

**REPORT TO UNITED NATIONS FOUNDATION /
UNITED NATIONS FUND FOR INTERNATIONAL PARTNERSHIPS**

"Rebuilding War-torn Societies"

1 June 2003 – 31 December 2004

Date of reporting: 30 March 2005

Project title: Peace Building and Conflict Prevention in War-torn Societies

DPA Project number:

UNFIP/UNF project code: DPA-INT-01-176

Programme framework topic: Peace, Security and Human Rights

Project purpose: Sustainable post-conflict rebuilding through joint involvement of civil society, government and international actors

Duration: 24 months: 01/08/2001 – 31/07/2003

Start date: 1 August 2001

Docket number: DX

Location: Worldwide (South-Central Somalia; Horn of Africa; Rwanda; Macedonia; Guatemala; Mozambique; Eritrea; Geneva)

Lead U.N. agency: U.N. Secretariat, Department of Political Affairs

Non-U.N. executing partner: WSP International and its local NGO partners

Cooperating U.N. agencies: UNDP, UNOPS (selected Geneva-based activities)

Total budget: US\$ 3,000,000

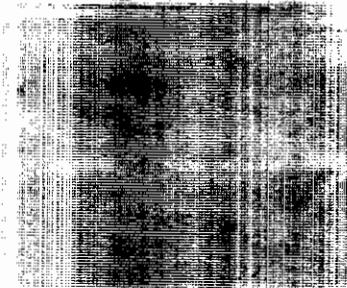
UNFIP/UNFIP Funding US\$ 1,000,000

Matching Funding

USAID US\$ 500,000

Other funders US\$ 500,000

Other funding US\$ 1,000,000



During the reporting period, WSP International carried out program activities in the Horn of Africa, Rwanda, Macedonia, the Middle East and Latin America in support of local and international actors dealing with the complex problems and challenges that must be addressed piecing fragmented societies back together. In order to carry out their work, to facilitate dialogue underpinned by participatory research to support informed consensus building processes and agree on priority actions, national teams received necessary support from the Geneva Office.

WSP International Latin American Programme

The Regional Office for Latin America in 2004 refined and pursued a strategy to solidify a regional institutional presence that could assist Latin American societies in their efforts at conflict prevention and peacebuilding. The office promotes and provides advice on the application of the WSP participatory action research (PAR) methodology in the development of national, regional and thematic projects. In this respect the regional office is a technical resource with a regional presence, at the disposal of national actors (civil society and state) or international actors (cooperation agencies, multilateral organizations, non-governmental organizations) that are interested in developing an intersectoral dialogue with WSP International's participative research resources.

The regional office provided assistance on projects that are being implemented by national institutions and teams, whose specific design adapts the WSP principles and approach to the varied conditions of each national, geographic or temporal context. The direct participation of local actors in the process (representatives of society, the government, individual participants and, in certain cases, also international cooperation agencies) allows them to be the ones to define the debate and research agenda, identify and prioritize the main political and development problems, and consensually decide on the necessary changes in the project's implementation, thus legitimizing the policy analysis and public recommendations resulting from the process.

The functions of the regional office in the development of these projects consist in:

- a. assessing the initiative's technical, political and financial viability;
- b. assisting local actors in the design of the political and methodological strategy of the dialogue process;
- c. training the project teams on specific topics (identification, research, methodological facilitation);
- d. assisting in the development of a participatory action research strategy;
- e. assisting national actors in the development of products for the dynamics and products developed in the process.

Developing the strategy, "Strengthening of local capacities for policy and governance dialogue in Latin America" has been a major undertaking for the regional office.

Guatemala

In Guatemala, WSP International is supporting two "second generation" programmes:

1) POLSEC (Towards a Policy for Citizen Security), an initiative implemented by the Latin American Faculty of Social Sciences (FLACSO Guatemala), the Association for the Study and Promotion of Security in Democracy (SEDEM) and the National Commission for the Strengthening of Justice and supported jointly by WSP International and UNDP, entered its final stage with the presentation to the corresponding authorities of policy recommendations and follow-up strategies in public security that were prepared by the different technical working groups. Two new initiatives that pursue the spirit of collaboration between civil society and the state are emerging: the adaptation of the PAR approach for the preparation of security plans at the local level; and assistance to the ministerial activities in the establishment of the civilian intelligence directorate. These new initiatives will be implemented in 2005.

2) FOSS (Strengthening of the Capacities of Civil Society in Security Issues), a WSP International initiative that began in late 2003, finished its first phase with the presentation of policy proposals and proposed oversight mechanisms by the different civil society institutions that participated in the project's Programme of Studies in Democratic Security. A liaison Office with Congress, in which participant civil society organizations serve as technical advisors for relevant parliamentary commissions, was established, and the project also assisted in the establishment and implementation of civil society's Security Advisory Board, which works with the Presidency in formulating policy recommendations and in the oversight of security policies and institutions.

Chiapas, Mexico

The initial research on the visions and perceptions of the different actors on the dynamics of conflict and peace in Chiapas has been low-key and finished in December 2004. The report (that remains internal at the moment) includes concrete recommendations for possible initiatives on dialogue, conflict prevention and peacebuilding in the state.

Partnerships and Collaborative Agreements

The regional office has been developing a number of partnerships and collaborative agreements with like-minded organizations working in the region, either on a generic level or around specific thematic issues, in order to stimulate

synergies that can enhance its overall capacity to assist local societies. The most important current ones are:

UNDP: Concrete cooperation at the field level in specific projects (POLSEDE and POLSEC in Guatemala, the Citizen Security Project in Honduras) has been followed by an exchange of letters between UNDP/RBLAC (Regional Bureau for Latin America and the Caribbean) and WSP International identifying areas for future collaboration. WSP International actively participates in UNDP's initiative on Democratic Dialogue, and has recentlised the design of the evaluation exercise for UNDP's "Dialogo Argentino" Project (Argentina).

OAS: Discussions between the Regional Office and OAS's Unit for the Promotion of Democracy (UPD) have led to the identification of concrete areas for collaboration. A first concrete line is the joint organization of an International Conference on Civil Society - Government Collaboration for Security Sector Reform issues that took place in El Salvador.

FLACSO Secretaría General: Building on the experience of concrete collaborations at project level, discussions between the Regional Office and the new Secretary General of FLACSO were initiated on strategies for joint programme development. A Memorandum of Understanding specifying areas for collaboration is expected to be signed in early 2005.

DCAF: A Memorandum of Understanding signed in 2003 between WSP International and DCAF has led to various kinds of collaboration in 2004. A joint Seminar on Democratic Control and Security Sector Reform in Guatemala, a joint Mission on Institutional Strengthening of the Nicaraguan Ministry of Defense, and participation of DCAF experts in seminars and conferences in Guatemala and Nicaragua organized or co-sponsored by WSP International, are concrete examples of institutional cooperation at the field level. Collaboration is also expressed in the development of joint publications, through which DCAF presents to its audience the WSP's experience with security sector reform in Central America: this includes the publication of the POLSEDE experience, and the proceedings of a Seminar on Civil Society and Security Sector Reform organized by WSP International in Antigua Guatemala.

GFN: With the Global Facilitation Network (GFN - secretariat at Cranfield University, UK) both organizations are exploring the possibility of developing a regional, Central-American framework for strengthening civil society participation in security sector reform efforts.

After eight years of continuous work, the growing recognition of the relevance of WSP International, by governments, institutions and by observers elsewhere in the region, has led to a series of follow-up on project results or try to replicate them. Given its influence and impact to materialize over time, WSP International's institutional

commitment to remain engaged also with "successor" initiatives after the original project.

Learning and capacity building

The following are some of the main activities carried out in that regard.

Methodological Review

In 2004 WSP International further developed mechanisms to strengthen our reflective practice and to foster more cross-programme learning. Most prominent among these is the "Methodological Review" process. Designed by staff from the various country teams, it focuses on nine core challenges that have emerged out of a decade of testing an approach to peacebuilding that seeks to foment knowledge creation and forms of 'national dialogue' around nationally agreed priority themes. The nine topics are:

- Values, mission, mandate and context
- Managing political space
- Participatory action research
- Integrating the diaspora into the approach / methodology
- Integrating audio-visual tools into the approach / methodology
- Sustainable action - sustainable institutions
- Information dissemination & communications
- Monitoring & evaluation
- Regional perspectives

WSP International's values and how they shape what it intends to do and how it does it, as well as the organization's mission and mandate, were debated and analysed in the course of a first cross-programme learning workshop, which brought together 18 WSP colleagues from around the globe in Djibouti on 17-21 May. The topics of "Managing political space" and "Sustainable action" were also addressed at that workshop.

Although the socio-political contexts in which each team operates are very different, the workshop discussions revealed many similarities in how they try to manage the political space and protect the independence and integrity of the WSP position and process. Every team drew attention to the relevance of timing and how things are worded, the importance of allies to help deflect threats and the need for tactics to deal with (potential) spoilers in an approach that aims at to be inclusive.

The Methodological Review process continues.

National Perspectives Pilot Project

WSP undertook efforts to develop mechanisms to facilitate project teams to more systematically capture, document and analyse the perspectives of

national actors on international post-conflict recovery and peacebuilding assistance, and what they see as good principles, policies and practices. The idea was to pilot this initially in the field-based teams, and then possibly to extend it to all.

The Canadian International Development Research Centre (IDRC) provided a small grant that allowed WSP International to test the readiness of its colleagues in the country teams to generate such structured reflections. They were invited to share their reflections and analysis of the relationship between internal and external actors in post-conflict situations within the context of their own WSP projects. This allowed them, at the same time, to contribute from their own experience to the Peacebuilding Forum (see *infra*).

The process involved e-mail forum exchanges through February, March and April 2004, a visit by one Geneva staff member to Rwanda, questionnaires and focus group discussions held in-country through the country focal points, and a review of the documentation from past WSP programmes.

The pilot produced substantive findings which have been summarized in a report and which have served to strengthen the institutional practice of learning and sharing learning. The exercise was evaluated via a questionnaire and a video conference on 23 July 2004. The key conclusions of both can be summarized as follows:

- The NPP pilot and its specific topic did not fit easily with the planned work and priorities of the various country teams;
- Teams do operate in reflective ways and are learning all the time;
- To become 'active learning teams that are part of wider learning organization', there is a need for better structured documentation and sharing of insights;
- 'Reports' and 'reporting' are not the best format to document and communicate learning;
- WSP International needs to be more precise in its vocabulary and focus more on insights, attention points and learning, rather than 'lessons', which refers to more formally validated and more confident statements;
- WSP International is motivated to be more structured, focused and disciplined about learning (and communicating learning) when in the first place it sees value for the projects/process as it managing, secondly for WSP International, and only in third place for other audiences;
- Mainstreaming reflective practice, structured learning, better documentation and sharing requires that WSP International builds it into its work plans, budgets and terms of reference.

Self-study, learning exchanges and capacity-building support

In order to facilitate individuals to learn in their own time and at their own pace, a number of resource materials were made available to all WSP International staff: an overview of websites with relevant material; a set of e-learning courses on fundamentals of organizational management; and a module in English and in French on "facilitation skills". An e-mail discussion forum and video-conferencing were also introduced and experimented with.

The Finance and Administration Section of WSP International, also had focused working sessions on the accounting and financial management of WSP project funds in Hargeysa, Kigali and again in Hargeysa, this time with the finance officers of all three Somali affiliates and the Office Manager of the Nairobi support office.

A number of learning exchange opportunities were pursued, proving valuable both to WSP International and its staff, and to the other participants and their organizations:

- a member of the Programme Unit participated in a UNICEF West Africa workshop on "Transforming Violent Conflict and Building Peace" in Dakar (Senegal) from 31 August to 3 September 2004;
- another staff member delivered half-day training module on the characteristics of post-conflict contexts and the main obstacles to the effective rebuilding of war-torn societies at a course organized by Development Cooperation Ireland (DCI) in April 2004 within the framework of the European Community Project on Training for Civilian Aspects of Crisis Management;
- at the invitation of Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), WSP International shared some its "lessons on peacebuilding" with regional desk officers and staff of JICA's peacebuilding unit, contributed to its peacebuilding training programme through a course on "conflict transformation at grassroots level" and shared some insights on "Capacity building and Human Resources for Peacebuilding" at a conference organized by JICA;
- in August 2004 Saferworld and WSP International were invited by the Pearson Peacekeeping Center (PPC), Canada to design a course on "conflict-sensitive development" for donors and bilateral agencies to be delivered at the end of October in PPC's training centre in Nova Scotia;
- in partnership with the Hiroshima office of UNITAR, until October 2004 WSP International will continue mentoring staff servants from the Ministry of Telecommunications and the Civil Service Commission in Afghanistan. The mentoring entails regular reporting on a range of issues, including on capacity-building units at the ministry and developing a mentoring system for the activities and courses of the developing partnership (teaching methods, etc.) The mentoring is done partly over e-mail and partly over monthly video-conferences with Kabul.

Monitoring and evaluation

A paper with 'evaluation guidelines' for staff of WSP International and affiliates was produced in February 2004. Our colleagues of the Latin America Regional office have also played an active role in the design, facilitation and implementation of a UNDP evaluation of democratic dialogue in Argentina. This has both led to and stimulated the design of a participatory evaluation process, which needs further refinement, but that holds promise to bring more of the inclusive values of a WSP process into the evaluation process.

Reflective practice working group

In light of the aforementioned efforts on learning and competency development, and in the process of restructuring the organization, a working group on reflective practice was created. The overall objectives of the working group are:

- To promote and support a culture of reflective practice and learning (including cross-programme and cross-team learning) within WSP International, its field offices and affiliates.
- To build up the confidence and expertise in WSP International and its affiliates to use evaluations as a tool and an opportunity for learning and accountability.
- Help provide the arguments why WSP International is a relevant and effective organization in the peacebuilding and policy development field.

The working group is composed of staff in the Geneva office as well as from the country teams. Country focal points will be the methodological advisor in the Latin America regional office, the information and reporting officer in the Nairobi office, and the communications officer in the Rwanda team.

A presentation has been prepared on reflective practice, elaborating basic concepts (reflective practice, process management, process documentation, learning and lessons, good practices and national judgment etc.) and how to do it better in the WSP context.

Other Programmes

The WSP Somali Programme (which receives direct support from USAID through the Nairobi Office) is engaged in a major two year "Dialogue for Peace" project. This will be the first time that all the affiliates (APD in Hargeysa; PDR in Garowe; and CRD in Mogadishu) engage in a collective exercise. The Dialogue for Peace is intended to facilitate the implementation in southern Somalia and Puntland of the peace agreement that has emerged from the SNRC, by drawing attention to key concerns - including challenges to peace - likely to arise from the state-building process. These may include differences over the establishment of a federal system of government, relations between the centre and the regions,

revenue sharing, disarmament and demobilization, and boundary disputes. In Somaliland, the Dialogue is aimed at consolidating peace and stability, while facilitating the complex process of democratization through elections, the implementation of constitutional democracy, and decentralization.

This project goes beyond WSP International's traditional approach, which typically concludes with the release of a series of recommendations. Instead, the Dialogue project challenges WSP International to form partnerships with key stakeholders in the development and implementation of recommendations that will emerge from the process. In the last quarter of 2004, the Somali Programme concluded the preliminary phase of research, actor and conflict-mapping exercises. The main phase of the Dialogue for Peace project was initiated in late 2004.

APD in Hargeisa (Somaliland) has selected its Dialogue for Peace entry points based on the original programme and four years of participatory research. The four areas of focus are Parliamentary elections; Constitutional reform; Decentralization (local governance); and Resource-based conflict. APD has completed the preliminary mapping phase of the project, which will result in a summary note, as well as the production of relevant films and other material. APD's entry points reflect key stakeholders' understanding of the precarious nature of the peace and democratic institutions in Somaliland, and the necessity of broad-based inputs to strengthen these institutions.

PDRC and CRD are committed to work closely together throughout the Dialogue process, and have made considerable progress to that end in 2004. Both organizations have launched actor and conflict mapping exercises, and held a joint National Project Group Meeting in late 2004. CRD and PDRC believe that shared entry points will spur the formation of Working Groups comprising members from both regions.

The CRD completed two years of research in south-central Somalia and with the Diaspora that culminated in a Zonal HQ, "Somalia: Path to Recovery—Building a sustainable peace." The report, an analysis of the obstacles to peace, security and reconstruction in south-central Somalia was presented to over 120 key stakeholders from across the region in a Mogadishu meeting July 3-4, 2004. BBC Somalia coverage and live daylong radio broadcasts by local stations ensured that as many as three million Somalis were able to follow proceedings.

In addition to the preparatory work on the Dialogue, the CRD conducted research and analysis for the World Bank's conflict assessment framework, and the APD has organized seminars on leadership and good governance as part of an ongoing partnership with UN Habitat. While there has been considerable demand for the affiliates to take on additional project work from a number of quarters, there has been a conscious effort not to over-extend and to focus on the Dialogue as a priority.

In Rwanda, the WSP International affiliate, Institute of Research and Dialogue for Peace (IRDP) has been working intensively to focus attention around each of the five priority areas that emerged at the National Group meeting in late 2003. Drawn from a longer list of issues identified during the countrywide consultations, those were:

1. **History of Rwanda** - Revisit, through debate and research, the key events of Rwandan history and develop balanced interpretations of them to which all members of society can subscribe and which can then be taught in schools.
2. **The Genocide** - Debate the various interpretations of the Genocide and reach consensus on what happened before, during and after, including why and how it occurred and who was responsible.
3. **Socio-economic development and poverty reduction** Examine the various ongoing strategies to address this issue and analyze the political, social, structural and other obstacles to their meaningful implementation.
4. **Justice and the rule of law** - Instill the rule of law in the minds of Rwandans through a change in the behavior of the judicial and executive authorities, addressing in particular such problems as political interference in the judiciary and rampant corruption.
5. **Ethnicity and democracy** - Address openly the pincer that ethnicity does (and should) play in society and governance in Rwanda.

Working groups have been created for each topic composed of leading political, social, religious and academic opinion-formers and decision-makers and international actors with expertise in the issue at hand. By mid-2004, IRDP had facilitated the constitution and operational framework of the all five working groups, and produced a new documentary, "The Saddest Days of Rwanda" to coincide with the April 6 Genocide commemoration.

The IRDP team has set up pilot "Dialogue Clubs" in five provinces - providing a permanent forum for local communities to engage in dialogue. Imparting the skills, approach and methodology, IRDP has trained local facilitators on how to stimulate and facilitate community discussions and provide feedback to the team to enrich their research findings.

To mark the 10th anniversary of the 1994 Genocide, IRDP team members took part in commemoration events in Geneva organized by the Rwandan community. In addition, the team participated in desk officers' meeting organized in Geneva. The event allowed for informal interaction between desk officers and local actors and provided a space for substantive discussions on the socio-political dynamics of Rwanda, and the international community's responsibilities and policies towards the country. These were also the challenges and opportunities of the current situation in Rwanda: the Poverty Reduction Strategy Programme (PRSP) and its relationship between internal and external actors in Rwanda; the system of the reconciliation process;

governance process; Gacaca; and the engagement of the Rwanda diaspora in the reconciliation process.

Furthermore, the team used the commemoration of the Genocide as a platform to engage Rwandan diaspora in Geneva and Fribourg. They facilitated discussions on the importance of memory while opening debates on controversial issues surrounding the Genocide.

In Macedonia, PEV's work was influenced by a number of factors: the delay created by the unanticipated electoral campaign due to the death of former President Boris Trajkovski; the relative reluctance of politicians to participate in all phases of the process; the challenge of engaging the international community and the absence of financial support on the part of the donors; and the challenge of recruiting and training new caseworkers and communication officers. Nonetheless, the programme of work has proceeded well, although the timing of the work plan agreed at first National Project Group meeting in June 2003 slipped by several months.

The activities of the five working groups facilitated by PEV gathered momentum in the first three months of 2004. In an intensive phase of field activities, the PEV research team, topical experts and local consultants have facilitated meetings, political consultations, and surveys in 24 communities affected by or exposed to conflict, and conducted a focused "case study" in Prilep, structured along the five Entry Points.

In the course of these activities, PEV has engaged over 3,000 citizens. The views of a stratified sample of 533 participants from the same communities, elicited through an elaborate survey, was integrated in the dialogue and research process to validate opinions and stimulate better understanding of the issues. Video materials capturing the diversity of opinions, demands and visions regarding each of the five Entry Points were finalized by PEV's audio-video team, and used as facilitative tools.

In early June the five Entry Point papers and the accompanying survey were presented by working group coordinators and PEV researchers in a two-day workshop in Skopje. The findings were endorsed by local and national participants as valid and timely, and disseminated through national mass-media.

International community, and particularly donor, engagement in the consultations has remained weak. Following an extended management review in February and a number of visits to Skopje by WSP international staff, PEV and WSP international together decided to step up efforts to clear the process of dialogue and research in the local groups and working group phase, and the possible transition to a local ownership arrangement. It was agreed that sufficient project funding to sustain the programme was not likely to be forthcoming.

In July and August, representatives of PEV working groups elaborated policy recommendations based on the groups' research. A double issue of PEV's newsletter was produced in August, summarizing key findings of the project's main phase. The results of the Africase study were shared with local participants in mid-September. Together with a video documentary and the results on an internal participatory assessment, the policy recommendations were presented at the second National Project Group (NPG) meeting in Skopje on 30 September, and the formal WSP International project drew to a close end October. A plan for continuing project activities beyond the formal completion of the WSP project after the NPG impetus being considered by project participants, and will depend as well on support by local and/or international donors.

Palestinian-Israeli Programme

In the first seven months of 2004 the programme team concentrated on strengthening the growing range of relationships with local and international actors on the ground, as well as in Europe, the United States and elsewhere, and has mobilized the necessary political and financial support to engage the process "on the ground". This included multiple visits to the region, discussions with a broad range of actors in various venues, participation in conferences and visits to capitals of potential donors. The team continuously revised and strengthened the concept document in light of both the changing scene in Israel and Palestine, and sharper understanding of the programme's potential. Although there was strong and broad support for the programme's concept and design, donor enthusiasm was initially somewhat tempered by concern over potential conflict with the "Geneva Initiative" and "One Voice" programme. This was overcome, however, as the team clearly differentiated the WSP approach, and its difference from and potential synergy with other initiatives.

Both members of the team have resided from Geneva to Jerusalem and Ramallah respectively and have started what will be a pilot phase of the programme. During this period, both the Israeli and Palestinian core teams have been formed, and they have refined and concluded work on power factor-mapping. On the Palestinian side, pilot processes have been initiated in three distinct communities (an affected village - Budrus; a refugee camp - Jalzoum; and the capital - Ramallah). In Israel pilot dialogue between leftist activists from the South of Israel and Settlers from the Gush Katif settlement in Gaza is well en route; and a process for engaging the Arab citizens in Israel has been designed and its leadership identified and engaged. Both projects have begun to create support groups for the project/process in each society in order to establish an ongoing, participatory guidance mechanism for the future direction of the programme.