Partnerships for Peace:

Peacebuilding Praxis and North-South NGO Relationships in Aceh and Timor Leste

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Doctor of Philosophy

Thushara Anne Dibley

Department of Indonesian Studies

University of Sydney

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This thesis is my own work and does not incorporate, without acknowledgement, any material previously submitted for a degree or diploma in any university. It does not contain any material previously published or written by another person where due reference is not made in the text. Where names are provided in the thesis for research participants, participants' permission has been granted. In cases where participants have expressed their wish not to be mentioned by name, I have referred to them as 'Anonymous'. This thesis meets the University of Sydney's Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC) requirements for the conduct of research.

Signed.....

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Abbreviations

3P	*Pusat Penguatan Perdamaian* (Peace Strengthening Centre)
ADAP	Aceh Peace and Development
ADP	Area Development Projects
AJMI	Aceh Justice Monitoring Institute
AMM	Aceh Monitoring Mission
APRC	Aceh Peace Resource Center
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
AusAID	Australian Agency for International Development
BRA	*Badan Reintegrasi Aceh* (Aceh Reintegration Board)
CAA	Community Aid Abroad
CAFOD	Catholic Overseas Development Agency
CALMER	Community Activities for Local Mitigation, Empowerment and Reintegration
CAVR	*Comissão de Acolhimento, Verdade e Reconciliação* (Commission for Reception, Truth and Reconciliation)
CB-CEWS	Community Based Conflict Early Warning System
CDA	Collaborative for Development Action
CERIC	Center for Intergroup Relations and Conflict Resolution

CIDA	Canadian International Development Agency
CNRM	*Conselho Nacional da Resistência Maubere* (National Council of *Maubere* Resistance)
CNRT	*Congresso Nacional da Reconstrução de Timor* (National Congress for the Reconstruction of East Timor)
CoHA	Cessation of Hostilities Agreement
CoL	Centers of Learning
CRS	Catholic Relief Service
CRU	Conflict Resolution Unit
CTF	Commission for Truth and Friendship
DELSOS	*Delegatus Sosial* (Social Delegates)
DOM	*Daerah Operasi Militer* (Military Operation Zone)
DTP	Diplomacy Training Program
EPC	Education Peace Center
ETADEP	East Timor Agriculture Development Program (previously Road to Progress Organisation or *Yayasan Ema Mata Dalan Ba Progresso*)
ETTA	East Timor Transitional Authority
EU	European Union
F-FDTL	*Forças Armadas de Libertação Nacional de Timor Leste/FALINITL –de Defesa de Timor Leste* (Timor Leste National Defence Force)

FOKUPERS	*Forum Kommunikasi Untuk Perempuan Timor Lorosae* (East Timorese Women's Communication Forum)
FONGTIL	*Forum Organização Não-Governamental Timor Leste* (NGO Forum of Timor Leste)
FORBES	*Forum Besar* (Joint Forum)
FRETILIN	*Frente Revolusionária de Timor Leste Independente* (Revolutionary Front for an Independent East Timor)
FTM	*Forum Tau Matan* (Watch with Care)
GAM	*Gerakan Aceh Merdeka* (Free Aceh Movement)
HAK Association	*Perkumpulan HAK* (formerly *Yayasan Hukum, Hak Asasi dan Keadilan* or Foundation for Law, Rights and Justice)
HAM	*Hak asasi manusia* (human rights)
HDC	Henry Dunant Center
HHK	*Hamutuk Hari'i Konfiansa* (Together Build Trust)
HIVOS	*Humanistisch Instituut voor Ontwikkelingssamenweking* (Humanist Institute for Development Cooperation)
ICRC	International Committee of the Red Cross
ICTJ	International Center for Transitional Justice
ICTR	International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda
ICTY	International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia
IDP	Internally Displaced Person

IEP	*Institute Edukasaun Popular* (The Popular Education Institute)
IOM	International Organization for Migration
IRD	International Relief and Development
KKR	*Komisi Kebeneran dan Rekonsiliasi* (National Truth and Reconciliation Commission)
Koalisi NGO HAM	Human Rights NGO Coalition
Komnas HAM	National Human Rights Commission
KontraS Aceh	*Komisi Untuk Orang Hilang dan Korban Tindak Kekerasan* (The Commission for 'the Disappeared' and Victims of Violence, Acehnese branch)
KPK	*Komisi Pengungkapan Kebenaran* (Truth Seeking Commission)
KSI	*Kadalak Sulimutuk Institute* (Streams Flowing Together Institute)
LBH Banda Aceh	*Lembaga Bantuan Hukum Banda Aceh* (Banda Aceh Legal Aid Institution)
LCP	Local Capacities for Peace
LoGA	Law on Governing Aceh
LPS-HAM	*Lembaga Pengembangan Studi Hukum dan Advokasi HAM* (Institute for the Development of the Study of Law and Human Rights Advocacy)
LSM	*Lembaga Swadaya Masyarakat* (Community Self-Reliance Institution)

MISEREOR	German Catholic Bishops' Organisation for Development Cooperation
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
MSS	Ministry of Social Solidarity
MTRC	*Ministério do Trabalho Reinserção Comunitária* (Ministry of Labour and Community Reinsertion)
NAD	*Nanggroe Aceh Darussalam*
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NOVIB	*Nederlandse Organisatie Voor Internationale Bijstand* (Dutch Organisations for International Aid)
OCHA	Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
PAXnet	World Vision's global peacebuilding network
PB-HAM	*Pos Bantuan Hukum dan Hak Asasi Manusia* (Human Rights and Legal Post)
PBI	Peace Brigades International
PNTL	*Polícia Nacional de Timor-Leste* (Timor Leste National Police)
POSKO	Post for the Coordination of Emergency Aid
PUSA	*Persatuan Ulama Seluruh Aceh* (All-Aceh Association of Ulama)
RATA	Rehabilitation Action for Victims of Torture in Aceh
RENETIL	*Resistensia Nacional dos Estudantes de Timor Leste* (East Timorese National Students Resistance)

RPuK	*Relawan Perempuan untuk Kemanusiaan* (Women Volunteers for Humanity)
SAHE	SAHE Institute for Liberation
SCU	Serious Crimes Unit
SIRA	*Sentral Informasi Referendum Ace*h (Aceh Referendum Information Centre)
SMUR	*Solidaritas Mahasiswa untuk Rakyat* (Student Solidarity for the People)
SPKP-HAM	*Solidaritas Persaudaraan Korban Pelanggaran Hak Asasi Manusia* (Association of Human Rights Abuse Victims)
TAN	Transnational Advocacy Network
TAPOL	A human rights organisation established in 1973 to campaign on human rights issues. The name is an abbreviation for the Indonesian *tanahan politik*, or political prisoner.
UDT	*União Democratica Timorense* (Timorese Democratic Union)
UN	United Nations
UNAMET	United Nations Mission for East Timor
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
UNHCR	United Nations High Commission for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNIFEM	United Nations Development Fund for Women
UNMISET	United Nations Mission of Support in East Timor

UNMIT	United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor Leste
UNOTIL	United Nations Office in East Timor
UNPO	Unrepresented Nations and Peoples Organisation
UNTAET	United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor
UNTL	*Universidadé Nacional Timor Leste* (National University of Timor Leste)
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
UUSC	Unitarian Universalist Service Committee
YAPSM	*Yayasan Badan Koordinasi Pengembangan Sosial Masyarakat* (The Institute for the Coordination of Social Community Development)
YBSM	*Yayasan Badan Pengembangan Masyarakat* (The Community Development Institute)
YKB	*Yayasan Kemakmuran Bangsa* (The Prosperous Nation Institute)
YLPK	*Yayasan Lembaga Perlindungan Konsumen* (The Institute for Consumer Protection)

Abstract

This thesis explores how NGO partnerships shape the nexus between peacebuilding theory and practice. It does so by examining how ideas about peacebuilding are exchanged between local and international NGOs working in partnership in Timor Leste and Aceh. In particular, it focuses on how tensions between the administrative structures of the international development system and the agency of individuals and the organisations for which they work influence the materialisation of ideas about peacebuilding in practice. In doing so, it engages with critiques of liberal peacebuilding, which illustrate that little space is offered to actors from the global South to contribute ideas to peacebuilding practice. By focusing in equal parts on the experiences and perspectives of Southern and Northern NGOs, this thesis provides insight into the role of Southern agency on the execution of North-South partnerships and on the development and transmission of peacebuilding ideas between organisations.

Drawing on heuristic tools from peace and conflict studies, development studies and anthropology, this interdisciplinary project systematically investigates three styles of NGO partnership: contract relationships, partner-driven relationships and networked relationships. By describing the mechanics of each of these approaches, this thesis explores the extent to which these partnership practices act as a conduit for the exchange of ideas. It does so by focusing on the ideas about peacebuilding held by the Northern and Southern NGOs in each of these relationships, their application of those ideas and the opportunities that existed for cross-fertilisation within these different modes of collaboration.

The analysis of these three styles of partnership illustrates that both Northern and Southern NGOs contribute theoretical frameworks, practical experience and knowledge to their partnerships. The ability for the ideas of both Northern and Southern organisations to be enacted in practice is mediated by contextual factors, funding structures and the experiences and skills of individuals. This thesis argues that the intersection of these three vectors shapes the dynamics of power that exist within these relationships and plays a central role in determining which ideas become enacted in practice and the mechanisms by which this occurs.

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Introduction

In the hierarchy of institutions that constitute the international development industry, non-governmental organisations (NGOs) from the global South are typically considered to be at the bottom. Portrayed as dependent on and frequently driven by donor funding, Southern NGOs are often depicted as either vulnerable or opportunistic and partnerships between Southern and Northern NGOs are considered sites of exploitation.[1] The recurrence of these observations in the literature about development and NGOs can be attributed to the priority that scholars place on the political, social and economic structures of the international development system at the expense of attention to the agency of the actors involved in this field.

Scholarship about the involvement of civil society organisations from the global South in peacebuilding is no exception. While there has been an increasing acknowledgement of the importance of NGOs to the peacebuilding process, and a growing consensus amongst scholars that local practices need to be better incorporated into peacebuilding strategies, there is a dearth of information about how Southern NGOs contribute to this process. Yet Southern NGOs, which commonly rely on their Northern 'partners' for the resources required to participate in peacebuilding, negotiate the power dynamics of these partnerships on a daily basis. These negotiations can have important repercussions, not only for the outcomes of peacebuilding projects, but also for the understanding and application of peacebuilding ideas by local activists and communities – and, in some cases, by international agencies themselves.

This thesis explores how the tension between broader structures of power and the agency of Southern NGOs affects the exchange and development of ideas about peacebuilding. It focuses on two post-conflict communities in

[1] This thesis interchangeably uses the terms Northern/international and Southern/local to describe the geographical origin of the organisations discussed. For a comprehensive discussion of the history of the North/South terminology, see Slater (2004, 5-10).

Southeast Asia: Timor Leste and Aceh in Indonesia. In each place it examines three forms of partnership between international and local NGOs engaged in peacebuilding activities: contract relationships, partner-driven relationship and networked relationships. It examines the ideas about peacebuilding held by the Northern and Southern NGOs, their application of these ideas and the extent to which cross-fertilisation occurs through these different kinds of partnerships. In doing so, it draws attention to the negotiations that occur between institutions and individuals across the North-South divide and illustrates how these actors navigate this process. The analysis of these three styles of partnerships highlights that broader structures of power are affected by contextual factors, funding structures and the experiences and skills of individuals involved in the projects. The thesis argues that the particular dynamics of engagement created when these three vectors intersect shape the opportunities for Southern (and Northern) actors to exhibit agency, and therefore, have an impact on the way in which ideas about peacebuilding are transmitted and transformed through partnership.

This chapter opens with an overview of the key concepts used in the thesis and an illustration of how scholars of peacebuilding have prioritised the problems caused by the structures of the international development system in their critiques of liberal peacebuilding. It argues that, as a consequence, these studies provide limited insight into the contribution that the ideas, values and principles of Southern NGOs make to practical applications of peacebuilding, before proceeding to make a case for examining the agency of these Southern actors. The chapter concludes with an overview of the methodology used in this study and an outline of the remainder of the thesis.

Structure, Agency and Peacebuilding Praxis

Peacebuilding, a concept which describes a range of activities undertaken by societies that have experienced armed conflict, became popular in the aftermath of the Cold War and continues to play an important role in the

global response to armed conflict.[2] Liberal peacebuilding – in which democratisation is considered central to building peace – has become the dominant practice in places that have experienced armed conflict. This particular approach has attracted considerable criticism from scholars of peacebuilding, who argue that its theoretical underpinnings are not consistent with the needs of the places in which it is practiced, and can, at times, further exacerbate existing tensions. These criticisms focus primarily on the political, economic and social structures shaping the practice. This is especially the case in the literature about the involvement of civil society in peacebuilding, which concentrates almost exclusively on how the structures of funding and the dynamics of North-South relationships tend to disadvantage and marginalise local civil society organisations. As a consequence, there is limited insight in the peacebuilding literature about how Southern actors use their agency to negotiate these structures and contribute to peacebuilding practice.

Theoretical underpinnings of peacebuilding practice

The concept of peacebuilding was devised in the late 1960s by scholar-activist Johan Galtung as an extension of his ideas about structural violence, negative peace and positive peace (Galtung 1969). Galtung coined the term 'structural violence' to explain processes– such as those that make it difficult to find employment or gain education – that leave some people less capable than others of achieving their full potential (Galtung 1969). Galtung argues that it is differences in how people use power – particularly how they use power to distribute resources – that lead to structural violence. Two notions of peace emerge from this understanding. Negative peace is defined as the 'absence of direct violence', a state than can be achieved without substantial changes to the structures causing violence. Achieving positive peace, on the other hand, necessitates changing those structures.

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[2] Sociologists and conflict resolution scholars have illustrated that not all conflict is violent or involves the use of arms, and that conflict can play a useful social function (Coser 1957; Lederach 1995); however, for the purposes of this thesis the terms conflict and armed conflict will be used interchangeably to refer to incidents of social disruption and aggression that involve the use of violence.

Galtung's concept of peacebuilding, derived from the notion of positive peace, emerged from his reflections on the mechanisms needed to end violent conflict and were primarily an intellectual exploration rather than instructions for practice (Galtung 1976, 282). These ideas did not resonate in any meaningful way with practitioners until the end of the Cold War when significant changes occurred in the number and types of conflicts that emerged globally (Wallensteen and Sollenberg 2001).[3] Sometimes referred to in the literature as the 'New Wars', these conflicts tended to occur within states rather than between states, often between groups of people that lived in close proximity to one another but had different religions or ethnicities (Kaldor 2007). Guerrilla forces, rather than national militaries, were involved and a far greater number of civilians were affected. The needs of people and governments in the aftermath of such conflicts were complex – refugees and internally displaced people had to be repatriated, guerrilla armies needed to be demobilised and often state systems were vulnerable and required support. Increasingly, the United Nations (UN) was requested to address the aftermath of these conflicts.[4] In the three year period after the fall of the Berlin Wall, the UN became involved in peace operations in Namibia, Angola, El Salvador, Western Sahara, Cambodia, Bosnia, Somalia and Mozambique (Paris 2004). Its aims in these places included disarming combatants and preparing for elections. Not only were these much more complex tasks than those for which the UN had previously been responsible, but they represented a new internationalised response to the occurrence of armed conflict.

The UN began developing policies to reflect its new responsibilities. At a meeting held on 31 January 1992 the Security Council invited incoming UN

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[3] From 1989 there was a steady increase in the number of conflicts, peaking in 1992.

[4] The increased involvement of the UN was a consequence of the end of the ideological battle between the US and Soviet Union. Previously, the US and Soviet Union would veto proposals for UN peacekeeping missions and invest resources into post-conflict zones themselves in an attempt to gain allies. After the Cold War there were fewer political incentives to make such an investment and as a result the UN gained both an increased volume of work as well as a broader range of tasks (United Nations 1992b, 2; Wallensteen and Sollenberg 2001).

Secretary General, Dr Boutros Boutros-Ghali, to provide analysis and recommendations on how the UN could better engage with countries emerging from violent conflict. In its invitation, the Security Council encouraged him to 'draw on lessons learned in recent United Nations peace-keeping missions to recommend ways of making more effective Secretariat planning and operations' (United Nations 1992b, 3). The Security Council had asked Boutros-Ghali to look specifically at preventative diplomacy, peace-making and peace keeping. In addition to reflecting on these particular areas he formulated the concept of 'post-conflict peacebuilding' and defined it as 'action to identify and support structures which will tend to strengthen and solidify peace in order to avoid a relapse into conflict' (United Nations 1992a, 6). The report he produced for the UN Security Council, called *An Agenda for Peace: Preventive Diplomacy, Peacemaking and Peace-Keeping* which popularised the concept of 'post-conflict peacebuilding', was grounded in the practices of the UN and other institutions involved in places that had experienced conflict following the end of the Cold War.

An Agenda for Peace provides an official and internationally recognised definition of peacebuilding and at the same time is an illustration of how peacebuilding theory and practice became closely linked at this time. Boutros-Ghali argues that 'only sustained, cooperative work to deal with underlying economic, social, cultural and humanitarian problems can place an achieved peace on a durable foundation' (United Nations 1992a, 17). The diversity of problems referred to by Boutros-Ghali reflects the fact that in defining peacebuilding he drew on the insight of a range actors with practical experience responding to armed conflict including '... governments, regional agencies, non-governmental organizations, and institutions and individuals from many countries' (United Nations 1992a, 1). At the same time, this understanding of peacebuilding also reflects the influence of Galtung's theoretical ideas about positive peace, specifically the need to address inequities in social structures to ensure that peace is lasting (Galtung 1969).

During the same period another influential approach to peacebuilding was developed by John Paul Lederach, a conflict resolution practitioner

(Lederach 1995, 1997; Lederach 2000). Lederach developed multiple peacebuilding frameworks and theories based on his experiences with conflict resolution around the world. Lederach's approach was focused on grounding conflict resolution in local practice so that change would come from within communities (Lederach 2000, 47). Another aspect of peacebuilding, according to Lederach, was the need to transform relationships through reconciliation (Lederach 1997; Lederach 2000), a process that he argued was a necessary part of a process of 'sustainable transformation' (Lederach 1997, 75).

There is a clear link between Lederach's ideas about building peace and their practical application. To begin with, Lederach's work is a reflection on his own practice:

> I have always considered myself a practitioner more than a theoretician. Where theory has emerged, it has done so through short, intensive bursts of writing in which I reflected on recent experiences. (Lederach 2000, 45)

While Lederach distances himself from theory, his work does have important theoretical functions. It underpins the practice of many other scholars and practitioners working with communities that have experienced conflict (e.g. Broome 2004; Alther 2006). Furthermore, there are a number of cases of scholarship where the research was itself an exercise in community peacebuilding, indicating a very close link between theory and practice (e.g. Maoz 2000; Mollov and Lavie 2001; Korac 2006; Lowry and Littlejohn 2006).

Over the last two decades, these theoretical and policy underpinnings have evolved into a wide spectrum of peacebuilding practices. Scholars have since developed a plethora of frameworks to capture the many activities that now constitute peacebuilding (see Voorhoeve 2007, 24; van Leeuwen 2009, 32-33; Miall, Ramsbotham and Woodhouse 2011, 227). These activities can be located on a spectrum ranging from those that aim to build peace by creating change at a macro, or state level, through to those that are designed to rebuild

relationships at the community, or micro level.[5] At the macro level, peacebuilding can involve efforts to build or rebuild state institutions and political systems (Simonsen 2004; Boege et al. 2009; Brown and Gusmao 2009; Silander 2009); actions involving the military and security, such as disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration (DDR) programs (Knight and Ozerdem 2004; Dzinesa 2007; Macartan and Weinstein 2007); large-scale economic development programs (Hampson 1997, 714-715); and programs that seek to achieve justice through security sector reform and transitional justice mechanisms (Celador 2005; Tschirgi 2005; Lambourne 2009). Many of these activities have applications at the micro level (see van Leeuwen 2009, 32-33 for detailed overview); however, there are also activities that are unique to micro-level practice. These include dialogue between groups in conflict, negotiations and other relationship-building activities (Mollov and Lavie 2001; Lowry and Littlejohn 2006; Shank and Schirch 2008; Wolpe and McDonald 2008; Zartman 2008).

Many peacebuilding activities, particularly at the macro level, are consistent with 'liberal peacebuilding' theory, the dominant approach to peacebuilding since the 1990s. 'Liberal peacebuilding' is based on the premise that democratisation and the liberalisation of the economy are integral to building sustainable peace (Paris 2004; Richmond 2006). This perspective was informed by ideas of liberalism within academic and political thought, following Enlightenment philosophers such as Adam Smith and Immanuel Kant (Smith 1776; Kant 1939), which entered the political lexicon in the aftermath of the First World War. They were then popularised by US President Woodrow Wilson, who believed that democracy was the key to peace both within and between states (Doyle 1983; Paris 2001).[6] These ideas were subsequently supported by research which demonstrated a link between

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[5] The use of 'macro' and 'micro' to describe activities occurring at different scales has its origins in sociological theory (e.g. Collins 1981). These terms, including the additional term 'meso', are commonly used by scholars discussing peacebuilding (Paffenholz, Abu-Nimer and McCandless 2005; Goodhand 2006; Paffenholz 2010).

[6] This belief guided Wilson's approach to the post-World War One reconstruction effort: he wanted to 'make the world safe *through* democracy' (Paris 2004, 41, italics in original).

democracy and peace (e.g. Hegre et al. 2001) and further reinforced by the publication of another important UN document in 1996 called *An Agenda for Democratisation*, also by Boutros-Ghali, in which he argues that 'a culture of democracy is fundamentally a culture of peace' (Boutros-Ghali 1996, 7).

The principles of liberal peacebuilding have been translated into practice through numerous peacebuilding missions implemented by the UN with the assistance of other international agencies. These missions have not always succeeded in curbing the violence, or have done so only temporarily, prompting scholars to challenge the link between democratisation and peace (Hegre et al. 2001; Fearon and Latin 2003). These findings have led to widespread criticism of the practice of liberal peacebuilding (Donais 2009; Lidén 2009; Richmond 2009b). At one level, this criticism is directed towards problems with procedural aspects of its implementation. Liberal peacebuilding initiatives have been criticised because they are implemented for a limited period and are not designed with adequate consideration of the sequence and timing of activities, a process which scholars argue makes democratisation more difficult (Call and Cook 2003; Jarstad 2008). For instance, the lack of coordination between the UN and other international bodies engaged in peacebuilding has been cited as creating situations where programs with conflicting goals have been implemented at the same time (Pugh 2000; Tschirgi 2005).[7]

Perhaps the most pertinent criticism of liberal peacebuilding in the context of this thesis is that it has created administrative structures and systems that obstruct the operationalisation of local ideas about peace. Some scholars have criticised the lack of consideration that practitioners give to the specificities of context when applying liberal peacebuilding strategies (Paris 2004; Jeong 2005). As a consequence, the practice of liberal peacebuilding

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[7] The global political environment since the 11 September 2001 attacks on the World Trade Center in the USA, and the beginning of the Global War on Terror, has contributed to these problems. Research has shown that these events have undermined efforts for global cooperation on strategies to build peace, and in the process have created more restrictions on international NGOs which potentially fuel practices like those described above (Tschirgi 2003; Goodhand 2006).

has developed in such a way that international peacebuilding actors do not genuinely involve, or even consult with, local actors – something that research has shown is necessary if the most appropriate peacebuilding mechanisms are to be developed (Hemmer et al. 2006; Sisk 2008; Fluri 2009). Scholars also argue that rather than uncritically exporting democratic practices to the global South, peacebuilding initiatives should focus on creating the political conditions that allowed local people to decide for themselves on the types of political systems and institutions to be employed (e.g. Kumar 2001; Lambourne 2009).

These analyses raise three key points about the relationship between peacebuilding theory and practice. First, they show that the liberal approach to peacebuilding practice is underpinned by the theory of liberalisation, but the theory *about* liberal peacebuilding is critical of the way in which these ideas are put into practice. The clash between the theory which underlies liberal peacebuilding and research findings which are critical of its effectiveness suggests that there are limited avenues through which scholarly work can influence this practice. Second, there tends to be a focus on the structural problems caused by liberal peacebuilding and a lack of consideration of how the agency of the actors involved, in particular local actors, may contribute to the failures (or successes) of peacebuilding. In other words, by focussing primarily on international actors in their criticisms of liberal peacebuilding, scholars are perpetuating the very problem which they are critiquing by denying local actors ownership, involvement and control over the peacebuilding process. Finally, these analyses indicate that there is limited information available about the mechanisms through which theory about peacebuilding becomes practice and vice versa.

In recent years, there have been attempts to develop new theoretical models of peacebuilding that respond to the difficulty of incorporating local ideas into peacebuilding practice. These models outline strategies for developing a hybrid approach to peacebuilding that combines liberal and culturally-

specific local methods of peacebuilding (Donais 2009; Lidén 2009; Richmond 2009a).[8] Some specify which local actors should and should not be involved. For example Richmond (2009b, 566) suggests that international actors need to engage with the 'local-local', by which he means the community level rather than with local civil society organizations that claim to represent communities. There is, however, little discussion of how this engagement may occur, what the challenges of sharing ideas across the local/international divide may be or what changes to the current system would need to be made to permit such an exchange to occur. The lack of detail about the mechanics of how to establish hybrid peacebuilding suggests that there is a need for more grounded understandings of how international and local actors currently exchange and develop ideas. One widespread practice which can yield this information is the collaboration between international agencies and local civil society groups engaged in peacebuilding.

Civil society and peacebuilding

Civil society is a concept that has its origins in the work of Greek and European philosophers such as Aristotle, Rousseau, Kant and Hegel but had a revival in the aftermath of World War II (Keane 1988; Cohen and Arato 1992; Kumar 1993). It has evolved to refer to a 'realm of association' (Kumar 1993, 390) in which 'the collectivities of non-state organizations, interest groups and associations... help maintain a check on the power and totalizing tendency of the state' (Haynes 1997, 16). At the same time, civil society has become an idealised goal, an entity that could 'promise something better' to countries transitioning out of authoritarianism or recovering from armed conflict (Khilnani 2001, 12).

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[8] Donais (2009) proposes a model of 'cultural exchange' which acknowledges that both the international community and many different local actors have knowledge and experience to offer to the peace process. Similarly Lidén's (2009) notion of 'social' peacebuilding aims to create a hybrid of liberalisation and culturally specific peacebuilding models that is focused on economic and social rights, targets the inclusion of the marginalised and allows local actors to determine the political model.

This contemporary understanding of civil society has resulted in the concept becoming a key part of the democratisation and liberalisation projects of the global aid community in the post-Cold War period (Cohen and Arato 1992, xii). The vague, yet idealised nature of the concept has contributed to its contemporary popularity in the development and peacebuilding sectors as these qualities allow it to acquire a range of meanings depending on the goals of those who employ it (Pearce 2000; Orjuela 2005). Development agencies working in the global South create space for civil society because they believe that it can contribute to democratisation by providing a place through which citizens can become politically engaged (Barnes 2005). Using this same reasoning, civil society has been considered central to the process of building peace in places that have experienced war (Duffield 2001; Kaldor 2003).

The 'rehabilitation of civil-society' was identified as a key element of peacebuilding in the UN's *Inventory of Post-Conflict Peacebuilding Activities* (United Nations 1996) in which the strengthening of local organisations was identified as a means of repairing damaged social structures. The reasons given for supporting civil society as part of the peacebuilding agenda in this document echoed those used to support civil society as part of the process of democratisation. First, donors hoped that civil society could counterbalance the power of the state. It was also believed that it could create links between people who may have otherwise been in conflict (Paris 2004). At the same time, civil society was perceived as a space within which citizens could develop the skills necessary to engage in a democratic society, such as compromising and negotiating, so that they could be better incorporated into the peacebuilding process (Barnes 2009). More recently, the Peacebuilding Commission was established in 2005 with a mandate to develop peacebuilding strategies, locate funding for peacebuilding by the UN, ensure the international community engaged with peacebuilding for a longer period of time and to coordinate the multiple

actors involved in the process (United Nations Peacebuilding Commission 2012). Engaging with local civil society was part of this mandate.[9]

In studies of the involvement of civil society in development and peacebuilding, there has been a tendency to conflate the terms 'NGO' and 'civil society'.[10] These patterns reflect the preference of international donors to fund NGOs rather than other civil society groups as a means of supporting democratisation in the global South (Fisher 1997; Mercer 2002). This approach became popular amongst donors because of a series of assumptions about NGOs, namely that they are autonomous organisations which provide an avenue through which to diversify the voices of civil society; they represent the poor and marginalised, providing them with enhanced opportunities for political participation; and they limit state power by monitoring the state and presenting alternative perspectives (Mercer 2002). In a peacebuilding context, the specific qualities of NGOs that made them popular amongst donors include: their less official status, which gives them more flexibility; their impartiality in comparison to state institutions; their ability to build relationships over the long term, and therefore respond better to the psychological aspects of resolving conflicts; and their ability to prevent further violence by acting as witnesses and providing protective accompaniment to groups under threat (Mawlawi 1993).

Both Northern and Southern civil society organisations have been actively engaged in places that have experienced armed conflict. Northern organisations, primarily NGOs, have been involved in locations in which there is armed conflict through their roles in humanitarian, development and

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[9] Research on the efforts of the Peacebuilding Commission in Sierra Leone suggests that this aspect of its program has not been particularly successful (Lambourne 2008).

[10] Like 'civil society', the term 'NGO' is a broad one encompassing organisations that range from bureaucratic formal institutions to informal entities operated by volunteers. These organisations can work at the local, regional or national levels as well as across scales and engage in activities in many different sectors (Lewis 1998). Goodhand (2006, 16) offers a useful matrix to map the areas in which NGOs are active (relief, development, human rights protection and conflict resolution) against their approach to working (direct-intervention, capacity building and advocacy). In addition to these functional qualities, NGOs can also be understood as 'processes', or entities that have multiple and changing meanings and roles depending on the context in which they are working, with whom they are engaging and the tasks they are completing (Hilhorst and van Leeuwen 2005, 541).

to a limited extent, advocacy work (van Leeuwen 2009). Northern humanitarian NGOs became aware of the possible adverse effects of their presence after the genocide in Rwanda in the early 1990s, during which time their resources were used by individuals perpetrating the crimes. As discussed in more detail in Chapter Two, this event prompted the development of a framework called 'Do No Harm', which helped Northern NGOs to reflect on how their presence could influence the dynamics of conflict (Anderson 1999). Since then, debates have emerged between practitioners about the extent to which humanitarian organisations should engage in peacebuilding, with 'maximalists' suggesting that aid should be used to respond to the problems that occur after conflict and 'minimalists' arguing that the basic principles of impartiality and neutrality should be prioritised (Goodhand and Atkinson 2001, 13-14; Goodhand 2006, 94-96). The involvement of Northern NGOs in conflict settings has also been interpreted by some scholars as part of a pattern of increased securitisation, with international development aid being used a means of containing and securing the global South rather than being genuinely about empowerment (Duffield 2001).

It is less clear how Southern civil societies have contributed to peacebuilding because the scholarship tends to focus on how international intervention inhibits the ability for Southern civil society to participate in responding to armed conflict. For example, scholars argue that some activities jointly undertaken by local and international organisations, such as project evaluation, can isolate communities and distance them from the peace process (Pugh 2000, 128; Paffenholz and Spurk 2006). They also note that the structures of international funding encourage local organisations to become financially and creatively dependent on their international donors (Pearce 2005, 42; Belloni 2008) and, as a result, are not always able to act as agents of change at the community level (Barakat and Strand 1995; Goodhand and Lewer 1999; Belloni 2001).

Scholars have shown that this 'donor driven hierarchy', in which local organisations tend to adjust their programs to align with donors' interests,

has led international aid agencies to focus their attention primarily on local organisations that share their values, marginalising those with more radical views (Pugh 2000, 119; Orjuela 2005; Pearce 2005). This hierarchy can create divisions within civil society between those NGOs that know how to use the language of the international community and those that do not (Belloni 2008). Scholars have also shown that civil society organisations are insufficiently equipped to create broad structural change, largely because their position vis-à-vis the state means they are not able to visualise how their actions fit into the broader peacebuilding strategy (Fischer 2006). As a result, scholars argue that donors have had limited success in working through civil society to generate political and economic change (e.g. Belloni 2001), suggesting that local civil society is 'necessary but not enough' of a contribution to peace (Orjuela 2003, 210).

These assessments, like the analyses of liberal peacebuilding, tend to focus on the structural factors inhibiting Southern civil society organisations' ability to make a productive contribution to peacebuilding. The scholars who do account for the agency of Southern organisations involved in peacebuilding do so to challenge the assumption that civil society actors are aligned with, and committed to, liberal principles. These scholars highlight how Southern organisations with undemocratic and divisive agendas acquire funding by packaging themselves in a way attractive to unsuspecting Northern donors (Pugh 2000; Orjuela 2003; Belloni 2008; Carey 2010). By funding divisive members of civil society, international organisations can potentially further contribute to antagonism and division:

> The promotion of civil society can have positive *or* deleterious effects both on the prospects for democratic consolidation and on domestic peace. When efforts to encourage political participation do not result in greater support for democratic compromise, but instead serve to increase polarization, intolerance, and antagonism in a transitional society, they do not further the cause of either democracy or peace (Paris 2004, 161, italics in original).

These findings illustrate how local actors can exhibit agency by concealing their true agendas and manipulating Northern donors; however, they focus primarily on the destructive capacities of local NGO agency, offering little insight into how local NGOs may make constructive contributions to peace at either a practical or conceptual level.

Problematising the local

The ideas of Southern civil society actors are frequently sidelined in international debates and discourse, including in fields in which they are directly involved. Connell (2007) observes that, unlike their Northern counterparts, the work of Southern theorists has tended to be seen as marginal to ideas produced by Northern theorists. The practical implications of this pattern are particularly apparent in the context of international development, which is built around the 'will to improve' the situation for people living in the global South, but, like many other fields within social science, draws primarily from Northern modes of thinking (Li 2007).[11]

Within the field of peacebuilding, there is debate about the usefulness of local civil society organisations as the source of ideas about peace. As Southern NGOs are frequently led and staffed by the educated elite, support for them can potentially reinforce inequality between different social groups (Henderson 2002; Hemment 2004; Orjuela 2005). Local elites can also act as 'gatekeepers', controlling the access of international donors to other local actors (Paffenholz 2001, 8). For some scholars, this undermines the legitimacy of local NGOs' ideas as representative of indigenous knowledge (e.g. Richmond 2009b).

These misgivings notwithstanding, the ideas of Southern NGOs and how they shape the projects on which they work are valuable because of the

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[11] Research about NGOs engaged in anti-trafficking initiatives in Indonesia illustrates how international debates about trafficking and HIV, which inform the way in which donor organisations distribute money, cannot always capture the complexity of the situations faced by local NGOs receiving that funding. As a consequence of not being able to feed into that essentially foreign discourse, those organisations can potentially lose funding or decide to engage with other issues (Lyons and Ford 2010; Ford and Lyons 2012).

unique position of these organisations in relation to their Northern counterparts and local constituents. The staff of local NGOs, particularly those in urban areas, occupy a hybrid position that allows them to act as mediators between those at the 'local-local' level and institutions and individuals from 'outside'. The unique combination of education, previous work experience and mobility can provide NGO activists with insight into both their local context as well as into the language and practices of the international aid systems upon which their organisations rely for funding. An analysis of the strategies used by local NGOs to navigate these different spheres thus offers an important source of insight about the convergence of peacebuilding theory and practice and the role of Southern agency in that process.

Accounting for Agency

The development literature provides a number of useful tools with which to examine the agency of Southern actors because of its considerable cross-over with the literature about peacebuilding.[12] Early studies of development tended to focus primarily on how the structures and discourse of development contributed to relations of power between Northern and Southern NGOs in ways that reinforced the dominance of Northern institutions, individuals and ideas (Escobar 1988; Ferguson 1994). One of the problems with these explanations is that, like contemporary scholarship about local civil society's contribution to peacebuilding, they insufficiently account for the agency of Southern actors. By privileging structural explanations for the inequalities in the international development system,

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[12] Scholars have examined the connections between peacebuilding and development from a range of perspectives. Some have explored the ways in which peacebuilding can be used as a strategy for furthering development (Santiso 2002; Lind 2006; Blagojevic 2007), while others argue that development can be used a peacebuilding strategy (Cain 2001; Rubin and Armstrong 2003; Shaw 2003; Söderberg 2006; Dobbins 2008). While a number of scholars have observed that development can be a contributor to conflict (Busumtwi-Sam 2002; Darini 2005; Souri 2006), others have shown that development organisations, and in particular NGOs, play an important role in building peace (Solis and Martin 1992; Barakat and Strand 1995; Santiso 2002; Kenichi 2003; Alther 2006; Makuwira 2006).

these scholars provided little scope for understanding how local actors navigated these conditions.

Building on Giddens' (1979) definition of agency to illustrate that agents (which can be individuals or organisations) have access to resources that allow them to shape their own world, even if they are operating in an environment over which they have little control or in which they are highly dependent on others, Long and van der Ploeg (1994) propose an 'actor-oriented approach' that allows scholars of development to unpack the interplay between structure and agency. They argue that actors use their social networks and their own discourses as resources to 'process information and strategize in their dealings with various local actors as well as with outside institutions and personnel' (Long and van der Ploeg 1994, 64). In doing so they are influenced by the structures of the environment in which they work, but importantly, their actions can also contribute to changing those same structures.

This idea was adapted and broadened by Lewis and Mosse (2006), who combine the actor-oriented approach with other sociological and anthropological tools in what they call an 'ethnography of development'. Lewis and Mosse add complexity to the arguments that Long and van der Ploeg make about agency by introducing the analytical tools of 'brokers' and 'translators'. Brokers are often understood as intermediaries between the international development industry and local populations. In some cases, they are portrayed as being parasitic and exploitative, but Mosse and Lewis argue that any actor can have this intermediary role, and the more important aspect of this particular concept is that it recognises the existence of actors whose role is to 'translate' and interpret events and decisions in their environment. In playing this intermediary and interpretive role, these actors create coherence in development projects by generating narratives that link ideas, events, institutions and people that may otherwise have no discernible connection to one another (Mosse and Lewis 2006, 14).

Scholars of the development industry draw on tools like those proposed by Mosse and Lewis to illustrate how Southern actors are able to exert agency through the development process and to insert their ideas into particular projects. Rossi (2004), for example, shows how local communities in West Africa frame their concerns using the language of their Northern benefactors, arguing that while being 'embedded in structures of knowledge which shape agency', the use of this particular language illustrates their awareness of those structures and attempts to 'adjust their trajectories' (Rossi 2004, 26). Ebrahim (2003, 51) makes a similar argument about the role of local NGOs working in the forestry and agriculture sector in India, asserting that they are both constrained by the discourse within which they operate and capable of 'challenging and changing established practices and policies of development'. Others, like Lister (2000), argue that the structures of development aid do reinforce power asymmetries between North and South but that Southern agency provides the opportunity to challenge this dynamic.

This thesis draws on Mosse and Lewis' (2006) approach to explore the tension that exists between the broad structures of power within the development industry and the agency of local NGOs, and to demonstrate that this tension has the potential to produce new ideas and practices within the specific field of peacebuilding. It compares similar forms of NGO partnership in Aceh and Timor Leste, two places in which partnerships between international aid agencies and local NGOs have very different histories. This comparison illustrates how Northern and Southern NGOs and their staff negotiate the boundaries and the opportunities inherent in each style of NGO partnership to compose, interpret and formulate peacebuilding theory and practice. By doing so, it demonstrates that the parameters for substantive exchange about peacebuilding are influenced by three key factors – the context in which the partnerships are occurring, the funding structures of the partnership and the individuals involved in the relationships.

Methodology

This thesis is an interdisciplinary study, which draws on heuristic tools from peace and conflict studies, development studies and anthropology to trace the way in which ideas about peacebuilding are developed and exchanged in North-South NGO partnerships. It employs the research methods associated with an ethnography of development, which seeks to shed light on the power dynamics inherent in relations between agents in the development system and how those dynamics bring particular ideas to life (Mosse and Lewis 2006). Although this research raises questions about the link between peacebuilding theory and practice rather than about development, its primary focus on NGO relations as a site for examining this link means that the ethnography of development framework is eminently suitable. Data for the thesis was collected by spending extended periods of time with local and international NGOs in the places in which they worked – an investment of time that was essential to be able to analyse the different characteristics of the partnership and the way local NGOs exhibited agency in these relationships.

Using semi-structured interviews and participant observation, I was able to elicit narratives from international and local organisations which provided insight into the logics of both Northern and Southern actors (Mosse and Lewis 2006). I spoke to a wide range of organisations about the projects in which they were involved, their experiences of partnership and their understandings of peacebuilding. On my first field visit, I interviewed a broad cross-section of organisations rather than interviewing multiple people within each organisation.[13] I also attempted to engage with individuals associated with both the Northern and Southern organisations involved in the partnership. On my second field visit, I followed up on cases where I had

[13] When I arrived for the first time in each place, I asked my contacts for recommendations of organisations that were involved in peacebuilding and approached those organisations. I explained what my project was about, and if they were interested I organised interviews during which I solicited information about other suitable people to interview, either within their organisation or from other organisations.

been able to speak to parties on both sides during my first visit.[14] I invited respondents to reflect on how the projects had progressed since my last visit and on any new developments in the relationship with their partner. I also collected data through participating in a range of public events and meetings. When the opportunity arose to participate in meetings, seminars or training sessions, I would attend as an observer. Additionally, during both field visits, I requested copies of documents (narrative reports, financial reports, brochures, training modules), which I analysed for descriptive information about the activities undertaken as part of the projects and about financial information related to each of the projects. I also conducted internet searches about each organisation which yielded supplementary reports and articles. These online documents were used to validate facts about events that occurred through the duration of the projects and to confirm information like the stated objectives of the projects.

Another aspect of an ethnography of development is that it allows scholars to see how policy is interpreted by practitioners. It uncovers the 'social processes of policy' (Mosse and Lewis 2006, 15), or in other words, why policy is (or is not) accepted by practitioners and how policy changes once it is applied. One of the purposes of this thesis is to understand which ideas about peacebuilding gain traction in projects and how these ideas change as they are applied. In order to identify the ideas, theories and policies which underpinned each case study, I used a combination of information from the interviews, participant observation and document analysis. In the interviews I asked participants explicitly what they understood peacebuilding to be. In order to understand whose ideas were most dominant I also asked questions about who was involved and what processes were used in designing the projects and why particular decisions were made.[15] In addition, I conducted

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[14] See the Appendix for a discussion about the process used to select case studies and determine the three styles of partnership discussed in this thesis.

[15] I interviewed approximately 100 people over the course of my fieldwork. The interviews of 45 respondents were directly used in the analysis of the cases presented in this thesis. These respondents included staff of local and international NGOs, consultants employed by the international NGOs, staff of other international agencies involved in peacebuilding and

multiple interviews with the same people to ensure that I had time to capture as many details as possible – a technique that was particularly important in cases where a dispute emerged during the course of the partnership. It was through these narratives about the projects' development and the disputes that emerged throughout the process that I developed an understanding of how ideas were selected and how (or if) they changed. In addition, some organisations were able to provide written policy statements outlining their approach to peacebuilding, while others provided peacebuilding training modules or results of research projects about peacebuilding.

Positionality and relevance

Two closely-related issues of concern for scholars of development relates to the ways in which the researcher engages with the environment being researched and the extent to which the research results can be used by those working in the field. For scholars of development, perhaps more so than in many other areas of scholarship, becoming involved in development projects provides an instrumental means to obtain data. Mosse (2005) explains that in order to collect data over an extended time period he needed to engage with the organisations he was studying in a practical way because development organisations:

> are less tolerant of research that falls outside design frameworks, that does not appear to be of practical relevance, is wasteful of time or adds complexity and makes the task of management harder. It is this that makes it virtually impossible to sustain long term participant observation in the absence of making a practical contribution (Mosse 2005, 12).

For others, becoming directly involved in development projects, or ensuring that their research has practical relevance, is less about the pragmatics of doing research and more about the moral imperative to contribute to change. In a seminal piece, Edwards (1989) argued that the increasing amount of

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members of civil society who had experience with and observations of the particular NGOs described in the following chapters. See the Appendix for a schedule of interviews.

research about development was not having any marked effect on poverty levels. He also critiqued the excessive focus on what 'expert' researchers could extract through the research process when this did not benefit those living in developing countries. Instead, he argued, research about development needs to be clear about its purpose, which was (in his view) to improve the conditions in developing countries, and should involve local people in the process of producing knowledge about development. According to Edwards (1994, 281) scholars should thus work towards 'uniting research and practice, understanding and action, researcher and researched, into a single, unitary process'.

Not all scholars agree with Edwards. Some argue that it is more important to achieve a balance between development studies being a way of 'helping' others and maintaining its academic rigour. According to Leys, (1996, 5) the fact that early development scholars adopted the normative position of helping those from the former colonies 'militated against philosophical dispassion and reflective self-criticism'. Similarly, Buttel and McMichael (1994, 47) argue that 'the problematic or explanandum of development sociology has been shaped so centrally by particular praxis-related normative considerations – that is, by an agenda to accomplish certain social goals in the Third World – that its social scientific foundation has been seriously compromised'. Bebbington (1994) addresses this problem by distinguishing between 'applied' research and 'relevant' research, which, in his view, have different functions. As he defines it, applied research is conducted to help resolve a particular problem, whereas relevant research is broader, engages with discussions at a theoretical level but has entry points for development actors to reflect on their own position and to think about how to change their own practice.

It is the latter approach that I apply to my own work about peacebuilding. My approach was to find ways to make a practical contribution, not necessarily to specific NGOs, but where opportunities arose and I was capable of contributing. This was important in part, because I was a volunteer for one year with a local NGO in Timor Leste prior to becoming a researcher, and

people in Dili knew me as a practitioner. Maintaining this identity helped me to broaden my contacts and to maintain legitimacy as someone who understood the sector (Dibley 2009). Most often, because of my role as a researcher, I was asked to help in ways that gave opportunities to development and peacebuilding practitioners to reflect on their work.[16] The types of practical contributions that I made included conducting reflective training on peacebuilding practices to management staff of international NGOs in both Timor Leste and Aceh, facilitating research training for NGO activists in Timor Leste and Aceh and holding a seminar about my research for a peacebuilding working group consisting of international and local NGOs.[17]

My relationship with each place influenced the way I related to my respondents and on the kinds of information I was able to elicit. In Timor Leste, I had credibility when talking about peacebuilding and conflict because I had been present in Dili during the 2006 crisis. My ongoing relationship with Timor Leste (beginning in 2002) was another source of legitimacy, as was my ability to speak Tetum and Indonesian. Though my Indonesian language skills were an asset in Aceh, my overall fieldwork experience there was markedly different. I had no personal history in the area, but I was able to use the relationships I had with other scholars who did have longer histories there as a way of establishing my credibility. In Aceh, it was more difficult to organise interviews because respondents saw me as yet another 'fly-in, fly-out' expatriate, of which there were many in Aceh during the period of my fieldwork (Missbach 2011). It was less challenging securing interviews on my second field visit, as many of my respondents already knew me, and because I had maintained contact with them during the intervening period. My experience interviewing respondents outside of Banda Aceh, the

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[16] A number of respondents commented that being interviewed itself offered them a welcome opportunity to reflect on their work, an activity for which practitioners in this industry rarely have time.

[17] I attempted to replicate this in Aceh, but the busy local NGO that offered to organise the seminar was caught up in its own activities and the seminar was delayed a number of times and eventually cancelled.

capital, was more positive, in part because NGOs there encountered fewer expatriates and researchers. I was given a particularly warm welcome in these more isolated areas when I returned for follow up interviews.

Like Edwards, I hope that my research can have a positive impact on the places that I have conducted my study and like Mosse, I recognise the pragmatic value of a certain level of practical engagement; however, in terms of my purpose, I am more aligned with Li (2007, 2), who argues that 'the positions of critic and programmer are properly distinct'. As a critic, I have not set out to directly involve my participants in generating knowledge – this study is not designed to be directly applied in order to improve the situation for those in Aceh or Timor Leste. Rather, it seeks to highlight issues and raise questions that may not have been addressed about who makes decisions regarding the ideas underpinning the peacebuilding projects that were implemented in Aceh and Timor Leste, how those ideas changed through partnership and the extent to which those ideas can inform the theorisation of peacebuilding.

Selection of field sites

Comparative, or cross-national research, can be defined as that which 'transcends national boundaries' (Kohn 1987, 714).[18] In other words, it is research that actively and systematically compares two or more places in relation to a specific concept with the purpose of producing explanations and generalisations that provide a 'greater awareness and a deeper understanding of social reality'(Hantrais and Mangen 1996, 2).[19] Scholars acquire a new

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[18] The use of comparative research methods had a renaissance in the post-World War II period due to the formation of new technologies, the establishment of international organisations like the UN and increased interconnectedness between countries and people (Marsh 1967). This enhanced global interconnectivity raised new research questions as the events in one country were increasingly felt, experienced or caused by events in another (Øyen 1990).

[19] This is in contrast to research which is 'implicitly' cross-national, such as that which focuses on one case study and compares it to information that is known to be true about other places (Hyman 2001). For a more detailed discussion of examples of research that appear to be, but are not, examples of cross-national research see Rose and Mackenzie (1991, 449-453). See Kohn (1987, 714-716) for a typology of comparative studies in which

lens when undertaking comparative research which raises alternative questions and sharpens their focus on their subject matter. This lens potentially leads to new insights about their research topic and reveals gaps in existing scholarship (Hantrais and Mangen 1996). One of the key challenges faced by scholars undertaking comparative research is achieving a balance between the scale of the comparison and the generalisability of the results. Large scale comparative projects can lose explanatory power by broadening research questions to the extent that their answers become 'vague and abstract' while the detailed results of smaller scale comparisons can prove difficult to generalise (Ragin 1987, viii; Rose and Mackenzie 1991).[20] Smaller scale comparisons, like this study, however, are able to be more thorough and less dependent on unreliable secondary data (Lijphart 1975).

Timor Leste and Aceh were selected for comparison because they share some key similarities. Both were sites of independence movements which campaigned extensively against the Indonesian state using force as well as political advocacy, and civil society groups in both places had close ties with the Indonesian democratisation movement. These civil society actors worked through extended periods of conflict and learnt to negotiate the constraints that the conflict presented. In both cases, these experiences shaped the value systems and priorities of local actors and influenced their strategies for working with international aid organisations that arrived subsequently.

Investigating two field sites also provided the opportunity to consider the influence of fundamental contextual differences on partnerships. Fieldwork was conducted in 2008 and 2009 about projects and partnerships that

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the nation or country can be examined in one of four ways: as the object, the context, the unit or as a component of a transnational system.

[20] One way of negotiating these problems is to undertake long-term and large scale comparative projects which allow time for detailed analysis of multiple cases. An example of such research is Peacebuilding Compared, a study implemented by scholars from the Australian National University which, over a period of 20 years, aims to investigate 50 different armed conflicts. It combines detailed narratives about each case study with quantitative analysis across 670 different variables with the aim of developing new ways of categorising conflicts and a more nuanced understanding of the conditions under which armed conflicts persist over time (Braithwaite, Braithwaite et al. 2010; Braithwaite, Charlesworth et al. 2012).

occurred beginning in 2005 (in Aceh) and 2006 (in Timor Leste). These timeframes corresponded with the beginning of funding cycles for peacebuilding projects that began after key events in each place, namely the signing of the peace agreement in Aceh in August 2005 and the beginning of the post-independence political and social unrest in Timor Leste in May 2006. At these pivotal points, the international aid industry had had a longer presence in Timor Leste than in Aceh. International aid organisations had worked in Timor Leste from 1999, after its referendum for independence, while Aceh was inaccessible to international aid agencies until after the 2004 tsunami. The scale of the aid response to the tsunami was another significant point of difference that shaped the partnerships discussed in this thesis. These key differences offered an opportunity to compare how similar patterns of partnership between Northern and Southern NGOs were influenced by broader contextual factors, and to investigate how these contextual factors facilitated or inhibited the exercise of agency of Southern NGOs involved in peacebuilding in Aceh and Timor Leste.

Chapter Structure

Having established the theoretical framework in this introductory chapter, the following chapters present the contexts in which the partnerships occur and then outline three patterns of NGO partnerships before concluding with an analysis of what these cases mean for the development of peacebuilding theory. Chapter One traces the history of the conflicts in Timor Leste and Aceh and their aftermaths, paying particular attention to the activity of local and international NGOs during the different phases of history. It goes on to illustrate the key peacebuilding strategies put in place following the events of 2005 and 2006 in Aceh and Timor Leste respectively, arguing that a range of contextually specific historical and political factors converged to shape the partnerships between local and international NGOs.

The following three chapters each focus on a different approach to partnership (short-term contract relationships, longer term partner-driven relationships and networked relationships) between international and local

NGO, which are illustrated with case studies from Timor Leste and Aceh. These particular models reflect three common approaches to partnership used in each place and are one avenue through which Northern and Southern actors in each place negotiate, exchange, develop and implement their ideas about building peace.

Chapter Two focuses on short-term contractual partnerships, a mode of partnership that has received significant scholarly attention because it is seen to create dependency and be an unsustainable mode of partnership for local NGOs. This chapter argues against this position, presenting an analysis of the motivations of the local NGOs who engage in this type of partnership in order to illustrate how a partnership option characterised by significant power discrepancies can in fact be a medium through which local NGOs exhibit considerable agency around which ideas to use in their projects.

Chapter Three examines longer-term partner-driven partnerships, an approach that has received considerably less scholarly attention. This chapter illustrates that longer term relationships potentially provide a better platform for local and international NGO partners to communicate with one another; however, for them to serve as a medium through which local and international NGOs share ideas, they require both parties to be committed to the process of developing new concepts and willing to trust one another.

Chapter Four focuses on a network of relationships involving the International Center for Transnational Justice (ICTJ) and local NGOs in both Aceh and Timor Leste. The chapter opens with an extended discussion of the connections between transitional justice and peacebuilding, arguing that in the contexts of Aceh and Timor Leste, local civil society organisations consider justice to be an issue of central importance, even though it is not always incorporated into the mainstream peacebuilding programs. It goes on to illustrate how the network of relationships between ICTJ and its local partners in Timor Leste and Aceh were shaped by long-term interpersonal relationships which played a key role in building the trust required for ideas to be disseminated and developed.

The thesis concludes by returning to the issue of agency for Southern civil society actors, bringing together the findings presented in the earlier chapters. It illustrates how the vectors of context, funding structures and individuals each contributed to shaping the different partnerships and offering opportunities and constraints for the exchange of ideas between Northern and Southern NGOs. It argues that a deeper understanding of Southern actors' capacity to shape their partnerships and provide input into peacebuilding ideas offers new insight into the relationship between peacebuilding theory and practice.

Chapter One: Landscapes of Partnership

The morning of 30 August 1999 was calm and controlled in Dili, Timor Leste.[21] Before the sun rose, half the registered voters had queued up at polling booths, waiting to decide whether Timor Leste would become an autonomous province within Indonesia or an independent nation. Over the course of the day 98.6 per cent of those registered cast their vote (CAVR 2005, Part 3, 143). On 4 September, Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General for the East Timor Popular Consultation Ian Martin in Dili and UN Secretary General Kofi Annan in New York announced that 78.5 per cent of voters had made the choice of independence (CAVR 2005, Part 3, 144).

On hearing this announcement, the Indonesian military backed militia acted upon their threats, made prior to the referendum, that if the Timorese rejected autonomy within Indonesia, they would leave the place in ruins. There were massacres in a number of cities, in which people were killed as they sought refuge in churches and police stations (Tanter 2006). It is estimated that between 1000 and 1500 people died in the ensuing violence and up to 300,000 people fled their homes (CAVR 2005, Part 3, 151). It took the international community two weeks to organise and deploy troops to control the violence, and in that time the militia and military ruined 70 per cent of the existing infrastructure in the new country (Dunn 2003, 353-360; CAVR 2005, Part 7.1, 145).

This event was important to the histories of both Timor Leste and Aceh. For those in Timor Leste it marked the end of 25 years of Indonesian occupation and the beginning of the road to independence. The challenges associated with the occupation – violence, oppression, international isolation – were replaced with the challenges of being a new country under the enthusiastic,

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[21] Prior to independence Timor Leste was commonly known as East Timor. For the sake of consistency, this thesis will use Timor Leste, even when referring to the period prior to independence, except if East Timor is used in the name of an organisation.

though occasionally misguided, support of the international community. Many in Aceh had also hoped for independence; however, the resounding 'success' of the referendum in Timor Leste sounded the death-knell for those hopes, as fears that Timor Leste's independence might be the first stage in the dismantling of the nation prompted the Indonesian government to close the door on a period of tolerance towards the Acehnese independence movement.

This chapter examines three periods in the history of Timor Leste and Aceh, with a particular focus on the roles of local and international NGOs in each of those periods. The chapter opens with an examination of how the Indonesian state influenced the operation of international and local aid agencies in the two places during the New Order (1966-1998). The next section traces the trajectories of change in each place after Timor Leste gained independence from Indonesia, and the implications of those trajectories for emerging relationships between local and international NGOs. The final section of the chapter focuses on the peacebuilding strategies put in place, and the role of local and international organisations in designing and implementing them, in Timor Leste since the outbreak of violence in May 2006 and in Aceh since the signing of the Helsinki peace agreement in August 2005.

This chapter argues that the interplay of geopolitical circumstances, historical precedence and the particular qualities of a conflict determine the parameters around which local and international NGOs collaborate. It concludes that by 2005–06, NGO partnerships in Timor Leste, which were built on a longer history of collaboration than those in Aceh, were less constrained by state structures. By contrast, in Aceh, NGO partnerships for peacebuilding projects developed in the aftermath of two events in which the Indonesian state was involved: the post-tsunami humanitarian recovery effort and the signing of the Helsinki peace agreement. Issues of conflict were initially sidelined in Aceh, and then implemented in such a way that marginalised local NGOs. These factors played a central role in shaping the decisions

made by local NGOs in the partnerships discussed in the subsequent chapters.

Negotiating the New Order

In the 25 years preceding the referendum in Timor Leste, both Aceh and Timor Leste had been locked in separatist conflict with the Indonesian military. Superficially these conflicts shared many similar characteristics, yet each had emerged from a unique set of circumstances. Importantly, they were of a different order of significance at a geopolitical level. The invasion of Timor Leste in 1975 by Indonesia was directly linked to global Cold War tensions, and the on-going occupation never recognised by the United Nations. Aceh, on the other hand, had been incorporated into Indonesia from the time of independence in 1945 and was recognised internationally as being part of the Indonesian nation. As a result, the separatist conflict in Aceh was shaped less by international political factors, driven instead by issues of unaddressed grievances combined with religious, political and national identity struggles within Indonesia (Aspinall 2009b). This distinction became particularly important at the end of the New Order period in May 1998.[22]

The invasion of Timor Leste in 1975 by Indonesia was made possible by the Cold War. Timor Leste was a colony of Portugal for 450 years before colonial structures collapsed on 25 April 1974 when a coup in Portugal ended the fascist Caetano regime (Jolliffe 1978; Taylor 1991).[23] The new regime in Portugal was committed to ending colonial rule in its occupied territories around the world, though did not take an active approach to decolonisation in Timor Leste (Dunn 2003, 47). In the process, tensions developed between newly formed political parties in Timor Leste, the Timorese Democratic Union (União Democratica Timorense, UDT), which supported autonomy within a broader Portuguese community, and the

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[22] See Braithwaite et al (2010) and Braithwaite (2011) for an analysis of how the political change at this time affected not only Timor Leste and Aceh, but also Papua, Maluku, North Maluku, Central Sulawesi and West and Central Kalimantan - provinces in Indonesia that had experienced underlying tensions during the New Order period.

[23] A detailed account of the Portuguese occupation can be found in Weatherbee (1966).

Revolutionary Front for an Independent East Timor (Frente Revolusionária de Timor Leste Independente, FRETILIN), which was an advocate of immediate independence (Jolliffe 1978; Dunn 2003). This tension was in part the result of manipulation by Indonesia, which encouraged UDT to stage a coup on 11 August 1975. FRETILIN overthrew this coup, forced UDT to retreat to West Timor and declared independence on 28 November 1975 (Hill 1976; Taylor 1991).

These events were a cause of concern for Indonesia because of the political ideology of FRETILIN, the mission statement of which contained an explicit commitment to the doctrines of socialism (Taylor 1991). The President of Indonesia at the time, President Suharto, had gained power and established his anti-communist credentials in 1965 with a nation-wide massacre of Communist Party members and supporters (Crouch 1978, 224-228; Cribb 1990). Under his staunch anti-communist leadership – a thirty-two year period commonly referred to as the New Order – Indonesia gained the support of key Western nations like Australia and the United States (Crouch 1978, 336-341; Jolliffe 1978; Dunn 2003, 103-137; Bertrand 2004, 142). These countries sanctioned Indonesia's invasion of Timor Leste on 7 December 1975 because of their own security interests, economic concerns and because they wanted to support their strong anti-communist ally in the region (Taylor 1991, 74-77; CAVR 2005).[24]

The annexation of Timor Leste as Indonesia's twenty-seventh province was not considered valid by the United Nations, in part because it contradicted the decision made on 15 December 1960 by the Security Council to recognise Timor Leste's right to self-determination (Jolliffe 1978, 266; CAVR 2005, Part 7.1, 13). Two weeks after the invasion, the United Nations unanimously passed Security Council Resolution No.384 (1975), which recognised Portugal as the official administrator of Timor Leste and called

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[24] The USA wanted to maintain good relations with Indonesia so that it could continue to maintain submarine access to the waters in the Straits of Wetar, and Australia was driven by an interest in the oil in the Timor Sea. For a detailed discussion of Australia's motivations for sanctioning the invasion see Braithwaite et al (2012, 17-28).

upon Indonesia to withdraw its troops from the territory (Lloyd 2000, 77; CAVR 2005, Part 7.1, 42). Between 1976 and 1982 another seven resolutions in support of Portuguese control over Timor Leste were passed, albeit with smaller and smaller margins (Lloyd 2000, 78; CAVR 2005, Part 7.1, 26). Nevertheless, the existence of vocal solidarity groups supporting independence for Timor Leste, particularly after the Santa Cruz Massacre of 1991 – when the Indonesian military opened fire on hundreds of young Timorese marching from the centre of Dili to the Santa Cruz cemetery where Sebãstio Gomes, a student shot two weeks previously by the Indonesian military, was buried – ensured that this issue remained firmly on the international agenda.[25]

A range of factors contributed to the Indonesian government's decision to give the people of Timor Leste the opportunity to choose whether or not to remain with Indonesia in 1999. The fall of Suharto in May 1998 brought an end to the New Order regime, presenting the opportunity for significant political change (Bertrand 2004; Aspinall 2005c). The person appointed by outgoing President Suharto to manage this change was his Vice President, and loyal supporter, Dr. Baharuddin Jusuf Habibie. Motivated by the need to differentiate himself and his policies from Suharto and the New Order period in order to legitimise his role as leader (Greenlees and Garran 2002; Mietzner 2008), Habibie reconsidered Indonesia's position towards Timor Leste. In June 1998, within weeks of becoming President, he reversed a position held by the Indonesian government for decades and announced that his government was open to the possibility of offering autonomy to Timor Leste (Greenlees and Garran 2002, 38).

Once Habibie made the offer of autonomy, discussions began between Portugal and Indonesia about different models that could be implemented,

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[25] See Braithwaite et al. (2012, 68-72) and CAVR (2005, Part 7.1, 95-113) for details about the contribution of international solidarity groups to the Timor Leste independence campaign.

facilitated by the UN.[26] These negotiations caused concern within the Indonesian military both because of their implications for Indonesia's territorial sovereignty and because they potentially threatened the military's significant economic interests in the province (Haseman 2000, 175). They began to establish militia groups and, according to Australian intelligence reports, the level of violence against Timorese began to increase (Ball 2006, 184).

The slow progress of the talks and the rising levels of violence in Timor Leste put pressure on Australia to intervene. On 9 December 1998, the then Prime Minister John Howard sent a letter to Habibie, which suggested that Indonesia grant Timor Leste autonomy in the short term with a view to organising a referendum on self-determination at a later time. Habibie's response to the letter was unexpected. His desire to make a strong political mark, the feeling that Timor Leste was becoming a thorn in the side of Indonesia's international relations, and the financial cost of the occupation prompted him to immediately offer the people of Timor Leste the opportunity to choose whether they wanted autonomy within Indonesia or independence (Greenlees and Garran 2002). This surprise decision set Timor Leste on a trajectory which was significantly different to Aceh, another province in the archipelago that had long been struggling for independence.

The separatist conflict in Aceh did not receive the same level of international attention as the conflict in Timor Leste (Braithwaite et al. 2010, 412). This discrepancy was a reflection of the differences in how Aceh became part of Indonesia. It took thirty years of war before the Dutch could contain Aceh, and unlike in other provinces, the colonial occupiers were forced to maintain control using military means rather than economic or political strategies (Reid 2006). Nonetheless, the Dutch did cultivate an elite group of local aristocrats, the *uleebalang*, as their administrators. The *uleebalang,* along with the Dutch, attracted the ire of local religious leaders, the *ulama*, who

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[26] These meetings were part of a series of meetings called the 'Tripartite Talks' involving representatives from Indonesia, Portugal and the UN that had occurred regularly since 1983 (Greenlees and Garran 2002).

became popular during the Islamic revival of the 1920s (Bertrand 2004). In 1939, the All-Aceh Association of Ulama (Persatuan Ulama Seluruh Aceh, PUSA) was established and became the umbrella group for opposition to the Dutch. PUSA defeated the Dutch in 1942 before the arrival of the Japanese, leaving the Acehnese in a strong position to support the rest of Indonesia in its independence struggle after the Japanese surrendered in 1945. Some Japanese defectors and considerable Japanese arms remained in the province, and many of the *uleebalang* who had been left in charge by the Japanese were convinced to support PUSA in opposition to the revival of Dutch occupation (Reid 2006). The extra military skill and resources and a relatively united Acehnese community combined with income from trade with Malaysia and Singapore meant that Aceh played a key role in helping Indonesia achieve independence (Bertrand 2004).

The first overt signs of tension between the Acehnese and Indonesia's central government appeared in the form of the Darul Islam Rebellion. The movement, which had its roots in West Java in 1948, was established in response to the decision that Indonesia would be a secular state (Cribb 1999). After declaring Indonesia an Islamic state in 1949, the movement spread to other parts of Indonesia, including South Kalimantan, South Sulawesi and Aceh. In Aceh, the rebellion found fertile ground with the *ulama*, who were also disappointed with the state's lack of recognition of Islam and frustrated with the decision to abolish Aceh's provincial status in 1951 (Aspinall 2006). At this stage the rebellion, though violent, was not a secessionist movement; nevertheless, its resolution, which forced the *ulama* to give up their aspirations of having influence on the shape of the Indonesian state, did contribute to the formulation of an Acehnese identity distinct from a broader Indonesian identity (Aspinall 2009b).

Aceh's sense of separateness was further cultivated with the formation of the Free Aceh Movement (Gerakan Aceh Merdeka, GAM) which was established two decades after the Darul Islam Rebellion was crushed (Aspinall 2009b). Led by Hasan di Tiro, and with the help of individuals who had been part of the earlier rebellion, GAM made a claim to independence

based on an interpretation of history that positioned Aceh as an independent state since 1500 BCE.[27] According to di Tiro, Aceh's independence was violated first by the Dutch colonisers, and then by the Javanese (Aspinall 2009b, 69). Although di Tiro actively lobbied the US and countries in the Middle East for support (Aspinall 2009b), this argument gained little traction with the international community because – unlike Timor Leste – Aceh was not widely recognised as having the right to self-determination. Indeed, the only forms of international support the independence movement in Aceh received were from Libya, which offered to train GAM soldiers between 1986 and 1990 (Nessen 2006), and from the Unrepresented Nations and Peoples Organisation (UNPO), which was the only international organisation that recognised Aceh's right to self-determination (Aspinall 2009b).

The Indonesian government's main strategy for dealing with the situation in Aceh was to use military force. In 1989 the province was declared a Military Operations Zone (Daerah Operasi Militer, DOM), a status that remained in place until after the fall of Suharto in 1998. Immediately after Suharto's resignation, there were some signs that the Indonesian government was open to alternative approaches to manage the conflict in Aceh. In 1998, General Wiranto apologised for the 'excesses' of the Indonesian military in Aceh, and promised to bring those responsible to justice (Schulze 2006). In September 1999, one month before becoming President, Abdurahman Wahid said that he supported the notion of having a referendum in Aceh (Drexler 2008).

Statements such as these raised expectations among activists that Aceh would be given the same opportunity as Timor Leste; however, the events in Timor Leste in September 1999 closed the door on that possibility. Many Indonesian officials disagreed with Habibie's decision to offer Timor Leste a referendum while others were shocked that the people of Timor Leste chose

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[27] Aspinall (2009a) argues that it was di Tiro's experiences in New York in the 1950s and 1960s that shaped GAM's doctrine, especially his exposure to ideas developing at the time in the USA about nationalism in the context of the Cold War. In this sense, international developments did have an impact on the conflict in Aceh, but in a less material way than in Timor Leste.

to secede. The outcome of this referendum fed fears of Indonesian national disintegration, which were further fuelled by episodic violence in many, previously untroubled, provinces such as Kalimantan and Maluku and meant that any possibility of a referendum in Aceh was quickly dismissed (Bertrand 2004; Braithwaite et al. 2010). Similar views were also held by the international community, which recognised that Indonesia had lost face over the violence in the aftermath of the referendum in Timor Leste. There was little interest in putting further pressure on Indonesia, particularly not for a province for which the case for independence was not as straightforward or convincing.

International and local NGOs in New Order Indonesia

The political landscape during the New Order period oscillated between periods of severe repression punctuated by moments of openness. These periods, which corresponded with fluctuations in the Indonesian economy and the extent to which President Suharto was able to maintain unity among the ruling elite, had important consequences for NGOs in Indonesia.[28] The first Indonesian NGOs were established in the 1970s and were initially accepted – or at least tolerated – by the Indonesian state because of their non-confrontational approach. Many of these early NGOs were established by activists who had supported the rise of Suharto, and shared a similar desire to modernise Indonesia (Fakih 1995, 113; Aspinall 2005c). The main approach used by these NGOs was that of directly engaging with poor communities by running community development projects targeted towards alleviating problems of poverty. This strategy meant that during this period NGOs were considered relatively benign by the government.[29]

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[28] For a detailed discussion of the New Order period see Chapter Two in Aspinall (2005c).

[29] Semantics played an important role in ensuring that the government did not view the NGOs with suspicion. Sinaga (1994, 56-60) explains how NGOs were initially referred to as foundations (*yayasan*) in reference to their legal structure. In 1983 the term Community Self-Reliance Institutions (Lembaga Swadaya Masyarakat, LSM) was officially adopted to avoid the oppositional connotations of the Indonesian translation of 'non-governmental organisation' (*organisasi non-pemerintah*) or of the English version considered by some Indonesian politicians as implying a more anti-establishment, anti-government confrontational institution than Indonesian NGOs. Zeccola (2011a, 80) notes that in 1998, as

Over time, however, NGO practices and attitudes towards the central government became more radical and oppositional, attracting hostility from government officials and the military. The NGOs' more radical stance developed during the period of political openness (*keterbukaan*) experienced between 1989 and 1994. The period of *keterbukaan*, during which the Indonesian government experimented with a more accommodating and liberal approach, was characterised by an open press and increased student and labour activism. During this period NGOs developed increasingly radical approaches to working with communities, engaging in advocacy around a range of human rights issues as well as directly mobilising villagers and helping them coordinate public campaigns about issues of concern to them (Fakih 1995, 121; Aspinall 2005c).

Indonesian NGOs have always relied on international funding. From the 1970s until the mid-1980s, NGOs were supported indirectly through large scale internationally funded development projects. However, beginning in the 1980s the dominant practice has been for bilateral and multilateral donors, as well as Northern NGOs to provide direct funding to Indonesian NGOs (Riker 1998). For the most part, these arrangements proceeded without government interference, although occasional attempts were made to exert control over donors. For example after a Dutch funded network of Indonesian NGOs made vocal protests against the military's actions at the Santa Cruz Massacre in Dili 1991, Dutch funding was blocked by the Indonesian government (Riker 1998; Aspinall 2005c).

The availability of international funding brought opportunities as well as challenges for Indonesian NGOs. On the one hand it compromised the self-reliance of Indonesian NGOs, but on the other, it allowed them to maintain independence from the Indonesian government (Eldridge 2005). At the same time international funding has been the conduit for new ideas and concepts that NGOs have used in their work (Ford 2009), and although the higher

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opposition to the government became a more commonly accepted norm, the term 'NGO' came back into popular use.

levels of responsibility associated with this funding increased the administrative burden, without it most Indonesian NGOs would be unable to operate. In a country where poverty levels make it difficult for people to donate money or free labour to NGOs, international support has played a crucial role in ensuring their survival (Eldridge 2005).

International organisations

The growth of NGOs and patterns of relating between donors and local NGOs in Timor Leste and Aceh were shaped by developments in other parts of Indonesia. The periods of most significant NGO development in both places occurred towards the end of the New Order period. However, their experiences of conflict created some important differences to other parts of the country. In both locations, international donors and NGOs were highly dependent on good relations with the Indonesian government for permission to work. Similarly, the political space available for local NGOs was much less than in other parts of Indonesia. These constraints made it challenging for international NGOs and their staff to freely collaborate with local organisations or to identify, design and fund projects that they believed were most important.

Prior to 1998, very few international organisations had a presence in Aceh. Save the Children, one of the earliest to work in the province, opened an office in 1976 from which it ran programs that were primarily concerned with welfare issues like poverty reduction and livelihoods (Yunis 2000). Throughout the DOM period, international human rights organisations such as Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch and TAPOL conducted research and published reports about human rights violations; however, these organisations did not have any long-term presence in the province (Amnesty International 1993, 1994; TAPOL 2000; Human Rights Watch 2001).

While having a more significant presence than in Aceh, international aid organisations in Timor Leste were also restricted by the Indonesian government, particularly in the period between 1975 and 1989. Catholic organisations, such as MISEREOR, were permitted to maintain the links they

had developed with the Church in Timor Leste prior to the invasion, which they used to run welfare, health and education programs (Nest 1999). The Indonesian government also permitted two USAID-funded organisations, Catholic Relief Service (CRS) and the Church World Service to run similar programs (Nest 1999). Beginning in 1979, the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) funded small scale community projects, and throughout the occupation the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) was permitted to have a presence (Nest 1999).[30] International NGOs with a presence in Timor Leste tended to focus on projects that were aligned with the interests of the Indonesian state. The activities of the ICRC and CRS – for example providing relief for victims of a famine that developed in the mid-1970s as a result of the forced relocation of people from their villages and farming land to resettlement camps – typify the nature of the relationship between international NGOs and the Indonesian government in this period (CAVR 2005, Part 7.3).[31]

In November 1988, Suharto announced that from January 1989 Indonesians and foreigners would have access to eight of the 13 sub-districts in Timor (Taylor 1995). This decision corresponded with the Indonesian government's *keterbukaan* policy, but also reflected the more neutral political position taken by FRETILIN. In early 1988, the National Council of Maubere Resistance (Conselho Nacional da Resistência Maubere, CNRM) was established by Xanana Gusmão in an attempt to unite a range of political groups in Timor Leste and make their calls for independence more appealing to the UN, Australia, Portugal and the United States. FRETILIN's membership of this group led to a shift in Timor Leste from armed resistance to more diplomatic and advocacy efforts (Bertrand 2004, 141; Niner 2009, 117-118).

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[30] The United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) had very limited access to the province, but was able to disperse a once-off sum of USD 300,000 to Timor Leste in 1986 (Nest 1999).

[31] Although ICRC and CRS both worked closely with the Indonesian administration, they handled their relationship with the government in very different ways. The ICRC chose to remain politically neutral, while CRS took an openly pro-Indonesian government stance (Taylor 1991; Dunn 2003; CAVR 2005, Part 7.3).

As a result of the change in Indonesian policy, many more international aid agencies were able to enter the province (Nest 1999). The Australian Government's aid program, AusAID (then the Australian International Development Assistance Bureau), started its Timor Leste program in 1992 following the Santa Cruz Massacre. By 1997 AusAID's program was the largest source of aid to Timor Leste, providing as much as AUD 20 million per year over a 5 year period. In this time AusAID ran programs addressing water supply and sanitation, rural and agricultural development, and veterinary issues (Taudevin 1999). According to Lance Taudevin (1999), the project representative in Timor Leste, AusAID's final decision about the programs was driven by the need to '[help] the Indonesian government carry out its own programmes' rather than 'aligning [itself] with programmes that were more politically sensitive', even when these were the types of programs requested by the Timorese (Taudevin 1999, 55). Even so, Taudevin was eventually asked to leave by the Indonesian government because he documented the atrocities to which he was witness while working there. This decision illustrates how actions by international actors that potentially exposed how the Indonesian state operated in Timor Leste tested the limits of their policy of opening up Timor Leste.

Local organisations

Most NGOs established in Timor Leste and Aceh in the 1970s were supported by international NGOs. Like their international counterparts, they had to frame their work in non-political terms, focusing on issues of welfare, health and livelihoods. For example, in Timor Leste in the mid-1970s the Social Delegates (Delegatus Sosial, DELSOS), a group of clergy and Catholics from Atambua in West Timor, helped those affected by the famine using funding from German and US Catholic NGOs. They later shifted into Dili and began working with those displaced by the civil war and famine, as well as orphans, widows and the disabled (Hunt 2008).[32] Another organisation set up during this period was East Timor Agricultural

[32] In the 1990s, DELSOS became Caritas Timor Leste which went on to play an important role in the resistance (Patrick 2001). See also http://www.cet.tp.

Development Program (ETADEP, initially known as Road to Progress Organisation or Yayasan Ema Mata Dalan Ba Progresso), whose focus was rural development (Hunt 2008). CRS set up ETADEP in 1986 but left Timor Leste soon after because of the increasingly difficult security situation. After its departure, it continued its programs through ETADEP from its office in Jakarta (Hunt 2002, 2008).

A very similar pattern emerged in Aceh, where the presence of Save the Children contributed to the formation of the first local NGOs which, like their counterparts in Timor Leste, were focused on welfare rather than political issues. During this period the Institute for the Coordination of Social Community Development (Yayasan Badan Koordinasi Pengembangan Sosial Masyarakat, YAPSM) was established in Pidie and the Community Development Institute (Yayasan Badan Pengembangan Masyarakat, YBSM) in Lamteuba. Other organisations were established by academics and students. In the 1980s The Institute for Consumer Protection (Yayasan Lembaga Perlindungan Konsumen, YLPK) and The Prosperous Nation Institute (Yayasan Kemakmuran Bangsa, YKB) were both established by academics. These and other similar organisations also focused on issues of poverty and livelihoods (Yunis 2000).

It was not until the late 1990s when the democracy movement in Indonesian began to grow stronger that new, more political local NGOs emerged in either context. In Timor Leste, organisations such as the Foundation for Law, Rights and Justice (Yayasan Hukum, Hak Asasi dan Keadilan until 2002 when it became Perkumpulan HAK or the HAK Association) and SAHE Institute for Liberation (SAHE) were sponsored by East Timorese students in Indonesia, who used their Indonesian contacts to establish and develop their new NGOs.[33] The HAK Association, initially a legal aid organisation, was founded by five East Timorese who had been encouraged by Indonesian activists and NGOs to establish a legal aid organisation in Timor Leste. Its

[33] SAHE has since changed its name to The Popular Education Institute (Institute Edukasaun Popular, IEP).

main purpose was to support political prisoners and those who had experienced human rights violations, with the goal of creating more political space for these activists to campaign. In its efforts to do so, the HAK Association was given guidance and assistance finding donors by its Indonesian colleagues (Hunt 2008, 154-155). SAHE was started by a student reading group established in Jakarta by Timorese students who were part of the clandestine movement. These students had access to academic and historical literature unavailable in Timor Leste. Using funding from Indonesian NGOs and the HAK Association, SAHE translated foreign language material into Indonesian so that it could be read by people in Timor Leste (Hunt 2008, 233).

Although officially non-partisan, these organisations, as well as some of those established previously, were involved in the campaign for independence. ETADEP's links to groups of farmers around the country meant that it was well equipped to collect information without attracting the attention of the authorities. It passed this information to international organisations and individuals involved in the independence campaign (Hunt 2008, 139). As a strategy to keep its staff and volunteers safe, the HAK Association established a close relationship with Indonesian security officials and told them that the organisation was defending Indonesian law and order (Hunt 2008, 156). However, like ETADEP, the HAK Association was feeding information about human rights violations to organisations like Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch.

In Aceh, the fall of Suharto precipitated the formation of a more vocal and politically active civil society. One of the first student protests, held on 18 March 1998, was organised by Student Solidarity for the People (Solidaritas Mahasiswa untuk Rakyat, SMUR), a group of 'left leaning secular ideologues' from Syiah Kuala University in Banda Aceh with links to student organisations in other parts of Indonesia (Zeccola 2011a, 129). Later protests were bigger and, unlike the first one, attempted to address local issues such as ending military extortion on main roads (Aspinall 2009b, 125). The number of local NGOs increased dramatically in the period immediately

following Suharto's resignation. According to Aspinall (2009, 126), 'Within six months Banda Aceh was transformed from a political backwater into a centre of frenetic activism. Workshops, seminars, demonstrations, and hunger strikes became the daily fare.' The organisations established during this period included NGOs with close ties to communities, which prioritised humanitarian issues, as well as NGOs that focussed on the issues of corruption, gender, the rights of internally displaced people, rule of law and the monitoring of ceasefires (Priyono 2003, 534-535).

Student groups like SMUR protested daily for the DOM to be brought to an end (Zeccola 2011a). They were also involved in the exposure of many of the human rights violations that had occurred. In 1998, prior to the rescinding of the DOM, NGOs brought 'DOM widows' into the public to speak about their experiences (Aspinall 2009b, 127). These women played a central role in portraying an alternative picture of the conflict in which Acehnese were victims rather than aggressors and garnered public support for a resolution of the conflict (Drexler 2008, 127). Local NGOs also contributed to changing public perceptions of the conflict by collecting data about human rights violations and were involved in fact finding investigations with the National Human Rights Commission (Komnas HAM) (Priyono 2003; Aspinall 2009b).

The events in Timor Leste helped consolidate the development of local civil society in Aceh by providing an example of a possible trajectory to independence. Calls for a referendum for Aceh emerged one week after Habibie announced the Timor Leste referendum in February 1999. Shortly after the announcement, Acehnese students organised a congress where the Aceh Referendum Information Centre (Sentral Informasi Referendum Aceh, SIRA) was established (Drexler 2008; Aspinall 2009b). This group consisted primarily of devout Muslim students from the Ar-Raniry State Institute of Islamic Studies (Zeccola 2011a, 94). Habibie's apology in March 1999 for the actions of the security forces and his announcement that political prisoners were to be released strengthened the students' resolve to pursue a referendum (Aspinall and Crouch 2003). Protests began in April 1999, with

28 human rights NGOs organising a general strike in protest of the deployment of police paramilitaries to Aceh in August of the same year. After the referendum in Timor Leste in September 1999, a new wave of protests were organised in Aceh. These culminated in November 1999 when a huge crowd gathered in Banda Aceh to demand a referendum (Aspinall 2009b, 131).[34]

Civil society's demands for a referendum were met with the offer of a Special Autonomy Law (Law No. 44/1999), which was drafted by representatives of the Acehnese political elite in partnership with politicians from the central government in Jakarta (Aspinall 2009b, 145-149).[35] The main elements of this law drew on a law developed in 1959 in response to Aceh's participation in the Darul Islam rebellion. While the 1999 law represented a major shift in the Indonesian government's position, it was based on the premise that the contemporary conflict in Aceh was a consequence of the failure to effectively implement the 1959 law (Miller 2006). As a result, it included provisions for local autonomy over matters of religion, culture and education, including a provision for the implementation of *Syaria'ah* law. However, GAM, which remained convinced that it would be able to achieve independence, was not open to the autonomy provisions. Additionally, the law did not address the human rights concerns of student groups and had little support from the public (Schulze 2006, 260). As a consequence, the prospects of peace, and hopes for independence in Aceh, quickly dissipated as hostility between GAM and the Indonesian military increased.

The New Order period provided limited political space for local organisations and restricted freedom for international NGOs, particularly in

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[34] There is some dispute in the literature about how many people attended. Drexler (2008) reports 1 million people in attendance, however Aspinall (2009) doubts that it is possible as that would have represented one quarter of the whole population of Aceh at the time.

[35] The Acehnese political elite saw themselves as mediators between the protestors demanding independence and the national government. They made statements in support of the referendum to demonstrate their affiliation to the protestors, but followed these with public statements in the media that watered down their support for independence (Aspinall 2009b).

the conflict ridden provinces of Aceh and Timor Leste. The space available for international NGOs was to implement humanitarian relief programs and there were uncompromising repercussions for institutions or individuals that stepped outside of these boundaries. Local NGOs were also limited by similar restrictions, but at the same time they provided local NGOs space in which to establish their identities independent of their international donors and allowed them to claim ownership over their own agendas. In both places local NGOs proliferated during the period of democratisation in Indonesia and during that time became adept at working around the restrictions put in place by the Indonesian military. In the years following the fall of Suharto, the trajectories of the two places diverged, providing local civil society organisations with vastly different experiences, expectations and approaches to partnership.

Establishing Patterns of Relating

The events of the following five years were decisive in shaping how local and international NGOs in the two places related to one another. In Timor Leste, this period was characterised by the presence of international aid organisations focussed on ensuring that the development of Timor Leste became an international success. In the process, local organisations, that had previously played a central role in humanitarian and human rights work, were marginalised. During the same period, local NGOs in Aceh were directly affected by the increasing violence. A period of political negotiation between the Indonesian government and GAM led to a short-lived agreement which offered the opportunity for some international NGOs to establish a presence in Aceh. However, this agreement quickly broke down, leading to the escalation of violence in the province which increased the work of and, at times, directly targeted local Acehnese NGOs and activists.

These experiences of marginalisation in Timor Leste and direct involvement in the hostilities in Aceh were fundamental to the expectations of, attitudes towards and practices of partnership between local and international NGOs in later years. As discussed later in this thesis, the memory of being sidelined

by the international community generated a defensive attitude towards partnership in some local NGOs in Timor Leste and prompted some expatriates who had been witness to the marginalisation of Timorese NGOs in 1999 to make an active effort to avoid the same patterns occurring after the 2006 crisis. For local NGOs in Aceh, the experience of being directly involved in the violence contributed to a sense of legitimacy and knowledge of context that made them resent being excluded from the process of negotiating the Helsinki peace agreement in 2005.

Timor Leste

After the 1999 referendum the Indonesian government was replaced by the United Nations Transitional Authority of Timor Leste (UNTAET). Initially UNTAET oversaw and coordinated the process of aid distribution and later shifted to the task of developing new state institutions. The UNTAET mandate was broad. It included providing security, establishing an effective public administration, developing civil and social services, coordinating humanitarian assistance, building capacity so that Timor Leste could self-govern and creating the conditions necessary for sustainable development (Security Council 1999). During this period, it also slowly handed control over the system to the East Timor Transitional Authority (ETTA), which consisted of the incoming Timorese leadership (Gunn and Huang 2004, 51).

This mission was one of the most comprehensive undertaken by the UN and was seen by many as a great opportunity to do good, although at the time some warned local ownership was being compromised by the process (Ife 1999; Suhrke 2001). The transition also had significant implications for the space available to international and local organisations in which to operate. International organisations were suddenly given considerably more freedom. At the same time he political space for local organisations increased, and many more were established. For the first time, however, local organisations began to experience the restrictiveness of the international development industry.

In the lead up to the referendum, local NGOs had played a central role in supporting the growing number of internally displaced people (IDPs). For example, in January 1999, with the financial support of AusAID and the UNHCR, The HAK Association organised a disaster preparedness workshop for local NGOs and church organisations, from which a network of local actors called the Post for the Coordination of Emergency Aid (POSKO) was established. Working closely with the United Nations Mission for East Timor (UNAMET) Humanitarian Office, POSKO operated in a number of areas where there were concentrations of IDPs (Hunt 2008, 158). Another local NGO, Caritas East Timor (previously DELSOS, and later Caritas Dili), was also busy with food distribution, using its links with the Church to identify those in need of assistance (Hunt 2008, 117).

However, the prominent role local NGOs played as providers of aid before the referendum was soon all but forgotten. Instead, this function was filled by the UN and its agencies, as well as by international NGOs, all of which lacked experience working in the Timorese context. Caritas East Timor was effectively displaced from its key role in food distribution by regulations set up by the World Food Program about the mechanisms for food distribution. According to staff from Caritas East Timor, the World Food Program mechanisms required a level of openness and transparency that was not possible prior to the referendum (Hunt 2008). Meanwhile, their donor, Caritas Australia, had begun its own emergency program, which further undermined the ability of what was now Caritas Dili to be involved in food distribution. Church personnel continued to approach staff from Caritas Dili with information about people who required food; however, it was no longer in a position to respond to those requests.

There are numerous arguments for why local NGOs were sidelined during this period. First, it is clear that the international presence transformed many local NGOs from relatively autonomous agents to increasingly reliant on donor funding and support. The identity of many young Timorese had been shaped by their involvement in the clandestine movement in Indonesia and Timor Leste (Bexley 2007). As part of this movement, activists had not been

subject to the kinds of regulations and procedures characteristic of the international development machine, and as such, initially they experienced difficulties navigating their way through the new environment.

At another level, pressure on the UN mission to meet its goals quickly meant that it lacked time for planning and to properly consult with local actors (Patrick 2001). Additionally, many international NGO workers were unaware that any kind of local civil society existed before the referendum, reflecting the common perception among foreign aid workers that Timor Leste was a 'terra nullius' (Ife 1999). This perspective contributed to a sense that international and local groups were not really working together:

> The division between 'them' and 'us', and the expectation that 'they' attend 'our' meetings, suggests a framing of the relationship that is unequal, not based on a genuine partnership, and where it is the [international] NGO ... that 'owns' the process. (Ife 1999, 4)

Furthermore, many expatriates who worked in Timor Leste in 1999 did not speak Indonesian or Tetum, and meetings were often held in English. Local NGOs complained that local organisations which were staffed by English speakers were chosen as partners over other organisations with more relevant knowledge and experience of the sector (Brunnstrom 2003). These factors pushed many previously active local civil society actors to the periphery of the recovery efforts where their knowledge and experience were not put to effective use.

Aceh

The period between 2000 and 2003 in Aceh was volatile, though was not characterised by the same level of change as in Timor Leste. During this time, GAM and the Government of Indonesia made multiple attempts to negotiate a peace agreement; however, these negotiations were not able to stem the increase in violence.

International and local civil society organisations faced the challenge of working within this violent context while navigating the limits established by

Indonesian state structures. A series of negotiations between GAM and the TNI were mediated by the Henry Dunant Center for Humanitarian Dialogue (HDC) between 2000 and 2003 (Huber 2004).[36] The first milestone achieved by these negotiations was the Joint Understanding on Humanitarian Pause, signed in May 2000, the purpose of which was to allow the delivery of humanitarian assistance to the province (Aspinall and Crouch 2003). The violence in Aceh decreased temporarily after the signing of this agreement, though it had begun to worsen again by the beginning of 2001. The renewed violence led international organisations including Oxfam, USAID, Medecins Sans Frontiers and Save the Children to scale back their programs, close offices and pull out their staff (Aspinall and Crouch 2003).

Meanwhile, in August 2001, the central government ratified a law intended to weaken Acehnese demands for independence by assigning more control over governance and resources to the provincial government (Miller 2006).[37] Though initially not in support of the law, which required it to give up its claims for independence, GAM officials eventually agreed to use it as the basis for further negotiations with the government. On 9 December 2002 the Cessation of Hostilities Agreement (CoHA) was signed. This agreement, which was supposed to be the first stage in a series of discussions, left many details unaddressed resulting in both sides eventually accusing one another of

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[36] The organisation later changed its name to the Center for Humanitarian Dialogue, but most analysts writing about the organisation's work during this period continue to refer to it as the HDC. While some in the Indonesian administration were receptive to involving HDC in negotiations, the overarching sentiment within the Indonesian government at that time was to avoid international intervention. The Norwegian government offered to fund the negotiation process, but its offer was rejected by the Indonesian government. Norway decided to risk its relationship with Indonesia and fund the processes secretly anyway; however, most other countries were not willing to become involved at this stage in such a manner (Huber 2004)

[37] This law, Law No.18/2001 concerning Special Autonomy for the Special Region of Aceh as Nanggroe Aceh Darussalam, or the Nanggroe Aceh Darussalam (NAD) law, was one of a number of attempts to legislate a version of special autonomy for Aceh. The NAD law, which was also part of changes happening at a national level to decentralise power to the provinces, allocated 70 per cent of revenue from the oil and gas industries to the province; it allowed Aceh to enforce some elements of Islamic law, including establishing a *Syaria'ah* court for Muslims; and it also allowed for the establishment of a symbolic head of state, or *Wali Nanggroe*, which was an attempt to win GAM's support for the law (Miller 2006; Aspinall 2009b). Previous laws upon which this law was based included Law No. 44/1999 on the Special Status of the Province of Aceh and a government decree made in 1959 which designated Aceh as a special region (*daerah istimewa*). See Miller (2006) for further details.

violating its terms (Aspinall and Crouch 2003). As a consequence, the level of violence during this period increased dramatically and was, by some reports, even higher than during the DOM period (Miller 2006). Within four months the agreement had broken down, and in May 2003 the Indonesian government declared martial law in Aceh (Aspinall and Crouch 2003).

Local NGOs and human rights activists had increasingly become the targets of violence between 1999 and 2003. A protest organised in November 2000 to commemorate the anniversary of the first referendum protest had become violent and between 14 and 100 people were killed (Drexler 2008, 184). On 20 November, Muhamad Nazar, the chairperson of SIRA, was arrested and accused of being affiliated to GAM. He was later sentenced to 10 months in prison for spreading hatred (Human Rights Watch 2001). One month later, four humanitarian workers who volunteered for an NGO called Rehabilitation Action for Victims of Torture in Aceh (RATA) were kidnapped and tortured. One escaped but the other three were killed (Human Rights Watch 2001; Schulze 2006). Around the same time, the military broke into local NGO offices and stole data from computers (Schulze 2006). In March 2001, Suprin Sulaiman, a human rights lawyer who worked at the Human Rights and Legal Aid Post (Pos Bantuan Hukum dan Hak Asasi Manuasia, PB-HAM) in South Aceh was murdered alongside his client, SIRA activist, Teungku Kamal (Human Rights Watch 2001; Zeccola 2011a).[38] A number of other activists were murdered or disappeared in the period between 2000 and 2002 (Priyono 2003, 523-524). The introduction of martial law was a further catalyst for punitive actions against students and activists. In May 2003, forty five students and activists were arrested and twenty one of these brought to trial because they were suspected to have links to GAM (Schulze 2006).

[38] PB-HAM posts were set up in six districts around Aceh by an NGO from Banda Aceh called the Human Rights NGO Coalition (Koalisi NGO HAM). They provided legal advice and collected information about human rights violations which they fed back to international organisations. See Zeccola (2011a) for more details.

The support that local NGOs received from international organisations and the links that some organisations developed with GAM contributed to the tension between activists and the military. During the CoHA negotiations, Aceh was opened to a much larger range of international organisations than in the past. However, the Indonesian military quickly grew suspicious of the support international NGOs were providing to local NGOs, which it described as 'a tool for foreign intervention, as foreign spies and as agents of conflict' (Schulze 2006, 254). Some local NGOs were exposed to GAM through their work with IDPs as GAM members lived in or moved through IDP camps where they met activists involved in aid provision (Zeccola 2011a). In addition to these chance encounters, GAM deliberately began building alliances with NGOs as a way of accessing and politicising the IDPs with which they worked (Schulze 2006, 237-238). These connections further fuelled the military's suspicion of local activists.

Almost all of the international organisations present in Aceh were required to leave once martial law was declared in May 2003.[39] One of the organisations able to maintain a presence was the International Organization for Migration (IOM), which had begun working in Aceh in 2003 (Cook and Bean 2007). One of the conditions of martial law was that the Government of Indonesia would split funding between the military and those requiring humanitarian assistance as a result of the conflict. The government asked the IOM to help with the latter (Cook and Bean 2007). The ICRC maintained a presence, albeit limited to two foreigners at a time who were restricted in how far they could travel (Burke and Afnan 2005). Save the Children also remained in the province. The other organisations that had had a physical presence in Aceh

[39] A range of international organisations had established a presence in Aceh prior to the declaration of martial law. Some organisations, including the International Catholic Migration Commission, the International Rescue Committee, Oxfam GB and Save the Children (which returned to Aceh in 2000 after leaving in 1996), focused on humanitarian and livelihoods issues (Burke and Afnan 2005; Zeccola 2011a).Others like the Catholic Overseas Development Agency (CAFOD), Nederlandse Organisatie Voor Internationale Bijstand (Dutch Organisations for International Aid, NOVIB) and Humanist Institute for Development Cooperation (Humanistisch Instituut voor Ontwikkelingssamenwerking, HIVOS) had a presence supporting local NGOs. Another organisation focusing on NGOs was Peace Brigades International (PBI), which provided protective accompaniment to local NGOs conducting humanitarian and human rights work (Zeccola 2011a)

were forced to leave and those that continued to fund projects in the province were unable to visit. As a result, local NGOs were isolated, stripped of the funding, confidence and sense of solidarity that had been generated through their interaction with the international aid community (Zeccola 2011a, 107).

The backdrop for future relationships

By 2003, the situation for international and local NGOs in Timor Leste and Aceh was considerably different. In Aceh, the dynamics resembled that of Timor Leste prior to independence, where the number of international organisations was limited and the ability of organisations like IOM, ICRC and Save the Children to maintain a presence depended on their developing strong contacts locally and working to a narrow, apolitical mandate (Burke and Afnan 2005). As a result, local activists operated independently of international organisations, often underground (Zeccola 2011a, 107). By contrast, in Timor Leste, international organisations had unprecedented freedom. A newly formed state structure highly dependent on international support meant that aid agencies had the liberty to set their agendas, as well as the agendas of their local counterparts. Local NGOs in Timor Leste were free to determine their own agenda, but they struggled to define their purpose in an environment dominated by international players.

These events in Timor Leste and Aceh established the foundations upon which the relationship between local and international NGOs would later be built. The nature of the conflicts in each place, as well as the role of the state resulted in local civil society developing different types of exposure to the international community. Similarly, international NGOs had very different expectations and experiences working with local NGOs. In Aceh, many of the expatriates working for international NGOs that had worked with local NGOs were forced to leave in 2003, whereas in Timor Leste some expatriate staff worked for different organisations over many years, developing personal and professional relationships across the NGO sector. These differences had an impact on local and international NGO relations in the aftermath of the political crisis that broke out in Timor Leste in May 2006

and after the signing of the Helsinki peace agreement in Aceh in August 2005.

Peace agreements and Peacebuilding

The second and key pivotal points in the history of relations between local and international NGOs in Timor Leste and Aceh occurred within nine months of each other. These events were the trigger for the funding, design and implementation of the peacebuilding projects discussed in subsequent chapters. After six months of internationally mediated talks, the Government of Indonesia and GAM signed a peace agreement in August 2005. The implementation of this agreement occurred amidst one of the most extensive international aid reconstruction efforts to date following the earthquake and tsunami of December 2004. The reconstruction effort brought hundreds of international organisations to Aceh, whose presence – while not directly linked to the peacebuilding process – played an important role in shaping the perceptions of local actors towards the international aid community. In May 2006, Timor Leste experienced a political crisis that led to the break-up of the security forces, a change in political leadership and the displacement of hundreds of thousands of people. The crisis, which had been brewing since the beginning of 2006, forced many local and international NGOs to shift their focus towards issues contributing to and arising from the conflict.

The ways in which local and international agencies became involved in the subsequent peacebuilding processes in each place were shaped by the history of relations between international and local agencies, but also by the particularities of these events. In broad terms, the situation in Timor Leste permitted a more substantial involvement of local NGOs in the peacebuilding process than the situation in Aceh. This difference can be attributed to three key factors. First, the government of Timor Leste allowed international agencies more control over the peacebuilding processes than in Aceh, where the Indonesian state took the lead. Second, the longer history of collaboration in Timor Leste between expatriates and Timorese meant that there were individuals who could speak the local language and who understood how to

operate effectively within that environment. Finally, the key peacebuilding activities in Timor Leste were better aligned with the interests and abilities of local NGOs.

Timor Leste

The political crisis that broke out in Timor Leste in May 2006 had far-reaching consequences for local politics, for the day-to-day lives of the majority of the population and for international aid agencies and local civil society. The conflict, which was triggered by an unresolved dispute within the military, led to violence within the suburbs of Dili resulting in thousands of people becoming internally displaced. The instability, which lasted for almost two years, was initially fuelled by an internal conflict within the military but within months had evolved to reflect rivalries between gangs and martial arts groups and community frustrations with the electoral process. By 2008 the instability was driven by a popular defector from the military police, Alfreido Reinaldo, who was eventually shot dead in February of that year during an assassination attempt against the then President Ramos Horta.

The main response to the conflict by the government and international community was directed towards creating stability and order in the country, which meant privileging humanitarian concerns over political concerns. This approach lent itself to the involvement of local organisations as service providers, rather than as advocates of political change. The initial stages of the response to the conflict did not involve local organisations, many of which were forced to close due to the instability. However, the experiences of expatriates who had been witness to the marginalisation of local organisations during the emergency response in 1999 meant that a number of opportunities were created to ensure the participation of local activists. Although local activists and organisations did not play key decision making roles, they were actively and strategically brought into the process through their connections with international organisations.

The crisis

The events that led to the instability in Timor Leste occurred between April and June 2006, but had their roots in a dispute that began in January 2006. A group of 159 military personnel from the National Defence Force (Forças Armadas de Libertação Nacional de Timor Leste/FALINITL –de Defesa de Timor Leste, F-FDTL) submitted a written petition to Brigadier General Taur Matan Ruak and President Xanana Gusmão citing unfair treatment of soldiers from the 'western' part of Timor Leste (Rees 2004; Scambary 2009, 267-270).[40] Their grievances included being discriminated against by 'eastern' soldiers, being offered fewer career advancement opportunities and poor service conditions (International Crisis Group 2006). The soldiers abandoned their barracks on 17 February, having not received any satisfactory response to their petition and on 23 February were formally dismissed by Brigadier General Ruak (United Nations Commission of Inquiry 2006).[41] President Gusmão then made a controversial speech on March 23 in which he criticised the decision to dismiss the soldiers made by the Brigadier General and, as a consequence, further exacerbated the situation. His words were interpreted by many as an endorsement of the views of those from the 'west', namely that they were being mistreated by those from the 'east', and is recognised as inflaming the ensuing conflict between 'east' and 'west' (Silva 2010, 111-115).

In April, a group of 591 soldiers organised a four day demonstration to dispute their dismissal in the previous month. On the final day, violence broke out across Dili leaving five civilians dead and many dozens suffering from firearm and other injuries. Over the following month the situation in Dili became increasingly unstable as splits developed within the National

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[40] The 'western' part of Timor Leste includes the sub-districts between Dili and the border with West Timor in Indonesia (Bobonaro, Covalima, Ainaro, Ermera, Liquiça, Aileu and Manufahi). The 'eastern' part refers to the remaining sub-districts to the east of Dili (Manatuto, Viqueque, Baucau and Los Palos).

[41] There was a prevailing sense among local activists that political conflicts between Timorese political leaders were resulting in a lack of leadership in response to this issue. Long-standing tensions between the political elite originated in conflicts that occurred during resistance to the Indonesian occupation (International Crisis Group 2006).

Police Force (Polícia Nacional de Timor-Leste, PNTL). Adding to the confusion, Minister of the Interior Rogerio Lobato and Minister of Defence Roque Rodirigues each armed a different group of civilians. Meanwhile tensions mounted between President Gusmão and the governing FRETILIN party (United Nations Commission of Inquiry 2006). A key development occurred on 3 May, when the Australian-trained Major Alfredo Reinaldo abandoned the F-FDTL Military Police with his platoon of officers. Major Reinaldo, who pledged his allegiance to President Gusmão, was to become an increasingly important player in the conflict (International Crisis Group 2006).

The perceived division between 'easterners' and 'westerners' was decisive in the early stages of the conflict. Some commentators argued that the division was artificially created for political and cultural reasons (Silva 2010). Others trace its origins to unresolved land conflicts in the post-1999 period and to problems in how the armed forces were established after independence (Rees 2004). During the crisis of 2006, the labels 'easterner' and 'westerner' were powerfully divisive. In many areas of Dili, those who were from the east were driven from their homes by groups claiming to be from the west and graffiti soon appeared on walls warning 'easterners' that they were not welcome back.

The inability of the Timorese security forces to maintain order in the midst of rising tensions led the government of Timor Leste to request the help of Australian forces in May 2006. On the day the request was made 6 people were killed in violence between the F-FDTL and the PNTL. The following day was one of the bloodiest of this phase of the conflict. Nine unarmed PNTL officers who had surrendered and were being escorted to the UN compound were shot dead by F-FDTL soldiers. Twenty-seven other people were injured. Within a month of these events, President Mari Alkatiri had resigned and been replaced by Jose Ramos Horta, the former Minister of Foreign Affairs (International Crisis Group 2006; United Nations Commission of Inquiry 2006).

At this stage fights between rival gangs became the key drivers of the instability. Although martial arts groups had been involved in April/May, gang warfare became more prominent after the breakdown of the police force with some groups siding with the 'east' and others with the 'west' (Scambary 2006; 2009, 273-274).[42] The fighting between these groups, and the attacks they made on houses owned or occupied by people from opposing sides, contributed to 2000 houses being burnt down and 140,000 people fleeing to IDP camps (United Nations Commission of Inquiry 2006; Devant 2008).[43]

The violence and unrest carried on into 2007, driven primarily by the Presidential and parliamentary elections. The defeat of FRETILIN in the parliamentary elections in June 2007 by Xanana Gusmão's new party, National Congress for the Reconstruction of East Timor (Congresso Nacional da Reconstrução de Timor, or CNRT) was the main source of unrest. It followed the victory of José Ramos Horta at the Presidential elections of May 2007, which was popularly seen as a major defeat for FRETILIN whose candidate was unsuccessful (International Crisis Group 2007b, 1). Frustrated members of FRETILIN, primarily those from the eastern parts of Timor Leste, contested the election results leading to violence along political lines in the eastern districts of Baucau and Viqueque (McWilliam and Bexley 2008; Arnold 2009). The conflict was further fuelled during this period by riots caused by rumours that politicians were behind rising food prices (Kammen and Hayati 2007)

The violence and instability decreased significantly in February 2008 after the death of renegade military policeman Major Alfredo Reinaldo during an assassination attempt against President Ramos Horta. Reinaldo had been arrested in July 2006, but escaped from prison soon after and managed to evade capture for the next 18 months by taking refuge in a guest house in a

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[42] Some martial arts groups helped organise the protests in support of the petitioners in April 2006.

[43] The violence continued into 2007, though it took a slightly different form and was in response to different catalysts. Scambary (2009) describes how the different martial arts groups experienced 'shifting alliances' in 2007 that led to new sources of conflict between groups that formerly collaborated.

mountain village called Maubisse (Grenfell 2009). The fact that he and his group of armed followers were free to roam contributed to a prevailing threat of violence in Timor Leste. Political leaders made repeated attempts to negotiate with him because of the instability that his presence caused and in February 2008 Reinaldo descended from his mountain retreat to supposedly attend a meeting with President Ramos Horta. Upon arriving at the President's house a guard shot Reinaldo dead, but not before one of Reinaldo's men managed to shoot President Ramos Horta. The government responded quickly to the incident and managed to prevent it becoming the catalyst for further violence and instability (International Crisis Group 2009b), and the incident is now commonly understood to be the end point of the crisis that began in 2006 (e.g. Scambary 2009).

Responding to the crisis

Many of the causes of the 2006 crisis and its aftermath stem from the country's multiple experiences of colonisation (United Nations Commission of Inquiry 2006). As Myrttinen (2007, 9) argues, the political elites involved in the conflict 'cut their teeth' during the struggle for independence and a number of the problems that emerged in 2006 had their roots in interpersonal competition, conflicts and rivalries that occurred between these individuals in the 1970s. Added to this were demographic pressures, such as high levels of rural to urban migration and the resulting concentration of unemployed youth in the capital (Neupert and Lopes 2006). The strategically poor choices made by the political elite immediately after independence, such as the designation of Portuguese as a national language, are credited by some scholars as creating conditions of inequality that led to the extended outbreak of violence and instability (Simonsen 2006). Other scholars attribute the problems of inequality to the structure of the state system established by the United Nations in the immediate aftermath of independence (Moxham 2008).

The absence of a single, clear cause contributed to the challenge of developing an appropriate response. Moreover, for those living and working in Timor Leste during the period of instability, the pressing need to respond to the problems that emerged as a result of the crisis left little opportunity to

reflect on and analyse the ongoing events. One key project, implemented by the UN mission, focused on rebuilding the security forces (International Crisis Group 2008b, 2009a; Wilson 2010).[44] There were also attempts to bring to justice those who were responsible for the violence.[45] However, the area that received the greatest attention was that considered most likely to help the nation regain stability, namely the repatriation of the IDPs, an endeavour in which local civil society was involved.

The events of 2006 had displaced thousands of people from their homes, and the continued violence in 2007 made it difficult for them to leave the IDP camps. People began leaving their homes on 26 April 2006, the day that the petitioners' protest became violent. The numbers built up, peaking in the aftermath of the shooting of the police on 23 May (United Nations Commission of Inquiry 2006). By September 2006, the International Crisis Group estimated that 140,000 people were displaced, with half of those living in camps in Dili (International Crisis Group 2006). More IDPs flowed into camps in the early part of 2007, increasing the numbers by a further 8,000 (Devant 2008).

One of the first steps taken by the Timor Leste Government to encourage IDPs to return home was to address the tensions between 'east' and 'west'. On 2 August, President Xanana Gusmão held a meeting with 18 NGOs to discuss how to facilitate dialogue between young people from the two regions (Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs 2006a). After this meeting an initiative called the Low-Level National Dialogue Program was set up by President Gusmão which was intended to stop the violence occurring at the suburb (*bairo*) level by building trust and empowering youth (Trindade and Castro 2007; International Crisis Group 2008a). Those who

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[44] On 25 August 2006 a new UN mission, the United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor Leste (UNMIT) was established. The previous mission, the United Nations Mission of Support in East Timor (UNMISET) had wound up in May 2005, and had been replaced by a much smaller mission, the United Nations Office in East Timor (UNOTIL). The political crisis resulted in the decision to establish the bigger UMMIT mission.

[45] By 2010, some trials had occurred; however, delays, poor evidence and poor implementation of the witness protection law meant that people were reluctant to testify (UNMIT 2009, 2010).

participated in the dialogues requested that traditional conflict resolution practices be used; however, a lack of funding meant that this request was not met and instead participants talked in general terms about the causes and consequences of the conflict, but failed to address the underlying tensions driving the rift between 'east' and 'west' in a meaningful way (Trindade and Castro 2007). [46] The National Dialogue Program was also happening in the context of a population frustrated with its leaders' seeming lack of commitment to building peace, explaining why attendance was poor even at reconciliation events where traditional practices were used (Braithwaite et al. 2012, 225).

The lack of substantive improvements in tensions between 'eastern' and 'western' groups as a result of the National Dialogue process pushed the government to seek other strategies to encourage IDPs to return home (Trindade and Castro 2007). In August 2006 the Ministry of Labour and Social Reinsertion (Ministério do Trabalho Reinserção Comunitária, MTRC) developed the 'Simu Malu' (mutual acceptance) program. The key goal of the program was to conduct dialogues between IDPs and the communities to which they were returning. Other goals of the program were 'to end the violence' and 'to ensure the protection of the population' (Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs 2006b). These goals were to be achieved through three programs – Protection, Immediate Support and Promotion of Dialogue. Initially this project was hailed for its creative use of traditional practices (Trindade and Castro 2007). Once the implementation began, however, the lack of resources, unclear roles and the prioritisation of short-term goals led to a lack of visible outcomes (Trindade and Castro 2007; International Crisis Group 2008a).

In December 2007, after the elections and change of government, the approach to IDP return changed with the introduction of the National Recovery Strategy called Together Build the Future (Hamutuk Hari'i

[46] Other activities that took place included a National Unity Concert organised by the government, in which local civil society organisations participated (Prime Minister and Cabinet Timor Leste Government 2006).

Futuru). This strategy, which involved ministries from across the government, sought to address five key issues: housing, protection, stability, economy and trust-building (Office of the Vice Prime-Minister of the Democratic Republic of Timor Leste 2007; International Crisis Group 2008a). Initially, the 'pillar' that received the most funding and focused attention was the housing pillar; however, during 2008–09, the most active pillar was the trust-building pillar which was called Together Build Trust (Hamutuk Hari'i Konfiansa, HHK).[47]

The main purpose of this pillar was to rebuild trust between people in the community and between the community and state institutions and, as such, it was supposed to support activities such as government-led dialogues, access to better public information about the recovery process, working with youth and martial arts groups, encouraging visits between different districts in the region and revisiting historical narratives that emerged from political conflicts from 1974 to 1999 as a means of generating a unified national identity.[48] In practice, much of the energy of the working group involved in this pillar was devoted to helping IDPs return to their communities. For example, the Ministry of Social Solidarity (MSS), the ministry responsible for IDP return after the change of government in 2007, established and trained dialogue teams who acted as intermediaries between IDPs and the communities to which they were returning (UNDP 2010).[49]

The United National Development Program (UNDP) played an important role in supporting the implementation of the National Recovery Strategy and in the operation of the trust-building pillar. UNDP consultants helped draft the strategy and UNDP funded advisors were placed within MSS and played

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[47] Interview with Daniel Hardy, Care Timor Leste (CALMER Program Manager), 16 September 2008, Dili, Timor Leste.
[48] Interview Ben Larke, UNDP (Social Reintegration Team Leader), 24 September 2008, Dili, Timor Leste.
[49] Interview Ben Larke, UNDP (Social Reintegration Team Leader), 24 September 2008 and 24 August 2009, Dili, Timor Leste.

a key role in the training of the dialogue teams.[50] The UNDP was also instrumental in bringing together local and international actors through the working group associated with the trust-building pillar, which consisted of local NGOs, international NGOs and multilateral agencies that were involved in the IDP return process planned by MSS. Members of the working group met once a fortnight to report on their progress in the particular geographic area to which they were assigned. As the return process reached its final stages, funding from AusAID was made available through the UNDP to members of the working group to implement projects in line with purposes of the trust-building pillar. The process for applying for funding required a peer review process of proposals, some of which were for projects involving collaboration between local and international organisations.[51] This process was used by the UNDP as a means of aligning the activities of NGOs with the goals of the government and of improving their relationship with one another.[52] It also provided a space for interaction between local and international NGOs.

Despite these activities, some international NGOs working in Timor Leste at the time were critical of the government and UN approach to addressing the conflict, not least because they had sidelined local civil society organisations. In a press release published in March 2008 (three months after the official launch of the National Recovery Strategy), Trócaire, an international NGO from Ireland, noted that its local partners were focussing on youth unemployment and justice, issues that they argued had not been sufficiently addressed through the government strategy (Trócaire 2008). Staff from the

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[50] Interview with Pamela Sexton, UNDP (Dialogue Team Capacity Builder), 9 October 2009, Dili, Timor Leste. The success of the dialogue teams inspired the MSS to establish a Department of Peace Building and Social Cohesion, with UNDP support. The key purpose of this department was to consolidate the work that had been done in the immediate aftermath of the 2006 crisis. In particular it aimed to improve the skills of the government to build and maintain peace, provide support for women to be involved in peacebuilding and to generate analysis about conflict related issues (UNDP 2010). The department was officially opened at the end of 2010.

[51] Interview Ben Larke, UNDP (Social Reintegration Team Leader), 24 September 2008, Dili, Timor Leste.

[52] Interview Ben Larke, UNDP (Social Reintegration Team Leader), 24 August 2009, Dili, Timor Leste.

umbrella body for local NGOs, the NGO Forum of Timor Leste (Forum Organização Não-Governamental Timor Leste, FONGTIL) as well as international staff working for Concern Worldwide reinforced this perspective. The Coordinator of Capacity Building at FONGTIL illustrated his experience of what happened in the immediate aftermath of the crisis:

> Initially everything that was happening [after the crisis] was all international. At that time, for example, if we went to the Minister of Social Solidarity, it was like we were in the UN not in Timor Leste. All these outsiders talking about our problems, but we are insiders.[53]

Claire Danby, the former Country Director of Concern Worldwide and an individual who had been working on projects in Timor Leste since before independence, explained that she and others whose organisations supported local NGOs were concerned that local NGOs were being marginalised. Local NGOs had a low profile in the immediate aftermath of the crisis because of the impact of the events on the day-to-day lives of staff, resulting in many local organisations going into 'dormancy'. As a result they were not easily made part of the process of coordination that was happening at the government and UN level.[54]

In response to the structural marginalisation of local NGOs, Concern and Oxfam worked alongside FONGTIL to set up a working group structure for local NGOS that mirrored the structure which operated at the international NGO/UN/government level. Three of the groups established only functioned for a short period of time: the Food Distribution Monitoring Group, which monitored how the international community was distributing food within the camps; the Child Protection Group, which provided alternative education programs for children in the camps who were not attending school; and the National Unity Campaign Committee, which focussed on devising activities

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[53] Interview with Lourenco Tito X. Lopes, FONGTIL (Capacity Building Coordinator), 24 September 2008, Dili, Timor Leste.
[54] Interview with Clare Danby, Concern (Former Country Director), 14 September 2009, Dili, Timor Leste.

in camps that responded to the rise in the east/west rhetoric by promoting a sense of shared Timorese identity.

The final group was the Community Security Group, which was later renamed Equipa Hari'i Dame (Peacebuilding Working Group).[55] This group was formed in response to informal projects being implemented by local activists in their own neighbourhoods, such as organising meetings to explain to local communities the terms of reference of the international security forces. This group also used its personal contacts within local communities to organise dialogues to help facilitate the return of IDPs.[56] In 2007, Concern and Oxfam organised for a regional peacebuilding organisation called Action Asia to come to Dili to work with various groups.[57] Among their other activities, its staff provided peacebuilding training to the members of Equipa then accompanied those who had completed the training around Timor Leste, co-training district based local NGOs, village level leaders, heads of youth groups and other community leaders.[58] After this initiative, Equipa's activities ceased because many of the organisations for which its members had worked were operating their own peacebuilding projects.

Around this same time, another Peacebuilding Working Group was formed, but with greater involvement of international NGOs. In January 2007 World Vision had established a Peace Education Working Group at the request of the Ministry of Education's Secretary of State for Youth and Sport. The focus of this group was on how to provide peace education in schools. When the founder of this group heard that Oxfam and other international NGOs

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[55] Later another working group was developed called the Peacebuilding Working Group, so for the purposes of clarity I will refer to this initial working group by its Tetum name.

[56] Interview with Lourenco Tito X. Lopes, FONGTIL (Capacity Building Coordinator), 24 September 2008, Dili, Timor Leste.

[57] Interview with Clare Danby, Concern (Former Country Director), 14 September 2009, Dili, Timor Leste. In addition to funding its collaboration with the Equipa Hari'i Dame, Concern Worldwide and Oxfam Australia funded Action Asia to work with the HAK Association on a project that involved providing martial arts and ritual arts groups with peacebuilding training. The staff involved in this project eventually broke away from the HAK Association and established a new peacebuilding NGO. For more details about this project see Center for Peace and Conflict Studies (2010).

[58] Interview with Armindo dos Santos, FONGTIL (Advocacy Officer), 24 September 2008, Dili, Timor Leste.

such as Plan International were involved in another Peacebuilding Working Group he suggested that the groups combine.[59] According to some members, the new group was called the Peacebuilding Network, though in 2008 and 2009 the group was commonly referred to as the Peacebuilding Working Group, and the former members of the Peace Education Working Group were less actively involved. The active members were from a combination of local and international NGOs involved in implementing a range of different peacebuilding projects. The purpose of the group was unclear, and in 2009 the group was still drafting and discussing the terms of reference which it had started drafting when it originally merged with the Peace Education Working group in 2007 (Dibley in press).

The response to the 2006 crisis was driven by the Timor Leste government and the UN with the support of international NGOs. Anxious to avoid marginalising local actors in the peacebuilding response, some staff of international NGOs sought to ensure that local NGOs were brought into the process by establishing a working group structured in such a way that local NGOs could feed into the government and UN run response. A range of other partnership opportunities then followed ensuring that local NGOs continued to be involved in peacebuilding projects. The involvement of local NGOs was also facilitated by the choice made by the government and UN to include in their strategy peacebuilding activities in which local NGOs were suited to be involved such as mediation, conflict resolution and the implementation of other community level events. This situation was in stark contrast to what happened in Aceh after the signing of the Helsinki peace agreement.

Aceh

The repressive conditions under which local NGOs in Aceh worked during the martial law period – and the relative autonomy they had from donors – came to an abrupt end in December 2004 when Aceh was rocked by a

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[59] Interview with Augusto Soares, World Vision (Former Peacebuilding Officer), 29 September 2008, Dili, Timor Leste.

magnitude 8 earthquake, followed by a tsunami that killed approximately 167,000 people (Nazara and Resosudarmo 2007). These natural disasters, as well as the signing of a peace deal between GAM and the Government of Indonesia in August 2005, reconfigured the physical and political landscape of the province and substantially altered the dynamics of the relationships between local and international NGOs working there.

The extent of the damage forced the Indonesian government to re-open the province to international organisations to assist with the rebuilding efforts, shifting local civil society to a peripheral position.[60] Moreover, the narrow and conservative approach that most international organisations took towards tsunami reconstruction frustrated the many local organisations that had been supporting conflict-affected communities throughout the period of martial law, frustrations exacerbated by not formally being given an opportunity to feed into discussions about how to create peace in Aceh during the negotiations or afterwards. Their sense of being sidelined was one that many organisations and activists carried into their subsequent relationships with international NGOs and shaped their attitudes and approaches to partnership.

A humanitarian emergency in the mix

The six months between the tsunami in December 2004 and when the Helsinki Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed in August 2005 were instrumental in setting the tone for how international and local NGOs subsequently worked together on conflict related issues. The international organisations that came to Aceh during this time were careful to maintain a narrow focus on tsunami relief because they were concerned that their permission to work in Indonesia would be revoked if they addressed issues related to conflict. The military was highly suspicious of the international NGOs working in Aceh during this period and some people and organisations were asked to leave. For example, the UNHCR was temporarily expelled because, according to the military, there were no

[60] The World Bank estimated that the total losses of the disaster came to USD5.8 billion. In response, governments and individuals around the world contributed close to USD 8 billion to the rehabilitation and reconstruction process (Nazara and Resosudarmo 2007).

'refugees' in Aceh, only IDPs. Some individuals were also asked to leave including an academic, two Amnesty International researchers and two human rights workers (Zeccola 2007b).

In addition to avoiding projects that were directly related to the conflict, many international organisations made almost no attempt to design their tsunami response programs in a way sensitive to the conflict. The only exception to this pattern was when the security of their staff was affected; although beyond removing their expatriate staff from Aceh, few organisations developed strategies to deal with the possibility of escalating conflict, nor had they considered how their work would change if a peace agreement was signed (Burke and Afnan 2005). Initially these international organisations worked in areas that were easy to reach, and in which they would not be troubled by the TNI. This approach changed only marginally as the tsunami response transitioned from the emergency phase to a longer term development phase. Many staff working in Aceh had no prior knowledge of Aceh, and most organisations were under pressure to spend their funding. The large sums of money they were managing meant that ensuring financial accountably was a higher priority than implementing tsunami programs in a conflict sensitive manner relevant to the Acehnese context (Ford and Dibley 2011).

Local organisations grew frustrated with the approach of the international agencies for a number of reasons. First, the international community's approach to tsunami reconstruction in Aceh had a direct impact on how local NGOs operated. Local NGO representatives explained, for example, that their donors encouraged them to pursue tsunami reconstruction projects even when it was outside their organisational mandate.[61] The consequences for local NGOs of doing this ranged from temporarily losing focus to engaging in tasks for which they did not have the skills. Local NGOs realised quickly that these activities had the potential to compromise the reputation of their

[61] Interview with Khairani Arifin, Women Volunteers for Humanity (Relawan Perempuan untuk Kemanusiaan) (Director), 16 October 2008, Banda Aceh, Aceh.

organisation, and soon began to turn down offers of funding that were for activities outside of their core interests.[62] Another source of frustration for local NGOs was the way in which international organisations used their funds. By providing generous reimbursements to participants of training sessions for transport and accommodation costs, international NGOs raised expectations within communities that local NGOs would be able to make similar offerings. The constituents of local NGOs working with conflict victims began asking for similar levels of compensation, which the local NGOs could not afford. This demand was frustrating for local NGOs because it reduced the willingness of their constituents to participate in programs and because they felt it was detrimental to Acehnese culture. Finally, local NGOs were also concerned that, by focusing solely on tsunami victims, the international community was creating an artificial division between tsunami and conflict victims.[63] These frustrations were exacerbated by the fact that these local organisations were for the most part excluded from the key peacebuilding activities that occurred after the signing of the peace agreement.

Structural marginalisation

Prior to the December 2004 earthquake and tsunami the Government of Indonesia had taken steps to recommence peace discussions with GAM (Aspinall 2005b; International Crisis Group 2005a). The humanitarian disaster was not the main reasons that both parties decided to commit to this process, but it provided a framework to justify their decision to pursue peace talks. GAM was able to capitalise on the presence of the international community to achieve their goal of internationalising the conflict while the government could argue that it had made the decision to pursue negotiations with GAM because of the humanitarian situation in Aceh (Aspinall 2005b,

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[62] Interviews with Khairani Arifin, Women Volunteers for Humanity (Relawan Perempuan untuk Kemanusiaan) (Director), 16 October 2008, Banda Aceh, Aceh; and with Arie Maulana, Peace and Democracy Monitoring Committee (Komite Monitoring Perdamaian dan Demokrasi) (Director), 18 October 2008, Banda Aceh, Aceh.

[63] Interviews with Khairani Arifin, Women Volunteers for Humanity (Relawan Perempuan untuk Kemanusiaan) (Director), 16 October 2008, Banda Aceh, Aceh; and with Raihan Diani, Beujroh (Former Director), 26 October 2008, Banda Aceh, Aceh.

20-21). There were five rounds of negotiations between January and July 2005 and the Helsinki peace agreement was finally signed in August (International Crisis Group 2005a).[64]

The two key institutions established to oversee the peace agreement were the Aceh Monitoring Mission (AMM) and the Aceh Reintegration Board (Badan Reintegrasi Aceh, BRA). The AMM, which was funded by the European Union (EU) and from contributions made by individual EU member states, was established on 15 September 2005. It consisted of 226 people who came from the European Union and from five Southeast Asian countries: Thailand, Malaysia, Brunei, Philippines, Singapore (International Crisis Group 2005a). The AMM was established as part of the MoU because of lessons learnt through the failure of the CoHA.[65] One of the key reasons that the CoHA did not hold was that there had been no powerful body available to enforce the agreement. The formation of the AMM, with representatives from the EU and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), was intended to address this gap (Aspinall 2005a; Lahdensuo 2006; Schulze 2007). Its stated purpose was to supervise the disarmament process and to rule on disputes between the Government of Indonesia and GAM (International Crisis Group 2005b; Lahdensuo 2006). This mandate required the AMM to deprioritise human rights issues and as a consequence limited its ability to gain legitimacy with civil society.

The key tasks of the AMM were to oversee the decommissioning and deconstruction of GAM weapons and to monitor the withdrawal of military and police (International Crisis Group 2005b; Schulze 2007). It also held regular meetings with GAM and representatives from the Government of Indonesia to mediate any conflicts or problems that emerged through these processes, and wrote reports on incidents of violence. The AMM had to

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[64] For further details about the Helsinki MoU see Aspinall (2005b) and Aspinall (2008).
[65] Involving the UN as overseers of the agreement was not an option for the Government of Indonesia, but they eventually agreed to involving regional representatives. GAM insisted on involving the EU and the Government of Indonesia wanted monitors from ASEAN countries (Lahdensuo 2006).

undertake these tasks in a way that maintained the confidence of both the Government of Indonesia and GAM in the peace agreement. This meant avoiding issues related to human rights unless they were explicitly raised by either of the two parties, which, according to AMM representatives, at no stage occurred (Burke 2008). For some local NGOs, the position of AMM towards human rights was unacceptable (Aspinall 2008, 32). In addition, the AMM did not have the necessary resources to work closely with local civil society. The Initial Monitoring Presence, the short-term predecessor of the AMM, did organise a meeting with local civil society organisations and suggested that one AMM staff member be responsible for liaising with local NGOs, but this suggestion was never implemented. Just before the AMM mission ended in December 2006, there were further discussions about how to collaborate with civil society; however, AMM claimed that it had no guidelines, organisational structures or financial resources to build relationships with local NGOs (Lahdensuo 2006).[66]

The BRA, which was established in December 2006, was a provincial level agency which reported to the Governor of Aceh. It was responsible for managing the USD173.5 million that the national and provincial governments provided to the peace process (MSR 2009). The key international actors supporting the peacebuilding process included a combination of multilateral and bilateral agencies. The most prominent were the IOM, UNDP, the World Bank, the EU and USAID. These agencies, as well as other international donors, donors from the private sector and NGOs contributed USD 192.1 million, which was just over half of the USD 365.6 million dollars committed to reintegration and peacebuilding in Aceh (MSR 2009). Like the AMM, the BRA had difficulty engaging with local civil society organisations, albeit for different reasons. Whereas the AMM was not

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[66] Despite not having a formal policy for engaging with civil society, Braithwaite et al (2010, 390-391) report that AMM staff did respond to requests for help to resolve conflicts at the community level. In some cases, AMM staff were informed about conflicts after they had already been resolved by community members. In other cases they encouraged people at the community level to resolve their problems directly with one another as a strategy to encourage independence from the AMM.

able to engage with local civil society because it did not have the resources or the mandate to do so, and because local NGOs did not respect its approach to addressing human rights issues, the staff of BRA had limited coordination skills which contributed to the broader challenges it faced coordinating the peacebuilding process, including ensuring that local NGOS were actively included.

Barron and Burke (2008) argue that the strength of the Indonesian state meant that the international agencies were not in control of the form and trajectory of the peacebuilding efforts in Aceh in the way they may have been in other contexts, such as Timor Leste. This view was also expressed by a member of staff from the World Bank working in Aceh in 2008, who explained that the international community felt a need to stay on the periphery because most of the funding came from the central government, but also because there was a need for the state to gain legitimacy in the eyes of the Acehnese because of its role in the conflict.[67] Attempts made by the international community to organise or coordinate together were also actively undermined by the Indonesian government, which eventually left institutions like the BRA primarily responsible for coordination. For example, in early 2006 a network called the Joint Forum (Forum Bersama, FORBES), which was funded by USAID, was established. The purpose of FORBES was to provide a neutral meeting space for GAM, the Government of Indonesia and other local and international stakeholders in the peacebuilding process. When the BRA was established, FORBES was absorbed into the BRA structure and not given any significant decision making power (Barron and Burke 2008). This situation left the BRA responsible for coordinating the diverse range of actors involved in the peacebuilding process – a task that it was not able to carry out effectively.

After the FORBES was absorbed into the BRA a new body was established called the Aceh Peace Resource Center (APRC), which was intended to have

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[67] Anonymous interview, Word Bank (Conflict and Development Program), 24 October 2008, Banda Aceh, Aceh.

an advisory and coordinating role. In practice, however, it did not have strong mechanisms to bring local NGOs into peacebuilding programming. One difficulty was that the local NGO representative invited to meetings for stakeholders in the peace process was the Aceh NGO Forum (Forum LSM Aceh), which was not an effective representative of all local NGOs.[68] Other channels for consultation with local NGOs included informal meetings and seminars, but these rarely captured a representative view from local civil society, and were inaccessible to NGOs that were not based in Banda Aceh.[69] The difficulty the BRA had in coordinating the various stakeholders involved in the peacebuilding process was attributed to the BRA leadership having political rather than technical skills as well as because it was preoccupied with administrative problems such as delays in receiving the funding for peacebuilding programs from Jakarta.[70] The fact that many individuals working for BRA did so while simultaneously holding positions in other parts of government also contributed to the poor coordination of agencies involved in peacebuilding.[71]

Another factor contributing to the marginalisation of local NGOs was that the international organisations involved in supporting the peacebuilding programs were not well suited to working with local agencies. Their funding criteria frequently meant that it was difficult for them to disburse funds to local NGOs, which were not familiar with working within the complex bureaucratic systems established by these agencies (Barron and Burke 2008; Multi-Stakeholder Review 2009).[72] Bureaucratic processes within the international aid industry were a major structural impediment to involving local NGOs in the peacebuilding strategies because, after government

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[68] Anonymous interview, Word Bank (Conflict and Development Program), 24 October 2008, Banda Aceh, Aceh.
[69] Interview with Aguswandi, Aceh Peace Resource Center (Senior Program Officer), 23 October 2008, Banda Aceh, Aceh.
[70] Anonymous interview, Word Bank (Conflict and Development Program), 24 October 2008, Banda Aceh, Aceh.
[71] Interview with Aguswandi, Aceh Peace Resource Center (Senior Program Officer), 23 October 2008, Banda Aceh, Aceh.
[72] Anonymous interview, Word Bank (Conflict and Development Program), 24 October 2008, Banda Aceh, Aceh.

agencies, the next most prominent peacebuilding players were these international agencies. For example, the main form of reintegration assistance provided to former combatants and political prisoners was overseen by both the BRA and the IOM (Barron and Burke 2008; Multi-Stakeholder Review 2009).[73] Local NGOs were not involved until a later stage of the program, and even then some of these organisations were from other parts of Indonesia, not Aceh.[74] Support for conflict victims was initially provided by the World Bank through a program modelled on an initiative called the *Kecamatan* (sub-district) Development Program, an existing program run by the World Bank across Indonesia (Barron 2007; International Crisis Group 2007a; Multi-Stakeholder Review 2009; Braithwaite et al. 2010).[75]

Local NGOs were not able to fully comprehend the programs being implemented by the government and the international community or the mechanisms that existed in relation to post-conflict programming because of their marginalisation from these processes. For example, a staff member from Acehnese branch of the Commission for 'the Disappeared' and Victims of Violence (Komisi Untuk Orang Hilang dan Korban Tindak Kekerasan, KontraS Aceh) explained that she did not realise that a similar group was meeting through the APRC, which consisted of international organisations, when she brought together a group of organisations involved in post-conflict programming called the Aceh Post Conflict Working Group.[76] In other cases, local NGOs expressed suspicion of the connection between APRC and USAID, arguing that USAID did not trust local NGOs in Aceh and therefore

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[73] See Barron (2007) for criticisms of the reintegration process, in particular the way in which the government and international community made use of models of reintegration developed in other contexts. The unique aspect of GAM was that they had maintained relations with their communities throughout the conflict, which meant that reintegration had a very different meaning for them; however, few opportunities were given to GAM and the Government of Indonesia to discuss what the purpose of reintegration should have been.

[74] Anonymous interview, IOM (Post-Conflict Reintegration Program Officer), 3 November 2008, Lhokseumawe, Aceh.

[75] In April 2007 the new head of BRA, Nur Djuli decided that assisting conflict victims through providing community support was not appropriate and began targeting individuals (Barron, Diprose and Woolcock 2007; International Crisis Group 2007a).

[76] Anonymous interview, KontraS Aceh, 25 November 2009, Banda Aceh, Aceh.

felt compelled to establish its own 'local' organisation.[77] While resentful of not being involved in the process, others argued that there were advantages to not working with the big international agencies because they would have been too interventionist and controlling.[78]

The sense of being marginalised led some organisations and activists to feel frustrated and angry at the BRA and the international community. According to a staff member from HIVOS, who had worked closely with local civil society, this anger and frustration was exacerbated by local organisations' poor advocacy and lobbying strategies. For example, rather than working collaboratively, each organisation would individually make their complaints to BRA. Additionally, these organisations tended to 'throw stones' as opposed to developing strategies to advise or work with government, ensuring that BRA was even less inclined to meet with them.[79] As a result, they further alienated themselves from the peacebuilding process.[80]

Not all local organisations were isolated from the international community and government peacebuilding programs, yet even those who were involved maintained a critical stance. By 2008, some local NGOs including Women Volunteers for Humanity (Relawan Perempuan Untuk Kemanusiaan, RPuK) and Beujroh had worked with agencies like the World Bank and the IOM. After being given the opportunity to engage in the broader peacebuilding process, these organisations continued to be critical. In particular they were concerned that the peacebuilding strategies did not make the best use of their strengths, in particular their knowledge of local communities and skills

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[77] Interview with Wiratmadinata, Forum LSM Aceh (Secretary General), 27 October 2008, Banda Aceh, Aceh.

[78] Interview with Arie Maulana, Peace and Democracy Monitoring Committee (Komite Monitoring Perdamaian dan Demokrasi) (Director), 18 October 2008, Banda Aceh, Aceh.

[79] Anonymous interview, HIVOS (Project Manager), 5 November 2008, Banda Aceh, Aceh.

[80] This perspective was illustrated by a staff member from the APRC, who explained that local NGOs tended to focus primarily on their own projects and failed to see the bigger picture which made it harder for the international community to work with them. Interview with Aguswandi, Aceh Peace Resource Center (Senior Program Officer), 23 October 2008, Banda Aceh, Aceh.

working with conflict victims.[81] Their biggest concern, however, was that their constituents, who were primarily victims of the conflict, received less attention than former combatants or tsunami victims.[82] This view was confirmed by a report released in 2009 which demonstrated that 81 per cent of conflict victims had not received any form of assistance (Multi-Stakeholder Review 2009).

Conclusion

This chapter has provided an overview of the roles played by international and local NGOs in Timor Leste and Aceh since Indonesia's invasion of Timor Leste. From that time the differences in the geopolitical significance of each of the two separatist conflicts, with Timor Leste featuring far more prominently on the global stage, played a vital role in shaping how much international attention each of these conflicts received. Yet despite this difference local and international NGOs in both places had to contend with the Indonesian state and, as a consequence, were for the most part limited to politically uncontroversial projects at a time when the number of politically-oriented NGOs had increased dramatically in Jakarta and other key locations from the mid-1980s. In fact, it was not until the end of the New Order that politically active NGOs began to emerge in Timor Leste and Aceh, when they mobilised around campaigns for a referendum for independence.

The trajectories of Timor Leste and Aceh then diverged between 1999 and 2003. The controlling hand of the Indonesian state remained dominant in Aceh, but was no longer present in Timor Leste. Independence created a far a more significant role for the international community in Timor Leste, and brought local civil society organisations into close contact with it. The dominant experience of local civil society was, however, that of being marginalised. In Aceh, on the other hand, the Indonesian state continued to

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[81] Interviews with Khairani Arifin, Women Volunteers for Humanity (Relawan Perempuan untuk Kemanusiaan) (Director), 16 October 2008, Banda Aceh, Aceh; and with Raihan Diani, Beujroh (Former Director), 26 October 2008, Banda Aceh, Aceh.

[82] Interview with Khairani Arifin, Women Volunteers for Humanity (Relawan Perempuan untuk Kemanusiaan) (Director), 16 October 2008, Banda Aceh, Aceh.

dictate the extent of the relationship between local civil society organisations and the international community by setting limits on the international presence in the province after the declaration of martial law. This in turn isolated local civil society organisations, many of which were targets of violence as a result of the resumption of hostilities.

The different experiences of the NGO sector in Timor Leste and Aceh had an impact on the role NGOs played after the 2006 conflict in Timor Leste and the Indian Ocean tsunami. In Timor Leste, the state continued to require support from the international community, which meant that international agencies like the UNDP were able to exert considerable influence over the trajectory of the peacebuilding process. Furthermore, expatriates who had worked in different institutions in Timor Leste over a (relatively) extended period of time were able to shape peacebuilding activities through their leadership positions in international agencies. As a consequence, structures were put in place that allowed local organisations to become directly involved in the peacebuilding efforts. By contrast, in Aceh, local NGOs were swiftly pushed to one side by the international aid community which arrived in the aftermath of the tsunami. The signing of the Helsinki peace agreement did not change these dynamics, despite the fact that local NGOs had considerable experience working with conflict-affected communities. The fact that the international community were present at the behest of the Indonesian state, combined with the lack of experience and local contacts that expatriates had in Aceh, meant that local NGOs continued to be marginalised during the implementation of the agreement.

As this discussion suggests, context plays a major role in shaping how international and local organisations perceive one another and in establishing the parameters for collaboration. The contextual differences between the cases of Timor Leste and Aceh influenced the kinds of peacebuilding projects that were prioritised, the extent to which international agencies could take leadership over these projects and the level of involvement of local civil society organisations. This brief history has also illustrated how even just a few years of experience and exposure to a particular context can have a

dramatic effect on how individual aid workers approach their work. The remainder of this thesis explores these issues in further detail by examining three different forms of partnership between local and international NGOs, namely contract, partner-driven and networked relationships. Through their examination of multiple case studies of each form of partnership, the following chapters illustrate how the interplay of contextual differences, funding structures and individual agency shape the development and transfer of ideas about peacebuilding.

Chapter Two: Contract Relationships

In the middle of a hot, dry day in August 2009, I stopped in front of a concrete basketball court located on an empty field amongst houses in the suburb of Bairo Pite in Dili, Timor Leste. The heat meant that the basketball court was unsurprisingly empty, with the exception of a few small children playing in the shade of the surrounding trees. The concrete slab looked new, the blue poles of the basketball hoops were freshly painted and only the tattered nets hanging off the hoops hinted at how well used the court was. This court was the product of a short collaboration between a local human rights NGO supporting a community leader struggling to win the trust of the youth in his neighbourhood and an international NGO whose mandate was to fund small peacebuilding projects in the area. The NGOs hoped that by building the court, the community leader would develop better relationships with the local youth, thereby reducing the likelihood of the young people engaging in violence.

This case study is an example of a contractual approach to NGO partnership. Contracting Southern NGOs became popular amongst Northern donors and NGOs in the early 1990s as they grew impatient with the inefficiencies of channelling aid through Southern states (Fowler 1998). NGOs were valued for being flexible and value driven, and having specialised skills that neither the public nor private sectors could offer (Edwards and Hulme 1996). Since then, there has been considerable analysis of the advantages and disadvantages of using such an approach. The most persistent criticisms relate to the effect of the funding structures on the operation and sustainability of Southern NGOs, the implications of these funding structures on the legitimacy and accountability of Southern NGOs and the inability of such short-term output oriented partnerships to generate deep and lasting change (Edwards and Hulme 1996; Fowler 1998; Lewis and Sobhan 1999).

Yet although scholars continue to identify these types of problems with NGO partnerships (Pickard 2007; Harris 2008), in practice, the contracting relationship remains a widespread and popular mode of engagement between

Southern NGOs and their Northern counterparts. Moreover, while scholarly accounts focus on how it is difficult for learning to occur within short-term contract style partnerships (Farrington and Lewis 1993, 331; Vincent and Byrne 2006), there has been little extended discussion about the implications of this approach to partnership for the exchange and generation of new ideas.

This chapter addresses these issues through a discussion of contract relationships in Timor Leste and Aceh. It begins with a review of the literature about this approach to partnership, highlighting how the case studies discussed in this chapter are illustrative of that type of relationship. Following that it demonstrates how Northern and Southern NGOs entered into these relationships with pre-existing ideas about peacebuilding as well as specific reasons for engaging in a contract partnership. It then shows how the structural qualities of this style of partnership, specifically the priority placed on financial accountability and the reluctance of Northern NGOs to engage in political issues, overrode potential opportunities to exchange ideas that emerged throughout the duration of the relationship.

The chapter makes two key arguments. First, it refutes a common assumption in the NGO literature that local NGOs lack agency in their relationships with the international NGOs to which they are contracted, demonstrating that local organisations are in fact highly strategic in their approach to contract partnerships. Second, it argues that, despite this element of local NGO agency, these partnerships are ineffective sites for the development of new ideas about peacebuilding because they neither facilitate the collaborative development of projects nor provide sufficient incentives for the partners to negotiate differences in opinion or approach.

Rhetoric versus Reality

Contracting arrangements between Northern development organisations and Southern NGOs became popular at a time when aid to Southern governments was beginning to be perceived as ineffective and counterproductive. The most vulnerable people in society were often not benefiting from the aid money channelled through their governments, and they were rarely involved

in making decisions about how that aid was to be used (Sobhan 1997). The 'New Policy Agenda', which developed in the aftermath of the Cold War and aimed to address these problems, was built around two key premises, both of which accorded NGOs a prominent role. The first premise of this new approach was that governments were inefficient and corrupt structures unable to effectively combat problems of poverty and that markets and thus the private sector, including NGOs, were a more efficient means through which to provide services and promote economic growth and development (Edwards and Hulme 1996; Harriss-White and White 1996; Riley 1998; Robinson 1998). The second premise was that good governance, specifically democratisation, was important for economic growth and could help combat the corruption that hampered this growth. NGOs were considered an essential component of creating and maintaining the governance structures of a healthy democracy (Edwards and Hulme 1996; Harriss-White and White 1996; Fowler 1998). It was in this context that Northern NGOs and donors began funding Southern NGOs in the hope that doing so would promote economic and democratic development in Southern countries.

The language that emerged at this time to describe North-South NGO partnerships suggested that this new approach to development would be collaborative, participatory and put both partners on equal footing (Fowler 1998; Crawford 2003; Cornwall and Brock 2005). In practice, however, many partnerships did not reflect this 'authentic' form, but rather resembled a donor-patron 'contract' model in which a defined task must be completed in a set period of time, usually as part of a 'fee-for-service' arrangement (Leach 1997, 3; Fowler 1998, 137). There is limited discussion in the literature of the exact time periods of a contract relationship, but the implication of a fee-for-service arrangement is that the partnership lasts only the duration that it takes for the task to be implemented and no funding is provided for the operational costs of the organisation (Sobhan 1997).

The practice of contracting between Northern and Southern NGOs has attracted extensive criticism from scholars.[83] At one level, contract partnerships were critiqued because their qualities were seen to contradict the rhetoric about partnership (Harris 2008). The notion of partnership being 'an equality in ways of working and mutuality in respect of position, identity and role' was undermined by practices which reinforced the inequality in power and resources between Northern and Southern institutions (Fowler 1998, 141). These practices included mechanisms for dispensing funding, the process of setting agendas and the central role that international organisations gave to financial accountability. These deviations from the ideal model have been attributed to Northern NGOs' operational mechanisms, which made it difficult for them to hand full control to their Southern partners and have led some to describe this mode of collaboration as 'donorship' rather than 'partnership' (Hatley 1999; Ahmad 2006, 630). As a consequence, Southern NGOs experienced difficulties sustaining their organisations and maintaining relationships with their beneficiaries.

Research on contract partnerships has shown that local organisations have struggled to remain sustainable under the funding arrangements of these partnerships (Yukiko 2000). In most Southern contexts, local NGOs have experienced difficulty generating local sources of funding. Poverty levels make it difficult for all but the rich to donate money; moreover, the presence of the international aid community has instilled the expectation that funding will come from outside, stifling the formation a culture of philanthropy amongst local wealthy people, and the tendency for local NGOs to pay higher wages than many other employers means that local people do not view them as in need of their financial support (Hoksbergen 2005). Southern

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[83] The scholarly discussion about contract partnerships was most extensive throughout the 1990s and in the early 2000s, a period during which NGO partnership became a popular practice. The issue of contracting is still addressed by contemporary literature, but scholars' attention has also shifted to other types of partnerships – such as those between government and donors, donors and Southern NGOs and between the Church and other organisations – and to exploring alternative models of NGO partnership (Brinkerhoff and Brinkerhoff 2004; Johnson and Wilson 2006; Makuwira 2006; Morse and McNamara 2008; Macpherson 2009).

NGOs are thus heavily reliant on funding from Northern NGOs. When that funding is short-term and sporadic, it can have a significant impact on the effectiveness of the organisation. Financial uncertainty can lead staff to seek supplementary work in other areas, which can take time away from the projects they have been contracted to complete by their donors (Carroll 1992, 139-140; Hemment 2004). In other cases the possibility of donor funding can lead organisations to embark on projects for which they have limited experience, no real local constituents and that are deviations from their main goals (Henderson 2002).

Another challenge local NGOs face in contract relationships is prioritising activities that will support their own development or the longer term sustainability of the communities with which they work. Organisations funded on a short-term contract model are often consumed with administrative tasks and are rarely given the resources or time for reflection or for institutional development (Farrington and Lewis 1993, 331; Edwards and Hulme 1996; Sobhan 1997). The lack of opportunity and support for organisational development is felt by communities, which Southern NGOs are less capable of supporting when they themselves lack clear direction or are facing internal organisational problems (Carroll 1992). As a consequence this mode of funding perpetuates an 'aid chain' that serves the administrative needs of the managers and those accounting for the finances in the Northern organisations, but fails to sufficiently provide the technical support for those engaging with communities (Wallace, Bornstein and Chapman 2007, 165).

This funding style also has implications for the accountability and legitimacy of the local organisation. Organisations that receive short-term contract funding are bound to adhere to the administrative requirements of their donors, which can lead the Southern NGOs to focus upwards to their donor rather than downwards to their constituents (Edwards and Hulme 1996; Mawdsley, Townsend and Porter 2005; Eade 2007).[84] A closely related question is how the legitimacy of NGOs is affected by accepting contracts

[84] See Ford (2006) for an example of this argument in the case of Indonesia.

from international donors. NGOs' legitimacy is generated through their connections with local communities and their value based approach to work (Lister 2003). According to some scholars, this situation changes when Southern NGOs accept contracts from donors because they then begin to attain organisational legitimacy by fulfilling the requirements of the contract rather than because of their value system or relationship with their constituents (Edwards and Hulme 1996, 967).

These analyses demonstrate how contract style partnerships can create dependency, shift NGOs' focus from communities to bureaucratic tasks and, as a result, make it difficult for local NGOs to act as agents of change. In making these critiques, scholars have aimed to demonstrate the failure of Northern donors' strategy to fund NGOs because they are potentially more efficient service providers than the state and can enhance the process of democratisation. Their arguments emphasise the problems associated with this mode of dispensing funding, in particular highlighting how such intervention can operate to the detriment of Southern NGOs.

In both cases of North-South partnerships discussed in this chapter, an international organisation contracted a local organisation to complete a particular task that constituted part of a broader project. In Timor Leste, local NGO Watch with Care (Forum Tau Matan, FTM) received funding from Care International Timor Leste (hereafter, Care) to oversee the construction of the basketball court in Bairo Pite described at the opening of this chapter. Established in December 2003, FTM is a human rights organisation which initially focussed on the rights of prisoners by monitoring and reporting on cases of arrest, detention and imprisonment (Forum Tau Matan 2009). During the 2006 crisis, however, FTM staff developed an interest in peacebuilding. Care enlisted the help of FTM, as well as other local NGOs, as part of its peacebuilding program, called Community Activities for Local Mitigation, Empowerment and Reintegration (CALMER). This program focused on conflict related problems in Bairo Pite, the suburb in which the Care office was located. The case in Aceh involved the local NGO the Peace Strengthening Centre (Pusat Penguatan Perdamaian, 3P) and World Vision,

which was primarily involved in tsunami reconstruction work but had a small peacebuilding and conflict resolution program that aimed to strengthen the capacity of local actors to deal with conflict. 3P was established in mid-2008 by Fachrul Razi, a former lecturer at the University of Indonesia. The purpose of 3P was to 'strengthen peace in a just and democratic way in line with the Helsinki MoU' (Pusat Penguatan Perdamaian 2010). It was contracted by World Vision to provide peacebuilding training to community leaders in four sub-districts of Aceh in July and August of 2008.

The way in which Care and World Vision funded their local partners was consistent with how the literature describes the funding mechanisms in contract relationships (Sobhan 1997). Contract relationships are characterised by a concern for using resources efficiently. Northern NGOs are reluctant to provide core funding to their partners out of fear that it will make them less productive, both because their own donors stipulate that core funding cannot be given to local organisations and because it is harder to convince their Northern constituents that they should donate money to be used as core funding for local organisations (Carroll 1992; Sobhan 1997).

In both of the cases discussed here the local organisations were financed to implement the project but not offered core funding. The conflict mitigation project, CALMER, had a budget of USD 399,667 from the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), approximately USD 50,000 from the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) and USD 75,011 from the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) (UNMIT 2008; USAID 2008). Of this, Care allocated USD 4500 to the project run by FTM, of which there was no provision for operational costs. FTM was able to cover the costs of running the project by drawing on funding and resources from its other projects. Some of these projects were short, one-off events such as organising a series of human rights workshops with funding from the Diplomacy Training Program (DTP), a project implemented by the University of New South Wales in Sydney, Australia. Others were longer term projects such as a housing rights program and a critical-thinking program, both funded by Oxfam (Forum Tau Matan 2009). FTM also

received some operational funding from Irish Aid. Having these different sources of funding meant FTM could afford to work with Care on a short-term basis.[85]

World Vision received funding from multiple donors as part of its tsunami funding. Forty per cent (USD 138,320,590) of the money that World Vision raised from public and corporate donations, government grants, gifts-in-kind and multi-lateral donors in response to the tsunami was allocated to its work in Indonesia from 2005 until 2010 (World Vision Asia Pacific 2009). The money allocated to World Vision's peacebuilding projects amounted to approximately USD 45,000 for the financial year 2008-2009.[86] 3P received approximately USD 3500 of this money for providing training in four districts in Aceh.[87] World Vision paid 3P for the costs involved in the training but did not provide 3P with any funding for its overheads. At the time, 3P had organised a contract with another international organisation – International Relief and Development (IRD) – to run similar programs with community organisations. Besides this other small source of funding, 3P relied primarily on the personal savings of its leader to operate its office.[88]

Both FTM and 3P had specific experiences and skills that need to be taken into consideration when thinking about how they approached the experience of partnership with their Northern NGO donor. FTM had considerable experience with multiple Northern donors, working with international NGOs including HIVOS, Oxfam-Australia and Care, aid agencies such as the Australian Agency for International Development (AusAID) and Irish Aid, and UN agencies including the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) in the period between 2005 and 2008 (Forum Tau Matan 2009). Similarly, prior to

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[85] Interview with Joao Pequinho, FTM (Executive Director), 22 September 2008, Dili, Timor Leste.
[86] Personal communication with Hendi Julius, World Vision (Emergency Response & Community Development Program Manager), July 2010.
[87] Personal communication with Fachrul Razi, FTM (Coordinator), 18 July 2010.
[88] Interview with Fachrul Razi, 3P (Executive Director), 27 October 2008, Banda Aceh, Aceh.

establishing the organisation, the director of 3P had worked for two different international organisations. How, then, did these institutional and personal experiences shape these organisations' approach to working with their Northern partner? What differences existed between developing a contract relationship in post-tsunami Aceh and in Timor Leste after the 2006 crisis? And, importantly, what space existed for local NGOs engaged in contract relationships to influence the conceptual frameworks underlying the projects they were commissioned to implement?

Peacebuilding Ideas

Scholars of contract partnerships have observed that the international partner determines the 'goals, strategies and systems' used in the relationship (Leach 1997). This description suggests that the ideas underlying a collaborative project are generated primarily by the international partner. In both cases discussed here the international organisations did indeed bring developed notions of peacebuilding to the relationship and had established specific peacebuilding goals they wanted to achieve with (or through) their partners. However, the local organisations too came to the partnership with pre-existing ideas, goals and strategies about peacebuilding.

For both the Northern and Southern NGOs, the process of developing, designing and implementing the peacebuilding projects was shaped to different degrees by individuals and by context specific factors. The Northern NGOs developed their peacebuilding ideas by way of research or by drawing on institutional resources. The individuals who worked for these organisations influenced some of the day-to-day decisions and implementation of the program, but did not have influence over the frameworks used or ideas underlying the programs. In contrast, the Southern organisations relied primarily on the knowledge and experiences of the individuals in leadership roles and while in some cases they did draw on theoretical models about peacebuilding, they did so to a far lesser extent than their Northern counterparts.

Peacebuilding concepts and frameworks

Care and World Vision both developed peacebuilding programs that responded to the specific conflict related challenges faced by communities in the place in which they worked. The two organisations used different strategies to ascertain these local needs, which reflected their different institutional relationship to place and approach to peacebuilding. Care's program developed in response to the experiences of the organisation during the 2006 conflict and relied on ideas developed by consultants hired to do research about the conflict. World Vision, on the other hand, had a comprehensive institutional framework for engaging with issues of conflict but limited knowledge and previous engagement with Aceh.

The ideas for Care's CALMER project were formulated during the 2006 crisis, when the Care compound in Dili became a refuge for internally displaced people (IDPs) fleeing the violence in their neighbourhood. As noted earlier, the Care compound in Dili is in a suburb called Bairo Pite, one of the most unstable areas during the crisis. The compound occupies three blocks of land and is surrounded by a two to three metre high wall, making it an ideal destination for those seeking shelter from members of martial arts groups, gangs or others individuals who were threatening to burn down their houses. The establishment of an IDP camp within its boundary during the crisis meant that the Care compound was frequently the target of intimidation and occasional violent attacks. Care wished to facilitate residents' return home once the neighbourhood became more stable, but realised that this activity would be difficult. Although Care had worked in Timor Leste since 1994, it had not established a relationship with its surrounding community, implementing most of its projects in the districts outside of Dili, in part because the organisation had invested very little in its relationship with its neighbours.[89]

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[89] Interview with Diane Francisco, Care (Country Director), 11 September 2009, Dili, Timor Leste.

In 2007, after Care made the decision to engage with issues of peace and conflict, the organisation commissioned a consultant to research its surrounding community. The research was completed over a number of months and involved conducting focus group discussions as well as in-depth interviews with people in Bairo Pite and in other neighbourhoods in Dili which had not been as badly disrupted by the crisis.[90] The purpose of the research was to understand what made Bairo Pite unstable and why other communities had not been as negatively affected by the conflict. Care's intention was to replicate in Bairo Pite the practices and structures operating in the more stable communities.

There were three key findings from this research which fed directly into the aims of the CALMER project. Two problems fuelling the instability in Bairo Pite were the lack of connection between the many diverse groups living in the neighbourhood and the inability of local leaders to bring people together. Another difference that the research revealed was that in the more stable suburbs there was a stronger capacity for self-advocacy. These communities were better able to create change for themselves than the community in Bairo Pite, where people tended to blame the government for the instability and violence, and also waited for the government to resolve the problems. These findings became the foundations upon which the project was later designed.[91] The project aimed to strengthen local leadership as a means of reducing violence in Bairo Pite; target the source of the conflict by providing local communities the skills to identify and resolve conflict; and engage with all sectors of the community through the project (USAID 2008). As part of these objectives, Care wanted to improve its organisational profile in Bairo Pite. A

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[90] Conducting preliminary research prior to beginning a project was a standard practice for Care. Care was particularly committed to doing research prior to undertaking a peacebuilding project because staff from Care had observed that many other organisations had embarked on peacebuilding projects in the aftermath of the 2006 conflict without sufficient preparation or knowledge and had unintentionally contributed to further conflict. Additionally, Care had very little data about the conflict and as an organisation did not have a precedent of either working on peacebuilding projects or implementing projects in their local neighbourhood.

[91] Interview with Diane Francisco, Care (Country Director), 11 September 2009, Dili, Timor Leste.

key concept used by Care staff to describe what they hoped the outcome of the project would be was improved 'social cohesion' – or, in other words, better relations between people and organisations within the Bairo Pite area.[92]

The key ideas driving World Vision's approach to peacebuilding in Aceh were drawn from the two international peacebuilding frameworks that underpin World Vision's institutional approach to working in conflict areas. The first of these frameworks was Do No Harm, an approach developed in the aftermath of the 1994 genocide in Rwanda by an organisation called Collaborative for Development Action (CDA), run by Mary Anderson. Anderson implemented a project between 1994 and 2001 that aimed to develop concrete strategies to help international organisations avoid contributing to conflict (Anderson 1999). Through this same project, she developed Local Capacities for Peace (LCP), a framework used to identify and strengthen those aspects of society that are capable of bringing about more peace and designed to be used in conjunction with the Do No Harm framework. World Vision became involved in Anderson's project through its emergency work in Sudan and the World Vision Sudan office was one of 12 organisations that initially implemented both frameworks established by CDA (Lowry 2006). The Do No Harm/Local Capacities for Peace framework was devised primarily for organisations that were providing emergency relief, but World Vision was one of the first organisations to integrate this framework as a cross-cutting theme as part of its longer term development projects (Harder 2005, 33; Lowry 2006; World Vision 2009).

World Vision subsequently experimented with the Do No Harm/Local Capacities for Peace framework in the Asia-Pacific region, establishing what were called Centers of Learning (CoL) in Sarangani in Mindanao, Philippines and in Banggai in the province of Sulawesi in Indonesia. Another CoL was later developed in the Indonesian province of Maluku (Harder

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[92] Interviews with Daniel Hardy, Care (Peacebuilding and Security Officer), 16 September 2008, Dili, Timor Leste; and with Richard Bowd, Care (Community Outreach and Peacebuilding Project Manager), 1 August 2009, Dili, Timor Leste.

2005, 41). In each of these places, programs called Area Development Projects (ADP), which aimed to empower local communities to take ownership over the development process in their area, were implemented concurrently with the establishment of the CoL (Lowry 2006). The CoLs became part of a regional peacebuilding network and were places where World Vision staff from surrounding countries would meet to discuss issues they had learnt through their work on the ADPs (Lange 2004). The regional peacebuilding network and the CoLs were also linked into World Vision's global peacebuilding network called PAXnet which facilitated information sharing and linked programming efforts with national, regional and international level advocacy (Lange 2004).

The program in Aceh drew directly from the broader ideas about peacebuilding developed within the organisation. However, World Vision implemented its peacebuilding framework in Aceh on a much smaller scale, with less time in which to achieve its goals and with far fewer resources than in other parts of Indonesia. Prior to the tsunami, World Vision did not have a presence in Aceh. When it arrived in 2005, it integrated aspects of the Do No Harm framework into its tsunami response program by undertaking analyses to ensure that its programs were conflict sensitive and training staff in the appropriate skills. It was only in 2007 that it commenced programs that specifically engaged with the peacebuilding process in Aceh (World Vision Indonesia 2010).[93] As a point of comparison, World Vision has been working in Banggai, on the island of Sulawesi – where a peacebuilding program was established in 2001 with an annual budget of USD 50,000 – since 1984 (Sihotang and Silalahi 2006).[94] World Vision's relatively short period of involvement in Aceh meant that staff had to think laterally about how to

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[93] The partnerships and ideas that were part of World Vision's engagement with the peacebuilding process are the focus of discussion in this chapter rather than its use of conflict sensitive programming in the response to the tsunami. Other scholars have discussed how international organisations have integrated conflict sensitivity into the tsunami response in Aceh (see Burke and Afnan 2005; Waizenegger and Hyndman 2010; Zeccola 2011b).

[94] World Vision continued to have a presence in the area almost 10 years later (World Vision Indonesia 2010).

implement a framework designed to be implemented over a much longer period of time.

One of the strategies used by World Vision staff to overcome this problem was to use the knowledge and experience of local NGOs as a source of information. According to the principles of its peacebuilding frameworks, World Vision needed to ensure that its program goals reflected the needs of local actors. Because of its lack of familiarity with the local context, including not having direct connections to conflict affected communities, World Vision decided to organise a meeting of local NGOs that had been actively working throughout the conflict in order to identify conflict-related problems and possible solutions. World Vision's Peace Building and Capacity Development Officer (hereafter referred to as World Vision's Peace Building Officer), thought that the NGOs would be able to give insight into a broad range of issues related to the conflict based on their connections to local communities.[95] One of the findings of the meeting was that there was a need to strengthen knowledge about peace in communities. This goal was consistent with the plan devised at a workshop attended by senior World Vision staff responsible for the tsunami response who elected to undertake 'community-level peace projects of a non-political nature, as well as selected peace advocacy interventions' (World Vision Indonesia 2010, 30). The goal of World Vision's program in Aceh was, therefore, to improve the skills and ability of people at the community level to navigate conflict, but to do so through apolitical means.

Room for an individual touch?

The role of individuals in the formation and implementation of Care's and World Vision's peacebuilding ideas was different, but the individuals involved did not significantly shape the underlying approach or philosophy of the peacebuilding program in either case. In both Aceh and Timor Leste, program coordinators were employed from overseas or other parts of

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[95] Interview with World Vision's Peace Building and Capacity Development Officer, 27 October 2008, Banda Aceh, Aceh.

Indonesia to implement peacebuilding programs that had been designed prior to their employment. This – in addition to the broader structures of the international development system and the nature of work in post-conflict contexts, in which there is frequently a high turn-over of staff, as well as the way in which the projects were designed – meant that the effects of individual experience, personality and preference were only able to have a limited influence.

Care's program design was outsourced and so, while individuals later employed to implement the program had limited influence on the ideas underlying the project, they did have an impact on how those ideas were understood by local staff in the organisation. CALMER was initially managed by a Canadian who had a military background and who had been responsible for security at Care during the 2006 conflict. Daniel Hardy completed a Masters program in peace and conflict studies and had worked in the emergency sector in Sri Lanka, Pakistan, Chechnya and Somalia. His work experience and education suggested he would have a range of ideas about peacebuilding. Nevertheless, his main contribution to the program was to create structures to enable the local staff to learn about these concepts. Prior to the project start date, Hardy hired a consultant who taught the staff about a range of different concepts including Do No Harm, participatory planning and conflict mapping.[96] He explained that by organising the training he delayed the start of the programs, but he felt that this action was justified because it meant that the staff were better equipped than staff responsible for peacebuilding in other organisations working in Timor Leste. In making this decision, he exerted some control over how the program was implemented, but his influence was limited by the pre-established design of the program.

At the beginning of 2009, a new project manager was hired to replace Hardy, who left to take up a job outside Timor Leste. The new manager, Richard Bowd, was from the United Kingdom, and had an academic background in

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[96] Interview with Daniel Hardy, Care (Peacebuilding and Security Officer), 16 September 2008, Dili, Timor Leste.

peace and conflict studies with an empirical interest in Africa. He had authored a number of publications about peace and conflict related topics, but was relatively new to working in development. While working for Care, he produced a peacebuilding training manual for the CALMER project. Producing a manual had been part of the original project design, but work on the manual had been postponed during the first half of the project because staff were pre-occupied with the task of supporting IDPs. Once it was written, Bowd trained the staff on the CALMER project, all of whom were Timorese, to use the manual.[97] Local staff who attended the training explained that while it was useful to learn about the module, it took a long time to cover the content because the new manager only spoke English. The time required during the training session to translate between Tetum and English meant that they had to skim over some aspects of the course, including the more complex sections of the material.[98] Bowd, like Hardy, was able to enhance the CALMER staff's understanding of peacebuilding, but this contribution was shaped by the overall project design and limited by his own language skills.

World Vision's Peace Building Officer was Indonesian and had a deep understanding of its Do No Harm and Local Capacities for Peace framework. The Peace Building Officer had extensive experience working on World Vision's peacebuilding programs elsewhere and played a key role in linking the Aceh program to the broader ideas about peacebuilding developed within the organisation. He had been involved in establishing the World Vision peacebuilding program in Indonesia and was the coordinator of the Center of Learning in Sulawesi. His direct experience in the program elsewhere meant that he was able to apply the framework to the Acehnese context.[99] Unlike the project manager of the Care project, World Vision's Peace Building

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[97] Interview with Richard Bowd, Care (Community Outreach and Peacebuilding Project Manager), 1 August 2009, Dili, Timor Leste.
[98] Interview with Joao Filipe Pereira, Care (Former Deputy Project Manager), 15 August 2009, Dili, Timor Leste.
[99] Interview with World Vision's Peace Building and Capacity Development Officer, 27 October 2008, Banda Aceh, Aceh.

Officer, who was Indonesian, shared the same language as the local organisations with whom he was working and had many years' experience with the framework used in Aceh. Despite working for a Christian organisation and not being Acehnese, two factors that could potentially antagonise local Acehnese who were sensitive to the presence of outsiders, he established good rapport with local activists.[100] But, World Vision was only in Aceh for a short amount of time and with a very particular funding situation, which tempered the effectiveness of his personal skills and experience.

Ideas in context

Both Care and World Vision developed peacebuilding strategies that were grounded in the circumstances of their local context. Care's ideas were based on trying to address the problems that led to the outbreak of conflict in Bairo Pite. By improving the skills of community leaders and strengthening relations between itself and those in its neighbourhood, and between different groups within its neighbourhood, it hoped to mitigate future conflict. World Vision applied a much more established peacebuilding model that drew on tools that it had used in other parts of Indonesia, although eventually it established quite similar goals to Care – the training and education of community members who were likely to be the source of, or who could mitigate, future conflict. But World Vision had a much less focused sense of what it wanted to achieve in Aceh and of why it wanted to achieve it, in part because it relied on second-hand information from local NGOs to identify the key peacebuilding needs rather than undertaking its own direct assessment.

Despite these differences in the relationships that Care and World Vision had to the context in which they worked, there were definite similarities in how they integrated local NGOs into their programs. In both instances local NGOs were brought in as partners to help complete particular elements of the international organisations' peacebuilding projects. In both cases there was very little opportunity during the planning stage for those local partners to

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[100] Field Notes, Banda Aceh 2008.

provide input into the programs that the international organisations were implementing. Their tasks, as local partners, were determined by the ideas and interests of the international NGOs for whom they worked. Nonetheless, these local organisations, too, saw opportunities to achieve their own goals through these partnerships. These goals, developed primarily by the leaders of the organisations, included supporting local communities affected by conflict and assisting former combatants in their transition into political life.

Ideas at the local level

Like their international counterparts, FTM and 3P grounded their ideas about peacebuilding in local events and needs. However, they were far less systematic in their process of identifying precisely how they planned to build peace. Whereas Care and World Vision drew on international frameworks and practice, the ideas of FTM and 3P about peacebuilding were a reflection of the interests of their leaders, the concepts or tools to which their organisations had been exposed and the opportunities made available to them. Consequently, individual choice and experience played a central role in driving the peacebuilding trajectory of these two organisations.

The work experience, education and other events in the lives of the leaders of the NGOs were central to the decisions that these organisations made in a way not evident within the structures of the international organisations. The local NGOs operated on a smaller scale, having far fewer employees than their international counterparts and much smaller budgets. The local NGOs also had narrower mandates, focusing on one or two key issues in contrast to their international partners whose projects covered a swathe of issues. Furthermore, unlike staff of the international NGOs, the leaders of the local NGOs had a much higher level of personal investment in the organisations. For example, they supplemented the budget of the organisation through consultancies they undertook for other agencies.

In both cases, the leaders of FTM and 3P were directly in charge of designing the project, applying for the funding and making decisions about how to implement it. As a consequence, the ideas about peacebuilding underpinning

the projects of these organisations were more personal. To understand these ideas, where they came from and why they emerged, it is necessary to examine the professional and personal experiences of the NGO leaders and how these experiences shaped their attitudes and approach to building peace.

'Human rights is promoting peace values'

The director of FTM, Joao Pequinho, was an activist with extensive experience working for different international and local organisations in Timor Leste. Pequinho had been arrested and imprisoned in 1999 when he was a student activist opposing the Indonesian occupation. His lawyer was from the Law, Rights and Justice Association (Perkumpulan HAK or HAK Association), the legal aid organisation with which he subsequently volunteered and from which he learnt about the concept of human rights. Before establishing FTM, Pequinho worked as a translator for the political affairs section of the United Nations Mission for East Timor (UNAMET), a role in which he developed deep insight into the political context in Timor Leste. He then worked for the Office for Human Rights within UNAMET, where he maintained his links with the HAK Association as he had to liaise with it to maintain a database of how many people had been tortured and killed during the 1999 violence.[101]

Pequinho's experiences of being imprisoned during the Indonesian occupation and working on human rights issues in Timor Leste shaped the ideas about peace espoused and acted upon by FTM. An issue of key concern for FTM is human rights – something which the organisation believes is important for peace. As Pequinho explained, one of FTM's philosophies is that 'teaching human rights ... is promoting peace values'. FTM played an instrumental role in establishing and coordinating the Human Rights Monitoring Network, a vocal network of local organisations that critiqued the government on issues such as development policy, appointment of public

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[101] Interview with Joao Pequinho, FTM (Executive Director), 31 July 2009, Dili, Timor Leste.

figures and corruption.[102] Its commitment to rights education as a way of promoting peace is also reflected in the organisation's choice to run programs dealing with human rights education and housing rights.

FTM's focus on young people, and in particular juvenile delinquents, as part of its peacebuilding strategy was a reflection of Pequinho's observations of events during the 2006 political crisis. Pequinho and his colleagues at FTM observed that young people engaged in violent and destructive behaviour during the conflict, frequently under the instruction of martial arts groups or gangs. After speaking with many of those involved in the fighting Pequinho decided that an effective strategy for building peace would be to find alternative activities to directly engage these young people:

> I had a chance to talk to them, discuss with them what they need. And they say, 'We want peace, we want to have a safe environment, we don't want to fight'. Always nice things, always mention things that are contrary to what I saw. I couldn't believe myself. I saw in 2006 and 2007 something else. But that says that they are an easy target by adult criminal gangs, by organised criminal gangs, by political party supporters who mobilise these children to do these things. So if we work more with them, try to help them, provide different space to them ... maybe that will change.[103]

Pequinho concluded that the young people were being manipulated by adults and as a consequence had simultaneously become 'criminals and victims' in the conflict. For this reason he was interested in programs that addressed the needs of young people so that they were less vulnerable to this kind of

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[102] Interview with Joao Pequinho, FTM (Executive Director), 31 July 2009, Dili, Timor Leste.
[103] Interview with Joao Pequinho, FTM (Executive Director), 31 July 2009, Dili, Timor Leste.

manipulation.[104] It was this interest that eventually brought his organisation into contact with Care.[105]

In early 2007, FTM started working in four hamlets in Bairo Pite that had lost young people during the 2006 conflict. The organisation's board members made individual donations amounting to USD 100, which FTM used to purchase sporting clothes, balls, food and water. With the help of local leaders, FTM identified members of one of the martial arts groups involved in the violence, to which they distributed the goods they had purchased. The young members of the group who received the equipment agreed to meet regularly to address any issues of concern to their group, to stop intimidating people in the neighbourhood and to stop fighting with one another and to play sport instead. They did not, however, agree to stop fighting with another prominent martial arts group in the area, and within a week of this agreement being made conflict broke out between the two groups.[106]

Some months after this initial attempt to build peace in Bairo Pite, the village chief (*chefe aldeia*) of Bitaba, one of the four hamlets involved in the original project, approached FTM wanting to make another attempt to address the conflict in his neighbourhood. After many conversations with Pequinho, who lived in the same neighbourhood, they decided to build a basketball court for the young people, to hold dialogues with different members of the community and to offer the community conflict resolution training.[107] FTM agreed to help the community draft a funding proposal for the basketball court and find a donor to support it. FTM distributed the proposal to a number of international organisations including Oxfam, Plan

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[104] Pequinho also had a direct material interest in an end to the fighting. During the 2006 conflict, he was driven from his house, which was located in the same suburb where his organisation eventually implemented a peacebuilding project.

[105] Interview with Joao Pequinho, FTM (Executive Director), 31 July 2009, Dili, Timor Leste.

[106] Interview with Joao Pequinho, FTM (Executive Director), 22 September 2008, Dili, Timor Leste.

[107] Interview with Cesar, Bitaba village chief (*chefe aldeia*), 11 August 2009, Dili, Timor Leste.

Timor Leste and Care, each of which was focused on peacebuilding projects in different geographic areas around Dili as part of their response to the 2006 crisis. Care was responsible for peacebuilding projects in Bairo Pite, and therefore was the only organisation to respond to FTM's request for funding.[108]

'Fachrul Razi is 3P... 3P is Fachrul Razi'

Like FTM, 3P was led by an individual whose extensive study and work experience in the area of peacebuilding shaped the focus of the organisation's peacebuilding approach. After completing an undergraduate degree in politics at the University of Indonesia, Fachrul Razi returned to Aceh in 1999, where he became involved in peace education programs at Islamic schools. In 2005, he built on this knowledge by taking a peacebuilding course in Bangkok. Eventually, he returned to Jakarta to teach at the University of Indonesia, where he developed links with a research centre concerned with issues of peace and conflict called the Center for Intergroup Relations and Conflict Resolution (CERIC). Razi also gained exposure to ideas and concepts related to peacebuilding through his professional experience. After the tsunami, Razi returned again to Aceh to distribute aid that his university's alumni had collected. He spent the next two years moving back and forth between Jakarta and Aceh, where he helped to re-establish the Social and Political Science Faculty at Syiah Kuala University in Banda Aceh. Between 2006 and 2007, Razi worked as a Senior Research Consultant in the Knowledge Management Section of UNDP in Aceh, during which time he researched issues related to the conflict. Afterwards he was employed by an international peacebuilding organisation called Interpeace as a program coordinator. He resigned from Interpeace after one year because he did not agree with their approach to peacebuilding, which he felt was too

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[108] Interview with Joao Pequinho, FTM (Executive Director), 22 September 2008, Dili, Timor Leste.

sympathetic to the Indonesian government and in conflict with his own strong views about how to build peace.[109]

The ideas that Razi held about peacebuilding were highly political. Razi believed that in order to maintain peace in Aceh, support must be provided to former combatants from the Free Aceh Movement (GAM). He believed that the government and international community were not taking the ex-combatants' needs seriously, and as a result were exposing Aceh to the threat of further unrest in the future. He argued that the ex-combatants required political training to help them through the transition from being soldiers to being politicians, and wanted to ensure that they understood the peace agreement and what they could expect from it.[110] Razi had also developed an interest in experimenting with different peacebuilding strategies that he had learnt from the institutions at which he had studied and worked. One peacebuilding tool with which he wanted to experiment was a conflict early warning system. Such a system is ordinarily used to collate data about regions where conflict is occurring or is likely to occur so that the international community can be prepared to respond if necessary (Austin 2004). Razi wanted to apply this idea on a small scale in Aceh so that local communities could collect information and share it with one another in the event of an emergency.[111]

Razi established 3P as a tool with which to put these ideas into practice. Under the banner of 3P, he was able to attract funding from international NGOs such IRD and World Vision, as well as from multilateral agencies such as the International Organization for Migration (IOM), to provide training to a range of different communities around Aceh. He also used his affiliation to 3P to write newspaper editorials and engage in other kinds of public discussion about issues related to reintegration and GAM.

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[109] Interview with Fachrul Razi, 3P (Executive Director), 27 October 2008, Banda Aceh, Aceh.
[110] Interview with Fachrul Razi, 3P (Executive Director), 3 December 2009, Jakarta, Indonesia.
[111] Interview with Fachrul Razi, 3P (Executive Director), 27 October 2008, Banda Aceh, Aceh.

Razi explained that it would have been impossible to do these activities as an individual. Without an organisation he lacked legitimacy and he required an organisational affiliation to help people identify him:

> Originally I was 'Fachrul Razi UI [Universitas Indonesia]'. But after I started to work for Interpeace, I became 'Fachrul Razi Interpeace'. And now I have become 'Fachrul Razi 3P', it's a symbol.

As most of the funding that 3P received was through contracts for particular activities, Razi had to cover the extra costs associated with running an organisation out of his own pocket. With this level of financial commitment, Razi's identity became very tightly associated with the organisation, to the extent that he believed that 'Fachrul Razi is 3P and 3P is Fachrul Razi'.[112]

Working the system

For both FTM and 3P, the experience and insight of the individuals leading the organisations played a central role in shaping their approach to peacebuilding. In the case of FTM, the observations of its director and his relationship to the community leader in his neighbourhood pushed the organisation to seek sources of funding to implement a peacebuilding project in Bairo Pite. 3P was established as a tool for its executive director, Razi, who had grown frustrated with implementing peacebuilding ideas developed by other institutions and wanted to experiment with concepts he had learnt elsewhere.

The peacebuilding ideas of Pequinho and Razi, and indeed their interest in peacebuilding, were cultivated independently of the organisations that funded them. In contrast to the program directors appointed by Care and World Vision, who came from elsewhere in Indonesia or overseas, the peacebuilding projects were deeply connected to the lives of these local activists, rather than being primarily a means to earn a living. While these local activists had to operate within the parameters of the project cycle to be

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[112] Interview with Fachrul Razi, 3P (Executive Director), 27 October 2008, Banda Aceh, Aceh.

able to attract funding, they were committed beyond it to the broader goal of creating peace in their communities. Far from being driven by the agendas set by their donors, the following section illustrates how these individuals made the choice to partner with an international organisation with full awareness of what this partnership entailed and how to use it to achieve their own goals.

Why Short-Term Partnerships?

Care, World Vision, FTM and 3P had different reasons for engaging in contract relationships with one another. Care and World Vision justified their choice to work through local partners using the rhetoric about partnership as a means of developing civil society and as a way to make the programs more sustainable (Brehm et al. 2004). Their practice of partnership, however, revealed more pragmatic reasons for working with local NGOs. In both instances, the international NGOs expressed frustration with the inefficiency and ineffective approaches used by their local partners, suggesting that rather than developing civil society or making the programs sustainable, the key focus of the partnerships for the international NGOs was as a vehicle to complete aspects of the project they were unable to complete on their own.

Similarly, both FTM and 3P had definite reasons and strategies for engaging with international NGOs through the mechanism of a short-term contract. It was important for FTM to support the community leader that had approached it, and although short-term contracts were not its preferred method of working with donors, its priority was to fulfil its commitment to the community in Bitaba. By contrast, 3P saw short-term contracts as a way of maintaining autonomy from its donors and specifically sought out contracts that would allow it to travel around the province of Aceh so it could develop relationships with a wide range of local communities. Both cases belie the emphasis in the literature on contract relationships, which asserts that donors dictate the terms of the partnership, leaving local NGOs significantly disadvantaged as a result of working on short projects (Fowler 1998; Hatley 1999; Hoksbergen 2005). In practice, as these cases demonstrate, local NGOs

are very conscious of how different modes of partnership can affect their experience and are strategic about how they manage these relationships.

International organisations

For both Care and World Vision, partnership with local organisations became an important tool through which to achieve their peacebuilding goals. Care's CALMER project had a Training and Capacity Building team which was responsible for overseeing aspects of the program that involved training members of the community and dispersing grants. Early in the program these activities were primarily outsourced. For example, Care partnered with Living Art (Arte Moris), the national arts school, and with Crazy Goat (Bibi Bulak), a local theatre group, to do arts and theatre work with young people. It also worked with Women's Network (Rede Feto) as part of the women's empowerment component of the program and with Timor Aid to do trauma healing workshops.[113] Each of these organisations was either based in Bairo Pite or had links with the suburb. These partnerships allowed Care to incorporate activities into its program that its own staff did not have the skills to implement. These partnerships were also seen as a way of strengthening links between different groups in Bairo Pite, which was one of the objectives of the program.[114]

Care chose to work in partnership with local NGOs in Bairo Pite as part of its CALMER project for two key reasons. First, working with local NGOs was part of an institutional policy to support the development of civil society. Care's perspective towards local organisations in Timor was that they had limited experience managing projects. Its view was that by working with these organisations they would become better skilled at project management, and therefore more useful for their communities. Second, Care worked with NGOs in Bairo Pite as part of the community cohesion objective of the CALMER project. In other words, Care sought to improve its own relations

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[113] Interview with Richard Bowd, Care (Community Outreach and Peacebuilding Project Manager), 1 August 2009, Dili, Timor Leste.
[114] Interview with Daniel Hardy, Care (Peacebuilding and Security Officer), 16 September 2008, Dili, Timor Leste.

with the local community by working with and supporting local organisations, a strategy that it hoped would also facilitate the formation of relationships between local organisations and people in the community. This approach was seen as a strategy to make the CALMER project more sustainable.[115]

Care also had specific reasons for funding local organisations through contracts, the most pressing of which was its relationship with its own donors. One of the project managers explained that the organisation was under considerable pressure from its donors to justify all its expenditure, which made it difficult to be flexible with local partners about how they spent their money.[116] However, there was also an institutional lack of trust regarding the capacity for local organisations to manage money, as demonstrated by a conflict between a consultant hired in the early stages of the CALMER project and the Care leadership. When the consultant suggested that the establishment of long term relationships with local NGOs would better reflect the principles of peacebuilding, the response from those in the higher levels of the organisation was that shorter interactions were a more effective approach because local organisations did not have the infrastructure or skills to manage money.[117]

World Vision's stated motivation for working with local partners was for reasons of sustainability. It had limited time and resources for its work on peacebuilding in Aceh as the majority of its funding was used to directly implement tsunami related emergency and reconstruction activities (World Vision Asia Pacific 2009). As a result, the peacebuilding component of the program was not as extensive as that implemented in Sulawesi and Maluku (Harder 2005; Lowry 2006; Sihotang and Silalahi 2006). In Indonesia and elsewhere, World Vision's strategy was to identify individuals in the

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[115] Interview with Diane Francisco, Care (Country Director), 11 September 2009, Dili, Timor Leste.
[116] Interview with Richard Bowd, Care (Community Outreach and Peacebuilding Project Manager), 1 August 2009, Dili, Timor Leste.
[117] Anonymous interview, July 2009, Dili, Timor-Leste.

community who took an interest in the program and to support them over many years to implement projects, some of which aimed at reducing the risk factors for conflict (Riak 2006; Sihotang and Silalahi 2006). World Vision's approach in Aceh was different because of the nature of its funding and the time constraints for implementing the program.

The pressure of the post-tsunami aid cycle was part of World Vision's justification for involving local NGOs. By working with local NGOs, World Vision staff believed they were facilitating relationships between the communities targeted by their projects and their local NGO partners. They argued that through the project, relationships could be formed between local NGOs working in Aceh on a long term basis and the communities that would be sustained beyond the period funded by World Vision.[118] World Vision also used its partnerships as a means of broadening the scope of its peacebuilding project. For some aspects of its program, World Vision was able to draw on resources it had developed and used in other parts of Indonesia. For example, one activity undertaken as part of the peacebuilding project was to run peacebuilding training for school children around Aceh using a magazine called *Harmonis*, which had originally been designed for the peacebuilding program implemented by World Vision in Sulawesi (World Vision Indonesia 2008). World Vision's Peace Building Officer also acquired training modules produced by an NGO in Bandung for use by an Acehnese NGO called the Peace Education Program (Program Pendidikan Damai), which World Vision had commissioned to implement peace education training with school aged children.[119] In other cases World Vision commissioned local NGOs to produce material or implement parts of the program and asked 3P to provide peace education training to community leaders.

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[118] Interview with World Vision's Peace Building and Capacity Development Officer, 27 October 2008, Banda Aceh, Aceh.
[119] Interview with World Vision's Peace Building and Capacity Development Officer, 27 October 2008, Banda Aceh, Aceh.

Care and World Vision both found that their local counterparts were able to contribute skills and networks that were of use to their projects. World Vision staff explained that their local partners' knowledge of the context and of Acehnese language helped them engage more effectively at the community level. These skills were important because the staff members responsible for World Vision's peacebuilding program were not Acehnese.[120] Similarly, Care felt that its local partners were an asset because of the diverse range of skills they brought to the CALMER project. Being able to delegate some of the specific tasks related to activities such as managing small grants for community groups and reintegrating IDPs into their communities to NGO staff with specialised skills was important to ensuring the project ran smoothly.[121] More importantly, however, it allowed Care to diversify its activities by contracting local organisations that had skills in areas in which it did not.

As intimated by Care's distrust of the capacity of local NGOs to fulfil their financial responsibilities, the main partnership challenge faced by both international organisations was dealing with the internal organisational management systems of their local partners.[122] Staff at Care spent considerable time dealing with problems of poor planning, and lack of financial accountability. When one of Care's local partners requested USD 25 per person per day to cover the transport costs of its staff while working on a Care funded project, the CALMER project coordinator denied the request because he thought it was more than was required to pay for public transport or car rental and would therefore be difficult to justify to Care's donor. It took multiple meetings to negotiate a reduction in this cost when the

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[120] Interview with World Vision's Peace Building and Capacity Development Officer, 27 October 2008, Banda Aceh, Aceh.

[121] Interviews with Daniel Hardy, Care (Peacebuilding and Security Officer), 16 September 2008, Dili, Timor Leste; and with Richard Bowd, Care (Community Outreach and Peacebuilding Project Manager), 1 August 2009, Dili, Timor Leste.

[122] Weaknesses with the internal management systems within local NGOs are a widespread problem in the global South (Lewis 1998; Yukiko 2000; Antlöv, Brinkerhoff and Rapp 2008).

local NGO could not provide sufficient justification for its request.[123] In World Vision's case, a key challenge it faced was that the quality of its local partners' work for World Vision was affected by the fact that NGO staff were often preoccupied with the search for other sources of income. For example, when trying to organise meetings with local partners, World Vision often had to make multiple appointments before key staff members of the local NGO were available.[124]

The fact that both Care and World Vision experienced these as the most pressing problems in their relationships with local NGOs suggests that having a partner that could efficiently fulfil its side of the contract was as important – perhaps even more so – to these organisations than supporting the development of their local partners. The dissonance between international NGOs' stated positions about partnership and what they prioritise in practice has been attributed to their unwillingness to relinquish control to their local partners (Hatley 1999) and an assumption that Northern organisational practices are superior to those of Southern organisations (Brunnstrom 2003). In this instance, it also reflected the multiple pressures faced by staff working for international NGOs. On the one hand they were committed to the notion of partnership as a means of developing the skills of local organisations, but on the other they were also under pressure to account for funding and ensure the timely completion of the projects.

At the same time, the very nature of short-term contracts push local organisations to work in ways that are inefficient – either by seeking work in other places, or seeking ways in which to make a little extra money out of the contract so that their organisation can sustain itself even after it finishes. These behaviours are labelled by some international aid practitioners as unethical, inefficient or a sign of a lack of 'capacity'.[125] In fact, as the

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[123] Interview with Richard Bowd, Care (Community Outreach and Peacebuilding Project Manager), 1 August 2009, Dili, Timor Leste.
[124] Interview with World Vision's Peace Building and Capacity Development Officer, 27 October 2008, Banda Aceh, Aceh.
[125] Field Notes, Dili 2008, 2009; Field Notes, Banda Aceh, 2008, 2009.

following section suggests, these are active choices made by local NGOs to ensure their survival or to pursue their goals in the face of funding structures that are not always in their best interests.

Local organisations

Both FTM and 3P were aware of the risks associated with short-term partnerships prior to beginning their relationships with Care and World Vision. However, both were ultimately able to take advantage of the opportunities that emerged to further their own goals. Prior to working with Care, FTM had made an institutional decision not to accept short-term funding based on its extensive experience working with international donors which had raised staff's awareness of the risks associated with working in this way. As Pequinho explained, 'We spend a lot of time dealing with donors and that is not productive.'[126]

FTM subsequently decided to work with Care because it had made a commitment to the community in Bitaba. In accepting funding from Care, FTM had to be prepared to make organisational sacrifices or give the project up all together. When FTM originally requested USD 10,000 from Care to build the basketball court Care said that it could only provide USD 4,500, which, according to FTM, would only cover the cost of a portion of the materials required and for rice and oil to distribute to the young people who helped build the basketball court. FTM's director explained that the decision about whether to accept or reject the funding offered had ramifications for the community with which they were working:

> If I reject the funding it is fine for Forum Tau Matan, we have no problem, but the community leader [from Bitaba] would be very upset, young people would be very upset with the community leader.[127]

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[126] Interview with Joao Pequinho, FTM, Program Coordinator, 22 September 2008, Dili, Timor Leste.
[127] Interview with Joao Pequinho, FTM, Program Coordinator, 22 September 2008, Dili, Timor Leste.

While FTM found it difficult being the intermediary between Care and the community, it decided, on the basis of this consideration, that accepting the funding represented the best outcome for its target community. One of the key motivations in FTM's decision to become involved in the project was to help improve the relations between the youth in Bitaba and the community leaders. Rejecting the funding would have jeopardised this goal. Eventually, after discussing the options with the leader of the hamlet, they decided to accept Care's offer, and to seek funding from other sources to purchase the additional materials required to make the court.[128]

Further difficulties arose when a problem with accountability emerged. Care discovered that members of the community who had requested the basketball court had inflated the cost of some items required to build the court and were pocketing a percentage of the money for themselves. Pequinho was aware of the extortion, but felt that it was more important that the project was completed than that it was conducted in a completely transparent way. For him, insisting on complete transparency from the community would have jeopardised his relationship with them, and would have risked the completion of the project. Stopping the project before completion would have undermined its entire purpose by disrupting the relationship between the young people in the community and the community leader. Pequinho argued that it was not worth pursuing sums of less than USD 500 that were siphoned off.[129] Predictably, Care took an entirely different approach. When Care staff discovered a discrepancy between the receipts given to them, what the community members had quoted and what the vendor had been paid, they insisted that the community return the balance.[130] In order to resolve the issue and ensure that the project continued, FTM used organisational funds to fill

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[128] Interview with Joao Pequinho, FTM (Executive Director), 22 September 2008, Dili, Timor Leste.
[129] Personal communication with Joao Pequinho, FTM (Executive Director), 18 August 2009, Dili, Timor Leste.
[130] Interview with Joao Filipe Pereira, Care (Former Deputy Project Manager), 15 August 2009, Dili, Timor Leste.

these and other financial gaps.[131] However, the different perspective between the two organisations about the role of money remained an obstacle to open communication about the ideas underlying the basketball court project.

3P also made the conscious decision to pursue a contract relationship, but for quite different reasons. As discussed previously, Razi saw his organisation as a tool for achieving his peacebuilding goals because it gave him 'a vehicle to make others see [his] vision'.[132] Razi chose to engage with donors on a short-term basis because he felt it was an effective strategy for maintaining institutional autonomy, and he believed that it was important that 3P not become dependent on international support. He also preferred to work with international organisations that would only provide short-term funding, because he believed that longer-term funding made local NGOs too comfortable and easily influenced by the interests of the funders. In short, the decision to engage in short-term contract partnerships was a means to avoid dependency on international financing.[133]

As noted earlier, one of Razi's goals was to develop a network of people around Aceh who could inform one another in the event that conflict re-emerged. In order to achieve that goal, Razi strategically chose international NGO partners that would help him expand this network. Razi explained that he was very happy to have a short-term contract with World Vision because the project was implemented in parts of Aceh with which 3P did not yet have links, thereby giving the organisation the opportunity to build new networks. Razi explained that after conducting the training commissioned by World Vision he spent time talking to the communities about his plans for a conflict early warning system and recruiting one or two to be part of this scheme.[134]

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[131] Personal communication with Joao Pequinho, FTM (Executive Director), 18 August 2009, Dili, Timor Leste.
[132] Interview with Fachrul Razi, 3P (Executive Director), 3 December 2009, Jakarta, Indonesia.
[133] Interview with Fachrul Razi, 3P (Executive Director), 27 October 2008, Banda Aceh, Aceh.
[134] Interview with Fachrul Razi, 3P (Executive Director), 27 October 2008, Banda Aceh, Aceh.

In this way 3P was able to complete the tasks agreed to in its contract with World Vision while pursuing other institutional goals.

The decisions FTM and 3P made in accepting opportunities to engage in short-term contract partnerships demonstrate that local NGOs can exhibit agency even in forms of partnership that are typically considered restrictive and constraining for local actors. Before embarking on the relationship, both organisations considered how the task they were allocated fed into their broader organisational objectives. For FTM, this concern meant engaging in a less preferable form of partnership in order to fulfil its objective of supporting the local community in Bairo Pite. For Razi, it meant seeking partners that would allow 3P to maintain some autonomy. In both instances, these local organisations made an active choice to partake in this style of partnership even when, in the case of FTM, the organisation had to make financial sacrifices to ensure the success of its project. The organisations were both aware of the implications of engaging in a short term relationship with their international partner, they had strategies for dealing with the challenges associated with this form of partnership and both made use of the opportunities that it provided.

Exchanging Ideas in Contract Relationships

Despite the agency shown by local NGOs in their approach to these relationships, there was little opportunity for new ideas about peacebuilding to develop through their partnerships with Care and World Vision. A significant factor contributing to this situation was that the conditions of a contract style partnership provided little incentive for either side to compromise on their perspectives. As a consequence, differences of opinion or conflicts between the organisations were seen as a reason to end the partnerships, rather than as an opportunity to reflect on deeply held beliefs about peacebuilding.

Some elements of Care's CALMER project provided channels for input from local actors; however, there were a number of barriers to the integration of local ideas. The process of designing the CALMER project included

extensive consultation with local people, but ultimately the research consultant and Care decided on how to use the input provided. One of the goals of the project was to facilitate local community members coming to Care with their ideas, but this opportunity sometimes backfired. For example, a local martial arts group that had been involved in the violence of 2006 requested and was granted funding to paint 'peace' messages around Bairo Pite. It was not until all the messages had been completed that Care realised that the group had also included the name of their group in the painting, thereby using the funding from Care to publicise their presence in the neighbourhood.[135] There was no community backlash to the presence of the groups' name on the artworks; however it did conflict with Care's principles of promoting unity and maintaining neutrality. Importantly, it also illustrates the limitations in communication between Care and the martial arts group about what constituted a peace message.

Other limits of a short-term partnership as a site for the exchange of ideas were illustrated by the developments in Care's relationship with FTM after the successful construction of the basketball court in Bitaba. The success of this project led Care and FTM to discuss the possibility of working together to build multiple other basketball courts around Bairo Pite using the model of the original project. A disagreement emerged, however, around whether the young people who assisted in building the basketball courts would be provided a stipend for their contribution to the program. In the first phase of the project the young people who helped build the court were given oil and rice for their efforts. FTM felt this contribution was an important part of the project because it helped re-establish the self-worth of young people who had been manipulated into violence by being offered material rewards during the 2006 conflict.

During the first stage of the project FTM observed that the young people participating in the project felt proud to have been considered trustworthy

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[135] Interview with Daniel Hardy, Care (Peacebuilding and Security Officer), 16 September 2008, Dili, Timor Leste.

enough to have been given compensation by an international organisation like Care. FTM believed that continuing the practice of rewarding the young people for positively contributing to their community would reinforce this behaviour and make them less likely to become involved in destructive activities. [136] Care, however, argued that the financial reward of young people who helped build the basketball courts created dependency and thus contradicted the fundamental principles of community development.[137] FTM eventually decided to end the project because of the difference in opinion with Care on this issue.

The conflict between Care and FTM highlights one of the key difficulties of exchanging ideas in short-term partnerships, namely the lack of commitment that each party has to sustaining the relationship. FTM had already made a number of sacrifices in order to ensure the success of the first stage of the project with Care, and the organisation had run short of patience with having to continuously compromise. Neither side had made any commitment to working together when the negotiations about the next stage of the project commenced. So when it became clear that they had very different perspectives about what would be most helpful to the youth, walking away from the project became a logical conclusion for FTM. This outcome suggests that when both parties see the partnership primarily as a way of fulfilling their own institutional goals, any barriers to achieving these goals – barriers that could provide a breakthrough in understanding about the concept that underlies the project – become a disincentive to collaborating.

In Aceh, World Vision's process of exchanging ideas about peacebuilding with its local partners was framed by its use of the Do No Harm framework, a peacebuilding framework that it had used in other parts of Indonesia. World Vision's purpose in making use of the Do No Harm framework was to be sensitive to the context in which it worked. The Peace Building Officer

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[136] Anonymous interview, FTM (Education Program Coordinator), 30 July 2009, Dili, Timor Leste.
[137] Interview with Richard Bowd, Care (Community Outreach and Peacebuilding Project Manager), 1 August 2009, Dili, Timor Leste.

explained it was a tool that organisations could use to help them identify what issues were important locally and therefore was useful in any context. World Vision decided to consult with local NGOs because the peacebuilding program manager thought they would give him some insight into a broad range of issues related to the conflict based on their connections to local communities.[138] World Vision intended to use the results of the consultation to design its own peacebuilding strategy before commissioning local organisations, who had already developed ideas about how to approach peacebuilding, to implement their ideas within this broad framework.

World Vision organised a meeting of local NGOs who were working on conflict related issues in April 2008. These organisations included many local NGOs that viewed conflict related problems from a political perspective, including KontraS Aceh, the Aceh Justice Monitoring Institute (AJMI) and the Acehnese branch of the national Legal Aid Institution (Lembaga Bantuan Hukum Banda Aceh, LBH Banda Aceh), which had been deeply involved in campaigning for the rights of conflict victims and lobbying for a truth and reconciliation commission to be established in Aceh (Badan Reintegrasi-Damai Aceh 2008).[139] Ultimately, however, even though many of these local NGOs believed that building peace in Aceh required engaging with highly political issues related to justice for conflict victims, or political training for former combatants, World Vision chose to focus on apolitical activities such as peace education training in schools.

This decision deeply affected World Vision's relationship with 3P. As noted earlier, one of Razi's ideas about building peace was that it was important to provide specific support to the former GAM combatants. He suggested to World Vision that it include support for GAM as part of its program, but World Vision refused on the grounds that its goals were humanitarian and therefore it did not want to engage in such overtly political activities. 3P

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[138] Interview with World Vision's Peace Building and Capacity Development Officer, 27 October 2008, Banda Aceh, Aceh.

[139] See Chapter 4 for further details about these organisations who were involved in advocacy for the Truth and Reconciliation Commission.

decided to work around this decision, and ran 'extra' training sessions in the evenings during the period when it was engaged in training funded by World Vision. When World Vision discovered what had been happening it refused to extend 3P's contract, even though the two organisations had previously agreed that 3P would do training in a number of other areas.[140]

The conflict between World Vision and 3P reveals that the two organisations had contrasting beliefs about the best way to build peace as well as incompatible ideas about their role in the peacebuilding process. World Vision had an apolitical mandate while 3P believed peacebuilding required interventions of a political nature. That such different approaches to peacebuilding did not emerge prior to the commencement of their relationship reflects the fact that that Razi saw the partnership as an opportunity to extract resources and opportunities rather than as a meaningful collaboration. It also highlights World Vision's need for local contractors, rather than local partners, and demonstrates that partnership processes that do not allow space for the discussion of ideas can have dramatic repercussions.

Conclusion

The relationships and ideas underpinning the projects described in this chapter were mediated by contextual differences, the role of individuals and the funding structures. Care and World Vision had very different relationships with the places in which they were working, which were reflected in how they developed their programs. Care's ideas about how to build peace were a reflection of what happened during the 2006 crisis, whereas World Vision, while it had a comprehensive institutional peacebuilding framework, was not able to develop a program that was as responsive to the needs of the local context. FTM and 3P were also very different. FTM was headed by an activist with a long history of working in Timor Leste for different institutions and his organisation had experience with multiple donors, while 3P was run by a scholar who had previously

[140] Interview with Fachrul Razi, 3P (Executive Director), 3 December 2009, Jakarta, Indonesia.

worked for international organisations but had limited experience with the processes of working with international donors. As a result, FTM was far savvier in the way in which it addressed problems that emerged with its donor than 3P, which lost its contract with World Vision before the project was complete.

The individuals working for each of these organisations also shaped how peacebuilding was approached through these partnerships. The expatriate staff working on the CALMER project were hired by Care after the program was designed by an external consultant, and so their main contribution was in providing support to the local staff in understanding the ideas. One of the project managers was able to have a more direct influence by drawing on his education and previous work experience in the peacebuilding sector to design a peacebuilding training manual, though at the same time, the ability for his ideas to be effectively shared with other staff on the project was hampered by his limited language skills. At World Vision, the Indonesian program officer for the peacebuilding program in Aceh brought extensive experience with the institution's peacebuilding tools – although he too was not solely responsible for determining the ideas that drove the organisation's peacebuilding program. The local NGOs on the other hand, relied almost entirely on the education, experience and interests of their leaders for the ideas that shaped their programs. Pequinho's experience and observations during the 2006 conflict and the relationship he developed with a community leader in his neighbourhood were the main drivers of FTM's interest in peacebuilding. Similarly, Razi, the founder and executive director of 3P, used the organisation as a tool to experiment with ideas he had acquired through years of study about peace and conflict.

The contextual factors and the influence of individuals, while shaping the kinds of peacebuilding ideas used in the programs and the extent to which they were enacted, were in a large part overshadowed by the funding structures of the partnerships. The short-term nature of the funding in contract relationships, and international organisations' sense of entitlement to a good 'product' or 'outcome' made it difficult to develop new ideas about

peacebuilding across the North-South boundary. Instead, individual organisations saw the partnership as a means to promote their own ideas about peacebuilding. A key goal of Care's CALMER program was to increase social cohesion in Bairo Pite. The relationship between Care and FTM reveals that this goal was potentially undermined by Care's persistent prioritisation of financial accountability. At various points in the relationship with FTM, Care made demands that could have jeopardised the fragile relationship between the community leader and the youth previously involved in violent activity. FTM was aware of the vulnerability of these relationships and was willing to make financial sacrifices as an institution to maintain and create 'social cohesion'. A less experienced organisation may not have been so successful at negotiating similar demands.

The cases presented here suggest that it is difficult for ideas about peacebuilding to be exchanged between Northern and Southern organisations engaged in short-term contract partnerships. Short-term partnerships, like any relationships, are replete with potential for misunderstandings and conflict. Instances of conflict between Care and World Vision and their local partners reflected not only differences in opinion, but also a fundamental inability for this type of partnership to replicate the kinds of relationships that the international NGOs were seeking to create in the communities with which they were working. This contradiction was particularly well demonstrated by the difficulties World Vision encountered in reconciling its rhetoric about grounding its peacebuilding response in what was important locally and its practice, which avoided any kind of political engagement, even though local interlocutors considered it to be important.

At the same time, however, these cases demonstrate that local organisations can exhibit agency even in unfavourable conditions. In both these cases, the local organisations were able to achieve their goals, even if it did involve making personal sacrifices and taking organisational risks. Although only for a short period of time, both FTM and 3P made use of the opportunities offered by short-term funding to implement their ideas about how to build peace. Moreover, the short-term nature of the interaction meant that these

local organisations, not just their donors, could walk away when they encountered differences in opinion or approach.

Chapter Three: Partner-Driven Relationships

Zulfikar, the director of Aceh Peace and Development (ADAP), the local NGO with which I had arranged a meeting in November 2009, instructed me to meet him at a local café in Bireun in North Aceh. I arrived early and was there when he and his two companions pulled up in their old four wheel drive jeep. One year previously I had met Zulfikar at the ADAP office: two rooms of a small house in the suburban backstreets of the town. Since then the Humanist Institute for Development Cooperation (Humanistisch Instituut voor Ontwikkelingssamenweking, HIVOS), their international NGO donor, had wound back its program in Aceh, including its funding for ADAP, and the office was now closed. Most of the staff had taken jobs with the government or with other NGOs.

Hours prior to meeting with Zulfikar I met with the staff of Education Peace Center (EPC), a local organisation in Lhokseumawe that had also received support from HIVOS. Like ADAP, EPC's funding had ceased; however, the organisation was still operating, albeit at a slower pace. The banner hanging outside their small one room office advertising computer training was faded and tattered, but the former GAM combatants who received training there wandered in and out throughout the course of our meeting, asking questions and sitting at the dusty computers.

Unlike these Acehnese NGOs, the Peace and Conflict Studies Centre (hereafter the Peace Centre) in Dili maintained funding from its international NGO donor, Trócaire (the official development agency of the Irish Catholic Church) during the period of my fieldwork. The walls of the Peace Centre office, in the building of the National University of Timor Leste (Universidadé Nacional Timor Leste, UNTL), were covered with photos of staff shaking hands with activists and volunteers from around the world who had participated in the struggle for independence or attended more recent events in Timor Leste. The virus ridden computers in the Peace Centre office were often commandeered by student volunteers or colleagues visiting from

other NGOs who needed to type or use the internet. The level of activity in the office could never be labelled frantic, but was certainly steady.

These three organisations and their donors were all engaged in a form of partnership that I define as 'partner-driven'. The international NGO involved in each of these partnerships did not directly implement programs, but worked through local NGO partners that shared similar goals. They also provided those local organisations with funding for their organisational costs as well as a budget to implement activities, and supported them with technical assistance and training as required. In contrast to the contract partnerships discussed in the previous chapter, the local NGOs involved in this style of partnership had a relatively high level of control over what they would do in their capacity as a local partner.

The literature about NGO partnerships does not explicitly discuss the partner-driven approach to collaboration between international and local NGOs – indeed, there is a distinct lack of systematic analysis of approaches to partnership outside the contracting approach. This gap is notable for both practical and theoretical reasons. In practical terms, local NGOs working in partnership with international organisations are very conscious of the different ways that international organisations engage with their local partners. Staff from ADAP, for example, explained that if an international NGO tried to intervene in how they engaged with the community, they would not work with them because they felt that such an approach was neither in their nor the community's best interest.[141] This perspective suggests that local organisations are conscious of the effects of different styles of partnership and actively consider these differences when choosing their international partners. Theoretically, this observation is significant because it shows how local organisations exercise agency in their partnerships with Northern organisations and indicates that they have the ability not only to

[141] Interview with Zulfikar, ADAB (Director), 4 November 2008, Bireun, Aceh.

influence program design and implementation but also to engage with ideas about peacebuilding.

This chapter argues that the characteristics of the partner-driven approach resemble the 'ideal' form of partnership described in the literature that critiques short-term contract relationships between Northern and Southern NGOs. As such, it has more potential to facilitate the amalgamation of local and international ideas about peacebuilding by offering local partners greater control over the design of their peacebuilding projects and opportunities for experimentation and dialogue with their international counterparts. What this chapter reveals, however, is that for these opportunities to be realised, international organisations need to have a clear sense of the peacebuilding goals that they are trying to achieve and a deep knowledge of the local context, including an understanding of the dynamics of local civil society. It also requires local organisations to be involved in the partnership out of an interest in peacebuilding, rather than an interest in funding and to be willing to engage openly with their international donors.

The chapter begins with an overview of the literature about NGO partnerships, focusing in particular on what scholars consider to be the ideal approach to partnership and on the notion of capacity building. Following this, it outlines each NGO's understanding of peacebuilding and explores how and why they chose their specific approach to peacebuilding. In order to understand how the partnerships between these organisations were formed, it focuses on the influence of context, donors and individuals before presenting some of the opportunities and limitations experienced by all parties involved. The final section of the chapter explores the degree to which this style of partnership was able to facilitate the exchange of ideas about peacebuilding between local and international NGOs.

Ideal Approaches and 'Capacity Building'

There is no discrete body of literature that describes the kinds of partnerships discussed in this chapter. Indeed, with the exception of Leach (1997), very few scholars provide distinct definitions of partnership beyond that of the

contract. Instead, most of the discussion about partnership styles other than the contract is in the form of hypothetical models proposing the qualities of the 'ideal' partnership between Northern and Southern NGOs. An additional source of alternative perspectives on partnership can be found in the literature about the practice of capacity-building. Capacity-building, or the provision of skills, training and other support designed to make an organisation or individual self-reliant, is a major component of the partner-driven relationship and is the source of extensive and critical academic discussion (Hudock 1999; Kaplan 2000; Drew 2003; Eade 2007).

These bodies of work, in combination with the findings of scholars who have examined case studies of NGO partnerships that resemble those discussed in this chapter, provide insight into the qualities of the partner-driven relationship. However, none of them comprehensively accounts for the perspective of local NGOs, nor do they provide adequate consideration of the impact of contextual factors on the formation of these types of partnership. Drawing on of literature about partnership, this section examines the extent to which the qualities of the ideal models of partnership are reflected in the partnership policies and practice of Trócaire and HIVOS, arguing that there is a need for a deeper consideration of how local NGOs perceive this style of partnership and what they want from it.

The theory and practice of partner-driven relationships

Scholars became critical of the practice of contracting between international and local NGOs when contradictions between this form of partnership and what it claimed to achieve began to emerge. In response, many scholars developed hypothetical models of how they believed partnerships should operate. Fowler (1998, 150-151), for example, presents 'authentic' partnership as the preferable alternative to contracting, arguing that Northern donors who want to practice such partnerships need to engage in a range of practical measures that ensure that their relationships with Southern partners are based on more equal terms. These include explicitly articulating the rights and expectations of each partner prior to embarking on the

relationship, ensuring that Northern NGOs' policies about partnership with Southern organisations are based on consultation, and incorporating an assessment of the quality of the collaboration between the Northern and Southern partners in the evaluations of projects.

The partnership philosophy and approach of both Trócaire and HIVOS reflect an institutional awareness of the importance of these kinds of practical measures. Both organisations emphasise that local organisations' ideas are central to their projects. Trócaire's website states that:

> one of the key features of Trócaire's work is our partnership approach to development... The beauty of this way of working is that local people drive the whole process... Trócaire works in partnership within networks of development organisations and with local non-government organisations in order to carry out our work as effectively as possible. (Trócaire n.d.)

In Timor Leste, this philosophy was reflected in Trócaire's practice of supporting local organisations to design and implement projects rather than implementing projects itself.

HIVOS approached its partnerships with local organisations in Aceh in a similar manner, a fact reflected on its website, which states that:

> Development cannot be steered from the outside, yet it can be encouraged. For this reason HIVOS places its full trust in the power and creativity of the people who are themselves living in developing countries. (HIVOS n.d.)

In Aceh, HIVOS supported ideas that came out of the community rather than implementing ideas that emerged from a top-down assessment and design process. HIVOS argued that its Aceh strategy was 'partner focused',

meaning it used a flexible program design in an attempt to respond to issues faced by its local partners.[142]

One of the specific elements of Fowler's authentic partnership model is that the international and local partners should develop goals and strategies together (Fowler 1998, 148). This idea is echoed in a model developed by Lewis (2001), which contrasts dependent relationships with active relationships. According to Lewis, dependent relationships resemble contract relationships because they are based around the exchange of resources, are more rigid and are dominated by individual rather than shared interests. Active partnerships, on the other hand, are 'those built through on-going processes of negotiation, debate, occasional conflict, and learning through trial and error' (Lewis 2001, 75). In active partnerships, the partners share risks and also exchange learning and information. The way that both Trócaire and HIVOS worked in Timor Leste and Aceh respectively reflected these ideas by ensuring that local partners' ideas formed the basis for joint projects. In Timor Leste, Trócaire's partners were funded for projects that they proposed, as long as they aligned within the fairly broad parameters of Trócaire's goals. In Aceh, HIVOS used the ideas presented in proposals written by local NGOs to determine some of their own organisational goals. In both cases, the local NGOs were invited to negotiate and debate their project ideas with their international NGO partner.

The notion that partnerships should be about 'solidarity' and that the partners should have 'complementary strengths' are qualities that Fowler and other scholars identify as being ideal in partnership (Fowler 1998; Hatley 1999; Hudock 1999). The partnership policies of both HIVOS and Trócaire described above imply that solidarity is a key aspect of their approach to partnership. Furthermore, both organisations perceived their role in the partnership as providing knowledge and resources to complement the skills that their local partners possessed. The local organisations also saw

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[142] Personal communication with Jonatan Lassa, HIVOS (Former Coordinator of HIVOS Aceh Program), 22 October 2010.

themselves as being in a complementary relationship with their international donors, arguing that their contribution to the partnership was knowledge of the local community.[143]

Research about NGOs that exemplify 'authentic' relationships illustrates that these NGOs choose partners that share the same value system, avoid project-based relationships and support local partners to find alternative sources of income (Pettit 2000; Yukiko 2000). As will be discussed in more detail later in the chapter, both Trócaire and HIVOS replicated some of these qualities in their partnerships. Specifically, they worked with their local partners for a longer period of time than those international organisations engaged in contract partnership, and they supported local partners to develop skills that they could use beyond the period of their time working together. This practice, commonly referred to as 'capacity building', is widely written about in the literature and is another source of insight about the practice of partner-driven relationships.

As many scholars have noted, the imprecise definition of 'capacity building' makes it a challenging term to define (Lewis 2001; Drew 2003; Baser et al. 2008). The literature about capacity building engages with both an idealised notion of what capacity building should be, as well as critical reflection on how it is implemented in practice. The term has its roots in the concepts of solidarity and empowerment, which, for some, are ideally what capacity building will achieve (Eade 2007). Another ideal function of capacity building is that it plays a role in enabling Southern organisations to be more effective at making change by providing opportunities for them to reach their untapped potential (Lewis 2001; Baser et al. 2008). These ideas were put into practice in the 1990s when Northern NGOs stopped directly implementing projects and began working through and enabling their local partners (Lewis 2001). The efforts of these organisations have been critiqued primarily when they have reinforced, rather than overcome, the power differential between Northern and Southern partners.

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[143] Interview with Amir, EPC (Director), 3 November 2008, Lhokseumawe, Aceh.

One of the key rationales behind capacity building was that it would allow Northern NGOs to create more equal relationships with their Southern partners (Lewis 1998). In practice, however, capacity building has been a contentious practice because of the way in which it has been implemented. As Hudock argues, one of the key difficulties with this practice is that it requires one organisation, almost always the Northern partner, to assess the capabilities of another, usually a Southern organisation (Hudock 1999). This practice has led some to argue that capacity building has become a means of ensuring that Northern NGOs are able to rely on their local partners to perform effectively, rather than as an exercise in enabling and empowering Southern organisations to develop skills they more urgently need (Lewis 2001; Eade 2007). Furthermore, the failure of Northern institutions to reflect on their own capacity building needs has been found to further reinforce the power imbalance between NGO partners (Eade 2007).

The partnerships between HIVOS and Trócaire and their local partners were modelled on the capacity building approach. For both organisations, developing their local partners' skills was central to their partnership philosophy, allocating up to thirty per cent of their budget to activities designed to help local organisations develop skills useful in managing their institutions, or for specific skills related to their projects.[144] This practice raises the question of how effectively these resources were used, not only to support the development of these organisations, but to support the process of integrating local ideas into the peacebuilding programs that these two NGOs implemented. Another central question that emerges, and one that is not sufficiently addressed by the capacity building literature, is how local NGOs perceive these types of relationships.

Southern NGOs and the movement of ideas

One key source of information about how Northern NGOs are perceived within a particular context is local civil society. Local NGOs can provide an

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[144] Anonymous interview, HIVOS (Project Manager), 5 November 2008, Banda Aceh, Aceh.

alternative perspective on the approach and activities of Northern NGOs and can help explain why some partnership and capacity building strategies work and why some are less effective. The literature provides limited insight into this perspective. Local NGOs' viewpoints are rarely represented in discussions of ideal approaches to partnership or capacity building. While Fowler does provide some suggestions to Southern NGOs in his guidelines about how to achieve 'authentic' partnerships, Lewis focuses primarily on Northern organisations (Fowler 1998; Lewis 2001). The literature that applies these ideal models to case studies also emphasises the partnership philosophy and approach of the Northern organisations (Yukiko 2000). Discussion of the Southern NGOs involved is mainly in terms of their activities rather than their assessment of the partnership (see for example Pettit 2000).

The capacity building literature also tends to focus on Northern NGOs, highlighting their weaknesses, but failing to adequately consider the role Southern NGOs play in facilitating or hindering the process of capacity building. For example, some scholars are critical of how Northern NGOs conflate capacity building with 'training' (Eade 2007). This tendency is seen as problematic because it relies on assumptions about the importance of the individual which are not relevant in all contexts, but also it is often not the most appropriate mechanism to change behaviour. Others assert that Northern NGOs lack the capacity to provide training effectively (Smillie 2001), criticising their lack of willingness to accept that they too have capacity building needs. These criticisms of Northern NGOs raise questions about the views of Southern NGOs. Do Southern NGOs think capacity building is important, and if so, why? What kind of capacity building do they think is required? What input do they have into the kinds of capacity building provided by their donors? These questions have been addressed to some extent in the literature. A paper published in 1987 from a conference which brought together Northern and Southern actors argues that Southern NGOs prefer core funding and capacity building to receiving money on a contractual basis (Drabek 1987). Furthermore, scholars writing specifically

about Timor Leste suggest that, rather than seeing capacity building as a way of reinforcing the power dynamic between Northern and Southern actors, Southern organisations believed that capacity building was an important tool for their own empowerment (Patrick 2001; Brunnstrom 2003). However, there is little other research that speaks to the question of how Southern NGOs engage with and respond to attempts by their Northern partners to provide them with new skills and knowledge.

The lack of attention to the perspectives of local NGOs is problematic for a number of reasons. Primarily, it is significant because it does not reflect the fact that in practice many local organisations have a partnership philosophy of their own. As this chapter will show, this philosophy, which may or may not be explicitly articulated, shapes Southern NGOs' motivations and reasons for becoming involved in partnerships with Northern NGOs and their behaviour within those relationships. These factors can affect the willingness of Southern NGOs to contribute and be open to new ideas from their Northern partners. Moreover, according to the literature about capacity building, ideas usually move in a North to South direction (Drew 2003; Eade 2007). By viewing the partnerships from the perspective of Southern actors, however, there is scope to understand the role played by Southern NGOs in facilitating this process and the extent to which they can encourage their Northern partners to be receptive to new ideas.

Inadequate consideration of the perspective of local NGOs is also problematic because it permits the literature about ideal types of partnership and capacity building to downplay the impact of context on partnership. Local NGOs' views on partnership are often a reflection of their experiences with the international aid community in their own country, town or village. The way the international aid community operates and is received within a particular context depends on a range of social, economic and political factors as well as the reasons for its presence in that context. As discussed in Chapter One, the different purposes of the international aid communities' work in Timor Leste and Aceh, the different political dynamics and the divergent histories in those places contributed significantly to how local

NGOs perceived and approached their partnerships with their international donors. The following section outlines the role of donors and individuals in the formation of the relationships and in the development of their respective peacebuilding programs, and in doing so, illustrates why context is such an essential part of understanding these partnerships.

The Drivers of the Peacebuilding Projects

Each of the partnerships discussed in this chapter were influenced by the interests and goals of the donors providing the funding, by the individuals working for the local organisations and, importantly, by the relationship that the respective organisations had with their context. An analysis of these three factors together provides a comprehensive and nuanced picture of how and why the partnerships developed. Furthermore, an assessment of how these factors influenced the formation of partnerships between local and international NGOs contributes to understanding what opportunities and challenges existed for the exchange of ideas within the parameters of this approach to collaboration.

Like the organisations in contract relations discussed in the previous chapter, the local and international organisations described here came to the partnerships with their own ideas about how to build peace. Trócaire, which worked through local partners on sustainable agriculture projects as well as on peacebuilding, had a specific interest in improving communities' access to information. It chose to work with local organisations that took a range of approaches to integrating information production and distribution with peacebuilding. The Peace Centre, which was established in 2007 by a former activist who later became an academic, focused primarily on conducting research about issues linked to the conflict in Timor Leste with the aim of documenting indigenous knowledge about peace and conflict.

On the other side of the archipelago, in Aceh, HIVOS also worked through local partners for its two peacebuilding projects. The first project it supported was a Community Based Conflict Early Warning System (CB-CEWS) network, the members of which were HIVOS' local partners, including

ADAP, a relatively new institution that had an interest in conflict-affected communities. The other part of HIVOS' program involved funding local organisations that provided support to vulnerable communities. One such organisation was EPC, an NGO with a history of engaging in human rights training and working with ex-combatants, whose activities included the provision of computer training to former GAM combatants using funding from HIVOS.

Donors and individuals each had an influence on the formation of these partnerships as well as the form of the peacebuilding projects undertaken through them. In Timor Leste, those with an interest in responding to the 2006 conflict operated in an environment where peacebuilding was incorporated into almost every international organisation's agenda. In contrast, those working on peacebuilding in Aceh were the minority. This section demonstrates that these particularities of context were the defining influence on what types of projects were selected and on how the partnerships played out.

The impact of donors on the projects

As explained previously, in the 1990s donors began to prefer a model of funding in which Southern NGOs acted as project implementers (Lewis 2001; Wallace, Bornstein and Chapman 2007). As a consequence, Southern NGOs were pushed to learn more about the administrative aspects of managing projects, in some cases drawing them away from their core interests. Donors had a similar influence on the practice of capacity building. The more donors became interested in how to ensure the sustainability of their work, the more they encouraged Northern NGOs to provide skills and training to their local partners (Hudock 1999). In other words, capacity building as a practice developed in response to the needs and interests of the donors rather than those of the organisations whose capacity was being built (Lewis 2001). In other cases, donors have had a positive influence on NGO partnerships. For example, international NGOs that receive a large percentage of funding from a single source, with the balance being provided

by donors with a similar value system, are able to be more flexible in their relationships with local membership organisations (Pettit 2000).

Though both of the international NGOs discussed in this chapter had partnership policies which prioritised the interests of the local partners, differences between how they were funded affected the way in which they approached their relationships. In Timor Leste, a proportion of Trócaire's funding for the peacebuilding project was provided by the Irish Government's Conflict Resolution Unit (CRU). The CRU was established in mid-2007 by the Political Division of the Irish Department of Foreign Affairs (McKenna 2007; Irish Aid n.d.). The purpose of the CRU was to build on Ireland's experience of dealing with conflict (McKenna 2007). In Timor Leste the CRU had a budget of EUR 1 million per annum, which it spent on five different programs.[145] The funding for one of these, the Peace, Remembrance and Reconciliation program, focused on supporting the documentation of the conflict (Irish Aid n.d.). The CRU had a philosophy of supporting the development of local civil society organisations. It knew which local organisations it wanted to fund and chose Trócaire as the intermediary through which to channel the money.[146] The three organisations that the CRU chose to work with were the Max Stahl Audiovisual Centre and the Commission for Truth, Reception and Reconciliation (Comissão de Acolhimento, Verdade e Reconciliação, CAVR), with which Trócaire had had previous contact, and the Peace and Conflict Studies Centre (Irish Aid n.d.).

At the time that Trócaire was offered money by the CRU, it had already devised its peacebuilding strategy. Trócaire staff explained that they had done an analysis prior to the 2006 conflict that revealed a need to focus on

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[145] The CRU's other programs included sponsoring an NGO called BELUN (Friend) to work on an Early Warning and Recovery System in cooperation with Columbia University's Center for International Conflict Resolution; supporting Interpeace and the Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue; supporting a Security Sector Reform program; and sponsoring an exchange program for women from Timor Leste, Liberia and North Ireland (Irish Aid n.d.).

[146] Interview with Kathryn Robertson, Trócaire (Country Representative), 15 September 2009, Dili, Timor Leste.

providing better access to information in Timor Leste as a way of improving the development process. The importance of strengthening mechanisms for disseminating information was underscored during the conflict when rumours and gossip significantly influenced people's decisions about whether they were safe in their neighbourhoods or whether they should seek refuge elsewhere (Kammen and Hayati 2007).[147] Very few international organisations in Timor Leste at the time approached the peacebuilding process from this perspective, instead they engaged directly with IDPs or implemented conflict resolution sessions, peacebuilding training, sports or other interactive activities. Each of the organisations that the CRU sought to fund was engaged in activities that aligned within Trócaire's mandate of improving access to information.[148]

In this instance it is clear that the donor, CRU, had a significant influence over the partnership by specifying to Trócaire exactly who its partner/s should be. In some situations this level of intervention by the donor may have been problematic. The Trócaire coordinator explained, however, that there were good reasons for Trócaire to work with each of the partners proposed by the CRU. The Max Stahl Audiovisual Centre and the CAVR were both well-known organisations producing high-calibre work which meant it was in Trócaire's interest to be affiliated with them. Furthermore, Trócaire had a long history of engagement with the director of the Peace Centre and was happy to continue supporting his endeavours. [149]

HIVOS' donors in Aceh had less direct input into the formation of the partnerships and on the development of peacebuilding ideas. HIVOS' decision to implement a community based conflict early warning system was inspired by its observation that there was a gap in the work done by

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[147] Interview with Kathryn Robertson, Trócaire (Country Representative), 15 September 2009, Dili, Timor Leste.

[148] Other local organisations undertaking peacebuilding projects that Trócaire supported using funding from sources other than the CRU were Walk Together (Lao Hamutuk), a Catholic radio station called Good Timor Radio (Radio Timor Kmanek), and the Dili Justice and Peace Commission (JPC Dili).

[149] Interview with Kathryn Robertson, Trócaire (Country Representative), 15 September 2009, Dili, Timor Leste.

international organisations in Aceh. At the urging of local NGOs, HIVOS conceded that there was a need to engage with the issue of the conflict, an activity avoided by many organisations in Aceh responding to the tsunami (Zeccola 2007b). Rather than determining exactly the partners with which it could work, HIVOS' donors exerted influence through their initial reluctance to address conflict issues out of concern that it was beyond their funding mandate and that it was an issue not condoned by the Indonesian government. As discussed in Chapter One, these were common concerns for international NGOs working in Aceh after the tsunami (Zeccola 2007b).

At the same time, the abundance of money available for tsunami reconstruction meant there was a real push for agencies in Aceh to spend their funding quickly (Pandya 2006, 305). This broader contextual dynamic left HIVOS staff in the challenging position of having to initially convince their donors that addressing conflict related issues was worthwhile, and then coping with the pressure to spend the available funding in the face of a lack of suitable local partners. Unitarian Universalist Service Committee (UUSC), HIVOS' donor at the time, had provided USD 200,000 which was earmarked for tsunami related work. As Jonatan Lassa, the former coordinator of the HIVOS Aceh program, explained, it took some creative negotiating to convince UUSC to divert some of that money to local NGOs who wanted to support conflict-affected communities. Most importantly, HIVOS had to show that there were direct links between the conflict-affected areas in which it was planning to work and the tsunami. HIVOS also argued that supporting conflict-affected communities was a means of ensuring that the tsunami funding was well spent, framing peacebuilding as a means of achieving sustainable development.[150] Eventually UUSC provided HIVOS an additional USD 100,000 specifically for a Community Based Conflict Early Warning System (CB-CEWS) program.[151]

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[150] Personal communication with Jonatan Lassa, HIVOS (Former Coordinator of HIVOS Aceh Program), 12 October 2010.
[151] Personal communication with Jonatan Lassa, HIVOS (Former Coordinator of HIVOS Aceh Program), 22 October 2010.

The pressure to spend the money that was eventually allocated to the peacebuilding projects by UUSC was so intense that in some instances HIVOS found itself working with inappropriate partners. HIVOS identified a number of potentially suitable local NGOs through informal referrals from other partners, by checking the NGO database and through engaging in activities in which those NGOs participated. Once suitable local NGOs had been identified they were invited to submit proposals. When HIVOS was considering ADAP as one of its local partners, other organisations in Bireun (the town in which ADAP was based) warned it against working with ADAP. However, HIVOS staff felt that they had little option because ADAP met all the criteria required to become a partner, and there were no other suitable organisations in the area. [152] As HIVOS' Program Officer for Human Rights and Democratisation explained, when HIVOS received the proposal from ADAP she was sceptical about its ability to complete the program but argued that 'at some point we had to lower our standard in order to implement programs'.[153] This statement illustrates the bind in which organisations like HIVOS found themselves – the pressure to produce results forced it to compromise on the quality of its work. Unlike Trócaire, HIVOS could choose which organisations it would work with, but its experience illustrates that pressure from donors to spend money can limit the power of this freedom.

The agency of individuals

Much of the literature addressing the influence of individuals on partnership highlights how individuals have the power to cause damage to partnerships. As Brehm et al (2004, 159) argue 'partnerships tend to be concentrated in a few individuals and departments within organisations, and are often not truly inter-organisational in nature'. The centrality of individuals to the functioning of a partnership can become problematic because of the

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[152] Personal communication with Jonatan Lassa, HIVOS (Former Coordinator of HIVOS Aceh Program), 12 October 2010.

[153] Interview with Firly Purwanti, HIVOS (Program Officer for Human Rights and Democratisation), 30 November 2009, Jakarta, Indonesia.

'unpredictable dynamics of relationships based on individual contacts and personalities' (Brehm et al. 2004, 160).

One factor that contributes to this tendency is that NGOs often make inappropriate staffing choices, selecting young and inexperienced workers who may compensate for lack of experience by misusing their position of power in relation to local partner organisations (Fowler 1998). Capacity building suffers a similar fate because those employed to do it are 'young, overworked, operating in high-stress situations and subject to sudden reassignment ... In short, their capacity to build capacity is limited' (Smillie 2001, 20).

While individuals have the potential to create problems, the case studies in this chapter illustrate that they can in fact have a range of impacts, both positive and negative, depending on the level of control they have over the program. The influence of individuals is most obvious in the decisions made by local NGOs, which are often founded and directed by figures who dominate the trajectory of the organisation (Sinanu 2009). Nonetheless, the education of individuals, their relationships and their experiences can all contribute to the form a partnership takes whether these individuals work for donor organisations, international NGOs or their local partners.

The local partners with whom Trócaire and HIVOS worked had their own motivations for engaging in peacebuilding. Like the local organisations involved in contract relationships described in the previous chapter, these organisations were influenced considerably by the interests of the individuals who founded and worked for them. Antero Bendito da Silva, the activist who established the Peace Centre, played a central role in the independence movement.[154] His view that the international community had made grave mistakes during their efforts to rebuild Timor Leste contributed significantly to the Peace Centre's decision to focus on research.

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[154] Interview with Antero Bendito da Silva, the Peace Centre (Director), 27 September 2008, Dili, Timor Leste.

During the period of UN administration, da Silva worked as a contractor for an international NGO. As part of his job he was sent to an isolated district within Timor Leste, where he observed the UN's implementation of what were called Quick Impact Projects, through which the UN paid Timorese from local villages to clean the roads.[155] At the time, the only vehicles using the roads belonged to the UN. Da Silva explained that he felt frustrated seeing Timorese engaged in menial work which primarily benefited the UN after decades fighting for independence. He concluded that he and his activist colleagues must embark on a new struggle, which required new strategies: 'The situation is different now – you can't take up the weapons against the UN. So you must fight at the level of thinking'.[156] Da Silva went on to do a Diploma in Development Studies at the Kimmage Development Studies Centre in Dublin, followed by a Masters in Peace Studies at Trinity College, also in Dublin, and a Masters in Cooperative and Social Enterprise through the University of Cork. When he returned he began working at UNTL and eventually completed a PhD with University of New England in Australia.[157]

During the 2006 conflict, da Silva had become increasingly frustrated with the Australian military's approach to quelling the violence in Dili. His concern was that the presence of overseas security forces was likely to cause more problems, and he believed that addressing conflict at the grassroots level would be more effective. Da Silva held meetings in Dili and in Australia about his views on the Australian military and the importance of grassroots actions for peace then used the ideas generated at these meetings to develop a concept paper about grassroots peacebuilding. In Dili he and a group of other activists in his network held meetings with young people in

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[155] Quick Impact Projects are short-term, small scale projects implemented by the United Nations targeting specific groups of people (such as refugees) which promote development (UN High Commissioner for Refugees 2004).

[156] Interview with Antero Bendito da Silva, the Peace Centre (Director), 27 September 2008, Dili, Timor Leste.

[157] Personal communication with Antero Bendito da Silva, the Peace Centre (Director), 27 October 2010.

Bebonuk, a suburb that had been particularly volatile during the conflict.[158] With this group he also conducted a 'social analysis' to further develop an understanding of the most appropriate grassroots peacebuilding strategies in Timor Leste. These ideas were consolidated through a dialogue held with youth from around the country that da Silva was instrumental in organising in September 2006.[159]

The concepts da Silva developed during this period, as well as the process of using research as a central tool for developing ideas, were two of the key resources that helped bring the Peace Centre and its approach to peacebuilding, to life. For da Silva, the establishment of the Peace Centre was a means of combining his long-running interest in strengthening the autonomy of Timorese in their own country with his research skills and his access to the nation's only accredited university. The organisations' key peacebuilding program, which involved researching local conflict-related issues, was a way of producing indigenous sources of knowledge to inform policy while at the same time providing young people with the necessary skills and ideological conviction required to continue to pursue peace in Timor Leste.

EPC also developed its ideas from the observations and experiences of its founders. The organisation was established during the conflict by a group of university friends studying in Lhokseumawe in North Aceh. Initially this group worked together during the student referendum campaign in 1998, but did not adopt a formal organisational structure until 2004, prior to the tsunami.[160] At that time, the organisation's goal was to educate people in its community about the concept of human rights. After the peace agreement was negotiated, EPC initially supported the formation of a group in North Aceh representing conflict victims, but soon realised that there was a greater

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[158] Interview with Nelia Menezes, the Peace Center (Researcher and Administrative Officer), 7 August 2009, Dili, Timor Leste.
[159] Interview with Antero Bendito da Silva, the Peace Centre (Director), 27 September 2008, Dili, Timor Leste.
[160] Interview with Amir, EPC (Director), 3 November 2008, Lhokseumawe, Aceh.

need to support former GAM combatants who were not benefiting from the government's reintegration programs. EPC staff explained that they observed that ex-combatants had become disillusioned and were feeling sidelined. EPC wanted to encourage these ex-combatants to consider how to deal with the challenges they faced without returning to armed conflict. For this reason, it decided to offer a combination of computer courses and human rights training. EPC believed the computer training would provide the ex-combatants with a practical skill that might help them gain employment. While they were attending computer training, the participants would also be taught about human rights and the philosophy of non-violence as a means of encouraging them not to vent their frustration with their situation by again taking up arms.[161]

The ideas that EPC used to develop its peacebuilding program were derived from the educational background and work experience of its staff. Two of the key people involved in running the organisation, Muhammad Usman and Chairul Muchlis, had developed conceptual knowledge about the issues they used in their organisation from their respective studies at university and previous work experience. Usman, a student at an Islamic university in Lhokseumawe, was majoring in religious studies and had a particular interest in education that was free from violence (*pendidikan tanpa kekerasan*).[162] He explained that parts of the training program that EPC offered to the ex-combatants involved discussing ideas of non-violence that he had learned at university. Muchlis, a lawyer, had been contracted previously by KontraS Aceh, the Acehnese branch of a national human rights NGO. Muchlis had learnt about international human rights law as part of his law degree and had developed an understanding of other human rights concepts while with KontraS Aceh.[163] These ideas were also integrated into the training program offered to the ex-combatants.

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[161] Interview with Amir, EPC (Director), 3 November 2008, Lhokseumawe, Aceh.
[162] Interview with Muhammad Usman, EPC (Staff), 19 November 2009, Lhokseumawe, Aceh.
[163] Interview with Chairul Muchlis, EPC (Staff), 19 November 2009, Lhokseumawe, Aceh.

Individual personalities at the international NGO level also made a significant contribution to the kinds of peacebuilding projects that were implemented and the formation of partnerships. The resources critical to the development of HIVOS' peacebuilding program came in the form of two particular individuals. Jonatan Lassa, the Coordinator of the Aceh HIVOS program from 2005-2007, came to Aceh with experience working in development in eastern Indonesia with the Pikul Foundation (formerly Oxfam Australia's field office in eastern Indonesia).[164] During his time with Pikul, Lassa worked closely with a local organisation in Sulawesi called the Institute for the Development of the Study of Law and Human Rights Advocacy (Lembaga Pengembangan Studi Hukum dan Advokasi HAM, LPS-HAM), at that time run by Syamsul Alam Agus.[165] On one of his visits to Poso, Lassa observed that LPS-HAM had devised a CB-CEWS, a strategy for collecting and disseminating information about the conflict at the community. The basic premise of this strategy was that communities would develop their own indicators of what was likely to cause a conflict in their area using their own terminology. They would decide themselves the order of importance of these indicators, and then develop a system of monitoring and reporting on these indicators (Lassa and Agus n.d.). Lassa was impressed with this approach and after he started working for HIVOS in 2005 he invited Agus to visit Aceh to help establish the HIVOS program.[166]

Lassa and Agus used the Poso model as the basis of HIVOS' application for funding to implement a similar program in Aceh. In 2005 Lassa drafted an application requesting money from the European Union to implement the CB-CEWS program in Aceh; however, this proposal was rejected on the grounds that the project did not engage with government actors.[167] It was not

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[164] Personal communication with Jonatan Lassa, HIVOS (Former Coordinator of HIVOS Aceh Program), 12 October 2010.
[165] Personal communication with Jonatan Lassa, HIVOS (Former Coordinator of HIVOS Aceh Program), 12 October 2010.
[166] Personal communication with Jonatan Lassa, HIVOS (Former Coordinator of HIVOS Aceh Program), 12 October 2010.
[167] Personal communication with Jonatan Lassa, HIVOS (Former Coordinator of HIVOS Aceh Program), 22 October 2010.

until 2006 that HIVOS obtained funding for the project from the UUSC, an organisation from the United States that supports projects and organisations working on human rights and social justice issues around the world (Unitarian Universalist Service Committee n.d.). The educational background of a staff member that worked for UUSC influenced its decision to allocate some money to peacebuilding. This individual, Martha Thompson, had studied about peace and conflict at Brandeis University, and according to the HIVOS staff who were communicating with her about the project at the time, her educational experience contributed significantly to UUSC's decision to allow HIVOS to use some of the funding for the peacebuilding project.[168]

Individual agency also had an influence on how HIVOS selected its partners. As discussed above, one of HIVOS' strategies for selecting partners was to engage in NGO events and observe activists and ask those who appeared suitable to submit a proposal. One particular event organised by HIVOS was a large training session about sustainable livelihoods and the development of social policy, to which HIVOS invited representatives of approximately 45 Acehnese NGOs. At this session Lassa observed the participants with the specific intention of recruiting some into the peacebuilding program.

The particular attributes that Lassa was seeking were not systematically determined, but were based on his instinct of which activists were creative and critical thinkers:

> I pick up more activists who are anti-the government [sic] because that was the only indicator for me, but at the same time they have to be qualified also to talk to others, I mean like diplomatically out there, so not just 'anti' but also able to speak .... [We] did not really follow a clear logic, it was written after we had done it .... I did some observation about who was ideological and smart, who was interested

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[168] Personal communication with Jonatan Lassa, HIVOS (Former Coordinator of HIVOS Aceh Program), 12 October 2010.

in developing new ideas. It was not really systematic, but we used this kind of event to work out who our potential partners could be.[169]

Lassa's reflections reveal how influential the opinion and judgments of a single individual were in the selection of partners for this particular project. In choosing the partners he ensured that they met HIVOS' partnership criteria, but nonetheless his subjective opinion played a significant role in who was eventually selected.

The influence of context

The literature about partnerships provides limited discussion about how the relationship that organisations have to their local context affects their partnerships with other institutions. In their analyses, some scholars investigate the history of how various international organisations came to work in the countries in which they are based (Yukiko 2000). Others present the opinions of Northern and Southern NGOs from various countries about their experience of partnership or analyse the experiences of NGOs that work in many different places (Pettit 2000; Brehm et al. 2004). However, very little analysis exists about how the way in which organisations begin working in a particular place can affect how they are received by local actors. Similarly, there is little discussion of how NGOs' position in relation to other international aid actors influences their ability to develop 'authentic' partnerships, or how their philosophy and approach to partnership resonate with the particularities of the local context.

As the discussion that follows will reveal, the history of the international organisations' engagement with place, the other activities being undertaken by the international aid community and the level of importance granted to peacebuilding by the international aid community constitute the parameters within which donors and individuals make decisions about partnership and peacebuilding. These factors contribute to small but important developments which shape the trajectory of North-South NGO partnerships. These include

[169] Personal communication with Jonatan Lassa, HIVOS (Former Coordinator of HIVOS Aceh Program), 12 October 2010.

opportunities for Northern and Southern NGOs to become acquainted with one another, including to form interpersonal relationships, and to understand one another's motivations, purposes and modes of operating. This level of knowledge shapes the expectations that Northern and Southern NGOs have of one another, as well as the kinds of projects they choose to embark on together.

Trócaire and HIVOS had a long-standing presence in Timor Leste and Aceh respectively. Trócaire began its engagement with Timor in the 1970s. In the early stages of its involvement, it provided limited support for humanitarian projects. Then in 1989 it funded a human rights group, and engaged in advocacy for Timorese independence (Maye 2010). During the 1990s the organisation gave support to local organisations based in Dili (Hunt 2008), one of which was a local organisation called Streams Flowing Together Institute (Kadalak Sulimutuk Institute, KSI), which was co-founded by da Silva, the founder of the Peace Centre.[170] During its long period of involvement in Timor Leste, including through its work with KSI, Trócaire and its staff developed a personal connection with da Silva through his active involvement in the independence movement and in the post-referendum recovery efforts. In his capacity as an activist and as an employee of Caritas Dili, da Silva established personal relationships with Irish journalists, staff members of Trócaire, the Catholic Overseas Development Agency (CAFOD) and members of the Irish government.[171] These links were essential in giving Trócaire credibility in the eyes of the Peace Centre. Indeed, one of the reasons that the Peace Centre was willing to work with Trócaire was because of da Silva's personal connections with the organisation.[172] These personal

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[170] Interview with Antero Bendito da Silva, the Peace Centre (Director), 18 September 2009, Dili, Timor Leste.
[171] Personal communication with Antero Bendito da Silva, the Peace Centre (Director), 27 October 2010.
[172] Interview with Antero Bendito da Silva, the Peace Centre (Director), 18 September 2009, Dili, Timor Leste.

connections were also the reason that the Peace Centre knew that it shared a similar value system with Trócaire.[173]

One of da Silva's underlying concerns about the international aid machine in Timor Leste was that it eroded the autonomy of the Timorese people. This perspective had a considerable influence on da Silva's attitude towards donors and international NGOs. Self-reliance was one of the key principles he used as a guide – and encouraged his staff to apply – when approaching partnership. In practice, this philosophy meant endeavouring to use each collaboration as a step towards the eventual achievement of financial independence and not being 'oppressed' by international funding. One strategy da Silva employed was to insist that organisations which provided funding were labelled as 'partners' rather than 'donors'. He also ensured that the Peace Centre only accepted funding from organisations with which they shared similar values, even if it meant receiving less money.

In Aceh, HIVOS had supported local NGOs prior to establishing an office in the province. In 1999 HIVOS provided funding to the Human Rights NGO Coalition (Koalisi NGO HAM) to conduct human rights investigations (Zeccola 2007b). However, the partners with which it worked on the peacebuilding projects did not have the same depth of connection to HIVOS as the Peace Centre had with Trócaire. The partnerships between HIVOS and ADAP and EPC only began after the commencement of its peacebuilding program in 2006 and were not grounded in any prior personal connections.

The local organisations involved in the HIVOS project were operating under different circumstances and with a different history of collaboration from those in Timor Leste. In the first instance, the conflict in Aceh received far less international media coverage and the independence movement had far fewer international advocates than the independence campaign and the

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[173] In the case of Trócaire some of those shared values are 'a just society', 'self-determination issues' and respect for the environment.

victims of the ensuing violence in Timor Leste.[174] The more distant relationship between Aceh and the international community prior to the signing of the MoU meant that there were fewer opportunities for personal relationships to develop in the same way that occurred in Timor Leste, particularly for organisations like EPC and ADAP, which were based outside of Banda Aceh.

In addition, the operation of the international aid community in the post-tsunami period led local NGOs to establish particular perceptions and expectations about international NGOs which influenced how these local NGOs approached partnership. EPC, for example, expressed frustration at the many international organisations that came to Aceh and implemented projects that had no relevance to local communities.[175] This perception significantly influenced its choices regarding partnerships. EPC had previously been approached by Save the Children to work on a project about environmental regeneration with people in refugee camps but had ultimately turned down the offer of funding, in part because its staff did not think it was in the best interests of those in the camps to prioritise environmental regeneration while camp dwellers were experiencing insecurity about where to live. Furthermore, they were concerned that pursuing a project that clearly did not fit with the interests of the community would give EPC a reputation for chasing money.[176] EPC was willing to work with HIVOS because HIVOS did not implement projects directly, but instead entrusted implementation to its local partners. EPC staff explained that as implementers they were able to bring their knowledge of what the community felt was important into the project design. For example, their decision to conduct computer training was a reflection of what community members had requested.

HIVOS' other partner, ADAP, also responded to the way that international NGOs behaved in Aceh in the aftermath of the tsunami. The sheer number of

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[174] In fact, there were aid workers in Aceh after the tsunami who were not aware prior to arriving that an armed conflict was underway in the province (Burke and Afnan 2005).
[175] Interview with Amir, EPC (Director), 3 November 2008, Lhokseumawe, Aceh.
[176] Interview with Amir, EPC (Director), 3 November 2008, Lhokseumawe, Aceh.

international NGOs that came to the province, and the amount of money they had available to spend, meant that many of them placed a premium on seeking out local NGOs that could provide information or be recruited as partners (Zeccola 2007b). The speed and urgency with which these organisations acted meant that almost every local organisation had the prospect of gaining access to funding from an international NGO. ADAP's awareness of this opportunity was reflected in its approach to working in partnership with HIVOS on peacebuilding.

The history of ADAP's formation and its response to the cessation of funding from HIVOS suggest that its main motivation for choosing to work with HIVOS on the CB-CEWS project was financial. As noted above, the roots of ADAP lay in an informal grouping of university students who came together to do volunteer work in the late 1990s. During the period after the Cessation of Hostilities Agreement (CoHA) was signed in 2002, the students would travel through local communities educating people about the agreement. However, it was not until after the tsunami that ADAP was formally established as an organisation.[177] According to Zulfikar, the founder of the organisation, ADAP decided to focus on conflict issues because most other NGOs in the area were focused on livelihoods. He felt that there were people in his organisation who were able to engage with both GAM and with the authorities, and this skill was an asset ADAP could use to work on conflict related issues. Besides this ability to engage with people on both sides of the conflict, ADAP had very little knowledge or had put little thought into what it wanted to achieve in relation to peacebuilding. In fact, according to Zulkifar, the idea for this project only emerged after discussions with the technical assistant provided by HIVOS.

ADAP shut its doors almost immediately after its HIVOS-funded project was completed. Four months after their funding with HIVOS ended, all of the staff working for ADAP had taken other jobs, either with the government or with other NGOs. Zulfikar explained that some of the former staff would

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[177] Interview with Zulfikar, ADAB (Director), 4 November 2008, Bireun, Aceh.

occasionally contact him to ask whether the organisation had received funding for other projects.[178] While it is clearly legitimate that staff would seek employment elsewhere when the funding ceased, their lack of commitment to the organisation is striking in comparison to other local NGOs in the area who experienced similar financial setbacks, such as Labang Nanggroe, an NGO in Lhokseumawe that lost its funding from the International Organization for Migration (IOM) but continued to do its work using the personal funds of staff members.[179] The staff of EPC also continued their activities after the HIVOS funding ended, drawing on the salaries and resources of their colleagues who had found employment in government.[180]

The difference between how the international community in Timor Leste and Aceh prioritised and approached peacebuilding was a further contextual factor contributing to the decisions made by Trócaire and HIVOS. Trócaire was able to be more responsive to the specific needs of the context because many other organisations in Timor Leste were engaged in peacebuilding. Its decision to pursue a peacebuilding project built around access to information was based on a gap its staff observed in how other international organisations were approaching peacebuilding. HIVOS, on the other hand, was working in a context where very few other international organisations were implementing peacebuilding projects with local NGOs. They too were motivated to fill a gap; however, the gap with which they were dealing was much broader because fewer international organisations were addressing issues related to the conflict. As a result, HIVOS was left with a wider mandate. This difference had a significant impact on the quality of the local partners of each organisation, and on the kind of projects that each organisation supported.

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[178] Interview with Zulfikar, ADAB (Director), 19 November 2009, Bireun, Aceh.
[179] Interview with Saiful, Labang Nanggroe (Director), 18 November 2009, Lhokseumawe, Aceh.
[180] Interview with Muhammad Usman, EPC (Staff), 19 November 2009, Lhokseumawe, Aceh.

A matter of place

The partnerships and peacebuilding projects discussed in this chapter were shaped considerably by the priorities of donors and by the decisions, experiences and insights of particular individuals associated with each international and local institution. What is clear, however, is how essential an understanding of context is to an analysis of partnership. While donors and individuals each made a significant contribution to the form of these partnerships, it was the context within which the collaborations occurred that determined the influence of these other factors. The response of donors, for example, reflected their specific concerns and goals within the particular context in which they operated. The decisions made by individuals were often a reflection of their previous experiences within that context.

The key differences between Timor Leste and Aceh were related to the length of time that international agencies had worked there and the level of importance granted to peacebuilding in each place. These differences played a major role in determining the kind of influence donors had and the particular concerns of key individuals within the partner organisations. International agencies had a longer history of working with local organisations in Timor Leste than in Aceh. This history of involvement was precisely what motivated the CRU to choose Trócaire as the organisation through which to channel its funding. At the same time, the fact that international NGOs had had such an extended presence in Timor Leste meant that activists had extensive experience and understanding of them, which in some cases made them wary of collaboration. For example, the history of the international aid industry in Timor Leste fuelled da Silva's concern about the extent to which the independence of his country meant true autonomy for its people, and this attitude shaped the views that eventually informed how The Peace Centre worked with Trócaire.

The other key difference between the two places was that, compared to Timor Leste, peacebuilding was a peripheral issue in Aceh, and one that many international organisations avoided when they first arrived in the

province. The initial reluctance of HIVOS' donors to provide funding for peacebuilding reflected the particular circumstances in the province. Many organisations feared that they might lose their funding if they engaged in conflict related issues, and HIVOS had to spend considerable energy convincing its donors to fund peacebuilding projects. Once HIVOS did convince their donors, they were under pressure to find partners and spend the money, which led to the funding of organisations, like ADAP, whose commitment to peacebuilding was minimal.

New Ideas in Partner-Driven Relationships

There are a number of qualities of this style of partnership which made it more conducive for the development of new ideas between local and international partners than the contract style partnership. The first of these qualities was that the international NGOs involved were aware of and sympathetic to the problems that local NGOs faced. For example, HIVOS and Trócaire both considered the difficulty that local NGOs faced completing administrative tasks to be normal and took it into account as part of the partnership process. As a project manager from HIVOS explained, it was a challenge ensuring that local partners submitted their reports on time, commenting on one case that 'they were only a month or two late ... all our partners are late anyway'.[181] In contrast to the international NGOs engaged in contract relationships, staff from Trócaire and HIVOS expressed little surprise or frustration about these technical difficulties, but rather a more pragmatic acceptance of this shortcoming. For example, Trócaire staff focused on how to 'problem solve' around the concerns raised by their local partners.[182] Additionally, both organisations employed consultants who could sit with the staff and support them to develop systems and skills improve their report writing and financial management abilities.

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[181] Interview with Firly Purwanti, HIVOS (Program Officer for Human Rights and Democratisation), 30 November 2009, Jakarta, Indonesia.
[182] Interview with Kathryn Robertson, Trócaire (Country Representative), 15 September 2009, Dili, Timor Leste.

Another quality shared by HIVOS and Trócaire was that both were concerned about issues that prevented the local NGOs from functioning as institutions or from being effective members of civil society. One of the HIVOS program officers involved in the peacebuilding project explained that HIVOS was concerned that local NGOs in Aceh tended to focus more on their programs than on their institution, which in practice meant that local organisations would not adequately consider how particular programs aligned with their institutional mandate. Similarly, in Timor Leste, Trócaire staff observed that local NGOs tended to embark on too many projects at once. One of the main messages Trócaire passed on to its partners was to stay focused on their main task, noting 'that is why we say to our partners, please try to focus on your main job. If you want to do a job, you need to focus on what you are good at'.[183] This lack of focus was a problem that Trócaire observed with the Peace Centre, which at times seemed confused about whether being a research focused organisation provided scope for direct implementation of projects in the field.[184]

Closely related to this issue was that in some cases local NGOs undermined their own legitimacy. In Aceh, HIVOS was concerned that some of its local partners were acting as provocateurs in the communities in which they worked. They were also worried about the effects of local NGO staff becoming involved in political parties.[185] These types of concerns differed significantly from those of international NGOs involved in contract style relationships, whose key concern was whether the local NGO partner could complete the task allocated to it, often without due consideration for the broader structural problems that might prevent them from being able to do so.

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[183] Interview with Elias Conan Boavida, Trócaire (Program Assistant), 9 September 2009, Dili, Timor Leste.
[184] Interview with Kathryn Robertson, Trócaire (Country Representative), 15 September 2009, Dili, Timor Leste.
[185] Anonymous interview, HIVOS (Project Manager), 5 November 2008, Banda Aceh, Aceh.

Scholars critiquing the practice of partnership have identified a lack of reflection within international NGOs as a contributing factor to their inability to find appropriate ways of working with their local partners (Postma 1994; Fowler 1998; Brunnstrom 2003). Unlike many of the other organisations that were interviewed for this study, the staff of both HIVOS and Trócaire actively reflected on what they could have done differently, or should do differently in the future, in the face of problems they encountered with their partners. For example, when talking about how it could better facilitate links between their partners, the director of the program in Trócaire observed that 'Trócaire could do a better job of linking up partners and saying "Hey why don't you guys walk down the road and talk to FONGTIL about how they can help you", and some of that doesn't happen'.[186] Another example of open reflection came from the HIVOS project manager, when considering the problems HIVOS had encountered with some of its partners in the peacebuilding project. Purwanti observed that 'the main thing was HIVOS was over confident in Aceh. Because actually HIVOS' core business... that's more in human rights, that's our area of expertise'.[187] These open acknowledgements of how the organisation had erred or could improve imply that a willingness to learn and change exists within these organisations which could potentially have positive impacts on their future partnerships with local organisations.

This focus on how to address the problems faced by local partners, the desire for their local partners to become strong institutions and their staff's ability to openly reflect on their institutional weaknesses opened up opportunities for the movement of ideas between these Northern NGOs and their local partners. Both Trócaire and HIVOS offered direct opportunities for their local partners to acquire knowledge about peacebuilding. For example, staff in the head office of Trócaire in Ireland developed a theoretical framework about peacebuilding, which Trócaire shared with its local partners. The

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[186] Interview with Kathryn Robertson, Trócaire (Country Representative), 15 September 2009, Dili, Timor Leste.

[187] Interview with Firly Purwanti, HIVOS (Program Officer for Human Rights and Democratisation), 30 November 2009, Jakarta, Indonesia.

framework was intended to help Trócaire identify opportunities for and promote discussion about peacebuilding so as to enhance its peacebuilding work (Abozaglo 2008). In addition to producing and disseminating the framework, its author visited Timor Leste and ran workshops for Trócaire's local partners about the meaning of peacebuilding.[188] The purpose of these workshops was to help the local partners identify their role in the peacebuilding process and to determine what action was most appropriate for them to take.[189] Similarly, HIVOS paid for Syamsul Alam Agus, the person who developed the CB-CEWS system in Poso, to work with each of the organisations involved in the network. HIVOS also funded a small group of Acehnese activists within the network to visit Poso so that they could speak with NGOs there about how they used the system.[190]

While the local partners appreciated the flexibility and openness of their international NGO partners, they did not always embrace opportunities to develop new ideas. For instance, ADAP had very little sense prior to starting the project of what peacebuilding was. The HIVOS technical assistant, Syamsul Alam Agus, who worked with ADAP on the CB-CEWS project, noted that 'from the beginning when I joined and discussed with them how to develop an agenda for peace, they did not have any idea ... No ideas whatsoever. Even defining the word peace was very difficult [for them]'.[191]

Zulfikar, the director of the organisation, explained that by working closely with Agus they were able to learn about the community based conflict early warning system. He was also one of those who travelled to Poso to observe the system there. However, ADAP's lack of conceptual engagement with peacebuilding meant that there was little opportunity for them to expose HIVOS to new ideas or approaches. ADAP's lack of ability to do so is best

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[188] Interview with Kathryn Robertson, Trócaire (Country Representative), 15 September 2009, Dili, Timor Leste.
[189] Interview with Kathryn Robertson, Trócaire (Country Representative), 15 September 2009, Dili, Timor Leste.
[190] Interview with Zulfikar, ADAB (Director), 4 November 2008, Bireun, Aceh.
[191] Interview with Syamsul Alam Agus, HIVOS (Technical Assistant), 7 December 2009, Jakarta, Indonesia.

demonstrated through the approach it took to the opportunity to contribute ideas to a document about community based conflict early warning systems that HIVOS was potentially going use in other parts of the world. One of ADAP's tasks in the project was to produce a set of guidelines about how best to apply the community-based conflict early warning system in Aceh. These guidelines were important to HIVOS because it was aware that the CB-CEWS framework was one introduced from outside, and it was hoping to use the guidelines as a means of revising the framework to be more relevant to Aceh. When it became clear that ADAP was struggling to produce the guidelines, HIVOS provided the organisation with two technical assistants, but even with this support ADAP failed to produce the guidelines.[192]

In the case of the Peace Centre, da Silva's commitment to maintaining autonomy closed doors to discussions that may have yielded new ideas about peacebuilding. In part, this obstacle developed because Trócaire and the Peace Centre experienced some conflict over one of the research topics that the Peace Centre had chosen to pursue. The original agreement between Trócaire and the Peace Centre stipulated that the latter would conduct research on four topics, one of which was the 'petitioners', the group of former soldiers whose departure from the military sparked the internal conflict in Timor Leste in 2006 (Scambary 2009).[193] The Peace Centre decided to use the money allocated for the petitioner research to conduct research on alternative energy. This decision became a source of conflict because the Peace Centre had begun the research on the new topic without communicating with Trócaire.[194]

The process of resolving this conflict revealed that there was considerable space and time for dealing with differences in the partnership between Trócaire and the Peace Centre. Trócaire staff were initially concerned that

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[192] Interview with Firly Purwanti, HIVOS (Program Officer for Human Rights and Democratisation), 30 November 2009, Jakarta, Indonesia.
[193] The other three topics were the conflict in Uatulari (a sub-district in southeast of the country), cooperatives and community policing.
[194] Interview with Elias Conan Boavida, Trócaire (Program Assistant), 9 September 2009, Dili, Timor Leste.

the Peace Centre had not followed the correct procedure in pursuing research on a new topic without consulting Trócaire. In addition to this procedural problem, the conflict between the two organisations extended to debates about whether research about alternative energy fitted within the framework of peacebuilding. The director of the Peace Centre explained that in order to convince the Trócaire program manager that the production of alternative energy could be pursued as a strategy for building peace he shared readings by peacebuilding scholars, including by Lederach, which illustrated his argument.[195] Another point of debate between the two organisations was whether the Peace Centre was an appropriate organisation to be undertaking the research. The alternative energy research project involved installing and managing a water generated power source. The coordinator of Trócaire was concerned that by embarking on this task the Peace Centre was extending itself too far beyond its mandate.[196]

Eventually, the conflict was resolved when Trócaire accepted that alternative energy did fit within the definition of peacebuilding and decided that it was best for the Peace Centre to work out for itself whether it was appropriate to have taken on the project. The director of Trócaire reflected on how the conflict ended:

> I think there was also an element of where they just kind of needed to try it. I mean, you can only go so far with a terms of reference, and they can't always explain so well what they want to do, or they kind of figured they wanted to give it a go. And so at one point I said maybe they just need to do it, maybe it's not quite as, whatever, polished as we might want it to be or quite as well articulated as you

[195] Interview with Antero Bendito da Silva, the Peace Centre (Director), 18 September 2009, Dili, Timor Leste.
[196] Interview with Kathryn Robertson, Trócaire (Country Representative), 15 September 2009, Dili, Timor Leste.

might want it to be, but they just need to give it a go, they need to just try.[197]

Trócaire in this instance was open to the possibility of being challenged at a conceptual level and was willing to allow its local partner to use their ideas about peacebuilding to guide the project. The Peace Centre, however, was not equally as open to conceptual input from Trócaire.

Trócaire had concerns about the way the Peace Centre was conducting its research and wanted to give feedback to the researchers, but encountered structural impediments in its attempts to do so. For example, in some cases, the individuals who conducted the research were never introduced to the Trócaire staff, making it difficult to directly communicate with them. Furthermore, organising meetings with staff in the Peace Centre was challenging because its office was part of the university and was frequently the site of student meetings and seminars that would frequently be scheduled at the same time as the meetings with Trócaire. Finally, Trócaire staff explained that it was difficult to speak with da Silva, the main decision maker in the organisation, because he was frequently busy or unavailable.[198]

While these communication difficulties do not directly concern the movement of ideas about peacebuilding, they reflect a lack of openness on the part of the Peace Centre to input from their donor, which is consistent with da Silva's views on maintaining Timorese autonomy. What this reluctance suggests is that the ability for a partnership to be a space within which international and local organisation share ideas relies just as much on the local organisation being open to feedback from their international donor. The Peace Centre's focus on autonomy in this instance may potentially have closed the door on an opportunity for honest exchange that might have led to better quality and more nuanced research.

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[197] Interview with Kathryn Robertson, Trócaire (Country Representative), 15 September 2009, Dili, Timor Leste.
[198] Interview with Elias Conan Boavida, Trócaire (Program Assistant), 9 September 2009, Dili, Timor Leste.

In both of these instances, the interests of and challenges faced by international organisations that engage in partner-driven relationships appear in sharp relief. The fact that ADAP failed to produce the guidelines required of them meant that it was not able to feed conceptually into the project. At another level, however, it was the source of some embarrassment to HIVOS who had been relying on this document as evidence to their donors of the project being successfully completed.[199] Similarly, Trócaire was open to using the Peace Centre's research as material in their advocacy campaigns in Ireland, but because the Peace Centre were not open to feedback about their research process, much of what Trócaire received from them had limited use in an Irish context.[200]

HIVOS' ability to transfer new ideas about peacebuilding to EPC was more successful, though the exchange of ideas did not occur directly between the two organisations. Instead, by engaging in a partnership with HIVOS, EPC was given the opportunity to experiment with its own ideas and learn from other organisations that were also working with HIVOS. EPC staff explained that HIVOS gave them the freedom to design their peacebuilding project and only intervened with instructions about how to manage its administrative components.[201] EPC designed the project according to what it felt was in the best interests of the community with whom they were working and EPC staff explained that HIVOS was happy to accommodate these ideas, even when these interests changed over time. For example, HIVOS had originally provided funding to EPC to run computer and human rights training to former combatants. Once the courses had begun, a number of younger people expressed interest in participating. EPC approached HIVOS about making this change, and HIVOS responded positively.[202] This decision did not involve a conceptual shift, but demonstrated that HIVOS had the flexibility

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[199] Interview with Firly Purwanti, HIVOS (Program Officer for Human Rights and Democratisation), 30 November 2009, Jakarta, Indonesia.
[200] Interview with Kathryn Robertson, Trócaire (Country Representative), 15 September 2009, Dili, Timor Leste.
[201] Interview with Amir, EPC (Director), 3 November 2008, Lhokseumawe, Aceh.
[202] Interview with Amir, EPC (Director), 3 November 2008, Lhokseumawe, Aceh.

to allow its local partners to respond to what was happening in its surroundings. The outcome was that EPC developed a sense of expertise and ownership over their project.

At this stage in the project, very little conceptual discussion had occurred between the organisations because Syamsul Alam Agus, the technical assistant who provided most of HIVOS' knowledge about peacebuilding, was not involved with the EPC project. Nonetheless, HIVOS was able to empower EPC by facilitating the formation of relationships between EPC and other local organisations through its CB-CEWS email list and bimonthly meetings organised for all its partners engaged in peacebuilding. EPC staff explained that is was through their local NGO colleagues who were part of this network that they discussed and developed new strategies for dealing with incidents of conflict in their area:

> [The CB-EWS network] opened up an experience that was ... well, it was like this, our access to information expanded. When an incident occurred in our area, we would develop a diagram and send it to our colleagues ... We would look at their responses, there were some who supported us, or encouraged us to do this ... we should respond like this to these results. Sometimes they would send us something, and we too would support or give suggestions.[203]

In effect, HIVOS provided the tools through which EPC, and the other organisations in the network, communicated with one another, and in doing so, facilitated the exchange and development of ideas between its local partners.

Conclusion

This chapter has shown that a 'partner-driven' relationship between international and local NGOs has many qualities of the 'ideal' approach to partnership described in the scholarly literature on NGOs. This scholarly

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[203] Interview with Amir, EPC (Director), 3 November 2008, Lhokseumawe, Aceh.

research stipulates that 'authentic' partnerships should position local partners and their interests centrally in the relationship. By supporting local NGOs to implement projects, HIVOS and Trócaire's partnership strategy better reflected 'authentic' relationships than the contract-based strategy discussed in Chapter Two. The local NGO partners working with HIVOS and Trócaire had the opportunity to shape projects on which they worked. Furthermore, HIVOS and Trócaire were sympathetic to the difficulties they faced managing their core work alongside their administrative responsibilities and offered them support to write reports and manage finances.

This chapter has demonstrated that contextual factors play a major role in shaping the partnership by influencing the particular focus of donor agencies and by setting the parameters around which individuals' personal qualities, experiences and decisions can influence the form of the relationship. Two key contextual differences between Timor and Aceh have been highlighted in this chapter. The first is the longer presence of international aid organisations in Timor Leste. On one hand, this history gave Trócaire credibility with its local partner, the Peace Centre, whose director had had the opportunity to engage with Trócaire and with individuals associated with the organisation for many years before beginning a formal collaboration. At the same time, the extended period in which the international aid community had had a presence in Timor Leste was also instrumental in shaping the Peace Centre's, at times, defensive attitude to working with an international partner. The second contextual factor was the scale of the international response to the tsunami in Aceh and how the money that flowed into the province shaped the expectations of HIVOS' local partners towards their donor. ADAP, for example, approached the partnership experience with HIVOS from a primarily self-interested perspective, accepting funding from HIVOS but failing – despite considerable support – to meet its obligations under the partnership agreement. EPC, in contrast, was very enthusiastic about being supported for its interest in peacebuilding as it had had limited international support previously, and eagerly responded to the various forms of support offered by HIVOS.

As this chapter has suggested, partner-driven relationships offer a robust framework through which ideas about peacebuilding can be exchanged between Northern and Southern partners, but the extent to which this exchange occurs relies on both parties being receptive to new concepts and ways of thinking. The experiences of Trócaire in Timor Leste and HIVOS in Aceh suggest that the partner-driven approach offers potential for local NGOs' ideas to underpin the types of projects being undertaken. They also suggest that the onus is on the local organisation to take advantage of the opportunity to do so in this type of relationship. What becomes apparent through this approach to North-South collaboration is how the qualities of the local organisation themselves can become an impediment to the process of developing new ideas. Local NGOs, such as ADAP, which had not developed any concept of peacebuilding of its own, were in no position to contribute ideas to their international partner, even when the opportunity to do so presented itself. Furthermore, organisations that prioritised maintaining their autonomy inadvertently rejected opportunities to develop and acquire new ideas. The Peace Centre successfully influenced Trócaire's concept of peacebuilding but was not able to be equally as open to their suggestions. The most successful example in this case was that of EPC – but in fact this case was not so much the meeting of international and local ideas so much as an international organisation facilitating the exchange of ideas between local organisations.

In contrast to the short-term contractual relationships discussed in the previous chapter, partner-driven partnerships are more responsive to the needs of local NGOs and more accommodating of their organisational limitations. Nonetheless, this model of partnership, like short-term contract relationships, is still primarily shaped by the transfer of resources from North to South. While in many ways this affords the Northern institution power over its Southern partner, the example of ADAP illustrates the extent to which this power dynamic can be subverted when the local partner does not genuinely engage with the project and how its failure to fulfil its side of the bargain threatens the legitimacy of the international NGO. The following

chapter examines networked relationships, a model of collaboration characterised by shared interests, collaborative projects and the power of personal relationships in which the exchange of resources plays a far less central role.

Chapter Four: Networked Relationships

In September 2009 at the Congress for Victims of Human Rights Violations 1974-1999 (Kongresu Nacional Vitima Violasaun Direitu Humanus 1974-1999, hereafter National Victims' Congress) in Dili, a vibrant group of people from around Timor Leste were debating a name for their newly formed organisation. The discussion was hosted by José Luis, the former director of the Foundation for Law, Rights and Justice (Perkumpulan HAK, or the HAK Association) a reputable local human rights NGO.[204] The atmosphere in the room bordered on chaos. People were standing up, calling out their ideas, and whispering their opinions to one another. At one point, an elderly gentleman took hold of the microphone and launched into a long diatribe in Tetum. The audience's irritation was palpable; people stood up indicating to José Luis that he should cut the man off. He gently but firmly did so, and guided the discussion back to the issue at hand. In the back corner of the room sat a group of three or four people who worked for the International Center for Transitional Justice (ICTJ). They were hunched over laptops, busily documenting the discussion, whispering urgently about the next item on the agenda and moving through the room passing messages to and from José Luis about how much time he had left. In the cooler, open hall adjacent to the meeting room were special guests from the UN, NGOs and the government. While waiting for a decision to be made, they looked at exhibitions of photos, memorabilia and poems displayed in memory of those killed or missing during the 1974–1999 conflict.

The ICTJ office in Banda Aceh also focused on the rights and needs of conflict victims. In July 2007, a similar congress for victims was organised by Acehnese human rights NGOs, at which ICTJ interviewed 113 victims and produced a report about their experiences (Clarke, Wandita and Samsidar 2008). In 2008, ICTJ facilitated visits to Timor Leste for local Acehnese activists who worked with conflict victims in order to learn about the truth

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[204] The history of the HAK Association is discussed in detail in Chapter One.

and reconciliation mechanisms in place there. Over coffee, two of these activists discussed what they learnt about the Commission for Reception, Truth and Reconciliation (Comissão de Acolhimento, Verdade e Reconciliação, CAVR) in Timor Leste and about the problems they thought Timor Leste was creating by not sufficiently including victims of conflict in decision-making at a national level. Importantly, they were surprised at how different the situation in Aceh was from that in Timor Leste despite both places having experienced conflict with the Indonesian military, insight which they would have been hard pressed to gain without the opportunity given to them by ICTJ to travel across the archipelago to visit their Timorese counterparts.[205]

This chapter focuses on the network of relationships between ICTJ and human rights activists from Timor Leste and Aceh. Some of these collaborations involved ICTJ and multiple local organisations working together on a single issue, and others involved ICTJ and just one or two local organisations with an interest in a particular project. A web of personal relationships between individuals involved in the network helped shape and direct how the organisations worked together. In both Timor Leste and Aceh these networks focused on transitional justice issues, or the range of judicial and non-judicial mechanisms designed to help societies come to terms with past human rights violations (United Nations 2004).

In order to situate this example in the contexts of the broader peacebuilding strategies in Timor Leste and Aceh, the chapter opens with a conceptual discussion about transitional justice and its links to peacebuilding. It then describes the third form of partnership addressed in this thesis – that of the network – before going on to explore the particular qualities of the ICTJ program. As the chapter illustrates, this particular network's success rested considerably on the qualities possessed by individuals associated with ICTJ.

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[205] Interviews with Hendra Budian, Aceh Justice Monitoring Institute (Director), 23 October 2008, Banda Aceh; Raihan Diani, Beujroh (Former Director), 26 October 2008, Banda Aceh, Aceh; Liza 'Cici' Dayani, member of the Acehnese Truth-Telling Coalition (Koalisi Pengungkapan Kebenaran Aceh), 26 October 2008, Banda Aceh, Aceh.

The experiences of these individuals, in combination with broader contextual factors at play in these two locations, had a significant impact on how effectively the network operated as a means of developing and disseminating new ideas about transitional justice and peacebuilding within and between Aceh and Timor Leste.

Transitional Justice and Peacebuilding

The term 'transitional justice' describes the mechanisms used to 'come to terms with a legacy of large-scale past abuses, in order to ensure accountability, serve justice and achieve reconciliation' (United Nations 2004, 4). One of the earliest such mechanisms was the Nuremberg Tribunal, held in the aftermath of World War II, which was intended to bring those in the higher echelons of the German Nazi regime to account (Teitel 2003). Other key judicial mechanisms have been the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY) and the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR). The scope of transitional justice also extends to non-judicial mechanisms such as truth-telling, which includes a range of processes to determine the details of the atrocities committed in the past. Truth commissions and historical and archival research are used in combination with reconciliation processes to seek accountability for past human rights atrocities, address divisions within society through reconciliation and contribute to the strengthening of justice systems and the rule-of-law with the aim of preventing future atrocities (Call 2004; Clarke, Wandita and Samsidar 2008).

Connections between transitional justice and peacebuilding have developed at a policy, theoretical and practical level. As discussed in the Introduction of this thesis, peacebuilding practices and theories developed in the early 1990s at a time when the UN was being increasingly forced to respond to internal conflicts that developed in recently decolonised countries, mainly in the global South (Paris 2004; Richmond 2005). Theories and practices emerging from these interventions focused on strategies to rebuild states, communities

and the relationships between individuals in such a way as to prevent the reoccurrence of hostilities (Lederach 1995; Call and Cook 2003).

Over time, it became evident that places that had experienced armed conflict frequently returned to violence. In response, practitioners began to focus on the need for effective rule-of-law mechanisms to create sustainable peace and transitional justice gained popularity as a means to strengthen these mechanisms. A report written by the UN Secretary General in 2004 highlights how the UN promotes transitional justice as a strategy to strengthen the rule-of-law in places that have experienced prolonged conflict or human rights violations. The report explicitly links transitional justice to peace by arguing that strong rule-of-law mechanisms are needed to guarantee that peace endures:

> Our experience in the past decade has demonstrated clearly that the consolidation of peace in the immediate post-conflict period, as well as the maintenance of peace in the long term, cannot be achieved unless the population is confident that redress for grievances can be obtained through legitimate structures for the peaceful settlement of disputes and the fair administration of justice. (United Nations 2004, 3)

The parallels between transitional justice and peacebuilding were reinforced at a policy level in 2006 by an inventory of peacebuilding capacities compiled by the United Nations. The report defines four sectors of peacebuilding in which the UN is involved: security and public order, justice and reconciliation, governance and participation and socio-economic well-being. A full section of the report devoted to transitional justice argues that justice for mass human rights violations can be achieved through courts and tribunals as well as within communities (United Nations 2006). This and other policy documents demonstrate that institutions addressing peacebuilding at a state level see transitional justice as an integral part of a broader strategy for achieving peace.

Academic discussions too have reflected growing interest in the connections between transitional justice and peacebuilding. Early scholarly accounts of transitional justice focused on the role that it played in the transition from authoritarian to democratic regimes, and in doing so addressed similar concepts to those prioritised by peacebuilding scholars. A seminal three volume work published in 1995, entitled *Transitional Justice: How Emerging Democracies Reckon with Former Regimes* (Kritz 1995), outlines the key concepts, case studies and legal considerations related to transitional justice. Since that time, transitional justice has become normalised as a response to increasing global political instability and fragmentation (Teitel 2003). Scholars have explored how participating in processes of transitional justice can contribute to peacebuilding by changing the perspectives of those affected by conflict, for example by using transitional justice mechanisms to provide channels for people to talk about their problems without disrupting the broader peacebuilding process (Laplante 2008). Others have argued that processes such as truth-telling can play an important role in transforming relationships, if designed correctly, by involving a wide range of individuals and generating 'a sense of ownership, participation and genuine commitment' (Borer 2006, 37). This sense of ownership and the ability for transitional justice to be genuinely transformative and contribute to sustainable peacebuilding relies on transitional justice mechanisms encompassing not only the elements of legal justice dominant in a Western context, but also local practices of justice and measures to meet the psychosocial and socioeconomic needs of the victims of mass human rights violations (Lambourne 2009). Another recent scholarly contribution is that by Braithwaite et al (2010) whose study of 'non-truth' and reconciliation in Indonesia proposes a theory for linking transitionalism, which includes transitional justice, to peacebuilding. The authors suggest that transitional justice can be linked theoretically to peacebuilding through its role in rebuilding value systems and re-establishing norms of behaviour that disintegrate during violent conflict.

Not all scholars, however, agree that there is utility in linking transitional justice with peacebuilding. Some studies have focused on the tensions between peace and justice that emerge when transitional justice is used in a peacebuilding context (van Zyl 2005). Leebaw (2008, 97), for instance, asserts that framing transitional justice as something central to building peace overlooks some of the key contradictions between these two strategies, arguing that:

> more attention should be given to the ways in which [transitional justice institutions'] efforts to expose, remember and understand political violence are in tension with their role as tools for establishing stability and legitimating transitional compromises.

Others are concerned by untested assumptions about the role that truth-telling can play in peacebuilding. These include assumptions about human psychology, for example the notion that the process of individual healing that occurs through truth-telling leads to national healing; assumptions about how truth-telling can contribute to the formation of a new shared identity; and institutional assumptions about how truth-telling can contribute to the formation of democracy (Mendeloff 2004, 365).

The misgivings of these scholars notwithstanding, in practice there are direct connections between transitional justice and broader peacebuilding processes in most post-conflict environments. In both Timor Leste and Aceh, transitional justice mechanisms have been integrated into the overall post-conflict peacebuilding strategies, albeit to different extents. In Aceh, provisions for transitional justice mechanisms were built into the Helsinki MoU. These mechanisms included an amnesty for those imprisoned for their participation in the rebel movement; the demobilisation, disarmament and decommissioning of GAM; the reduction of TNI forces in Aceh; the reintegration of former GAM combatants; and changes to the legal code to ensure that it met international human rights standards. A human rights court and a truth and reconciliation commission were also mooted in the Law on Governing Aceh (LoGA) (Government of Indonesia 2005), although neither

has been established to date. Moreover, the provision for the Human Rights Court in the LoGA did not give the court retroactive jurisdiction, which means it can only be used in cases of human rights abuse that take place after the formation of the court and therefore cannot be used to address violations that occurred during the conflict (Clarke, Wandita and Samsidar 2008).

Local Acehnese organisations have played an important role lobbying both the provincial government, and (with the help of the colleagues in Jakarta) the national government, to take the necessary steps to make the truth and reconciliation commission a reality (ICTJ 2010b).[206] The truth and reconciliation commission was supposed to be set up as a subsidiary of the Indonesian National Truth and Reconciliation Commission (Komisi Kebeneran dan Rekonsiliasi, KKR); however, Law No.27/2004 on the Truth and Reconciliation Commission which is the basis for the national commission, was revoked by the Constitutional Court in 2006, which delayed the process of establishing a similar body in Aceh (Aspinall 2008). Nevertheless, the interest local NGOs have taken in transitional justice mechanisms, and the fact that these mechanisms were made a formal part of the peace process, suggests that they are of central importance for the purpose of understanding the dynamics between international and local organisations involved in peacebuilding in Aceh.

In Timor Leste, by contrast, the connection between transitional justice mechanisms and the peacebuilding process established in response to the 2006 conflict is less obvious as most of the existing mechanisms were related to the conflict from 1974–1999. In the immediate aftermath of the 1999 referendum, there were calls from the international human rights community and recommendations from three Special Rapporteurs from the UN Commission for Human Rights to establish an international tribunal to investigate the violence in Timor Leste (Bowman 2004). These calls were not heeded because the UN was concerned about the resources required to

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[206] Interview with Samsidar, ICTJ (Aceh Program Coordinator), 10 October 2008, Banda Aceh, Aceh.

run such a tribunal and wanted to avoid conflict with the Indonesian government (Bowman 2004; Kingston 2006). Instead, separate processes occurred within Indonesia and Timor Leste to investigate the crimes committed and to prosecute those responsible. In Indonesia, an investigation in 1999 conducted by the Commission of Investigation into Human Rights Violations, a commission established by the National Commission for Human Rights, prompted the Indonesian government to establish an Ad Hoc Human Rights Court in Jakarta in 2001. The tribunal found six of the 18 people it indicted guilty, but their convictions were all subsequently overturned (Hirst 2008).[207] In Timor Leste, a hybrid tribunal was established which brought together international and Timorese legal practitioners (Linton 2001; Katzenstein 2003). This tribunal consisted of the Special Panels for Serious Crimes, which exercised jurisdiction over crimes such as genocide, war crimes, crimes against humanity, murder, sexual offences and torture committed between January and October 1999 (UNTAET 2000a). At the same time a Serious Crimes Unit was established as part of the public prosecution service to investigate and prosecute these crimes (UNTAET 2000b).

In addition to the hybrid court, the national truth and reconciliation commission, the CAVR, was established on 13 July 2001. The purpose of the CAVR was to establish the truth about human rights violations committed between 1975 and 1999 and to facilitate the reintegration of individuals who had committed less serious crimes during this period into the community (Stahn 2001). The commission produced its final report at the end of 2005 which making a number of recommendations for the Timor Leste government and international community across 13 broad themes, many of which related to the needs of the victims of conflict (CAVR 2005; Kingston 2006). A final transitional justice mechanism put in place was the

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[207] The CTF was widely criticised by civil society in Timor Leste, Indonesia and around the world. The main elements of the commission that attracted criticism included its failure to engage in consultation with relevant stakeholders, the provision of amnesty for those who participated in the commission and its lack of independence from the Timorese and Indonesian governments (Hirst 2008).

Commission of Truth and Friendship (CTF), established in Indonesia in August 2005. The CTF used the results of previous commissions to make a final decision about who was responsible for the atrocities committed in Timor Leste in 1999. There was considerable criticism of the CTF by the human rights community and the UN refused to participate in the process; however, the report produced by the commission has been credited with being the 'first official recognition that [Indonesian] state institutions had systematically violated human rights in East Timor' (Hirst 2009, 5).

The majority of peacebuilding initiatives in Timor Leste after the 2006 crisis had no formal relationship to the transitional justice mechanisms put in place to address grievances that emerged in the period between 1974 and 1999. Nonetheless, from a theoretical perspective, these transitional justice mechanisms have direct relevance to recent peacebuilding efforts because the events of 2006 were the culmination of unresolved problems from the earlier period of conflict. Scambary (2009) reveals that many of the groups involved in the 2006 conflict were formed because of unresolved resentments that originated during and in the aftermath of the independence campaign. This suggests that the distinct separation made by practitioners between the 2006 conflict and transitional justice issues from the independence period was an artificial one that reflected a pragmatic (and understandable) desire to focus on one or the other.[208]

Yet despite the differences between how strongly transitional justice mechanisms were linked to peacebuilding in Aceh and Timor Leste, ICTJ considered the work it was doing in both places to be central to the process of building long-term and sustainable peace. According to Megan Hirst a Program Associate in the ICTJ Timor Leste office in 2008, ICTJ was aiming to contribute to 'creating a stable, peaceful Timor Leste, but not on a short-term working with the community resolving disputes basis, but more on a

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[208] When questioned, some practitioners explained that issues of justice were either outside their mandate, that they dealt with them through other program areas or it was too risky to pursue them with vigour and maintain a good relationship with the government.

long-term reform and dealing with past violence basis'.[209] Similarly, Samsidar, the member of the ICTJ Indonesian secretariat who managed the Aceh office, argued that the activities for which ICTJ and its partners were advocating, such as truth-seeking, were essential for peace because 'Aceh cannot move forward if the past is not acknowledged'.[210]

These statements illustrate the synchrony between the UN policy statements about the links between transitional justice and peacebuilding, scholarly views and the views of practitioners working for ICTJ in Timor Leste and Aceh. Despite the widespread belief that transitional justice is required for building peace, the establishment of transitional justice mechanisms was not the key focus for the governments implementing peacebuilding projects in either Timor Leste or Aceh. For civil society organisations in both places, however, these mechanisms were a matter of priority. As the next section illustrates, the participation of civil society organisations in transitional justice processes is less well-documented, yet integral to understanding how transitional justice mechanisms may become shaped by local, rather than primarily international, ideas.

Transitional justice and civil society

In the cases of both Timor Leste and Aceh, local civil society organisations have played a central role in advocating for the implementation of transitional justice mechanisms – a role that has received limited attention in the literature about transitional justice. The scholarship that touches on the participation of civil society in transitional justice is primarily descriptive, and almost none of it addresses relational issues between local and international civil society organisations working collaboratively on these issues. Crocker (2000), for example, examines the contributions that both domestic and international civil society make to transitional justice mechanisms but assesses them separately, implying that problems of power

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[209] Interview with Megan Hirst, ICTJ (Program Associate), 23 September 2008, Dili, Timor Leste.
[210] Interview with Samsidar, ICTJ (Aceh Program Coordinator), 10 October 2008, Banda Aceh, Aceh.

and dependence might influence the actions of international and domestic civil society, but does not address this issue directly or in depth. Meanwhile, Backer's (2003) comprehensive overview of how civil society organisations can potentially become involved in transitional justice touches only briefly on the impact of international donors, and even then it is more concerned with how international funding affects local organisations' relationships with the government than with the dynamics between the local organisations and their funders.

One issue that is tackled by this small but growing body of literature is the importance of local voices in ensuring that transitional justice mechanisms are sustainable and effective. International civil society organisations are known to play a central role in spreading ideas about transitional justice, specifically in 'hammering out, justifying and diffusing universally applicable norms relevant to transitional justice' (Crocker 2000, 117). This is of concern to scholars because other research has shown that neglecting the voices of local actors in the design and implementation of transitional justice mechanisms can adversely affect the long term sustainability of these mechanisms (Lambourne 2006, 2009). Others have noted that the lack of local voices is problematic because it has facilitated a homogenous, Western perspective on transitional justice mechanisms and strategies. In particular, these scholars are critical of how 'the agenda being set for transitional justice, as it is currently constituted, tends to marginalise issues, questions, and approaches that might ... challenge the forms and norms of Western governance' (Lundy and McGovern 2008, 274). These views suggest that there is a need to further understand the contribution of local civil society to the development of transitional justice programs.

Nevertheless, there is very little research on what local civil societies know about transitional justice or the processes through which their ideas have developed. Rather, there is an assumption that local civil society organisations have pre-existing ideas about transitional justice. For example, Backer (2003, 311) calls for further research into 'mechanisms by which the contributions of civil society can be constructively integrated into

[transitional justice] policies'; however, he raises no questions about how local civil society organisations develop their 'contributions'. The following sections address precisely these questions by exploring the various mechanisms used by ICTJ to elicit and disseminate ideas about transitional justice amongst its local partners, as well as by examining the origins of the ideas held by the various stakeholders.

The ICTJ Network

Networks have a variety of structures and purposes; they can be formal or informal; and they can be based around different geographical areas. One of the key bodies of scholarship that addresses connections between networks that span across national boundaries focuses on transnational advocacy networks, or TANs. These networks operate across national boundaries, linking local and international actors in global campaigns and are driven by activists and activist organisations characterised by their commitment to a particular value system (Keck and Sikkink 1998, 1999). By framing their concerns in ways that appeal to a wide range of constituents, TANs support local activists around the world to target their own, or other national governments to address issues of global concern (della Porta and Kriesi 1999).

Many of the characteristics of TANs are reflected in the web of relationships between ICTJ and the local organisations with which it worked in Timor Leste and Aceh. Its geographical spread is one example. The ICTJ network is headquartered in New York and encompasses organisations in thirty different countries worldwide (ICTJ 2010d). ICTJ began working in both Indonesia and Timor Leste in 2002 but did not open an office in either country until 2007. In Indonesia, offices were opened in Banda Aceh and Jakarta, the latter serving as the headquarters of the Indonesia/Timor Leste project. From there, staff worked with local civil society organisations on transitional justice issues at the national level and oversaw projects in West Papua. The office in Banda Aceh focused primarily on transitional justice issues of relevance to

Aceh. The office in Dili concentrated on issues in Timor Leste, though it also monitored the CTF, which took place in Indonesia.

Like the participants in TANs, ICTJ and its local partners shared similar value systems (Keck and Sikkink 1998). The values of ICTJ are reflected through the places in which it works and the types of activities it undertakes. ICTJ works in places that have emerged from 'repressive rule or armed conflict, as well in other societies where legacies of abuse remain unresolved' (ICTJ 2010d). Its key goals are to 'confront legacies of mass human rights abuse', to 'promote accountability', and to 'create just and peaceful societies' (ICTJ 2010d). ICTJ works to achieve these goals by engaging in research, which it uses as an advocacy tool to convince those who live in societies that have experienced human rights violations of the importance of justice and accountability (ICTJ 2010d). Its local partners in both Timor Leste and Aceh are driven by an interest in similar issues and, in some cases, engage in similar types of activities.

In Timor Leste, two of ICTJ's primary local partners were the HAK Association and the East Timorese Women's Communication Forum (Forum Kommunikasi Untuk Perempuan Timor Lorosae, FOKUPERS). The HAK Association had goals and program objectives that were aligned in many ways with the goals of ICTJ. According to its website, its basic values are 'humanity; equality; justice on behalf of the people; democracy based on solidarity, participation, freedom, and responsibility' (The HAK Association n.d.). The strategies used by the HAK Association to achieve these goals – working with victims of the 1974–1999 conflict, providing legal aid to victims, and developing a network of victims' groups – are strongly aligned with ICTJ's own strategies. Around the world, ICTJ mobilises and supports victims groups as a central component of its approach to transitional justice (ICTJ 2010e). Another key activity conducted by the HAK Association is research about human rights issues, an activity that also fits within ICTJ's spectrum of approaches. Some of its research findings have fed into national debates about policy, while the results of other research projects have been used in international human rights campaigns (The HAK Association n.d.).

FOKUPERS shared with ICTJ a concern for the victims of conflict. Borne out of providing support to female victims of the conflict in the late part of the Indonesian occupation (Hunt 2008), FOKUPERS maintained this focus after the referendum in 1999. In its strategy plan from 2000 until 2002, its first priority was identified as ensuring 'that women can live free from violence and those who become victims of violence have the opportunity to rebuild their lives' (Hunt 2008, 196). In pursuing this goal the organisation became involved in very practical activities like establishing a safe house, providing counselling services and supporting women's groups to develop skills and organise themselves (Hunt 2008). While these particular activities were not directly aligned with the ICTJ approach, the links that FOKUPERS had with these women and their involvement in advocacy and lobbying on their behalf complemented ICTJ's objectives with regard to providing support to victims.

The local organisations that worked with ICTJ in Aceh also had an interest in human rights and victims of conflict. Women Volunteers for Humanity (Relawan Perempuan untuk Kemanusiaan, RPuK) was established in 1999 with the aim of providing material as well as psycho-social aid to the victims of the conflict in Aceh (Zeccola 2007a). The Human Rights Coalition (Koalisi NGO HAM), like RPuK, was established in 1999 during the period of political change in Indonesia that followed Suharto's resignation (Koalisi NGO HAM 2010a). Its main focus is to disseminate information about human rights and peace, support the human rights movement in Aceh, develop strategies for the movement and encourage the government to fulfil its human rights obligations (Koalisi NGO HAM 2010b). Similarly, the primary purpose of the Acehnese branch of the Commission for 'the Disappeared' and Victims of Violence (Komisi Untuk Orang Hilang dan Korban Tindak Kekerasan, KontraS Aceh), as described in its mission statement is to 'promote political awareness of victims of abuse in order to fight for justice' (KontraS 2008). All of these organisations worked to support victims groups in Aceh by giving them access to small amounts of funding, or by providing other non-material support. For example, RPuK

provided training on how to engage with the legal system to female victims of conflict; while Koalisi NGO HAM and KontraS Aceh provided information about human rights to members of the victims' congress, the Association of Human Rights Abuse Victims (Solidaritas Persaudaraan Korban Pelanggaran Hak Asasi Manusia, SPKP-HAM).[211] Like the organisations in Timor Leste, the interest that these Acehnese NGOs had in supporting the conflict victims, many of whom received minimal support after the signing of the peace agreement, were closely aligned with ICTJ's focus on pursuing justice for human rights abuses.

One function of a TAN is to pressure states – and societies – to adopt particular norms and to change their behaviour (Keck and Sikkink 1998, 3). ICTJ itself did not engage in advocacy, but with the support of ICTJ the other members of its network engaged in such lobbying in relation to transitional justice issues in both Timor Leste and Aceh. In Timor Leste, ICTJ supported a number of initiatives which fed into advocacy for a range of transitional justice processes. In 2008, the organisation monitored the Serious Crimes Investigation Team as well as the CTF, producing reports written in English and Indonesian which could be used by local activists.[212] ICTJ also provided technical assistance to public bodies, such as the parliament and the post-CAVR secretariat, the body established to follow up the CAVR after the release of its report in 2005. The ICTJ office in Aceh was smaller and its programs less intensive, but nevertheless influential. One activity undertaken by ICTJ in collaboration with KontraS Aceh involved writing a report outlining the perspectives of conflict victims towards the peace process (Clarke, Wandita and Samsidar 2008). This report was subsequently used for lobbying by a coalition of human rights NGOs campaigning for the human

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[211] Interview with Ali Zamzami, SPKP-HAM (Coordinator), 2008, Banda Aceh, Aceh; Interview with Khairani, RPuK (Director), 16 October 2008, Banda Aceh, Aceh.

[212] The Serious Crimes Investigation Team was established in 2006 to continue investigating human rights violations committed in 1999, though did not begin its work until 2008. It was continuing the work of the Serious Crimes Unit (SCU), though, unlike the SCU was not able to prepare cases for indictment and was limited to investigation duties. See http://unmit.unmissions.org/Default.aspx?tabid=4973 (accessed 5 May 2011) for more details.

rights mechanisms in the MoU to be implemented. Other projects on which it worked were related to campaigning for reparations for female victims of the conflict and supporting local NGOs to document human rights violations.[213]

Another strategy used by ICTJ was to establish and work through small issue-specific working groups for a set period of time. In Timor Leste in 2009 a working group was established to organise the National Victims' Congress described at the opening of this chapter. ICTJ helped facilitate this working group in collaboration with the United Nations Integrated Mission for Timor Leste (UNMIT), local NGOs and groups representing victims of the 1974-1999 conflict.[214] It also established a reparations working group with local NGOs and other local partners, engaged in consultation with victims in collaboration with those local partners and co-wrote reports on the issues that emerged from that process.[215] This work was continued through a reparations program that involved lobbying the government to set up welfare activities. In Aceh, ICTJ initiated a working group called the Truth Seeking Commission (Komisi Pengungkapan Kebenaran, KPK). In addition to lobbying for the truth and reconciliation commission, this working group was subsequently involved in drafting a local law (*qanun*) for the Acehnese parliament to use in the establishment of the commission.

The impact of funding on the shape of the network

While the network connecting ICTJ and its local partners exhibits many characteristics of a TAN, qualities of other types of networks were also reflected in this web of partnerships. Considerable research has been done about networks of organisations that address humanitarian emergencies (Benini 1999; Moore, Eng and Daniel 2003; Saab et al. 2008), predominantly on networks established in response to one particular emergency. There is

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[213] Interview with Samsidar, ICTJ (Aceh Program Coordinator), 10 October 2008, Banda Aceh, Aceh.

[214] Interview with Manuela Leong Pereira, ICTJ (Project Associate), 30 July 2009, Dili, Timor Leste. UNMIT was the mission established in the aftermath of the 2006 conflict. See Chapter One for more details.

[215] Interview with Megan Hirst, ICTJ (Program Associate), 23 September 2008, Dili, Timor Leste.

also a body of work on networks of organisations concerned with peacebuilding (Garb and Nan 2006; Nan and Strimling 2006; Westerwinter 2010). In contrast to the literature on TANs, both of these bodies of literature draw on examples of networks that are based in one physical location, with very few examples of cross-border networks. Nevertheless, accounts of these networks can provide a point of reference for how ICTJ operated in each individual place, in particular on the funding of the network and the role of individuals and their relationship with context.

The challenges posed to networks by their funding arrangements are widely canvassed (Rohrschneider and Dalton 2002; Garb and Nan 2006; Saab et al. 2008). One aspect that has received considerable scholarly attention is how the uneven distribution of resources between Northern and Southern members affect dynamics within the network. Research about networks of humanitarian organisations has shown that Southern organisations are frequently under-represented at meetings because they lack the time and resources to attend, which can lead to domination by Northern organisations (Duwe 2001; Moore, Eng and Daniel 2003). In addition, Northern organisations often manage the funding that is channelled to Southern organisations, which further contributes to Northern control over the network (Rohrschneider and Dalton 2002).

ICTJ was conscious of the potential for these types of power dynamics to emerge, and endeavoured to act as a facilitator rather than a leader of the network. Nonetheless, as Manuela Leong Pereira, the Program Associate for the Dili office, explained, the dynamics of the network meant that ICTJ frequently played a leadership role because local organisations were not able to fulfil their responsibilities in a way that satisfied ICTJ:

> What should happen, in theory, is that we are at the back, pushing them to be in front ... but sometimes, we end up here [pointing to a diagram which shows ICTJ in front of the local NGOs]. This demonstrates that on one hand these [organisations] are not yet strong, but on the other hand, they just want to let go of

responsibility, or they are too easy going – things get out of hand and chaotic, and in the end, we have to take responsibility.[216]

Like the organisations engaged in partner-driven relationships discussed in the previous chapter, ICTJ relied, to an extent, on the achievements of its local partners to demonstrate its legitimacy to its own donors. This dependence partly explains the frustration expressed by Pereira at what she perceived as the lack of responsibility taken by the local organisations in the network.

The funding of the network itself is another common focus of scholarly attention. Donors are reluctant to fund networks because their outcomes are hard to measure and their diffuse nature makes it difficult to hold them to account (Verkoren 2006). When funding does become available it can, as discussed earlier, create imbalances within the network, particularly as the Northern members of the network frequently receive the majority of the resources (Jordan and van Tuijl 2000). In other cases, differences between the perspectives of donors and members of the network about how funding should be spent can lead to rifts within networks, particularly in cases where Northern and Southern members of the network have different priorities (Rohrschneider and Dalton 2002).

There were two key ways that the ICTJ network activities were funded that allowed the network to avoid these difficulties. Activities were partly financed using money that ICTJ attracted and distributed to other organisations through short-term contracts, with the shortfall being met by pooling some of the funding each member organisation received from their respective donors. This mechanism allowed the network to sidestep many of the problems associated with accountability because each organisation was responsible for reporting back to their own funding sources. The ICTJ network also received funding for particular activities, such as hosting a

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[216] Interview with Manuela Leong Pereira, ICTJ (Project Associate), 23 September 2008, Dili, Timor Leste.

forum or workshop. The concrete nature of these activities made it easier to convince donors to contribute money.

ICTJ nonetheless experienced trouble attracting donors, although this challenge was primarily because of its interest in potentially controversial issues of justice rather than due to its decision to operate through a network. As an organisation focused on issues related to justice, ICTJ faced difficulties finding donors that were comfortable supporting its projects.[217] Even uncontroversial initiatives such as educating people about truth and reconciliation commissions – activities that are common in other countries – frightened donors because of their link to justice issues. According to a senior associate of ICTJ who oversaw the projects in Indonesia and Timor Leste '[donors] don't want to deal with that because they believe it's too messy and you're dealing with powerful people'.[218] The donors that did support ICTJ, such as the Norwegian Government, HIVOS and the Open Society Institute, were generally easy to work with, but tended to give money on a project by project basis.[219]

Unreliable access to resources also makes it difficult for a network to sustain itself because the individuals who participate often do so in addition to their usual workload (Garb and Nan 2006). One strategy that the ICTJ network used to overcome this problem was to fund organisations individually on a case-by-case basis depending on what activities needed to be completed and on the skills of the partner organisation. In Timor Leste, ICTJ provided funding to a local NGO in exchange for allocation of a staff member from that local NGO to work on a project for ICTJ full time. In other situations it provided funding to a local NGO to host a particular event. On still other occasions, ICTJ provided training or materials.[220] A similar approach was used in Aceh. For example, ICTJ provided funding to KontraS Aceh to cover

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[217] Interview with Galuh Wandita, ICTJ (Senior Associate), 27 November 2009, Jakarta.
[218] Interview with Galuh Wandita, ICTJ (Senior Associate), 27 November 2009, Jakarta.
[219] Interview with Galuh Wandita, ICTJ (Senior Associate), 27 November 2009, Jakarta; Anonymous personal communication, ICTJ, 3 December 2010.
[220] Interview with Megan Hirst, ICTJ (Program Associate), 23 September 2008, Dili, Timor Leste.

the costs of facilitating focus-group discussions with victims of the conflict.[221] This ad-hoc, case-by-case approach to funding meant that ICTJ could avoid being seen as a donor – something necessary because of ICTJ's limited financial resources but which also served to prevent the local NGOs from becoming dependent on the funding it supplied.[222]

Research in other contexts suggests that funding can create tension between members of a network. If funding is not distributed equally to all members it can create competition and cause jealousy, which can have a negative impact on the effectiveness of the network (Abelson 2003; Verkoren 2006). In the case of ICTJ, there is no evidence that the distribution of funding to individual partners generated jealousy, although the arrangement was not always to the local organisations' satisfaction. In Aceh, concerns were raised about the amount of money on offer: one of the complaints that local NGOs made about working with ICTJ was that their per diem would be quite small. As a result, they preferred to be contracted as individuals rather than being seconded to ICTJ from their organisation and receiving the small perdiem. Samsidar, who oversaw the Aceh office, acknowledged that this was a legitimate concern for the local NGOs.[223] In Timor Leste, ICTJ experienced similar challenges. The difficulty that Pereira, a project associate, faced was the need to explain why ICTJ, as an international NGO, had such limited amounts of funding. She knew, as someone who formerly worked within the local NGO sector, that local activists expected international NGOs to have ample funding at their disposal.[224]

The other strategy used by ICTJ to deal with its limited access to funding in both Aceh and Timor Leste was to work side-by-side with local organisations. In Aceh, ICTJ came to an arrangement with the members of

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[221] Interview with Samsidar, ICTJ (Aceh Program Coordinator), 10 October 2008, Banda Aceh, Aceh.
[222] Interview with Megan Hirst, ICTJ (Program Associate), 23 September 2008, Dili, Timor Leste.
[223] Interview with Samsidar, ICTJ (Aceh Program Coordinator), 10 October 2008, Banda Aceh, Aceh.
[224] Interview with Manuela Leong Pereira, ICTJ (Project Associate), 23 September 2008, Dili, Timor Leste.

the KPK such that each member would take responsibility for funding a different section of the group's activities. For example ICTJ provided funding for the production of a report while one of the other network members, the Legal Aid Institution (Lembaga Bantuan Hukum, LBH), provided funding for an academic draft (*naskah akademis*) of the local law on the truth and reconciliation commission. In Timor Leste, ICJT helped the National Victim's Congress Working Group to solicit funding for the Congress from the UNMIT Human Rights and Justice Unit, the Irish Embassy and Progressio, a Catholic aid organisation from the United Kingdom.[225] By working collaboratively, ICTJ was able to build and consolidate relationships with a number of local organisations simultaneously without requiring direct access to large pools of funding. This strategy was not without its challenges. For example, in the lead up to the National Victims' Congress in Timor Leste in 2009 some members of the network frequently missed planning meetings due to other commitments. Others were consistently behind schedule in providing funding they had committed to pay for participants of the congress to travel from different parts of Timor Leste to Dili.[226]

The challenges faced by ICTJ are consistent with those observed by other scholars, who have noted that it can be difficult to coordinate around their different budgets and timeframes when members of a network each have access to their own funding (e.g. Garb and Nan 2006). At times, the expectations of some local NGOs about the funding available from ICTJ did not align with reality and others had difficulty making their financial contributions in a timely manner. Nevertheless, the fact that the network did not rely on core funding for its day-to-day operations meant that it was able to avoid many of the problems frequently faced by organisations that choose to work collaboratively using a network model.

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[225] Participant observation in National Victims Congress planning meeting, 18 August 2009.
[226] Field Notes, Dili 2009

The influence of individuals and context

It is also important to consider the personal motivations of key figures in the local organisations that participated in the network, especially since many of them did not see working with ICTJ as their most financially lucrative option. In the literature about networks, the influence of individuals and context are rarely considered together. Instead, the impact of individuals is largely assessed in relation to their leadership style and ability to generate trust (Bebbington and Kothari 2006; Garb and Nan 2006). The issue of context is generally considered to be important, though scholars very rarely compare how networks operate in different places (Benini 1999; but see Duwe 2001 and Westerwinter 2010). The ICTJ case is illustrative of the connection between individuals and context because of the prominent and influential role that personal relationships played in forming the network, and because of differences in how effective those relationships were in Timor Leste compared to Aceh.

The ICTJ network only came into being after ICTJ opened offices in Indonesia and Timor Leste. Establishing a physical presence in these countries changed ICTJ's relationship with these places since prior to opening the offices, ICTJ consultants would conduct their work through short, fly-in-fly-out visits.[227] In Timor Leste, ICTJ consultants had been involved in designing the CAVR and writing its final report. In Indonesia, they had conducted research on the ad hoc tribunals held in Jakarta in 2001, and on the establishment of the Indonesian TRC (ICTJ 2010a, 2010c). This approach attracted criticism within the international development community in Timor Leste, with some suggesting that ICTJ was missing the details and nuances of the transitional justice situation in each place by not maintaining an in-country base.[228] In changing its strategy, the organisation developed not only a physical presence in Timor Leste and Aceh, but was also able to

[227] Anonymous personal communication, ICTJ, 3 December 2010.
[228] Anonymous personal communication, ICTJ, 3 December 2010.

use the previous experience and contacts of its staff to tap into networks of local activists who had long been involved in justice issues.

The offices in Indonesia and Timor Leste each had their own staff; however, the fact that Galuh Wandita oversaw both offices meant that there were close links between the two. Network scholars have shown that the strategies, goals and personal qualities of leaders can have a significant effect on the characteristics of a particular network (Bebbington and Kothari 2006; Westerwinter 2010). In this case, Wandita's personal connections and professional experience had a considerable impact on the form and performance of the ICTJ network. Wandita, who comes from Indonesia, had well-established connections with civil society organisations in both Jakarta and Dili, and was able to draw on these connections when she recruited staff.[229] As one consultant explained, it was through Wandita's web of personal connections to civil society in Jakarta, Aceh and Timor Leste that ICTJ had become a 'catalyser' of relationships.[230] Indeed, ICTJ's status as an international organisation with local connections meant that it was able to bring together individuals and organisations in civil society in Indonesia that otherwise may not have considered collaborating.

Wandita's links to civil society, particularly in Timor Leste, were a result of an extensive history working within the development sector in Indonesia. Wandita's first exposure to the problems in Timor Leste was in 1991 during the Santa Cruz Massacre. At the time, she was working for Oxfam UK/Ireland (now Oxfam GB) in Kupang. As people began fleeing to Kupang from Dili, Wandita explained that she became aware of the 'other side of the island'. Four years later, Wandita was employed by Community Aid Abroad (CAA, later Oxfam Australia), which asked her to set up programs in what was then East Timor as part of its development and human rights program. Wandita visited Dili at this time and made connections with some of the individuals working for local NGOs. She maintained contact and continued

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[229] This chapter focuses on the offices in Aceh and Dili.
[230] Anonymous personal communication, ICTJ, 3 December 2010.

to work with these activists both in the lead-up to the 1999 referendum and afterwards in her role as Deputy Executive Director of CAVR. Wandita was also instrumental in helping set up FOKUPERS during her time working for CAA. Over ten years later, an activist from this organisation, Manuela Leong Pereira was employed by ICTJ in Timor Leste. Meanwhile, Wandita was connected to the activist community in Indonesia through her family. Her sister, Kamala Chandrakirana, worked for (and later chaired) the National Commission for Women (Komnas Perempuan), and through her, Wandita met activists like Samsidar, a prominent feminist activist from Aceh who spent time living with Wandita's family while working in Jakarta.[231] Samsidar was initially hired to manage the ICTJ Aceh office, and later became a member of ICTJ's Indonesian secretariat.

Magic histories and trust

The personal connections that Wandita developed with activists in Jakarta and Dili became a key element of how the ICTJ network later developed. Not only was she instrumental in staffing the organisation, but she also played a significant role in shaping ICTJ's approach to partnership. Although ICTJ collaborates in some way with local civil society groups in many locations across the world, the approach that ICTJ took to working collaboratively with local NGOs in Aceh and Timor Leste was not based on a particular institutional philosophy.[232] This lack of a formal partnership policy meant that both the strengths and weakness of the individuals involved in the organisation played a major role in ICTJ's interaction with local organisations. As the discussion that follows shows, the relationship that these individuals had with the context in which they were working significantly influenced their ability to build partnerships with local actors.

Many of the methods used within the ICTJ network to build partnerships originated from the work Wandita did with CAA in the 1990s. For example, when with CAA, Wandita had organised a regional meeting of women from

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[231] Interview with Galuh Wandita, ICTJ (Senior Associate), 27 November 2009, Jakarta.
[232] Interview with Galuh Wandita, ICTJ (Senior Associate), 27 November 2009, Jakarta.

eastern Indonesia, including East Nusa Tenggara, Irian Jaya (currently West Papua) and Timor Leste to talk about women's health and human rights. At the time, as she explained, 'it was something brewing in different places, and bringing it together it had this really excellent energy'.[233] The women from Timor Leste who were involved in this workshop later arranged a similar event in Dili that led to the establishment of FOKUPERS. ICTJ replicated this approach in Indonesia and Timor Leste by bringing together activists involved in transitional justice work from different regions to learn from one another. Activists from Timor Leste who supported victims' groups were taken to Aceh to see how victims in Aceh organised themselves and, as noted earlier, activists from Aceh lobbying for the formation of a truth and reconciliation commission were taken to Timor Leste to learn about how the CAVR operated. In short, Wandita's experience working with local civil society organisations meant that she was able to bring together civil society organisations in Aceh, Timor and Jakarta, even in situations when long standing conflicts meant that organisations would rarely collaborate.[234]

The limits of Wandita's personal standing as a basis for ICTJ's legitimacy become apparent when the work of the organisation in Timor Leste and Aceh is compared. Wandita had more authority within the civil society community in Timor Leste than in Aceh because she was able to maintain the status of an 'outsider' who had legitimacy because of her long history working alongside organisations like the HAK Association, and her instrumental role in establishing FOKUPERS. Wandita lacked similar exposure among civil society actors in Aceh, and as a result, relied on Samsidar to facilitate the relationships with local organisations.[235] Samsidar's more embedded role within civil society in Aceh meant, however, that she did not command the same authority as Wandita did in Timor Leste.

Samsidar was one of three key advocates for women's rights in Aceh. According to other Acehnese activists, each of the three advocates took

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[233] Interview with Galuh Wandita, ICTJ (Senior Associate), 27 November 2009, Jakarta.
[234] Anonymous interview, ICTJ, 8 December 2010.
[235] Interview with Galuh Wandita, ICTJ (Senior Associate), 27 November 2009, Jakarta.

different approaches to addressing women's issues and each had their own supporters and critics.[236] Samsidar's entanglement within the politics of local civil society meant that her decisions were sometimes seen by ICTJ's local partners as being related to her position within that community rather than as a reflection of her authority as an ICTJ staff member. In such situations, Wandita was able to play a mediating role even without any 'magic history' in Aceh,[237] as her decisions about whether to accept proposals presented by local NGOs were not interpreted as being biased because of her position as an outsider.[238] Nonetheless, despite being able to leverage her outsider status in these kinds of situations, Wandita explained that her perception was that civil society in Aceh was very independent and less inclined to meet the needs, interests or deadlines of international organisations than groups with which she worked in Timor Leste.

Trust is another element that scholars highlighted as being central to ensure that networks start and run effectively (Liebler and Ferri 2004; Garb and Nan 2006). For other ICTJ staff from outside Aceh, the lack of a 'magic history' was problematic because they were not trusted by the local civil society organisations with whom they were working. For example, an ICTJ staff member from Jakarta was put in charge of a project which involved training staff from local NGOs that collected data about human rights violations to use software that would help them manage the data more effectively. As part of this project, ICTJ wanted access to this data but the organisations that had collected the data – LBH, KontraS Aceh, RPuK and Koalisi NGO HAM – were not willing to share the information. Representatives of these organisations explained that they had developed a procedure to determine who could have access to the data and the conditions under which it could be shared, and ICTJ's request did not meet their criteria.[239] A consultant for ICTJ who had close contact with many of these activists argued that part of

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[236] Anonymous interview, ICTJ, 8 December 2010.
[237] Interview with Galuh Wandita, ICTJ (Senior Associate), 27 November 2009, Jakarta.
[238] Anonymous interview, ICTJ, 8 December 2010.
[239] Interview with Khairani, RPuK (Director), 16 November 2009, Banda Aceh, Aceh; Interview with Zulfikar, Koalisi NGO HAM 18 November 2009, Lhokseumawe, Aceh.

the problem was that there was a lack of trust because the relationship between the ICTJ staff member and the local organisations had not been properly developed. Local activists had been collecting the data for many years using their own time, taking considerable personal risks, and relying on relationships built with communities over many years to access the data. They felt that being asked to collaborate with ICTJ in a way that gave ICTJ access to the data risked their losing control over this hard won information.[240]

The problem of trust between local and international NGOs in Aceh stemmed in part from nature of the space available for them to interact. As noted in previous chapters, in Aceh, local organisations involved in transitional justice issues were sidelined by international agencies implementing large scale post-conflict programs. Moreover, those international agencies tended to follow the lead of the government, which in practice meant not pursuing projects that targeted justice for victims, but instead focusing on reintegrating former combatants. This strategy further reinforced the view held by Acehnese human rights NGOs that their interests were not aligned with those of the international agencies. The dissonance between the goals of the local NGOs and the goals of the international agencies also meant there were fewer opportunities for collaboration, leading to a strong sense of independence within the local NGO community in Aceh and a sense of ownership over initiatives to help victims.

The issue of trust was less problematic in Timor Leste where local human rights NGOs had more opportunities to engage with international organisations about issues of justice. Both the HAK Association and FOKUPERS were closely involved in the CAVR and Serious Crimes Unit investigations and had multiple international donors. Moreover, foreign volunteers had worked with them at various points in time. Working alongside Pereira during 2007 and 2008 was Megan Hirst, an Australian lawyer who had employment experience with other local organisations in

[240] Anonymous interview, ICTJ, 8 December 2010.

Dili. From 2009, Naomi Kinsella, another Australian who had previously been involved with the CAVR, replaced Hirst. In Aceh, on the other hand, the office was run primarily by Samsidar with occasional assistance from various consultants who were either hired in a short term capacity on particular projects, or were not very well connected to the broader international community.

The deep personal relationships between ICTJ staff and their local partners in Timor Leste was another important difference between the two places. As noted earlier, a number of planning meetings were held involving ICTJ staff and staff from three key local NGOs – the HAK Association, FOKUPERS, and the NGO Forum – as well as support groups for victims of the 1974–1999 conflict and staff from the UN Human Rights Unit and the UN Serious Crimes Investigation Team prior to the National Victims' Congress in Timor Leste in September 2009. Before one of these meetings Pereira privately expressed her frustration with the planning team for not putting sufficient time into organising a schedule for the day of the congress. She had told her husband, José Luis, the former director of the HAK Association, that the schedule was something that needed to be addressed. Previously Pereira had also explained that she felt that one of ICTJ's roles was to protect the local organisations from being dictated to by the UN representatives in the working group. When José Luis appeared later in the meeting, it was clear he retained both a considerable level of authority over those in attendance and that he had been talking to his wife. He guided the participants towards discussing the schedule for the day of the congress, and in the process was also able to communicate to the UN members of the group that there were clear limits around what the representatives from the international community were to speak about at the congress.[241]

This example draws attention to how ICTJ's mode of operation blurred the boundary between the local and international NGO members of the network. The direct personal relationships between the staff in ICTJ and members of

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[241] Participant observation in National Victims Congress planning meeting, 18 August 2009.

local civil society organisations suggest that it can be problematic to think about such networks as comprising members that are separate and divided along international and local lines. Wandita explained that many of the individuals associated with the network had in fact been engaged with these issues prior to ICTJ establishing a presence in Timor Leste. Reflecting on her own relationship with ICTJ, Wandita commented that it was a 'vehicle I can use for a while, and I'll use it, and at one point it may or may not be relevant anymore'.[242]

The challenges of blurry boundaries

The use of ICTJ as a vehicle by a network of activists who had a long history of working together on transitional justice issues brought its own challenges. According to some observers, in comparison to the office in Timor Leste, ICTJ's Aceh office had not been able to fully take advantage of its position as an international organisation because it did not have the same kinds of connections with international actors as the Timor Leste office and consequently was frequently drawn into the politics of local civil society. This occurred in part because of Samsidar's antagonistic views towards the involvement of the international community in Aceh and partly because of her, at times, troubled relationship with other civil society actors. For example, some local NGO activists who had worked with ICTJ explained that when they tried to give input into alternative ways of managing relationships with local partners they felt their ideas were not welcomed.[243]

In Timor Leste, Pereira also experienced challenges after beginning her new position as a staff member for an international NGO. She was forced to change her approach to transitional justice when she moved from FOKUPERS, a local NGO with direct links to communities in Timor Leste, to ICTJ, which was more removed from the grassroots. She explained that one of the challenges she faced working through partnership was to relinquish control of how communication occurred with those at the

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[242] Interview with Galuh Wandita, ICTJ (Senior Associate), 27 November 2009, Jakarta.
[243] Anonymous interview, 25 November 2009, Banda Aceh

grassroots level: 'We have to follow the rules of the local organisations. Because they are, after all, more powerful. We can say that they have more power. We have to do what they want.'[244] It was also difficult to adjust to working at arm's length. Having left a local NGOs where she was directly involved in engaging with the victims of the conflict, Pereira felt frustrated at no longer being able to provide input about what happened at that level and having to trust the local organisations to successfully manage those relationships. Nevertheless, it was these very experiences with working at the community level that gave her the insight and ability to advise and support ICTJ's local partners.

Ideas and the ICTJ Network

The intertwining of personality and context had significant implications for the development and movement of ideas about transitional justice in this transnational network. The role ICTJ has played in the generation and dissemination of ideas about transitional justice is consistent with Keck and Sikkink's (1998, 10) argument that TANs' ability to generate, frame and distribute information is one of their key strengths. Indeed, ICTJ has played a central role in the development of transitional justice as a field of study and practice and it uses its direct links to places that have experienced mass human rights violations to produce and disseminate its ideas.

ICTJ has played an active role in producing ideas about transitional justice worldwide. The ICTJ website identifies the founding of the organisation as part of the development of the field of transitional justice: 'In some senses, ICTJ's relationship to the field is genetic: transitional justice and ICTJ came into being at nearly the same time, and the Center also took deliberate steps to define and develop the field' (ICTJ 2010d). Scholars in the field of transitional justice have also observed the links between the establishment of transitional justice as a stand-alone field of inquiry and the development of

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[244] Interview with Manuela Leong Pereira, ICTJ (Project Associate), 23 September 2008, Dili, Timor Leste.

ICTJ (Brahm 2007, 70; Bell 2009, 9). Further enhancing those links are ICTJ's connections with an academic journal called the *International Journal for Transitional Justice.* Staff from ICTJ publish regularly in the journal and some are members of the editorial board and its staff (Rubio-Marín and Greiff 2007; Carranza 2008; Méndez 2009). Journal articles also frequently reference ICTJ research reports (e.g. Pham and Vinck 2007; Pasipanodya 2008; Musila 2009; Thoms, Ron and Paris 2010) and draw on examples of ICTJ's practical work (e.g. Rosser 2007; Duthie 2008; Jaquemet 2009; Backer 2010). As a consequence, ICTJ's research focus and its involvement in the journal create links between it and individuals and organisations engaged in theory-making, both at a policy and an academic level.

One of the criticisms made of ICTJ by observers in Timor Leste is that its prominent position in the development of the field of transitional justice compels its local partners to focus on issues which they may not otherwise prioritise.[245] Staff from FOKUPERS explained that at the time ICTJ opened its Dili branch their organisation was not addressing cases of human rights violations from the Indonesian occupation because of the pressing need to respond to contemporary domestic violence cases. With encouragement from ICTJ, FOKUPERS later attempted to focus on the cases from the 1974–1999 conflict, but found it difficult to find the time and resources to do so.[246] This situation echoes the findings of research on how power differentials between Northern and Southern members of networks affect the generation of information and knowledge within TANs (Rohrschneider and Dalton 2002; Dumoulin 2003). However, it also raises questions about the conceptual base underpinning ICTJ's projects.

Whose ideas drove the actions of the ICTJ network in Timor Leste and Indonesia and what mechanisms facilitated the transfer of those ideas between its members? To what extent did ICTJ's role as an 'international'

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[245] Field Notes, Dili 2009. A similar observation about ICTJ was made to me by a consultant for ICTJ who had experience with the organisation in Central America.

[246] Interview with Marilia da Silva Alves, FOKUPERS (Program Manager – Community Strengthening), 8 October 2009, Dili, Timor Leste.

organisation influence the kind of ideas that were transferred and how they were received by the community of local organisations with which it worked? The answers to these questions suggest that the power differential between ICTJ and local organisations did not have as significant an impact on how the network operated as may be the case in other transnational networks. As the international member of the network, ICTJ did determine the type of input that local organisations had into the development of ideas about transitional justice, but at the same time, the personal connections between individuals played a central role in the movement of ideas in the network.

The movement of ideas

ICTJ uses a number of strategies to share, develop and elicit ideas about transitional justice with the local organisations in its network. One of its primary strategies is to share ideas by working alongside local organisations. In Timor Leste, ICTJ worked with local organisations in the reparations working group and during the preparations for the National Victims' Congress; in Aceh, ICTJ worked alongside local organisations in the KPK. These arrangements allowed local organisations to learn a great deal about and contribute to various transitional justice mechanisms. In the Aceh case, staff from local organisations explained that working with ICTJ helped them learn about how truth and reconciliation commissions operated in other parts of the world, about what reparations were and about how best to advocate for them in Aceh.[247]

The working groups were also a channel through which ICTJ could propose alternative strategies to local NGOs for achieving their goals. For example, Pereira explained that in Timor Leste the local organisations had a 'resistance' mentality, in particular when it came to working with the government, referring to their tendency to use confrontational methods when

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[247] Interview with Asiah, KontraS Aceh (Former Director and Public Relations Officer), 13 October 2008, Banda Aceh, Aceh; Interview with Khairani, RPuK (Director), 16 November 2009, Banda Aceh, Aceh.

communicating with the government about their goals and interests.[248] This approach often offended government officials and made it difficult for local civil society to promote change at the national level. ICTJ encouraged the local organisations with which it worked to take a more conciliatory approach. A staff member from FOKUPERS explained that she learnt much from this strategy. In particular, she discovered that the government actually knew very little about how to help victims of the conflict, and that by explaining what role government agencies could play rather than protesting, her organisation was able to exert greater influence.[249]

In addition to providing local organisations with strategies and information, ICTJ was also able to use the working groups as a channel through which to elicit ideas. As Megan Hirst from the Timor Leste office explained:

> With the reparations working group the focus is to try and have a channel to get the ideas of the local NGOs, because, especially HAK and FOKUPERS they're the people who sort of have ... long term experience working in this area and a long-term relationship with the victims ... if you just ask them once-off what their thoughts are on reparations you don't necessarily get the answer that is immediately useful, but we sort of tried to establish a framework through which we could ask the right questions ... it's kind of just a means of getting their ideas from them.[250]

ICTJ also used this approach when doing collaborative research about transitional justice issues with their local partners. By co-authoring reports, ICTJ was able to consolidate the skills of its local partners while at the same time ensuring that its local partners' ideas were incorporated in the material that it published and distributed worldwide. As noted earlier, ICTJ wrote a report about the perspectives of conflict victims towards the peace process in

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[248] Interview with Manuela Leong Pereira, ICTJ (Project Associate), 23 September 2008, Dili, Timor Leste.
[249] Interview with Marilia da Silva Alves, FOKUPERS (Program Manager – Community Strengthening), 8 October 2009, Dili, Timor Leste.
[250] Interview with Megan Hirst, ICTJ (Program Associate), 23 September 2008, Dili, Timor Leste.

Aceh in collaboration with KontraS Aceh (Clarke, Wandita and Samsidar 2008). The process involved staff from KontraS Aceh working with an ICTJ staff member to develop a research plan and research tools before conducting focus group discussions with conflict victims, the results of which were then used to draft the content of the report. An international consultant later edited the draft written by KontraS Aceh in order to ensure that it reached the standard required by the ICTJ headquarters in New York.[251]

ICTJ's reports offered an additional means of feeding ideas back into local organisations in the hope that it could influence their advocacy strategies. As ICTJ does not have a mandate to directly lobby governments in the countries in which it works, co-authoring reports with local NGOs became an important strategy to influence debate about transitional justice issues. For example, one of the tasks of the ICTJ Timor Leste office was to monitor the CTF and compile a report (see Hirst 2008). As Hirst explained:

> Around the time we put out our first report, when we were doing research, we were feeding information from our monitoring reports to [our local partners], we were sort of trying to be careful because our NGO doesn't really do direct advocacy in Timor Leste so we try and support the local NGOs in whatever advocacy they were doing by giving them information and technical assistance that we had, but we don't so much do the advocacy ourselves.[252]

These examples illustrate ICTJ's commitment to a two-way movement of ideas between it and the local organisations that were part of its network. Its report-writing model provided a mechanism through which ICTJ could draw out the ideas that local NGOs had developed from working closely with victims groups to influence political processes related to transitional justice. In this way, the local organisations and ICTJ both benefitted from the input of the other. ICTJ could claim that its research findings were legitimate

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[251] Anonymous personal communication, ICTJ, 3 December 2010.
[252] Interview with Megan Hirst, ICTJ (Program Associate), 23 September 2008, Dili, Timor Leste.

because of its close connections to local communities via local NGOs. At the same time, the local NGOs were given resources and guidance to assist in achieving their own human rights, justice and conflict victim oriented goals. The local organisations involved in the project spoke highly of their experience working on the report, and the report was presented to me by various local NGOs as evidence of their involvement in transitional justice issues and of their ability to work collaboratively with other organisations interested in these issues.

Another strategy that ICTJ used to spread its ideas was to organise exchanges between its branches for local activists in the network. The organisation made use of the presence of its branches in Timor Leste and Aceh by sending local activists and representatives from victims' groups between the two places. A trip occurred in early 2007 when a conflict victim who worked at FOKUPERS and a staff member from the HAK Association were sent to Aceh to observe the victims' congress held there. In mid-2008, activists from Aceh who were involved in the KPK were sent to Timor Leste to learn about the CAVR. Later that year, representatives from victims' groups in Aceh were sent to meet their counterparts in Timor Leste. ICTJ also facilitated extended visits by activists from Jakarta to share their skills and provided local activists the opportunity to attend training programs. For instance, in the lead up to the National Victims' Congress in Timor Leste, an activist from the KontraS office in Jakarta worked closely with activists from the HAK Association directly contributing ideas and strategies which fed into the design and implementation of the workshop.[253] In preparation for the same event, ICTJ sent an activist from the HAK Association to Bali to attend a transitional justice workshop.[254]

ICTJ made use of its extended network in a variety of ways to disseminate and elicit ideas from its local partners. By employing staff with close links to the activist community, organising workshops for its local partners in each

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[253] Field Notes, Dili 2009.
[254] Interview with Xisto dos Santos, HAK Association (Human Rights Monitoring Manager), 5 August 2009, Dili, Timor Leste.

place and arranging exchanges between its networks in Timor and Aceh, ICTJ was able to draw on and disseminate ideas that local activists had developed through their extensive experience working with communities. In many ways, however, this network was not the source of new ideas, but rather a channel through which to enhance the knowledge of all these actors about concepts with which they were already familiar. Many of the individuals working in the ICTJ network – Wandita, Pereira, Pereira's husband José Luis, Samsidar, and many of the individuals associated with the local NGOs – had been cooperating to support conflict victims since the late 1990s. ICTJ and the network it set up was the latest manifestation in what had been a long-lasting collaboration between these individuals. By using these personal links, ICTJ exposed local activists to ideas about transitional justice in such a way that they could reach their own conclusions about how to integrate these ideas into their activities.

Conclusion

ICTJ and the local organisations with which it worked in Timor Leste and Aceh were primarily focused on issues related to transitional justice. Specifically, the network focused on providing avenues through which victims of conflict in both locations were able to have a voice and on advocacy for the implementation and follow up of mechanisms such as truth and reconciliation commissions. These types of concerns have been recognised as integral to the process of peacebuilding by both the academic literature and by practitioners working for and with ICTJ in Aceh and Timor Leste.

The ICTJ network comprised individuals who had been working together, albeit in different configurations, on human rights issues since the late 1990s. Wandita, the Senior Associate of ICTJ responsible for overseeing the Indonesia/Timor Leste project, used her personal connections to staff the ICTJ offices in Dili and Banda Aceh. In turn, the people she employed used their own relationships with members of local civil society to build up the ICTJ network. Many of the activists involved in the network from Timor

Leste had worked alongside Wandita during the 1999 upheaval, while many of those from Aceh who were involved in the ICTJ network had worked with Samsidar, the Program Associate for the ICTJ Aceh office, during the conflict. This use of personal relationships enabled ICTJ to make best use of the 'international' and 'local' members of the network while simultaneously breaking down the boundaries between these categories.

By not directly providing funding and blurring the boundaries between 'international' and 'local' within this network ICTJ was able to elicit and disseminate local ideas, but this approach was not without its challenges. In some respects, by not acting in the traditional 'donor' role, ICTJ was able to operate on a more equal footing with its local partners. But being an 'international organisation' is not a label that can be easily ignored by local activists who still expected that ICTJ would behave like other international NGOs. For example, in Aceh activists were as mistrustful of ICTJ as they were of many other international organisations; in Timor, there was a tendency for local activists to defer to ICTJ's decisions. In both places, local activists expected ICTJ to have access to more money than it did in fact have.

Importantly, by not providing direct funding and relying on the personal relationships between individuals to make the network function, ICTJ became vulnerable to the weaknesses of the interpersonal approach. Relying on personal networks to execute projects becomes problematic when key individuals become entangled in local politics or if their relationships break down. ICTJ's local staff members, who were long-standing members of the local activist community, struggled at times with the transition to their role with an international organisation and with the challenge of embracing all the opportunities that their new positions provided.

Despite these challenges, however, the network approach led ICTJ to use its resources creatively, enabling ideas about and practices of transitional justice to come together. ICTJ, as the network's 'international' member, was able to help locate funding, negotiate with other members of the international community in Aceh and Timor Leste and contribute to theory-making at a

global level. 'Local' network members were given opportunities to visit and work with one another across national boundaries and bring back ideas to implement with their local constituents. By providing opportunities for exchanges, ICTJ allowed local activists to decide for themselves whether strategies that worked in one place would work in their own context. Additionally, these activists' long term experience working with communities became a source of knowledge and insight upon which ICTJ was able to contribute to policy discussions about transitional justice. As a result of working in this way, ICTJ was able to better facilitate the meeting of ideas and practice more effectively than other modes of partnership discussed in this thesis.

Conclusion

This thesis has provided a detailed analysis of how ideas about peacebuilding are applied by NGOs in Timor Leste and Aceh through the medium of partnership. It has done so by undertaking a systematic investigation of three types of partnership involving Northern and Southern NGOs engaged in peacebuilding: contract partnerships, partner-driven relationships and networked relationships. These three styles of partnership – while not exhaustive – represent a cross-section of the diverse modes of collaboration between Northern and Southern actors. Contract partnerships are short term relationships based on a fee-for-service arrangement, while partner-driven relationships are partnerships in which the international organisation works through its local partner rather than directly implementing programs. Network relationships, meanwhile, are based primarily on collaborative engagement around a particular issue rather than the exchange of resources.

By exploring examples of these different styles of partnerships, this thesis has provided insight into the diverse range of ways that NGOs in Timor Leste and Aceh participated in peacebuilding. The NGOs featured in this thesis engaged in activities ranging from the building of basketball courts, to improving the conflict resolution skills of former rebels and developing a conflict early-warning system that alerted communities to the possibility of instability and violence, to advocacy around issues of justice. With the exception of the work done by the ICTJ network, the NGO projects discussed in this thesis focussed on small scale ventures which occasionally, but not always, contributed to the broader peacebuilding initiatives implemented by state institutions, the UN and multilateral and bilateral agencies. While these small projects were not always directly aligned with the peacebuilding goals of the government and international agencies, they complemented them and, in some cases, were implemented alongside initiatives that did engage with these broader initiatives.

The ICTJ network, which supported local NGOs to advocate for the implementation of large scale transitional justice mechanisms, provides a

counter-example to the small-scale projects developed through contract and partner-driven relationships. In Aceh, the network lobbied for the implementation of the human rights court and truth and reconciliation commission referenced in the 2005 MoU. In Timor Leste, it addressed issues of justice for victims of the 1974-1999 conflict. Those within the network argued that although the government and larger international aid agencies did not see these issues as being central to mainstream peacebuilding programs, their efforts were necessary for peace because they addressed some of the fundamental problems that contributed to, and resulted from, the conflicts in each place. The ICTJ network's approach demonstrates that Northern and Southern NGOs can be part of peacebuilding projects that target structural and political change but that this requires commitment and a willingness to defend a potentially controversial and occasionally political stance on the part of all those involved. For ICTJ itself, this position posed problems in terms of finding donors to support its projects. For its local partners, it meant developing strategies to convince the government that their goals went beyond protest and opposition.

The difference between the approach taken by ICTJ and the other international NGOs discussed in this thesis demonstrates the diversity of peacebuilding roles that NGOs can undertake. It also highlights the structural factors that shape their contribution to peacebuilding. When questioned about their willingness to engage in political issues, World Vision, Care, HIVOS and Trócaire argued that to do so was not within the scope of their involvement, either because their organisation had no political mandate or because they did not want to influence the political agendas of their local partners. This position limited these international organisations to supporting small-scale projects that impacted upon a narrow cross-section of the population, but at the same time allowed them to capitalise on the strengths of their local partners, many of whom were better equipped to operate at this level. On the one hand, this illustrates how institutional mandates limit the scope of how NGOs engage with peacebuilding, while on the other it shows

how operating in this way potentially facilitates local organisations' involvement in the peacebuilding process.

Context, Funding Structures and Individuals

This thesis has highlighted three key factors that influenced the dynamics of partnership and the opportunity to exchange ideas in each of the cases discussed. Contextual factors shaped the expectations that the organisations had of one another, particularly Southern NGOs' expectations of their Northern partners. Funding structures played a major role in determining how much time was invested in bureaucratic and administrative tasks as compared to discussions about the substantive content of the projects. The final factor influencing each institution's approach to partnership and the ideas underpinning their projects were the experiences, values systems and personal qualities of the individuals affiliated with each project.

One of the key findings of this thesis is that the way in which the aid industry established its presence in each place shaped the expectations and attitudes of the local NGOs towards their international partners. The presence and approach of the international aid industry in the aftermath of the tsunami had a number of implications for NGO partnerships in Aceh. First, many international organisations had had no presence in the province prior to the tsunami. They lacked local contacts but were under pressure to rapidly find local partners, which led to partnership choices that were not always appropriate. Second, the availability of relatively large amounts of funding and the urgency with which international agencies were required to spend it meant that there were incentives for new and inexperienced local organisations to become involved in peacebuilding. In the cases examined here, 3P had a strong commitment and interest in peacebuilding but its lack of experience led to poor strategic choices that eventually triggered a premature end to its relationship with its partner, World Vision. ADAP, on the other hand, had little interest in peacebuilding and was driven primarily by the availability of funding from HIVOS. Finally, the dynamics established by the international response to the tsunami in Aceh contributed to a lack of

trust towards the international aid community by local civil society organisations that had an interest in human rights issues. This dynamic was particularly apparent in the case of the organisations involved in the ICTJ network which were reluctant to collaborate on projects with newly arrived ICTJ staff.

The situation in Timor Leste was very different primarily because the international aid industry already had a relatively extended presence in Timor Leste and, as a result, local NGOs were more adept at negotiating their relationships with their international partners. This ability was particularly apparent in the case of the relationship between FTM and Care, in which FTM was able to manage and dissipate conflicts with Care over the course of the project. The longer history of engagement between the international and local sectors also meant that there were stronger relationships in Timor Leste between the organisations involved in the ICTJ network based on many years of joint collaborations. However, the extended presence of the international aid community did not always engender feelings of trust. The founder of the Peace Centre saw the presence of international organisations as a threat precisely because they had been around for so long and, as a consequence, was very particular about the international partners with which his organisation would collaborate.

In addition to these contextual factors, each of the three partnership models discussed in this thesis were characterised by different approaches and attitudes towards the dissemination of funding. One key difference was the level of importance that the Northern partners attributed to financial accountability. For example, as discussed in Chapter Two, there was a significant mismatch between Care's concern about project money being misspent and FTM's approach, which was forgiving of budget discrepancies as long as project outcomes were met. The clash between Care and FTM on this issue put considerable strain on their relationship and became an obstacle to open discussion about how best to build peace at the community level. The 'fee-for-service' assumption underlying their short-term mode of partnership contributed to this dynamic because it limited the opportunities for joint

decision making about conceptual aspects of the project. Both Care and World Vision hired local partners to implement elements of projects that they had designed independently, allowing little opportunity for these projects to incorporate the ideas of local activists.

In comparison, international NGOs involved in partner-driven relationships were more flexible about how project funding was spent. Furthermore, they had mechanisms in place to enable local NGOs to design projects and to support them in developing the skills required in the implementation phase. For example, in Timor Leste, the conflict between Trócaire and the Peace Centre initially appeared to be about accountability and procedure; however, the flexibility in the partnership arrangement and the commitment that Trócaire had to honouring the autonomy of its local partners offered a genuine opportunity for the two organisations to debate the meaning of peacebuilding. Similarly HIVOS' more flexible partnership style allowed EPC to make changes to its project design that took account of new observations it had made about which members of the community should be targeted. These examples suggest that in the partner-driven relations, when local NGOs are committed to building peace, there are more opportunities for them to exchange and share ideas with their international partners. However, as discussed earlier, the nature of the funding offered by HIVOS through this mode of partnership in Aceh did attract local NGOs like ADAP who had greater interest in the financial benefits of the partnership than a commitment to peacebuilding. This type of situation highlights one of the risks of this mode of partnership, particularly for international NGOs, which can find themselves in a particularly vulnerable position when they rely heavily on their local partners for the successful implementation of their projects.

The third approach to partnership – the networked relationship – was structured around joint collaboration on issues that both the international and local partner considered to be important. In this model of partnership the transfer of funding played a relatively minor role. This structure created confusion for local activists, who expected ICTJ to operate more like their

other international NGO partners: in both Timor Leste and Aceh, the local NGOs were surprised at how little money they received for working with ICTJ. This dynamic reflects how the funding structures used by most international NGOs have led to a perception among local activists that all international NGOs are awash with funds. By stepping away from the conventional approach to funding, the network approach facilitated the implementation of creative mechanisms for exchanging and disseminating ideas, such as co-authoring publications and organising field trips and exchanges for local activists. These activities were less susceptible to problems of accountability and were designed specifically to facilitate discussion about how the local NGOs' practical experiences with the victims of conflict related to theoretical concepts about transitional justice.

The impact of funding structures on the timeframe of the partnership also played an important role in mediating the exchange of ideas. Funding structures that promoted short-term collaborations offered fewer opportunities for the exchange of ideas. As discussed in Chapter Two, the short-term nature of contract relationships meant that there were limited opportunities for either the Northern or Southern partner to resolve conflicting attitudes or approaches towards peacebuilding. Instead these differences became a reason to 'manage' the relationship without seeking a resolution or to simply end the partnership. In contrast, the long term nature of the commitment between NGOs involved in partner-driven relationships became an incentive for negotiating differences in opinion about how to build peace, such as in the case of the dispute between Trócaire and the Peace Centre. The timeframe of the particular networked relationship established by ITCJ was also conducive to meaningful exchange because it promoted long-term interpersonal relationships, which provided ample opportunity for the discussion and development of ideas. Nevertheless, this process was hampered by some of the challenges of relying on personal relationships such as interpersonal conflicts and personality clashes.

Another central theme of this study has been the contribution that individuals have made to the partnerships and to the peacebuilding ideas within each

organisation. Most local NGOs discussed in this thesis came to their partnerships with their own ideas about how to build peace, which had been shaped primarily by the experiences and education of their founders. In some cases, these individuals were primarily interested in experimenting with their own ideas and were not concerned about using the partnership as a site for learning or intellectual exchange. Nevertheless, this thesis has also provided examples of local actors who benefited from opportunities for developing their knowledge about peacebuilding from their international partners. For example, staff from both EPC and from the local NGOs that were part of the ICTJ network described how they were able to acquire new concepts or tools through their interaction with their international partner which assisted them in their work. In both of these cases the sharing of ideas occurred through activities designed explicitly by the international NGO to support local NGOs in the development of new concepts, such as opportunities to work on joint publications and to participate in local NGO networks. These activities allowed local NGOs to actively develop and seek out ideas rather than being passive recipients of 'outside' theory.

Individuals working for the international NGOs also played a key role in the transmission of ideas across the North-South interface. The choices made by individuals like Galuh Wandita from ICTJ played a central part in shaping the dynamics of the ICTJ network, drawing on her experience with networks she had coordinated in other parts of Indonesia earlier in her career. Her senior role allowed her the freedom to apply similar models with local civil society in Indonesia and Timor Leste. In Aceh, Jonathan Lassa played an important role in integrating peacebuilding into HIVOS' program, convincing donors to undertake a peacebuilding project and identifying the conceptual framework that eventually shaped the project. Both Galuh and Lassa were, however, more constrained by their institutional mandates than their local counterparts. Lassa was under considerable pressure to quickly commit funding to particular projects and Wandita had to operate within the parameters of a transitional justice framework. Wandita navigated this situation by viewing ICTJ as a 'tool' – something she and her network of

colleagues used to achieve a specific set of goals, and for a finite period of time. Notably, 3P director Fachrul Razi conceptualised his relationship with his own NGO in the same way, as a tool to gain legitimacy and to experiment with different conceptual peacebuilding tools. The approach of these individuals demonstrates a sense of control over the organisations for which they worked, which allowed them to use the organisation as an instrument to meet their professional goals, to promote change and to put their ideas into practice.

This finding speaks to one of the central questions addressed by this thesis, namely how the agency of local NGOs influences the process of exchanging and developing peacebuilding ideas within NGO partnerships. The local NGOs featured in this study were acutely aware of the implications of different kinds of partnership. They were deliberate about embarking on relationships that aligned with their general principles of partnership or that they believed would allow them to pursue their institutional goals. Both FTM and 3P were cognisant of the limitations of contract partnerships. Although FTM was left with little choice about partnering with Care, its commitment to the community led it to actively seek ways to work around the constraints of its contract, sourcing grants from other institutions to fund aspects that Care would not, and contributing its own funds to the project when money went missing, and ultimately terminating the relationship. 3P deliberately chose international NGO partners with which it could work for a limited period of time in order to maintain institutional independence and autonomy. The Peace Centre, too, made very deliberate decisions about its funding sources, choosing to work with Trócaire, with which it shared values and had a long history of engagement. At times, the agency of these local organisations created problems for their international partners. ADAP refused to complete documentation that was central to its partnership with HIVOS, while some of the organisations that were part of the ICTJ network in Aceh were initially uncooperative with ICTJ when it requested that they share data they had collected about conflict victims. Although not always helpful for donors, the agency exerted by each of these organisations

nevertheless contributed significantly to their ability to ensure that their ideas were made part of the projects on which they worked – something that is often overlooked in the literature about the involvement of civil society in peacebuilding.

Peacebuilding Praxis

For each of the Northern NGOs discussed in this thesis, working through partnership was a means of achieving their project goals. In all cases, this objective was framed in terms of supporting local organisations to become more skilled and effective, a framing consistent with a central tenant of liberal peacebuilding. As noted in the Introduction, the practice of liberal peacebuilding, which includes cultivating civil society, has been widely criticised by scholars, some of whom have made calls for the formation of hybrid models that better integrate local and international practices. This thesis has provided an alternative, yet complementary, perspective to this argument by drawing attention to the mechanisms that shape the exchange of ideas between Northern and Southern NGOs. By focusing on the agency of local NGOs, it has illustrated that, under particular conditions, developing civil society through NGO partnership can be a medium through which local and international ideas meet and evolve.

The ability of particular individuals working in both local and international NGOs to act as brokers and translators within the international development system played an important role in enabling this particular North-South interface to function as a medium for the exchange of ideas. The Northern and Southern NGOs described in this thesis used different strategies to source the peacebuilding ideas which they brought to their partnerships and consequently contributed different frameworks and knowledge to the projects on which they worked. Through the efforts of these brokers and translators, local NGOs were given access to the frameworks of the international NGOS, and the experiences and observations of local NGOs were translated into language and ideas relevant and comprehensible to their international partners.

The differences in how Northern and Southern NGOs acquire their peacebuilding ideas illustrate both the value and the limitations of using such partnerships as a site for understanding the nexus between peacebuilding theory and practice. Local NGOs' peacebuilding ideas had their roots in the experiences and education of individuals within the organisation. In Timor Leste, the projects implemented by FTM and the Peace Centre were shaped by the observations and experiences of their staff during the independence campaign, in the aftermath of the independence referendum in 1999 and during the 2006 crisis. Similarly, in Aceh, EPC's ideas about how to build peace emerged through the interaction between its staff and people in the community. In both places, the local organisations that were part of the ICTJ network developed their ideas through their many years of working with conflict victims.

These observations and experiences were translated into peacebuilding projects by individuals with an understanding of how to engage with and frame their ideas in a way amenable to international NGO donors. For organisations such as the Peace Centre, 3P and EPC the educational background of their leaders contributed directly or indirectly to the ability for this translation to occur. For other organisations, such as FTM, the director's extensive experience of working with international agencies meant that it was able to navigate, translate and fill gaps between the interests of the local communities with which it worked and the expectations of Care. In other words, although local NGO staff may come from the elite sectors of society, organisations that have mechanisms for engaging with communities can act as effective intermediaries for the development of peacebuilding ideas. Individuals who acted as translators within international NGOs also played an important role in facilitating the upward movement of ideas generated within local NGOs. People such as Galuh Wandita, who had a deep understanding of local context and extensive experience with local civil society organisations, were able to create mechanisms that allowed local NGOs to feed ideas and information into material that had an international audience.

The Northern NGOs discussed here drew on very different resources to develop their peacebuilding ideas. These organisations and their staff had access to academic theories and frameworks about peacebuilding, which they used to design their programs. World Vision applied the Do No Harm framework, based on research undertaken by Mary Anderson, to determine its approach in Aceh, while Care and Trócaire undertook research about Timor Leste in order to determine their approach to building peace. Care went on to develop peacebuilding training manuals which drew on academic theories and Trócaire's peacebuilding officer in Ireland developed a peacebuilding concept paper drawing from a range of scholarly work. ICTJ also relied on a combination of an institutional interest in transitional justice and extensive research undertaken jointly with its local partners. In addition it had a direct link with an academic journal which published research about transitional justice. Northern NGOs were also able to draw on their experience in other locations to supplement their peacebuilding projects. For example, World Vision's application of the Do No Harm framework in Aceh was based on extensive experience using that framework in other parts of the world, while HIVOS relied on a peacebuilding framework that one of its staff members had encountered in another part of Indonesia, which it used in combination with its own assessments of the peacebuilding priorities in Aceh. ICTJ also actively made use of its transnational links and international networks to facilitate the spread of ideas between its local partners.

North-South NGO partnerships contribute to an understanding of the relationship between peacebuilding theory and practice because they serve as a meeting point for different sources of knowledge. Northern NGOs contribute a repertoire of practical experience from a broad range of locations, and their work is more likely to be influenced by academic work. Southern NGOs, too, have access to academic theories, which they use in combination with knowledge based on practical experience with local communities, as well as knowledge of, and observations about, local context. There are a number of limitations of these sources of knowledge which may affect the applicability and relevance of the ideas that NGOs formulate

together. For example, there is no certainty that international or local NGOs engage effectively with the theory they apply. Furthermore, the ideas that the international NGOs bring from their experience abroad may not resonate in all contexts and the experiences upon which local NGOs base their ideas may only be relevant to a particular demographic. These limitations notwithstanding, the key factor shaping the ability for local and international NGOs to share and exchange ideas is the nature of their relationship and the opportunities their partnership offer for discussion and communication about the conceptual aspects of the projects.

These findings have implications for both Northern and Southern NGOs. This study has shown that longer-term relationships structured in such a way as to decentre issues of accountability allow more space for the exchange of ideas. Additionally, activities that are specifically designed to elicit Southern ideas and encourage Northern and Southern actors to develop frameworks and undertake analysis collaboratively help to ensure that local ideas are incorporated into project designs. This suggests that it is important that Northern NGOs acknowledge and respect the ideas, strategies and goals that their Southern partners bring to the relationship. Doing so, in combination with offering opportunities for local NGOs to contribute to the project's design and to materials produced about the project, will strengthen the ability for NGO partnerships to become sites of exchange. Equally, it suggests that it is important for Southern NGOs to seek opportunities to contribute to project reports and other forms of documentation, which can provide channels for their ideas to reach beyond their local context. For some local organisations, this may mean setting aside defensive attitudes towards the ideas and practices of outsiders. If they manage to do so, local NGOs can potentially use partnerships to develop their own skills, while at the same time contributing to global discourse about peacebuilding.

The findings of this thesis also have important implications for those engaged in theory-making because they illustrate the complexity of the peacebuilding theory and practice nexus. As this thesis has demonstrated, context, institutional funding structures and people interact with one another in

different constellations through the medium of an organisation and its partnership with other institutions. These factors act as a filter, influencing the kinds of theoretical ideas that are prioritised and how they are interpreted and applied. They also shape how practical experience feeds into theories, strategies and frameworks for building peace. Implicit in this analysis is the role of power in determining which ideas take form in practice and which practices influence theory. What this study has illustrated is that this power does not rest solely in the hands of the Northern NGOs that have primary control over financial resources, but also in the hands of their Southern counterparts, who, even in highly unequal relationships, have developed strategies for contributing to, and at times directing, the peacebuilding processes of which they are part.

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Appendix: List of Respondents

This thesis draws on interviews conducted during fieldwork in Aceh in October -November 2008 and November -December 2009 and in Timor Leste in August-September 2008 and July-September 2009. The names of the organisations and positions of the people reflect the roles of the respondents at the time they were interviewed. Many of these individuals may have since moved on to other positions. Not all the interviews listed below have been directly quoted in the body of the thesis; however conversations with these individuals were instrumental in shaping my interpretation of the cases discussed in this thesis and in establishing my understanding of the broader context.

During fieldwork I interviewed international and local NGOs as well as multilateral and bilateral agencies that worked in partnership with local NGOs. Upon completing fieldwork, I identified the partnerships for which I had the most comprehensive data and experimented with different categories for grouping them. While on fieldwork there was a clear distinction between NGOs that engaged in short-term partnerships and those that collaborated for longer periods. It was clear that the network approach to collaboration was also popular.

After I mapped how the different partnerships fit within these three broad categories, I selected the specific case studies. I immediately excluded partnerships between the multilateral and bilateral organisations and local organisations. The conditions under which these partnerships emerged, the types of projects that were implemented through them and the kinds of challenges encountered through this partnership style were similar to the NGO partnerships; however the different role that multilateral organisations played in both places, the nature of their relationship to the state and the size of their budgets meant it was difficult to make a clear comparison between these types of partnerships and partnerships between them and NGOs. I also excluded partnerships that involved local organisations that were established and directed by expatriates. This organisational structure, which was more

evident in Timor Leste than in Aceh, raises questions about the meaning of 'local' and about the nature of insider/outsider relationships; however, these NGOs were also excluded from this analysis because there was no suitable point of comparison in Aceh, and because of their substantial difference to other 'local' NGOs in Timor Leste. The partnership case studies that were finally selected for analysis were between Northern and Southern NGOs which best exemplified each of the three different patterns of partnership in each place.

Aceh

International NGOs

Anonymous respondent, World Vision Aceh
Anonymous respondent, HIVOS
Firly Purwanti, HIVOS (Program Officer for Human Rights and Democratisation)
Galuh Wandita, ICTJ (Senior Associate)
Hendi Julius, World Vision (Emergency Response & Community Development Program Manager)
Jonatan Lassa, HIVOS (Former Coordinator of HIVOS Aceh Program)
Liesbeth van der Hoogte, Oxfam Aceh (Partnership Program Manager)
Marsen B. Sinaga, Canadian Development and Peace (In-Country Support Person)
Samsidar, ICTJ (Aceh Program Coordinator)
Syamsul Alam Agus, HIVOS (Technical Assistant)

Local NGOs

Afridal Darmi, LBH Aceh (Human Rights Lawyer)
Agung Wijaya, DEMOS (Aceh Project Coordinator)
Ali Zamzami, SPKP-HAM (Coordinator)
Amir, EPC (Director)
Anonymous respondent, KontraS Aceh
Arie Maulana, Peace and Democracy Monitoring Committee (Director)

Asiah, KontraS Aceh (Former Director and Public Relations Officer)

Chairul Muchlis, EPC (Staff)

Dani, TRANSISI (Founder)

Fachrul Razi, 3P (Executive Director)

Fajran Zain, Aceh Institute (Research Manager)

Fatimahsyam, LBH Apik Aceh (Executive Director)

Hendra Budian, Aceh Justice Monitoring Institute (Director)

Junaidi, RATA (Coordinator)

Khairani Arifin, RPuK (Director)

Liza 'Cici' Dayani, Member of the Acehnese Truth-Telling Coalition (Koalisi Pengungkapan Kebenaran Aceh)

Lukman Age, Aceh Institute (Director)

Muhammad Usman, EPC (Staff)

Raihan Diani, Beujroh (Former Director)

Ramadana Lubis, IMPACT (Executive Director)

Saiful, Labang Nanggroe (Director)

T. Isa Rahmadi, Aceh Society Development (Secretary)

Tarmizi, Aceh People's Form (Director)

Wiratmadinata, Forum LSM Aceh (Secretary General)

Zulfikar, ADAB (Director)

Zulfikar, Koalisi NGO HAM

Other

Aguswandi, Aceh Peace and Resource Center (Senior Program Officer)

Anonymous respondent 1, World Bank Office Banda Aceh

Anonymous respondent 2, World Bank Office Banda Aceh

Anonymous respondent, Aceh Reintegration Agency

Anonymous respondent, AusAID office Banda Aceh

Anonymous respondent, IOM (Conflict and Development Program Activity Manager)

Anonymous respondent, IOM (Post-Conflict Reintegration Program Coordinator)

Anonymous respondent, IOM (Post-Conflict Reintegration Program Officer)

Cameron Noble, World Bank (Multi-Stakeholder Review Team Leader)
Dino Umahuk, Strengthening Sustainable Peace and Development in Aceh-Badan Perencanaan Pembangunan Nasional (Provincial Project Officer for Peace Building)
Paul Greening, UNDP (Gender Advisor-Reintegration)
Rachel Schiller, Peacebuilding Advisor to the Aceh Reintegration Agency
Renate Korber, EU Post-Conflict Governance Advisor to the Governor of Aceh
Ma. Theresa Dela Cruz, Interpeace Aceh (Consultant)

Timor

International NGOs

Agusto Soares, World Vision (Former Peacebuilding Officer)
Angelita Sarmento, HIVOS (Liaison Officer)
Anonymous respondent, Plan Timor Leste
Catharina Maria, CRS (Program Manager Peacebuilding and Civil Participation)
Clare Danby, Concern (Former Country Director)
Daniel Hardy, Care (Peacebuilding and Security Officer)
Diane Francisco, Care (Country Director)
Domingos Antunes, Christian Children's Fund (Peacebuilding Program Officer)
Elias Conan Boavida, Trócaire (Program Assistant)
Felipe Hendriquez, Plan Timor Leste (Program Coordinator)
Janio Aldorado, Plan Timor Leste (Program Coordinator)
Juliao da Costa C. Caetano, Concern Worldwide (Peacebuilding Officer)
Kathryn Robertson, Trócaire (Country Representative)
Leonie Venroji, Oxfam, SEPP (Social, Economic and Political Participation) Program Mentor
Manuela Leong Pereira, ICTJ (Project Associate)
Maria Rowena Ondangan Ladaga, Progressio (Capacity Building Advisor)
Megan Hirst, ICTJ (Program Associate)

Raul de la Rosa, AustCare (Team Leader IDP Protection)

Richard Bowd, Care (Community Outreach and Peacebuilding Project Manager)

Virginia Dawson, OXFAM (Deputy Country Program Manager)

Anonymous respondent, Catholic Relief Services (IDP Program Manager)

Local NGOs

Anonymous respondent, Ba Futuru (Peacebuilding Training Facilitator)

Anonymous respondent, Ba Futuru (Project Coordinator - Psychosocial Program)

Anonymous respondent, Espada (Peacebuilding Officer)

Anonymous respondent, FTM (Education Program Coordinator)

Anonymous respondent, the Peace and Conflict Studies Center

Antero Bendito da Silva, Peace and Conflict Studies Centre (Director)

Armindo dos Santos, FONGTIL (Advocacy Officer)

Benecia Eriana Magno, the Peace Center (Volunteer)

Elsa Joaquina Arauju Pinto, the Peace Center (Volunteer)

Father Cyrus Banque, Justice and Peace Commission Diocese of Dili (Director)

Gerson Martins, BELUN (Conflict Resolution and Prevention Officer)

Joao Pequinho, FTM (Executive Director)

João Fernandes Soares, Justice and Peace Commission Diocese of Dili (Program Manager)

José Amaral, FONGTIL (Advocacy Team Leader)

Laurensius Amir Lein, Commission of Justice and Peace (Project Coordinator for Youth Development)

Lourenco Tito X. Lopes, FONGTIL (Capacity Building Coordinator)

Marilia da Silva Alves, FOKUPERS (Program Manager – Community Strengthening)

Nelia Menezes, Peace and Conflict Studies Centre (Researcher and Administrative Officer)

Sierra James, Ba Futuru (Co-Founder)

Xisto dos Santos, HAK Association (Human Rights Monitoring Manager)

Other

Anata Aparicio, RENETIL

Ben Larke, UNDP (Social Reintegration Team Leader)

Cesar, Bitaba village chief

Clemens Roos, UNDP (Head of the Civil Society Strengthening Team, Acting Head of the Transitional Justice Unit)

Filomena Reis, Women's rights activist and previous employee of The Peace and Democracy Foundation

Filomena, resident of Becora Church IDP camp

Gerard Galluci, UNMIT (Chief of Staff)

Joao Boavida, Centre of Studies for Peace and Development (Executive Director)

Louis Gentile, UNMIT (Representative for the United National High Commissioner for Human Rights)

Luis Da Costa Ximenes, BELUN (Program Manager)

Nug Katjasungkana, Researcher and activist

Pamela Sexton, UNDP (Dialogue Team Capacity Builder)