OLLI RUOHOMÄKI • TIMO KIVIMÄKI

# Peaceful solutions:
# NAVIGATING THE PREVENTION AND MITIGATION OF CONFLICTS

# PEACEFUL SOLUTIONS: NAVIGATING THE PREVENTION AND MITIGATION OF CONFLICTS

## An issues paper

OLLI RUOHOMÄKI and
TIMO KIVIMÄKI

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# Note from the Authors

This paper is mainly intended for non-specialist readers as an introduction to conflict prevention and mitigation issues. It highlights the dynamics behind conflicts with the intention of making the reader aware of the impact of violent conflicts on development processes.

The perspective taken focuses very much on development co-operation and some of the problems related to development co-operation programming. The paper is intended to assist in identifying programmes related to conflict prevention and mitigation, particularly from the viewpoint of bilateral development co-operation, hence the section on programme cycle considerations.

The paper includes a list of selected references and useful web-sites on conflict literature. Because the literature about conflict issues is continually evolving the reader is encouraged to seek further information from the listed web-sites, which provide up-to-date information on conflict related issues and links to other related sources.

Finally, a word of caution. Conflict prevention and mitigation is a vast field which keeps on evolving and it is not possible to write an exhaustive study, which considers every aspect of conflict prevention and mitigation, in a document of this length. Although there exists a wealth of literature on conflict dynamics, much of the literature tends to be highly specialised and compartmentalised. It often requires specialist knowledge to unravel the concepts and is often written from within a particular school of thought.

The objective of the present paper is more modest. It aims to provide the reader with an accessible sketch of the main issues which conflict prevention and mitigation confront as they unfold in contemporary development co-operation practice. I hope that the paper is thought-provoking and provides the development practitioner with tools for thinking and elements for discussion about ways of contributing to conflict prevention and mitigation.

Olli Ruohomäki
Helsinki

7 December 2000

# PREFACE

Violent conflicts have reversed or prevented economic and social development in many parts of the world. Socio-economic disparities, bad governance, abuses of human rights and environmental degradation affect the development process negatively. While inter-state wars have decreased, intra-state wars have become increasingly common. At the same time, civilians, particularly women and children, have become the victims.

Conflicts need to be managed in a non-violent manner through democratic processes. Governance structures must be made more responsive and accountable to the public. Marginalised groups must be given the means to participate more widely in the decision-making processes. Conditions must be created that are conducive to economic growth and sustainable development.

Conflict prevention and mitigation presents an enormous challenge for development co-operation. The present volume seeks a better understanding of what constitutes conflict prevention and mitigation in Finland's development co-operation. The volume discusses the conceptual premises of conflict prevention and mitigation, explores the dynamics behind conflict situations, examines the different modalities of conflict prevention available in Finland's development co-operation portfolio and offers examples of what can be done to help prevent conflicts.

Although post-conflict reconstruction and reconciliation programmes have also been in the realm of development co-operation for some time now it is worth noting that conflict prevention is much more cost-effective than dealing with the consequences of violent conflicts. One may argue that more resources should be spent on conflict prevention, i.e. support for good governance programmes, democracy programming, human rights education, peace-building programmes and different poverty alleviation programmes, in order to tackle structural problems that give rise to violent conflicts.

It should be noted that civilian crisis management is a new emerging theme in conflict prevention and mitigation and will no doubt play an important part in Finland's policies with the developing countries. Civilian crisis management is a field within conflict prevention and mitigation which is clearly growing in scope and the methodologies utilised are constantly evolving. Civilian crisis management provides new challenges to development co-operation programming as it requires rapid responses and flexibility on the part of actors involved.

A great deal of learning remains to be done and lessons learned need to be put into practice. We need to be realistic, yet creative, in our approaches to conflict prevention and mitigation.

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# Executive Summary

## Why an issues paper on conflict prevention and mitigation?

Finland has been involved in different conflict prevention and mitigation programmes in different parts of the world for some time already. Nonetheless, it could be said that the overall trend within Finnish development co-operation shows that projects and programmes related to conflict prevention and mitigation have clearly increased in the past decade. The modalities of support will be discussed in more detail later on, but it is worth noting that projects and programmes that can be considered to fall under the rubric of conflict prevention and mitigation range from post-conflict peace-building measures in Bosnia, Kosovo and East Timor to mine-clearance operations in Mozambique and Cambodia, to human rights monitoring and education in Burundi, Namibia and Guatemala, to strengthening civil society in Tanzania, Zambia, South Africa, Palestine and Nepal. Some of the projects and programmes have been undertaken through bilateral development co-operation channels and others in partnership with other donor agencies through multilateral development co-operation channels such as the World Bank, UN agencies and the EU. In addition, support for regional organisations and NGOs, both international and domestic, which focus on conflict prevention and mitigation work is an important channel for realising Finnish development policy aims in terms of conflict prevention and mitigation.

The objective of an issues paper on conflict prevention and mitigation is to explore the latest thinking around the concepts of conflict prevention and mitigation as they relate to Finland's policy on relations with developing countries. This paper will approach the concepts of conflict prevention and mitigation using the metaphor 'to navigate', which implies that there are many facets to conflict prevention and mitigation that need exploring, none of which are necessarily better than others, but all of which serve as food for thought and assist in operationalising the somewhat multi-faceted and complex concepts of conflict prevention and mitigation.

The premises for this paper lie in Finland's development policy aims, which include:

- promotion of global security
- reduction of widespread poverty
- promotion of human rights and democracy
- prevention of global environmental problems
- promotion of economic dialogue

These policy aims serve as the guiding parameters for Finnish development co-operation at a macro-level. Conflict prevention and mitigation are most closely associated with the policy aim of promotion of global security, although promotion of social equality, human rights and democracy and the reduction of poverty figure prominently too. However, it is not always clear how the policy aim of the promotion of global security should be translated into practice in a way that is congruent with the latest thinking and best practices concerning conflict prevention and mitigation.

The OECD/DAC has published guidelines on Conflict, Peace and Development Co-operation on the Threshold of the 21st Century. This document serves as an excellent point of departure for Finnish assistance and has been helpful in formulating programmes. Nonetheless, there is a need for a paper that explores the latest thinking and best practices concerning conflict prevention and mitigation, which is commensurate with the Finnish experiences, development policy aims and available human and financial resources.

The aim is to understand why conflicts take place, how conflicts can be tackled, who are the players in the field, what is the role of outside assistance, particularly development co-operation and what Finland can contribute to conflict prevention and mitigation. Hence this paper aims at clarifying concepts and unravelling the practical implications of policy statements for development co-operation practices.

## Approaches to conflict prevention and mitigation

Civil wars, with external involvement from neighbouring countries and/or private armies, have become typical for today's developing countries. The number of conflicts or the number of fatalities in them has not dramatically changed, even though the end of the Cold War tended to increase temporarily the likelihood of political violence. However, the concentration of wars in developing countries has made political instability more common in Africa and South Asia than in other regions.

Conflict prevention can be approached fruitfully in three different ways. Firstly, conflict behaviour - violent efforts by conflict parties aimed at imposing the will of one party over that of another - can be contained or re-channeled by means of conflict management. The strengthening of a developing country's democratic institutional capacity and civil society to deal with disputes and move them away from battlefields and into politics constitutes an effective opportunity in conflict prevention for development co-operation. Secondly, resolving disputes that give rise to violence is an effective strategy of conflict prevention within Finland's diplomacy in developing countries. However, perhaps most opportunities for development co-operation are offered by the so-called conflict transformation approach to conflict prevention. Development co-operation can effectively transform economic and institutional structures for interaction in developing countries to address the root causes of wars.

For efficient conflict prevention Finland should increase its conflict early-warning capabilities in cooperation with other donors and recipients of development co-operation and better identify the countries with conflict risks. These countries should each be designated a slightly different set of objectives in development co-operation and conflict prevention-related coordination should be intensive in relation to these countries. The conflict prevention priorities should be further specified and operationalised to allow more concrete advice concerning field activities. Development co-operation contractors in these countries should be expected to have, and should be willing to improve, capacities in dealing with conflict questions. Also the assessment and evaluation of activities in these areas should take into account the conflict prevention priorities. In project identification and formulation in conflict risk countries one should emphasise the efforts to prevent:

- Any drastic relative decline in the economic positions of groups compared to their earlier positions or their positions vis-à-vis other groups (relative deprivation)
- Clashes of structures of economic survival (expansion of incompatible types of production in the same areas, environmental degradation of resources vital to groups of people, etc.)
- The criminalisation of the economy and uncontrolled competition of groups over economic assets.

Projects should emphasise:

- Support for the structures of positive interaction
- The development of democratic institutions of dispute resolution
- The increasing of the capabilities of legitimate authorities to control the trade in small arms
- The integration of potential/former fighters into society.

Furthermore, the administration of development co-operation in the conflict-prone countries should be allowed to have greater flexibility and sensitivity regarding changing needs on the ground and it should especially try to create effective measures against corruption.

Conflict prevention and mitigation is a field that is constantly evolving and new ideas and practices are being developed. Many of the ideas are well suited for the various development co-operation instruments. At the same time the new practices easily confuse the scope of conflict prevention. It is not easy to define where conflict prevention and mitigation starts and ends as the concept of security is linked to so many aspects of human activity.

Nonetheless, as the DAC Guidelines on Conflict, Peace and Development point out, it is now accepted that structural stability, where dynamic and representative social and political structures are capable of managing change and resolving disputes without resorting to violence, is a necessary basis for sustainable development. At the same time the World Bank has alerted us to the risk of the criminalisation of the economy in developing countries. In addition to creating new non-violent channels of protest, conflict prevention efforts must also be able to assist developing countries to close down the existing windows of opportunity for illegitimate, gainful use of violence. Finally we must pay heed to the lessons learned by UNDP, according to which development co-operation also has to be able to address the grievances of deprived groups in order to do away with the motivations for conflict. If conflict prevention efforts are unable to prevent situations where fighting and looting have become the only viable options of economic survival for groups of people, no control of violence and no alternative channels of protest can prevent people from fighting.

Increasingly donors are called on to engage in conflict prevention and mitigation through policy dialogue and development co-operation instruments to assert significant influence on redirecting the dynamics toward peaceful development. This paper addresses to some extent the question as to how to go about implementing conflict prevention and mitigation, but there is still a considerable distance to go, notwithstanding the very fact that the dynamics of conflict keep on evolving.

## Emerging issues

Policy dialogue contributes to raising sensitive issues to public scrutiny and to developing responses to perceived needs.

Marshalling political will and financial resources are key factors in conflict prevention and mitigation. Analysing and understanding the root causes of conflicts and identifying ways for programmes to tackle problem issues have become crucial parts of development co-operation programming.

Development co-operation through its different modalities is in a position to assist in conflict prevention and mitigation by addressing structural inequalities and being a catalyst for disadvantaged groups to participate in the development of their country. Areas of intervention that would not have been considered ODA-eligible a few years ago, such as the small arms issue or aspects of security sector reform, are now ODA-eligible and methodologies are being developed to make interventions more effective.

There is a wide variety of instruments available for development co-operation in the field of conflict prevention and mitigation, ranging from demining operations to expanding local methodologies of local capacities for peace, to supporting human rights monitoring mechanisms, to development of the rule of law and support for

judicial systems, to strengthening the administrative capacities of post-conflict states and helping the situation of deprived groups.

What should be the focus of Finnish policies and development co-operation in the field of conflict prevention and mitigation? Matching needs with financial and human resources is the key factor in planning Finnish development co-operation. There must be scope for flexibility, but at the same time it is useful to concentrate on a limited number of methodologies of which Finland has experience.

There are a number of activities that can be supported through bilateral development co-operation programmes, including the support provided through the Local Funds in Finnish embassies and specific well-defined programmes such as demining operations. Bilateral co-operation places restrictions on geographic coverage as Finland has a limited field of bilateral development co-operation activity, mostly in Sub-Saharan Africa, Nepal, Vietnam and Nicaragua. On the other hand, this can be a strength as the programmes can be focused on particular problems, without forgetting donor co-ordination efforts to enhance the effectiveness of different donor interventions.

Finland can contribute to complex conflict prevention and mitigation programmes through multilateral channels in partnerships with other donor agencies. Using multilateral channels is particularly warranted when Finland wishes to participate in programmes where there is no bilateral development co-operation or when the issue is such that multi-faceted approaches are more effective.

Encouraging civil society participation in conflict prevention and mitigation is an area in which Finland can make a real contribution. Finland, as a democratic society which emphasises human rights and good governance, has considerable experience of civil society involvement in social processes on the domestic front. This means that Finland should push the civil society agenda on different fronts whenever appropriate. It is not a coincidence that NGO support figures prominently in Finnish development co-operation.

Finally, it is important to appreciate the fact that conflict prevention and mitigation is a process. No single policy dialogue or development co-operation programme can possibly prevent conflicts from happening. Rather, conflict prevention and mitigation programmes are contributions that can influence the course of events when coupled with all the other activities that unfold in practice on the ground. Lessons learned must be constantly fed into the planning process to make future programming more efficient and appropriate.

# NAVIGATING CONFLICT PREVENTION AND MITIGATION

## 1. Introduction

### Conflict prevention and mitigation as a wide field of activity

Finland has been involved in different conflict prevention and mitigation programmes in different parts of the world for some time already. Nonetheless, it could be said that the overall trend within Finnish development co-operation shows that projects and programmes related to conflict prevention and mitigation have clearly increased in the past decade. The modalities of support will be discussed in more detail later on, but it is worth noting that projects and programmes that can be considered to fall under the rubric of conflict prevention and mitigation range from post-conflict peace-building measures in Bosnia, Kosovo and East Timor to mine-clearance operations in Mozambique and Cambodia, to human rights monitoring and education in Burundi, Namibia and Guatemala, to strengthening civil society in Tanzania, Zambia, South Africa, Palestine and Nepal. Some of the projects and programmes have been undertaken through bilateral development co-operation channels and others in partnership with other donor agencies through multilateral development co-operation channels such as the World Bank, UN agencies and the EU. In addition, support for regional organisations and NGOs, both international and domestic, which focus on conflict prevention and mitigation work is an important channel for realising Finnish development policy aims in terms of conflict prevention and mitigation.

### Premises for the paper

The objective of an issues paper on conflict prevention and mitigation is to explore the latest thinking around the concepts of conflict prevention and mitigation as they relate to Finland's policy on relations with developing countries. This paper will approach the concepts of conflict prevention and mitigation using the metaphor 'to navigate', which implies that there are many facets to conflict prevention and mitigation that need exploring, none of which are necessarily better than others, but all of which serve as food for thought and assist in operationalising the somewhat multi-faceted and complex concepts of conflict prevention and mitigation.

The lead idea is to link the latest research with the practical world of policy dialogue and conflict prevention and mitigation. The focus of this paper is on the developing world. Hence, development co-operation instruments constitute a prominent part in the analysis of conflict prevention and mitigation.

The premises for this paper lie in Finland's development policy aims, which include:

- promotion of global security
- reduction of widespread poverty
- promotion of human rights and democracy
- prevention of global environmental problems
- promotion of economic dialogue

These policy aims serve as the guiding parameters for Finnish development co-operation at a macro-level. Conflict prevention and mitigation are most closely associated with the policy aim of promotion of global security, although promotion of social equality, human rights and democracy and the reduction of poverty figure prominently too. However, it is not always clear how the policy aim of the promotion of global security should be translated into practice in a way that is congruent with the latest thinking and best practices concerning conflict prevention and mitigation.

## Search for conceptual clarity

Security has come to be viewed as an all-encompassing condition in which people and communities live in freedom, peace and safety, participate fully in the process of governance, enjoy the protection of fundamental rights, have access to resources and the basic necessities of life and inhabit an environment which is not detrimental to their health and well-being. Conflict prevention and mitigation falls under the policy aim of 'promotion of global security', which is essentially about supporting the creation of conditions for peaceful, sustainable development and well-being. Well-functioning democratic processes and equally distributed economic and social well-being serve to prevent crises in advance and to resolve them peacefully.

Despite the above references to 'freedom, peace and safety', 'governance', 'fundamental rights', 'basic necessities of life' and 'well-being' it is not always easy to define what exactly constitutes conflict prevention and mitigation. From the view point of development co-operation policy-making must have practical implications. Statements about 'what should be done' have to be translated into questions about 'what can be done'.

## Why the need for an issues paper on conflict prevention and mitigation?

The OECD/DAC has published guidelines on Conflict, Peace and Development Co-operation on the Threshold of the 21st Century. This document serves as an excellent point of departure for Finnish assistance and has been helpful in formulat-

ing programmes. Nonetheless, there is a need for a paper that explores the latest thinking and best practices concerning conflict prevention and mitigation and which is commensurate with the Finnish experiences, development policy aims and available human and financial resources.

The aim is to understand why conflicts take place, how conflicts can be tackled, who are the players in the field, what is the role of outside assistance, particularly development co-operation and what Finland can contribute to conflict prevention and mitigation. Hence, this paper aims at clarifying concepts and unravelling the practical implications of policy statements for development co-operation practice.

### A note on the scope of the paper

Humanitarian assistance, although very much linked to conflict mitigation, is deliberately left out from the discussions in this paper because in order to do justice to the complex realities in the field the subject would warrant a separate paper of its own. Peace-keeping issues are also left out deliberately, as peace-keeping, although an important issue, is not ODA-eligible and therefore does not fall under the issues with which development co-operation is concerned.

## 2. Contemporary conflict dynamics

### 2.1. Concepts and themes

Conflict literature often refers to conflict prevention, not only as the prevention of the beginning of conflicts, but also as the prevention of the escalation of conflicts that have already erupted. Also, peace-building after a conflict has occurred is often considered as conflict prevention, since it usually focuses not only on the creation of the infrastructure needed for development, but also on building social capital to deal with the potential for new conflicts to emerge. Sometimes, however, conflict prevention is defined in a narrower way as measures that can be implemented before disputes escalate into violence. This interpretation is reserved for short-term measures, while the term 'structural prevention' is used for more long-term measures. In this document structural prevention is seen as one of the important components of conflict prevention.

## Conflict phases

Conflict prevention and mitigation activities are often divided into three phases:

1. pre-conflict phase activities,
   - situation of submerged tension
   - situation of rising tension
2. conflict phase activities, and
3. post-conflict phase activities.

In the OECD/DAC's Guidelines on Conflict, Peace and Development Co-operation the pre-conflict phase is divided into situations of submerged tension and situations of rising tension. In the pre-conflict phase the prevention of the outbreak of conflicts is the focus of activity, while in the conflict phase the main concerns are ending the conflict, limiting its costs by means of conflict mitigation, and preventing its escalation. While media attention and the diplomatic efforts of mediation and humanitarian operations often focus on the conflict phase, development cooperation can make its most useful contribution during the pre-conflict and post-conflict phases. Hence, whether one defines conflict prevention broadly or narrowly, the various conflict prevention instruments of development cooperation are primarily measures applicable prior to the eruption of violence (pre-conflict phase) or after violence has subsided (post-conflict phase). Civilian crisis management is more closely linked with conflict mitigation as the nature of the problem implies the need for acute, short-term measures. It is also associated with the conflict phase.

Conflicts begin when parties hold incompatible positions and each seeks to make its will prevail over the others - that is when static incompatibility is turned into dynamic incompatibility. This dynamism refers to the concept of conflict behaviour where parties to a conflict try to impose their positions on others.

## Violence as defining criteria

Very often conflict literature makes a distinction between conflicts and violent conflicts. This distinction is based on the nature of conflict behaviour. In some other documents and studies dynamic incompatibilities without violence are referred to as disputes, while conflict behaviour is always seen as violent and destructive. The term conflict prevention normally hints at the latter conceptual practice since the prevention of non-violent disputes is not necessarily desirable – after all, democratic politics is defined by continuing disputes. Conflicts that have claimed more than 1,000 lives are normally categorised as wars.

Another distinction in conflict literature is between dynamic incompatibility involving interstate violence and dynamic incompatibility involving violent acts committed by citizens. When an illegitimate, undemocratic regime imposes its will on groups of people by using violence, one normally talks about human rights violations or, in extreme cases, genocide. An example of systematic violence practiced by a regime in a post-conflict situation on a particular group of people is the discrimination against women by the Taleban in contemporary Afganistan. The distinction between conflict and government aggression against its citizens is problematic. The normative relevance of conflict prevention is based on the normative value of reducing violence. Yet, regardless of the distinction between a people's violence against their government and a government's violence against its people, conflict is often associated with lack of order or weak order. Empirical studies show that more than four times more people have been killed by governments (with poor human rights records) than by wars in the 20th century. Bad order seems more detrimental than lack of order and conflict prevention as restoration of order reduces conflicts, but may increase violence. This is why the question of the quality of order, especially the respect for human rights within a certain order, needs to be integrated into conflict prevention thinking.

## From conflict management to conflict transformation

According to the so-called 'conflict management position' the main opportunities in the prevention of violent conflicts are in the management of the conflict behaviour. It is thought that if only conflict behaviour can be kept in the sphere of political competition, violent conflicts can be avoided and non-violent disputes promoted. The management of conflict behaviour can be focused either on the military containment of violence or on the development of spaces for political competition. The former approach is represented by the traditional approach of military deterrence and defence, but also by the more recent ideas of peace enforcement. The latter is something that was initially presented as a conflict transformation strategy, but later considered as a conflict prevention strategy of its own. According to this view, development as such inherently involves changes in the relative economic position of different groups and this gives rise to disputes. While it is thus impossible to prevent disputes from arising, what conflict prevention can aim at is the promotion of peaceful conflict resolution mechanisms and institutions. Disputes are here brought into the sphere of politics and away from the sphere of warfare. The various means to promote democracy are seen as belonging to the latter category of conflict prevention which is very much about the management of conflict behaviour. This strategy is emphasised in the EU Guidelines of Peace-Building and Conflict Prevention and it appears that this emphasis is very much in line with the Nordic policies and practices.

Conflict prevention does not need to focus merely on conflict behaviour. It can also aim at the settlement of the dispute which lies behind the conflict behaviour by persuading the disputants, or one of them, to make compromises. This conflict/dispute resolution approach has for a long time represented the main mind-frame of international diplomacy, international security studies and peace research.

Often conflicts are caused by structural economic, political and social inequalities which give rise to disputes. In these conflicts, where disputes are expressions of deep-rooted conflict structures, solving the dispute behind the conflict behaviour would simply end one conflict while the existing conflict structures would give rise to other disputes and conflicts. Furthermore, if there is a fundamental economic incompatibility between groups of people no dispute resolution mechanism can do away with the disputes unless the structures of economic survival are addressed. These kinds of incompatibilities often exist in modernising states where a large proportion of the population relies on the diminishing natural resources for their livelihood.

> ### Box 1: Conflict Transformation
>
> Conflict Transformation is an approach in which conflicts are prevented from rising to the point of violence by intervening in the structures of interaction and replacing conflict structures with peaceful ones.  Countries in which particular ethnic groups specialise in particular economic activities are prone to experience civil unrest during periods of economic instability. The reason for this is that the impoverished consumers identify merchants by their ethnicity and attribute the problems they face to the doings of the merchants. For example, the Chinese in some Southeast Asian nations have been targeted as the scapegoats for economic hardships of the rural population even though the real causes of the problems may lie in fiscal management of state resources or regional macro-economic problems. Encouraging the development of a more diverse economic base and enabling previously deprived groups to partake in economic development is a way out from a situation in which one particular group holds all the economic resources.
> Conflict transformation does not, however, always mean the transformation of economic structures of conflict. One can also transform the ways in which people perceive politics by enhancing political participation and by making civil society a subject rather than just an object of politics.  Conflict transformation can also change the ways that people see their ethnicity or their collective identities in politics. In countries where the regime governs using divide and rule techniques by rallying ethnicity as a platform for mobilisation of political support, strengthening the independence of the media can mitigate the effects of divisive politics.

Conflict transformation is a particularly suitable strategy for conflict prevention using development co-operation instruments as its tool. Development co-operation almost always has an impact on economic structures, which again very often have conflict implications. This is in line with Finland's foreign policy documents, which

list security and conflict prevention questions as one of the main aims of Finland's policies towards developing countries. Also, the OECD/DAC emphasises conflict transformation as one of the main strategies of conflict prevention. Nonetheless, conflict transformation is not limited to using development co-operation tools. Finland's traditional policies of building up extensive security by using soft strategies, policies to build up the CSCE/OSCE framework, and the proposals related to soft security build-up made by Finland's and Sweden's former foreign ministers Tarja Halonen and Lena Hjelm-Wallen all represent the idea of tackling the conflict question by transforming the structures of interaction and replacing conflict structures with peaceful ones. In all these proposals confidence building and common identity play a major role in the creation of security.

### Table 1.  Approaches to conflict prevention and settlement.

|  | Crisis Management | Dispute Resolution | Conflict Transformation |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Objective** | De-escalation | Dispute Settlement | Change in Conflict Structures |
| **Target** | Conflict Behaviour | Dispute | Structures: social, political, economic |
| **Relation to Change** | Often status quo oriented | Status quo oriented | Change oriented |
| **Timing** | After ripening of conflict, also in pre-conflict phase. | After the emergence of the dispute | Ideally as early as possible, can be needed during the post-conflict phase |
| **Examples** | Peace-keeping; Arms Control; Peace Accords; Deployment of Human Rights Monitors | Peace Treaties; Agreement on Constitutions | Transformation of the Cold War dispute; Policies of peace-building through affirmative action; German integration into Europe after WW II. |

While conflict prevention defines the aim of Finnish policies in this sector in negative terms (as prevention of something), Finland's conflict prevention has always operated in a more positively defined framework of promoting peace and creating non-violent structures of interaction.

Violence is no longer perceived in scholarly or diplomatic communities merely as the absence of direct destruction, but also as a structural phenomenon, where the existing status quo is violent even if there is no ongoing violence among people. A situation is structurally violent, for example, if a regime imposes discriminatory rules concerning welfare services against a specific category of people, and this causes a decline in the life expectancy of that particular group.

Similarly, the concept of peace is no longer defined merely in negative terms as lack of direct violence. Positive peace is also co-operation towards the end of decreasing structures of inequality which exploit the poor and which weaken the health and prospects of a long life for the less advantaged. Here the success of conflict prevention can be measured by its efficiency in preventing decreases in life expectancy caused by actual and structural violence.

## 2.2. War at the turn of the millennium

### From inter-state wars to civil wars to intra-state violence

Intra-state violence has shifted to become the centre of focus in conflict research and conflict prevention diplomacy. This increasing emphasis on civil war is understandable since this type of conflict is much more typical of modern times than inter-state wars: according to a World Bank study of 101 armed conflicts around the world between 1989 and 1996, no less than 95 of the conflicts were internal. The nature of conflict has made the strict distinction between civil and inter-state wars difficult. Domestic wars and disputes are an important source of inter-state tension and domestic fighting is often combined with external involvement in favour of one of the conflicting parties. Finally, even in domestic wars different regions of countries behave differently. For example, in Indonesia in the year 2000 there were three armed conflicts with more than a thousand casualties (Aceh, Irian Jaya and the Moluccan Islands), while much of the rest of the country remained in peace. In some cases local structures of governance remain intact even though the capital city and the central administration have collapsed (Somalia, and the DRC-Congo are examples of such situations). In some cases mineral-rich areas remain calm due to private security arrangements in which private armies play a decisive role (oil-rich areas of Sumatra in 1958 and many of the resource rich areas in contemporary DRC-Congo and Chad are examples of such 'pockets of peace').

### Box 2: Conflict Trends

- Civil wars with indirect external involvement have become more typical than inter-state wars.
- The relative numbers of wars and battle deaths have not increased significantly over the past centuries.
- The end of the Cold War increased the probability of war in developing countries, but after the peak year of 1992, the numbers of wars and battle deaths have declined.
- Conflicts are now concentrated in developing countries, especially in Africa and South Asia.
- Conflicts are often caused either by a relative decline of the economic position of groups of people or by uncontrolled competition over diminishing natural resources and other economic assets.

The 1990s were more violent in terms of wars than many previous decades. Nonetheless there are no clear tendencies as to whether wars have become more frequent or destructive. Relative to the size of world population, the number of casualties in civil wars of the 1990s is comparable to the number of war casualties in the 1970s or even the 1940s, and certainly lower than in the 1860s. (These calculations are based on the Correlates of War data and UNDP figures for the casualties of the 1990s, and UNFPA data on population). In absolute terms the period of the 1990s was the first decade in which the number of civil war casualties was higher than the corresponding figure from the 1860s. Relative to the size of the population, inter-state wars claim fewer casualties than before.

The end of the Cold War and the collapse of the Soviet Union contributed to the rise in the number of civil wars since they created confusion in which politics could be framed in many alternative ways. While a successful coup d'état/revolution/change of regime in a socialist country almost always brought a pro-Western regime into power in the 1990s, it was common for the forces that overthrew the regime to disintegrate after the fall of the regime. This caused in many places a fragmentation of the political scene and contributed to violence and the collapse of the state in many countries. Very often this fragmentation took shape along ethnic lines of division. In 1991 at least one party was ethnically defined in 92 percent of the 27 intra-state conflicts. In 1994 all but five of the twenty-three intra-state wars being fought were based on communal rivalries and ethnic challenges to a state. By the end of the 1990s the number of ethnic wars had dropped sharply and many old ones have since been settled. While the number of wars peaked to 55 in 1992, the situation started to improve and there were 'only' 36 wars in 1998. This can be attributed to new ways of managing secessionism and nationalist passions by granting autonomy, devolving and sharing state power and recognising group rights.

**Graph 1:**

### Intensity of Wars
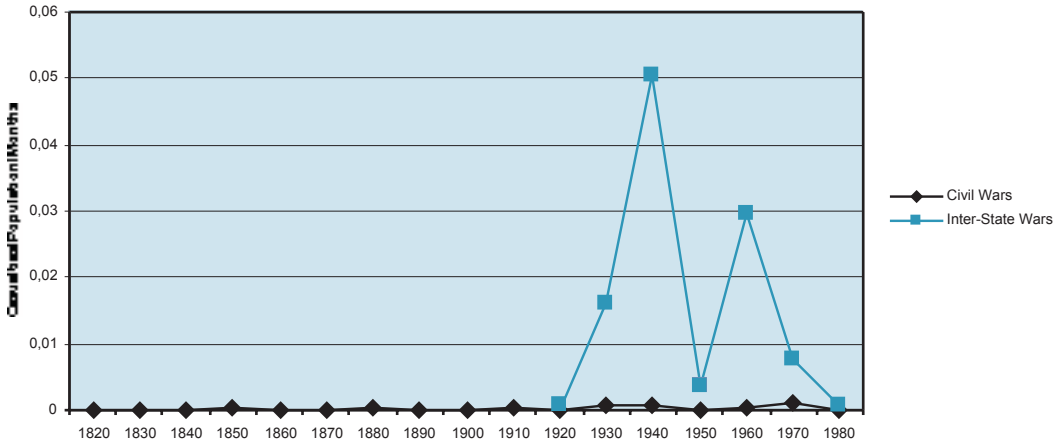


**Source: Correlates of War Project Database**

Since WWII conflicts have mostly occurred in developing countries, especially Africa, where the intensity (casualties/population/month) and seriousness (casualties/population) of civil wars have also been much higher than anywhere else. Since 1989 the occurrence of civil wars has been concentrated in developing countries, where African wars and wars in the southern republics of the former Soviet Union have produced most casualties. While wars were still more frequent in the Middle East, South Asia and South America than in Africa between 1960-1995, in the 1990s only South Asia (the region including, in this calculation, the southern areas of the former Soviet Union) experienced more frequent incidents of conflict than Africa.

## Causes of war

Concerning the causes of war there are two traditional schools of thought. On the one hand some researchers examine the motivations and relative deprivation of the initiators of direct violence and try to explain violence from that perspective (the relative deprivation model). Conflict prevention based on this kind of thinking emphasises the importance of preventing relative deprivation of ethnic, religious and regional groups, and classes.

**Graph 2:**

**Battlegrounds in the 1990's**
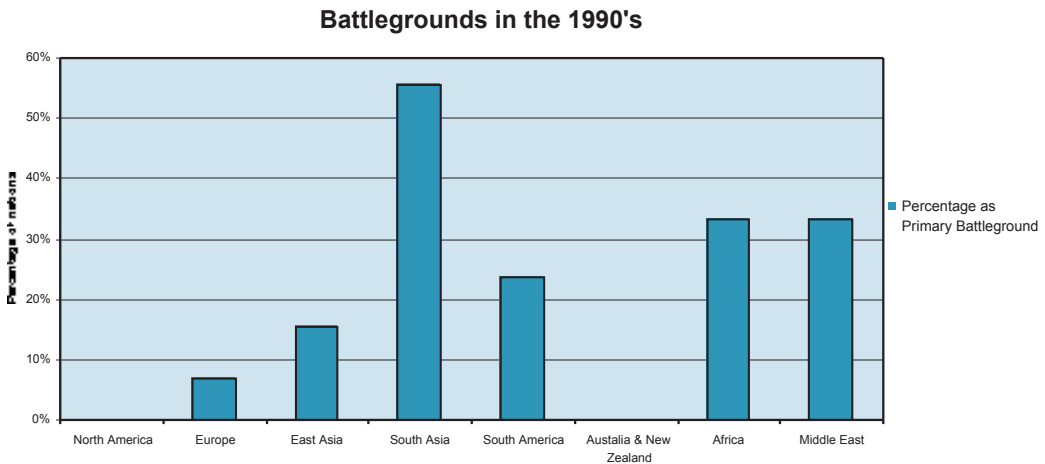


Source: Leger-Sivard 1996, CIA: World Factbook 1999

According to the other school, it is the opportunities that explain conflicts (the ratio-nalistic school of conflict, the resource mobilisation school, the democratic peace paradigm). A recent World Bank study suggests that conflicts are more about 'greed' than about 'grievances': parties to conflicts are more often seeking economic gains arising from the criminalisation of economies than improvement of the unjustly deprived status of their group. If the state is too weak to prevent violent mobilisa-tion, or control its security apparatus and prevent it from engaging in atrocities, con-flicts are likely to take place. On the opportunity side the question of opportunities for non-violent protest and expression of grievances is also relevant. Empirical evi-dence suggests that the expansion of non-violent channels of change substantially reduces conflict potential. Conflict prevention based on the latter type of thinking emphasises the build-up of democracy and institutional structures of dispute resolu-tion and the strengthening of a professional security apparatus. This strategy is strongly emphasised by the EU in its conflict prevention guidelines and is well exem-plified by Finland's contribution, for example, to the justice sector in South Africa (Justice 2000, see text box 4, Chapter 3.2.1).

What is common to both of the above schools of conflict thinking, is that conflict prevention which aims at addressing the root causes of conflict has several economic means at its disposal: relative deprivation can be prevented by well-targeted aid while international assistance in institution-building and education can address the oppor-tunity-related causes of conflict. For example, when international donor action

assists local governments in preventing the rise of urban unemployment, it on the one hand reduces the risk of relative deprivation of the urban poor, and on the other prevents the emergence of a class of people who can easily be mobilised to violence.

## 2.3 The rocky road to democracy

It is well accepted by scholars that democracy has a positive association with peace and development. One of the most spectacular 'laws of international relations' has been that democracies do not engage in armed conflicts with each other. Similarly, few, if any, democracies have experienced civil war or genocide. This is largely due to the fact that democratic institutions provide mechanisms for the peaceful resolution of protests. A person's likelihood of dying in a war is 2 1/3 times higher if (s)he lives in a totalitarian rather than in a democratic country. Furthermore, recent comparative research points out that democratisation processes in general do not increase conflict potential, except in cases of rapid and uneven transition.

Rapid and uneven transitions do pose a serious problem for sustainable development. Groups that hold the power to disrupt the democratisation process need particular attention. For example, it is essential that the grievances and employment opportunities of young urban men, especially former fighters, are given adequate attention. Also the rapid deterioration of the military's position in society has often proved to be problematic. The position of the civil administration is another issue that needs careful attention. Low salaries lead to the temptation of corruption, which erodes the legitimacy of a government in the eyes of the public.

Conflict prevention as a policy objective is closely linked with the eradication of poverty. There is a clear association between poverty and conflicts. Measured by almost any indicator, such as GNP/capita, life expectancy, literacy, etc., poor developing countries are more conflict prone than countries that are better off. It would appear that the level of development increases the threshold for violence.

The observation that the probability of war is relatively low among the least developed countries and highest among the slightly more developed countries, and that the probability of war drops drastically when countries develop, has been explained in various ways. While it is known that the level of development increases the threshold of violence, it has also been noticed that the first steps in the path to a modern market economy are dangerous. For example, the emergence of funds generated through taxes into the coffers of the state opens doors for opportunistic political, ethnic and other groups to compete for political power. Furthermore, as a consequence of international pressures to adopt the principles of accountability and transparency within a political system, a crisis is often caused in which the economic positions of different groups change. Such situations often lead to political protests among the losers in development.

The above issues point to the fact that conflict prevention is by no means an easy task and its implications are often highly controversial. Nonetheless, the eventual outcome of the road to democratic development is a situation which outweighs the risks involved.

# 3. Modalities for Finland's support in conflict prevention and mitigation

The following sections consider modalities for Finland's support in conflict prevention and mitigation. The modalities include: policy dialogue, development co-operation programming in the form of bilateral co-operation, multilateral co-operation, regional co-operation and NGO support and civilian crisis management. Besides examining the strengths and weaknesses of each modality of support, practical considerations are weighed. Examples are presented to illustrate the types of activities that can be considered to fall under the rubric of conflict prevention and mitigation. The aim of this chapter is not to present an exhaustive list of what Finland is doing in the field of conflict prevention and mitigation. Rather by highlighting certain aspects that have proven to be effective, the idea is to contribute to the development of methodologies most appropriate for Finland's support in the field of conflict prevention and mitigation.

## 3.1 Multilateral policy dialogue

### Political messages
As noted earlier, policy dialogue forms an integral part of Finland's policy on relations with developing countries. Besides bilateral dialogue Finland participates in dialogues with developing countries through the EU, the UN and the development banks. In terms of conflict prevention and mitigation policy dialogue plays an important part as policy dialogue is very much about sending political signals and raising issues on the table in different forums. Taken together, the Community and its Member States constitute the biggest donor of development aid in the world. This means that decisions concerning development aid are made considering democracy, good governance and human rights in both Finland's bilateral development co-operation partner countries and in EU development co-operation partner countries.

Certain agendas can be furthered through policy dialogues. Political messages in the form of EU "Troika initiatives" provide one example of this and the EU-ACP Joint Assemblies provide another. As a somewhat different example, provision is made for the suspension of aid under the 336a procedure of the LomÈ Convention, which states that in the case of serious violations of human rights, the European Community shall request consultations and may decide to suspend development co-

operation or other aspects of the Convention with a given country.

Imposing conditionalities on aid is one option that can work as long as the parties involved act in unison. Finland follows the policies of the EU in this regard. Pegging performance to particular criteria and indicators is the most effective means of following through issues set up in policy dialogue meetings. One such criterion is the percentage of military spending in the state budget. Finland has no specific guidelines on military expenditures and related subjects, nor have direct efforts targeted to reduce the influence of the military and the size of the military budget been part of Finnish policy to date. However, these subjects should be carefully considered when individual country policies are devised for development partners and when country programs are analysed. In common with many other donors, Finland is concerned that its development assistance should not be used indirectly, to enable a government to spend more on the military sector and less on another sector which would be subsidised by ODA. Military-related issues are considered of particular relevance for countries emerging from armed conflict.

### Box 3: EU Declarations - Angola January 2000

In January 2000 the European Union issued a Declaration by the Presidency on behalf of the European Union on Angola. The EU had been following closely the situation in Angola and remained convinced of the need for a political solution to bring a lasting peace to the country, allowing stability and progress for the Angolan people.

According to the EU, Dr. Jonas Savimbi, the leader of UNITA, bearing the prime responsibility for the war in Angola, continued to fail to comply with key provisions of the Lusaka Protocol. By acting in persistent defiance of the UN Security Council Resolutions, Dr Savimbi had deliberately chosen the path of conflict instead of fulfilling his undertakings, a course of action which casts legitimate doubts as to whether he really intended to work towards national reconciliation in Angola.

The EU urged UNITA to cease immediately its military activities and reaffirmed its determination to continue supporting all the international efforts to tighten the UN Security Council sanctions against UNITA.

The EU encouraged the Angolan Government to create the appropriate political, social and economic environment for democracy and the rule of law to flourish in Angola. The EU believed that the Government had a special responsibility for the promotion of human rights, including in those areas which were under UNITA's control, of democratic principles, good governance and the strengthening of a free civil society.

The EU called on the Government, as a signatory of the Ottawa Convention, and in particular on UNITA, to cease immediately mine-laying activities in the country.

The EU stated that it was ready to consider how to assist the Government of Angola in facing the challenges of rebuilding and reconstructing the country within a democratic environment.

## Practical considerations

Policy dialogue is an instrument of foreign policy through which sensitive issues can be tabled in different forums. Good governance, for instance, is a concept which gained currency in the 1990s and is now widely referred to on the various occasions when the international community discusses prerequisites for sustainable development. Good governance is invoked in round tables and consultative group meetings when the donor community wishes to signal preconditions for financing development programmes. Policy dialogue does have its limits. Dialogue can go only so far and action needs to be taken to support policy statements. It is the world of development co-operation programmes that give credence to policy dialogue.

Whatever policy dialogue measures are taken it is important that policy dialogue is clearly grounded in the regional policy strategies the MFA has for particular regions in which Finland has interests. In similar vein links to existing and planned budgets must be kept in mind. This basically means that in order to enhance the efficiency of Finland's interventions in the field of conflict prevention and mitigation a clear vision of the available financial resources must be available. When practising multilateral policy dialogue clear links should be made to the available multilateral funding windows that Finland supports. An example of this kind of action is a request coming from a region/country that is not a priority for Finnish bilateral development co-operation programming. Any support in such a case would come from the multilateral channels where Finland already pays membership dues. The EDF of the EU is a case in point of a funding window that has wide coverage and through which Finland supports a whole range of different interventions in regions/areas where Finland has few bilateral engagements.

### 3.2 Development Co-operation

#### ODA-eligibility

Projects and programmes that are funded through official development co-operation budgets are often referred to as official development assistance or ODA. ODA-eligibility plays a crucial role in determining what constitutes conflict prevention and mitigation in development co-operation programming. Peace-keeping missions, for example, do not fall under the rubric of conflict prevention and mitigation, albeit that they contribute to conflict prevention and mitigation. The institutional strengthening of legal and judicial systems on the other hand is ODA-eligible. In order for conflict prevention and mitigation programmes to be ODA-eligible they have to have a clear developmental objective, as is the case with the latter example.

The OECD/DAC policy marker system has been developed to facilitate monitoring and co-ordination of Members' activities in support of the DAC policy objectives

for the 21st century: reduction of poverty, gender equality, environmental sustainability and participatory development/good governance. The DAC policy marker system assists in defining what is ODA-eligible and what is not. Within the DAC statistical reporting system there are CRS purpose codes (CRS stands for creditor reporting system) that classify sectors of development co-operation aid projects under different headings. The headings under which conflict prevention and mitigation fall are: economic and development policy/planning, public sector financial management, legal and judicial development, government administration, strengthening civil society, post conflict peace-building (UN), elections, human rights, demobilisation, free flow of information and landmine clearance. Within each of these headings there are clarifications/additional notes on coverage. For example, the heading '150161 Post conflict peace-building (UN)' includes such activities as human rights and elections monitoring, rehabilitation of demobilised soldiers, rehabilitation of basic national infrastructure, monitoring or retraining of civil administrators and police forces, training in customs and border control procedures, advice or training in fiscal or macroeconomic stabilisation policy, repatriation and demobilisation of armed factions and disposal of their weapons and support for landmine removal.

Nonetheless, in recent years the scope of ODA-eligibility in terms of conflict prevention and mitigation has clearly evolved as a response to the challenges faced in development assistance. Within the OECD/DAC Taskforce on Conflict, Peace and Development, discussions about security sector reform provide a case in point. Lessons learned from the field indicate that unless security sector services, such as the police, the armed forces and the judiciary are brought within the domain of development co-operation, efforts to consolidate democracy and to promote human rights and good governance are only partially fulfilled. Therefore police and judicial reform are now considered to be ODA- eligible. Another example is the regulation of small arms to maintain public security. Only a few years ago small arms issues would not have been considered ODA-eligible, but recently it has been accepted that there is a need to increase the state's capacity to monitor, check and prevent illegal arms transfers and to collect and destroy surplus weapons as long as these activities are part of a crime prevention programme. These examples illustrate the point that ODA-eligibility questions respond to needs perceived to relate clearly to developmental issues.

### 3.2.1 Bilateral co-operation

#### In-depth engagements

Much of Finland's bilateral development co-operation is in a limited number of countries, currently including Ethiopia, Kenya, Mozambique, Namibia, Zambia, Tanzania, South Africa, Egypt, Nicaragua, Vietnam and Nepal. Bilateral development co-operation is the modality through which both human and financial

resources are effectively channelled for a number of reasons. Besides official representation of the Finnish state through the Finnish embassies, the substance of bilateral development co-operation is developed through regular country consultations. It is at this juncture that the policy aims of both parties are examined and programmes agreed on.

Raising the issue of military spending in the state budget is a way to signal concerns that Finland's development assistance is not used, indirectly, to enable a government to spend more on the military sector and less on other sector which would be subsidised by ODA. Similar concerns can be raised about governance and human rights issues. The UNDP Human Development Report 2000 points out that human development indexes (HDI) and human rights indicators have the aim of producing information that will give policy signals on how to improve human freedoms - such as freedom from want, freedom from fear and freedom from discrimination. They both rely on measures of outcomes and inputs to tell the story - not only literacy and infant mortality rates, but also teacher-pupil ratios and immunisation rates. They also use measures of averages and disaggregations, both global and local, to reveal information at many different levels. In similar vein Transparency International compiles an annual Corruption Perception Index (CPI) for diagnostic and monitoring work. This powerful and often controversial tool attracts the world media's attention in order to raise the standard of the global debate on corruption and put the issue on the front pages of newspapers in countries where reforms are needed.

Incorporating human development indicators, human rights indicators, gender development indicators, governance indicators and corruption perception indexes and reviewing past performance in the regular country consultations is a way of pegging performance on these important issues.

The detailed guidelines for programme formulation, monitoring and evaluation that exist for project cycles in bilateral development co-operation programming provide scope for detailed planning processes, which in turn enable an in-depth engagement in particular problems of selected partner countries to an extent that is often not feasible in other development co-operation modalities. In many cases a typical time frame for project planning, from identification of a problem to a fully developed project document ready for implementation, is 1.5 - 2 years.

Some of the partner countries with which Finland has development co-operation programmes have experienced violent conflicts in the past and future directions of development are not always clear. It is therefore important to assess the conflict potential of a given country in order to prioritise development assistance in unstable situations. By identifying significant problem areas that have the potential to lead to violent conflict in a given country, decisions can be made as to whether to assist through development co-operation instruments in dealing with the problems or whether to withdraw support altogether. For example, non-democratic and ineffec-

tive governance is one of the root causes of conflicts. Problem areas that need attention include legitimacy deficits of government and public institutions, insufficient or declining public services, criminality and social and political violence and biased law application and enforcement by judicial and security services. Interventions can then be planned to assist the partner countries in dealing with the problems. Sufficient political will within the partner country government must exist to address the problems, otherwise there is little scope for development co-operation interventions. Finland does not make decisions about engagement or disengagement alone, but works together with other EU member countries on these matters. For example, the ACP-EU Agreement sets the parameters for action in this regard.

## Practical considerations

### Funds for Local Co-operation

Finland has established Funds for Local Co-operation in most of its embassies in developing countries, which are primarily meant to support local civil society initiatives in the areas of democracy, good governance and human rights. Support can also be rendered to public sector institutions through programmes contributing to democracy, good governance and human rights agenda. There are specific guidelines for the Funds for Local Co-operation operations. Funds for Local Co-operation have now been established in most of the Finnish embassies in the developing countries. The operational modalities of these funds are evolving as lessons learned are fed into the planning system and policy development of the MFA. There is still considerable scope for further strengthening and harmonising of practices regarding the funds in different embassies. Nonetheless, it is highly likely that the Funds for Local Co-operation will play a crucial part in operationalising the conflict prevention and mitigation policy aims of the MFA in practice.

### Box 4: Justice Sector Support - South Africa

A predictable and reliable legal system is an essential element for democratisation, good governance and human rights. Stable and peaceful societies rest on the premises of rule of law, which is essentially about the fair and impartial application of the legal framework. Strengthening the judicial system is very much about conflict prevention. A justice system that is corrupt, arbitrary and unpredictable can trigger resistance within society and lead to escalating conflicts.

Justice 2000 is part of a larger justice sector reform programme in South Africa, which aims at developing the South African justice sector to be more compatible with the demands of modern society. The Finnish contribution of 3 million FIM for 1998-2000 is targeted at strengthening the local level courts.

Decisions concerning the allocation of resources determine the extent of Finnish support in particular programmes. Choices have to be made concerning the scope of interventions. Diversifying support to different types of activities engages development co-operation with a variety of settings, institutions and ways of working. While valuable lessons are learned there is a risk of spreading the administrative resources available too thin. Lessons learned from the field point out that it is perhaps more useful to concentrate on larger programmes with bigger budgets than to support very small-scale activities that require a lot of administrative resources. The question about administrative resources needs to be considered seriously as the personnel in Finnish embassies tends to be rather small. As one of the purposes of bilateral co-operation is to develop deeper relationships with partners it is important not spread activities beyond the administrative capacity of the embassies.

An important aspect of bilateral development co-operation is working together with like-minded countries on specific issues. For example, in the case of electoral assistance to Tanzania in 2000, Finland together with a number of like-minded countries supported civic education initiatives through a 'basket fund' administered by DANIDA. Besides donor co-ordination issues and enhancing the absorption capacity of partner organisations, such arrangements increase the effectiveness of activities supported by the donor community. When feasible, 'basket funding' arrangements should be sought.

## Other issues

**Box 5: Land Mine Clearance for Developmental Purposes – Cambodia, Bosnia, Mozambique, Angola and Kosovo**

Land mines and unexploded ordinance (UXOs) are the consequences of conflicts, which continue to kill and maim thousands of innocent civilians in pursuit of their livelihoods. Land mines and UXOs pose a serious security threat and are major obstacles to the resumption of normal life and sustainable development.

Land mine clearance and the removal of UXOs for developmental purposes have become a regular activity in post-conflict countries supported by the donor community. The focus has been on creating an indigenous capacity for mine removal using manual techniques, although military technologies of mine clearance are being tested in a variety of settings.

As national capacities for mine removal are enhanced increasing attention is being paid to the social and economic dimensions of demining. Land use issues and the selection of beneficiary communities need to be analysed to ensure that potential conflicts are dealt with in a democratic manner.

Finland's budget for humanitarian land mine clearance for developmental purposes for 1998-2001 is approximately 120 million FIM. Finland has been involved in mine clearance activities in Cambodia, Bosnia, Mozambique, Angola and more recently in Kosovo. Besides clearing operations mine awareness raising is an important part of the work.

Utilizing Finnish know-how is an important aspect of bilateral development co-operation in conflict prevention issues. This is best demonstrated in the mine clearance operations Finland has been supporting in Cambodia, Mozambique, Bosnia and Kosovo, where new technologies for mechanical demining have been tested, improved and utilised.

The use of Finnish know-how is linked to the question of available human resources, particularly in the form of consultancy companies. There are very few consultants specialising in conflict prevention and mitigation per se in Finland. However, there is considerable experience available of institutional development and planning and management issues, acquired in the more 'traditional' development co-operation programmes in the health, education and natural resource management sectors. Although there is a demand for specific expertise for particular programmes, as the demining example demonstrates, more often there is a need for experts who understand public policy development and who can work in partnerships with local experts in developing appropriate programmes in the fields of governance, democracy and human rights. Further training opportunities for consultants in these fields are clearly needed to develop a sufficient pool of expertise from which to draw resources.

### 3.2.2 Multilateral co-operation

#### Building partnerships

Support for conflict prevention and mitigation programmes through multilateral channels is an important modality for Finnish development co-operation. This is particularly true when Finland wants to be involved in complex processes in partnership with other actors and when bilateral action has limited efficacy. Multilateral channels include different UN agencies, the World Bank, the regional development banks, the EU and other organisations and arrangements. In most instances the main instrument for channelling financial support are the different Trust Funds and 'basket fund' arrangements in which different donors pool their resources under a commonly agreed framework of support. Furthermore, Trust Funds and 'basket fund' arrangements promote coherence and co-ordination between different donor approaches.

**Box 6: Post-Conflict Reconciliation, Reconstruction and Rehabilitation - East Timor**

Following the elections in August 1999, the majority of the people of East Timor voted for independence from Indonesia. The events that followed plunged the newly independent state into chaos as orchestrated violence after the announcement of the ballot results wreaked physical destruction and human terror throughout East Timor. Over 75 % of the population was displaced in the weeks following the ballot results and almost 70 % of physical infrastructure was destroyed or rendered inoperable.

The international community responded to the appeals of the East Timorese to assist them in rebuilding the country. In December 1999 the international community pledged approximately 520 million USD in a donor meeting on East Timor in Tokyo.

It was agreed that the funds were to be allocated to two trust funds, A reconstruction fund administered by the World Bank in partnership with the Asian Development Bank was established to cover sectors such as infrastructure, agriculture, health, education and macro-economics. The United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET) and East Timorese representatives were designated to be responsible for approving projects and overseeing their implementation.

A second trust fund was established to be administrated by UNTAET, focusing on governance and capacity-building projects as well as East Timorese public administration costs.

Finland pledged 7,5 million USD to the joint effort of reconstructing East Timor. Part of the funds were allocated to the reconstruction fund and part to the UNTAET administered trust fund.

The Tokyo donors' meeting was of particular significance as all donors agreed to pool their resources and let the UNTAET, World Bank and East Timorese representatives take the lead in co-ordinating aid.

The East Timor reconstruction effort is continuing and it is acknowledged that there a number of delivery-related problems, especially those arising from cumbersome administrative procedures that hinder rapid responses to East Timorese needs. Nonetheless, using the above trust fund modalities donors have managed to agree on common policies and also to avoid swamping the fledgling East Timorese administration with bilateral programmes which, in the East Timorese context, would have no doubt created confusion.

The objective of the reconstruction effort in East Timor is not to return to pre-crisis conditions but to lay the foundations for peace and sustainable development and hence break the cycle of conflict, to help in restoring a legitimate state administration, regarded by its citizens as serving all groups and able to allay tensions that inevitably persist in the post-conflict situation. As such Finland's involvement with East Timor through the UNTAET and World Bank administered Trust Funds is very much about conflict prevention.

## Box 7: Confidence-Building Measures - the Democratic Republic of the Congo

A cease-fire agreement to address the crisis in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) was signed in Lusaka in August 1999 between the leaders of the DRC, Angola, Namibia, Zimbabwe, Uganda and Rwanda and the leaders of two leading rebel groups the MLC and the RCD. The implementation of the Lusaka agreement has experienced serious problems due to lack of political will. A 'new' cease-fire was negotiated in April 2000 with optimism in the air. The Security Council passed a resolution for sending 500 military observers and 5000 peace-keepers if the different conflict parties commit to a cease-fire and guarantee the security of the UN personnel. Decisions concerning a fully-fledged peace-keeping operation remains open. The implementation of the Lusaka Cease-fire Agreement requires serious commitment from the conflict parties, the OAU, the UN and the international community.

A crucial element of the Lusaka Cease-fire Agreement is the holding of a National Dialogue in the DRC to establish a new constitutional and governance base that will bring durable peace to the DRC. The provision of a neutral Facilitator to implement the Dialogue is made in the Agreement. The ex-president of Botswana, Sir Ketumile Masire, accepted to act as the Facilitator.

The holding of the National Dialogue required support from the donor community and Finland allocated FIM 500,000 in support of the Dialogue. This support is channelled through a Trust Fund established for the Dialogue.

### Practical considerations

Supporting conflict prevention and mitigation programmes through multilateral channels is a particularly useful modality when Finland wishes to contribute to conflict prevention and mitigation in countries where there are no Finnish embassies and/or when Finland wishes to contribute to conflict prevention policy development on a regional and global level.

Donors are increasingly agreeing on co-ordinated approaches and different levels of pooling arrangements in order to support particular policy aims. Co-ordinated action raises the level of credibility of donor efforts. The special donor consultations, round-tables, consultative groups, etc. are good examples. Co-ordinated action in the form of Trust Funds and 'basket fund' arrangements and related jointly agreed monitoring and evaluation mechanisms also help to ease the strain on the absorption capacity of the partner countries. There are also problems involved in using multilateral channels. Perhaps the most serious one relates to delivery problems. Despite good intentions, lessons learned from the field point to the fact that multilateral efforts are often hindered, and their efficiency reduced, by cumbersome administrative processes. In this respect, Finland promotes good governance agenda within the different multilateral arrangements with which Finland is involved, especially in terms of the transparency and accountability of administrative procedures.

## 3.2.3 Regional Co-operation

### Box 8: SADC Regional Co-operation

Southern Africa is a good example of the need for regional co-operation to address problems of mutual interest. The region holds promise for economic growth and social developments that could serve as models for the rest of Africa. Nonetheless, the potential for conflict remains, arising from both short-term and longer term sources. There is a clear trend towards multi-party democracy, which is still incomplete. At national levels there are a number of factors that could destabilise the ongoing democratisation processes. These include unequal development within the countries, questions concerning the political legitimacy of certain governments, land-tenure problems and economic mismanagement. At an intra-state level there is potential for escalating tensions arising from illegal trafficking in drugs, arms and people, trade disputes, problems in absorbing refugees and differences over the equitable usage of the region's water resources. In addition, there are differing views over the war in Central Africa. Particular issues that appear to have a high regional profile include:

• regional security and stability
• small arms issues
• sharing of the region's water resources

Solving the above problems must also be undertaken at an intra-state level. In practice this means adopting a regional programme that would address the core issues that have regional-level importance for the countries in the SADC region. The different actors within the SADC region tend to view matters from a country perspective alone. Hence, it appears that issues affecting regional security and stability, small arms issues and sharing of the region's water resources should be enhanced through:

• state-to-state co-operation
• civil society-to-civil society co-operation
• civil society-to-state co-operation

The states of Southern Africa had for some time co-operated through the Southern African Development Co-ordination Conference (SADCC), which became the Southern African Development Community (SADC) in 1992 with changes in the political climate of South Africa. While promoting economic progress in the region has been on the agenda since the formation of the SADC, conflict prevention and management have been added on to form a further aim of the regional organisation. In 1996 the SADC decided to create the Organ for Politics, Defence and Security (OPDS) to facilitate co-operation and co-ordination in the fields of security and political affairs. The aim of the OPDS was to keep political-military issues from erupting into conflict by ensuring that they are addressed in a proactive and systematic manner. The OPDS put machinery into place for the prevention, management, and resolution of conflicts. This included an early warning system to identify potential sources of conflict within and between states, a regional diplomacy unit to encourage compromise, the development of regional arbitration procedures and mechanisms to guarantee an equitable sharing of the region's scarce water resources. Despite some progress a lot of work remains to be done within the SADC to address these issues.

### Spreading the Reach

Besides being active in a variety of multilateral forums, one way to enhance the work being done in the fields of conflict prevention and mitigation is to support regional co-operation mechanisms. Many of the same considerations that apply to multilateral co-operation are relevant to regional co-operation. Perhaps the main qualification is that regional co-operation focuses on a particular geographical region and is context-specific.

## Practical Considerations

Although supporting regional co-operation is an important channel for supporting conflict prevention and mitigation initiatives it is useful to limit the support to bodies/organisations that have a clear political mandate from member countries to execute programmes entrusted to them. Otherwise processes become stalled and resources are wasted. Around the world there are a number of 'institutional white elephants', which are unable to do much as member countries stall decision-making processes at every turn when the objectives of particular programmes do not suit them.

## 3.2.4 NGO support

### Empowering people at the grass-roots level

Supporting NGOs working with conflict prevention and mitigation issues is one viable modality for channelling Finland's development co-operation support in the area of conflict prevention. NGOs may contribute to facilitating spaces for dialogue and empowering people at different levels to enhance efforts for peace. Lessons learned from the field show that the contribution of NGOs to peacemaking and peace-building can be seen principally in their work when preparing the ground for efforts that can eventually result in effective peace processes. In particular, their capacity to have access to one or both parties to the conflict in an atmosphere characterised by a discreet, non-threatening approach can be a positive element. 'Citizen diplomacy' at various levels can provide vital capacities for reconciling different group interests over the long-term. International Alert, International Crisis Group and Search for Common Ground are examples of NGOs that work in this area and that have received support from Finland.

**Box 9: Facilitating Spaces for Dialogue - International Alert**

Finland has supported the international NGO International Alert for a number of years, in terms both of core-funding and of earmarked project funding. One of the countries where the organisation has been working is Burundi. Finland has supported the search for peace in Burundi through a number of multilateral channels, particularly through support to the Arusha peace process, and the support given through International Alert is one window that is felt to be useful.

In 1999, within the general aim of 'contributing to processes of change that are needed to secure a durable peace by and for the Burundian people,' Alert's activities included:

• Learning and Analysis - continuing to learn, analyse and share information about the causes of the conflict, and about forces and events affecting Burundi's progress to peace;
• Dialogue - supporting and facilitating dialogue and confidence-building between political and ethnic antagonists;
• Capacity-building - strengthening the knowledge and skills of individuals, and the capacities of groups and organisations to work for a just and sustainable peace;
• Catalyst action - acting as a catalyst in support of changes favourable to peace;
• Advocacy - contributing to policy-making by international actors and advocating appropriate measures on the basis of analysed information.

Finland views the activities of International Alert to be an important contribution towards strengthening civil society in the Burundian context.

Conflict analysis is another crucial contribution from NGOs working with conflict prevention and mitigation. In-depth understanding of the history and the socio-political context of the conflict and rigorous analyses of the dynamics of the conflict and the principal actors involved are needed a base for sound policy-making.

NGOs also contribute to conflict prevention and mitigation by acting as watch-dogs over state policies and their implementation (or lack of it). By drawing attention to problem issues advocacy NGOs may contribute to national development policies and donor interventions. An example of an NGO working in this sector that has been supported by Finland is Minority Rights Group.

> ### Box 10: Femmes Africa Solidarité
>
> In 2000 Finland supported an international NGO, Femmes Africa SolidaritÈ (FAS), which aims to promote and strengthen women's roles in conflict prevention, control and mitigation in Africa with FIM 200,000. FAS operates at various levels using a variety of means. Besides regional lobbying, education and organising seminars FAS operates on a national level and has supported women's participation in the Burundi peace process. Women's organisations in Burundi have now applied for additional support from FAS in order to continue their active work as peace negotiators in the Arusha process, ensuring that women are also included in the peace negotiations and in the building of a civil society.

## Practical considerations

One of the issues faced by development co-operation when it comes to considering NGO support for conflict prevention and mitigation is how to select the most appropriate and effective NGO. Furthermore, it is often difficult to decide whether to give core funding and when to give project funding. The track record of a particular NGO is an obvious indication. It appears that with some NGOs there is a 'virtuous circle' of funding, meaning that the better an NGO does its work the more it will be able to attract funding from donors. In these cases core funding is often the right approach, giving the NGO sufficient independence to develop its programmes. The implication is that despite the rapidly growing number of NGOs only a small handful qualify for substantial support.

The problem, however, is that there are a number of potentially efficient national NGOs which do good work, but which find it difficult to access funding because of lack of knowledge of donor procedures. In response to this perceived need, Finland has established Funds for Local Co-operation in most of its embassies in developing countries, and these are meant to support local civil society initiatives in the areas of democracy, good governance and human rights. Having Funds for Local Co-operation in the Finnish embassies would entail the fact that local civil society initiatives would only be supported in countries where Finland has official representation. Countries not covered by Finnish embassies can only be considered if there are guaranteed monitoring mechanisms in place either through multilateral organisations or international NGOs with established track records.

Lessons learned in the field point to the fact that, as there are a vast number of other actors supporting different initiatives in conflict prevention and mitigation work (and this also applies to a number of other sectors), Finland's support should be strategic and catalytic. While NGOs have much to contribute to conflict prevention and mitigation it is important to be on alert to the risk that the support they give to particular social institutions and authorities can at times be misinterpreted. Also some groups may be elitist or instruments of contending factors. Hence they

must be subjected to the careful scrutiny that all partners in development co-opera-
tion receive. Finland should support conflict prevention and the build-up of non-
violent democratic channels of protest without giving support to any particular posi-
tion in opposition to, or in favour of, actual government policies. International sup-
port for local NGOs should be such that it cannot be treated as 'international sup-
port for the legitimacy' of positions or views of particular NGOs. Otherwise, a struc-
ture of non-violent channels of protest is produced, which empowers the interna-
tional community rather than the deprived people.

Given Finland's limited resources there is not much point in funding a vast array
of initiatives. Rather, considerations for funding should be well-targeted and con-
tribute to perceived needs on the ground.

As noted earlier, the strength of NGO contributions to conflict prevention and
mitigation lies in the ability of NGOs to facilitate spaces for dialogue and to empow-
er people at different levels to enhance efforts for peaceful development. It is this
focus that should guide Finland's decisions of support when considering NGO fund-
ing. Furthermore, it is useful to develop partnerships with a limited number of
NGOs as it is easier to be involved in the work of a limited number of programme
portfolios through consultations than to keep track of a large number actors with
diverse programmes. In addition, limiting the number of NGOs to be supported
also opens the possibility for more substantial funding as long as the absorption
capacity of the NGO is not overwhelmed.

## 3.3 Civilian Crisis Management

### Modern-day 'fire brigades'

Civilian crisis management is very much about managing a crisis situation in a par-
ticular country or part of a country, or even a region, by the international communi-
ty. Civilian crisis management focuses very much on conflict mitigation, dealing
with acute needs arising from such natural catastrophes as floods, fires and earth-
quakes or the from the manmade catastrophes of warfare and other conflicts of a vio-
lent nature, rather than focusing on conflict prevention. Crisis management requires
rapid responses and flexibility on the part of the actors involved. The traditional pro-
ject/programme cycles related to development co-operation do not necessarily apply.
Neither do the criteria of projects and programmes having a straightforward devel-
opmental objective always apply. As such civilian crisis management is very much
about containment of the problems at hand. Civilian crisis management cannot deal
with the structural problems contributing to the crisis situation. This is more the
task of conflict prevention programmes, which attempt to address the problems with
a long-term perspective.

Nonetheless, the flexibility and rapidity of responses that are needed in civilian crisis management do not mean that decisions should be based on meagre background information or that the quality of interventions does not matter. Rather, given the nature of crisis situations, it is of paramount importance that the personnel involved in civil crisis management are well-trained and of a quality which meets international standards.

Civilian crisis management differs from peace-keeping operations in the sense that the actors are civilians representing the different areas of expertise which are needed to manage a situation. These actors include the civilian police, human rights monitors, electoral monitors, judges, personnel working on humanitarian assistance issues, mine clearance and rescue service personnel, administration personnel, media people and technical expertise personnel (to deal with infrastructure, etc.).

The continuum between civilian crisis management and post-conflict reconstruction is at times somewhat hazy. Nonetheless, post-conflict reconstruction usually begins when a peace agreement has been signed, the rudimentary structures of government administration apparatus are in place and ordinary people can begin rebuilding their lives.

In the autumn of 2000 Kosovo was still in a civilian crisis management situation whereas East Timor was well on its way into the post-conflict reconstruction phase.

It is worth noting that civilian crisis management requires vast resources from the international community and does not solve the underlying problems contributing to the crisis situation. Unfortunately the international community is drawn increasingly often into civilian crisis management situations as the "global fire-brigade", when the emphasis should be on conflict prevention. Such civilian crisis management, despite the moral imperatives confronting the developed world, is a reactive measure when proactive measures in the form of conflict prevention programmes are called for.

Nonetheless, civilian crisis management is a field of conflict prevention and mitigation, which is clearly growing in scope and the methodologies utilised are constantly evolving.

Finland's involvement in civilian crisis management is of crucial importance as it clearly relates to one of the main policy aims - promotion of global security.

**Box 11: Election Monitors  - Zimbabwe 2000**

In May 2000, the President of Zimbabwe, Mr. Mugabe, decided to organise parliamentary elections to be held 24-25 June. The political situation in the country had for a long time been unstable for a number of reasons such as Zimbabwe's participation in the DRC-Congo war, attacks on white farmers, the high unemployment rate, etc. Most of the administration was in the hands of the President and his party ZANU.

The UN did not receive a mandate to coordinate the election observation mission and hence the EU became involved. Besides the EU, the OAU, the Commonwealth and the SADC were involved in the observation mission. The GTZ was responsible for the practical arrangments on behalf of the EU. Through the EU Finland contributed four long-term and three short-term observers to the mission.

It became apparent that the presence of the international elections observers helped to ease the emotionally charged situation prior to and during the elections. The level of violence clearly decreased and pressure by the authorities against the opposition became less apparent.

Although there were a number of issues that the election observer mission could not solve, such as the registration of voters, the general conclusion was that the elections were fairer and more peaceful than if no international observers had been present.

Nonetheless, decisions about the involvement of Finland in different election observation missions must be considered carefully, taking into account the preparations in the field and the readiness of the different parties to receive foreign observers. Otherwise, the whole election observation mission may became an act 'rubber-stamping' an election which has been rigged prior to the casting of votes.

## Practical considerations

One of the most critical issues in civilian crisis management is that of matching available human resources with the needs in the field. The MFA has developed a roster system, which registers all the human resources in Finland which are available in case of need for civilian crisis management duties on a short notice in crisis situations. This roster is called SIREKE. The aim is to keep the information in SIREKE up to date in one central data bank, hence avoiding duplication and enhancing transparency in the recruitment process.

As human resource issues play a crucial role in determining the degree of Finnish involvement in civilian crisis management operations, it is necessary to develop further the capacities in the fields of human rights and democracy, mine clearance, rescue and recovery, environmental protection and logistics. The development of co-ordination mechanisms concerning civilian crisis management issues within the MFA and relevant institutions requires further attention. In Finland there exist a variety of institutions dealing with civilian crisis management whose expertise is available.

As noted earlier, the quality of personnel involved in civilian crisis management must meet international standards. This means that a comprehensive training system is needed to constantly up-date the skills of the people in the roster.

Personnel involved in civilian crisis management can be divided into three categories:

1) Experts who have specialist skills, for example judges, but who lack experience and need training in the concepts of civilian crisis management;
2) Human rights and election monitors who have some training and experience;
3) Project personnel who have experience, but need updating about the concepts of civilian training management.

One way of addressing training needs is to set up special courses that can certify that the person who has received training in civilian crisis management issues meets international standards. People would be sent on civilian crisis management operations only after completing the required course/s. For example, the OSCE has developed a training package for OSCE Mission Staff and personnel involved in future OSCE missions must meet the required standards.

An example of a course that would prepare personnel for civilian crisis managment operations could include:

• Introduction to rehabilitation of post-conflict societies
• Cross-cultural communication skills
• Safety and security
• Stress management and first aid
• Field work techniques

The Department for International Development Co-operation, MFA, has for a long time provided training (VALKU) for personnel being sent to development co-operation projects. The current VALKU-system could be slightly adjusted to accomodate the special needs of personnel involved in civilian crisis management operations.

In terms of civilian crisis management operations, activities can be undertaken through specific programmes, for example by contributing civilian police or human rights monitors to multinational operations administered by the EU or the UN or others, or by channelling funds to organisations conducting civilian crisis management operations such as the International Red Cross. Decisions concerning the modalities of action depend on the available financial and human resources. It is worth noting, that Finland cannot be involved in every civilian crisis management operation in the world despite perceived needs. Decisions need to be taken concerning the scope of involvement and the countries and region concerned. Despite the

moral imperatives involved some crisis situations will be of more direct concern to Finland than others. In such situations there will no doubt be a correlation between the use of human resources and the degree of involvement.

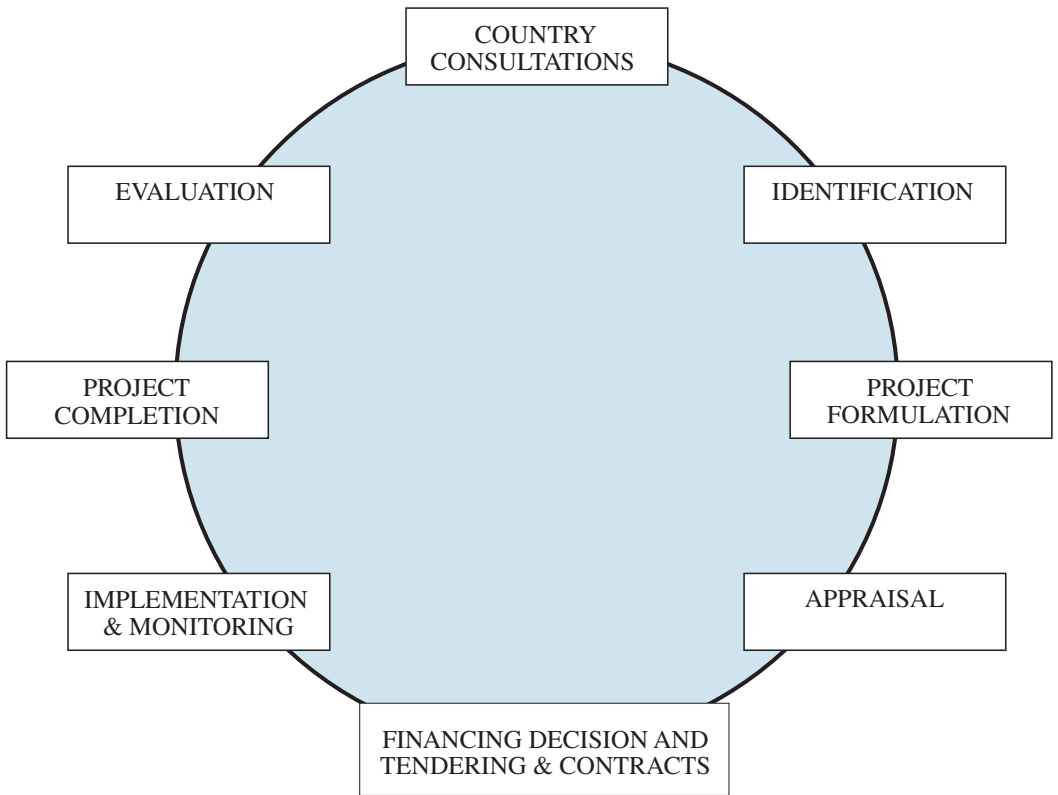# 4. Programme cycle considerations

### 4.1 Enhancing the effectiveness of interventions

Current conflict trends and the recent progress in conflict research strongly support the idea of taking conflict issues seriously while planning development co-operation. Present-day conflicts are concentrated in developing countries, especially in Africa. Secondly, clear causal links have been discovered between the development of economic structures and conflict. In addition, there is new progress in research on conflict prevention - especially the discoveries concerning the possibility of transforming conflict structures – so there are good grounds for emphasising the opportunities offered by development co-operation for conflict prevention. Above all, it appears that conflict prevention is much more cost-effective than dealing with the consequences of conflict.

In the following sections the opportunities for conflict prevention that ODA instruments can offer will be discussed by taking the program cycle of development co-operation as a starting point. The latest conflict studies have revealed several ways of taking conflict prevention priorities into consideration in development co-operation programming, and many of the new approaches can be applied in one or several of the phases of the program cycle.

**Figure 1:**

**Program Cycle**



COUNTRY CONSULTATIONS

EVALUATION

IDENTIFICATION

PROJECT COMPLETION

PROJECT FORMULATION

IMPLEMENTATION & MONITORING

APPRAISAL

FINANCING DECISION AND TENDERING & CONTRACTS

## Country Consultations & Programming

When preparing for country consultations the following issues need to be addressed:

- A general analysis of whether or not there are conflicts present in the partner country
- An analysis of the institutional mechanisms of the partner country in addressing potential conflicts
- An analysis of the policies and actions of the donor community in terms of conflict prevention
- An analysis of the policy objectives of Finland and the partner country in terms of development co-operation, particularly regarding:
  - objectives and indicators
  - priority sectors
  - available instruments
- An analysis of the development co-operation programme
- An analysis of fund allocations.

It should be noted that the country consultations for bilateral development co-operation differ from multilateral consultations such as the Round Tables and Consultative Group Meetings. Some of the more thorny conflict issues are better treated in multilateral consultations.

Conflict-prone countries should be treated differently from other developing countries during country consultations. There is a need to develop a 'conflict watch list', which lists countries that need careful attention in terms of conflict issues. Particular attention needs to be paid to early crisis warning signals. Furthermore, there is a need to train MFA staff together with people from other countries, especially within the EU, in awareness and knowledge about the relationship between the effects of aid and the development of conflict potential. In this context MFA's close contacts with the international research community should be fully utilised.

When considering the aims of promoting positive peace and reducing violence, there may be a different understanding of what constitutes conflict prevention among different donors and partner countries. If there are clear incompatibilities in the conflict prevention strategies of the donors and the partners, country consultations can prove difficult. Sometimes, however, it has been possible for the donor community to use conditionality to promote less coercive governance in dealing with dissidence. In Kenya, for example, it has been possible for the donor community to assist the government in reducing the potential for conflict by addressing the grievances of particular groups of people who have been discriminated against in past national development strategies. At times donor leverage has contributed many benefits in the promotion of democracy, human rights and non-violence. (Ethical con-

siderations and questions concerning possible conflicts with sovereignty will be discussed in Section 4.3.)

Budget support gives particularly powerful leverage. At the same time budget support has some ethical considerations in non-democratic countries and adverse conflict influences in coercive states. In aid-dependent developing countries international support and criticism are also very important for the perceived legitimacy of the government and this gives a further boost to the leverage of donors in country consultations.

Aid money very often represents a sizeable portion of the national economy, and when compared to all public spending its importance is even more significant. Thus it has quite fundamental effects in economic and institutional structures. If conflict transformation strategies are applied consciously, the total effect of aid can be very positive. However, without co-ordination the effects may be minimised, and development co-operation which does not at all consider the overall conflict effects of aid can create economic and political structures of conflict. One of the historical administrative burdens in this respect is the fact that aid organisations have been separated within the foreign affairs bureaucracy from the political affairs bureaucracy. In some countries this situation has resulted in the problem of policy dialogue becoming easily separated from the day-to-day affairs of running programmes. Development towards better co-ordination between political affairs and development co-operation administration within donor countries is a field where a lot of work remains to be done.

**Country consultations:**

- Identify conflict countries (conflict watch list).
- Analyse the causes for the conflict.
- Analyse the institutional mechanisms of the partner country in addressing potential conflicts.
- Analyse the policies and actions of the donor community in terms of conflict prevention.
- Analyse the policy objectives of Finland and the partner country in terms of development co-operation, particularly,
- the objectives and indicators;
- priority sectors;
- available instruments.
- Co-ordinate politics and aid.

## Project Identification and Formulation

### Identification of Beneficiaries

During project identification and formulation the following analyses should be taken into account:

- Analysis of the beneficiaries
-  Analysis of the problems encountered by the beneficiaries
- Analysis of the available resources
- Analysis of the available strategies to address the needs of the beneficiaries

In order to address the grievances that give rise to disputes between groups of people, development co-operation should target the groups whose economic position is deteriorating. This can be done by operating in the geographic areas where the relatively deprived population lives (the beneficiaries) or by focusing on activities which benefit this group (the type of aid). Very often relative deprivation is caused by a conscious policy of discrimination by the central government. Discrimination is normally aimed at regions in which people do not support the regime. Thus the targeting of relatively deprived people often means going slightly against the national development priorities of some recipient countries. In these cases targeting the areas or ethnic groups that monopolise the national development planning can only add to the grievances of the relatively deprived people. In some other instances targeting relatively deprived people means supporting affirmative action to cushion the effects of structural adjustment programs.

### Box 12: Relative Deprivation as a Source of Conflict

Relative deprivation of a group of people means a discrepancy between the expected and actual levels of well-being as a consequence of a rapid deterioration of the (mainly economic) status of the group compared either with its earlier status or with another group or other groups. Relative deprivation can be found behind many if not most protracted conflicts: the status of the Tamils, who were favoured by the British administration, declined relative to that of the of Singhalese when Sri Lanka became independent, just as the Tutsis lost status relative to the Hutus when Rwanda became independent, and Kosovo Albanians were the relative losers after the disintegration of Yugoslavia (as were Serbs after the entrance of NATO into the area). In Aceh, incorporation within newly independent Indonesia reduced the power of the non-religious local elite compared to the situation under Japanese occupation, and in the Moluccan Islands the position of Christians, who were favoured by the Dutch, deteriorated relative to that of the local and Javanese Moslems after Indonesian independence.

Sometimes the targeting of people who have been relatively deprived as a result of bigger political, economic or climatic changes – droughts, independence or transformation from socialism to a market economy for instance – requires contributions to fundamental changes in the economic structures of production in a national economy. For example, offering alternative employment opportunities to pastoralists of drought-ridden areas may be the only way of accommodating and disarming people who could otherwise become involved in violent crime, pillaging or warfare for survival. Furthermore, encouraging economic development across national borders may be the only way of accommodating the needs of pastoralists who depend for survival on their use of lands that cross borders. Environmental security considerations are crucial for accommodating the interests of people using the same, diminishing water resources. In cases where relative deprivation is caused by changes that threaten the livelihoods of peoples, only by addressing the structures that give rise to conflict can violent conflict be avoided. Here the crude observation that 'survival can not be negotiated, no matter how advanced the techniques of dispute resolution' applies. Nor, in similar vein, can the motivation to engage in violence be discouraged by deterrence or by containing violence if the livelihoods of people are threatened.

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**Box 13: UNDP Small Arms Control Programme in Northern Mali: People First.**

In Northern Mali (mainly Tuareg) pastoralists were largely forced to emigrate due to the droughts of the 1980s. As a result a group of ethnically, culturally and racially distinct people started to mobilize in the refugee camps. In an international effort to contain the conflict in Northern Mali at the beginning of the 1990s,  UNDP sought to link the control of small arms with development efforts in an integrated strategy of conflict settlement. Instead of simply trying to force disarmament and concentrate on small arms, UNDP decided to concentrate on the carriers of small arms, on people and their economic security. The rationale for this strategy was that since the relatively deprived people had lost their traditional livelihoods and this had led them to rebellion, the only way of providing motivation for disarmament was to offer new opportunities for alternative livelihoods. Only if the people have economic horizons beyond pillaging and fighting, can they be motivated to give up their weapons.

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## Problem-analysis

In some cases economic problems in the public sector or structural adjustment programs have crippled the ability of the state to claim a monopoly over legitimate control of the police and the military forces. In these situations the prevention of smuggling of national natural resources, drugs and small arms cannot be efficient. Even more often the state is unable to pay proper salaries to its employees and as a consequence, the military and the police use their positions for their own economic survival and enrichment. In Indonesia, the military used to get more than half of its rev-

enue from unofficial activities, smuggling, land grabbing etc. In Thailand in the 1950s part of the military obtained its funding from the drug trade. According to a recent World Bank study, smuggling and drug trafficking are also very typical for African and Latin American military forces. Assistance to police training and police/military reforms that address the problem of abuse of coercive power are ways of dealing with such problems. Support for the control of drug production and trafficking can equally well be effective conflict prevention measures.

## Possible strategies

Addressing the problem of unemployment is important in the fight against violence. It has been shown that high urban unemployment levels, especially of young men, are clearly associated with political and criminal violence. As a jobless mass people become easy to mobilise by militias and rebel groups as well as by oppressive national armies. When fighting becomes a way of life, the process of conflict becomes self-sustaining as has become evident for example in parts of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Sierra Leone, Liberia, Somalia, Aceh (Indonesia) and the Sudan. In addition to the urban unemployed, people in refugee camps also tend to be easy targets for violent mobilisation and agitation. Many wars have been fought by fighters who have been mobilised in refugee camps. Hence food-for-work projects have proven a relatively useful way of tackling employment problems and reintegrating refugees into society.

### Box 14:  The Complexity of the Problem of Small Arms

Small arms are the main means of destruction in contemporary wars: estimates attribute about 90% of all deaths and injuries in wars to small arms. It is a well-known fact that in areas of weak law and order, the trade in small arms is linked to the drug trade: drugs are grown, produced and stored in areas where central government control is weak and they are then exchanged for small arms. What has been revealed more recently is that illegal trade routes are also used in collapsed and weak states for the trade of legitimate national natural resources. Rebel and regular armies sell diamonds, minerals and rights to logging in the area under their control and in exchange they buy small arms. Thus the control of the trade in small arms is linked to reducing the problem of illegal drug and slave trafficking as well as to the problems of sustaining viable alternative modes of livelihood in the drug-producing areas, and to the rules of trade in natural resources such as diamonds, oil and timber. Furthermore, the problem of small arms is linked to the personal security of the people who carry the weapons. Even if the leaders of the rebel groups are motivated by the benefits offered by criminalised economic activities, the followers of these leaders are often motivated by grievances. To make ordinary rebel soldiers give up their arms, matters relating to their economic survival need to be addressed.

Different, but by no means all, ways of promoting democracy in developing countries contribute to conflict prevention. Support for independent media provides one example. If the media are not controlled by the ruling elite, and diverse opinions are presented in the media, it is not likely that people can be mobilised to risk their lives in wars against an imagined enemy. Adversaries are more difficult to 'demonise' by politicians if the media are free and not controlled by the ruling elite. For example in Indonesia after the 1960s the elite could always mobilise popular support against groups they labelled as communists. When president Habibie tried to use the same techniques of labelling his opponents after the freeing of the media, his efforts were labelled scape-goating. Support given to the freedom of the media also has an influence in reducing the likelihood of inter-state violence. It has been suggested that freedom of the media is one of the reasons for the fact that liberal democracies do not fight each other.

Support for democratisation also reduces the risk of war when it strengthens democratic mechanisms and institutions of dispute resolution. When the political process allows for non-violent alternatives to addressing grievances it influences the delegitimising and marginalising violent strategies of change. Strengthening transnational and international mechanisms and institutions can also be used in reducing inter-state tension. In addition to strictly democratic institutions, traditional institutions of consultation, power sharing and consensus building also decrease the likelihood of conflicts. It is often the case that support for institution-building and the revival of traditional institutions can address the grievances of particular separatist populations, whenever these institutions offer ways of expanding local autonomy, devolving and sharing state power and recognising group rights.

Support given to administrative reforms often functions as a conflict prevention instrument. This is especially true in societies undergoing democratisation processes in which a strong civil society exists but there is a lack of effective means of implementing the democratic will. If democratisation only means increased abilities to mobilise, without relief being given to the grievances of the people, conflict potential may increase. Hence public administration reforms that support the transformation of an inefficient bureaucracy into a more efficient, transparent and accountable one are very valuable instruments in conflict prevention.

Finally, support for democratisation and especially liberalisation may help to create a new sense of positive interdependence, which again reduces the likelihood of conflicts. If liberalisation increases the perception that care for other people's welfare can be expected to increase one's own absolute welfare in proportion, support for economic and political liberalisation can function as conflict prevention. There is robust evidence of the positive association between stability and increased liberal economic exchange both in inter-state relations and in relations among ethnic/regional/political groups. The increase of positive interdependence is also one

of the explanations for the fact that liberal democracies do not engage in armed conflict with each other.

**Identification and project formulation:**

- Prevent relative deprivation
- Prevent clashes of structures of economic survival
- Support the structures of positive interdependence (intra-state as well as international)
- Support democratic institutions of dispute resolution
- Reduce violent opportunities for the criminalisation of the economy
- Increase the capabilities of the states to control the trade in (small) arms
- Integrate potential/former fighters into the society.

## Appraisal, Financing Decisions, Tendering and Contracting

The appraisal of projects needs to look at the relevance, feasibility and sustainability of project/programme objectives in terms of conflict prevention and mitigation issues.

Effective conflict prevention also requires consistent policies along the lines of the objectives of prevention when financing decisions and decisions about contracts are made. The conflict-handling expertise of potential contractors should play a role in the selection of projects and in financial decisions concerning contracts. Furthermore, the competence of consultants should be increased in the field of conflict prevention. Seminars and co-operation between the ministry's conflict specialists and the academic community could play an important role in the raising of the standard of conflict expertise among development co-operation contractors.

The overall consciousness of conflict implications of aid should also be increased, since even the most technical development co-operation projects may have enormous implications for conflicts. Finland should therefore opt in its own aid community for the promotion of a culture of conflict prevention along the lines of the Swedish conflict prevention action plan. The Swedish culture of conflict prevention is naturally based on the norms, values and principles of international law and the UN objective of preventing armed conflicts. A culture of conflict prevention and awareness of the needs of conflict prevention are necessary in order to be prepared to act in time and to reduce escalating dispute processes before it is too late.

**Appraisal, financing decisions, tendering and contracting:**

- Require conflict prevention expertise
- Increase the capacity of contractors to deal with conflict priorities
- Promote a culture of conflict prevention

## Implementation, Monitoring and Completion

It is quite likely that conflict-insensitive implementation of development co-operation drastically increases the potential for domestic power battles and conflicts. On the macro level, implementation of corruption-prone projects together with the central government of an undemocratic developing country is risky. By increasing the wealth of an undemocratic elite, aid may give an additional motivation to compete over state power. If and when the rules of this competition are not democratic (based on demonstrated competence) but coercive (based on a demonstrated ability to control through coercion), centrally channelled aid fuels deadly battles over central power. Development co-operation in authoritarian systems can fuel competition and conflict unless aid can be channelled in a way that does not bolster the wealth and legitimacy of this regime.

On a more micro level, local channels of distribution can also fuel competition. In the case of Somalia after the fall of Siyad Barre, humanitarian aid fueled local competition over distributive issues and in some cases stolen humanitarian aid was used to finance inter-clan warfare. Similarly, very localised incidents are frequent in many parts of the world, perhaps most recently in the Yogyakarta area of Indonesia, where contributions to alleviate the relative deprivation of the local villagers caused disputes between people competing over the control of distribution channels.

In a policy paper prepared for the German government Stephan Klingebiel has suggested that development cooperation with conflict-prone nations would require greater administrative flexibility from the donor nations and more power for the embassies operating in conflict-prone nations to allow open funds for operations required for special conflict prevention policies. At the same time it has been suggested elsewhere that even stricter auditing procedures should be applied in potential conflict countries, since conflict prevention and especially humanitarian crisis situations have traditionally been used by some developing countries' political elites for corrupt purposes. Prevention of corruption in development cooperation is always an important objective, but in conflict prone nations it is especially important. Corruption is often an important part of the grievances that give rise to conflicts. The Indonesian army has been accused of having used conflict containment emergency situations for corruptive purposes in Aceh and in Irian Jaya. In Somalia the concept of 'castles of drought' refers to the luxurious housing of political leaders who alleged-

ly diverted Western aid money that was meant to deal with the humanitarian emergencies caused by the second Ogaden War.

> **Implementation, monitoring and project completion:**
>
> • Allow greater flexibility in the administration of development co-operation,
> • Ensure effective prevention of corruption,
> • Avoid the enrichment of non-democratic regimes

## Evaluation

When the objective of the protection of the environment was written into Finnish policy documents, it did not instantly change the substance of Finland's development cooperation. A study of the declarations and realities of Finland's development cooperation policies in the 1980s shows how it took rather a long time before the reality of actual development cooperation work was changed to take environmental matters into consideration. The goal had to be made operational at the level of co-operation practices before it could take effect. One of the key elements in the operationalisation of this target was the development of tools for evaluating the environmental qualities of aid projects.

The target of conflict prevention also requires careful operationalisation, an issue which was discussed in more detail in Chapter 3. So far conflict prevention objectives have been discussed on a very general level without much expertise on the actual causal chains that lead from ill-targeted aid to conflicts and from good aid practices to peace. The general idea of the positive association between democracy and peace is too often interpreted as a justification for any kind of promotion of democracy to be used as conflict prevention measures. As has been discussed above the relationship between democracy and conflict is more complex. The same is also true of the question of poverty alleviation, which is also discussed above.

In order to operationalise conflict prevention in practice the 'conflict prevention quality' of aid should be introduced as the concept of environmental quality of aid was introduced in the latter half of the 1980s. Just as even the most technical project has environmental effects, it should be realised that almost all development projects also have conflict implications. Conflict transformation quality should therefore also be systematically used as a criterion for the evaluation of project designs and project implementation, monitoring, and completion. This kind of evaluation could use similar scientifically proven knowledge about the components of successful conflict prevention as has been used with respect to the environment. Furthermore, in order to operationalise and make the objective of conflict prevention meaningful, the con-

flict prevention aspect should be added, along with environmental matters, to the ministry's recommendations for aid contractors and to the indicative project component checklist.

### Evaluation

- Use conflict transformation quality indicators as criteria of evaluation.
- Acknowledge the special requirements of conflict prone countries.

## 4.2 Creating sustainability and mobilising partnerships

In long-term-oriented conflict prevention, mobilizing partnerships is often the only way to create sustainability. Only if the developing country is committed to the transformation of conflict structures, and to the creation of conflict management institutions, can conflict prevention have long-term effects. One of the most obvious ways to enhance the sustainability of conflict prevention by mobilizing partnerships involves early warning of conflict situations. Donors should continue to work with their partners to enhance their early warning capacities with regard to possible local conflicts.

### Box 15: Conflict Early Warning Indicators

- Indicators based on causes of war
- Indicators of relative deprivation: income, employment & other economic statistics
- Indicators of government's inability to control its people & bureaucracy: corruption indicators, crime statistics, governance indicators
- Indicators of clashes of structures of survival: demographic statistics, statistics of occupations requiring different uses of the same resources (agricultural interventions in pastoral areas)
- Indicators based on vulnerability factors
- Level of development indicators
- Indicators of the level of freedom, democracy, participation.
- Indicators of ethnic, linguistic and regional fragmentation.
- Indicators of conflict tradition
- Indications of political/economic protest
- Indications of the level of ethnic/regional tension
- Signs of weakness in the maintenance of law and order

Sustainability and partnership are, however, often somewhat difficult to achieve because of the political nature of conflict prevention. On the one hand, conflicts can be prevented by, for example, creating non-violent channels of protest, addressing the grievances of the relatively deprived people and making the necessary transformations of political and economic structures of conflicts. On the other hand conflicts can also be prevented, at least temporarily, by containing any challenges to the existing regime with the maximum use of deterrents. Since conflicts are more probable in authoritarian countries than in democracies it is often the case that the developing country regime opts for the latter strategy, while the donor community would be more interested in working along the lines of the former strategy. Creating partnerships is thus sometimes possible only in the NGO sector and within the limits of a government's willingness to allow strategies that divert from the official conflict prevention strategy. Recipient governments' reluctance is often also a difficult obstacle in the promotion of bureaucratic reforms aimed at increased bureaucratic efficiency in addressing popular grievances. Here the sensitivities and ethical problems related to sovereignty complicate matters.

The sustainability and ownership promotion of conflict prevention should also take into account the realities of the political structures and the balance of power in the developing country. Going against the power balance by using extensive conditionality and political pressure and supporting opposition partners often fails to bring sustainable solutions unless the conflict prevention intervention is intended to be permanent. This is why sustainability considerations often limit the alternatives in conflict prevention interventions.

## 4.3 Ethics and politics: problem areas for development co-operation

Conflicts normally take place in undemocratic societies with insufficient channels for peaceful protest and change. In this kind of environment, conflict prevention must include many difficult decisions about whom to negotiate with and whom to consider as a legitimate agent of collaboration. Although women contribute considerably to conflict transformation and reconciliation at the grass-roots level, they have been excluded from the negotiating table. This disparity has recently been challenged by some NGOs and officials worldwide calling for a change in the paradigm. In the new thinking women are not seen merely as victims of conflicts but as peacebuilders and negotiators. In fact, many activists argue that including women in the peace process is of fundamental importance if we want to achieve sustainable results in peace building and conflict resolution. When operating with potential conflict parties in the prevention of conflicts one often involuntarily empowers and legitimises these parties. At the same time, disregarding parties with potential for violence would be dysfunctional for conflict prevention purposes. This leads to a situation where

coercive power gives access to negotiation tables, which is in contradiction with the common sense of ethics. Most of these ethical problems are most urgent just before the eruption of violence or immediately after the cessation of violence, when decisive measures are needed, and all the potential parties to the conflict need to be mobilised for the prevention of conflict.

This problem is also very often relevant when dealing with official governments. Undemocratic regimes frequently base their authority on their ability to coerce the opposition. In such cases democratic principles would suggest that even the official government should not get special treatment as an agent or a partner in conflict prevention. Most important from the moral point of view is, however, that conflict prevention is not automatically seen as preventing a change of regime or as a restoration of stability based on the power of the old regime. Sometimes conflict prevention goes against the existing order and sometimes change rather than stability is the only way to transform conflict structures. In this respect some, especially military, means of conflict prevention, such as the control of small arms, are problematic: they tend to have a status quo bias, even if the contributors to these means would represent a morally acceptable regime being opposed by the regime which is being stabilised with conflict prevention.

**Box 16:** Platform for Action of the Fourth International Conference on Women in Beijing in 1995 - Women's Role in Conflict Resolution and Peace-Building
As laid out in the Platform for Action of the Fourth International Conference on Women in Beijing in 1995, governments are committed to take the following actions regarding women's role in conflict resolution and peace-building:

- Increase the participation of women in conflict resolution at decision-making levels and protect women living in situations of armed and other conflicts or under foreign occupation.
- Strengthen the role of women and ensure equal representation of women at all decision-making levels in national and international institutions which may make or influence policy with regard to matters related to peace-keeping, preventive diplomacy and related activities and in all stages of peace mediation and negotiations, taking note of the specific recommendations of the Secretary-General in his strategic plan of action for the improvement of the status of women in the Secretariat.
- Promote women's contributions to fostering a culture of peace.
- Promote peaceful conflict resolution and peace, reconciliation and tolerance through education, training, community actions and youth exchange programmes, in particular for young women.
- Encourage the further development of peace research, involving the participation of women, to examine the impact of armed conflict on women and children and the nature and contribution of women's participation in national, regional and international peace movements; engage in research and identify innovative mechanisms for containing violence and for conflict resolution for public dissemination and for use by women and men.
- These principles were reconfirmed in the Beijing follow-up conference in New York in June 2000. Moreover it was again noted that although the contributions of women to peace-building, peacemaking and conflict resolution are being increasingly recognized there remains a lot of work to do. The under-representation, at all levels, of women in decision-making positions, such as special envoys or as special representatives of the Secretary-General in peacekeeping, peace-building, post-conflict reconciliation and reconstruction, as well as the lack of gender awareness in these areas, was seen to present serious obstacles

Conflict prevention and humanitarian measures often involve methods that would normally be considered as too donor-driven or even as violations of the sovereignty of the recipient nation. The cases of military involvement in Kosovo or in East Timor or the provision of practically all public services in Somalia by the international community are good examples of international activities where sovereignty considerations have had to be compromised for the sake of humanitarian needs. It seems clear that after the collapse of the Cold War and with the rise of the "New Humanitarianism"

advocated by US President Bill Clinton and British Prime Minister Tony Blair, the international community has been willing to go further in the definition of what are acceptable levels of interference in the interest of preventing suffering. According to the Danish conflict prevention policy paper, in the prevention of conflicts or their escalation, or in down-scaling the magnitude of humanitarian emergency in conflicts, "the principles of partnership and ownership may have to yield temporarily to the necessity of minimising human suffering." This donor-bias, especially in short-term conflict prevention, creates an ethical problem related to the sovereignty of independent developing countries. Post-conflict activities to prevent further conflicts particularly sometimes fail to mobilise local parties and hand activities over to them. In these cases the international community effectively continues to use political power that would normally belong to the local people. Somalia and other collapsed states are cases in point. In these cases efficient measures to address humanitarian needs often clash with principles of sovereignty, and decisions are today made more in favour of the efficiency of intervention than in favour of a principle of sovereignty.

The sovereignty principle is especially vulnerable in conflict prevention since peace can never be promoted entirely without taking sides in the question of the terms of peace. Conflict prevention represents a political field in development co-operation and guided by the ideas of universal values, such as non-violence, and the idea of the comprehensive nature of development, donors routinely interfere with affairs that would previously have been considered as domestic. Preventing dictators from oppressing their people and rebels from killing innocent people is naturally ethically acceptable. At the same time, however, the ability of donors to meddle in the domestic affairs of a conflict nation is based on their economic might. This is especially true for the use of aid conditionality. The power of money in world politics does not sound democratic or moral.  Despite the moral justification of the idea of universal values, the power of developing countries should be highlighted as well in order to solve some of the global disparities. Considering the increasing economic and political disparity of rich and poor nations, a disparity which exceeds the domestic disparity of even the most unequal nations, empowering rather than marginalising developing countries in the global power balance would seem an ethical thing to do. It seems obvious that more emphasis should be put on the study of the moral implications of this particular dilemma.

## 5. Conclusions

### The challenge of conflict prevention and mitigation

Conflict prevention and mitigation is a field that is constantly evolving and new ideas and practices are being developed. Many of the ideas are well suited to the various instruments of development co-operation. At the same time the new practices easily confuse the scope of conflict prevention. It is not easy to define where conflict prevention and mitigation starts and ends as the concept of security is linked to so many aspects of human activity.

Nonetheless, as the DAC Guidelines on Conflict, Peace and Development point out, it is now accepted that structural stability, where dynamic and representative social and political structures are capable of managing change and resolving disputes without resorting to violence, is a necessary basis for sustainable development. At the same time the World Bank has alerted us to the risk of the criminalisation of the economy in developing countries. In addition to creating new non-violent channels of protest, conflict prevention efforts must also be able to assist developing countries close down the existing windows of opportunity for illegitimate, gainful use of violence. Finally we must pay heed to the lessons learned by UNDP, according to which development co-operation also has to be able to address the grievances of deprived groups in order to remove the motivations for conflict. If conflict prevention efforts are unable to prevent situations in which fighting and looting have become the only viable options of economic survival for groups of people, no control of violence and no alternative channels of protest can prevent people from fighting.

Donors are increasingly called on to engage in conflict prevention and mitigation through policy dialogue and development co-operation instruments in order to assert significant influence on redirecting the dynamics toward peaceful development. This paper has addressed to some extent the question of how to implement conflict prevention and mitigation, but there is still a considerable distance to go, especially in view of fact that the dynamics of conflict keep on evolving.

### Emerging issues

Policy dialogue is an instrument of foreign policy through which sensitive issues can be tabled in different forums. Good governance, for instance, is a concept which gained currency in the 1990s and is now widely referred to on the various occasions when the international community discusses prerequisites for sustainable development. Good governance is invoked in round tables and consultative group meetings when the donor community wishes to signal preconditions for financing development programmes. Policy dialogue does have its limits. Dialogue can go only so far and action needs to be taken to support policy statements. It is the world of develop-

ment co-operation programmes that give credence to policy dialogue.

Marshalling political will and financial resources are key factors in conflict prevention and mitigation. Analysing and understanding the root causes of conflicts and identifying ways for programmes to tackle problem issues have become a crucial part of development co-operation programming.

Development co-operation is in a position to assist in conflict prevention and mitigation through its different modalities by addressing structural inequalities and being a catalyst for disadvantaged groups to participate in the development of their country. Areas of intervention that would not have been considered ODA-eligible a few years ago, such as the small arms issue or aspects of security sector reform, are now ODA-eligible and methodologies are being developed to make interventions more effective.

There is a wide variety of instruments available for development co-operation in the field of conflict prevention and mitigation, ranging from demining operations to expanding local methodologies of local capacities for peace, to supporting human rights monitoring mechanisms, to development of the rule of law and support to judicial systems, to strengthening the administrative capacities of post-conflict states and helping the situation of deprived groups.

What should be the focus of Finnish policies and development co-operation in the field of conflict prevention and mitigation? Matching needs with financial and human resources is the key factor in planning Finnish development co-operation. There must be scope for flexibility, but at the same time it is useful to concentrate on a limited number of methodologies in which Finland is experienced.

There are a number of activities that can be supported through bilateral development co-operation programmes, including support provided through the Local Funds in Finnish embassies and specific well-defined programmes such as demining operations. Bilateral co-operation places restrictions on geographic coverage as Finland has a limited field of bilateral development co-operation, mostly in Sub-Saharan Africa, Nepal, Vietnam and Nicaragua. On the other hand, this can be a strength as the programmes can focus on particular problems, without forgetting donor co-ordination efforts to enhance the effectiveness of different donor interventions.

Finland can contribute to complex conflict prevention and mitigation programmes through multilateral channels in partnerships with other donor agencies. Using multilateral channels is particularly warranted when Finland wishes to participate in programmes where there is no bilateral development co-operation or when the issue is such that multi-faceted approaches are more effective.

Conflict prevention is much more cost-effective than dealing with the consequences. Civilian crisis management and post-conflict peace-building, although important, are reactive measures. Both require vast resources and can easily drain financial and human resources intended for long-term development programmes.

Conflict prevention programming takes a proactive stance and attempts to address problems before they develop into a crisis situation. In other words, it is more useful to prevent than to mitigate conflicts.

Encouraging civil society participation in conflict prevention and mitigation is an area in which Finland can make a real contribution. Finland, as a democratic society which emphasises human rights and good governance, has considerable experience of civil society involvement in social processes on the domestic front. This means that Finland should push the civil society agenda on different fronts whenever appropriate. It is not a coincidence that NGO support figures prominently in Finnish development co-operation.

Finally, it is important to appreciate the fact that conflict prevention and mitigation is a process. No single policy dialogue or development co-operation programme can possibly prevent conflicts from happening. Rather, conflict prevention and mitigation programmes are contributions that can influence the course of events when coupled with all the other activities that unfold in practice on the ground. Lessons learned must be constantly fed into the planning process to make future programming more efficient and appropriate.

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The objective of Peaceful Solutions: Navigating the Prevention and Mitigation of Conflicts is to explore the latest thinking around the concepts of conflict prevention and mitigation as they relate to Finland's policy on relations with developing countries. The paper approaches the concepts of conflict prevention and mitigation using the metaphor 'to navigate', which implies that there are many facets to conflict prevention and mitigation that need exploring, none of which are necessarily better than others, but all of which serve as food for thought and assist in operationalising the somewhat multi-faceted and complex concepts of conflict prevention and mitigation.

The overall aim is to understand why conflicts take place, how conflicts can be tackled, who are the players in the field, what is the role of outside assistance, particularly development co-operation, and what Finland can contribute to conflict prevention and mitigation. Hence this paper aims at clarifying concepts and unravelling the practical implications of policy statements for development co-operation practices.

Development co-operation is in a position to assist in conflict prevention and mitigation through its different modalities, by addressing structural inequalities and being a catalyst for disadvantaged groups to participate in the development of their country.

ELEMENTS
for DISCUSSION

**MINISTRY FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF FINLAND**
Department for
International Development Cooperation