Impact Assessment Findings, Lessons Learned and Recommendations

BUILDING OF DEMOCRATIC SOCIETY BASED ON CULTURE OF NON-VIOLENCE

Jessica J. Jordan
Society for Psychological Assistance, Zagreb
Marina Škrabalo

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Acknowledgements

This work would not have been possible without the dedication, conviction and support of Michelle Kurtz. It also would not have been possible without the dedicated, committed and professional work of the men and women that make up the different Peace Teams in this Project. To both, we extend our gratitude and admiration. A special thank you also goes to the entire Project staff and to Serb, Croat, Roma, Hungarian, and Jewish men and women who shared with us their fears, dreams and aspirations for a better future.

We leave the reader with an anecdote that captures both the reasons for hope in Croatia and the challenge of any intervention in the region. In one of the many train rides Jessica took from Zagreb to Osijek she met Miroslav. He was rather talkative and happy to tell her about his upcoming wedding- one he had been planning for over four years. Finally, he had a secure job and was ready to wed his high school sweetheart. After our six-hour ride, which was filled with conversation, laughter, food and plenty of smoke, he turned to her and said, “Jessica can I ask you something?” “Of course”, she said. “Well, in this job you are going to go do in Osijek…. Can you promise me one thing,” “Sure,” she replied, “Please.. will you please promise me to be objective……yes objective….you know, it’s the biggest problem we have….it is just so very hard to be objective here.”

We hope this document proves she was true to her word. More importantly however, we hope this document becomes a working tool for the discussion and construction of the future.
“The delight of building peace, like fishing is the pursuit of what is elusive, but attainable, a perpetual series of occasions for hope”

John Buchman
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I. General Background

UNTAES and Eastern Croatia

In May 1991, the people of Croatia held a referendum regarding Croatia’s future in the Yugoslav Federation. As a result, on the 25th of June, 1991, the Republic of Croatia declared its independence. Following the declaration, fearful of their minority status, Croatian Serbs in the eastern parts of Croatia and the Krajina intensified their armed insurrection against the Croatian government and Croatian Croat civilians. Shortly after that, the Yugoslav Peoples Army (JNA) began to fight along side Croatian Serb paramilitary groups. One of the immediate results of this alliance was the mass exodus of Croatian Croats from the area.

The eventual proclamation of the “Serb Republic of Krajina,” over 30% of Croatian land, and the influx of Bosnian Serbs fleeing from the conflict in Bosnia-Herzegovina, led Croatian Croat forces to undertake two mayor military offensives in 1995. While successful in re-conquering most of the disputed lands, neither operation re-gained control of Sector East: Eastern Slavonia, Baranja and Western Sirmium. They also resulted in the mass exodus of the Croatian Serb population from the region.

In November 1995, the Erdut Agreement, the first in a series of agreements, which culminated in the Dayton Peace Accords, brought Serbian and Croatian parties to agree on the reintegration of Sector East, into the Republic of Croatia. To implement this arrangement, the agreement established a United Nations Transitional Administration for Eastern Slavonia, Baranja and Western Sirmium (UNTAES).

The UNTAES was on the ground from January 1996 to January 1998 and covered a 2300-square-kilometer region that bordered Hungary to the north, and shared the Danube River as a border with Yugoslavia to the east. It’s specific mandate was to: 1) supervise and facilitate the demilitarization by the parties (Government of the Republic of Croatia and the local Serbian Community); 2) monitor the voluntary and safe return of refugees and displaced persons to

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1 On May 1, 1995, Croatian Croat forces launched “Operation Flash” and recaptured Western Slavonia and on August 2, launched “Operation Storm” which re-took all remaining areas making up the “Serb Republic of the Krajina” with the exception of Sector East (Eastern Slavonia, Baranja, and Western Sirmium)
their home of origin; and, 3) contribute to the maintenance of peace and security of the region while working towards its reintegration.

Figure 2: UNTAES Area of Responsibility
United Nations, 1996

Despite severe war atrocities and complete isolation of the warring populations for over four years, the mission achieved the following: 1) the demilitarization of the region in a smooth and timely manner, (including de-mining and weapons buy-back programs); 2) the securing of international funds for the opening of communication and transport infrastructure; 3) the establishment and training of a multi-ethnic Transitional Peace Force (TPF); 4) the access for all the region’s residents to Croatian citizenship papers; and 5) elections under Croatian law for the area’s local authorities.

Due to these successes, and unlike many of the other United Nations (UN) peacekeeping operations in the region, UNTAES has been widely regarded as one of the most successful comprehensive peace support missions in Croatia over the past decade, and one of the most successful of its kind in the world.

War Damage and Results

Prior to the war, Eastern Slavonia was a fertile agriculture land whose agricultural yield helped the region enjoy one of the highest per capita incomes in the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. Its population was about 170,000 people living in approximately 95 villages and in two mayor cities: Vukovar (pop. 44,000) and Beli Manastir (pop. 10,000). The last census, that coincidentally took place just before the war, in 1991, revealed that it was a multiethnic region with a population distribution of 42.49% Croats, 35.11% Serbs, 6.7% Hungarian and 22% Other (Slovaks, Czech, Albanian, Montenegrin, Ukrainian).

Upon UNTAES’s arrival, following the war, the United Nation’s High Commissioner for Refugees, (UNHCR) pointed to a 90% Serb and a 10% non-Serb population in the region. Additionally, trends in the numbers revealed that of the 90 percent, 60% -70% were internally displaced persons (IDPs) from other parts of Croatia and refugees from Bosnia-Herzegovina.

3 UNHCR, 1995.
4 UNHCR, 1995.
Okuchani, one of the communities in the region is reputed to have housed persons from 130 different communities from both Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina. The area was also host to Gasinci, the largest refugee camp in Europe since WWII.

UNTAES discovered that Eastern Slavonia had the highest concentration of mass graves and missing persons in the country and had been the site of Arkan’s training camp. Among the many war crimes mentioned to have taken place in the region, it was the location where over 100 male patients disappeared from the Vukovar hospital and the site of 1300 illegal arrests of Croatian Serb males.

Two years after UNTAES’s withdrawal, both Croatian Croats and Croatian Serbs continue to lobby the Governments of Croatia and the Yugoslavia (FRY) for action and information on their missing family members. According to the 1997 UN Human Rights Commission Report, there were approximately 6000 unresolved missing person cases at the time, from both Croats who disappeared during the Serbian paramilitary and JNA operations in 1991-92, mostly from Eastern Slavonia and Serbs who were missing after the 1995 Croatian military operations.

Currently, the Croatian Government has 1558 people still registered as missing. This continuing situation has intensified the animosity between the two groups and has been an important contributing factor in the murders that continue to take place in the region.

While the Government of Croatia will conduct an official census in the year 2001, the most recent official data points to current population distribution of 40% Croat, 40% Serb and 20% Other and a depopulation of about 25%. These same official statistics also point to an overall unemployment rate of 80% to 90%.

Building a Democratic Society Based on the Culture of Non-violence - Project Overview

Following UNTAES’s retreat, and in response to the social challenges that remained unresolved, the Center for Peace, Non-violence and Human Rights in Osijek, (the Center), and its technical counterpart the Life and Peace Institute in Uppsala, Sweden, began to implement the Building a Democratic Society Based on the Culture of Non-violence Pilot

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5 UNHCR, 1995.
6 UNHCR, 1998.
7 An indicted war criminal by the War Crimes Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia (ICTY), Zeljko “Arkan” Raznjatovic was accused of having orchestrated and carried out several massacres in Eastern Slavonia and Bosnia-Herzegovina.
8 UNHCR, 1997.
10 In the past 1½ years, different murders have taken place in Berak, Vukovar and Tenja.
11 OSCE, 1999.
12 Ibid.
13 The Center for Peace, Non-violence and Human Rights in Osijek was founded in May 1992 by a small number of lawyers, doctors, teachers and economists as an attempt to counter attack ethnic, religious, political and ideological divisions imposed by the war. The Center, a non-governmental, non-partisan and non-profit association, focuses on building peace, protection of human rights and freedoms, and the promotion and implementation of creative methods of problem solving and conflict resolution. Over the decade, the Center has grown into a network with more than 150 members and 30 full time “activists”. Its 1998 funds amounted to 400,000USD; in 1999 they amounted to 500,000USD and in the first six month of the year 2000 total funds amount to 400,000USD. The Center has been promoting three Programs in the areas of Peace Education and Psychological Development, Promotion and Protection of Human Rights and Peacebuilding and Community Development.
Project in late 1998. With an expected budget of over 1.6 million dollars,\textsuperscript{14} the Project was launched for a period of two years “to contribute to a new, non-violent, security structure in Eastern Croatia through promoting people’s skills and inner capacities to restore broken relationships and to build a democratic society.”\textsuperscript{15}

In its design, the Project’s Peacebuilding Model involved the identification and training of local men and women, who had themselves been victims of war, and international recruits, for the creation and placement of multiethnic and multinational Development Peace Teams throughout Eastern Croatia. By forming a network of Teams that would support each other and engage large numbers of the populations in their activities, the Development Peace Teams were charged with the promotion and strengthening of community based and community generated activities that would cultivate non-violence and reconciliation throughout the processes. Community development defined as the process of joint community identification of needs and joint satisfaction of needs was therefore, seen as a main strategy for community empowerment, reconciliation and in turn for peacebuilding.

The Project design also identified the need and opportunity to conduct action research throughout the intervention for the purpose of improving upon the pilot experience and assisting with the strengthening of peacebuilding approaches throughout the country and the region. Specifically, as stated in the Project Document, the Project’s objectives and targets are cited in Table 1.

\textsuperscript{14} The Project is funded in part by the EU, UNHCR, OSCE, the Council of Europe, the Government of Republic of Austria, the Austrian Peace Service, the Danish Church Aid, Ohne Leben Roestung, the Westminster Foundation for Democracy, the Norwegian Government, and the Government of Finland.
\textsuperscript{15} Project Document, 1998.
**Objectives**

**General Objective**

To contribute to a new, non-violent security structure in Eastern Croatia through promoting people’s skills and inner capabilities to restore broken relationships and to build a democratic society.

**Specific Objectives**

To educate and train women and men from different ethnic, national and religious backgrounds to serve in organized non-violent ways in violence prevention conflict transformation and peacebuilding.

To organize multi-ethnic, multi national, multi religious teams of these trained persons and to support their work in local peacebuilding processes in Eastern Croatia.

To support communication among the different ethnic and religious groups living in Eastern Croatia contributing to preventing violence, building confidence and enabling Croats and Serbs to return, stay and live together.

To initiate and maintain processes in which people’s needs interests and visions are heard and discussed and in which local people will be encouraged and empowered to seek the fulfillment of their needs.

To explore how special methods for empowerment and capacity building can enhance the peace process in local communities.

To specially empower women for democratization, peacebuilding and reconciliation.

To specially recruit youth, in cooperation with the Youth Action Groups in the region.

To document the life, work and values of local people working for peace in their communities and region.

To analyze and evaluate each program component and the total project through a process of action research which develops recommendations for strengthening further peacebuilding work.

**Targets**

Approximately 30 full time peace workers in Eastern Croatia.

100 people deeply involved in the Project

2250 returnees and displaced people

150 young people

240 women

200 clergy and laity

50 middle-range societal leaders

50 people in the media

25,000 in Eastern Croatia reached by “Days of Peace Culture,” newsletters, local radio, local newspapers people in Croatia, through the project book and other media

Key peoples in other republics of Former Yugoslavia, in particular FR Yugoslavia and Bosnia, development agencies. Peace and human rights organizations, churches etc in the Peace Team Forum network in Sweden and in the European NGO network, peace researchers, politicians interested in building non-military peace structures.

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Table 1: Project Objectives and Targets</th>
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In general terms, the Program’s first year was for the recruitment, selection and training of Team members, for the identification of Development Peace Team sites and offices, for the securing of matching funds and for the placement and community integration of five Teams. Four Teams were placed in February 1999 and one in May 1999.

The second year has been for the placement of one sub-regional Team in Slavonski Brod\textsuperscript{17}, the testing of a “virtual” Development Peace Team strategy in Berak\textsuperscript{18}, the development and validation of working methodologies, including the implementation of the “Listening Project,” and the organization and execution of community based activities.

*Figure 3* provides an overview of Team’s locations: Beli Manastir, Slavonski Brod, Dalj, Vukovar, Okucani, Berak and Tenja.

\textsuperscript{17} While the Slavonski Brod Team has an office in Croatia its activities are conducted in the neighboring Republic of Srbska in Bosnia-Herzegovina.

\textsuperscript{18} In June 2000, following the murder of a Croat Serb and at request of Organization of Security and Cooperation in Europe, a new Peace Team modality, a “virtual” team was placed in the community of Berak.
II. IMPACT ASSESSMENT OBJECTIVES

With the end of the Project close at hand, the Project has identified the need to carry out an impact assessment exercise in order to obtain information that will guide the evolution of the Program’s new phase. This document therefore, seeks to document the impact assessment’s framework and general findings. The process was undertaken in July and August 2000, in response to the following objectives:

- Assess the impact of the Project at the Community level.
- Compare and contrast achievements against initial objectives.
- Identify the main constraints and obstacles during implementation
- Identify programmatic strengths and weaknesses.
- Contribute to lessons learned and recommendations for the Project’s second phase focusing mainly on:
  - Program approach and implementation
  - Program management structure
  - Staff capacity
  - Reconciliation
  - Program components
  - Program sustainability
- Develop and validate a peacebuilding impact assessment methodology that may assist in future peacebuilding interventions.
III. DOCUMENT STRUCTURE

This document is divided into the following sections:

- Methodology
- Findings
- Conclusions
- Lessons learned
- Recommendations
- Bibliography
- Annexes
IV. IMPACT ASSESSMENT METHODOLOGY

Given that few non-traditional peace processes have received enough attention to be formally evaluated and understanding that peacebuilding is fundamentally rooted in the process of re-building relationships and trust, this methodology has been foremost an opportunity to validate a working model and a capacity building exercise for the Project Personnel.

The methodology’s main characteristics have been its historical, qualitative, participatory, flexible, multi-layered and process oriented nature. That is to say, the assessment sought to: re-construct and analyze the historical evolution of the Project; identify the Project’s management and implementation structures; identify the Project’s impact on the different groups involved in its implementation; analyze the process oriented structures beneficial to peace that resulted from the Project’s implementation; and worked within a malleable structure capable of adapting to the different circumstances. Figure 4 depicts the different levels at which the methodology intervened.

Level 1: Project Management Structure

Level 2: Peace Teams

Level 3: Community
(Participants and Non-Participants and Counterpart Institutions)

The methodology, which was carried out by a team of three external consultants, was comprised of the following components. 19

1. Management Level

Key Interviews

Project Personnel Interviews
For the purpose of acquiring primary data regarding the evolution of the Project and the strategic long term goals, this component consisted of open ended interviews with the Project’s Management Team.

19 Lead by an international Impact Assessment Team Leader, individual interviews with local counterparts, analysis of Project documents and focus groups were conducted by two local consultants.
Counterpart Personnel Interviews
In order to identify the nature and strategies of the Project’s inter-institutional links, individual semi-structured interviews were carried out with donor representatives, local and international Non Governmental Organization (NGO) personnel, religious leaders and Government representatives.

Programmatic Workshops
Activities in this area included two, one-day workshops with Management Team personnel for the purpose of critically analyzing the institutional strengths and weaknesses of the Project Management Team and the Project in general terms.

Program Document Review
This group of activities involved the study of program documents, quarterly reports, donor feedback, internal monthly activity reports, previous assessment report documents and an analysis of the Project’s budget.

Survey of the Project’s Training Structure and Monitoring Mechanisms
This cluster of activities included a curriculum analysis, an overview of the trainer profiles as well as the administration of an in-depth trainer questionnaire. It also incorporated an analysis of the Project’s monitoring tools and on-site observation of monitoring mechanisms.

2. Peace Team Level

Programmatic Workshops
For the purpose of critically analyzing the Project’s strengths, weaknesses and opportunities, activities in this area included a one-day workshop with all Peace Team members. Institutional strengths and weaknesses of the Project Management Team were also analyzed.

Key Interviews
This component consisted of open-ended interviews with Peace Team members in order to obtain further information on such topics as relationship with Management Team, technical knowledge, work obstacles encountered and the evolution of the Project in their particular area of work.

Construction of Process Matrices
Specific matrices were developed in an effort to obtain qualitative and quantitative information concerning activities undertaken by the Peace Teams, attitudinal changes in the Teams and communities served, and the creation of sustainable mechanisms and processes.

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20 Because the Project is already engaged in an activity that assesses the impact the Project has had at the individual Peace Team member level, and understanding the intention to not replicate this effort, the impact assessment activities have focused on the Team Level. It is important therefore, that the Project use both sets of results jointly when developing future activities.
On-Site Visits

This methodological component included on-site visits to all Peace Team locations in an effort to assess working areas and working facilities.

3. Community Level

Volunteer Interviews

Individual, open-ended interviews were carried out with Project volunteers in order to gain their overall project perception, reasons for volunteering, views on reconciliation, and project impact.

Focus Groups with Participants and Non-participants

Focus groups were carried out in the different Peace Team location sites with the community groups participating and non participating in the Project (Croatian Serbs, Croatian Croats, Roma, men, women, youth, religious and “influential people”). Additionally, focus groups were carried out with non-participants. These activities sought to elicit input and perceptions of community members in reference to the Peace Teams and the activities being promoted, peace and reconciliation, inter-ethnic relations, quality of life before and after the war, and development of civil society.

4. Analysis of Data

All activities were analyzed individually and in a qualitative manner. While the findings in this document represent a general overview that seeks to highlight the salient points, the annexes contain the specific results.

5. Validation of Assessment Report

As part of the methodology, a participatory validation workshop was carried out with both Project staff members and community participants in order to provide different participating actors with an opportunity to learn and discuss the results.
V. Impact Assessment Findings

1. Management Level Findings

**Impact Assessment Participants and Structure**

While the Project Management Team is not clearly defined, as *Figure 5* depicts, it is in general terms thought to be comprised of six members: a Program Manager, a Listening Program Coordinator, a Peace Team Coordinator, a Program Manager Assistant, the Center’s Executive Director and an external advisor.\(^\text{21}\) Impact assessment activities benefited from the active participation of each of these members.

![Figure 5: Project Management Team Members and Structure](image)

Two out of the six participants have an academic background in sociology; one in administration, one in medicine and two do not possess a college degree. Common factors between all these members are their “activist” role in the peace movement in Eastern Croatia, their commitment, and the fact that this Project is their first major implementation effort in a Peacebuilding Project. As defined by each of these participants, the Management Team is made up of four Croatian Croats, one Croat-Serb and one international\(^\text{22}\).

While not all the Management Team members have had the same degree of involvement in the Project’s implementation, results show that this team as a whole is charged with the financial management of the Project, and the technical assistance, supervision and training of the Peace Teams. Additionally, the Team is also responsible for identification of needed resource people, networking and advocacy, and for the organization of research activities dealing with the Project.

For two of the Management Team members, the Project Manager and the Listening Project Coordinator, work responsibilities have also included being part of the Berak Peace Team where they have been involved in “active listening” in the community, identification of volunteers and organizing and promoting of community activities.

At the beginning of the Project, the Project Management Team consisted of two people: a Project Manager and an assistant. As the Project began to secure funds however, the Team

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\(^{21}\) In this case the external advisor is an international faculty member in the local Evangelical Seminary.
grew into its current composition. Throughout the Project’s implementation therefore, and in particular during its early stages, the Project Management team sought decision making support from the Center’s Executive Board.

Impact assessment findings revealed however, that for some Management Team members as well as Peace Team members the Project’s decision making structures and procedures are not clear. This has resulted in a general perception of the concentration of power on a few. In similar fashion, accountability and enforcement modalities are also perceived as unclear.

Similarly, the Management Team pointed that one of their ongoing management objectives has been the development and setting in place of a decentralized self-management structure for the Project and in turn for the Center.

**Link with the Overall Center’s Programming**

As seen in Figure 6, the Building a Democratic Society based on the Culture of Non-violence Pilot Project is one of the five Project that exist as part of the Center’s Peacebuilding and Community Development Program. Throughout its implementation period, the Project has developed consistent programmatic and financial links to the other four projects in the Peacebuilding Program. As a matter of fact, a few activities in the four other Projects have been integrated into the Building a Democratic Society Based on the Culture of Non-violence Pilot Project and have in many instances served as matching funds to the Project.

![Figure 6: Projects within the Center’s Peacebuilding Program](image)

In this manner, Women to Women for example linked its psychosocial support efforts with the Peace Teams and the communities they are serving, resulting in specific activities for women. Additionally, the Ecumenical Program assisted in the formation of prayers groups in different Peace Team locations and The Bench We Share provided the opportunity for 12 unemployed community members to go on an exchange trip to the Netherlands.

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23 Please refer to Annex 1 for the Center for Peace, Non-violence and Human Rights organogram.
Similarly, the Project has also had important links with the Peace Education and Psychosocial Development Program of the Center. In this case, as one of this Program’s Projects has involved the training of community teachers in the field of trauma management to assist their students and their parents, by organizing the participation of teachers belonging to the communities where Peace Teams work, Peace Team communities have also benefited from this effort.

The Project has also maintained a close link with the Center’s Human Rights Program both logistically and programmatically. Logistically, the Human Rights Program hosted the Peace Teams when they initiated their work and were identifying their respective community offices. Technically, the legal assistance provided by this Program has served as a point of referral for the Peace Teams to community members.

**Monitoring**

Throughout the Project’s implementation, the Project Management Team has been involved in the design and implementation of different monitoring activities. Some of the initial activities, which were later dropped, included the production, by individual Peace Team members, of daily, weekly and monthly activity reports. Others, which continue, have included Project group meetings and Management Team meetings as well as site visits by the different Management Team members to each Peace Team location. One of the latest activities, begun in January 2000 has involved the formulation, by the individual Peace Team members, of monthly “strategic plans” that have been developed and monitored jointly with the Management Team’s External Advisor.

**Project Finances**

The European Union (EU) has been the Project’s main funding source. The initial financial arrangement brokered by the Life and Peace Institute stated that the 1.6 million-dollar Project budget would be funded in equal parts by the EU and by additional matching funds the Institute and the Center would locate. Additionally, as EU policy states, the arrangement stipulated that the EU funds would not be released until the matching funds were guaranteed. Because the total amounts of funds were not matched and the amounts that were matched were done so in small increments, the EU released small amounts of money during the first year. Hence, the parties agreed to reduce the budget to 1.106.467 million dollars and extend the Project to almost three years. The original Project budget was planned for 24 months including 3 months preparation, 3 months of Peace Team training and 18 of fieldwork. The extension was to 23 months in the field. In the long run, the EU contributed with 61% of this amount and the matching funds secured by the Center and the Life and Peace Institute amounted to 39% of the total budget. Table 2 provides a general overview of the Project’s budget.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EXPENDITURE</th>
<th>AMOUNT</th>
<th>PERCENTAGE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Peace Team</td>
<td>651.591</td>
<td>59%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reports and Publications</td>
<td>31.995</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research and Evaluation</td>
<td>71.486</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project Co-ordination Croatia</td>
<td>114.603</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project Co-ordination Sweden</td>
<td>103.603</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Activities</td>
<td>133.189</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>1.106.467</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2: General Overview of Project’s Budget

The inability to match the EU funds resulted in the Project beginning in 1998 with secured funds for the first three months only. Project personnel were recruited therefore, with the understanding that they could be terminated at any time and that the Project could conclude at any time. This three-month period was later extended to another three months and so on. This went on for the first 15 months in the field. Hence, the securing of funds for the completion of the Project is relatively recent in its implementation cycle.

The decision to begin the Project without the adequate funds was taken by both the Life and Peace Institute and the Center in an effort to swiftly set in place the Peace Team mechanism to curtail two events that were expected immediately upon the departure of UNTAES: violence and the massive exodus of Serbs from the region. As individual interviews with Project Management Team members revealed, this decision did not allow the Project to engage in long term planning and contributed to the crisis mode-reactive management style that has characterised most of the Project’s implementation phase.

2. Peace Teams Level Findings

**Peace Team Assessment Participants and Team Conformation**

Currently, there are twenty-two national members and four international members that comprise the Peace Teams. Out of the twenty-two, sixteen define themselves as Croatian Croats, three as Croatian Serbs, one as Serb/Croat and one as Ukrainian. All four international Peace Team members are Austrian. All of these members participated in the impact assessment activities.

With an average national age of 28, twenty out of the twenty-two national members do not possess a university degree. In the case of the international members, all possess a university degree. An overwhelming majority of national members have been involved in the Project since its beginning in 1998. On the other hand, none of the original international Peace Team members have continued in the Program. The existing four are new additions to the Teams.
Recruitment, Selection and Team Conformation

Through newspaper and electronic announcements in Croatia, Europe and the United States, the Center received over 171 national applications and 15 international applications. From these, 28 national and 7 international candidates were selected. Initially, there was a strict adherence to selection criteria, which included previous peace work, language skills and basic NGO knowledge. As the process went on however, and in light of the financial insecurity that accompanied selection, the criteria became, an interest in peace work, and a willingness to participate in a transformative experience. Additionally, Croatian language was not a needed criteria for international recruits, nor was the knowledge of the English language a criteria for the national recruits.

National Peace Team members were recruited under the general rubric of “peace workers” and were offered a monthly salary in line with the national average. International Peace Team members on the other hand, while also recruited under the generic “peace worker” title, were recruited for the purpose of providing a neutral presence within the multiethnic teams, for promoting a work ethic grounded in democratic values and for the creation of links with the international community. In turn, their salaries were lower than the average salary in their respective countries. This resulted from negotiations between the Center and some of their respective NGO’s and governments, constituting a civil service option.

In-depth interviews, questionnaires and workshops revealed, that international Peace Team members have found it extremely challenging to integrate themselves into the Teams and the work being promoted. The lack of language knowledge, the lack of clear and defined responsibilities as well as the lack of communication mechanisms between the international and national Peace Teams were all been sited as barriers for effective teamwork. As they mentioned, in most cases this resulted in the withdrawal of many of them from the Project or their independent work in the communities.

Peace Teams Training

The first activity selected candidates undertook was a 10-week pre-service training in Ilok, a small community in Eastern Croatia. The curriculum was developed in Sweden by the Project Manager, a consultant from the Pedagogical Faculty in Osijek and Life and Peace Institute personnel. The curricula followed the general framework of the Empowerment for Peace Service initiative, championed by The Christian Council of Sweden. The international consultants that assisted in the actual training of Peace Team members were professionals in the areas of conflict resolution, psychology, trauma and sociology. As Table 3 reveals, pre-service training had a strong emphasis on the theoretical construction of conflict and its resolution and stressed the understanding of the basic values inherent in these concepts. As one of its main designers stated, “it did not have the purpose of transferring tangible skills, as this was determined would happen once the Teams were on the field.” It did however have a component that sought to assist Peace Team members in the development and formulation of an initial three-month work plan.

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24 Initially, PeaceTeam members were paid around 2600 HRK. Today they receive a total salary of 3,200 HRK which includes 160,000 HRK for transportation costs. In 1999, Croatian Bureau of Statistics national average salary of 2,935 HRK.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week 1</th>
<th>Setting the framework</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(Participants, Project and Peace Center, course overview)</td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week 2</th>
<th>Values, Ideas, and Themes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(Origin of life, Good vs. Evil, Non-violence, Democracy and Human Rights)</td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week 3-5</th>
<th>Listening Project, Group Development and Team Building</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(facilitation, nonviolence, alternatives to violence, dealing with trauma, reconciliation)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week 6</th>
<th>Working with Conflict</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(Conflict transformation, Negotiation, Mediation)</td>
</tr>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week 7</th>
<th>Social Dimensions of the Conflict</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(Economics, Religion, Northern Ireland, Conflict Resolution)</td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week 8</th>
<th>Social Reconstruction- from Vision to Action</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(Community Organization, Organizational Management, Grassroots Leaders, Fundraising)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week 9</th>
<th>Communication via Media</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(Peace, Democracy and the Media)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week 10</th>
<th>Building our Vision of Society in Eastern Slavonia</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(Values, Project Objectives, Evaluation)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3: Overview of Pre-Service Training for Peace Team Members

Through an informal evaluation and monitoring exercise carried out during and after the 10 week training course, as well as impact assessment activities, Peace Team members pointed out that in their opinion there was a lack of clarity in terms of the training content, a desire for more tangible skills and a need for leadership and supervision. At the same time, a few trainers pointed to a lack of structure, and a lack of tangible objectives in the overall training package and strategies. While all these findings were indeed discussed during the training, the existing mechanisms did not permit adaptations to the process.26

Peace Team members did point out however, the benefits of having received “active listening” training as it provided to them tangible skills to promote at the community level and the benefits of having bonded as a team.

In addition, to the training received in Ilok, and after acknowledging the need of Peace Team members for more practical community building skills, the Project also undertook a series of in-service training workshops for Peace Team members. As Tables 4 and 5 reveal, both the in-service optional and mandatory training curriculums were geared towards the transfer of practical and tangible community based skills.

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Similar to the findings encountered regarding the pre-service training at Ilok, however, the assessment exercises revealed that most Peace Team members felt frustrated with in-service training. The lack of clear training objectives and training strategy as well as the different approaches used by the diverse trainers, who have been either recruited or self-volunteered were mentioned as some of the main causes for anxiety. Additionally, most Peace Team members re-emphasized the feeling that the in-service training received did not provide them with the technical and practical skills needed to promote some of the community projects identified in the field.

An additional source of frustration mentioned was that international and national Peace Team members did not receive the same training in either the pre-service or in-service phases.

For members that joined the Peace Teams after the pre-service training and after many of the in-service workshops, training consisted of, in the cases of the nationals, “active listening” and the formulation of questionnaires for community interviewing purposes and in the case of internationals, a general overview of the Project.

On occasion, particularly when the in-service training entailed community development and project development themes, the Project has had the practice of inviting community groups to participate in these workshops as part of their institutional “mentoring” approach. In particular, the participatory development themes encapsulated in five thematic workshops were identified by community groups to have been extremely beneficial.

In terms of Slavonski Brod, where a new Peace Team has recently been created, the training has also involved more site visits by the Management Team as well as training in participatory development themes.
Peace Teams’ Working Context

Impact assessment exercises also revealed that upon arrival of the Peace Teams to the different working sites, what they found was an integrated territory but a society still at war. The atmosphere was full of tension. On the one hand, expelled populations were not returning and on the other, Croatian Serbs who had stayed in the region feared that Croatian Croats returnees would seek revenge at all levels. Governmental program or institutional structures to monitor the violation of human rights, to promote trust building or to prevent violence were minimal. On the contrary, legal, political and economic conditions for the integration of people were absent. In general terms, groups did not communicate with each other and the social pressure to maintain these separations was extremely visible. The few schools functioning were conducting separate classes for Serbs and Croats, and housing was a major problem, as families wishing to return had nowhere go.

In addition, many of the Peace Teams received different types of threats from community members regarding their work. Not only was the notion of Peace Teams unfamiliar and threatening it was also foreign and hence suspicious. Seen as a novelty that was brought in by foreigners to the region with the purpose of protecting Serb interests, NGO’s were considered spies and allies with the “enemy.” The former Croatian Government’s reluctant acceptance of such organizations also enhanced these impressions. Peace Team members therefore, were not welcomed when they first arrived to their working communities and were openly opposed by many.

The Peace Teams’ working methods were also foreign in nature. While the break-up of Yugoslavia happened through the process of substitution of communism as a dominant, state ideology, with nationalism, both ideologies shared the same model of political culture, featured by collectivism, centralism and authoritarianism. Hence, the change of ideologies brought minimal change to the dominant political culture, which emphasized the role of strong, charismatic male leaders, like President Tudjman in Croatia. The role of citizens therefore, continued to be reduced to passivity and loyal followers. The notion of working together to promote basic human rights, non-violence and reconciliation as well as the potential of individuals to identify and meet their joint needs was therefore new and did not have a precedent.

While civil society, multi-party democracy and minority rights were articulated and tolerated on a declaratory Governmental level, the contribution of opposition parties was continuously minimized, while civil society groups were ignored and minority rights were violated both by Government laws and State actions. Hence the Management Team and the Peace Teams continued, in their minds, to fight in the “silent war” which had the Government engaged in the underlying expulsion of Serbs from Croatia and the Project trying to counter attack these effects at the community level.

Peace Teams’ Activities

“Listening Project”27 - Background

From the Project’s inception, the “Listening Project” has been at the core of the Peace Teams training and community-based activities. The “Listening Program” has sought to:

1. Build trust and respect between Peace Teams’ members and local people.
2. Encourage people to express feelings (anger, fear) and concerns.

27 Please refer to Annex 2 for the specific and detailed results
3. Identify feelings and needs among different groups.
4. Identify common beliefs and hopes in the community.
5. Open communication between Croats and Serbs.
6. Identify community leaders.
7. Identify joint community actions.
8. Implementation of joint action projects

This working methodology was first introduced to the Center by the organization “Rural Southern Voice for Peace” who had been using this method to improve inter-racial relations in the United States and other parts of the world. In the mid 1990’s, the method was adapted to the Croatian context through its validation in Pakrac, Western Slavonia Bilje and Baranja. Through its first and major component, “active listening,” one on one interviews between a Peace Team member and a community member or family group,

“Listening Project” interviews have consisted of open-ended questions that have explored the following information:

1. Respondent’s background (gender, nationality, age, place of origin, family status, profession, and employment status).
2. War-related status.
3. War experiences – loss of family members; loss of property; torture, intimidation; economic hardship; fear; displacement; return etc.
4. Perception of current problems – on personal and community level.
5. Perception of current mode of communication between the two dominant nationalities.
7. Attitudes towards the prospects of reconciliation.
8. Personal readiness to get involved in the community development and peacebuilding activities.

“Listening Project” Participants

As can be seen in Table 6, available data shows that in the seven Peace Team locations as of August 2000, the “Listening Program” had engaged 1353 community members in the exercise of “active listening.”
Table 6: Number and Profile of Reported Listening Project Participants as of August 2000

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Site Location</th>
<th>Total People Listened to</th>
<th>Serb</th>
<th>Croat</th>
<th>Other</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Vukovar</td>
<td>52</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dalj</td>
<td>290</td>
<td>174</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slavonski Brod</td>
<td>162</td>
<td></td>
<td>162*</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beli Manastir</td>
<td>343</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tenja</td>
<td>326</td>
<td>152</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Okucani</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Berak</td>
<td>60</td>
<td></td>
<td>60</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Totals</strong></td>
<td><strong>1353</strong></td>
<td><strong>347</strong></td>
<td><strong>387</strong></td>
<td><strong>224</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*In this case, this number refers to Muslims living in the Republika Srbska in Bosnia-Herzegovina.

Recently, Peace Teams have also begun to identify men and women from the different communities to assist the Project in “active listening.” For this purpose, during the months of March and May 2000, the Project trained approximately 40 community members in “active listening.” While Project personnel point out that the training was a pilot, participants’ feedback revealed their desire to utilize this new skill in their personal lives and their potential public work. The Project has also developed a modality of paying some of these volunteers a nominal fee to cover food and transportation when engaging in “active listening” interviewing for the Project.

“Listening Project” Results

The analysis of the “Listening Project” results, undertaken as part of the impact assessment exercise suggests that:

- The main division in attitudes is not between ethnic groups but between the status of the groups during the war (people that remained in the region, people that fled the region and then returned, and people that migrated to the region).
- The trauma of the people that fled and then return revolves around forced displacement, death or disappearance of family members, torture and disillusionment upon return.
- The trauma of the people that remained in the region revolves around a sense of imposed collective guilt, social isolation, discrimination at work, fear of Croatian institutions, and a sense of insecurity.
- For some of the people that remained in the region, the sense of victimization is double – by Serbian authorities during the war (as they were seen as supporters of
Croatian neighbors) and by Croatian authorities and returnees after the war (as they are seen as supporters of Serbian rebel authorities or involved with war crimes).

- Common to all groups is a sense of economic hardship and lack of economic opportunities.
- Common to all groups is the need for improvement in village infrastructure, cultural and social life, and activities for children and youth.
- People that stayed in the region express greater interest and readiness for communication with returnees, while people that returned dominantly feel anger, disappointment and distrust towards the people that remained.
- Attitudes by people that are returning ranges from desire for revenge, total rejection of communication with neighbours that stayed, and/or selective rejection of communication (avoidance of alleged war profiteers and criminals or people who harmed them directly).
- Proposals for community development activities (in the areas of infrastructure repair, small enterprise development and environmental concerns) are rich in detail and very concrete.

Reconciliation

The analysis further revealed that when men and women were directly asked about reconciliation, two preconditions were cited: (1) immediate State action against war criminals and the identification of missing persons; and (2) social and economic community development actions. Within these broad categories, “reconciliation” is defined in specific terms in each community depending on the reality. Where data has been available, the following provides a quick overview of the “pre-requisites” men and women sited for reconciliation.

Vukovar
- Indictment of war criminals
- Passage of time.
- Joint projects that promote employment.

Tenja
- Communication among children.
- Organise meetings with both groups.
- Residents who have not lost family members need to take the initiative in reconciliation.

Beli Manastir
- Indictment of war criminals.
- Involvement of residents in joint activities to improve our community.
- Setting up a local council.
- Improvement of town infrastructure.
- Support group activities with women, children, youth and elderly.
- Founding a co-operative.
Berak

- Punishment of war criminals.
- Psychosocial support activities for traumatised residents.
- Social activities for children and youth.
- Additional education of teachers.

“Listening Project” Effects on Peace Team Workers

Individual interviews and workshops with Peace Team members revealed that, “active listening” has in fact been a predominant activity Peace Team members have engaged. Additionally, since it constituted a tangible interviewing skill acquired by the Teams it became the activity they adapted to meet different needs that arose during their work. In this way, if Teams needed to know what the community felt on a given issue the Teams would develop a specific questionnaire to engage community members in search of their opinion on that given issue.

On occasion, therefore, the different Peace Teams have carried out specific listening activities to elicit the community’s input on specific topics such as the reaction to current events or possible Peace Team sponsored activities.

This created a continuous “listening” process that in the words of most Peace Team members, left them “exhausted,” “depressed,” “overwhelmingly sad,” and “with a million things to do in order to meet the raised expectations.” While, on the one hand, Peace Team members requested the technical support and expertise to promote some of the identified activities, on the other they also requested psychological assistance to cope with the “process of listening.”

In technical terms, Peace Team members felt a continued technical training gap and in psychological terms, while an informal mechanism was put in place and a psychologist was identified to meet with Peace Teams upon their request it was deemed insufficient.

Community Based Initiatives

In general terms, it can be concluded that with the assistance of community volunteers, the Peace Teams have been promoting activity oriented programming in the areas of education, recreation, culture and humanitarian assistance. In a few isolated instances activities have also entailed the consolidation and formation of community groups.

Education

Activities for Youth and Children
The majority of the educational activities promoted by the Peace Teams have been for youth and children in the areas of computer and language training. Similarly, the Teams have also promoted activities such as school yearbook and newspaper clubs.

29 While the Project is already engaged in an assessment of the Project’s impact at the individual and personal Peace Team member level, an exercise does not seek to duplicate this effort, these recurrent individual level findings are worth noting.

30 During the Project’s implementation, the identified psychologist provided individuals in the Teams the following number of support sessions: Beli Manastir five times, Okucani nine times, Tenja 3 times, Dalj times, Vukovar 1 time, Slavonski Brod 2 times.
Activities for Women
Women have also benefited from computer and language classes, in collaboration with the Women’s Studies Institute in Zagreb, the Peace Teams have also been promoting a package of six workshops dealing with gender identity issues, discrimination again women, women and politics, and spirituality.

Psycho-social Workshops
The Peace Teams have organized and implemented psychosocial counseling workshops dealing with conflict resolution and trauma for children, youth, teachers and women.

Training for “Active Listening”
As has been previously mentioned, some Peace Teams have also begun identifying specific volunteers for “active listening.” In some cases, the “active listening” training for these volunteers has also been developed and carried out by Peace Team members. In addition to local volunteers, the Project has also trained three people from central Bosnia as well as different counterpart personnel as a part of their institutional “mentoring” strategy.

Specific Discussion Round Tables
The Peace Teams have also developed the practice of sponsoring round table discussions dealing with current events. Some of these discussions have included topics such as religion, civil service, drugs and legal issues.

Current Event Campaigns
During the election months both at the Municipal and Governments levels, Peace Teams have been engaged in promoting activities that have not only raised awareness in these issues but have also informed the population as a whole.

Recreation and Culture
Peace Teams have promoted recreational activities such as rock concerts, reading and poetry nights, evening movies and plays, sport events, and the distribution of flowers to promote good will. Fields trips and visitation activities have also been carried out particularly with the elderly. The Teams also promoted creative workshops for the community at large.
A three-day event dealing with cultural events, round tables, ecumenical events, creative workshops and solidarity work for the promotion of peace values entitled Day of Peace Culture has also taken place in the different locations.

Community Infrastructure
Peace Teams and community members have engaged in a series of activities that have involved the beautification of their towns by, among other things, planting flowers, painting school, and carrying out clean up campaigns.

Production of Printed Materials and Media
As a joint programmatic effort between the Peace Teams and the Management Team, the Project has produced a series of materials ranging from information brochures, videos, a Project magazine and journal articles.
In terms of the media, the Peace Teams have also been engaged in building relations with the local media outlets to assist them in outreach activities.
Humanitarian Assistance

Peace Team members have engaged in humanitarian assistance activities such as the distribution of food, money and clothing. In addition, the Peace Teams have also sponsored discussion groups on “how to help the poor” and on the formation of groups to assist the poorest members in their communities.

Consolidation and formation of community groups

In a few instances, the Peace Teams have engaged community groups and have assisted them in their consolidation, as is the case with the Roma Association in Beli Manastir, the Chess club Tenja, a mountaineering club in Okucani, and the strengthening of a religious diversity group in Okucani. In the last couple of months, a few Peace Teams have also begun to explore the possibilities for the formation of local Peace Councils by beginning to ask community members their opinions in this regards.

The Peace Teams have also engaged in the distribution of greenhouses and the subsequent training of greenhouse recipients in vegetable gardening practices. This has assisted in the formation of groups interested in health and nutrition.

Creation of New Peace Teams

During the month of June 2000, the Project placed two new Teams in the area, one in Berak the other in Slavonski Brod. Unlike the other Peace Teams, the Team in Berak is using a “virtual” modality where the Team is made up of different members from other Peace Teams, including to Management Team members. Charged with the purpose of beginning community based activities and workshops and visiting the community periodically, the Team has also identified community volunteers who are their link to the community and are involved in the workshops and the activities with the hopes they may assume these responsibilities in the future. In the initial months activities being carried out in these communities have been “active listening” particularly to elderly women, and women’s empowerment workshops.

The Slavonski Brod Team on the other hand, is similar to the other Peace Teams in that it is made up of permanent members that have an office in Slavonski Brod. Their work however, involves crossing the border and promoting activities in a few neighboring communities in Bosnia-Herzegovina. Their initial activities have been concentrating on the conduction of “active listening” by Peace Team members.

3. Community Level Findings

Men and Women in Eastern Croatia

Community Focus Group Participants

Twenty-one different focus groups ranging from 3 to 11 people were held in the different Peace team locations, with a total of 110 invited participants. Among these 56% were female; 55% were Croats, 35% were Serbs and 10% were of Other ethnic origin, only 38% were employed. Approximately half of the participants (51%) were people that remained living in their communities throughout the war and the post-war period, while 38% were men and

31 Please refer to Annex 3 for a short account of the Roma experience.
32 Please refer to Annex 4 for the detailed and specific results
women that had returned to their homes after being internally displaced or refugees. 11% of the participants were immigrants from Bosnia-Herzegovina and Serbia. The majority of the participants (67%) had either actively participated in the peacebuilding project, or had a family member that had participated. Table 7 describes the general profile of focus group participants and Table 8 elaborates on the general overview of the focus groups held.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristic</th>
<th>Participant Profiles</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Project Participants</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>110</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non Project Participants</td>
<td>36</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>110</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>48</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Returnees</td>
<td>42</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>People that remained in their communities</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>110</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Immigrants</td>
<td>12</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Croats</td>
<td>60</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Serbs</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>110</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others (Roma, Hungarian, Ukrainian)</td>
<td>11</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employed</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>110</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Un-employed</td>
<td>68</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 7: Participating Community Member Profiles

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participants</th>
<th>Croats</th>
<th>Serbs</th>
<th>Specific groups (mixed)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Women</td>
<td>1 (Dalj)</td>
<td>1 (Dalj)</td>
<td>Romas, Teachers, Youth, Volunteers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Men</td>
<td>1 (Tenja)</td>
<td>1 (Tenja)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mixed</td>
<td>2 (Berak, Religious)</td>
<td>1 (Youth Vukovar)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non participants</td>
<td>1 (Dalj)</td>
<td>1 (Dalj)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women</td>
<td>1 (Tenja)</td>
<td>1 (Tenja)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Men</td>
<td>1 (Youth Beli Manastir)</td>
<td>1 (Youth Beli Manastir)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mixed</td>
<td>2 (Dalj, Okucani)</td>
<td>2 (Dalj, Okucani)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 8: General Overview of Focus Groups Held

Definitions and Group Affiliations

Similar to the analysed results of the “Listening Program” focus group findings reveal that for both Project participants and non-participants, men and women in the region use other than
ethnic background variables to define themselves and their experiences. The major factor for defining “who is who,” is centered on the location of each during the war. Hence, men and women who stayed in the region during the war define themselves as “stayers” a direct translation from the Croatian word “ostalnik”. Most “stayers” in the region are Croatian Serbs. Throughout the region however, there also exist an important number of Croatian Croats who are also “stayers”.

On the other hand, there are also men and women who fled the region and have been returning in the last few years. Most of these men and women are Croatian Croats and have on the average been away for about seven years. Their domiciles during those years were either as IDPs in other parts of Croatia, or as refugees in other countries. These men and women refer to themselves as “returnees” from the Croatian word povratnici. As is the case with “stayers” the ethnic composition of this group is also mixed, but predominantly Croat.

A third group is defined as “immigrants” or “settlers” from the Croatian word useljenici. Men and women who were typically forced to flee from communities in Bosnia-Herzegovina or Serbia and have settled in Croatia constitute this group. They do not have refugee neither status nor refugee benefits and typically have Croatian citizenship. In its majority, this group’s composition is Croat.

Men and women, who stayed in the areas controlled by the Serbian army during the war, are considered by the community to be pro-Serbian. The communities interact with “stayers” therefore, as if they were Serb, regardless of their ethnicity. On the other hand, “returnees” are perceived as Croats.

Due to these community-based definitions, in a number of instances Croatian Croat “stayers” joined the Croatian Serb designated focus groups, signalling a clear social belonging. Interestingly however, men and women in mixed marriages, as well as Croatian Croat “stayers” revealed the highest level of distress during focus groups activities and felt the highest degree of isolation.

Knowledge of Peace Team, and Participation

Focus group activities revealed that in general, Serb “stayers” seem to know more about the existence of the Peace Teams in their community than other groups. Croat returnees are less likely to state they seek to engage in joint activities with the non-Croat populations in their communities. Along the same lines, there were more examples of negative public opinion regarding the Peace Teams and their work among returnees (in the majority Croats) than among “stayers”, (in the majority Serbs). Additionally, in this regard, comparison between findings from community members and community leaders revealed that community leaders seem to be more radical in their views, in terms of expressing support or criticism of the Peace Teams work.

Returnees, also pointed out, that despite their dissatisfaction with Peace Teams in terms of activities, “favoritism” and lack of economic initiatives, their activities should continue considering they are serving as a community center and a catalyst for socio-cultural events.

If it were not for the Peace Team, Dalj would be a dead town.

Adult Male- Dalj
In general, Youth consider the Peace Teams and their offices to be their community and recreational centers and have an overwhelmingly positive review of the Peace Teams and the Project’s activities. Their motivation to participate was sited as the recreational benefits they received and the positive and constructive atmosphere they encounter with the Peace Teams. Parents from all groups consider their children’s participation in Peace Team activities as beneficial.

On the contrary, in terms of adult participation, a constant finding throughout the focus groups tended to be a perception of low numbers of participation among the adult population as a whole. When asked, both participants and non participants attributed this to the lack of propaganda or outreach activities, the “pro-Serbian” aura the Peace Teams have, the fear and anger that still exists between “returnees” and “stayers”, the patriarchal values that encourage women to stay at home, and the present “what will I get out of it” mentality.

Contributing factors to adult community participation however, were identified as the neutral location of the Peace Team office, loneliness and boredom and a desire to participate in improving their lives and their communities for the future.

"I felt lonely and the Peace Teams gave me something important to do"

Adult Woman- Tenja

Perception of Specific Activities Promoted

While youth are the strongest supporters of the Peace Teams and their work, this group also highlighted the need for capacity building activities that go beyond recreation. By mentioning the importance of guidance so that they become self-reliant in terms of projects and initiatives, this group emphasized upon the need to learn how to organize and implement activities for themselves.

"We don't want to publish books with poetry about peace so that somebody abroad can show how they did a neat job, we want projects in the local radio-ware we organise it and we do it. We want to publish a newspaper for youth, we want to discuss issues on human rights and reconciliation and not be lectured on them"

Youth Group Member-Vukovar

“We do not want to talk about Peacebuilding – We want to live it through our activities”

Young Man-Vukovar
Overwhelmingly, findings reveal that while adult men and women defined the objectives of the Peace Teams actions as “peaceful reintegration” and “service to the poor,” they also felt the need to broaden the emphasis of the activities being carried out. Findings point to their desire for more community oriented projects against what they perceive to be the Project’s “workshop oriented programming.”

**Adult Men and Women - Vukovar**

*We first have to survive and then think about Peace*

**Adult Man – Okucani**

*More people suffer from poverty that from ethnic issues*

On the other hand, individual interviews with “active listening” volunteers revealed that in a few instances, volunteers did not equate “active listening” with reconciliation between groups. On the contrary, they pointed out that they were engaged in “active listening” to members of their same social/ethnic group to make friends and/or learn more about their community, and receive a salary.

In contradiction to this however, focus groups held with “active listening” volunteers stressed that “active listening” for them was a means to help the needy, to assist in the reconstruction of their communities and to instill hope among their fellow men and women.

Jointly, adult men and women from both social/ethnic groups, while citing the benefits of socio-cultural events to “invigorate our communities once again” also mentioned the need for more tangible activities that bring the different groups together and promote the economic development of their families and their region. In large numbers, these men and women mentioned the need to work towards reconciliation by means of tangible projects and not by sitting down and seeking to obtain reconciliation “by talking or by re-living psychosocial traumas.”

**Adult Men and Women Tenja, Okucani, Vukovar, Dalj**

*Activities promoted need to be in concordance with peoples needs*

In contrast to this however, most men and women who had participated in the “active listening” did mention the fact that by having a Peace Team member visit them they did feel “cared for, important and with reasons for hope.” An overwhelming number of men and women of all ages and groups mentioned the acceptance they felt by the Peace Team members towards them when either entering the Peace Team offices or when participating in Peace Team events.
Women that had participated in the Peace Teams women’s workshops, had an overwhelming positive response towards the Project and mentioned the new opportunity this had provided them with and the added meaning it had brought to their lives.

I feel more valuable, more intelligent, supported and warm.

Adult Woman- Workshop Participant- Tenja

Community, Non-Governmental Organizations and Civil Society

The pro-Serbian agenda that many focus group participants mentioned in reference to the Peace Teams was not only related to the perceived overwhelming Serb participation in Peace Team activities but also, as has been previously mentioned, to the impression NGO’s continue to carry in the region. Paradoxically, when probed on this issue however, a few “active listening” volunteers mentioned that the dominant Croatian Croat composition of the Peace Teams might also play a role in the overwhelming participation of Serbs “because it is sometimes harder to work with men and women in your own ethnic/social group.” Interestingly however, data also points to the notion that a strong perception exists where it is considered sometimes easier to work among different ethnic or social groups when these groups do not belong to the same community

Similarly the “pro-Serbian” perception was also accompanied by the notion that most of the activities held for adults, unlike the activities being promoted for youth, were frequently held for each social/ethnic group in separate manner. Findings also noted the lack of understanding on part of community members as to how a community might organize in order to meet it’s own needs as well as their overwhelming desire to learn to do so.

At the same time however, a few focus group members did revealed that the Peace Teams encouraged their organization, by assisting them with community clean up campaigns and the integration of Roma into Project activities.

I was bothered by dirt and garbage on streets, so I came in and said that I would like to organize an action of cleaning the streets. The Peace Teams organized the action, we cleaned the streets and everybody felt satisfied and proud

Adult Woman- Beli Manastir

33 Due to a lack of available data, participant numbers and their distribution were not available for the impact assessment to analyze. Reconstruction of these variables proved unsuccessful. Annex 6 however, provides one of the sites sample approximation produced during the impact assessment exercise.

34 While Peace Team members clearly state that they are indeed trying to promote activities with a socially and ethnically mixed participation, there is a lack of reliable and available data in this regard.
The Peace Team activities helped us to feel good and equal with other ethnic groups, we all took part in sport and other activities during the festivities, there was a soccer play when everybody in public cheered for us in a supportive, not ironic way; we all sang and danced together; 2 - 3 years earlier it would be impossible that a Croat approach a Roma, and at that occasion everybody ate "fish" that had been cooked in Roma pans.

Roma Society Member- Beli Manastir

A few focus group members also mentioned that the Project had given them the opportunity to take their grievances in a joint manner to the government level representatives. While they expressed disappointment and resentment with the representative’s response, they did mention that this experience made them feel with a power of influence that they never knew they had.

Reconciliation and Peace

Focus group activities with “influential “ Croat revealed that in their perception, there is a latent need for the open discussion regarding the war and what happened during the war. Additionally, they also mentioned the perceived difficulty that community members continue to have in expressing their views about the war.

Peace will come when Serbs and Croats will sit together and talk about the conflict and what happened during the war

Croat Community Leader

As through individual interviews and the analysis of the “Listening Project” results, the focus group findings stressed the need for men and women in the area to feel a sense of justice through the imprisonment of war criminals.

Many Serbs say that they feel sorry, but they never say it in public; they told me several times they are sorry, but unless the criminals are prosecuted it doesn't count, it is simply not

Adult Male- Tenja

Criminals are still freely walking the streets, the government is not willing to process them; war criminals are walking freely in Beli Manastir.

Adult Woman- Beli Manastir
Also, with a large number of unresolved issues in terms of missing persons and war criminals, findings revealed that for many, the guilt has stayed collective, which has resulted in the need by many community members, particularly among Croatian Croats, and non-participants of the Project, for collective judgement and prosecution of the “other” group.

A recurrent theme throughout the focus groups was identified as the social pressures all groups express to be under in reference to remain separate from the “other” group. This was present in all groups including youth. Nonetheless, the current practice of separate school classes was unanimously rejected by both Croats and Serbs.

In terms of economic issues, all groups equated social and economic development as not only a pre-requisite for true peace and reconciliation, but as the main strategies to get the different groups in conflict to work together and begin the path of reconciliation and social reintegration.

We need to work together to better our lives and be able to provide for our families without waiting for the government to do it all

Adult Male-Dalj

Both participants and non-participants, Croats less and Serbs to a greater degree, mentioned that relationships are getting better. In particular, the highest areas of interaction were identified as commerce, sport, and community festivals.

Our soccer team is mixed, so when people come to a derby they cheer for Dalj, not for one group- they have even beat up together an unfair referee the other day, it is not nice, but they did it together

Adult Male- Dalj

When probed regarding the reasons behind the improved relations, participants had clear answers that credited, among other things, the Peace Teams and their work. Non-participants on the other hand, credited the passing of time and the recent change in government.

Local Counterpart Institutions

Institutional Counterparts

A purposive sample of 25 individuals representing the different types of institutional links of the Project were interviewed. These representatives belonged to churches, grassroots organizations, local media, national and local governments and non-governmental organizations at both the regional and local levels. Table 9 gives a general overview of their profiles.

35 Please refer to Annex 7 for the specific and detailed results.
Among the organizations interviewed, there are two contradictory perceptions regarding the Center and in turn the Project. The first views them as a resource to the region’s civil initiatives, while the second, sees them as a “monopolistic threat.”

On the one hand, the Center and the Project are seen as a “peace avant-garde in the region” encouraging others to take initiative. Field activities are seen as risks taken by a serious organization at the time when inter-ethnic tensions were high and at a time when the negative label of “Yugonostalgic” was associated with these efforts. Additionally, they are seen with the potential to link the development of civil society with the reform of public administration in the region.

At the community level and in terms of the Peace Teams, the general perceptions of community leaders’ and counterparts are as follows:

- Through the organization of a variety of public activities (workshops, cultural events, discussions, sports, communal works), Peace Teams have helped restore a sense of meaning and dynamism in the local social life.
- Peace Teams have contributed to the healing of war trauma, by means of empathic listening, communication workshops for children and youth, creative workshops for women and children, and psychosocial support for teachers.
- Through the organization of education programs, such as computer and English courses, Peace Teams have contributed to the learning process of youth in an ethnically mixed arena.
- By orderly and impartial organization of pre-election public panels and voter education, Peace Teams have contributed to the local people’s confidence and activation in the national political process.
- The remarkable support provided to the Roma community by the Peace Team Beli Manastir has helped integrate one of the most discriminated groups in the region.

Conversely, a few national as well as international counterparts share the view that while the Center has grown into the most powerful regional NGO it has done so at the expense of collaboration with local counterparts and the development of regional civil society. In this case, the Center is perceived as an isolated institution, which has not sought initiatives to form local sustainable coalitions or regionally based peacebuilding mechanisms.
Based on the general findings reported in this document as well as the specific findings in the accompanying documents, strengths and weaknesses can be concluded in terms of:

1) The impact assessment methodology
2) The Project’s objectives;
3) The Project’s Management Structure;
4) The Project’s relationship with the Life and Peace Institute
5) The Center for Peace, Non-violence and Human Rights

1. In terms of the Impact Assessment’s Methodology

Strengths

• Because the evaluation of non-traditional peacebuilding initiatives is a relatively new and evolving concept, this impact assessment exercise and its methodology permits the Center for Peace, Non-violence and Human Rights to contribute in the development of this field and enrich the debate.

• The methodology’s participatory and multi-layered nature allowed the impact assessment exercise to gather large amounts of data in a relatively short amount of time. It also facilitated communication between the different programmatic levels, generating a collective effort and a cross communication exchange.

• The methodology also permitted the Project’s personnel to acquire new skills in the areas of analysis and critical thinking. Additionally, it provided an opportunity to acknowledge the vital necessity of working with indicators within structured planning and monitoring mechanisms.

• This exercise provided an opportunity for community members to directly address the issue of reconciliation and how to achieve it, while providing the Project with an opportunity to validate their understanding of how people define themselves, and where, in their opinion, conflict lies.

• While this exercise was first intended to look solely at the impact of the Project at the community level, initial findings revealed that the institutional and managerial aspects of the Center and the Project needed analysis as well. Hence this methodology has also permitted a broad general view of the institutional and its management structures.

• While the methodology did not have the specific purpose of analyzing the relationship between the Life and Peace Institute and the Project, findings point to a series of conclusions and Lessons Learned that might prove useful for future interventions.

Weaknesses

• Because the Project did not develop an operative plan with process and result indicators as well as a systematic planning and monitoring system, the methodology has had to rely, in large part, on the re-construction of past events and perceptions.
• The pursued option of reconstructing indicators meant an increased amount of work for the staff and the inability to collect needed relevant information in some cases. In others it meant the contradiction of factual data.

• While the Project document identified specific Project Targets, the lack of accurate and reliable data has impeded the verification of such targets.

• Timing prevented the participation of all Project members in all the pertinent assessment activities, which in turn complicated communication within the process as well as impeded the maximization of the capacity building and ownership qualities inherent in the methodology’s design.

• Due to the identified need to explore the Project’s management structure and its connection to the Center, in addition to the other Project aspects, the analysis of the institutional dimensions remains in general terms and needs further consideration.
2. In terms of the Project’s Objectives

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Objectives</th>
<th>Targets</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>General Objective</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>To contribute to a new, non-violent security structure in Eastern Croatia through promoting people’s skills and inner capabilities to restore broken relationships and to build a democratic society</td>
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<td>• Approximately 30 full time peace workers in Eastern Croatia</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Specific Objectives</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>• To educate and train women and men from different ethnic, national and religious backgrounds to serve in organized non-violent ways in violence prevention conflict transformation and peacebuilding.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• To organize multi-ethnic, multi national, multi religious teams of these trained persons and to support their work in local peacebuilding processes in Eastern Croatia</td>
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<tr>
<td>• To support communication among the different ethnic and religious groups living in Eastern Croatia contributing to preventing violence, building confidence and enabling Croats and Serbs to return, stay and live together.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• To initiate and maintain processes in which people’s needs interests and visions are heard and discussed and in which local people will be encouraged and empowered to seek the fulfillment of their needs.</td>
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<td>• To explore how special methods for empowerment and capacity building can enhance the peace process in local communities.</td>
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<td>• To specially empower women for democratization, peacebuilding and reconciliation.</td>
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<td>• To specially recruit youth, in cooperation with the Youth Action Groups in the region.</td>
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<td>• To document the life, work and values of local people working for peace in their communities and region</td>
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<tr>
<td>• To analyze and evaluate each program component and the total project through a process of action research which develops recommendations for strengthening further peacebuilding work.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• 100 people deeply involved in the Project</td>
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<td>• 2250 returnees and displaced people</td>
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<tr>
<td>• 150 young people</td>
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<td>• 240 women</td>
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<td>• 200 clergy and laity</td>
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<tr>
<td>• 50 middle-range societal leaders</td>
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<td>• 50 people in the media</td>
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<tr>
<td>• 25,000 in Eastern Croatia reached by “Days of Peace Culture,” newsletters, local radio, local newspapers people in Croatia, through the project book and other media</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Key peoples in other republics of Yugoslavia, in particular FRY and Bosnia, development agencies. Peace and human rights organizations, churches etc in the Peace Team Forum network in Sweden and in the European NGO network, peace researchers, politicians interested in building non-military peace structures.</td>
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Table 10: Project Objectives and Targets
**General Aspects**

**Strength**
In general terms, the Project’s main strength has been its ability to validate a Peacebuilding Model that is working in the region and is promoting community based processes that nurture reconciliation and a maintenance of peace. *Figure 7* depicts the Model’s general working structure and characteristics.

*Figure 7: Peacebuilding Model under execution*
• The Project has begun important processes that are the foundation on which men and women at the community level are becoming active participants and partners in the promotion of stability and peace in their region.

• Additionally, another major strength of the Project has been its committed and dedicated personnel who despite all the financial, technical and managerial adversities have retained their integrity, remained energetic, hopeful and loyal to their peace, non-violence and human rights ideals.

• The Project has developed a deep understanding of the situation of people at the community level giving the Center the potential to lobby at a national level on issues dealing with reconciliation.

• The Project has developed into a recognisable and respected civil society initiative and has begun to lessen the prejudice against NGOs in the region.

• In contrast to the region’s cultural and traditional working and learning modalities, the Project has succeeded in introducing participatory and non-formal education methods that are based on non-violence, human rights and individual and collective action.

• Despite the foreign nature of “voluntarism” the Project has succeeded in engaging community members in this capacity with the goal of being active participants in their regions reconstruction.

Weaknesses

• In general terms, the Project’s mayor weakness has been the Model’s lack of a systematic monitoring system that may have assisted in identifying the needed modifications to promote the Model’s sustainability and concerted focus on process-oriented programming.

• Despite the recurrent identified need for income-generating activities at the community level, the Project has not incorporated this type of programming into its implementation.

• While the Project was intended as a pilot, it has not consolidated its working methodologies and at present does not possess the adequate information or material for its replication at the national or sub-regional level.

• The Project is lacking a phase out strategy despite the fact that it was due to terminate on August 2000.

Specific Aspects

Selection and Composition of Peace Teams

Strengths

• The Project has been extremely successful in recruiting men and women for peace work in Eastern Croatia and building upon the notion that individual men and women can in fact be part of peacebuilding in the communities and their region.

• The Project has been extremely successful in placing Peace Teams in some of the most volatile communities in the region.

• The recruitment of young dedicated Peace Team workers injected the Project with creativity and enthusiasm as well as the needed dose of idealism and energy.
The fact that the majority of the national recruits lived in the region during the conflict created an important affinity between the Teams and their working arenas and made then a first example in terms of different ethnic and social groups working together for peace.

The recruitment of international Peace Team members initially provided the Project with a needed international presence in the eyes of the communities and a link with the international community.

The Project gave men and women with a high school diploma the opportunity to engage in remunerated meaningful work that will assist them in their future endeavors.

Weaknesses
- While the membership in the Peace Teams sought to be multi-ethnic, in order to favor the formation of multi-ethnic groups working together for common purposes at the community level, the selection over time has favored an overwhelming majority of Croatian Croats.
- International Peace Team members have had a difficult time integrating to the Peace Teams due to a lack of clear responsibilities and communication mechanisms.
- Because Peace Team members selected are not members of the communities they work in and in the majority of the time are commuting back and forth from their work to the homes, the selection has not favored the strengthening of local community actors.

Peace Teams Training Curriculum

Strengths
- The Project has successfully developed, executed and validated a training package for peace workers in Eastern Croatia making this an important first step for future endeavors.
- Pre-service and in-service training counted with the technical expertise of like-minded international and national professionals in the fields of conflict resolution, psychology and peacebuilding.
- The pre-service training provided Peace Team members with the opportunity to bond and develop solid relationships based on peace and democratic ideals that have assisted them while working in the field. It also provided Team members with the practical skills of “active listening”- their major conduit into the communities.
- In-service training facilitated Team members with practical community building skills.
- Training methodologies have exposed Peace Team members and community members to innovative participatory and non-formal education methods constituting an important first in the region.

Weaknesses
- The Project did not develop an over-all systematic training strategy that encompassed the attainment of all Project goals and objectives both at the Peace Teams and community levels.
- In regards to the pre-service training, and taking into consideration the educational background of most Peace Team members selected and their community based job responsibilities, the training content had a disproportionate amount of theory. Skill-
based, hands-on training needs for everyday peacebuilding and community development work, with the exception of “active listening” were not adequately addressed.

- While in-service training attempted to provide Peace Team members with more tangible community building skills, it did not develop a strategy encompassing all the needed skills: identification of community leaders, conflict resolution, community diagnostics, project formulation, project implementation, project monitoring and evaluation, grant writing and fundraising.

**Activities Promoted by Peace Teams**

“Listening Project”

**Strengths**

- “Active listening” has unleashed a series of community processes that are the foundation for future peacebuilding and community development initiatives in the region.
- “Active listening” constitutes one of the first attempts in the region to illicit community member’s opinions and felt needs, acquiring important programmatic information for future endeavors.
- “Active listening” has permitted the Peace Team members to integrate themselves into the community and learn first hand about the community in which they work.
- “Active listening” has helped people to begin to process the trauma of war and ethnic conflict. It has been a tool for bringing some hope and comfort to those interviewed.
- ‘Active listening “ has enabled Peace Teams to develop programs responsive to psycho-social, educational and peacebuilding needs of men and women in the communities.
- “Active listening” has helped to begin the process of trust-building among the different socio-ethnic groups in the communities.

**Weaknesses**

- While the “Listening Project,” as its title suggests, is a process made up of different components with community empowerment as the ultimate aim, the Peace Teams actions have predominantly focused on “active listening.” “Active listening” therefore, in many instances, has been viewed as an end within itself. Therefore, for the most part, the tool has not reached its full potential of empowering local men and women to unravel processes and mechanisms of inter ethnic cooperation, collaboration and reconciliation while fulfilling their joint felt needs.
- “Listening Project” is being carried out by Peace Team members who are external to the communities in which they work and not by community members. In the few instances where volunteers do exist, their involvement is in the majority of the cases sporadic and loosely monitored. Additionally, where volunteers are involved, the majority is conducting “active listening” with members of their own social/ethnic groups.
“Active listening” has resulted in high personal and emotional costs for Peace Team members, many of which are in need of secondary post traumatic counseling.

Community Based Activities

Strengths
- The socio-cultural and educational activities promoted by the Peace Teams have re-engaged a wide number of community members and community groups, particularly youth and women into community affairs, providing them mechanisms to counterattack the tendency for stagnation that is present in their communities.
- Peace Teams have created an important and living example that promotes a tangible and practical alternative to violence and distrust at the community level.
- Peace Team activities have strengthening the overall scholastic programming found in their area schools by promoting activities that increase the interaction between schooled youth and children from the different social/ethnic groups.
- Peace Teams have also provided community women with important awareness raising opportunities that is, in many cases, a first in the region.
- In specific cases, Peace Team activities have contributed to the organization and strengthening of specific community groups, among which the Roma Society, is a poignant example, and another first in the region as is the religious group in Okucani.

Weaknesses
- The Project has emphasized upon activity oriented programming rather than process oriented tasks which normally accompany an empowerment approach to Peacebuilding and Community Development.
- The Peace Teams have been the main executors of most activities which has in many instances created a dependency on the part of the community members.
- A large number of Peace Team activities are constituted by workshops and trainings. These however, are not part of an overall training strategy which includes the monitoring of skill use.
- With the exception of youth and children’s activities and a few others, the Project has not set in place a concrete strategy to engage different adult groups in joint community ventures.
- The activities promoted for women have been mainly in the areas of awareness raising and have not been part of a gender approach to peacebuilding.
- The Project has not incorporated an income-generating component into its programming despite the fact that it is one of the most recurrent identified community needs.

Action Research and Documentation of Experience

Strengths
- The Project has recently published the first edition of a magazine that records the different experiences men and women working for peace are undergoing in Eastern Croatia.
The Project’s commitment to undertake an impact assessment exercise constitutes a first step towards systematizing its lessons learned during the implementation and collecting information that might be useful for future endeavors.

Weaknesses

- The Project has not set in place an action research component which had the purpose of assisting with the identification of needed modification and adjustments and enabling the Project to share their experience with other peacebuilding initiatives in the region.

Institutional Counterparts

Strengths

- At the community level the Peace Teams have developed a number of working relations with important local and international counterparts that have not only enhanced their work but have also allowed their innovative approaches.
- Similarly, in a few instances, local partnerships have allowed for communities to contribute with space for the local Peace Team offices.
- The Project’s efforts and hard work has gained the respect and admiration of important counterparts both at the national and community levels.

Weaknesses

- The Project has not developed a communication strategy to assist them in their work with local counterparts including local and international NGO’s, local Government institutions and multi-lateral organizations.
- Despite the fact that the Project defines its role as a “mentor” to a few regional counterparts, the Project does not have clear and systematic guidelines on how to work with these counterparts both for technical and replication purposes.

Sub Regional Cooperation

Strengths

- As part of the Project’s “mentoring” strategy, it has trained 3 people from Central Bosnia in “active listening” for the purpose of promoting the replication of this tool in their communities.
- The Project has developed a strong working relationship with the Austrian Government and NGO’s that has resulted in securing the partnership of Austrian Peace Team members for years to come.

Weaknesses

- The Project is understanding sub-regional cooperation as the act of sending local Croatian personnel to neighboring countries to begin “active listening” or training individuals or organizations in “active listening.” It has however, developed a strategy that explores the possibility of institutional capacity building of local actors in those specific areas through systematic guidelines, packages and strategies.

36 While interinstitutional and subregional cooperation and sustainability mechanisms are not directly addressed in the Project objectives, the qualitative targets identified in the Project design alude to them. Assessment therefore has addressed these issues as such.
**Sustainability Mechanisms**

**Strengths**
- In some instances Peace Teams have begun identifying potential community leaders and have begun to train them in “active listening.”
- Additionally, a few Peace Teams have begun to explore the possibility of promoting Municipal Peace Councils by eliciting community members opinion on the subject.
- The Project counts with a total of 21 Peace Team members that will be able to apply their learned knowledge in future personal and professional endeavors throughout the region.
- In a few instances Peace Teams have begun to identify and have trained partners that might incorporate some of the Project’s methodologies into their programming.

**Weaknesses**
- The Project’s actions have not developed a planned strategy for the identification or exploration of community structures that would sustain some of the actions it has launched at either financial or programmatic levels.
- While the field of Peacebuilding is currently undergoing a debate regarding the payment of peace workers, the paid status of all Peace Team members, as well as the payment of the few volunteers that exist, diminishes the chances of sustainability once the Project funds are terminated at the end of 2000.
- The fact that the Peace Team members are not members of the communities they are working in and have been executing most of the Project’s activities at the community level, jeopardizes the permanence of their acquired knowledge in their respective communities.

3. **In terms of the Project’s Management Structure**

**Strengths**
- One of the main strengths of the Project’s Management Structure is the commitment and dedication of each one of its members. Additionally, their experiences during the war and their subsequent peace activist involvement have created an important affinity between them and the communities in which the Project is working.
- In the same manner, their professional and personal links with other peace activists in the region as well as within the current government also provide the Project with important lobbying networks and with the potential for promoting community-based initiatives at a higher level.
- The Management Team’s values of democracy, human rights and peaceful co-existence provide a solid foundation for the Project and inspire its actions.
- Despite the financial and technical obstacles that the Management Team faced, it has maintained a flexible and malleable implementation structure that has permitted the needed adjustment when identified.
Weaknesses

- The Project has lacked a clear and defined management structure with a core group of members that share in the operational decision-making and in the daily responsibilities. Individual functions, responsibilities and communication lines are not clear, technical gaps are not being addressed through staff training, and in many of the cases, accountability and sanctions are handled on an individual basis.

- The Project did not develop an operational plan that identified specific objectives, activities, tasks and indicators. Hence, in many cases, the informal monitoring mechanisms that were put in place did not address the needed criteria and resulted in a tremendous amount of additional work for the Management Team and the Peace Teams.

- While a self management structure based on democratic principles has been a management goal, the difficulties in implementing this structure has contributed to difficulties between Management and the Peace Teams as well as to the centralization of leadership and decision making power.

- Throughout the Project’s implementation, and due in large part to lack of funds and the lack of a consolidated Management Team throughout most of the Project’s implementation, the Management Team has assumed a crisis management mode of operation resulting in technical difficulties and high personal costs for its individuals.

4. In terms of the Project’s relationship with the Life and Peace Institute

Strengths

- Without the financial and technical assistance of the Life and Peace Institute the Center for Peace, Non-violence and Human Rights, would not have been able to implement the Building a Democratic Society based on the Culture of Non-violence Project and to validate a Peacebuilding model for Eastern Croatia.

- By associating itself with such an experienced partner, the Center for Peace, Non-violence and Human Rights and in turn the Project allowed themselves to gain technical knowledge, legitimacy and international renown. In addition, the partnership with the Life and Peace Institute also introduced the Center to an important number of additional technical and financial resources.

- During the Project’s implementation, the technical relationship with the Life and Peace Institute provided the Project with an important point of reference and source of support.

- The working relationship between the Project and the Institute allowed for the development of important professional friendships between staff.

Weaknesses

- In technical terms, while the conception of the Project and the elaboration of the Project document was a joint venture between the two, the Project did not develop an operative plan of action that included specific objectives, activities, indicators and the Project’s monitoring structure. The Project design and implementation also failed to develop a capacity building component for the Project managerial staff, which was implementing a peacebuilding program of this magnitude for the first time.
• In managerial terms, the Project’s design and implementation phases did not, 1) clarify the individual responsibilities of each institution; and 2) develop a technical assistance and financial monitoring structure on the part of the Institute towards the Center.

• In financial terms, the inability to fulfill the financial agreements reached at the design phase of the Project, resulted in an overwhelming technical and personal burden on the Project and its staff.

5. In terms of the Center for Peace, Non-violence and Human Rights

Strengths
• The Center’s hard and concerted work has secured financial and technical partnerships with important international and national counterparts at all levels, in a relatively short amount of time, and despite the many historical and political obstacles, the Center has managed to become a highly respected NGO in Eastern Croatia.

• The Center has also flourished, as a domestic organization comprised mainly of national personnel while remaining true to the ideals that inspired its creation.

• The Center is in the process of developing and setting up internal management and organizational mechanisms and structures to strengthen its institution, its durability and its programming.

Weaknesses
• The Center is in need of clear and functional management, financial and technical structures with internal mechanisms that promote democracy, transparency, efficiency and expertise.

• As the Center continues to expand, it is not assessing the technical expertise that is needed in order to implement its programmatic objectives. Institutional capacity building therefore, has taken a back seat causing a detriment to the Programs being implemented and crisis management attitude within the institution as a whole.

• Despite the efforts made to manage a membership-based organization the Center continues to struggle with the development and the setting in place of the necessary mechanisms. In contrast, this struggle has resulted in the concentration of power and decision-making.
VII. LESSONS LEARNED

Based on the strengths and weaknesses of the Project’s first phase a few general lessons can be identified that might be beneficial to take into consideration when designing and implementing the Project’s new Phase. Some of the main lessons lie in the areas of: 1) Peacebuilding impact assessment methodologies, 2) Project Objectives and Strategies; 3) Project Management Structures; 4) Relations between international and national partners; and 5) Securing funds

1. In terms of Peacebuilding Impact Assessment Methodologies

   • *Peacebuilding initiatives need to begin incorporating evaluations and impact assessment exercises in their overall programming.*

   Despite the fact that Peacebuilding initiatives may not be amenable to short-term or quantitative identifiable results, these initiatives need to begin identifying process and result indicators in their design. By doing so, these initiatives will be able to develop clear operative work plans that will assist in the creation of monitoring structures that will not only maintain the Project on the right track to meet its objectives but will also allow donors to see results. The key to this therefore, rests in the identification of the appropriate type of indicators for this type of intervention.

   • *Peacebuilding impact assessment exercises need to also take into consideration the institutional capacity of the implementing agency.*

   As it is true in many regions, Peacebuilding activities in Croatia are being carried out by relatively new and nacent organizations. In their majority these organizations are in one way or another transiting from having been activist groups to implementing agencies. Hence, the technical and financial capacity is inherently linked to the results of their initiatives. Therefore, impact assessment exercises need to clearly and directly engage in the assessment of the institution’s implementing capacity as a whole.

   • *Peacebuilding impact assessment exercises must be seen as capacity building activities and must include participants at all levels of intervention.*

   It is important that impact assessment exercises be seen as capacity building exercises for the implementing agency and its personnel. Project personnel at all levels therefore, need to plan and expect to be active participants in the process.

2. In terms of Project Objectives and Strategies

   • *Peacebuilding needs to be understood as a type of result and not a type of project, hence all activities and initiatives undertaken must have the*
ultimate goal of trust building by engaging and bringing together conflicting parties in joint activities, at all levels.

Because the desired effect of all activities undertaken within a Peacebuilding initiative needs to rest on making connections or building relationships between people who are in conflict and replacing this hostility with trust, Peacebuilding Projects need to place particular attention on the methods by which their objectives are achieved. Hence, these objectives need not be achieved by minimizing the contact between the warring parties. On the contrary, all activities need to have clear strategies that will maximize the contact, while keeping in mind the different phases of trust building between the parties. The process therefore, in many instances becomes more important than the result.

In this case, as the Project identified community development as the main strategy for Peacebuilding, all activities within this Model need to promote the engagement of the different groups towards the joint identification of needs, joint design and implementation of community based projects and joint project evaluation.

In addition, Project objectives need to address the contact of the different socio/ethnic groups to be promoted at all levels in the community. This includes the institutional, the group and the individual levels.

Project Objectives also need to address men’s and women’s need in a differentiated manner and implement a gender perspective throughout the evolution of the Project from the design to the implementation phase.

- Reconciliation needs to be understood as an inherent part in any Peacebuilding initiative, which takes place throughout its execution.

By promoting the engagement of antagonist groups throughout the initiative’s processes, reconciliation can take place throughout the intervention, hence, doing away with the misconception that reconciliation is conditional on a series of dispositions and acts.

It is important to keep in mind however, the need for trauma management and psychological assistance that accompanies any process where peacebuilding is taking place and need to make these activities part of the overall strategy.

- Peacebuilding interventions benefit from defining “empowerment” as the ability by individuals and community groups to engage antagonist community groups in joint enterprises no matter how small these may be.

Community and individual empowerment strategies need to lie in the acquisition of skills (in personal and communal terms) that will allow individuals and community groups to engage other community groups and work towards the satisfaction of joint needs. This process will also benefit from the formation and consolidation of community groups.
Training Strategy

- Training and workshops need to be an opportunity to bring different groups together.

- Training workshops need to be carried out as part of an overall training strategy with an end result in mind. Training for the sake of training is sometimes more detrimental than it is helpful.

At the community level, while training strategies can constitute a powerful reason to bring different groups together in a systematic and planned manner, Peacebuilding projects need to develop training workshops, for peace workers and/or community members, within an overall strategy that points directly to the attainment of the intervention’s objectives, build upon each other and have tangible results. This strategy needs to also incorporate adequate plans and activities that follow up and monitor on the transferred skills and the productive and effective use of the skills.

- Training Strategies for Peacebuilding initiatives need to be a union between theory, practice and hands on skills.

Peacebuilding training strategies need to be a combination of practical and theoretical knowledge. Reaching a balance between the two is critical for the effectiveness of peace work as the methods by which goals are attained is the key difference between Peacebuilding and other more traditional development initiatives.

- Peacebuilding initiatives at the community level need to empower local actors that live and know their communities.

In terms of community-based peace workers, training needs to provide tangible skills in such areas as: conflict resolution and negotiation, trauma management, facilitation, participatory community development, fundraising, networking and communication.

In terms of community members, training needs to have tangible results that will assist them in the interactions with other community groups while helping them to re-build broken relationships and trust at all levels and move towards the satisfaction of joint needs.

Peacebuilding projects need to also incorporate a gender perspective in their activities and in their designs and begin by differentiating between women and men’s needs, addressing these needs and position both men and women in leadership roles.

Activity Strategies

- It is critical not to dissipate energies by having too many different activities

- Peacebuilding initiatives must have tangible results for their participants

Considering the “experimental” stage of Peacebuilding Projects, they may have the tendency of conducting an array of different type of activities in such areas as recreation, culture,
education, and communication among others. Nonetheless, they need to be focused on the goal of promoting community healing mechanisms and structures that will maintain the different community groups engaged in their own joint development. Hence, they need to be careful and critical with the actions they promote.

In addition, while recreation activities and socio-cultural activities serve an important purpose they need to be closely accompanied by tangible actions that engage different community groups towards the attainment of more sustainable common goals.

- **Peacebuilding initiatives need to incorporate income-generating opportunities for community groups**

Because weak economic structures accompany post war scenarios, the challenge to Peacebuilding initiatives lies in the promotion of joint income generating activities at the community level.

- **Peacebuilding initiatives need to develop networks at the project and community level.**

An important strategy to strengthen Peacebuilding initiatives is the development of networks that link not only the community groups that may have been formed as a result of Peacebuilding initiatives to other similar groups in the country and in the region but also networks that link the institutions engaged in these types of interventions.

**“Mentoring” and Sub-regional Co-operation Strategies**

- **“Mentoring” needs to include the transfer of technical and financial skills and the technical monitoring of the skills transferred.**

As the region is developing a number of experienced organisations in the area of Peacebuilding seeking to replicate their most successful modules of intervention, the need arises for technically based and solid replication packages and strategies that also include the technical monitoring of the processes.

- **Sub-regional co-operation entails capacity building of sub-regional counterparts.**

Similarly while many of the nascent organisations with successful interventions seek to replicate their interventions at the regional level, it is important that these sub-regional strategies be based on the capacity building of local actors and not on the expansion and/or execution of activities at the sub-regional level.
Sustainability Strategies

While not all aspect in Peacebuilding Projects need to be sustainable the key is to leave behind existing structures that will continue to engage the different groups in the reconstruction and reconciliation of their communities.

Because Peacebuilding initiatives require endurance and staying power and because the true successes of these types of initiatives will require 10-20 years to be measured, the key becomes sustaining the process that maintain community groups positively engaged. Hence, above all else, continuity becomes crucial. Peacebuilding interventions therefore, need to focus on the goal of identifying and strengthening community structures that promote this engagement. These structures need not be formal and may vary in each scenario. A common feature between them however, needs to be the partnership between the community groups and possibly the local government.

Peacebuilding interventions need to discourage dependency at all levels.

Peacebuilding initiatives need to seek the empowerment of community members to identify, implement and sustain reconciliation and reconstruction process. Therefore, the agencies promoting this type work need to discourage dependency in terms of the activities being promoted.

3. In terms of Project Management

Project Management begins with clear and defined Project Objectives, Activities and Indicators.

While allowing for modification and readjustments, which are part of the dynamic process of Peacebuilding, it is critical that Peacebuilding initiatives begin with a clear and defined formulation of Project goals, objectives, activities and indicators in order to enable the formulation of the Project’s operative plan. The Project’s Management structure therefore, needs to also be clearly defined in the design of the Project. The execution of the Project’s operative plan in turn becomes this Management’s Team main monitoring responsibility.

The skills for Democracy need to be learned and developed—democratic structures are based on transparency, clear channels of communication, accountability, and technical knowledge.

It takes time, personnel development, management skills and on the job training for teams to implement a self-managing structure.

While one of the major organizational challenges being confronted in the Development and Peacebuilding fields is the pursuit for horizontal management structures, it is imperative that institutions promoting Peacebuilding initiatives understand that democracy within the workplace is a learned practice that needs to be nurtured and developed, particularly in regions where democracy is new and emerging concept. A self-managing structure that rests on democratic principles therefore, needs to be based on transparent mechanism, clear
channels of communication, supervision and accountability as well as technical knowledge and expertise. Hence, institutions pursuing such a management structure need to begin by restructuring all the different components within their organization to be able to create the foundation upon which a horizontal management structure lies.

- **Multidisciplinary teams enhance the effectiveness of Peacebuilding interventions.**

Because Peacebuilding interventions are characterized by their multi-faceted nature, these initiatives benefit from the expertise of different technical background within their management structure. In this way, the team is able to build upon each other’s technical expertise.

Additionally, a multidisciplinary intervention works best and is maximized by forming alliances with like-minded projects and institutions for execution in the same working areas.

4. **In terms of the Relations between International and Local Partners**

- **International Partners cannot underestimate the importance of institutional capacity building for their local partners.**

While it is extremely critical for international agencies to support local Peacebuilding initiatives as they bring important skills, expertise and resources, when working with local organizations, international agencies need to fully understand the local organization’s strengths and weaknesses and need to critically consider the costs (financial, managerial, personal) that the local organization will incur through the relationship.

Additionally, it is also important that international agencies incorporate structured and well-defined capacity building component for the local counterpart’s personnel and implement it throughout the initiative. A few of the skills that are in great need are proposal elaboration and writing, project and financial management, fundraising and monitoring and evaluation.

- **International agencies need to provide local partners with clarity in terms of their contributions, their responsibilities and their expectations.**

When working with local organizations, international agencies need to be clear in terms of the roles and the responsibilities they will assume. Additionally, these roles and responsibilities need to be clearly stated in Project documents and need to be clearly identified at the beginning of the relationship.

Likewise, at the local level, when working side-by-side, individual responsibilities need to be clearly defined and the mechanisms for open and constructive communication need to be set in place at the beginning of the joint venture.

- **While Peacebuilding is in fact a new and emerging field it is at all times important to take into consideration local knowledge and expertise as well as existing regional experiences.**
There are important and innovative approaches to Peacebuilding that are being pursued in the region; hence it is crucial that international agencies and their local counterparts seek local expertise before importing it from the international arena.

5. In terms of Securing Funds for Peacebuilding Initiatives

- **Peacebuilding initiatives need to have clear goals, clear strategies and clear indicators.**

Because funding is proving to be a challenge for Peacebuilding interventions it is crucial that these type of initiatives develop clear Project documents that emphasize upon their intended outcomes and means of measuring these outcomes, even if that means the processes that the intervention is hoping to unleash. Additionally, it is crucial that Peacebuilding initiatives crystallize the uniqueness of this type of intervention in its methods when compared to traditional community development, youth development or humanitarian approaches.

While the common Mennonite mantra goes “our calling is not to be effective, but to be faithful,” Peacebuilding initiatives need to reconcile the fact that the field is moving towards the security of funds from institutions that place a high moral and technical obligation on accountability and intervention effectiveness.

- **Peacebuilding initiatives need to differentiate the stages of the intervention and need to emphasize upon their unique nature.**

Likewise, Peacebuilding interventions need to be able to identify the progression of the type of programmatic strategies proposed in reference to the stage of the conflict, be that for example during the conflict, during an armistice, during re-integration, post-reintegration etc. In this way, the planned activities and strategies as well as the expected results and outcomes will be more justifiable. While further analysis and joint discussion between institutions working in this field is needed, the use of the traditional “Relief to Development Continuum” seen in Figure 8, might be a starting point for the debate. By using this model, Peacebuilding initiatives might begin discerning, identifying and developing the different types of methods and interventions that accompany this evolution.

![Figure 8: Traditional Relief to Development Continuum](image-url)


38 Department of International Development, UK. 1999
The impact assessment process and results point to general and in some cases specific recommendations for the Building a Democratic Society Based on the Culture of Non-violence Project and for the Center for Peace, Non-violence and Human Rights.

In terms of the Project

Immediate Actions

Because the Project is due to end in December 2000 and while some funds might be stretched into the New Year, there are a few practical and immediate actions the Project might consider undertaking:

- Organize an internal event where the impact assessment results are socialized in details with the Peace Teams in an effort to promote information sharing, discussion and debate.
- Develop strategy to inform local communities and counterparts of end of the Project’s first phase.
- Begin curtailing Project activities.
- Provide psychological counseling for Peace Team members that need it and request it.
- Develop a short (10-20-page) document that highlights the major policy oriented issues the Project has identified.

By conducting these immediate actions the Project will have the much needed opportunity to discuss the impact assessment results and its recommendations. It will also give communities an opportunity to acknowledge and plan for the possible retreat or interruption of the Peace Teams work, while providing the Project itself with time to plan its next steps. Additionally, it will allow current Peace Team members to acknowledge the situation and make professional decisions regarding the future. Finally, it will provide the Project’s personnel on all levels with the necessary focus for the production of the Project’s second phase.

In terms of advocacy, it is important that the Project’s first phase maximize the expertise it has acquired by identifying the tangible policy oriented issues that must be addressed in order to foster the future development of an advocacy campaign and place these issues at the forefront of the national discussion and debate.

Project’s Second Phase

Project Components and Model

With the death of President Franjo Tudjman in late 1999, and the subsequent election of President Stipe Mesic, the new coalition Government has ushered in a new sense of hope, openness and energy towards political change. The new Government’s political agenda said to rest on democracy, human rights and accountability has many in the region signalling the beginning of true national reconciliation while others remain sceptical. Nonetheless, the Project’s second phase will have to take advantage of the favourable political climate, the end of the “silent war” and build upon the positive results from the first phase.
It is strongly suggested therefore, that the Project’s **second phase** focus on the following components:

**Focus of Project’s second phase**

1) Consolidation and improvement upon the successes to date;
2) Identification and strengthening of community based mechanisms that will sustain successes to date;
3) Monitoring and Evaluation;
4) Advocacy;
5) Institutional capacity building for regional organizations,
6) Institutional capacity building for Project Management staff and
7) Peacebuilding and gender.

Therefore, the Model suggested for the Project’s second phase will emphasize upon 1) building the capacity of communities themselves to promote and maintain peacebuilding initiatives, 2) strengthen the Center’s ability to sustain their roles as leading advocates of peacebuilding initiatives and 3) link the results of the initiative with national governmental levels to promote policy oriented changes. *Figure 9* depicts the general framework of the modified Peacebuilding Model proposed for the second phase.
1. Consolidation and improvement upon the successes to date

This component will allow the Project to consolidate some of its most important successes into replicable methodologies by producing modules and training packages capable of being transferred and shared with other institutions in Croatia and in the sub-region. This also means that some of the training topics of the first phase, while useful, need added modifications as for example is the case with the Listening Project - the need to focus more on the process rather than on “active listening” alone, on debriefing and analysis methods. Additionally, it should also involve the development of modules with training contents that were identified as missing from the overall package in the impact assessment results. Some of these are in the areas of participatory community development, project formulation, fundraising, outreach and income generation. Additionally, these packages will also have to address the working strategies with both returnees and “stayers”. Together these materials will be the basis for an over all training strategy with clear objectives and methodologies and also serve as the training core curriculum for future peace workers in the region and in the Project’s second phase.

2. Identification and strengthening of community based mechanisms that will sustain successes to date

While the Project’s first phase was devoted to the development and the validation of working methodologies for the creation of peace teams and their subsequent community based work, it is recommended that the second phase focus the majority of its effort on the identification and strengthening of all inclusive community based structures that might be able to sustain the successes of the Project’s first and second phases. Peacebuilding relies on a foundation of multiple actors and activities aimed at achieving and sustaining the process of reconciliation. Hence, sustaining the process becomes the key.

Therefore, this component seeks to: 1) Form community based peace teams, 2) Identify and build the capacity of community structures that will become the “reconciliation meeting point.” Ideally, these structures will engage community members, local government and local peace teams.

![Local Government](image)

**Figure 10: Peace and Reconciliation Structure**

It is through this type of structure that the local peace teams would execute and determine their work. The role of the Center’s Project personnel would therefore be one of technical assistance and accompaniment and not one as executors. It is in this component that the current national and international Peace Team members might have the role of providing technical assistance to the different community based teams.
3. Monitoring and Evaluation

It is recommended that the Project’s second phase develop a clear Project document that
develops the attainment of the above mentioned components in a manner that objectives,
activities, tasks and indicators are clearly outlined. Additionally, the Project design should be
accompanied by an operative working plan and preferably by a Participatory Planning
Matrix. As the term implies, it is suggested that during the design of the Project’s second
phase, workshops be held with the different stakeholders involved in order to jointly identify
the specificities of such a design. In terms of indicators while the task is not an easy one, joint
identification of indicators might also prove beneficial in this endeavor by promoting the
definition of the working terms and the joint goals. This joint exercise will also assist in
laying the foundation for what will be monitored, how it will be monitored, by whom will it
be monitored, when it will be monitored, etc.

4. Advocacy

It is recommended that this component serve as a way to not only to disseminate the
information and knowledge the first and the second phases will collect but to also enable the
Project to influence needed changes at the Government and public policy levels in the
country. The Project therefore, will have to develop specific activities in the area of
formulation of messages, communication campaigns and strategies and public pressure
mechanisms.

5. Institutional capacity building for counterparts

The second phase will benefit from the systematic development of a training strategy to
increase the capacity of local counterparts to promote some of the successes of the Project’s
first and second phase and in turn improve the effectiveness of their work. Hence, in a
practical and tangible manner, the Project’s second phase will need to: 1) identify its
objectives in terms of working with counterparts at the national and sub-regional levels, 2)
develop an overall training strategy with the use of the training components produced and 3)
develop follow up mechanisms to these activities.

The overall strategy should also focus on the creation and strengthening of functioning
networks at the institutional, and community levels.

6. Institutional capacity building for project management staff

Upon the design of the Project’s second phase, and identification of the Project’s
Management Team, it will be necessary to assess the strengths, weaknesses and opportunities
of this team and accordingly design a training package for the Team that will assist them in
their implementation of the Project. The training package therefore, needs to be created in
function of the proposed objectives. A few general training areas might be considered to be
technical and financial management of Projects, monitoring and evaluation, participatory
community development and advocacy among others. When designing the strategy however,
it will be important to lay out an overall training strategy with definite objectives and with
definite trainer profiles.

39 Please refer to Annex 7 for a sample PPM.
7. Peacebuilding and Gender

The Project’s second phase needs to incorporate a gender perspective into its overall programming. Objectives and Activities therefore, need to differentiate between men’s and women’s needs. The attainment of Project goals need to be achieved in a differentiated manner by men and women taking into consideration the diversity in needs, constrains and opportunities that men and women confront when working within a peacebuilding context. For this purpose a gender perspective needs to be introduced from the Project’s design, through objectives and indicators, in the implementation phase through specific activities and leadership roles for community women, and in the evaluation phase through the objective analysis of costs and benefits resulted from women’s participation in the Project’s second phase.

Territory

Depending on the results of fundraising efforts, the Project personnel will have to identify the potential locations for the continued intervention. Some of the characteristics that might be useful to consider are, existing community structures, willingness by local authorities to be active participating partners, and overall community interests. While it will be important to build upon the results of the past, the possibility of new sites must not be ignored.

Project Management Structure

The design phase needs also to identify the Project’s specific management structure for the second phase as well as the institutional partnerships that will assist in this effort. It is strongly recommended that the Project’s Management structure be comprised of a defined number of individuals with clear and defined responsibilities in terms of the Project objectives and goals. It is also recommended that the Project look among the current Peace Team members for the technical support needed in the proposed model. Important to emphasize however, is that the management structure needs to be made functional in terms of the second phase design.

The Project’s new phase should strive to operationalize the desire for decentralization, clarity and competence. Specifically, it is suggested that the Management team be comprised of the Technical Personnel that will be providing assistance to the community based peace teams, a Training Coordinator, a Project Manager and a Project assistant. Hiring practices must also strive to be transparent and must include contests for selection.

In terms of the friends and influences the Project receives from the outside, there must be concerted efforts to formalize these links and incorporate them into the process in a way where it allows for information to flow from level to level and does not centralize decision making structures.

In terms of the Center for Peace, Non-violence and Human Rights

In her 1996, Signs of Hope, Mary Evelyn Jegen recorded the process that gave birth to the Center, along with the virtues and unique qualities she found in the Center’s personnel and structure. She also reflected upon the future challenges she identified the Center would have to face. These challenges were: maintaining its unity and mission once the war ended, securing funds to implement the projects that would carry its vision and its ability to continue
functioning under the “company of friends”\textsuperscript{40} structure she had identified as the organizational structure of the Center.

\textit{The Center for Peace, Non-violence and Human Rights and its Programs needs to undergo an immediate Strategic Planning Exercise that is serious, all-inclusive, professional and timely.}

These three challenges continue to be present today. As is the case with many organizations that began as an activist movement, the Center for Peace, Non-violence and Human Rights is facing the challenging transition from being an activist group to becoming a competent, professional and organized implementing agency.

As John Lederach points out, “peacebuilding in deeply divided societies is, above all, the task of establishing an infrastructure for sustaining initiatives. Although individuals may be highlighted and are certainly a key to peace, institutional capacity building is what makes the difference over time.” Hence, it is advisable that the Center, its Programs and its Project, prioritize the strengthening of the institution and its internal structure. A serious and highly professional attempt needs to be undertaken to develop a participatory strategic plan. In general terms, this will include the identification of institutional strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats, the development of an internal training package to overcome the existing technical gaps, the development of roles and responsibilities for each institutional post, the creation of a clear structure of accountability and supervision and the setting in place of transparent mechanisms in the areas of decision making, hiring practices, performance evaluations and financial management.

These objectives need to be achieved with competent external assistance, through a long-term process of institutional capacity building that should be a priority and funded by the different programs and projects being pursued.

While the Center is currently struggling with the challenge of promoting a much desired self-managing structure based on democratic principals, it is essential to understand that the use of clear channels of communication, staff supervision, accountability mechanisms, transparency, competence within an institutional structure, make this concept operational. The strategic planning exercise therefore, should also result in the adaptation of internal management and technical structures and policies that incorporate these concepts.

Strategic planning results should provide the institution with mechanisms that are based on democratic principles: \textit{competence, accountability, transparency and clear channels of communication}

With the many existing challenges, technical expertise needs to accompany the visions being set forth by the Center. This includes technical expertise at all levels, as well as technical diversity. Practical and theoretical know-how need to work hand-in-hand. Hence, once the Center identifies its personnel in realistic terms, and it clarifies the pertinent responsibilities, a

multidisciplinary team of professionals needs to then be identified. In this way, the Center will benefit from the technical diversity.

Center and Program personnel need to be diverse in education and background for the conformation of multi-disciplinary team, which will add richness and competence to the Center’s initiatives

As one of the leading organizations in the region the Center needs to seize the opportunity and begin exploring the possibility of creating a “Volunteer Corps” in Croatia. Charged with many of the responsibilities carried out by the current Peace Teams, this “Volunteer Corps” could be part of a civil service or a voluntary opportunity to serve ones country and gain invaluable skills for the future. With the relatively low cost associated with such a Program, and the inherent needs present in the country this initiative would undoubtedly receive much support nationally and internationally.

The Center needs to become a leading and technical advocate for the creation of a national “Volunteer Corps”

The Center and the communities it works with might benefit from the development of a Program that focuses solely on the advocacy of the policy implications of their local work. The Program’s main aim should seek to link field results with policy changes and awareness raising. In this way, the expertise that the Center has accumulated through the years can begin to advocate for the needed structural changes that need to take place in order to enhance the sustainability of their peace, non-violence and human rights.
IDRC, 1999. Pre-Project Considerations. ICDR: Ottawa, Canada.