

USAID/ Office of Transition Initiatives



Guide to Program Options in Conflict-Prone Settings



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FOREWORD

The U.S. Agency for International Development's Office of Transition Initiatives (USAID/OTI) has produced this guide to serve as a reference for USAID staff and partner organizations. It offers a menu of program options that OTI has used in conflict-prone and post-conflict settings over the past seven years.

When OTI was created in 1994, its emphasis was on "transition" opportunities in post-conflict situations, bridging the gap between relief and development assistance. Today, with more experience of governments and NGOs, the field is evolving toward conflict prevention, mitigation, resolution, and post-conflict recovery. This guide can serve as a resource for determining those interventions that might be most effective, given our current understanding of conflict. This is a work in progress, as OTI continues to explore new activities together with its implementing partners, learn lessons from past and current programs, and adapt and apply them to new situations.

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For additional information on OTI and its activities, please contact the Office at (202) 712-1299, oti@usaid.gov, or visit http://www.usaid.gov/hum_response/oti.

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INTRODUCTION

This guide synthesizes OTI's field activities, which are divided into four major categories:

- supporting peace negotiations;
- building citizen security;
- promoting reconciliation;
- expanding democratic political processes.

THE GLOBAL CHALLENGE

An increase in violent intrastate conflicts has resulted in complex humanitarian disasters across the globe. Whether the eruptions of violence are religious, ethnic, economic, territorial, and/or political in origin, the failure of state institutions to manage internal struggles over political power and economic resources has cost thousands of lives and millions of dollars in destroyed infrastructure and property. In such an environment, the line between “pre” and “post” conflict has become increasingly blurred as countries find themselves trapped in cycles of violence where the root causes are never fully addressed. These conflicts result in high levels of citizen insecurity, stalled democratic development, displacement of people, interruption of economic and agricultural cycles, and in many cases, heightened regional tensions. Neither traditional diplomacy nor sheer military power has proven effective in deterring intrastate conflict.

The needs of societies emerging from internal wars or complex emergencies are central to the discussion of international development. As the number of crises continues to mount, USAID and other donor organizations must be able to move quickly and effectively to meet new transition challenges. There is an increased demand to help countries in crisis promote national reconciliation, build democratic and participatory processes, and broaden access to and promote efficient use of economic, political, and natural resources. Without these structural changes, the cycle of poverty, violence, and repression is likely to continue indefinitely.

TIMING

The timing of transition assistance is critical. Because there is a short window of opportunity in which to make positive political gains, transition assistance depends on a quick response to fill gaps and demonstrate positive impacts. Conventional long-term development programs can often take years to design and implement.

Transition assistance cannot be implemented in the absence of a viable political opening and a conducive environment for providing such assistance. In a repressive regime or in the midst of hostilities, donor countries can offer little beyond diplomatic initiatives aimed at ending conflict or encouraging democracy. Thus, transition assistance is almost always preceded by some kind of “threshold event” that precipitates a political opening in which the donor community can begin the process of cementing peace and preventing conflict (or the resurgence of conflict) through programs aimed at political stabilization, economic development and democratization. Typical threshold events include:

- Emergence from war (Guatemala)
- Brokered peace or cease-fire (Bosnia, Sierra Leone)
- Outside military intervention (Haiti, Kosovo, East Timor)
- Elections (Croatia)
- Early transition from authoritarian state (Nigeria, Indonesia)
- Post-humanitarian crisis (Albania)

Timely assistance following threshold events can pay large dividends by mitigating the need for costly military operations, peace-keeping efforts, and emergency humanitarian relief. It can help countries develop strategies for sustainable development that will enable them to become stronger trading partners and allies, thereby enhancing global security by enlarging the community of peaceful, democratic nations.

OTI—RESPONDING TO NEEDS IN CONFLICT-PRONE SETTINGS

In 1994, the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) created a new tool for responding to these challenges: the Office of Transition Initiatives (OTI). OTI’s mission is to help local partners advance peaceful, democratic change in conflict-prone countries. Seizing critical windows of opportunity, OTI

guidelines for successful transition assistance

OTI has gained critical experience in transition countries. The program options laid out in the following pages constitute the “what” of OTI, but equally important is the “how.” The following mantras have been developed over the years and continue to guide OTI’s decision-making process.

- 1** Operate with the same urgency as in a humanitarian emergency.
- 2** Focus efforts on those elements critical to achieving successful transitions, or those that threaten to derail transitions.
- 3** Maintain flexibility in programming and adjust when needed.
- 4** Small amounts of assistance directed strategically and applied early can have tremendous impact.
- 5** Building local capacity is essential to sustaining momentum for change.
- 6** Politically oriented interventions are necessary because political weakness often underlies the economic and social unraveling of societies.

rules continued

- 7 New change agents must be identified to help the populace embrace new democratic behaviors.
- 8 Programs must reach out beyond the capital to rural areas and involve community members at the grassroots level in all phases of program design and implementation.
- 9 Program responses must address specific realities, needs and opportunities of a country in transition. Generic responses are largely unsuccessful.
- 10 Jumpstart larger efforts, but make sure commitments to continue them are made and followed up.
- 11 Be innovative and creative. The program can address traditional issues, but they can be addressed in a new way.
- 12 Empower local partners; it is their transition and it will rest on their energy to keep it advancing.
- 13 Coordinate and collaborate with the international community.
- 14 Find a comparative advantage; do not replicate other efforts.

works on the ground to provide fast, flexible, short-term assistance targeted at key transition needs. Its ability to assist local partners in addressing the root causes of conflict is key to bridging the gap between emergency relief and long-term sustainable development.

OTI's programs and resource allocations reflect U.S. foreign policy priorities in assisting transition countries during critical periods (generally two to three years) when they are most vulnerable to renewed conflict or instability (See Appendix A - OTI Country Selection Criteria). Because OTI possesses special programming flexibility, it can put staff on the ground swiftly to identify and act on what are often fleeting opportunities for systemic change. Working closely with local, national, international, and non-governmental partners, OTI carries out short-term, high-impact projects that increase momentum for peace, reconciliation, and reconstruction. There are no set responses; rather, strategies are tailored to meet the unique needs of each transition country. Typically, they are tested on a small scale and applied more broadly when it is clear that high impact is being achieved. Changing conditions are quickly reflected in new or modified strategies.

PROGRAM ACTIVITIES

Transforming violent conflict into a stable and just peace requires interventions on many levels. In addition to the track of diplomatic negotiations, there are political, social, economic and technical measures that can be taken to prevent or resolve conflict. In this report, OTI has divided these types of measures into five categories: expanding democratic political processes, building citizen security, promoting reconciliation, supporting peace negotiations, and cross-cutting themes.

Although this guide represents the experience of OTI activities in the field, it does not preclude future innovations, adaptations or refinements. Indeed, in order to remain relevant to dynamic transition opportunities all around the world, OTI continues to seek new and more effective measures against conflict. However, it is important to keep a record of past experience and share lessons learned for this reason.

Program Options for Transition Responses	before conflict	during conflict	after conflict
Expanding Democratic Political Processes			
Technical Assistance to Government Institutions		X	
Transparency/Accountability/Good Governance	X		X
Civil Society Development	X	X	X
Elections Assistance	X		X
Decentralization	X		X
Building Citizen Security			
Community Stabilization and Economic Relief			X
Civilian-Military Relations	X		X
Police Reform	X		X
Reintegrating Ex-Combatants			X
Mine Awareness Education and Action		X	X
Promoting Reconciliation			
Discrete Conflict Management	X	X	X
Domestic Judicial/Human Rights Processes	X		X
International Judicial/Human Rights Processes			X
Supporting Peace Negotiations			
Technical Assistance to Diplomatic Negotiation Teams		X	
Peace Initiatives		X	
Special Advisors	X	X	
Expanding the Negotiations		X	
Cross-Cutting Themes			
Community-Based Approaches	X		X
Media	X	X	X

Activities under these categories can be determined according to: stage of the conflict; objectives/goals of the interventions; country context; and pre-requisites that need to be in place.



Expanding Democratic Political Processes

Conflicts often turn violent because of the lack of legitimate mechanisms for addressing grievances and effecting change. Developing meaningful political participation at the local, regional, and national levels is therefore critical to building a stable peace.

OTI's activities help build the capacity of political institutions to respond to public expectations, creating space to reconcile differences peacefully.



Technical Assistance to Government Institutions

Description Technical assistance to host governments and NGOs is provided to build effective, responsive, and participatory democratic political institutions.

Objectives To enhance professionalism of government authorities and increase government's ability to address key transition issues through regulatory or policy reforms.

Prerequisites Political will on the part of the government must exist along with some basic government structures.

Stage of Conflict Before; After

OTI Experience Rwanda (1996-1998); Bosnia (1998); Nigeria (1999-2001); Zimbabwe (2000-2001); Indonesia (1999-2001); Sierra Leone (2000-2001); Serbia and Montenegro (2000-2001)

- Activities**
- Help newly elected government officials through training, visits, and special advisors to learn about different options for decentralizing government services and increasing citizen participation in local decision-making.
 - Support efforts of senior officials and key government ministries to address issues critical to the transition.
 - Provide information resources that enhance new government's understanding of immediate policy issues and options for reforms.
 - Bring voices and expertise of civil society and NGOs to bear on government decision making processes, through workshops, dialogue and development of white papers.

Examples OTI is helping the Government of Sierra Leone (GOSL) establish a legitimate diamond trade policy. Consultations between OTI, the U.S. Department of State, NGOs, other governments, and diamond industry representatives resulted in a shared approach to international sanctions on illicitly traded diamonds of Sierra

Leonean origin. A trilateral U.S./U.K./Belgian team is working with the GOSL on a new certification regime.

In Nigeria, in partnership with USAID's Center for Democracy and Governance and Management Systems International, OTI conducted training for over 11,000 newly elected officials in Nigeria, including all governors, National Assembly members and locally elected officials. The training was held throughout Nigeria during a six-week period in the spring of 1999 and focused on the basic building blocks of democracy - how government is organized, how to manage resources, what it means to be transparent and accountable, and how to mitigate conflict.



The Training for Good Governance program in Nigeria helped elected officials better understand their roles. One participant noted, "Before now, I thought that once you got elected, you wait for people to come to you with their problems or views. After the training, I realized it is important to go to the people, visit them in their homes, and reach out to them with information on the latest issues being addressed. Hearing their problems equips you for action."

Transparency/Accountability/Good Governance

Description The capacity of new government structures at all levels is built by enhancing official skills, improving communications between political officials and constituents, increasing positive links between local officials and national government authorities, and increasing accountability for government decisions and processes.

Objectives To help government become more responsive to constituents, accountable for its actions, and for government processes to become more democratic in nature. To help local governments gain a degree of fiscal and political autonomy. To improve capacity of NGOs to monitor and publicize government corruption. To enhance citizen oversight of government budget and operations.

Prerequisites Some existing government structure is needed along with political will on the part of the government to reform. An independent media and active civil society are also needed.

Stage of Conflict Before; After

OTI Experience Haiti (1994-1997); Liberia (1997); Nigeria (1999); Lebanon (2000); Honduras (1999/2000); Bosnia (1998-1999); Indonesia (1998-2001); Rwanda (1998); Albania (1999); Kosovo (1999); Zimbabwe (2000-2001); Serbia and Montenegro (2000-2001)

- Activities**
- Train newly elected officials about their roles and responsibilities, constituency building, transparency, structural reform, participatory decision-making methodologies and conflict management.
 - Fund audits of government ministries to demonstrate ability to manage donor funds according to internationally accepted procedures.
 - Initiate an anti-corruption media campaign.
 - Train journalists in investigative techniques to improve their “watchdog” capacity.



By replacing old bookkeeping records with computers, OTI is helping municipal governments in Lebanon become more efficient, effective, and transparent.

- Train elected local governments and municipal employees on the principles and methods of accountability such as budgeting and accounting systems.
- Establish links between public officials and ordinary citizens through organization and implementation of community improvement projects.
- Implement a citizens' oversight and complaint system.
- Improve capacity of government offices by providing additional staff and equipment.
- Help to establish checks and balances in governance institutions.
- Fund educational institutions and NGOs to provide research and implementation support for key executive and legislative offices.

Example

In Lebanon, OTI and the State University of New York/Albany worked with the Jounieh and Beirut municipalities to migrate revenue data from ledger books to a computerized revenue management system. When completed, the municipalities were able to quickly and transparently manage their revenues and update their tax rolls.

lessons learned: transparency

Because corruption is such a political issue, and anti-corruption efforts often seek to change the behavior of government officials or other elites, OTI learned that it must work within the larger structure of USAID and the Embassy to present a united U.S. Government policy. An integrated strategy is especially important when handing off programs to longer-term development actors in order to promote a sustained impact.

It is difficult to tackle corruption in a two-year time period, especially when it is pervasive and systematic. Corruption needs to be viewed as a cross-cutting issue and addressed in manageable ways throughout all programs and projects.



Civil Society Development

Description

The capacity of independent NGOs is strengthened to promote democratic and peace agendas for their organization, membership, constituency, and/or board of directors. Building civil society increases opportunities for individuals and groups to interact politically with the government (at all levels) to achieve major political change and to contribute to democratic processes.

Objectives

To support democratic pluralistic society and peaceful participation in the transition to democracy. To strengthen the operations and performance of civil society organizations in representing constituencies' interests and advocating for peaceful change. To improve government responsiveness and accountability. To build tolerance for alternative views and opinions.

Prerequisites

Some degree of openness is needed on the part of government for civil society organizations to exist. It is very helpful if there is some tradition of people working in and through associations, formal or informal.

Stage of Conflict

Before; After

OTI Experience

Bosnia (1997-2000); Sierra Leone (1997-2001); Croatia (1998-2000); Serbia and Montenegro (1997-2000); Indonesia (1998-2000); Nigeria 2000; Albania (1999-2000); Kosovo (1999-2000); Zimbabwe (2000-2001)

Activities

- Support civil society efforts to organize public forums, debates, and peaceful demonstrations.
- Build capacity of civil society organizations to define, articulate, advocate and disseminate political agendas.
- Assist efforts to contribute to electoral and other national debates.
- Publicize models of effective civic action.
- Sponsor workshops and trainings on areas of need, including team-building, media relations and conflict management.

- Help elite organizations to reach out to constituents and develop grassroots support.
- Link civil society groups with elected officials and media representatives.
- Assist civic groups in developing strategic plans and effective messages.

Example

In Serbia, OTI backed the efforts of civil society groups such as Otpor, a student opposition group that helped generate grassroots support for Milosevic's defeat in October 2000. OTI provided in-kind assistance for Otpor's outreach work, including hall rentals, air time for TV and radio, printing costs, and other campaign materials.



With OTI support, Otpor launched a campaign in the spring of 2001 to prompt the arrest of Milosevic. The campaign slogan asked the question, "Who is Guilty?"

lessons learned: civil society

- Civil society must work with media during all phases of a transition to create momentum for political change. Waiting too long to connect the two may have detrimental effects on NGO development. Although media are useful for communicating information, research shows that information alone is not enough to change opinions or actions. NGOs are the interpersonal link needed for people to learn about an issue and then be able to act on it. Creating partnerships between NGOs and media grantees can maximize donor impact.
- Each program should set up clear and specific criteria to decide when civil society funding is productive to the overall goals of the program.
- Support to civil society organizations should include message development and encouragement to pursue these messages in all organizational activities. However, there needs to be a balance between not having any involvement with the grantees once the funds are awarded and having complete control over their actions and messages. Grantee organizations have important roles to play in building civil society but their impact will be limited if the public believes that they are merely puppets of foreign governments.



Elections Assistance

Description Electoral assistance is provided to prepare for, conduct, observe and/or monitor an election, and to ensure that it is free and fair.

Objectives To fill critical donor gaps in assistance to electoral processes and reform efforts. To increase citizen participation and public confidence in electoral process. To increase the capacity of local communities to conduct free and fair elections. To improve understanding of electoral processes and promote informed decisions.

Prerequisites Political will for free and fair elections is needed on the part of the international community, local political actors, regional powers and neighboring states, and citizens.

Stage of Conflict Before; During (rarely); After

OTI Experience Liberia (1997); Rwanda (1998); Indonesia (1999); Bosnia (1996-2000); Croatia (1999); Kosovo (2000); Philippines (1999); Serbia and Montenegro (2000); Zimbabwe (2000-2001); East Timor (2001); Sierra Leone (2001)

- Activities**
- Support provision of voter information and civic education programs to inform citizens about the election process.
 - Fund “get out the vote” campaigns and local election monitoring efforts.
 - Provide outside monitors and specialized equipment as needed, including voting machines, ink, etc.
 - Assist in establishing and enforcing the rules by which elections are run.
 - Support candidates’ forums and public meetings to debate key election issues.
 - Train local monitors and observers.
 - Support efforts to prevent election-related violence.

Examples

For Indonesia's June 1999 parliamentary elections, OTI supported a massive civic and political education effort, featuring public service announcements, politically oriented debates in the local media and comprehensive grassroots education. Following the elections, OTI shifted programming to targeted projects that supported the new government, such as immediate training for newly-elected parliamentary officials in 10 of Indonesia's 26 provinces.

For Kosovo's first-ever municipal elections in October 2000, OTI sponsored a competition for the best elections-related programming on the radio. Eligibility was extended to local start-up stations as well as the larger Kosovo-wide outlets. OTI awarded three prizes of radio equipment to the top submissions.



Support of election processes can range from providing civic education to sponsoring parallel vote tabulations to supporting public debates.



Decentralization

Description Support is provided to decentralize state power and to encourage greater local participation in government decision-making. Programs are designed to help create new administrative arrangements such as regional autonomy.

Objectives To create a political environment in which access to political, economic, and social resources is fairly distributed. To improve the accountability of elected officials to local constituencies. To help put in place mechanisms to increase citizen involvement in political decision-making.

Prerequisites Agreement must be obtained within the central government and by political leaders to develop a power-sharing process.

Stage of Conflict Before; After

OTI Experience Rwanda (1998); Kosovo (1999); Zimbabwe (2000); Indonesia (2001); Peru (2001)

- Activities**
- Support government efforts to decentralize authority to local levels through training, technical assistance, and visits to other countries where decentralization has occurred.
 - Sponsor public hearings and forums on issues of decentralization of concern to local citizens, such as resource allocation and budget analysis.
 - Support citizen meetings that identify issues of local importance, prioritize these and then engage local legislators in seeking solutions.
 - Publish citizens' guides to local government structures, including roles, responsibilities, and information on how taxes are distributed.
 - Fund NGO development of plans and draft laws for redistribution of authorities between national and local governments.

- Bring national and state officials to local communities to meet with constituents and demand their participation as a prerequisite to donor contribution.
- Help governments establish regional/local development funds.
- Sponsor local community leaders' travel to participate in national meetings on power sharing.
- Help local communities develop plans for management and allocation of local resources.

Example

In Sumatra, Indonesia, OTI supported a series of public hearings at the district level in order to open the annual budget process to public scrutiny. (Previously, under the New Order, the budget was virtually a state secret.) At the hearings, civil society and district governments were able to share information and give critical input on the budget. This activity was part of a larger OTI effort to help Sumatrans understand the implications of a new regional autonomy law.



OTI supported public debates and forums prior to Kosovo's first-ever municipal elections. After the election, OTI worked on cultivating relationships between citizens and their new representatives.



Building Citizen Security

The number one concern of citizens in transition countries is often their own personal safety and security, and that of their families. Curtailing criminal and political violence is a prerequisite for sustainable economic development.

OTI's programs in this area are designed to promote conditions where civilians can travel in and around the country and return to their normal activities without fear of violence from former enemies, demobilized soldiers-turned-bandits, repressive security forces, and/or land mines.



Community Stabilization and Economic Relief

- Description** Providing short-term employment opportunities where the lack of economic infrastructure threatens to lead to instability and violence.
- Objectives** To infuse communities with economic resources that will allow them to begin reconstruction. To address critical public works. To prevent unemployed population from refueling conflict. To provide fast, tangible proof that international community can respond to urgent needs and provide hope for the future. To prevent large-scale migration to urban areas.
- Prerequisites** Local construction companies to provide management and supervision of employees, engineering and design services, and building materials and equipment.
- Stage of Conflict** After
- OTI Experience** Liberia (1997); East Timor (2000)
- Activities**
- Pay local workers to repair and rehabilitate roads, housing, schools, health clinics, water and power supplies.
- Example** In East Timor, OTI developed a jobs creation initiative, the Transitional Employment Project (TEP) that was able to provide immediate economic relief to thousands of unemployed East Timorese and address basic infrastructure needs. In a typical TEP program, OTI provided the capital, tools, and labor costs for small-scale community projects while UN district administrators provided management and oversight of the East Timorese workforce. The program put 65,000 people to work in all 13 districts of East Timor.



Civilian-Military Relations

Description Working with legislators, public officials, civil society, the media, and the academic community, assistance is provided to strengthen civilian understanding of military issues and/or facilitate improved civilian-military relations.

Objectives To enhance the capacity of civilians to exercise democratic control over the military. To broaden awareness and understanding of security issues, especially as a prerequisite toward achieving democratic ideals. To reduce friction and misunderstanding between civil and military cultures. To encourage civil society, the media, and the academic community to address civilian-military issues, especially as a prerequisite toward achieving democratic ideals. To start the process of re-professionalizing the military.

Prerequisites Political will is needed among civilian institutions to assume greater responsibility in the military realm.

Stage of Conflict Before; After

OTI Experience Indonesia (1999-2001); Nigeria (1999-2000); Peru (2001)

- Activities**
- Work with Defense and Intelligence committees in host country legislatures on procedures for military oversight.
 - Support media programs giving journalists the opportunity to learn more about defense issues and how to write about them to keep public debate alive.
 - Make grants to local NGOs and academics to facilitate discussion and document options for a military reform program that emphasizes civilian control.
 - Sponsor the production of a white paper for political debate and decisions on legislation.
 - Provide support for the development of an action plan to help guide the host government in transforming the military's role.

lessons learned: civilian–military

- 1 Heed legal restrictions but do not shy away from legitimate engagement in the civilian-military arena. Since USAID is prohibited from directly assisting foreign militaries, OTI has worked with civilian defense officials to build their capacity and interest in reform. Although the possibility of renewed military domination of a country's political life is often a key threat to success of the civilian, democratic government, this area has unfortunately previously been ignored for its political sensitivity.
- 2 When dealing with security issues like civilian-military relations, it is essential to weave civil society participation into the process. Because this approach often runs counter to the ways that both the military and the police operate, it is important to have a multi-disciplinary team work on any assistance program provided to the host government (i.e. any security program needs to be strongly rooted in the proper development context).
- 3 The appropriate and different roles and responsibilities of the military and the police must be clearly understood and part of any training or reform process. Otherwise, there is the danger that confusion on the part of the government, public and/or the two different forces could result in the inability of either institution to cope effectively with internal security problems and to uphold the rule of law.

- Work with partners to host dialogues and workshops to improve communication among civilian and military communities.

Example

In Nigeria, OTI paired a specialized U.S.-based consulting group with Nigerian counterparts to develop a comprehensive action plan for improving civilian-military relations. The plan was adopted and is being implemented jointly by both U.S. and Nigerian Governments. Among the changes being adopted is the inclusion of more civilian officials in the Ministry of Defense.



Retired Nigerian military from Cross River and Akwa Ibom states are retrained in computer skills and information technology in this OTI-funded project.

For more information on civilian-military relations, please visit <http://www.pdgs.org.ar>.



Police Reform

Description Assistance provided to reorient police toward protecting the rights of citizens rather than working as instruments of state repression.

Objectives To build a level of public trust and security necessary for socio-economic development. To consolidate democratic rule by placing the security forces under civilian control and integrating the police into society to serve and protect the public. To help the police address internal security issues that were formerly fulfilled by the military.

Prerequisites Political will on the part of the host government and the police force; access to technical experts.

Stage of Conflict Before; After

OTI Experience Nigeria (2000-2001)

- Activities**
- Support the development of a broad-based strategic plan for reform.
 - Bring civil society and human rights groups together with police, legislators and ministry officials to develop guidelines, objectives and oversight mechanisms for police.
 - Develop a network of NGOs and human rights groups to work with the police as partners in reform initiatives.

Example In Nigeria, OTI is working with the Nigeria Police Force, the Government of Nigeria and civil society to develop a strategic framework for broad-based police reform and modernization. From this framework, the USG, other donors and the GON have defined specific projects for implementation. OTI will not be participating in operational or tactical training nor will it provide enforcement equipment to police.



OTI/Nigeria brought together police and policy workers for a strategic planning session as part of its police reform effort.

Reintegrating Ex-Combatants

Description After combatants have been disarmed and collected into formal camps (“demobilized”), ex-combatants are helped to adjust to civilian life through skills training, education, counseling and other assistance.

Objectives To reduce the former combatants’ ability and desire to become political spoilers or to engage in criminal violence and/or to otherwise derail the peace and recovery processes. To prepare ex-combatants and their families for civilian life. To promote reconciliation between ex-combatants and civilian populations.

Prerequisites Ex-combatants must be disarmed and settled into demobilization camps. The military, rebel forces, and political leadership must show their commitment to the reintegration of ex-combatants by creating incentives for combatants to demobilize and making plans for their civilian roles. A minimum level of security must be established where reintegration processes will occur.

Stage of Conflict After

OTI Experience Haiti (1994-1997); Guatemala (1997-1998); Angola (1994-2000); Liberia (1996-1997); Philippines (1997-2000); Kosovo (1999-2000); Sierra Leone (2000-2001); Colombia (2001)

- Activities**
- Support construction of infrastructure for quartering, civic training, and education for ex-combatants.
 - Provide temporary jobs such as repairing roads and refurbishing schools and clinics.
 - Fund education and vocational training for ex-combatants and their families.
 - Provide inputs for income-generation activities.
 - Provide remedial schooling, trauma counseling, and family reintegration for child soldiers.



OTI worked with Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF) ex-combatants in Mindanao, Philippines. A key lesson learned from that program was to encourage active involvement of the host government.

Example

In Mindanao, Philippines, OTI worked with the Government of the Philippines to re-integrate ex-combatants from the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF). OTI addressed the problem on a village-by-village basis, working with ex-combatants in their efforts to become productive and self-sufficient. Assistance took the form of agricultural machinery, such as rice threshers and solar dryers. Both the government and the communities themselves were asked to contribute with labor, basic materials, training or funds. The program was successful because it offered not only the opportunity to make a living but also to learn new and profitable skills to increase their productivity, to expand incomes, and most importantly, to bring communities together. An evaluation of the program found that a significant outcome was the extent to which ex-combatants perceived their future as hopeful, therefore being less likely to re-arm. This was borne out during the ensuing conflict between the Government of the Philippines and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF). Not only did the MNLF ex-combatants stay out of the conflict, but they also acted as buffers between the violence and their communities.

Lessons learned: ex-combatants

- Fostering closer relationships between governments and communities improves mutual understanding of the long-term prospects for peace. It also means greater sustainability of programs and begins to address root causes of violence. These range from neglect of local infrastructure, lack of accountability on the part of government institutions, and inequitable distribution of resources.
- Despite the active involvement of government offices, former combatants may not be willing to give the government credit for the assistance they provided. Additional work may be needed to educate the community on the extent of the government's support.
- Technical training, such as bookkeeping, and use of equipment, may be insufficient if communities lack basic education. Basic education should be the first step in capacity building.
- Reintegration programs must not be limited exclusively to ex-combatants because that would create a new class of privileged citizens and reward people who resorted to violence. Other war-affected populations should be included.
- Cash payments to demobilized soldiers do not work as a method of (or substitute for) reintegration assistance. However, family stipends provided during formal training periods while the ex-combatant is unable to work may be justified (e.g., Haiti).

lessons learned: mine action

- 1 Landmine removal is most important when minefields inhibit development and implementation of other rehabilitation and recovery efforts.
- 2 Every mine action project should be linked into the country's national mine action plan.
- 3 When possible, fund a traditional demining NGO for mine removal. The high risks of demining require technical experts and there is a risk that a humanitarian NGO may not always take the advice of its technical experts.
- 4 Mine action grants should go beyond the traditional "area cleared" measurements. Grants should also include training for mine awareness in high-risk areas. Indicators of results should specify the number of people trained for mine awareness in high risk areas, agriculture area made available, IDPs moved, or the percentage increase of mines located due to awareness training.



Mine Awareness Education and Action

Description Mined areas are surveyed and marked, landmines are removed, local citizens are trained in mine removal techniques, landmine accident victims are supported, and information is disseminated about the whereabouts and effects of landmines.

Objectives To reduce the threat to civilians and relief operations posed by landmines and unexploded ordinance.

Prerequisites There must be agreement not to lay new mines. Mined areas must be free of violent conflict.

Stage of Conflict During (mine information and victim support only); After

OTI Experience Angola (1995-2000); Bosnia (1998); Kosovo (1999)

- Activities**
- Support landmine awareness campaigns through local and international media outlets.
 - Train local citizens in landmine removal techniques.
 - Survey, mark, and remove landmines in areas critical to re-settlement and the provision of humanitarian assistance.
 - Build an informational/reporting network in order to locate minefields.
 - Fund psychosocial support and vocational training for landmine survivors.

Example In Angola, OTI funded the training of 960 de-miners and dog handlers and a total of 2.5 million Angolans received mine awareness training/education. These activities made it possible to re-open 1,600 km. of roads to traffic, which enabled the delivery of food and other humanitarian assistance.



Promoting Reconciliation

As part of the peace-building process, OTI encourages reconciliation of groups emerging from violent conflict. By encouraging open public dialogue on past abuses, helping to build frameworks for accountability and justice, creating opportunities for constructive cooperation, and providing training in conflict management, OTI has helped societies cope with the past and begin to take steps toward reconciliation.



Discrete Conflict Management*

Description

Support is provided to local/regional/national organizations, political leaders at all levels of society, and the private sector for peace-making efforts.

Objectives

To identify root causes of conflict and violence and enable local populations to address them. To build national consensus on plans for the country's future and positive relationships between competing groups. To lay the foundation for more inclusive institutions and democratic mechanisms through public dialogue. To increase government's accountability for its actions and expand popular participation in government decision-making processes. To empower local groups to recognize and respond to conflict quickly and effectively.

Prerequisites

State-society relations should be ripe for developing a more democratic and participatory system. Relations between competing groups must be civil enough to allow for dialogue.

OTI Experience

Democratic Republic of the Congo (1998-1999); Guatemala (1997-1999); Sierra Leone (1998-2000); Indonesia (1999-2001); Nigeria (2000-2001); Zimbabwe (2000-2001); Colombia (2000-2001).

Activities

- Conduct trainings and workshops on conflict mediation techniques and work with participants to set up a conflict mediation network.
- Sponsor media campaigns to spread accurate information that can defuse explosive situations.
- Support regional reconciliation conferences that are sponsored by local government and citizen groups and bring together different groups to explore ways they can live together in peace.
- Provide capacity building training in advocacy and media relations to conflict resolution civil society organizations.
- Fund media campaigns before and after elections to reinforce the pledge of political parties to refrain from violence.

*This category covers direct conflict management activities. However, the bulk, if not all, of OTI's work contributes to effective conflict management. These include media, NGO support, reintegration, decentralization, and community stabilization.

The Ife-Modakeke Conflict Resolution Program

Conflict between the Ife and Modakeke in Nigeria's Osun State has been going on for over 150 years. Past attempts by police committees, state committees, and even presidential committees to resolve the conflict have had little, if any, success. In February 2000, OTI made a major commitment to assist these two communities to manage their differences without the use of violence.

In brief, the program began with a grant to the Modakeke Progressive Union, a community based umbrella organization that since 1948, has carried out development projects and community mobilization for development. The grant's objectives were to:

- Create awareness of communal conflict resolution and management;
- Identify causes and consequences of communal conflict;
- Generate a corps of conflict mediators;
- Import conflict resolution skills on vital stakeholders; and
- Enhance peace and development in Osun State.

The first activity was a five-day visit to introduce the training program to the Oba and key stakeholders in the Modakeke community including opinion and market leaders, leaders of road transport workers, youth leaders and village heads. Following on the visit, a three-day training program ►

- Support grassroots efforts that focus on non-violence and ways to solve community conflict peacefully.
- Support a committee of local women's NGOs to act as change agents within the community.
- Encourage and support networks of NGOs and community-based organizations involved with conflict mitigation activities to leverage resources and provide coverage to larger geographic areas.
- Identify and train local mediators.
- Establish networks of community and religious leaders who meet regularly to discuss areas of cooperation and as needed to defuse rising tensions.
- Fund studies to map conflicts and identify likely sources of violence.
- Identify stakeholders and spoilers and develop specific activities to engage them.



OTI has funded journalist training in conflict-prone settings through organizations like Internews. The curriculum they have developed, "Reporting for Peace," helps journalists learn to cover both sides of a conflict in a non-inflammatory manner.

conflict resolution program continued

was held on alternative dispute resolution techniques. Two hundred participants attended, including representatives of groups of youth, professionals, artisans, villages, and community leaders. A parallel effort was conducted through a grant to the Ife Development Board, which had the same objectives and activities as the one to the Modakeke Progressive Union.

As a direct result of these two grant activities, joint Ife/Modakeke workshops were held on “Forgiveness, Reconciliation and Transformative Leadership”. These workshops involved 15 representatives of the four critical stakeholder groups from each of the two communities. These four two-day workshops presented alternative dispute resolution theory and techniques, and most important, provided opportunities for each group of 30 Ife/Modakeke participants to commonly identify the fundamental issues involved in the conflicts between them and to jointly offer solutions. Also during the workshops a proposal was made and accepted to form an inter-community peace advocacy committee that would sustain the gains of the workshops. Since then the fighting has stopped and former adversaries are working together as members of the Inter-Community Peace Advocacy Committee.

To illustrate, The Modakeke Progressive Union reported an incident which, if not for the training workshop, would have degenerated into another round of killings and destruction between the two communities. In Modakeke on Wednesday, August 19, 2000, word was received that a member of their community had been killed. People rushing to the reported scene were stopped by the police. A short time later emissaries of the community were sent to Oshogbo to ask for directions from their community leaders, who were at that very moment participating in the alternative dispute resolution training workshop. Using the conflict management techniques they were learning at the workshop, the leaders questioned the emissaries as to the circumstances of the incident. The leaders then conferred and decided to send a strong message that the people should return to their homes and not resort to violence. Their instructions were obeyed and a potentially violent confrontation was averted.

lessons learned: discrete conflict management

- Center the strategy on civil society organizations as the most credible point of entry into conflicts.
- Whether working with conflicting groups or increasing the number of trained conflict management specialists, emphasize building capacities.
- Articulate a strategy from the start but ensure it includes the possibility of flexible response.
- A conflict management program requires a well-informed and nationally balanced program staff. Team building and staff development need to be part of the strategy.
- An advisory group or a regular program of contacts with key stakeholders is an important way to sustain focus and sensitivity to national peculiarities.



Domestic Judicial/Human Rights Processes

Description	As an important first step in the transition/recovery/ reconciliation process, assistance is provided to help governments and local communities deal with past human rights abuses and prevent new ones.
Objectives	To establish or support reforms of the national system to deal with past human rights abuses, war crimes, and/or impunity during critical stages of the transition. To support the development or strengthening of rule of law channels and mechanisms to prevent or mitigate violations of human rights.
Prerequisites	Strong local partners to support and apply political pressure to address issues related to past human rights abuses and war crimes.
Stage of Conflict	Before; After
OTI Experience	Rwanda 1996/1997; Indonesia; (1999-2000); East Timor (1999-2000); DROC (1998); Bosnia (1997/1998); Nigeria (2000-2001); Zimbabwe (2000-2001); Serbia and Montenegro (1998-2001); ECOWAS (1999)
Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provide technical assistance to ministry of justice to develop genocide law.• Fund grants for assessments or studies of legal reform possibilities. Sponsor national debates and conferences on constitutional reform.• Support training for human rights monitors.• Support collection and documentation of human rights abuses.• Fund resource centers to bring together members of society involved in human rights and legal issues.• Support legal challenges to government abuse of power.• Support under-resourced court systems and investigation units.
Example	In Africa, OTI funded an NGO to document human rights abuses and publish a weekly summary of acts of violence and intimidation. These reports were especially critical prior to and during parliamentary elections. The findings of the unit are being used by the NGO in legal challenges to argue the absence of conditions for free and fair elections in many constituencies.



International Judicial/Human Rights Processes

Description	International efforts are assisted in the documentation, investigation and prosecution of war crimes and genocide.
Objectives	To enable national reconciliation and conflict resolution by discovering the truth of what happened during the conflict and supporting public acknowledgement of crimes committed. To deter further abuses by prosecuting war criminals and by monitoring current activities.
Prerequisites	There must be significant political will on the part of regional and international actors to establish the truth and to hold the perpetrators accountable.
Stage of Conflict	After
OTI Experience	Rwanda (1996-2000); Kosovo (1999-2000); East Timor (1999-2000)
Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Disseminate information on war crimes tribunal processes.• Provide funding and technical assistance to jump-start the creation of an international tribunal.• Fund international human rights monitoring efforts to collect evidence and testimony for international tribunals.• Provide funding for documentation and discussion of war crimes.
Example	OTI managed a program in Rwanda that disseminated information on the International War Crimes Tribunal (ICTR). OTI's grantee was the only news organization that covered the Tribunal in English, the language spoken by many Tutsis, on a daily basis. All of the original ICTR-related articles and analysis pieces were carried by Africa News Service and Africa News Online, which distributed them to more than fifty newspapers around Africa.



Supporting peace Negotiations

OTI is sometimes requested by the diplomatic community to provide specialized assistance to the negotiation process. Often, what is needed in these cases is a rapid and flexible response to meet demands for technical expertise or special advisors. OTI has also stepped in to facilitate the negotiation process in the form of logistical support for mediators or by sponsoring the participation of civil society representatives.



Technical Assistance to Diplomatic Negotiation Teams

Description Technical assistance is provided to multilateral organizations and U.S. Government negotiation teams during the drafting of peace agreements.

Objectives To provide relevant information and incorporate realistic and operational components into the peace agreement. To broaden incentives for compliance with peace agreement.

Prerequisites Negotiation teams must request such technical assistance and the technical assistance team must be politically sensitive, collaborative in its approach, knowledgeable about the conflict and experienced in post-conflict work.

Stage of Conflict During

OTI Experience Angola (1994 Lusaka Protocol); Guatemala (1996); Sierra Leone (1999); ECOWAS (1999)

- Activities**
- Provide expertise on including a reintegration program for ex-combatants into the peace accords.
 - Conduct conflict analysis and provide cultural context for conflict resolution.
 - Fund participation of civil society groups in peace negotiations.
 - Fund media and informational campaigns in support of peace agreements.

Example OTI fielded a technical team to the Lome talks in Sierra Leone in April 1999 within three weeks of their commencement. Their contributions helped resolve contentious issues and contributed to the post-conflict focus on management of diamonds and other strategic resources.



Peace Initiatives

Description Immediate interventions are identified and implemented to build momentum in support of the peace process.

Objectives To expand public support for the peace process and build hope for the future.

Prerequisites A minimum level of security must exist so that activities can be implemented. The parties to the conflict, along with community members and donors, must be committed to a process that can result in peace.

Stage of Conflict During

OTI Experience Colombia (1999-present); Sri Lanka (1997-1998); Sierra Leone (1999-Lome); Kosovo (1998-1999); DROC (1999-2000); Aceh, Indonesia (2000-2001)

- Activities**
- Support workshops for local and national authorities and private sector groups to help design strategies for investing in peace process.
 - Work at the municipal levels by building partnerships between civil society and government through delivery of critical services identified by the community to address priority needs and show a peace dividend.
 - Assist implementation of a peace agreement by establishing citizen peace commissions.
 - Provide independent mediation expertise.
 - Finance independent analytical studies of conflictive issues as basis for peace negotiations.

Examples OTI developed a “Peace Fund” grant-making mechanism in Colombia with the International Organization of Migration (IOM) that provides seed money to local Colombian groups attempting to facilitate dialogue and bring an end to violence in their communi-



An OTI-funded peace grant went to a Colombia youth group to produce a CD on their situation in Colombia, their experiences of the ongoing conflict, and their hopes for peace.

ties. Grants under \$50,000 are made, with special attention paid to local initiatives that can have a national impact. Grantees include community radio and television stations, youth clubs and journalist groups promoting the use of neutral, non-inflammatory language in the media.

OTI employed another approach in Aceh, Indonesia, where it supported the work of an independent mediator, the Humanitarian Dialogue Center (HDC) of Switzerland. The Center is facilitating peace negotiations between the Free Aceh Movement (GAM) and the Government of Indonesia. OTI grants cover operational support and travel costs for the Aceh based Steering Committees, Security Monitoring Teams, and Public Information Unit. OTI also assisted prominent Achenese NGOs to publish calls for both sides to respect the cease-fire.



Special Advisors

Description Activities of a high-level special advisor, coordinator or facilitator are funded or supported with in-kind assistance to advance the negotiation and/or implementation of peace accords.

Objectives To provide better and updated information to USG and international organizations on the crisis. To facilitate coordination among donors. To improve the effectiveness of special envoys and expedite resolution of the conflict.

Prerequisites The advisor must have the visibility, personal stature and experience to marshal broad support; the parties to the conflict must value the stature and experience of the advisor.

Stage of Conflict Before; During

OTI Experience Greater Horn of Africa (1998–2000); War Torn Societies Project (1998-2000); Nigeria (1999); Great Lakes (1997/1998); Angola (2000); DROC (2000)

- Activities**
- Cover travel and logistical expenses for special advisors to provide technical assistance to national peace-building plans.
 - Fund efforts to track potential transition opportunities or provide input to a multilateral research effort on conflict.
 - Fund special advisors to attend donor conferences on transition-related issues.

Examples In Angola, OTI worked with the Government and UNDP to design a strategy of assistance that would help donors support Angola's reconstruction and rehabilitation in the short to medium term. The strategy included the development of a special fund to invest in parts of the country affected by conflict.

In the Democratic Republic of the Congo, a critical component of the Lusaka Peace Accords was a national dialogue to chart a peaceful transition to a democratically-elected government. The former President of Botswana was named in late 1999 as the

Facilitator for the Inter-Congolese Dialogue (ICD). Using funding designated through the Great Lakes Justice Initiative (GLJI), OTI supported the dialogue along with related activities to engage civil society in their country's transformation. OTI's funds covered things such as difficult-to-obtain communications equipment for the facilitator's offices in Kinshasa and Gaborone, and conference costs for preparatory ICD meetings.



A plaque demonstrating core values and a mission statement for the Nigerian Police Force, developed during an OTI-facilitated strategic planning session. Holding the plaque, from left to right, are the Permanent Secretary for Police Affairs, Deputy Inspector General for Police, Minister of Police Affairs, and an OTI Law Enforcement Consultant.



Expanding the Negotiations

Description Grassroots groups at the national, regional and/or local levels are empowered to provide input into peace/settlement processes.

Objectives To improve prospects for success of peace agreement by increasing input of key groups in the negotiation process.

Prerequisites The negotiation team must be willing to accept additional representatives, expand the agenda, and/or support public debate on agreement components. The new groups must possess knowledge of issues associated with the disputes.

Stage of Conflict During

OTI Experience Colombia (1999-2001); Sierra Leone (1999); DROC (2000)

- Activities**
- Strengthen the skills of the negotiators by providing training, research and support.
 - Support broad dissemination of information about peace negotiations.
 - Support civil society's efforts to engage the government in dialogue with opposing forces (rebels, insurgents, etc.)
 - Fund participation of civil society organizations in peace negotiations.
 - Provide training for NGOs on advocacy.

Examples In the Democratic Republic of Congo, OTI brought together civil society groups from across the country in October 1999 to meet with an umbrella organization and the All-Africa Council of Churches. This marked the first time that large numbers of Congolese from the east were able to travel freely to Kinshasa, and a rare opportunity for the government and civil society to engage in a frank discussion of political issues.

In Sierra Leone, during the April 1999 Lome peace negotiations, OTI supported civil society's engagement with the government to promote reconciliation and debate and development of consensus on key issues.



Cross-Cutting Themes

In order for conflict prevention, mitigation and resolution activities to be successful and sustainable in the long term, there must be substantial participation and ownership by the parties themselves. OTI has helped pioneer approaches to reconstruction, rehabilitation and reintegration that rest on the foundations of participatory development, engaging local communities in every stage of the process, from initial design through implementation. OTI amplifies this approach by helping local, independent media to broaden access to information, provide accurate and balanced news coverage, build public understanding of critical issues, and promote messages of peace and tolerance.



Community-Based Approaches*

Description

Support is provided to build the foundations for participatory decision-making at the community level on the immediate priorities for rehabilitation, recovery, and/or survival needs. Representatives from local government, NGOs, and civil society decide on priority activities and implement them together. Activities might include improvements to schools, water, health and sanitation facilities.

Objectives

To reestablish informal local governance in situations of a chaotic or failed state and in the absence of a functioning national government. To demonstrate the benefits of participatory decision-making through tangible projects which have immediate benefits. To bring former enemies together to decide common priorities. To build trust among participants (including trust between the community and donors). To identify and facilitate the growth of new leadership within the community.

Prerequisites

There must be access to the vulnerable populations who will form community groups. Communities must be willing to provide labor or other in-kind contributions to ensure local ownership.

Stage of Conflict

Before; During; After

OTI Experience

Angola (1994-1999); Haiti (1994-1997); DROC (1997-2000); Rwanda (1995-2000); Bosnia (1995-1996); Philippines (1999-2000); Kosovo (1999-2000); Albania (1999-2000); Colombia (1999-2000); Serbia (2001); Macedonia (2001)

Activities

- Create informal local rehabilitation/development councils with wide community participation.
- Support activities identified by local women's associations such as shelter, livestock, and income generation.

*For more information on this topic, please see the conference report by OTI and UNDP/ERD, entitled "Community-Based Approaches in Reintegration and Rehabilitation" on the OTI website (http://www.usaid.gov/hum_response/oti).

- Fund grants to communities to repair and re-open community centers, markets, and schools that benefit everyone.
- Find relevant international NGOs and donors to meet community needs in delivery of health and education services.
- Establish links between public officials and ordinary citizens through organization and implementation of community improvement projects.

Example

In post-conflict Kosovo, OTI helped Kosovars establish Community Improvement Councils (CICs). These CICs were composed of 12-15 people who reflected the diversity of their local population. They identified their community's priority reconstruction needs and OTI provided the material resources. Together, OTI and the CICs implemented more than 375 community improvement projects, including the reconstruction of schools, roads, community centers, and markets. The CICs emerged as representatives of their communities, providing other donors and international organizations with information on real needs and priorities as defined by Kosovars themselves.

In addition, CICs gave citizens an avenue to exercise political influence in their communities for their first time. An estimated 3,000 Kosovars participated directly in the CIC process and approximately 30,000 Kosovars actively participated in the implementation of projects. Overall, approximately one million Kosovars were served by CIC activities. Throughout the province, the OTI community development process brought together political factions within all ethnic communities to cooperate in identifying, prioritizing, and addressing community needs, a practice that was previously unfamiliar.

lessons learned: community-based approaches

Participants at USAID/OTI and UNDP/ERD's roundtable on "Community-Based Reintegration and Rehabilitation in Post-Conflict Settings" outlined the following recommendations for these types of programs:

- **Allow for flexibility within community-based programs.** Flexibility is crucial to allow for changes in the political and economic context, as well as the different needs of each community.
- **Define the objectives of community engagement.** There is a need to define the ultimate objectives of a community-based approach—whether it is reconciliation and political empowerment, or community engagement and project development. A focus on building democratic processes may mean that projects take longer to implement.
- **Plan for longer-term engagement with communities.** International organizations generally do not allow for sufficient time to engage with local communities. Development specialists should be on staff from the early stages of relief operations to improve relations and hand-off between emergency relief and development actors.

lessons learned continued

- **Plan for consistent funding and program approaches to post-conflict community programming.** The international community may take different approaches to engaging local populations in programs. To remedy this, there needs to be a more coherent and continuous commitment to using local structures, supporting local capacities, and building on them through advocacy development, training, and capacity building.
- **Recognize the influence of international organizations on the community.** The conscious or unconscious influence from international organizations often subtly dictates the direction of community change.
- **Understand local cultures.** International actors need to possess a better understanding of the local cultures in which they work. International organizations should conduct a conflict analysis to include an examination of specific local issues and relationships prior to, or at the early stage of project design. Practitioners need to develop a greater understanding of regional politics and influences, as well as a deeper recognition of the root causes of the conflict.
- **Promote better donor coordination.** Create a common, country- or region-wide vision that can help to direct resources, diminish the funding and programmatic gaps, and influence the central/local government.



The Kosovo Transition Initiative asked local community improvement councils to identify their priorities for community rehabilitation. Schools and infrastructure repair were among the most commonly identified.



Media

Description	Radio, television, print journalism and non-traditional media are assisted to promote peace, and encourage discussion of important transition issues. Media are used to disseminate factual information and/or multiple viewpoints.
Objectives	To help the public make more informed decisions. To expand public support for peaceful reconciliation and democratic values. To counter extremist propaganda and encourage public debate and discussion on critical issues. To support the independence and professionalism of the media. To multiply the effect of other transition programs.
Prerequisites	Some local media professionals must exist who are willing to work with USAID and/or its implementing partners. Knowledge is needed of the identity, capacity, and political will of local media outlets.
Stage of Conflict	Before; During; After
OTI Experience	Rwanda (1997-2000); Angola (1996-2000); Indonesia (1998-2000); Liberia (1997); Nigeria (1999-2001); Bosnia (1996-2000); Croatia (1997-2000); Serbia and Montenegro (1997-2000); Kosovo (1999-2000); East Timor (1999-2000); Sierra Leone (2000); Zimbabwe (2000-2001)
Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Pay for coverage of the proceedings of war crimes tribunals, public debates, town hall meetings or other forums.• Train journalists in order to increase the supply of accurate, uncensored news to the public.• Support NGOs to develop information campaigns on issues of public interest.• Provide equipment/support to enhance quality of information and increase circulation to information-poor regions.• Fund broad-scale national media campaigns to accelerate the democratic transition and to reinforce the messages of peace

tips for USAID-funded message campaigns

- 1 There are lots of local resources to help organize a media campaign. They can range from local advertising/public relations firms to international firms with a local presence to civil society groups with a strong handle on media. Resources can also include local radio and TV stations that may be able to produce appropriate materials for a low cost.
- 2 It doesn't take millions of dollars to have an effective campaign.
- 3 Western consultants can be helpful, but they cannot substitute for local insight.
- 4 Avoid simply airing a public-service announcement (PSA). It needs to be part of a larger media campaign. The message should be repeated as often as possible (as often as 8-10 times per day!).
- 5 Use multiple sources of media to reach different audiences and to reinforce the message. For example, broadcast a PSA, then hold a town hall meeting to discuss the topic. Make sure members of the press are there so they can write or broadcast news about the town hall meeting. Also use posters, billboards, bumper stickers, handbags or T-shirts to remind people of the message. Make a logo to identify the campaign so people know at a glance what the

tips continued

T-shirt or billboard is saying. Hold a logo or poster design contest to get people involved.

- 6 Use pre-testing and follow-on polls to determine if the message is reaching its target audience.
- 7 Know the audience and use representative focus groups when developing the message. A key communication principle is, “All messages must be designed as a function of the audience one wants to reach.”
- 8 Know your objectives. For example, are you disseminating information or do you want to create a change in the way people think/ behave?
- 9 Keep the message as simple as possible. The message should be locally driven.
- 10 Use music.
- 11 Include local opinion leaders in message development and campaign implementation. Their involvement will add credibility to the message and ensure that people will pay attention. The presence of community leaders at a campaign event can help to generate more interest by the public and the press.
- 12 Think carefully about using the USAID logo (or similar donor identification). It might be more

and reconciliation.

- Support media production facilities to produce voter information and civic education programming.
- Fund a “get-out-the-vote” campaign.
- Provide wind-up radios to community groups and election polling sites to ensure that critical information gets to key groups.
- Support independent, non-nationalist media outlets in order to provide alternative information to citizens.
- Support USG interagency efforts to boost objective news and information content through radio transmissions from neighboring countries in countries with repressive, state-controlled media.
- Provide support for stringer networks to encourage more diverse perspectives on events throughout the country.
- Work with host governments and media executives to develop initiatives on freedom of the press.
- Pay for newsprint, airtime or design services for voter education campaigns.
- Convene local advisory groups to develop advertising campaigns on key issues such as corruption, elections, and ethnic tolerance.
- Fund radio call-in shows and other news broadcasts to increase availability of factual information and improve level of debate.
- Support development of soap operas, dramas and other popular entertainment to spread important messages and educate target populations.

Example

In Croatia, OTI supported a comprehensive get-out-the-vote campaign that contributed to the highest voter turnout since the 1990 vote for independence. OTI worked with a coalition of four

major Croatian NGOs to develop the multi-media campaign. It was bolstered by other OTI-funded media activities including a weekly radio show and a weekly TV show, which focused on elections-related programming.

The Growing Role of Internet in Transitions

OTI is learning that Internet technology can play a role in transitions, as it does across the relief to development spectrum. The use of the Internet can be applied to a variety of transition programs, including elections processes, technical assistance to government institutions, and conflict management. OTI's experience includes:

- Providing Internet access to fifty local Indonesian radio stations, allowing them to download timely news from respected and balanced sources.
- Providing Internet access to opposition-led municipal governments as well as alternative radio stations in Serbia, enabling them to get information to and from the outside world despite government-imposed obstacles.
- Providing Internet access to voter information centers in Croatia prior to January 2000 election to increase available news and information that could effect voter behavior.
- Funding an Internet center and computer training and repair facility for an NGO umbrella organization in post-conflict East Timor to enhance news and information sources for NGO community.
- Providing Internet access to Nigerian journalist and conflict management groups to facilitate sharing of timely news and information from different regions of the country and dispel rumors.

tips continued

effective to put the campaign out under a local name. At the same time, there is something to be said for transparency.

- 13 Give people a way to respond to the campaign. Include a phone number, e-mail address, or interactive website for addressing questions and comments.
- 14 Obtain as much free airtime as possible, but do not hesitate to pay for airtime or newsprint when necessary. It may not be possible to maximize your audience on free airtime or newspaper space.
- 15 Conduct thorough exit polling to ascertain the effectiveness of the message campaign, and its reasons for success or failure.

OTI has produced a video highlighting its media approach and showcasing public service announcements from Indonesia, Nigeria and the Balkans. Please contact the OTI office for a copy.

lessons learned: media

- Direct funding to alternative media is an effective way to encourage challenging and political content in the beginning of a transition. However, if a donor extends beyond two years, it should adapt its funding mechanism for media to better prepare them for sustainability.
- If there is a significant media component in a transition plan, consider hiring local or international staff with expertise in media. The media business is much different than civil society, for example. Staff or consultants with technical media expertise can enhance the quality of media grants.
- It is possible to focus concurrently on a mix of media development and media content. While the initial need may be to create new media outlets, one can simultaneously spend time and energy on the development of new media programming for these outlets.
- Do not neglect state-run media when considering outlets for new programming. In Albania, offering a series to the national television station which highlighted citizen participation in infrastructure projects allowed the government to be seen as supporting these activities, a significant gesture in a post-authoritarian society.



An OTI/Kosovo grantee, The Forum, challenges Kosovars to say “enough” to violence. The poster is part of a larger OTI-funded media campaign that ran in the spring of 2001.



Appendix A: OTI Country Selection Criteria

Before engaging in a country or region, OTI considers whether it can play a pivotal role in the transition. OTI's resources are relatively modest, so programs must be carefully targeted for high impact.

OTI poses four main questions in determining whether to engage:

Is the country significant to U.S. national interests?

OTI programs are aligned with foreign policy objectives and priorities set by the U.S. Secretary of State. Though many transitions could benefit from OTI's assistance, funding constraints require that it focus on countries of particular importance to the United States. Humanitarian as well as strategic concerns factor into engagement decisions.

Is there a window of opportunity?

This question considers whether a country is in a period of transition. Typically, an event occurs—an election, a peace accord, or some other settlement—that signals movement away from conflict or instability and toward more stable, democratic governance. In addition, there must be sufficient political will in the country and an availability of reliable partners, both indigenous and international.

Is OTI best qualified to meet the particular transition needs of the country?

Before engaging, OTI must determine whether assistance from the USG is desired by local partners and will improve the chances for a successful transition. In addition, OTI considers whether it has a comparative advantage over other USG offices and programs. OTI will initiate a program only if there are no other offices able to address critical transition needs, and if OTI has the requisite skills, expertise, and financial resources to make a difference.

Is the operating environment sufficiently stable?

The environment must be secure enough to ensure the safety of OTI personnel and the proper monitoring of OTI funds.

In answering these questions, OTI elicits information from a wide range of sources. It draws on the knowledge of country experts, USAID, U.S. government offices, NGOs, and other donors. It also conducts an extensive review of academic journals, books, reports, and studies.

As part of the decision-making process, OTI conducts an in-depth field assessment, which serves as a basis for potential program strategy and design. Part of this assessment involves taking an inventory of all available in-country resources and proposed donor activities. The assessment is used to determine whether or not OTI will implement a country program—otherwise known as a “go” or “no go” decision.



U.S. Agency for International Development
Bureau for Humanitarian Response
Office of Transition Initiatives
1300 Pennsylvania Avenue., NW, Rm. 2.9B
Washington, D.C. 20523-8602
Tel: 202-712-5309
Fax: 202-712-3406
E-mail: oti@usaid.gov
http://www.usaid.gov/hum_response/oti