunt, the former third man in the Junta hierarchy and chief of the intelligence service, seemed to have clashed with Myanmar’s most senior leader, General Than Shwe, who—while well over retirement age (71)—still controls the entire army. The military intelligence service often acted as a broker between the ruling Junta and supporters of the opposition National League for Democracy (NLD), whose leader Aung San Suu Kyi remains under house arrest. Other experts hint at a conflict over the Junta’s business interests. Khin Nyunt was placed under house arrest and the intelligence service was dissolved a week later.

Burma Watchers fear this shift in political leadership is a further set-back to the efforts by both opposition and international groups to free Aung San Suu Kyi and put Burma on the road to democracy. General Than Shwe is seen as more hard-line than Khin Nyunt, who was prepared to discuss her release from house arrest, held regular meetings with ASEAN leaders and had outlined a seven-point “roadmap” for change last August. (As he had been prime minister for only a year, there were not many tangible results yet). In the past, Than Shwe has shown little interest in international relations in the past, other than the relationship with his immediate neighbours. Burma’s opposition leader Aung San Suu Kyi’s house arrest was extended with another year late November. Meanwhile, by 12 December 15,000 prisoners had been freed, including several prominent NLD members. However, the NLD Weekly News Report dated 12 December 2004 reported 19 NLD arrests in the past week, against 10 released NLD members. On the occasion of Myanmar’s National Day (6 December) the NLD urged the SPDC to start a national process of reconciliation, as there is “no way out of the problems of Burma without political dialogues.”

Lastly, some analysts fear that Khin Nyunt’s fall could signal a period of renewed fighting between Myanmar’s ethnic groups and the government. The SPDC signed ceasefire agreements with several rebel groups in the 1990s that were all brokered by Khin Nyunt and it was still in negotiations with the largest remaining insurgent group, the Karen National Union. It is unclear whether these ethnic groups will trust the Junta’s new leadership, as General Than Shwe has been leading the armed forces in ethnic combat over the past 50 years.

Cambodia: Aid, corruption and the UN Khmer Rouge Tribunal

International donors pledged $1.8bn for Cambodia over three years at the end of the Consultative Group meeting on 7 December 2004. However, the CG would only commit to the first year, for

\textsuperscript{139} According to TII Secretary General Emmy Hafild, corruption in the House and political parties included bribery from companies to be scrutinized by House members on dubious activities, brokers’ fees to help private companies get government contracts and financial inducements from conducting “fit and proper tests” for public officers. (The Jakarta Post, 10 December 2004)
which they allotted $504m and demand urgent reforms in return. In a year’s time the CG will assess whether Cambodia has made progress in tackling corruption. International aid accounts for nearly 50% of Cambodia’s national budget. A US government study estimated that up to $500m of public funds is lost to corruption in Cambodia each year. Ian Porter of the World Bank said Cambodia had agreed to pass an anti-corruption law, bring key cases to trial, and establish a legal framework effective across the country. “We have a lot of confidence... that these kinds of actions can indeed be accomplished in the coming year,” he said. (BBC News, 7/12/04)

Local and international NGOs however, beg to differ. In a public letter to Mr. Wolfensohn, the World Bank President dated 4/12/04, Global Witness (GW) argues that while good governance is at the core of the new “Rectangular Strategy”, the government has only been talking tough on corruption and doing nothing for years, as has the donor community. A week earlier, 200 local NGOs and civil society organisations united in the Civil Society Forum, submitted a petition to the Government and Consultative Group, entitled ‘Government and Donors Must Turn Promises into Action; NGOs demand concrete outcomes from Consultative Group meeting’. In the day-long event, NGOs from across the country highlighted the need for greater government and donor action to fight corruption, improve governance and the rule of law, and alleviate rural poverty. Speaking at the event, Mr. Thun Saray, President of ADHOC, stated, “Government, donors, and NGOs should unite together to end corruption, develop an independent non-partisan judiciary and ensure that all Cambodians have the ability to lift themselves from poverty.” Four key recommendations of the NGOs are to: 1) increase people’s direct participation (including lifting the ban on freedom of peaceful assembly and direct elections for village chiefs to increase accountability); 2) end corruption; 3) support the Rule of Law; and 4) decrease rural poverty (including enforcing the decentralisation Act and 2001 Land Law).

A United Nations delegation arrived in Cambodia the next day (8 December) to discuss funding for the long-awaited genocide tribunal to bring to justice the senior Khmer Rouge leaders. This year is the 25th anniversary of the end of Pol Pot’s regime, and seven years since the process to organise the tribunal began. The domestic obstacles to holding the tribunal were removed, prior to the coronation of King Sihamoni late October –who was selected by a combined Royal-CPP search party in less than five days. Legislation was ratified to allow foreign judges to preside in Cambodia over a team of five judges (three Cambodian) and sit in trial court. The tribunal is expected to take around three years at an estimated total cost of $60 million, but financing is complicated. The US made clear from the outset that it will not provide any funding. The UN will not provide funding directly, but will lobby individual countries to contribute. So far, however, only Australia has come up with a firm pledge, worth $3 million only.

Christmas 2004 Tsunami disaster

On 26 December 2004, an earthquake of 9.3 force on the Richter scale off the west coast of Banda Aceh struck and triggered a tsunami or huge ‘killer’ waves, which killed hundreds of thousands in Indonesia, Thailand, Sri Lanka, India and elsewhere as far as in East Africa. As this

140 “At the 1996 CG meeting, then First Prime Minister H R H Norodom Ranariddh stated that the Royal Government of Cambodia was committed to “effectively combat corruption.” More recently at the 2001 CG the ADB’s Urooj Malik “respectfully urged” the Royal Government “to move forward with the finalisation of legislation on Anti-corruption.” The donors then pledged US$ 615 million, US$ 115 million more than the Cambodian government had actually requested. In 2002 “the adoption of a new Anti-Corruption Law” was, according to the World Bank, by now “of particular and most urgent importance.” The donors pledged US$ 635 million. The Cambodian government must find the whole CG process absolutely hilarious. Each year they fail to meet their benchmarks and each year the donors give them more money.” (GW, Press statement, 4 December 2004)
study was completed early December, the impact of this human tragedy on the conflicts, especially in the hardest hit countries of Indonesia and Sri Lanka, is as yet hard to forecast.

It seems that the LTTE is hard hit as 40% of Sri Lanka’s casualties fell in the Tiger controlled areas in the North East, where the lack of qualified human resources has been a major problem for decades. Moreover, the LTTE lost its entire naval fleet and much of their military equipment. Plastic landmines that were planted to protect the LTTE bases were swept away and have become a public hazard. The Sri Lankan government has offered humanitarian assistance to the LTTE held areas as well. Tensions over the distribution of the aid are rising. In Aceh the human tragedy is beyond comprehension. Entire cities disappeared in the waves and over a 150,000 people lost their lives in West Aceh alone. Aid to the area is slowly getting under way and the assistance by the TNI is very limited, due to their lack of resources and own casualties it is claimed. The GAM rebel bases are located in the mountains and thus remained untouched by the tsunami. GAM announced a unilateral ceasefire to allow for humanitarian aid to the refugees who fled to the mountains.

While most recent developments fit seamlessly in the conflict analysis of this study, the impact of the tsunami on the governance and development policies of Sri Lanka and Indonesia’s conflict zones could have a transformative impact. Mega relief efforts are under way, unprecedented multi year donations are pledged towards the reconstruction in which multilateral aid agencies will play a lead coordinating role. The prevailing tensions between the government and the LTTE and GAM will likely strain the planning and implementation of the tsunami reconstruction efforts at first. However, ultimately State – civil society relations could flourish in the wake of this disaster; take for example the immediate humanitarian response in Sri Lanka where spontaneous inter-religious people-to-people initiatives emerged within hours after the tsunami struck, which are still ongoing today. The presence of foreign aid agencies could defuse some of the tension and bring a new development impetus to the battered conflict zones. Moreover, as the local NGOs in both conflict zones are comparatively weak, the tsunami reconstruction programmes could use this unique opportunity to strengthen their capacity and grant to them an key role in the rebuilding of civil society.
ANNEXES

Annex 1 Selection of NGOs and interview methodology

A wide net was cast to select development NGOs for the in-depth interviews. As this study's main focus is the indigenous capacity of NGOs to prevent deadly conflict pro-actively, only local NGOs were included. To be able to assess one of the core assumptions—that historic factors and subsequent State-NGO relationships have a determining influence on the NGO effectiveness—it was necessary to interview larger numbers of local NGOs in different countries, instead of researching a handful NGOs in-depth, the normal practice in graduate studies. As a result 48 NGOs were interviewed in four countries over a two year time span, of which 32 were ultimately included in the thesis. The main purpose of the interviews was not to objectively evaluate the impact of the NGOs’ work, but to identify and explore success factors with the respondents, which would have general validity and hence might enhance and promote partnering with the local NGO sector in Asia at large. At three stages in the research the reduction of case countries was seriously debated with the supervisor. The sheer volume of data was hard to process and cross check by a single researcher. Moreover, the width of the data set (four countries, thirty-two local NGOs and eleven national campaigns) obviously limited the depth of the analysis. It was decided that the diversity of the data and local insights and ideas provided richness to the study that would be lost if one or two case countries would be omitted from the final thesis write up.

The semi structured interviews made it possible to include a wide variety of local development NGOs, active in development and conflict prevention in both horizontal and vertical networks, representing highly specialised advocacy or service groups as well as broad based community development groups. In looking for general NGO success factors, the key selection criteria were:

- To cover a broad representative development NGO spectrum;
- To choose diversity over comparability, in terms of including different types of organisation (member/ service/ research NGO) and a variety of sectoral expertise (community development, civil society building/human rights and advocacy); and
- To include a few NGOs who represent or service particular ethnic or religious constituencies, to cross check the importance of horizontal and vertical cohesion within NGO organisation (where relevant).

Another major selection criterion was to include local NGOs of certain professional reputation, as the purpose of the study is to analyse effective approaches. Most of the interviewed NGOs are known local ‘authorities’ in their area of work and score reasonably well on key principles of legitimacy, transparency and accountability (e.g., having functioning boards, participatory planning mechanisms, public annual financial statements, and established relationships with professional donor agencies). Various interviewed NGOs furthermore have gained (inter) national recognition winning awards, invited to join official investigation commissions, invited to attend international donor conferences to represent local constituencies or to act as civil society resource persons etc. In addition, in each country two international aid organisations—both governmental agencies and private foundations—were interviewed to crosscheck the research group and to take stock of recent developments in both the local and the international aid world. In all it resulted in the final selection of ten NGOs in Cambodia, twelve NGOs in Sri Lanka and ten NGOs in Indonesia, which are discussed at length in chapter VII and VIII of this study. Many insights reflected in chapters V and VI were cross checked during the interviews as well.¹⁴¹

¹⁴¹ Two local and one international NGO declined to participate, because they felt they had little to contribute to this conflict prevention research or for internal reasons.
Making the deliberate choice to select NGOs of considerable size and reputation will impact on the results of this study. For example, only 8 of the 32 interviewed NGOs have their main office outside the capital. Acknowledging this choice will bias the study, there are four overriding arguments on geography, sectoral expertise and existing documentation that justify this selection:

1. While lack of documentation of NGO work is a general problem, accessible records are virtually non-existent in small community based, grass roots NGOs; hence to study their contribution would require extended field surveys with translators and assistants etc, which is outside the scope of this PhD research.

2. 65% of the interviewed NGOs are service and membership organisations that have their HQ in the capital for managerial (communications and access) and networking reasons. However, their field programmes are managed through fairly autonomous provincial offices. E.g., while all interviewed NGOs in Cambodia are Phnom Penh based, all seven membership/service organisations work in provinces and only two run urban projects as well. (On average 80% of the population in the four case countries live in rural areas).

3. Moreover, having the main office in the capital city provides some level of protection, which is of major importance to human rights and women’s organisations. Three interviewed human rights NGOs had to leave their area of origin fearing for their lives by the hand of rebel groups or armed forces, or both. The presence of international organisations and media provides additional protection for highly sensitive civil society building and advocacy work that is absent in rural areas. Meanwhile, their information lines and networks with grassroots continue to guide most of their equal rights work.

4. Lastly, this study aims to promote strategic stakeholder partnerships between key actors in conflict prevention, which requires participation of more mature, local NGOs.

### Table 27 Cambodian NGO respondents

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<th>Eth</th>
<th>NP</th>
<th>Expertise</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>WALHI</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>1985</td>
<td>L</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Y/N</td>
<td></td>
<td>Environment &amp; Dev</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baku Baa</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>2000</td>
<td>S</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>No</td>
<td></td>
<td>CP Melanesia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Remdec/Yasika</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>S</td>
<td>1993</td>
<td>S</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>No</td>
<td></td>
<td>CD/ CB training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LBH</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>S</td>
<td>1975</td>
<td>L</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Y/N</td>
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</tr>
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<td>Apik</td>
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<td>M</td>
<td>1992</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td></td>
<td>Women’s Rights</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kontras</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>S</td>
<td>1998</td>
<td>S</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>No</td>
<td></td>
<td>Political Violence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KCO</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Komnas Perempuan</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>1998</td>
<td>S</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>No</td>
<td></td>
<td>VAWW</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Legend
CD = Community Development, CB = Civil Society Building, A = Advocacy and Research
O = Organisation type: M=member or mass, S=service, A=advocacy/research
Fnd= Foundation year, Size of annual budget: small < 50,000$, medium 50,000 – 250,000$, large > 250,000$
Nat= national coverage: N=nationwide, P = provincial, L=local, S=national, but limited to narrow thematic sector
W= special women policy and programmes, Ethn= focus on specific ethnic target group, NP= Novib partner
Expertise= area of specialisation

A simple regression analysis was applied using the five core characteristics of the 32 interviewed NGOs to search for a correlation between maturity, size, type, core business, outreach and gender programming, but no evidence was found. Just to name a few examples: older NGOs aren’t by definition larger or more active in ‘first generation NGO strategies’, as community development work is often identified. Likewise, the interviewed membership NGOs aren’t necessarily more grassroots and less proficient in gender equity than often expected, while human rights NGOs can have the same of not bigger national outreach and size as community development NGOs. This conclusion provided a first indication that local NGO characteristics tend to be largely unique, evolving from the inception history and political developments in the respective countries. To allow for more comparative analysis between the case countries, it was therefore decided to add another level of NGO programme analysis to the study.

Table 30 Joint National NGO Campaigns

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aim</th>
<th>Title Campaign</th>
<th>NGOs</th>
<th>Period</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Good Governance</td>
<td>Independent voter education and election monitoring</td>
<td>COMFREL</td>
<td>Since 1996</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>and Democratisation</td>
<td>Independent election monitoring and good governance</td>
<td>MFTE/PAFFREL</td>
<td>Since 1987</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Multi-actor dialogue building national peace strategies for 2020 (Masa Depan project)</td>
<td>Konnas Ham</td>
<td>1999-2000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Independent conflict</td>
<td>Land Dispute Settlement Committee</td>
<td>Land WG, LAC</td>
<td>since 1998</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mediation mechanisms</td>
<td>Independent Forest Crimes Monitors</td>
<td>ADHOC, GW</td>
<td>1999-2003</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(evoking rule of law)</td>
<td>Campaign for acknowledgement of ICRC Geneva conventions (recognition and protection of IDPs)</td>
<td>CRM/ Nadesan</td>
<td>1987-1995</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>National Commission to Prevent Violence against Women</td>
<td>KomnPerempuan</td>
<td>Since 1998</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. International Advocacy</td>
<td>International Forum on Cambodia/CCC</td>
<td>Cambodia</td>
<td>Since 1988</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>for Policy and Practice</td>
<td>International NGO Forum on Sri Lanka</td>
<td>SRL and Europe</td>
<td>1989-95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Change</td>
<td>International Forum for Indonesian Development</td>
<td>IDO and world</td>
<td>Since 1988</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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In consultation with the interviewed NGOs, twelve national level joint NGO initiatives were selected (five in SRL, four in Cambodia and three in Indonesia, in which four or more of the interviewed NGOs participated) that reflect four distinct conflict prevention intervention strategies. These national campaigns proved highly similar in nature and intervention strategies, and thus allowed some a cross-country comparative analysis.

NGO interview methodology

The field interviews were held over the course of two years between November 2001 and December 2003. The semi-structured interviews were built around four blocks of questions: the history of the NGO and its current operations; its horizontal and vertical linkages with key actor; its conflict analysis; and lastly, its present interventions to prevent conflict, best practises and future plans. Table 31 shows the interview checklist. In a first round, executive directors were interviewed for app. two hours, using an open questionnaire. Most directors chose to be accompanied by other co-managers or technical experts. In a second round (wherever possible) follow-up talks with field staff and short field visits took place, in which NGO approaches, staff manuals, extension materials etc. were discussed. Furthermore, recent documents, like strategic plans, annual reports, human rights reports and advocacy studies by these NGOs were included.

Table 31 Interview checklist

1. NGO profile

   Foundation: when, in response to what event/need
   Member/service/advocacy organisation
   Identity of beneficiaries (ethnic/territorial/religious/gender)
   Sector/ specialisation (comm.dev/civil society building/advocacy)
   Staff/ size of funding (incl. foreign/local)
   Legitimacy/transparency/accountability/participatory decision making
   Networking with other NGOs and civil society actors

2. Actor linking

   Relation with government and security forces, three freedoms history
   Relation with religious leaders, political parties and judiciary
   Level of coordination/cooperation with other actors in field work
   Long term vision of role NGO in society
   Opinion on good governance
   Role in advocacy, relation with international community

3. Conflict analysis

   Biggest problem/conflicts NGO beneficiaries are currently facing?
   How is this conflict analysed: causes, actors, duration
   Does NGO spend time to reflect on conflict? How?
   What is NGO response to prevent escalation/ resolution?
   Do they use existing official mechanisms in this approach (police, religious and community leaders, judiciary)?
   At what level is NGO seeking for structural solutions?
   Is there attempt to vertical/ horizontal linking?

4. Conflict prevention

   Is NGO involved in peace building?
   Did the NGO develop vision on peace and coexistence?
   What new initiatives has NGO started over last few years?
   What are the major problems encountered?
   Are there clear indicators for success/failure identified?
   Does NGO feel well equipped to do cp work?
   Who is supporting their work?
   How would they like to improve their cp work?
Additional technical and coordination support was provided by UN Women (November 2011, May 2012, and April 2014) and Cambodia (February 2012, December 2013) on matters of legal protection and human rights. It involved in monitoring on gender, development and human rights in Cambodia and civil society building environment (all the provinces). UN Women has represented in province with six of the 15 surveyed NGOs (FAO, UNDP, UNICEF, Thank ICBS and MDDR).
Annex 2 List of interviews with NGOs and Development Agencies

Aartavan, Mr. – MDDR (Training Coordinator), Colombo. 11 May 2002
Abdullah, Fauzi – Remdec (Board member, with Budiharga and Sri), Jakarta. 17 June 2002
Alwis, Monica – Ahisma (Coordinator, with trainer staff), Colombo. 5 May 2002
Ariprunamni, Sita – Kaliyanamitra/Masa Depan (former Director, now with UNDP partnership for development programme), Jakarta, 18 June 2002; 12 December 2003
Ariyaratne, Vinya – Sarvodaya Shramadana Movement (Director), Colombo. 7 May 2002
Aung Htoo, Mr. – Burmese Lawyer Council (Executive Director), Bangkok, February 2002 and Mae Sot. 3 December 2003

Bandara, Asela – SETIK (Coordinator Environment Programmes), Kandy, 8 May 2002
Blankhart, Susan – Royal Netherlands Embassy (Ambassador), Colombo, 15 May 2002
Bo, Kyi – Assistance Association for Political Prisoners (Coordinator), Mae Sot. 04 December 2004
Boua, Chanthou – Partnership for Development of Kampuchea (Executive Director), Phnom Penh. 7 February 2002 and 11 February 2003
Budiharga, Wilarsa – Remdec (Executive Director with Handoko. Vice-director), Jakarta. 8 June 2002 and 16 December 2003
Bun, Rev Jim – Shalom foundation (Executive Secretary), Rangoon, 20 February 2003

Casperz, Fr. – Satyodaya (Founder, with Sunil Abeysinghe ED), Kandy, 1 December 2001
Chalida, Ms. - Forum Asia (Ex Director) and Mr. Das, Bangkok. 08 December 2003
Chandrakirana, Kamala – Komnas Perempuan (Coordinator, with Iita Nadia), Jakarta, 14 June 2002
Chhim, Van Deth – Sor Sor Trung (Director), Phnom Penh, 13 February 2002 & 28 November 2003
Chhoeun, Sokkha – Legal Aid of Cambodia (ED, with lawyers Pheu Hong Kiep and Ouk Van Deth), Phnom Penh, 13 February 2002

Dadang, Mr. - Bakubai (facilitator, former LBH vice-director), Jakarta. June 2002
Dharmadasa, Visaka – Mothers of Disappeared Soldiers (Director), Kandy, 8 May 2002 and Cambridge, November 2001

Ea, Sopheap – Legal Aid of Cambodia (Head of Land Unit), Phnom Penh. 1 December 2003
Edrisinha, Rohan - Centre for Policy Research (Senior Scholar), Colombo. May 2002

Fernando, Udan – (PhD candidate University of Amsterdam), Amsterdam. 26 January 2004
Fernando, Wimal – MDDR and PAFFREL (Board member/dept. secretary), Colombo. 4 April 2004, Colombo/Jaffna 12 May 2002 and Colombo, 6 December 2001

Galligher, David – UNDP Conflict Resolution Programme (Director), Jakarta. 17 June 2002

Hafild, Emmy – WALHI (Secretary), Jakarta, 18 June 2002, and15 December 2003
Hamlaor, Somchai – Forum Asia (Secretary General). Bangkok, 20 February 2003

143The interviews held with civil society leaders inside Myanmar in 2003 are not included in this list for security reasons.
Annexes

Hassan, Zubair – Young Men Muslim Association (former Secretary), Colombo, 6 December 2001 and 18 May 2002
Heggerens, Terry – FORUT (Asia coordinator, with 3 locally based staff), Colombo 6 May 2002
Heng, Mony Chenda – Buddhism for Development (Director), Battambang, 12 February 2003
Hhun, Okkar – Pao Movement (Leader), Mae Sot, 4 December 2003

Im, Sophia – ADHOC (Provincial coordinator, with Nehm Jarath), Banteay Mean Chey, 2 February 2002
Jefferson, Mr. – Baleo Maluku (Trainer reconciliation programme), Jakarta, 18 June 2002
Jeyakumar, Fr. – Human Development Centre (HUDEC Coordinator), Jaffna, 13 May 2002

Kartasasmitas, Ginandjar – (Vice Chair of the MPR), Jakarta, 16 December 2003
Katjasungkana, Nursyahbanii – Koalisi Perempuan (General Secretary, with Emmy Panganichas), Jakarta, 10 June 2002 and 17 December 2003
Khanaro – PADEK (Coordinator Training and Conflict Resolution), Phnom Penh, 15 February 2002
Kiyotaka, Takahashi – Japan International Volunteer Center Tokyo (Advocacy Director, with Yonekura Yukiko), Phnom Penh, 15 February 2002
Koul, Panha – COMFREL (Executive Director), Phnom Penh, 31 January 2002, 18 February and 30 November 2003

Lattky, Mr. – ADHOC Central Complaints section (Head) Phnom Penh, 12 February 2002

Maheswari, Mrs. - Forum for Human Dignity (Director), Colombo, 6 May 2002
Manatunga, Fr. Nandana – SETIK (Coordinator, with Gregory), Kandy, 30 November 2001
Mungty, Mr. – KONTRAS Maluku (Research and documentation unit), Jakarta, 17 June 2003
Munir Said Thalib – KONTRAS (Coordinator), Jakarta, 17 June 2002
Myslevic, Eva – Cambodian Development Research Institute (Executive Director), Phnom Penh, 14 February 2002

Nak, Sotherarith – NGO Forum on Cambodia (Coordinator environment working group), Phnom Penh, 12 February 2002
Neb, Sinthy – Working Group for Weapons Reducation (Executive Director), Phnom Penh, 01 December 2003
Gnem, Kim Teng – Pagoda Svey Rieng (Venerable, Religious leader), Phnom Penh, 20 November 2004
Nepal, Rohit – South Asian Partnership (Regional Board member), Colombo, 6 May 2002
Nesakumar, Fr. – Anglican Church Service Center-Jaffna (Director), Jaffna, 12 May 2002

Onstead, Michael – Oxfam America (Country Representative), Phnom Penh, 12 February 2002
Ok, Serey Sopheak - Center for Peace and Development (Coordinator), Phnom Penh, 15 February 2002
Oung, Chanthol - Women Media Centre Cambodia (Executive board member), Cambridge, 8 November 2002

Perrerra, Jehan – National Peace Council (Executive Director), Colombo, 8 May 2002
Pok, Nanda – Women for Prosperity (Executive Director), Phnom Penh 11 February 2002

Rama, Ms – APIK Aceh. (Lawyer), Phnom Penh, 25 November 2003
Ranasinghe, Saliyan - SEEDS (Executive Director). Colombo May 2002
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Ranti, Sylvana – Indonesian Inter-religious Council (Coordinator), Jakarta. 12 June 2002
Rietmatter, Leon – Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue (Executive Director), Rangoon. 21 February 2003
Rodrigo, Kingsley - PAFFREL (Secretary), Colombo. 12 May 2002 and 03 April 2004
Rumdul, Mrs. – Center for Peace and Development (Trainer, with Vanna and Watson), Phnom Penh. 17 February 2002
Rupasinghe, Kumar – (Senior peace researcher, former International Alert), Colombo, 6 May 2002

Secretariat, Cambodia Coordinating Committee (Resource Center), Phnom Penh. November 2003
Seneka, Mr. - MDDR (Coordinator, with the full Executive Council), Colombo, 15 May 2002
Shivachandran, Sharosni – Women Development Centre (Director), Jaffna, 11 May 2002
Shritaran, V – University Teachers for Human Rights-Jaffna (Coordinator, with five Tamil collaborators), Cambridge, 12 November 2001, Colombo, 16 May 2002
Shoan, Mr. - Oxfam GB (Peace and rights program officer), Phnom Penh, 11 February 2002
Sigamoney, Fr. George - SETIK (coordinator), Kandy, 01 April 2004
Sugeng, Mr. - International Forum Indonesian Development (Advocacy Director), Jakarta. 12 June 2002

Taylor, Simon – Global Witness (Co-director), London. 28 November 2001
Thun, Saray – ADHOC/COMFREL (Secretary General and Chair), Phnom Penh, 14 February 2002 and 25 November 2003
Tum, Bunthon – American Friends Service Committee (Coordinator Peace building programme), Phnom Penh, 30 November 2003

UNESCO, Phnom Penh, 12 February 2003

Weaver, Stephen – CIDA/Canadian Embassy (1st Secretary, with Hari Basuki), Jakarta, 13 June 2002
Wickremasinghe, Suriya – Civil Rights Movement (Former director), Colombo, 15 May 2002
Wickremasinghe, Damaris – Law and Society Trust (Director), Colombo, 16 May 2002
Wijojanto, Bambang – CETRO/LBH (former LBH Executive Director), Jakarta. 11 June 2002

Yonekura, Yukiko – Japan Volunteer Center (Country Representative), Phnom Penh. 29 November 2003
### Annex 3 List of Acronyms

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Full Form</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AAPP</td>
<td>Assistance Association for Political Prisoners</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ABRI</td>
<td>Armed Forces of the Republic of Indonesia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ADB</td>
<td>Asian Development Bank</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ADHOC</td>
<td>Cambodian Human Right &amp; Development Organisation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AI</td>
<td>Amnesty International</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APIK</td>
<td>Asosiasi Perempuan Indonesia Untuk Keadilan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ASEAN</td>
<td>Association of South East Asian Nations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BCN</td>
<td>Burma Center Netherlands</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BLC</td>
<td>Burmese Lawyers Council</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CCC</td>
<td>Cambodian Coordination Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CDRI</td>
<td>Cambodisa Development Resource Centre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CDP</td>
<td>Centre for Development and Peace</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CG</td>
<td>Consultative Group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CIDIA</td>
<td>Canadian International development Agency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CIIS</td>
<td>Center for Strategic and International Studies</td>
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<tr>
<td>COMFREL</td>
<td>Commission for Free and Fair Elections</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CPA</td>
<td>Centre for Policy Research</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CPP</td>
<td>Cambodia Peoples Party</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CRM</td>
<td>Civil Rights Movement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CSO</td>
<td>Civil Society Organisations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DFID</td>
<td>Department for International Development (UK)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DGIS</td>
<td>Directoraat Generaal Internationale Samenwerking (NL)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ELSHAM</td>
<td>Institute for Policy Research and Advocacy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EPDP</td>
<td>Eelam People’s Democratic Party</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EPRLF</td>
<td>Eelam People’s Revolutionary Liberation Front</td>
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<td>EU</td>
<td>European Union</td>
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<tr>
<td>FAO</td>
<td>Food and Agriculture Organization</td>
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<tr>
<td>FHD</td>
<td>Forum for Human Dignity</td>
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<tr>
<td>FORUT</td>
<td>Norwegian/Swedish Development Agency</td>
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<td>GAM</td>
<td>Gerakan Aceh Merdeka</td>
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<td>GW</td>
<td>Global Witness</td>
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<td>ICES</td>
<td>International Centre for Ethnic Studies</td>
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<td>ICG</td>
<td>International Crisis Group</td>
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<td>ICRC</td>
<td>International Committee of the Red Cross</td>
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<td>IFIs</td>
<td>International Financial Institutions</td>
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<td>ILO</td>
<td>International Labour Organisation</td>
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<td>INFID</td>
<td>International Forum for Indonesian Development</td>
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<td>IPKF</td>
<td>Indian Peace Keeping Forces</td>
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<td>JHU</td>
<td>Jathika Hela Urumaya</td>
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<td>JI</td>
<td>Jemaah Islamiyah</td>
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<td>JICA</td>
<td>Japanese International Cooperation Agency</td>
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<td>JIIC</td>
<td>Japan Institute of International Affairs</td>
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<tr>
<td>JIVC</td>
<td>Japan International Volunteer Center</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JVP</td>
<td>Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KNA</td>
<td>Kachin National Army</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KNO</td>
<td>Karen National Organisation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KONTRAS</td>
<td>Commission for Disappearances and Victims of Violence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KR</td>
<td>Khmer Rouge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LAC</td>
<td>Legal Aid of Cambodia</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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LBHI Legal Aid Foundation Indonesia
LST Law and Society Trust
LTTE Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam
MAR Minorities at Risk project
MIRJE Movement for Interracial Justice and Equality
MDDR Movement for the Defense of Democratic Rights
NGOs Non-Governmental Organisations
NLD National League for Democracy
NPC National Peace Council of Sri Lanka
NU Nahdlatul Ulama
PADEK Partners in Development of Kampuchea
PAFFREL People's Action for Free and Fair Elections
PKI Partai Komunis Indonesia
REMDEC Resource Management and Development Consultant
SAP South Asia Partnership
SEEDS Sarvodaya Economic Enterprise Development Services
SETIK Secretariat Diocesan Commission for Justice, Peace and Human Development
SIDA Swedish International Development Agency
SLFP Sri Lanka Freedom Party
SLORC State Law and Order Restoration Council
SPDC State Peace and Development Council
SSM Sarvodaya Shramadan Movement
TII Transparency International Indonesia
TNI Tentara Nasional Indonesia
TULF Tamil United Liberation Front
UN United Nations
UNDP United Nations Development Programme
UNCHR United Nations Commission on Human Rights
UNHCR United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNP United National Party
UNSFIR United Nations Support Facility for Indonesian Recovery
UNTAC United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia
UNTEA United Nations Temporary Executive Authority
UNU United Nations University
USAID United States Agency for International Development
UTHR-J University Teachers for Human Rights Jaffna
UVA University of Amsterdam
WALHI Indonesian Forum for Environment
WB World Bank Group
WCFIA Weatherhead Center for International Affairs
WCRP World Conference of Religions for Peace
WDC Women Development Center
WFP Women for Prosperity
WGWR Working Group for Weapons Reduction
WMC Women Media Centre
WTO World Trade Organisation
WWICS Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars
YMMA Young Men Muslim Association
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Nederlandse samenvatting


Deze studie onderzoekt de rol van lokale Niet-Governementele Organisaties (NGOs) in het voorkomen van dodelijke conflicten in vier verdeelde samenlevingen in Azië en de factoren die het succes van het NGO werk bevorderen. Het tracht een bijdrage te leveren aan de discussie over de rol van lokale NGOs in vredes- en ontwikkelingswerk, want het geringe empirisch onderzoek naar het werk van NGOs in conflict preventie blijkt een belemmering te zijn voor het betrekken van deze belangrijk actoren in nationale en internationale vredes-initiatieven. Om te doorgronden waarom geweldadige binnenlandse conflicten niet voorkomen worden, waarom de samenwerking tussen sleutel actoren –met name tussen de overheid en NGOs- problematisch is en wat er moet gebeuren om constructieve partnerships te stimuleren, onderzoekt deze studie drie verschillende thema’s: de oorzaken van dodelijke burgerconflicten, de relatie tussen de overheid en NGOs in historisch perspectief en de rol van lokale NGOs in het voorkomen van dodelijk geweld in Cambodja, Sri Lanka, Indonesië en Myanmar.

Het eerste deel van de studie identificeert de etnische minderheden in Azië die gevaar lopen om in dodelijke conflicten betrokken te raken en analyseert de oorzaken van dodelijke conflicten en mogelijke oplossingen in Cambodja, Sri Lanka, Indonesië en Myanmar sinds 1945. (hoofdstuk III-IV) Deel twee van deze studie behandelt de Staat – NGO relaties in historisch perspectief, de diverse maatregelen om de lokale NGO sector te controleren en de verdeling van taken en verantwoordelijkheden in ontwikkeling, vrede en veiligheid onder de belangrijkste actoren. (hoofdstuk V-VI) Deel drie tot slot onderzoekt het werk van 32 lokale NGOs in het voorkomen van dodelijk conflicten door middel van een analyse van NGO programma’s, een beoordeling van hun capaciteit om sociale kapitaal op te bouwen en organisatorische integriteit te versterken, alsmede een inventarisatie van drie potentiële succesfactoren die de kwaliteit van het NGO werk kunnen versterken. Twaalf case studies illustreren geslaagde conflict preventie initiatieven van lokale NGOs, wiens politieke ruimte wordt beperkt en die in partnership met andere NGOs werken, en sluit af met acht conclusies (hoofdstuk VII-VIII). Het laatste hoofdstuk rondt de studie af met een samenvatting en conclusies per vooronderstelling en doet een serie van vijf praktische en transformerende aanbevelingen per groep actoren: NGOs, overheid, internationale gemeenschap, vrouwen, religieuze leiders en militairen.

De studie formuleert vier vooronderstellingen:

- Dodelijke binnenlandsconflicten in Azië is het resultaat van bewuste uitsluiting, ongelijkheid en gebrek aan respect voor menselijke waardigheid en kan alleen worden voorkomen als fundamentele veranderingen in het lokale ontwikkelings- en veiligheidsbeleid en uitvoeringspraktijken worden doorgevoerd, die gericht zijn op duurzame ontwikkeling, sociale rechtvaardigheid en goed bestuur.
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- Omdat de privatisering van binnenlandse conflict in Azië nog in een vroeg stadium verkeert, is het voorkomen van dodelijk civil geweld met behulp van vreedzame onderhandelingen nog steeds mogelijk, op voorwaarde dat de overheid zich commiteert aan het uitvoeren van haar primaire verantwoordelijkheden -zoals vastgelegd in de UN Mensenrechten Covenants-, en bovendien de benodigde politieke ruimte en fundamentele rechten toekent aan NGOs opdat zij hun werk in een ondersteunende, democratisch omgeving kunnen uitvoeren.

- Lokale NGOs zijn sleutelpartners van de overheid en de internationale gemeenschap in het bouwen van cohesieve en democratische samenlevingen en het effect van hun werk wordt versterkt als drie kritische successfaktoren in de NGO programmastrategieën en organisatorische structuur zijn geïncorporeerd.

- (Her)bouwen van wederzijd vertrouwen in Staat - NGO relaties is een bewuste en politiek gevoelige proces van verzoening waarin actoren op verschillende niveaus in de maatschappij betrokken moeten zijn, en waarin internationale hulppartnerschappen slechts een beperkte rol kunnen spelen.

De studie opent met een presentatie van een serie elementaire definities (cultuur, identiteit, religie, uitsluiting, sociale cohesie, gender georiënteerd geweld en humanitaire veiligheid) die ten grondslag liggen aan de eerste vooronderstelling dat dodelijk geweld wordt veroorzaakt door opzettelijke en systematische discriminatie en uitsluiting van etnische groepen, iets wat wordt verergerd door niet duurzaam en ongelijk nationale ontwikkelingsbeleid. Deze studie poneert dat de meest effectieve manier om dodelijke binnenlandse conflicten te voorkomen, goede duurzame ontwikkelingssamenwerking is dat stelt zich immers tot doel armoede, ongelijkheid en onrechtvaardigheid uit de wereld te bannen met programmastrategieën die erop gericht zijn om de oorzaken van ongelijkheid, onrechtvaardigheid en gebrek aan respect voor menselijke waardigheid structureel weg te nemen.


Tien nationale etnische groepen en twee etnische minderheids groepen lopen nu een verhoogd risico om in dodelijke conflicten betrokken te raken. De meeste gewapende rebellengroepen in de vier landen verdedigen de belangen van nationale etnische groepen, wiens historische en hedendaagse grieven op vreedzame wijze kunnen worden opgelost -in tegenstelling tot motieven van hebbwil en persoonlijk belang- als de politieke bereidheid daartoe bestaat. Door jaren van interne strijd zijn de legers in de vier landen groot van omvang en hebben tevens een rol in het
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bestuur van afgelegene provincies en de exploitatie van natuurlijke hulpbronnen verworven. Daarom lijken de rebellengroepen eerder bereid een onderhandelde vredesovereenkomst te accepteren die gelijkheid voor de wet en een bepaalde mate van regionale autonomie garandeert, dan eeuwig door te vechten voor een onafhankelijke staat, met de LTTE in Sri Lanka als mogelijke uitzondering.  

Het tweede doel van de conflictanalyse was om de mogelijkheden voor vredzame conflictoplossingen te onderzoeken, die de basis vormt voor het testen van de bijdrage van lokale NGOs in het laatste deel van de studie. Daartoe werden de conclusies van vier recente en gezaghebbende studies over dodelijk binnenlandsgeweld gecombineerd en toegepast op de vier landen, die de impact trachten te beoordelen van democratische overheidsinstellingen, economische marginalisatie, globalisering, sociaal kapitaal en sociale cohesie op de lokale capaciteit om dodelijk conflict te managen en vreedzaam op te lossen. De “Peace and Conflict Ledger”, de “Conflict Trap” en de “Preventing the Next wave” studies geven echter een onvolledig beeld van de capaciteit van de overheid om goed met de wens tot zelfbestuur van etnische groepen om te gaan. Het bleek dat deze studies te positief oordelen over de overheid’s intentie en bereidheid om een democratische maatschappij te creëren waarin duurzame, participatieve en rechtvaardige ontwikkeling kan floreer. Als criteria voor het respecteren van mensenrechten en goed bestuur in overweging genomen worden, dan lijkt de Sri Lankaanse overheid hypothetisch het best in staat om dodelijk geweld vredzaam op te lossen. Maar dit is juist het land dat twintig jaar in burgeroorlog verkeerde en al twee jaar niet in staat is om het staakt-het-vuren bestaan om te zetten in een wederzijds aanvaardbaar vredesakkoord.

Na de onafhankelijkheid in 1948, zagen de nieuwe Indonesische en Birmezse regering zich geconfronteerd met de uitdaging om een nationale eenheid te smeden in een gebied met een enorme omvang en een grote etnische en taalkundige verscheidenheid, dat nooit eerder een natie was geweest. Het gewapend verzet tegen koloniale machten en de Japanse bezetting tijdens de Tweede Wereldoorlog had het identiteitsgevoel en het zelfbestuur aspiraties van de etnische groepen versterkt en toen deze verwachtingen ten tijde van de onafhankelijkheid werden veronachtzaamd, namen de eerste groepen al binnen een jaar de wapens op tegen de nieuwe regering. Beide landen eindigden hun experiment met democratisch bestuur in het midden van de jaren zestig en gingen over op een autocratisch bewind, waarbij economisch en militair gesteund door de toenmalige wereldmachten: het New Order regime in Indonesië kreeg steun van de Verenigde Staten en de militaire Junta van Myanmar kreeg steun uit China en India. Het door respectievelijk Javanen en Burmanen gedomineerde nieuwe militaire en politieke leiderschap beperkte met onmiddellijke ingang de politieke en burgerrechten. Schafte politieke partijen af, legde maatschappelijke organisaties het zwijgen op, verving traditionele leiders en gaf het leger een belangrijke rol in het dagelijks bestuur en in de exploitatie van natuurlijke hulpbronnen van afgelegen, opstandige provincies. Deze maatregelen verergerden de afkeer, het wantrouwen en het verzet tegen de centrale regering en leidden tot een verdere beschadiging van de nationale eenheid. Een jaar na de Aziatische economische crisis van 1997 die geresulteerd in economische depressie, armoede, onrust en dodelijke binnenlandse conflicten, implodeerde het 30 jaar oude New Order regime, dat intern was verzwakt door corruptie en nepotisme. Een complex driedubbel transformatie proces (politiek, economisch en sociaal) begon in 1999. De SPDC in Myanmar bleef ondertussen een betrouwbare partner van China en houdt thans het wereldrecord

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144De enige mogelijke uitzondering is de LTTE in Sri Lanka, die zich over het afgelopen decennium hebben ontwikkeld tot een zeer professioneel, wereldwijd netwerk voor Tamil onafhankelijkheid onder leiding van een autocratisch bestuur dat weinig ruimte laat voor afwijkende meningen noch voor democratische burgerparticipatie in besluitvormingen door de Tamil bevolking in het Noor Oosten wiens belangen de LTTE zegt te verdedigen.
van de langst zittende Junta in de geschiedenis (40 jaar). Historische grieven en de wens tot zelfbestuur blijven tot de dag van vandaag onopgelost In Indonesie en Myanmar.

Sri Lanka’s problematische nationale eenheid heeft een andere oorzaak. Hier werd de wet (en niet het leger) ingezet om etnische uitsluiting en discriminatie te rechtvaardigen. Ondanks de Britse voorzorg om de Tamil minderheid territoriale rechten toe te kennen in de Soulbury Constitution, was een van de eerste wetten goedgekeurd door het nieuwe Singhalese meerderheidsparlement de “Ceylon Citizenship Act” uit 1948, waarin de Indiase Tamil minderheid het staatsburgerschap werd ontnomen. En terwijl de etno-nationalistische meerderheidspolitiek floreerde, kon de overheid meer macht centraliseren en werden andere Tamil groeperingen systematisch verdere rechten ontnomen. De “Sinhala Only Act” uit 1959 en de Grondwetswijziging van 1972 waren breakpuntjes voor de Tamil politici en midden jaren zeventig nam de TULF een afscheidsagenda aan. Terwijl Sri Lanka een functionerende democratie bleef (die nooit een militaire coup heeft gekend), werd de escalatie van het etnische conflict onafwendbaar met de opkomst van militante Tamil groeperingen in Jaffna en in 1983 brak de burgeroorlog uit, die tot 2002 duurde. Vredesonderhandelingen hebben sindsdien weinig vooruitgang geboekt en de grieven van de Tamil bevolking blijven tot op de dag van vandaag grotendeels onopgelost, terwijl het autoritaire bestuur van de LTTE in het Noord Oosten weinig ruimte laat voor meer democratische federale bestuursoplossingen.


Geopolitieke invloeden hebben dus een grote rol gespeeld in de historie van dodelijke conflicten in Azië, met de impact van de Koude Oorlog dynamiek het meest zichtbaar in Cambodja, Indonesië en Myanmar. Deze drie landen hebben nog steeds een groot leger dat nauwe banden onderhoudt met de politiek en het bedrijfsleven en weinig aan macht heeft ingeboet. Het leger werd in de jaren zestig ingezet in het binnenlandse bestuur van afgelegen gebieden als gevolg van de heersende gedachte dat de nationale veiligheid en eenheid primair werd bedreigd door lokale groeperingen met een marxistische of juist anti-marxistische oriëntatie. Het bewaren van de nationale eenheid, niet het beschermen van de burgerbevolking, was hun belangrijkste doel en NGOs actief in gebieden die door het leger werden gecontroleerd, werden onderworpen aan zware repressie. Het gebrek aan civiele controle over het leger wordt verder versterkt door de hoge mate waarin het leger zichzelf financierd door middel van mijnbouw en houtkapconcessies en joint ventures met multinationale bedrijven. Mede daardoor zijn de legers in deze drie landen omvangrijk gebleven, hebben demobilisatie programma’s gefaald en wordt nog steeds een onverantwoord hoog percentage van de Nationale Begroting aan defensie besteed (gemiddelde
budget voor defensie is bijna 30% per jaar, voor onderwijs en gezondheidszorg minder dan 10%). Bovendien blijft de betrokkenheid van militaire leiders in politiek geweld en corruptie reden voor grote zorg.

Deze conclusies noopten tot een nadere analyse van de capaciteit van de overheid en de effectiviteit van haar interactie met burgers, NGOs en andere belanghebbenden, als een sleutelindicatie om dodelijke conflicten te kunnen voorkomen. Colletta's horizontale en verticale sociaal kapitaal concept bleek een goed model om de verticale relaties tussen de overheid en de burgers (oftewel goed bestuur) en de horizontale overbruggende relaties tussen verschillende groepen in deze ethisch verdeelde maatschappijen te kunnen beoordelen. Samenlevingen met een goede combinatie van horizontaal en verticaal kapitaal zijn beter bestand tegen dodelijke conflicten en daarom zouden duurzame vredesinitiatieven tegelijkertijd aan inclusief, participatief, gedecentraliseerd bestuur enerzijds en aan het versterken van horizontale relaties tussen burgers anderzijds moeten werken. De problematische "organisatorische integriteit" van Staat in de vier landen is inderdaad een van de belangrijkste belemmeringen, die het voorkomen van dodelijke conflicten bemoeilijkt. Cambodja en Myanmar scores als zogenaamde "schurkenstaten" met een hoog niveau van corruptie, discriminatie en gebrek aan burger-participatie. Deze represiëve politieke regimes onderdrukten hun eigen burgers met het argument dat de hegemonie van het land eerst veilig gesteld moest worden en gedurende deze onderdrukking werd het bestaande overbruggend sociaal kapitaal opzettelijk vernietigd, zoals bijvoorbeeld de lokale NGOs, de vakbeweging en religieuze organisaties. Sri Lanka en Indonesië hebben volgens deze analyse inefficiënte and ineffectieve regeringen (zogenaamde zwakke staten) met een groeiende corruptie, politieke polarisatie en een beperkte burger participatie in het bestuur. In alle landen is het vertrouwen tussen de Staat en burgers laag.

Met de eerste en tweede vooronderstelling aldus geverifieerd (dodelijk conflict preventie is nog steeds mogelijk als de relaties tussen de overheid en NGOs een structurele transformatie ondergaan en grieven worden vervuld), gaat deel twee van de studie verder met het beantwoorden van de derde vooronderstelling die luidt dat NGOs sluippartners zijn van de overheid en de internationale gemeenschap bij het opbouwen van cohesieve en democratische samenlevingen. Omdat de organisatorische integriteit van de Staat laag is, werden de relaties tussen de overheid en NGOs in historisch perspectief geplaatst en werden represiëve maatregelen ten aanzien van NGO werk en NGO reactie om het evenwicht in de machtsrelatie te herstellen, onder de loep genomen (respectievelijk via een analyse van de drie fundamentele rechten en het gebruik van de "soft power" en internationale lobby). De studie combineert de actoren analyses van het UN Covenant op het Recht op Ontwikkeling met de "Human Security Paradigm" en "Track-Two diplomacy" en concludeert dat de verantwoordelijkheden van de actoren, met name van de Staat en NGOs, in het voorkomen van dodelijke conflicten internationaal duidelijk zijn gedefinieerd en overeengekomen. De Staat is de 'eerstverantwoordelijke' om ontwikkeling en basisrechten voor alle burgers te realiseren op een democratische en participatieve manier.

Echter, de analyse van de NGO sector in de vier landen toont aan dat deze taakverdeling in de praktijk niet goed werkt en dat de meeste lokale NGOs vroeger of later door de Staat in hun werk worden beperkt. Veel NGOs werden opgericht als gevolg van een dodelijk conflict in een poging om de getroffenen te beschermen tegen verder geweld en om de slachtoffers van discriminatie te helpen bij het vinden van rechtvaardige oplossingen. De thematische of geografische specialisatie van een NGO geeft vaak al aan welke oorzaken van het conflict de organisatie tracht aan te pakken. Slecht functionerende rechtssystemen, de militarising van de samenleving en de wijdverbreide corruptie bemoeilijken effectieve conflict preventie en ontwikkelingswerk zeer en verergen de bestaande grieven en sociale verschillen van minderheidsgroepen. Periodes van extreme staatsrepressie deden zich voor in Cambodja, Indonesië en Myanmar tussen 1965 en
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1997, toen leiders werden gearresteerd of gedood, kantoren gesloten en maatschappelijke organisaties werden verboden. Conservatieve schattingen ramen dat meer dan een miljoen medewerkers van maatschappelijke organisaties werden gedood over een periode van ruim tien jaar, maar geen van deze buiten-rechtelijke moorden zijn ooit onderzocht noch bestraft. De overheidsrepressie van het werk van NGOs is over de afgelopen twee decennia politiek meer geraffineerd geworden, waarin vooral het recht op vrijheid van meningsuiting en samenkomst wordt ondermijnd; bijvoorbeeld door het confisceren van materialen, het opbreken van vergaderingen, het verbieden van toegang tot de media en het fysiek intimideren van de staf. Het verbod op lokale NGOs in Myanmar is het meest dramatische voorbeeld van het vermogen van de Staat om maatschappelijke organisaties en daarmee de maatschappij als geheel het recht te ontnemen om te ijveren voor verandering in beleid en voor een gelijkwaardiger en meer participatieve vorm van bestuur.

De ontstaansgeschiedenis van lokale NGOs heeft een doorslaggevend invloed gehad op de gespannen Staat – NGO relaties, die het partneren met de overheid en de internationale gemeenschap in politieke overgangsfasen nog steeds bemoeilijken. Pogingen van de overheid en NGOs om samen te werken in politieke overgangsperiodes in Sri Lanka en Indonesië in respectievelijk 1994 en 2000, kwamen snel ten einde toen instabiele nieuwe politieke alianciten al binnen twee jaar uiteen vielen en resulteerde in een onmiddellijke terugslag op de lokale NGOs. De verstrengeling van de belangen van de politiek, de militairen en het bedrijfsleven in Cambodja, Myanmar and Indonesië verzwakt bovendien de positie en daadkracht van democratische overheidsinstanties. Terwijl de nog jonge Cambodjaanse NGO sector, die in 1991 uit de as herrees, professioneel en een serieus alternatief vormt voor de ontbrekende overheidsdiensten aan de arme bevolking, is een klein aantal Birnese NGOs alleen maar in ballingschap vanuit Thailand en India te werken. De ervaren NGOs in Sri Lanka en Indonesië lijken na tientallen jaren van staatsrepressie in een recessie te zijn geraakt. Voorts hebben zij zwaar te lijden onder de ‘braindrain’ door internationale hulporganisaties van senior stafleden, onder-vinden ze problemen bij het werven van nieuwe leiderschap, dreigen zij hun historische donorrelaties te verliezen en raken ze verder geïsoleerd.

De meeste lokale NGOs zijn grotendeels afhankelijk van buitenlandse financiële donaties van bilaterale en/of NGO hulporganisaties, maar de overheidsen van de vier landen zijn dat eveneens. Hoewel de geïnterviewde NGOs zijn geselecteerd op organisatorische en programmatische kwaliteit, voeren ook zij een voortdurende strijd tegen onderfinanciering van hun werk, dat zich vertaalt in onderbestaffing, gebrek aan gekwalificeerd personeel en een permanente aanpassing van de programmaplanning. Corruptie heeft de vier landen sterk in haar greep en beïnvloedt het werk van NGOs dus ook. De geïnterviewde organisaties hebben verschillende initiatieven genomen om hun NGO sector te versterken en de institutionele accountability te vergroten, ondermeer door het opstellen en ondertekenen van een ethische gedragscode, de opzetten van algemene ledenvergaderingen en het publiceren van de jaarverslagen. Transparency Indonesia’s corruptie index rapport van december 2004 scoorde de Indonesische NGOs op 2.4 (van een vijfpunts index), een gemiddelde score waarmee de NGOs tot een van de minst corrupte sectoren behoort, in tegenstelling tot politieke partijen (4.4), de belastingdienst (4.3) en het Indonesische leger (3.8). (Jakarta Post. 10/12/04)

De NGO landenanalyses onthulden bovendien dat een verschuiving heeft plaatsgevonden in de postconflict programma strategieën van internationale donoren. Bilaterale en multilaterale organisaties geven in toenemende mate hun donaties aan internationale NGOs, in plaats van lokale NGOs, omdat deze geacht worden onpartijdiger, minder corrupt en betere diensten leveranciers te zijn met sterker management Capaciteiten. Bovendien raken de Wereld Bank, de UNDP en enkele bilaterale donoren steeds meer zelf betrokken bij operationele uitvoering van
hulpprogramma’s, waarin direct lokale ‘organisaties worden opgebouwd aan de ‘grassroots’. Blijkbaar wordt, in een poging om de post-conflict situatie snel te stabiliseren, gekozen voor een ‘quick-fix’ aanpak waarin de lokale overheid en NGOs worden gepasseerd, omdat zij te corrupt en politiek gepolariseerd worden geacht. Echter, ten tijde van de interviews in 2002 ontbrak een heldere maatschappijopbouwvisie en strategie in deze UN en bilaterale programma’s in Sri Lanka en de Molukken. Bovendien leken deze programma’s een lage efficiency en duurzaamheidgraad te hebben en leidden ze tot verslechtering van de positie van lokale NGOs, ten gevolge van de brûndrain en verzwakte politieke positionering ten opzichte van de Staat en/of rebellen groepen, en daarmee zien lokale NGOs zowel hun fysieke bescherming als hun financiële basis bedreigd.

De studie concludeert dat hoewel lokale NGOs op papier sleutelpartners zijn in conflict preventie volgens democratiseringsstudies en UN Covenants op mensenrechten, ontwikkeling en vrede, hun imago als betrouwbare partner in werkelijkheid veel minder positief is. Vier twijfels lijken internationale organisaties het meest te raken: NGOs gebrek aan legitimiteit en accountibility: de controle over de eindboodschap in NGO partnerships: de mogelijke schade die aangericht kan worden als met de ‘verkeerde’ NGOs wordt samengewerkt; en de twijfels over de vermogen van lokale NGOs om onpartijdig te zijn en de belangen van anderen dan hun eigen leden rechtvaardig te verdedigen. Deze twijfels zijn op zichzelf gerechtvaardigd, maar gelden evenzeer in de samenwerking met de overheden en internationale NGOs in ontwikkelingslanden. omdat vredesopbouw en conflict preventie initiatieven nu eenmaal politiek beladen activiteiten zijn en blijven ongeacht de geografische herkomst van de partnerorganisatie. Internationale NGOs en multilaterale organisaties werven hun operationele staf bij de ervaren lokale NGO en lopen evenzeer het risico om slachtoffer of corruptie en politieke druk van ambtenaren en gewapende rebellen. Zelfs al zouden internationale hulpprogramma’s erin slagen om nieuwe, niet-gecorrumeerde dorpsorganisaties op te richten die de basis vormen voor een herboren maatschappelijk middenveld, dan is er nog steeds geen garantie dat zij niet ten prooi zullen vallen aan represieve staatssystemen. Het (weder)opbouwen van Staat – burger relaties en een sterke NGO sector behoeft de betrokkenheid en transformatie van beide actoren (Staat en NGOs) zoals de historische analyses heeft aangetoond. Internationale organisaties kunnen daarin slechts een faciliterende rol spelen.

Daarom werd deel drie van de studie gewijd aan een vergelijkende analyse van lokale NGOs en hun werf op conflict preventie, om lokale specificiteiten en regionale overeenkomsten te kunnen ontdekken, alsmede om naar “best practices” te zoeken. De zes Birmese NGOs geïnterviewd in Rangoon en op de Thaise grens, zijn niet in het vergelijkende onderzoek opgenomen omdat hun context te zeer verschilt. De conflictanalyse van de lokale NGOs in Cambodja, Sri Lanka en Indonesië vertonen grote overeenkomsten met de analyse van de historische grieven en sociale verschillen in hoofdstuk III. De NGO programma’s in de drie landen vertonen eveneens een verrassende overeenkomst in thema en strategie keuze, maar er zijn tegelijkertijd duidelijke verschillen in de uitvoering, die de unieke politieke, historische en geografische verschillen van deze conflicten weerspiegelen. NGOs implementeren horizontale community initiatieven die erop gericht zijn om etnische en sociale verschillen te overbruggen, om onderlinge economische samenwerking te promoten en om vredeszaam samenleven te stimuleren. Verticale netwerken zijn opgezet om goed bestuur en respect voor mensenrechten te bevorderen en om grotere aantallen mensen bij de politiek te betrekken. Verticale netwerken lijken makkelijker te handhaven dan horizontale, waarin veel meer mensen betrokken zijn en die erg kwetsbaar blijken voor externe interventie door actoren waarop NGOs slechts beperkte invloed hebben. Het vermogen van lokale NGOs om cultureel kapitaal te versterken is een andere essentiële bijdrage aan het vredesproces, onder meer door het formuleren van alternatieve vredesboodschappen om bredere publieke acceptatie voor vredesonderhandelingen te verwerven en om ethische waarden en normen in een gewelddadige. gepolariseerde samenleving hoog te houden.
Lage humanitaire veiligheid bedreigt het sociale en economische NGO werk met de arme, gemarginaliseerde groepen het meest. De mate waarin de Staat politieke ruimte biedt voor NGO werk, bepaalt het NGO succes in hoge mate. Er zijn vier dimensies die de politieke ruimte voor NGOs in bepalen: de openheid en het democratische gehalte van het politieke systeem, de neiging tot repressief gedrag tegen privé initiatieven van de Staat en/of gewapende rebellen, de stabiliteit van de elite en de aanwezigheid van elite – NGO allianties die het politieke proces kunnen beïnvloeden. Als de Staat gevoelig is voor haar internationale imago en geloofwaardigheid kan internationale NGO lobby resulteren in druk vanuit de internationale donor gemeenschap om de politieke ruimte voor NGO werk te vergroten. NGOs in Sri Lanka en Indonesië hebben met succes internationaal gelobbyd voor economische en milieubeleidsveranderingen, die bovendien hun nationale bekendheid en veiligheid heeft vergroot. Maar in schurkenstaten als Cambodja en Myanmar heeft internationale druk veel minder of nauwelijks daadwerkelijk effect gehad.

De studie concludeert dat zeven strategieën, ontwikkeld door lokale NGOs om hun invloed in de samenleving met andere actoren en de internationale gemeenschap te vergroten, kunnen dienen als succes indicatoren omdat zij de kans voor succes van NGO ontwikkelings- en sociale rechtvaardigheidswerk aanzienlijk vergroten, zelfs in een politiek vijandige omgeving. De zeven indicatoren zijn gerangschikt onder drie succesfactoren:

4. Sociaal en cultureel kapitaal opbouw: de capaciteit van NGOs om duurzaam horizontaal en verticaal sociaal kapitaal te ontwikkelen en om alternatieve vredes- en rechtvaardigheidsboodschappen te formuleren;

5. Strategische actornetwerking: betrokkenheid in gezamenlijke, nationale NGO campagnes en het benutten van zachte macht door middel van internationale lobby;

6. Organisatorische integriteit: het leiderschap en de organisatorische integriteit van NGOs.

De studie vervolgt met een beoordeling van de organisatorische integriteit van de geïnterviewde NGOs, waarin werd meegenomen hoe deze in horizontaal en verticaal sociaal kapitaal werd gereflecteerd in NGO programma’s, doelgroepen, actornetwerken, staf samenstelling en intern bestuur. Dit organisatorische integriteitsmodel behoort tot verdere studie en ontwikkeling, maar de eerste resultaten zijn veel belovend. De Cambodjaanse NGOs lijken beter in staat om horizontale netwerken te ontwikkelen dan hun zusterorganisaties, omdat nationale NGO netwerken een belangrijk instrument zijn om Staat – NGO relaties te balanceren en tevens hoeven zij nauwelijks etnische en taalkundige barrières te overwinnen. Indonesische en Sri Lankaanse NGOs blijken beter in staat om verticaal dan om horizontaal kapitaal te ontwikkelen, wat een weerspiegeling is van respectievelijk de zwakte van de lokale plattelandsorganisaties en de macht van het leger, en de diepte van de etnische scheiding na 20 jaar burgeroorlog weerspiegelt. De toepassing van het model op de thematische specialisatie van NGOs levert het verwachte beeld op: training, ‘single issue’ en lobby NGOs neigen naar een sterker verticaal kapitaal opbouw, terwijl plattelands- en vrouwen NGOs een sterkere horizontale sociaal kapitaal basis hebben. Zeven NGOs (of 22%) scoorden gelijk op goed overbruggend en linking sociaal kapitaal, zowel in hun programma’s als in hun eigen organisatie; dit zijn vooral ‘goed bestuur’ netwerken, plattelandsontwikkelings- en mensenrechten NGOs.

Twaalf cases studies illustreerden voorbeelden van lokale NGO samenwerking in goed bestuur, conflictresolutie mechanismen, brede vredesbewegingen en internationale lobby voor het veranderen van beleid, wat leidde tot acht conclusies. Ten eerste, NGOs met de capaciteit om goed horizontaal en verticaal sociaal kapitaal te ontwikkelen, hebben een grotere kans om succesvol te zijn in conflict preventie dan NGOs die zich voornamelijk richten op een technische aanpak of op sociale dienstverlening. Ten tweede, gezamenlijke nationale NGO campagnes kunnen beperkingen in staf en financiën overwinnen, evenals omissies in actoren netwerken van
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individuele NGOs compenseren. Bovendien wint een gezamenlijke NGO boodschap aan publieke legitimiteit, blijkt die moeilijker te onderdrukken (met of zonder geweld) en wordt daarmee de veiligheid van NGOs, die werkzaam zijn in riskante sectoren, versterkt. Ten derde, de historische relatie met de Staat heeft een diepe invloed op de vermogen van de NGOs om effectieve actoren relaties op te bouwen vandaag. Ten vierde, internationale lobby blijkt een effectief middel om het nationale beleid te beïnvloeden in de afwezigheid van reguliere politieke inspraakmogelijkheden in het land zelf. Ten vijfde, simpele “end the killing” vredescampagnes of technische conflict bemiddelings trainingen blijken niet in staat om een brede vredesbeweging blijvend op de been houden, een gevolg van de politieke polarisatie van het vredesproces. Ten zesde, cohesieve samenlevingen met een effectief conflictpreventie vermogen, kunnen alleen opgebouwd worden door middel van de promotie van duurzame ontwikkeling, sociale rechtvaardigheid en goed bestuur. Ten zevende, zelfs het beste NGO ontwikkelings- en conflict preventie werk zal slechts marginaal resultaten behalen, als de Staat, het parlement en het leger hun primaire verantwoordelijkheid om humanitaire veiligheid te bieden aan alle burgers niet vervullen. Ten achtste, Aziatische vrouwen worden het meest getroffen door ongelijkheid, uitsluiting en onwaardigheid. Dodelijke conflicten verslechteren hun situatie verder omdat het geweld zeer “gender-biased” is. Helaas bieden politieke partijen slechts beperkte toegang tot en deelname in het politieke proces voor vrouwen, noch daadwerkelijke steun aan vrouwelijke slachtoffers van geweld die genoegdoening zoeken.

Concluderend, hoewel de studie positief oordeelt over de mogelijkheid om Aziatische conflicten vreedzaam op te lossen en over het vermogen van NGOs om een goede bijdrage te leveren, blijft het toekomstperspectief voor het voorkomen van dodelijk geweld in Azië niet optimistisch. De capaciteit en de intentie van de Staat in de vier landen om participatieve, gelijke en inclusieve democratieen te stichten, die historische en hedendaagse grieven van etnische groepen op een respectvolle wijze kunnen oplossen, blijft weinig overtuigend. Lokale NGOs hebben veel morele inzet en weerbaarheid getoond, maar zijn tegelijkertijd verzwakt door jaren van staatsrepressie. Een ondermijnd maatschappelijk middenveld gecombineerd met een groeiende officiële corruptie, de afwezigheid van de rechtsorde, de militaire invloed en de emo-nationalistische politieke polarisatie voorspelt niet veel goeds voor etnische minderheden die hun wens voor zelfbestuur ingewilligd willen zien. Zonder een fundamentele politieke, economische en sociale beleidsombouwing naar goed bestuur en duurzame ontwikkeling, lijkt het waarschijnlijk dat etnische rebellie weer zal toenemen, omdat de vier indicatoren die rebellie stimuleren worden versterkt: verergeren van collectieve grieven, versterken van de etnische identiteit, vergroten van het vermogen om gezamenlijke actie te ondernemen, ondermeer door de steun van externe, grensoverschrijdende groepen. Het grote aantal strijdende, etnische groepen in Azië en hun lange conflictgeschiedenis met de Staat maakt dat deze gewapende bewegingen beter zijn ontwikkeld, groter zijn omvang en middelen en meer ervaren in grootschalige rebellie (in 1995 vond 20% van de 22 grootschalige opstanden in de vier landen van deze studie plaats). De vierde vooronderstelling, dat het versterken van het wederzijds vertrouwen tussen Staat en NGOs een bewust en gevoelig lokaal politiek proces is waarin vele actoren betrokken moeten zijn, behoeft verdere studie en experimenten. De studie sluit af met vijf clusters van aanbevelingen gericht op de verschillende actoren (NGOs. Staat, internationale gemeenschap, vrouwen. en militairen en religieuze leiders) en biedt suggesties hoe dit proces kan worden geïnitieerd.