Preventing deadly conflict in divided societies in Asia: the role of local NGOs
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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.

85 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.
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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>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Conflict analysis</th>
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<tr>
<td>Cambodia</td>
<td>Sri Lanka</td>
<td>Indonesia</td>
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<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 - Division among political parties - Lack of civil society involvement - Human rights abuses ignored - Ownership of the peace process (influence of the war on terror)</td>
<td>Concerns over transition processes - KKN (Corruption, collusion and nepotism) - Militarization and political violence to 'manage' conflicts</td>
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<td>Conflicts over peace process</td>
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<td>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.</td>
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<td>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</td>
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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 widespread 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 Svay Rieng and Kampong Chhanang, 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

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86 Rohan Edrisinha, scholar and constitutional reform expert of the Centre for Policy Alternatives, in a presentation at a Movement for Free and Fair Elections (MFFE)/MDDR conference on election related violence May 2002.
87 Quote ADHOC Human Rights report
88 Presentation by Venerable Nem Kin Teng in the Development and Conflict Consultation of religious and NGO leaders, 18 February 2003, organised by the World Conference of Religions for Peace.
89 The interviews were held in 2001-03, when the rise of the Islamic Jihad in Indonesia and the struggle between rivaling LTTE fractions (Prabakaran and Karuna led fractions have been clashing since March 2004) had yet to impact on the national security situation.
relational) 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).

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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 disproportionate 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 religions 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 mechanism 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 leads 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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Role of local NGOs in preventing deadly conflict

Table 17 NGO responses to conflict challenges

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<tr>
<th>Cambodia</th>
<th>Sri Lanka</th>
<th>Indonesia</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Community development</td>
<td>Community development</td>
<td>Community development</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Village association building</td>
<td>- Shramadana Village development</td>
<td>- Sustainable livelihoods and land tenure with indigenous communities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Training in conflict resolution and mediation</td>
<td>- Vocational training and micro credit for poor Tamil women and Muslim youth</td>
<td>- Building women support teams to address vulnerability, poverty, care for victims of violence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Community capacity building to participate in decentralised development governance</td>
<td>- Building spiritual inter-ethnic movement through public mediation session, developing youth movement and inter-religious leader collaboration.</td>
<td>- Community peace building: Baku Basi, safety zones, reconciliation (Moluccas), -Community capacity building to participate in decentralised development governance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Peace education: (disarmament, domestic violence and demolishment)</td>
<td>- Promoting communal harmony: North-South community exchanges, communal harmony</td>
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Civil society building

- Conflict mediation training: (state officials, military and civil society leaders)
  - Human rights protection: legal aid, complaints programmes, violence against women, land disputes
  - Good governance promotion: voter education, monitoring decentralisation of decision making, legal training army
  - Women’s advancement: protection, training, women in politics at local & national level

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

- Human rights atrocities and political violence
  - Land and natural resource exploitation disputes
  - Law and constitutional reforms
  - Good governance: eco-violence, corruption, elections
  - International advocacy for sustainable development and policy reform

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

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 analysis and resolution training
  - Awareness and disarmament of light weapons and small arms
  - Advocacy for and monitoring of demobilisation of national army
  - Research and documentation of violent conflict causes, lobby for law and policy reform

Peace building

- Community based conflict resolution training
  - Alternative peace agenda publications, media statements
  - Peaceful co-existence village exchanges and democratisation
  - Mass mediation

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

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
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 Shramadana 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), Ahsima, Kalyana Mitra, Baku Baa, Walsi, 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, Koalisie 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 line 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 (=LBH), 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."
99 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.
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.106

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.
Role of local NGOs in preventing deadly conflict

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>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State-Community Interaction</th>
<th>State Capacity and Effectiveness</th>
<th>High</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Anarchy (collapsed states):</td>
<td>Predation, corruption (rogue states):</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>Inefficiency, ineffectiveness (weak states):</td>
<td>Cooperation, accountability, flexibility</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sri Lanka and Indonesia</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 18 State integrity in four case countries, after Colletta (2000)

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-corrput 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
Preventing Deadly Conflict in Divided Societies in Asia

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 Muninggar Sri Saraswati with Sri Lankan attorney Suranjith R.K. Hewamanna and Sydney-based barrister James Nolan, who were observing trials again the Tempo editors in the Jakarta Post of 20 August 2004.
networks .. Linking actors at various levels in vertical networks and broadening their outreach by 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. 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.
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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 19 Interviewed NGOs whose work was directly obstructed by State agents in past decade

<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 20 High level of State control, three freedoms restrictions and NGO legitimacy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Low NGO membership legitimacy</th>
<th>High NGO membership legitimacy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Highly specialised NGO work with high vertical actor linking</td>
<td>-International advocacy networks that lobby</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UN and bilateral Aid agencies</td>
<td>-HR membership work, especially land &amp; labour (class cleavages)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Environmental lobby</td>
<td>-Political and civil rights</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constitutional HR work (law reform, usually highly specialised, non-membership work)</td>
<td>-Democratisation, voter education/election monitoring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Type of freedom restricted</td>
<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>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-Few restrictions (as assistance is temporary)</td>
<td>-Freedom of Assembly and Expression, to silence demands for equal rights, political representation and increased share of economic gains.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 21 Low level of State control, three freedoms restrictions and NGO legitimacy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Low NGOs membership legitimacy</th>
<th>High NGOs membership legitimacy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Grassroots service NGO work with lower vertical actor linking</td>
<td>-Emergency relief and rehabilitation organisations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-Charitable groups</td>
<td>-Rural development NGOs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Type of freedom restricted</td>
<td>-Sometimes geographic restrictions of assembly and association (where or where not to work)</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 Gallagher, 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 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.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 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. 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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104Two 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 well-being 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

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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 perquisite 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.
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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. 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, Koalisi 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 bridging social capital capacity (legitimacy and accountability)</th>
<th>High bridging social capital capacity (legitimacy and accountability)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Low vertical social capital</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 vertical social capital</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>
</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

...strenthen horizontal social capital as well. 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.

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.

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

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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.