



## Conflict Transformation and Peace Work

Policy Paper for Ökumenische Diakonie (Ecumenical Social Service, OED)

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## Foreword

Christian motivation to engage in the work for peace is not a fad. Indeed, its biblical basis is the conviction that God's deeds are always dominated by his "thoughts for peace" (Jer 29:11). Such an understanding of peace is thus overarching, and refers to every individual in all circumstances.

Against this background, it was only consequent to set up the post of a Consultant for conflict transformation within the Ecumenical Social Service (OED – consisting of "Brot für die Welt" and "Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe"/Humanitarian Aid Germany) in 2006. Also feed-back and requests by our partners paved the way to such a decision. We thereby acknowledged that conflicts, especially violent conflicts, became more and more a problem of the daily life of many of our partners. Such a development has been fueled by a changing international order, easy access to weapons, new causes of conflict, modern forms of civil-military cooperation – all this has shaped the landscape of humanitarian aid and work relating to development, human rights and peace.

The present policy paper is a first step to react to such a situation in a systematic way, rather than to analyze single cases. We benefitted greatly from the input and experience of our partners in this endeavour. In this respect, I would like to thank the members of the internal policy group "Civil Conflict Transformation" and especially Martin Petry, who coordinated this area of work as a consultant and took the lead in drafting this document. Next to them and our partners almost every department within the OED was involved in adding to the process. To all of them I would like to express my gratitude.

In a next step we would like to check this policy paper against reality and have a closer look at the potential of church related actors for the process of conflict transformation and peace. We are therefore calling on our colleagues in the Projects and Programmes department, the Policy Department and Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe

(DKH) to continue a dialogue with partners within existing working relationships on the subject, and to collect ideas on how to develop the document further.

In order to enable such a process the policy paper at hand has been translated into four languages besides German: English, French, Spanish, Portuguese. Our aim is a vital dialogue with many new ideas that add up to a coherent strategy and also benefits our merging with the Evangelischer Entwicklungsdienst (EED, Church Development Service) in the long run.

Stuttgart, July 2010

Klaus Seitz  
Head of the Policy and Campaigns Department  
Brot für die Welt

## Introduction

### A Policy Paper for conflict transformation

**“Guide our feet into the way of peace.” This appeal to God in Luke 1, 79, is two thousand years old, yet it is right up to date for the work of the OED. This petition expresses the fact that we are searchers and that we are challenged to continue our search to find the way of peace.**

The OED sees itself as a part of the worldwide ecumenical community, which has for decades contributed towards peace and justice in many different ways. Since the 1950's the OED and its partners have been engaged actively in many different contexts to search and provide for a better and peaceful world.

Work to overcome violence and bring about peace is accorded a high status in the OED's basic policy document “Justice for the Poor” (Diakonisches Werk 2000) as well as in the strategic plans of different departments and in practical funding decisions. However, to date no consistent guidance has been formulated for this key area.

The present document is designed to meet this need. It provides guidance for those active for the OED in the broad area of peace work. The aim of the OED is to further qualify its work and engagement in this respective topic and communicate it to others. It sees this Policy Paper as part of the process of discussing and implementing the Decade to Overcome Violence, which was initiated by the World Council of Churches. During this decade the Council has created a space for reflection and a platform for joint action “in order to move peace-building from the periphery to the centre of the life and witness of the church, and to build stronger alliances and understanding among churches, networks, and movements which are working towards a culture of peace”.<sup>1</sup>

In line with the aims of the decade, our intention is to address “holistically the wide varieties of violence, both direct and structural, in homes, communities and in international arenas, and to learn from the local and regional analyses of violence and ways to overcome violence”.

It should be pointed out that domestic violence is not considered in detail in this document as a challenge and field of action for the OED. Experiences and recommendations are documented in “Overcoming Domestic Violence”, which was published in 2007 (Diakonisches Werk 2007).

The work of the OED is greatly influenced by its partners. Consequently, this document is a stage in a process in which those working in the field and partner organisations are involved in many different ways. Many partners live and work in countries which are shaped by violent conflicts. Over the last few years these partners and those involved in the OED have increasingly been taking a critical look at how violence and armed conflicts affect their programmes and what effects their programmes have on the conflicts. They have developed and implemented programmes which help to deal with conflicts without resorting to violence and also to overcome violence. Their concerns, suggestions, knowledge and experience have been contributed here.

This Policy Paper aims to describe what has been discussed and learned about overcoming violence and dealing with conflicts in civil society. One problem that has been and still is encountered in the course of the dialogue is the confusing diversity of concepts associated with peace work.

In this Policy Paper we use the term “conflict” in the widest sense of the word as a dispute between individuals or groups in relation to objectives where it is felt no common ground can be found. Conflict must not be allowed to be confused with violence, because in its constructive form conflict is a motor for change which is

<sup>1</sup> <http://gewaltueberwinden.org/de/ueber-die-dekade.html>

unavoidable and creative. However, if conflicts escalate and the parties to the conflict turn to violence, the destructive potential of conflicts comes to the fore.

Even though we have a broad understanding of conflict, this Policy Paper focuses on how our work can be structured in contexts of violent conflicts – and how the OED and its partners can help to overcome violence. It was a conscious decision to use the term “conflict transformation”, thus emphasising the goal of developing and shaping new relationships and more equitable social structures within the context of violence. Conflict transformation aims to exclude the use of violence and to make it possible to address conflicts without any fear of violence.

This Policy Paper represents an initial position. It will develop dynamically. This is because the paths towards transforming long-lasting armed conflicts such as in Darfur, Colombia, Israel and the Palestinian territories, the Congo and the Philippines are often tortuous, unclear and littered with setbacks. Those who are seeking solutions feel that they are out of their depth and experience a sense of helplessness. However, there are reasons to be hopeful because new ideas and approaches are surfacing and successes are also recorded.

This Policy Paper takes these positive experiences as its point of departure. It aims to identify strengths and develop these systematically, to reduce weaknesses and to make use of the options available in spite of all the deficiencies and limitations. It will therefore be necessary to update this paper.

The Policy Paper is based on the practical experience gained by partners and employees in dealing with conflict. An increasing number of partner organisations are integrating activities into their development programmes which contribute explicitly to overcoming violence, preventing violence and resolving conflicts peacefully. Others undertake programmes which aim to develop instruments, relationships, competencies and institutions that help to deal with conflicts in a non-violent way or become involved in different roles in the transformation of specific conflicts.

Human rights organisations look for ways of organising their work, including in failing states. In the meantime, many partners have gained in-depth experience and expertise. Partners and employees want to enter into an in-depth exchange of ideas.

In the current process of reflection, those involved have shared experiences, experimented, initiated national processes and developed instruments. Processes to develop positions and to implement them go hand in hand. For this reason, in the OED a policy group has been established which examines this topic on a continuous basis. Employees have been trained, and these training measures have produced information sheets on the topics of conflict analysis, trauma work, and conflict and gender.

Intensive exchange and networking processes have started in the Palestinian territories and the Philippines. Instruments, cooperative agreements and model activities for high-profile campaigns have been developed and tested.

The OED hopes that the subsequent process of dialogue will produce the following results:

- Orientation for its own work in the context of violent conflicts.
- Improved capability to exchange ideas about peace and conflict transformation with others, in particular the EED.
- Better capabilities to understand and forecast developments where conflicts will arise.
- Greater sensitivity to how a person's own actions prevent or reduce violence.
- Greater coherence, synergies and sustainability.

The Policy Paper describes the experiences underlying the work. It outlines basic reference points, provides recommendations for action and sketches key areas of action for the OED in the field of conflict transformation.

## 1 Context of the Policy Paper

### 1.1 The OED and its mission

The partners of the OED are in the front line of conflicts in their countries. We – the OED – want to be an expert partner for them. All challenges which cause conflicts are at their most intense with our partners.

Our partners must drive forward productive social conflicts, in order to safeguard and facilitate development opportunities in their societies. They are confronted with violent conflicts during which they must protect human life and stop violence. Under the most difficult of circumstances they organise humanitarian aid and protection for people who are threatened by war, violence and persecution. They must develop tailor-made procedures that fit the situation. This requires tremendous flexibility and stamina – work which exposes our partners to considerable risk.

The OED brings together partners with different mandates, ways of working, experience and profiles. This necessary diversity is also a strength. The aim of this Policy Paper is to further develop this diversity and promote coherent action within the OED. It is necessary to distinguish between three basic approaches to aid: the development policy approach, the human rights approach and the humanitarian approach.

“Brot für die Welt” is on the side of the poor and demands for them the most basic rights and a life of human dignity. This inevitably results in a confrontation with forces who want to prevent precisely this – and not only in the countries of the partners. In Germany and Europe we continue to profit from imbalances in the distribution of power and resources – a situation which globalisation has changed and intensified. Thus the name “Brot für die Welt” is a statement of purpose, and the title of the basic policy document “Justice for the Poor” is a challenge to become involved and to con-

front those parties and structures which create and cement injustice.

A human rights approach was developed in the 1970s in the human rights team. It supports those people who stand up for their rights and the rights of others in conflict situations and are therefore persecuted. It is not unusual for the lives of men and women who defend human rights to be at risk. They help those who are affected to become involved. They permit others to articulate their own demands, to put these on the political and public agenda and to pursue these in the political debate. The men and women who defend human rights want to highlight standards for human rights. Through this, they achieve a change in society – a transformation of those causes and structures which have created and maintained unjust conditions.

DKH plays another role. Its role is to ensure that all people – without any discrimination – have a right to humanitarian aid and humanitarian protection. With this, DKH is explicitly following the basic principles set out in the code of conduct<sup>2</sup> for humanitarian aid organisations and defined in humanitarian international law. These principles are the basis for obligations imposed on conflicting parties and humanitarian aid organisations as well as the rights of the civilian population affected by the conflict. In conflict situations it is therefore the task of DKH to hold the parties to the conflict accountable to ensure that they adhere to these obligations. In addition, DKH must adhere to these rules itself as it delivers its aid. Parallel to this, approaches and strategies which go beyond the three approaches have been developed by a number of partners. Today the terms “civil conflict resolution” or “conflict transformation” would be used to describe these.

### 1.2 Potential of religious protagonists to bring peace

The Church in its religious context has the unique advantage that it can and does engage in peace and justice

<sup>2</sup> See: <http://www.gdrc.org/ngo/codesofconduct/ifrc-codeconduct.html>



at all levels. One aspect of this is the need to be aware of the potential of religions to escalate a situation and to handle this carefully; on the other hand, the Church needs to develop its potential for reconciliation and bring its moral authority to bear.

Basic reference points such as love for one's enemy and non-violence can be found in different religions and form the basis for an inter-religious dialogue.

The fact that religions are anchored deep in the structures of society means that they are highly permeable and can link local events with developments on other levels in a credible way. Good access of religious protagonists to many very different protagonists in the conflict allows them to play constructive roles and build bridges, particularly in conflict situations.

In addition to this, religions embody the element of transcendence, and the transformation of conflicts must also be able to look beyond the "here and now". The hope of a better tomorrow must have roots which go deeper than the brutality of the present time. Religions must give people the strength that allows them to persevere in hopeless situations.

People who know that they are supported by this force will set off on their journey again time after time and never give up. When evaluating very different initiatives by religious protagonists (e.g. Weingardt 2007) it has been shown that:

- Religious protagonists must explain and justify less why they work for peace and against violence in a certain conflict. This holds true even in religiously charged conflicts. They are able to make those involved in the conflict confront awkward subjects;

- Religious protagonists also gain trust because they, in particular, can bring more deeply buried issues such as morality and responsibility, injustice and justice, guilt and forgiveness, vulnerability and reconciliation and, under certain circumstances, inter-ethnic or inter-religious tensions (prejudices stereotypes, intolerance) into the discussion;

- Religious protagonists are very often seen as being independent and fair, and it is assumed that they are less likely to have selfish interests.

The OED has seen these aspects clearly in a number of countries. In Angola, Kenya, Mexico, South Africa and Sudan (to give just a few examples) it is precisely the church partners of the OED that have made a key contribution to overcoming violence and achieving reconciliation. In the course of this work, cooperative agreements and initiatives have been created which may provide impulses for other contexts.

Credibility, unselfishness, moral and ethical values, integrity and the ability to network are also characteristics of secular protagonists involved in resolving conflicts. These are essentially the common property of all those who want to play a meaningful role in this field of work.

When it comes to the religious protagonists, however, over the last few years it is above all the potential of religions to intensify the conflict that has entered into the public consciousness. The ability to promote peace has often been overlooked.

Some religious protagonists appear to lack self-confidence in their ability to play a special peace-making role. It is therefore necessary to appeal to religious protagonists to bring their potential as a special societal force into play to a greater extent than in the past.

In places where they have the appropriate competence, credibility, independence and ties with those involved, they should do more than they have to date to apply these skills and use them to transform the conflict.

As a protagonist from the church, the OED recognises that it should not allow its inherent potential for transforming conflict to go to waste. Instead it should develop its own strengths in a targeted manner.

The OED therefore makes a special point of strengthening and supporting national and regional ecumenical initiatives and structures through its commitment

to conflict transformation and promoting inter-religious engagement for peace and reconciliation.<sup>3</sup>

### 1.3 Current challenges

Countries and regions where both “Brot für die Welt” and DKH funded a large number of projects in 2007 include Somalia, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Sudan and Chad in Africa, Colombia and Haiti in Latin America/the Caribbean, and the Philippines, Indonesia and the Middle East in Asia, as well as various states in India. These countries are particularly affected by violent conflicts and, in some cases, have featured on the Conflict Barometer<sup>4</sup> compiled by the Heidelberg Institute for International Conflict Research for years. Hardly any conflict area is the same as another.

The conflicts are about power, access to resources (such as water and land), threats to living space and identity, what are perceived to be religious issues or the exploitation of raw materials. Increasingly, economic inequality, corruption and extreme poverty fuel violent criminality and violent conflicts. Often several components and causes of conflict are conflated and intensify each other.

Violence manifests itself in very different ways in these countries. In many countries attacks and violent confrontations are common, whereas in others the potential of existing conflicts for violence is hardly visible. However, the speed at which a political confrontation can suddenly almost change into a civil war was demonstrated in Kenya in early 2008. Other countries are trapped in a highly escalated conflict in which the outbreak of military violence must always be expected.

The security situation for partners who undertake work that relates to human rights and peace is very precarious there. The events in Chad and Kenya in 2008 dem-

onstrate the necessity of permanently operating international networks so that all the levers can be set in motion in acute crisis situations, allowing at least the protagonists of non-violent conflict transformation to be protected. In many situations they are the first who suffer death and injury.

The complexity of the conflicts explains why very different topics come at the top of the partner organisations’ lists when it comes to conflict transformation. They must deal with poverty and hunger, globalisation and raw materials, elections and democratisation. Their worries revolve around outbreaks of violence, violence among young people and exclusion zones. They help children in armed conflicts and try to combat small arms. Once the wars have ended they become involved in reconstruction and the development of a legitimate state. They search for justice for the victims of war and violence. They stand up for a culture of freedom from violence, promote education on peace, and endeavour to reconcile hostile groups on the basis of truth and justice.

The signing of a peace treaty is no guarantee of peaceful co-existence between population groups that used to be enemies. Comprehensive work is required to come to terms with the past in order to achieve sustained peace in a post-war society and create a new feeling of a shared society. Here initiatives and concepts have been created over the last few years which are described by the term “transitional justice” (cf. Plattform Zivile Konfliktbearbeitung 2007).

The challenges relating to humanitarian aid and work relating to development, human rights and peace have become more complex. Nowadays this work often takes place in an environment where the state is fragile or has ceased to exist. In order to safeguard peace in the long term, human rights must be observed, protected

<sup>3</sup> In addition to the promotion of appropriate initiatives of our partners, this can take place through involvement in the run-up to the peace conference in Jamaica in 2011 for the Decade to Overcome Violence and involvement in the planned Peace Conference in the Area of the Protestant Church in Germany.

<sup>4</sup> See: [www.hiik.de/de/konfliktbarometer/index.html](http://www.hiik.de/de/konfliktbarometer/index.html)

and implemented actively. Stable democratic conditions and the means to transform conflicts constructively and without recourse to violence are needed.

Peace depends on a strong civil society, an independent system of justice, fulfilment of basic social needs, transparent public finances and an economic system which provides the population with an adequate income. However, in many countries neither the national nor the international protagonists are willing or in a position to achieve this. These contexts present a very special challenge for all work assignments of the OED and its partners, and they require intensive research and reflection.

Here, they are not helped by the current developments on the international stage. After 11 September 2001 and the subsequent “war against terrorism” ideology has increasingly entered into conflicts again. An argument based on pseudo-religious explanations is trying to polarise the world into good and evil. The threat scenarios of international terrorism and rogue nuclear states have been used to extend the scope of intervention and legitimise military intervention. At the same time, democratic freedoms have been curtailed. In the countries of the OED’s partners, governments have used the fight against terrorism to criminalise those who call for change.

The debate on whether military intervention is a suitable means to end conflicts is in full swing. Terms such as “humanitarian intervention” or “fight for human rights” convey promises which, once they have been examined in detail, are unlikely to be fulfilled. Nevertheless, there is increasing pressure for civilian work to be subjected to an overall logic which is determined by military thinking.

This pressure is also felt in the fields of cooperation and development. According to a shared communiqué from Misereor, EED and “Brot für die Welt” (2003), military intervention changes the role of cooperation and development if it is planned from the start for indirect financing of wars. The public’s attention is shifted towards reconstruction and humanitarian aid to the detriment

of long-term strategies for fighting poverty, promoting human rights and establishing democratic structures. Results that can be seen quickly matter.

Forced integration into military activities calls the basic premises of humanitarian aid into question. Close links with the military lead to a high security risk for international civilian aid workers. The communiqué goes on to state that civilian aid organisations in conflict regions lose their credibility if they place themselves under the declared protection of one of the parties to the conflict and are identified with that party (“Brot für die Welt”, EED, Misereor 2003). Their approach to support non-violent solutions for conflicts between interest groups collapses if they are identified with armed military forces.

It must be feared that, in the long term, humanitarian international law will be disregarded as a result of the undermining of independence and impartiality of humanitarian aid, as can be observed, above all, in Iraq. “Then the international community would not have any more instruments to stem the dreadful effects of the violence of war on civilians” (ibid.). This means that DKH is finding it increasingly difficult to provide help, particularly in extremely violent situations.

The parties to the conflict try to misuse, delay and persecute humanitarian aid. International military interventions try to align humanitarian aid with their own interests and to cloud its neutrality and independence. “Brot für die Welt” and DKH protested in a further declaration in 2004 against monopolisation along these lines, complaining that “the provision of safe working conditions for aid organisations [is] used to legitimise military deployments”.

Developments such as globalisation accentuate the gaps between winners and losers. The cracks can also be seen within individual societies. The potential for conflict and violence within societies is not likely to decrease. In countries with abundant natural resources there are cliques of people who are not at all interested in peace, because war makes them rich. The dividing line between legal and illegal businesses has been blurred for a long time in countries where there is civil war, creat-

ing so-called economies of violence. There are signs that conflicts will become more intense with climate change and emerging shortages of valuable raw materials.

The majority of OECD states seems to be less affected by these developments although they are largely responsible for global warming, the like of which has never been seen before in the history of mankind. Latin America, the southern part of Africa and parts of South-East Asia will be the main losers as a result of this development. The mining of raw materials has been destroying the areas where many millions of people live, and climate change will irrevocably destroy other inhabited areas. The human race still has a brief window of opportunity to change course. If we are seeking to have a world where solidarity exists, then major changes will be necessary, especially for people living in the rich Northern Hemisphere.

Everybody has a right to life and food. Food riots and soaring food prices jeopardise the achievement of these rights. The models must evolve to become rights which can be enforced by law. This means that people in the North must learn to share so that they no longer constrain the rights of people in the South.

There is a direct link between the fast spread of HIV/Aids and war. War and violence destroy health facilities and the areas where people live. They separate families and encourage prostitution. Warring parties deploy rape as part of their strategy of war. All this results in the spread of HIV and Aids in war zones.

The challenge resulting from current conflicts and huge upheavals is widely reported in the media. At the same time, the way in which conflicts and catastrophes are shown in the media determines as never before what action appears to be required and where. As a rule, this has little to do with reality as experienced by our partners. The contexts are barely explained. Hardly any attention is paid to the expertise that exists and the efforts made to achieve peace in these countries. Consequently, an impression is created that many regions of the Southern Hemisphere are devastated and that peace is impossible.

The aim of this paper is not to despair against a backdrop of such challenges but instead to provide encouragement to tackle what is possible. However, to do this we must not overstretch ourselves. Synergy is not just an overused buzzword: it is an absolute necessity in this field of work. The topic is still young – the term “conflict transformation” is not yet twenty years old. However, the aims of conflict transformation – peace, development and justice – have always been the basic challenges for the OED. Depending on the contexts of the work, the OED has pursued these using different approaches. Fundamental and far-reaching changes in the contexts have made violent conflicts a special challenge that requires independent approaches such as conflict transformation. Below the changes over time are described, because they illustrate how the emphases within the fields of tension of development, peace and justice have repeatedly shifted. These changes reveal how the OED has adopted different roles and approaches. This experience forms the basis for understanding diversity and developing a coherent approach.

## 2 The changing context of work in conflict situations

### 2.1 Cold War 1954–1989

#### Underlying conditions

After the Second World War a divided Germany was firmly incorporated in the East and West by the victorious Allies. The opposition between the East and the West determined the world view, the motivation for action and the limits of what could be done. Nuclear weapons repeatedly brought the world to the verge of global confrontation. The East-West conflict was considered to be the key explanation for many conflict events in the world. Wars on other continents were primarily viewed as proxy wars, and the complexity of conflicts and their special factors were hardly given any thought. Development aid was also designed and explained on the basis of this overall pattern. After the Second World War many former colonies were given their independence. In what direction would they evolve? The possible options were essentially specified by the East-West conflict, and the search for an independent path was difficult and accompanied by the threat of sanctions.

#### Changes in perceptions and approaches

When DKH was founded in 1954, emergency aid for abroad was institutionalised for the first time. The guiding principle was that peace could be achieved through emergency relief and development aid. A few years later, in 1959, “Brot für die Welt” was founded in Berlin. In the first years of fundraising campaigns it was assumed that substantial progress could be achieved in the poor countries of the South by providing development aid.

The “Brot für die Welt” campaign was a “thank you to the world” for all the help that had been received for reconstruction after the Second World War. It was intended as starting help, in line with the concept of development in the Western world.

“Development” was initially not considered to be affected by conflict. This altered with the demands for social change in the 1960s. Calls for participation, social justice and development opportunities resulted in the formation of new protagonists in civil society.

A guiding intellectual force and pioneer of what we understand today to be a civil society was Paulo Freire.<sup>5</sup> His message resulted in programmes which put the person in the centre. What were then still only a few development and humanitarian organisations in the North began to take up political positions and call attention to injustice.

Opinions were then split on the issue of whether and to what extent partners should be supported in violent disputes. Whether this application of force with the intention of liberation would itself initiate or intensify a problematic development was discussed in movements and organisations which – inspired by the model of Martin Luther King – took up a clear position in favour of non-violence. The solidarity movement that evolved was about liberation and emancipation. Its members considered it patronising to stipulate to people how to fight against injustice and suppression.

“Justice and peace in an interdependent world” has been the guiding principle of church development cooperation since the World Conference of Churches in Uppsala in 1968. Here the relationship between peace and justice was formulated in specific terms:

<sup>5</sup> Paulo Freire (1921–1997) was a teacher who aroused hope and provided encouragement more than almost anyone else in the century in which he lived. With his principle of dialogue, he pointed towards new kinds of relationships between teachers and their pupils. His work supported grassroots democratic processes worldwide. He was the teacher of the oppressed and taught the principles of hope. The social pastoral ministry in Latin America and liberation theology were influenced by him. He developed a method of literacy which made it possible to learn to read and write within 40 hours of lessons. This method made dictators hate Paulo Freire. After a coup d'état, he was imprisoned in Brazil and then expelled from his country. In Chile he then produced a similar literacy programme for UNESCO. For a long time after the coup d'état in Chile he was based at the World Council of Churches in Geneva.

*“This dedication to justice throughout the whole world is also an effective contribution to peace. In the comprehensive sense of the teaching of the Bible as well as political reality, peace is more than the absence of armed conflict and more than a tenuous balance between highly armed powers. Unjust conditions, whether within a country or among countries, represent a continuous threat to peace.” (EKD 1973, 18)*

For a long time “develop peace” was a central message of “Brot für die Welt”. Violent conflicts were viewed as the response to blocked development, and development was viewed as the peaceful alternative to revolution.<sup>6</sup> Humanitarian aid in catastrophes was seen by the public as non-political and therefore unrelated to conflict – as long as it did not exceed the ideological limits and was partial to the West. However, in the Vietnam war DKH experienced that people on both sides suffered from war, violence and need, and required help. The organisation broke a taboo when it extended its humanitarian aid to refugees in the communist north.

In the 1970s, human rights work developed within the Protestant Church in Germany (EKD) as a response to political and social crises in Chile, Paraguay, South Africa, the Philippines and Vietnam. At that time the work concentrated on specific support for partners of the churches and agencies.

In 1977, the Human Rights Desk in the Social Service Agency of the Protestant Church in Germany was established, in particular owing to the large number of refugees who sought refuge in the Federal Republic of Germany after the coup d'état by General Pinochet in Chile. The primary aim was to support those in the country who were defending human rights and to protect them as persons.

The issue of conflict and peace was seen in a more nuanced way in the 1970s. Peace was increasingly understood as being a process. “Brot für die Welt’s” 13th call for donations (1971/72) stated:

*“Peace is more than the absence of war, more than the laying down of weapons, more than the end of contempt for others and more than fighting the causes of need. Peace is a dynamic process in which very different partners seek to work together to achieve social justice on the foundation of shared human dignity.”*

The Conciliar Process for Justice, Peace and the Integrity of Creation tried to address human rights issues without thinking in rigid categories. Between its sixth (1983) and seventh (1991) general assembly, the World Council of Churches called on the churches to enter into a public commitment and to join together against the threat to life in the areas of justice, peace and the integrity of creation. Partners and employees had many contacts to the peace movement and the Conciliar Process.

This nuanced view did not lead to specific peace-making measures, even if the concept of “peace through development” came under increasing challenge. Towards the end of the 1980s the development model experienced a change. It became clear that development could not be expected as a present but was only to be secured with political participation and active involvement. An approach developed from this which deliberately focused on the issue of rights.

In this context the work in the North to heighten awareness gained a higher profile and education work on development policy became more significant. The gap between human rights and development closed.

<sup>6</sup> This appeared in an advertisement for “Brot für die Welt” in 1972: “Where injustice, existential fear, poverty and hunger are a permanent situation, it is easy to resort to weapon”. It is a well-known fact that for millions of people in the Southern Hemisphere, this permanent situation exists and that there is not enough to live. For them, there are only two options for changing their life – to take up weapons or to embark on the peaceful revolution of development.”

## 2.2 The turning point in 1989 and the peace dividend that did not come

### Underlying conditions

The end of the Cold War in 1989 was in many ways a turning point. The approach adopted to explain global conflict constellations was outdated. At the same time, the superpowers loosened their ties to Third World countries which shared the same ideological line with them. After this many of these countries became economically bankrupt and descended into political crisis. Their social structures and generally repressive security systems collapsed, and the state order disintegrated into a struggle between internal groups for survival and control of resources. The Western recipe of a global economy and a world where market forces were allowed a free reign contributed to this.

For a short time after 1990 there was hope of a “peace dividend”: it was possible to end wars in Namibia, Mozambique, El Salvador and Cambodia through mediation, and democratic elections took place for the first time in many countries.

After 1990 conflicts were rarely viewed in ideological terms or seen in a global dimension. They were now interpreted as conflicts between local power bases and warlords. Such an interpretation changed the roles and relationships between foreign helpers and partners. Support was less biased in favour of one party to the conflict and focused more on the civilian population caught between the fronts.

At the same time, the international dimension of these armed conflicts was highlighted more distinctly, in particular when the exploitation of profitable raw materials was at issue. The dividing line between legal and illegal businesses has been blurred for a long time in countries where there is civil war, resulting in so-called economies of violence.

After the end of the Cold War a realignment of states took place and here, too, limitations on actions disappeared. German policy developed increasingly military options and tried to incorporate societal protagonists in their concepts. New concepts such as “humanitarian catastrophes” helped to mobilise an appropriate acceptance in the population. The media became crucial protagonists as regards what term was used to showcase or ignore a crisis. The term “humanitarian catastrophe” appealed to compassion and mobilised humanitarian aid for the victims – and allowed conflicts to be depoliticised and global backgrounds and co-responsibility for these dramatic events to be excluded.

On the other hand, the recent conflicts during the disintegration of Yugoslavia, Somalia and Rwanda produced an unheard of level of violence. The disaster experienced by the United Nations in Somalia as well as the genocide in Rwanda posed many questions, in particular how the civilian population can be protected in such situations and how to prevent humanitarian aid being misused by the parties to the conflict.

### Changes in perceptions and approaches

The dilemma confronting the world in the mid-1990s was described by Werner Lottje<sup>7</sup> as follows:

*“War scenarios are extremely depressing. (...) Aid organisations and churches cannot lose courage, and they cannot become helpless or passive in the political sphere. Nor can humanitarian aid be the sole response. (...) It is necessary to take preventive action.”*

He commented critically:

*“Organisations delivering development aid continue with projects even if these may go up in flames the next day; emergency aid organisations wait until the conflict has erupted and*

<sup>7</sup> Werner Lottje (1946–2004) was for many years head of Diakonie Menschenrechte, co-founder of the Platform for Peaceful Conflict Management and one of the initiators of the Martin Ennals Award.

*the first casualties have been recorded before they do anything. The aid machine then gets going; human rights organisations document the crimes and the names of the victims and try to find out who is responsible. A feature of human rights work is that it often comes too late. (...) The challenge for those working in the field of human rights is to apply their knowledge to preventive action.” (Lottje 1994, p. 4 ff.)*

As more states fail and the number of armed conflicts within states increases,

*“the scope for bringing influence to bear in individual situations is diminishing. The need to apply methods for transforming conflicts is becoming greater.”*

By providing humanitarian aid to all the different groups of people affected by the conflict and by maintaining a conciliatory dialogue, DKH tried to counteract tensions, e.g. in Yugoslavia, and not allow itself to be exploited by individual parties to the conflict.

DKH withstood a new temptation in Bosnia and avoided becoming involved by the Civil-Military Cooperation of the German Armed Forces and in one-sided political projects. In Kosovo DKH consciously segregated itself from the “humanitarian” NATO intervention and gave humanitarian aid to all those who were persecuted, including those from the “other” side. DKH remained active in Somalia, too, and continued to provide help in solidarity when the Western troops and many aid organisations withdrew again.

In 1994 the research project “Local Capacities for Peace” began to pursue the “Do No Harm” objective in several case studies. The goal at least not to do any harm has, since then, become a broadly recognised guiding principle, which is also not always easy to adhere to.

In view of the long list of violent situations and challenges, it became more than clear that development cooperation was not performing adequately. Development cooperation which did not deal with these conflicts and injustices in a more targeted and creative manner could not make any real contribution to peace.

Experiments were begun with new forms of campaigns, new kinds of work, new partners and a new way of learning about conflict and dealing with conflict. New structures were developed and this is how in 1997 the Office for Peace and Conflict Resolution of the AG KED (Working Group of Church Development Services) was established.

Based on the growing knowledge that the complex situations in individual countries could neither be understood nor changed alone, work started in networks and cooperation with partners who had specialised in conflict resolution.<sup>8</sup>

Whereas at the start of the 1990s the focus was primarily on external interventions in conflicts, the workshop report “Peace must grow from the inside” from 1999 directed attention on the experiences of partners in resolving conflicts in their countries (cf. Arbeitsgemeinschaft Kirchlicher Entwicklungsdienst 1999). With this, “local peace potential” gained a face and the experiences of partners were accorded new importance. Florence Mpaayei of Kenya from the Nairobi Peace Initiative Africa put it this way (cf. [www.npi-africa.org](http://www.npi-africa.org)):

*“To do peace work, one needs people who are active on the spot, who know the region and the protagonists, and who can establish trust. Conflict transformation has a great deal to do with the establishment of new relationships and with reconciliation – that cannot come from the outside.”*

<sup>8</sup> At the end of the 1980s international human rights organisations gave considerable encouragement to develop new forms of action for dealing with violent conflicts. International Alert ([www.international-alert.org](http://www.international-alert.org)), one of the first organisations for conflict resolution, evolved from the context of these discussions.



This includes quite explicitly the provision of access to international policymaking for those involved and the international recognition and qualification of civil organisations, thus boosting their negotiating power. Through the emphasis on the international dimension of conflict events, the “Do no harm” approach with its focus on the project level and humanitarian aid was ignored. However, the subsequent process made a self-critical and close examination of projects for conflict resolution.

The previous assumption – and hope – that the effects of programmes for conflict resolution would accumulate on their own and achieve positive effects at higher levels was refuted with the Reflecting on Peace Practice project, the results of which have been published since 2003. Since then it has not been disputed that links need to be created actively in order to achieve effects at other levels.<sup>9</sup>

In the case of conflicts concerning raw materials and the phenomenon of economies of violence, “Brot für die Welt” was engaged in networks which dealt with specific countries, such as the Chad-Cameroon petroleum project or the European Coalition on Oil in Sudan, and it also concerned itself with special aspects of these phenomena, e.g. corporate responsibility and fighting corruption (cf. Global Policy Forum 2007).

The result of this work was “Principles for the conduct of company operations within the oil and gas industry” (“Brot für die Welt” 2000). In oil-producing countries innovative processes were developed which had the potential to prevent violence and to resolve conflicts in a constructive way. The view of conflict and violence was more comprehensive and at the same time it became more specific and differentiated with a gender perspective. As a result, awareness was achieved for areas that up to that time had not been perceived.

The most dangerous place for women is the place where they feel they are safest, and that is their home. Domestic violence is the expression of a violent cul-

ture, which is too often tolerated in a society. For this reason, from 2004 to 2006 the OED and its “Brot für die Welt” campaign operated the International Decade Project “Overcoming Domestic Violence”. Its aim was to bring together different strategies on how to deal with domestic violence and to make these useable (cf. Diakonisches Werk der EKD 2007). The Rosenstrasse 76 exhibition was intended as a contribution to break the silence.

## 2.3 From 2001: The war against terrorism – security instead of peace

### Underlying conditions

After 11 September 2001 and the subsequent “War on terror”, ideology has increasingly entered into conflicts again. An argument based on pseudo-religious explanations is trying to polarise the world into good and evil. Military interventions, motivated by the security interests of Western states, gained ground, and there were wars in Afghanistan and Iraq.

The “war against terrorism” destroyed the efforts of many years in the field of human rights. The buzzword “security” blatantly transformed selfish interests into policy. This reappearance of ideology still has consequences for independent humanitarian aid and for development cooperation. Humanitarian aid has to defend itself against massive attempts to deploy it as an instrument.

### Changes in perceptions and approaches

In 2003, church development agencies expressed extreme concern about these tendencies in a joint policy paper. The aid agencies emphasised that security is indivisible.

*“Neither the North nor the South nor individual states can gain and keep security for themselves without granting it to the majority of the popula-*

<sup>9</sup> See: [www.cdainc.com/cdawww/default.php](http://www.cdainc.com/cdawww/default.php) (status as at 30 Oct. 2008)

*tion and ethnic groups.” (“Brot für die Welt” et al. 2003)*

This policy paper, with the title “Development policy in the slipstream of military interventions?”, declared that security for everyone requires a rebalancing of global interests, which includes considerable concessions and changes from the Northern countries. To do this, the aid agencies stated it would be necessary to make efforts to change awareness, and this was not something that churches could do alone. They put distance between themselves and a philosophy which reduces peace to security and military intervention and completely loses sight of long-term perspectives. However, fair rebalancing of interests, reconciliation and the creation of political and societal structures that can create peace are a difficult task. As the agencies emphasised, peace must come from the grassroots.

Since 2001, DKH has tried to counteract the widely held scheme of good and evil by working with non-Christian, including Muslim, organisations, delivering with them impartial humanitarian aid for everyone and dissociating itself from the war and security agendas.

This overview of the historical development has shown to what extent the perception of conflicts and the changes in conflict contexts were and still are dependent on the general underlying conditions, the overall geopolitical atmosphere and ideological directions of politicians and society. The more the conflicts themselves are brought to the foreground, the easier it is to arrive at initial insights. The dialogue with partners has taken place on the basis of these experiences and views. The formulation of basic reference points (Chapter 3) and the consequences for our actions (Chapter 4) are based on the results of this dialogue with our partners and clients.

### 3 Basic reference points: What are our goals in the contexts of conflict and violence?

#### 3.1 Conflict transformation

The term “conflict transformation”, coined by John Paul Lederach among others, provides a comprehensive description of what the OED and its partners stand for. It aims to achieve new relationships and fairer social structures in conflicts. The concept of conflict transformation has space for intensification, advocacy and human rights work but also reconciliation and sustained development. Transformation means change, and makes it clear that it is about processes and not fast solutions – processes in which deprivation is alleviated and new relationships are established, truth is revealed and is forgiven, institutions are established, and a dialogue on standards and values can take place, competencies created and hope is born. All these together make non-violent transformation of conflicts possible – now and in the future.

The transformation of conflict aims to exclude the use of violence and to make it possible to address conflicts without any fear of violence. Transformation may mean de-escalation to prevent or stop violence, but it may equally mean engaging in confrontation and intensifying conflict in order to make the causes more visible and point the way to the future. This is a holistic approach, which requires systematic work in all environments, at all levels and with all protagonists.

#### Creating an environment for constructive conflicts

A conflict between individuals or groups is often understood to be a dispute about objectives which are thought to be irreconcilable. It is a complex human phenomenon which, in particular, must not be allowed to be confused with violence. If conflicts escalate and the parties to the conflict turn to violence, the destructive potential of conflicts comes to the fore. Confrontation and frustration, as are often experienced in conflicts, leave their marks on people. They change their attitudes

to each other, their self-image and their perception of themselves, of others and their environment. If it is not possible to find suitable forms of expression for the concerns which are the driving forces behind the conflict and to identify perspectives for change, then there is a considerable risk that the complex processes gain a momentum of their own in a negative direction. The step towards open deployment of force is then not far away.

However, escalations of this kind are not always necessary. Quite the reverse: in its constructive form conflict is a motor for change, unavoidable and creative. Conflicts are often approached constructively and resolved without those involved suffering any losses. People can grow through conflicts which they have survived. Communities can mature as a result of it. This is because conflicts bring problems to the surface: they put indefensible situations on the agenda of those involved and release energies for the necessary change. They are calling on those involved to be aware of their needs and rights, to articulate them and to confront those who are responsible for maintaining the rights.

#### Stopping violence and taking action against those who are profiting from violence

Violence in the widest sense of the word includes actions and words, but also structures and systems which cause physical, psychological, social and ecological damage and prevent people from achieving their full potential. Not only the open violence of the parties to the conflict but also the hidden violence of oppressing structures produce a tremendous amount of suffering and destruction. Overcoming violence and making peace then means changing these negative structures, which express themselves in areas such as discrimination, the withholding of rights and freedoms and the blocking of opportunities.

Whereas the violence of oppressive structures can often paralyse open and constructive conflicts for a long time, open violence intensifies polarisation. This intensifies the spirals of violence and retaliation. Stereotypes and a friend-foe mindset take hold, and rational thinking is stifled.

Conflict escalates into violence if there are no appropriate paths to peaceful conflict resolution and also if those involved selectively encourage violent incidents. Once a certain threshold has been crossed, the way back is all the more difficult. Those who have been oppressed and discriminated against are easy to instrumentalise and manipulate by the violent protagonists, who exploit an environment of uncertainty and instability for the purposes of their own power, profit or external interests.

For conflict transformation it is not enough to achieve de-escalation of open violence. Only too often the underlying structures of inequality as well as power, exploitation and profit remain hidden. In view of the fact that conflict transformation aims to achieve a fairer distribution of power, there is no way of circumventing this confrontation and there must also not be any lame compromises.

**Boosting non-violence**

Many people who live and work in an environment of instability and sporadic violence adopt a pragmatic philosophy. They avoid violence because it appears to offer less promise of success. Others shrink back from using violence because they fear the consequences of a culture of violence for their community.

Others, in turn, refuse to reach for weapons because they want to fight for peace and justice using non-violent methods. For them, active non-violence is more than the renunciation of the violent use of weapons, it is a creative, positive, innovative and healing path of conflict transformation. Being able to demonstrate a viable alternative to violence and injustice creates the greatest potential for peaceful development.

**3.2 Local capacities for peace**

The most successful approach towards sustained transformation of conflicts to date is the one which puts its trust in those local parties with capacity for peace, without ignoring the links at other levels. It includes protagonists at all levels of the society affected and may also mean facilitating and accompanying their appearance on

international stages. What is crucial is that this approach is and remains a process which is controlled by these protagonists themselves. The OED has recognised that conflict transformation is possible if such a process

- identifies, supports and strengthens local parties with capacity for peace;
- accompanies these parties consistently, also during setbacks, and knows how to provide protection;
- remains flexible, because the situation can change quickly;
- recognises opportunities and can exploit these through a fast response;
- at the same time, thinks in the long term and can help to prepare the ground for a culture of peace;
- interweaves approaches and instruments for cooperation in the fields of human rights and development, humanitarian aid and conflict resolution;
- links very different approaches and different levels to one another.

This approach can be strengthened considerably in the OED if it is successful in exploiting the recognised strengths, reducing the deficiencies and developing with other organisations and protagonists a way of sharing the workload that is right for the situation.

**3.3 Gender equality**

Today women and children account for around 75% of fatalities in violent intra- and interstate conflicts. Women are exposed to a high level of sexual violence as the spoils of war and because they embody the identity of the hostile group. As the ones who care for their family, they are forced into prostitution by men of their own and other groups in order to obtain food, medicines and water. They are targeted by combatants and raped in order to humiliate their opponents. Men who can often no longer fulfil their role to provide for and defend their

own family respond to these stressful situations with increased violence.

In addition to this, women are highly susceptible to the risk of infection by HIV/Aids, where young women in particular are three to six times more likely to contract the disease. Fifty percent of those who are HIV positive worldwide and 61% of those who are HIV positive in Africa are women. Rape increases the risk of an HIV infection enormously and HIV also contributes to conflicts within families and communities.

Women are not only victims. They join armed groups as “accomplices” or encourage their men to be violent. However, it is equally true to say that – as an extension of their traditional roles – they join together in organisations to restore peace and safeguard the survival of their families. They also stand up for peace in organisations of civil society.

In times of crisis, issues with clear links to the relationship between genders feature in debates within society. Men should again be able to defend their “wife and family” or their “homeland”. A man who cannot protect himself and bring his family through the crisis is “not a real man”. In crises these deep patterns are played out in order to prepare for action, long before the first shot is fired. This points towards the relevance of gender as a category for analysing conflicts as well as resolving conflicts. Here the risks and opportunities in various phases of conflicts are distributed differently.

Conflicts mobilise and confront societal power relationships. They also involve the images and ideas that social groups have of each other, which extend right down to deep levels of collective consciousness and unconsciousness. The relationships between the sexes and the desire to achieve gender equality are not immune from this.

Not all issues must be considered in the same light: What does the conflict mean for women? What does it mean for men? What does conflict mean for HIV-positive women and HIV-positive men? What does it mean for the relationships between them? When one under-

stands how sexual hierarchies, distributions of power and systems of belief evolve from the norms of what men and women are meant to be like and what they are entitled to, it becomes clear that the relationship between the sexes alone will cause conflict. It relates to issues of inclusion and exclusion, supremacy and subordination, and upgrading and downgrading.

These gender dimensions relevant to conflict permeate social life as asymmetric powers and specific roles. Images of masculinity and femininity form the basis for values and norms and thus determine attitudes right down to the formation of identity. The situations and developments for men and women vary, especially in conflicts, and must therefore be assessed separately. To do this, it is necessary to overcome the mechanism for filtering perceptions, which continues to ensure that women are either not taken into account at all or are seen exclusively as victims, and that men are hardly ever perceived to be in the role of victims.

The many changes in the roles of women during times of war are often not taken into account – politically and socially – in the period after the war. Very little attention is paid to their experiences as producers, organisers and providers of food, their needs as widows or demobilised soldiers, because it is first necessary to satisfy the armed men in order to avoid further violence. During the process of negotiations and decision-making on what is to happen after the war only very little input is provided by the experiences of women, including in the field of peace-making. Issues on the extent to which gender stereotypes of masculinity and femininity result in a response that intensifies conflict, how role assignments that intensify conflict can be broken down and can be used in a positive way to prevent conflict are still not discussed enough (cf. “Brot für die Welt” /EED 2007).

In particular, the development of changed attitudes among men concerning their masculinity is important. Again, that cannot be seen in isolation. Both sexes must change so that men can develop less violent roles for themselves. Isolated approaches are counterproductive, in particular when it comes to gender and conflict.

Constructive conflict increases the opportunities and margins for manoeuvre for achieving greater gender equality. Violent conflict reduces the scope and holds additional risks. Gender is often earnestly mentioned as a dimension of conflict but implementation remains difficult and fragmented, and is frequently limited to individual projects to promote women.

However, as the examples earlier mentioned show, gender has a much greater significance in conflicts. In respect of the approach towards conflict transformation adopted by the OED, gender equality and gender awareness are important reference points in conflict resolution.<sup>10</sup>

The OED has collated the results of an internal training course to produce an information sheet for employees on the subject of conflict and gender (cf. Team Grundsatz und Entwicklung 2006).

### 3.4 Orientation towards human rights

Violations of human rights lie at the root of many conflicts. All work relating to conflicts must therefore be sensitive to violations of human rights and discrimination if the causes of conflicts are to be resolved. Approaches based on legislation can provide conflict transformation with powerful strategic guidance. This gives them a clear advantage over guiding principles such as “human security” and “human development”, which were both developed with a view to emancipation but have lost much of their potential in the debate on security policy.

When resolving conflicts, it can be helpful if there is a higher-order catalogue of central values, basic rights and procedural principles which already exist as a universal Policy Paper and do not have to be negotiated first. The use of national and international instruments for protecting human rights can prompt state bodies to become actively involved in resolving conflicts as a re-

sult of the public exposure associated with this. Even private protagonists such as multinational enterprises, which can in public be made to share responsibility for human rights violations, must fear that their image will be damaged and are prepared to make concessions. Human rights help to assign roles clearly. What are the obligations of the state, where are the limits of its power to act and what are the tasks of other protagonists? It is, in principle, easier to clarify such questions by referring to the international human rights conventions and they therefore help to find appropriate solutions to conflicts.

Human rights are therefore a particularly relevant instrument where the structures of statehood are still present. However, they must not be halted when it comes to “failing states”. Victims of human rights violations must not be abandoned. Although it is no longer possible to have human rights enforced in court, they can however be used as the yardstick against which to document violations, which can then help at international level to name those who are responsible.

Civil conflict transformation in failing states can help to protect human rights and those who defend them, because it tries to take the rights, demands and objectives of people seriously even if there is no legal redress and to represent them in negotiating situations. Also, for those affected by violations, knowing about their rights is a first but important step towards empowerment. Alternative strategies can be formulated more easily if people know that they have been deprived of key rights or if these rights have been violated. But human rights strategies have their limits. Human rights are less likely to influence conflicts in which some or all parties to the conflict are not yet prepared to negotiate and are trying to articulate or assert maximum demands.

Bringing human rights into the equation in conflict situations can also have the effect of heightening the conflict. To demand that human rights be adhered to, to strengthen them and to develop them further is al-

<sup>10</sup> The topic of gender equality has been brought up particularly in relation to HIV and Aids. On this subject, see HIV and Aids Policy from “Brot für die Welt” and EED and also “HIV and Aids in Africa” Diakonisches Werk/“Brot für die Welt”, Stuttgart 2006

ways an issue laden with conflict. Human rights activists are like seismographs when it comes to progress in conflict resolution or the threat of escalation and spiralling violence. Those involved in human rights work and work relating to conflict resolution must therefore be prepared to stand up at any time to protect threatened human rights activists. For deployment to be of use, it must be planned specifically for the conflict and implemented strategically.

### 3.5 Humanitarian aid – a contribution to peace

Humanitarian aid can heighten tensions and violent conflicts, delay their solution and fritter away the credibility of the organisation providing the aid, if the aid delivered is biased for one party to the conflict and if it privileges certain groups and disadvantages others. It is also a disadvantage if it becomes enmeshed with military activities and cooperates in a biased way with armies or armed groups. In contrast, the organisation does not go far enough if it does not aim to restore conditions (rehabilitation and reintegration) that provide a life worth living but instead is content for those affected to remain dependent on aid. The same also occurs if the organisations allow themselves to be used over a fairly long period as a humanitarian substitute for the lack of willingness on the part of the conflicting parties find a solution and improve the situation of those affected.

Humanitarian aid can influence conflicts in a positive way if it

- is designed as a peaceful campaign and is therefore a peaceful message amidst the violence;
- is organised as an even-handed campaign and with this human message is diametrically opposed to the violent concept where the right to life only applies to one's own people;
- can build bridges and allow a new start; humanitarian aid can act to a limited extent on the parties to the conflict who are involved, restrain their violence, and seek dialogue and alternative paths;

- can help those involved to overcome the consequences of the conflict, improve their life chances and direct their life towards peace through material and psychological rehabilitation.

The separate humanitarian principles of humanitarian aid and their foundation in international law are therefore a central strategic point of reference for work in conflict situations. They are in serious danger as a result of the developments over the past few years. This requires humanitarian aid to develop a strong profile.

The aid agency must be able to deliver its aid independently of the prevailing opinions and in many cases that means swimming against the current of media opinion and resisting political influence. To do this, it must also use in-depth analysis to counteract short perspectives and arguments and defend its independent and impartial humanitarian mandate. This requires the OED to continue to stand up for humanitarian ethical principles in the public and political arena. It is also necessary to stand up against the misuse of humanitarian aid by political, economic, military and media interests and to lead the confrontation with the new global security and anti-terror policies and the effects they have on independent humanitarian aid.

The OED would like to join with others to become a powerful voice which focuses on the backgrounds and causes of conflicts. Whilst maintaining its political independence, the OED sees this involvement as a contribution to global prevention and necessary political and structural changes. Only in this way is it possible to avoid the acknowledged weaknesses and negative side effects of humanitarian aid and to develop its strengths systematically.

In view of the greater scope of work prompted by globalisation, it is important for humanitarian aid to seek new paths and allies in countries where partners are weak or non-existent, without primarily taking the route of the “white helpers” while doing so. Overall what is important is to find a balance which acknowledges the limited range of humanitarian aid during conflict prevention and transformation yet at the same time makes

the most of all the options endorsed by ethical basic principles. This includes innovative project approaches for preventing violence and conflict escalation.



## 4 Consequences for our actions

Vastly differing demands are placed on the OED and its partners in conflict situations. In addition to this, the partners are confronted with very different situations in their countries and the initial positions vary greatly.

Their needs and what they require specifically from their northern partners also vary accordingly. One group, for instance, is primarily focused on certain tasks, including their own qualification and development steps with a view to becoming effective protagonists in conflicts.

Others have already acquired a strong profile. Partners such as Serapaz in Mexico, Nairobi Peace Initiative in Kenya and the Kadtuntaya Foundation in the Philippines have for a long time played active roles in resolving conflicts in their countries and regions. In their activities they combine elements of development work, conflict transformation and, in some cases, direct humanitarian aid. They are already active at different levels – in the field as well as in the capital and on the international stage. Thanks to their integrity they can stand unequivocally at the side of the weak and strengthen them for the confrontation, as well as acting as a mediator to de-escalate violent situations. They have developed their own expertise to analyse and interpret the situation in their countries, which can provide reference points for policy and protagonists in society.

Contributions and support given by the OED to its partners must be incorporated into the complex contexts and must not give the semblance of contradictory campaigns and messages. A demonstration of the quality of synergy and coherence is provided by the positive difference they can make in specific conflict situations.

The following implementation stages provide an overview to demonstrate how aspects relevant to the conflict can be taken into account to a greater degree than has been the case to date by building on the good experience that has already been gained. It is intended that this will create awareness of the possibilities that exist when it becomes apparent that conflict transformation

is relevant in working contexts. This is to provide encouragement to develop steps to find answers to solve specific problems, which are consistent with the views gained from the practical work of programmes and fundamental convictions.

### 4.1 Conflict sensitivity

When considering the important insights gained through work in contexts involving violence and conflicts, it must also be borne in mind that both development cooperation and humanitarian aid can also have negative effects. Against the backdrop of these experiences, we regard “conflict sensitivity” as the ability of the OED and its partners to understand the contexts of the conflicts in which they are involved; to understand the interaction of programmes and the conflict and to use this understanding to avoid negative effects and strengthen the positive effects. This also includes awareness when dealing with the effects of violent conflict on the organisation and the personnel.

Conflict sensitivity is also important for programme work and, indeed, specifically for the advocacy activities in relation to countries in conflict situations. In conflict contexts partners and, above all, those who defend human rights and work for peace are very often in danger. Therefore, each step in advocacy work must be examined carefully to assess its consequences for protagonists in the field and in respect of the objective of achieving just and sustained peace.

For the OED it is important that conflict sensitivity be developed on the basis of practical experience, through dialogue, critical examination and shared learning with partners. When sensitivity of the conflict is achieved, it is a first milestone on the way to being a competent partner in conflict situations. We understand this as a process of learning and exchange, which does not achieve its objectives through the use of check lists but rather through conscious and selective creation of space for dialogue.

It is intended that instruments will be learned, adapted and developed further in the course of dialogue. Some

of the most important aspects as to how conflict sensitivity is actually experienced are developed below.

**Raising the awareness of both parties in respect of conflict situations**

In conflict situations, church work in the fields of development, humanitarian aid, human rights and peace must continuously examine whether the work has the effect of reducing or encouraging violence. The participants must therefore retain a continuous and independent overview of the context, causes and dynamics of conflicts, regardless of the “prevailing opinion”, and evolve development strategies that are sensitive to the conflict. For this reason, it is important for those who live in the conflicts and those outside the conflict to share ideas on a regular basis.

**Conflict analysis**

Tailor-made responses are founded on precise knowledge of the conflict and its dynamics. In particular, complex conflict situations with an international dimension, which requires an interaction of different players, demands intensive and regular updating of shared analyses. A deeper understanding of how the respective partners perceive the situation helps to deal with the situation in a coherent manner, even if it is not always possible to agree precisely about the next step. The information sheet on conflict analysis by the OED (cf. Projektgruppe Zivile Konfliktbearbeitung 2006) provides employees with guidance here.<sup>11</sup>

**Development and integration of instruments for planning, monitoring and evaluation**

Conflict situations are characterised by great uncertainties. Partners reach their limits with familiar planning instruments and, in some cases, planning is absolutely impossible. In the meantime, there are suitable instruments and, above all, contacts and potential for the further development of instruments. The aim is to work intensively on these with cooperation partners.<sup>12</sup>

**4.2 Dialogue and qualification**

This Policy Paper describes the OED’s basic concepts and key priorities. It is brought to life and moved forward through the exchange with partners. This dialogue is to be intensified. Meetings with partners or events can be used for this purpose. Measures and strategies for qualification are a part of this as well. A few important aspects are listed below.

**Finding a shared language**

Over thousands of years warriors have developed and perfected their language. Many of the terms they use have entered general usage. “Protect the flank”, “muster troops”, “close ranks“, „strategy” and “intervention” are just a few examples. In peace work it is much more difficult to find a shared language.

Many new approaches have been developed since 1990 in the course of positive dynamic evolution. In the

<sup>11</sup> The information sheet helps to raise the organisation’s own awareness and offers help when formulating important questions for partners. The aims in relation to an examined measure are:  
 – to identify and avoid possible negative effects (on the conflict in the context of the project or as a result of the conflict in the project context);  
 – to identify and boost possible constructive opportunities to influence; and  
 – to create a link to other initiatives at the location and/or at other levels and, as a result, extend the reach of measures and their sustainability.  
 The aim in relation to the dialogue with the partner is to obtain a secure basis for informed dialogue.

<sup>12</sup> The results of different regional processes supported by the EED can be included here. Based on the results of regional training of partners on Planning, Monitoring, Evaluating (PME) at the peace work conference in Chad (May 1998) and the test phase of the planning and monitoring instrument developed by GENOVICO (advisory network in Niger), a PME manual is to be produced for the French-speaking area in cooperation with GENOVICO and EIRENE.

course of this, a large number of new terms have been coined but these are often interpreted and used in different ways – crisis prevention, civil conflict resolution, conflict solution, peacebuilding, conflict management and conflict transformation. It becomes even more difficult when working with people in areas where other languages are spoken, because the status of peace research and civil conflict resolution varies greatly in different countries and language areas. Even the terms come with baggage.

Partners in the Palestinian territories say that “peace” and “peacebuilding” are non-words for them because they have become hackneyed and meaningless. When partners in Latin America hear terms such as “conflict solution”, which sound like a lame compromise, their response is cautious and they tend to reject them. All this makes communication more difficult and with it dialogue and critical scrutiny.

The search for a shared language is important. It can only succeed through commitment by both parties and as a result of an open exchange, for example using the reference points described in Chapter 3. An initial step has been taken with the (German) glossary “Terms relating to conflict resolution” (cf. Team Menschenrechte 2006).

#### **Acquisition of expertise through exchange and qualification processes**

Exchange and qualification processes organised on a longer-term basis have proven to be a suitable instrument for the development of competencies and strategies. How these are structured depends on the dynamics and interests of the partners. For example, in the Palestinian territories the focus is on further training but in the Philippines it is on undertaking shared activities. Further training for partners and employees and qualified technical advice are important for implementing the Policy Paper. The OED encourages its partners to acquire expertise through further training. This can take the form of activities in the funded programmes and through selective funding of measures through the scholarship programme.

An exchange of views can be organised for particularly important topics (such as conflict and gender, conflict sensitivity, raw materials and conflict, conflicts linked to resources such as land and water, and peace education). These can be started by the partners and taken up by the OED. Other options are the development, support and utilisation of regional expertise in technical advice and cooperation with qualification institutions in different regions of the world. These include financial support, curriculum development and the networking of these institutions (cf. Projektgruppe Zivile Konfliktbearbeitung 2008).

#### **4.3 Variety in financial support: Persons – organisations – networks**

Financial support for projects, programmes and activities is one of the key dimensions of the OED’s work. In view of the suffering and desolation which are caused by violent conflicts, the limitations of one’s own scope for action are difficult to bear. Against this backdrop, it is easy to understand the desire to keep out of the matter completely rather than only to be able to make such a small contribution. The reverse is necessary. The OED acknowledges the need to accept responsibility in the face of its own limitations. It sees itself as a reliable partner which is prepared to pursue the process of conflict transformation consistently and tenaciously, even if it experiences substantial setbacks. It does not view setbacks as the failure of projects and, for that reason, does not cease its commitment. Instead it embraces the risk of sudden conflict escalation as a challenge in order to seek new, different and more creative routes.

A look at the change in underlying conditions and work contexts has shown that the options of individual protagonists are limited and that the greatest opportunities lie in bringing together very different protagonists on site and at many other levels, taking account of their different strategies for action. In order to provide the best possible support for developing potential for conflict transformation, suitable persons, organisations and networks should therefore be supported and encouraged, as appropriate for the situation. What does this mean in detail?

**Prophetic influence of individuals**

It has repeatedly been shown to be the case that it depends on individual people whether opportunities for conflict transformation are recognised and utilised. Conflict resolution is like juggling with “irregular verbs”, which do not fit within the usual template. This requires people to show great perspicacity and a willingness to take risks. The risk of failure is continuously present here. These people who pursue a ray of hope at the end of the tunnel often take unconventional routes. They come up against brick walls and tend to find routine procedures a hindrance rather than a help. The OED resolves to be a place which nurtures the transforming and inspiring potential of its employees and partners, and makes its structures available to serve them. This also involves supporting and staying with unconventional initiatives of individuals, so that an atmosphere is created that encourages and facilitates the prophetic influence of individuals.

**Organisations**

In special situations such as work involving peace and human rights in areas where there are armed conflicts, in states that are fragile and have extremely repressive regimes, partner organisations require special attention and scope to act as required. In the past it has been necessary in such situations to dispense with formal recognition of organisations, to relocate work to neighbouring countries, completely revise the planning of current programmes and so on. This is only possible if there is trust in the relationship and OED employees are accorded the space to make unconventional decisions in serious situations.

**Networking**

Experience has shown that individual projects cannot create peace. Nor do many different activities automatically add up to peace either. Work undertaken in isolation and with the expectation that conventional instruments of development cooperation are alone sufficient to achieve conflict transformation will reach an impasse. What needs to be done is to link projects at different lev-

els and with different approaches in a targeted manner. To achieve this, it may be necessary to enter into new alliances and work in networks.

When considering network activities in relation to conflicts, we see first and foremost an activity and not necessarily a structure. Networking should be active and targeted at confidence-building measures, sharing information, experience and expertise, developing new and innovative options for taking action, seeking and creating synergies and complementary factors, coordinating and boosting the activities of those involved, and – if appropriate – developing and implementing shared activities. The question of “What do we want to do together?” is more important than the question of “What structure do we want?” The special feature of networks is that the structures are flexible and frequently change and adapt themselves. That is the advantage they have over organisations. The OED sees itself as an integral part of global networks. It works actively towards building alliances and also becomes involved in these. The OED provides selective funding for the work of networks and is flexible in the awarding of funds.

**4.4 Advocacy and shaping policy**

Processes to transform conflict in favour of peace and justice can only be achieved if the underlying conditions are changed appropriately. In the North this requires systematic support at the various levels and in the different fields of action with the aim of maintaining or improving the foundations on which effective action is possible. We consider the following fields of action to be important.

**Facilitating the activities of civil society in conflicts**

In situations of heightened tension, the activities of civil society in favour of peace are often the only basis for hope. However, in conflict situations these activities are often limited or made impossible as a result of violence, repression, emergency laws and persecutions. Governments in the North often concentrate excessively on interacting with their partner governments in the South.

The OED makes a stand in favour of retaining and winning back space for the activities of civil society. The OED wishes, through the use of targeted actions, to help extend the scope for activities of civil society in conflict situations in the local areas concerned.

### **Taking the human rights route**

The OED can take the human rights route here. It can use both state structures at a national level as well as regional or international systems to protect human rights. Formal structures include the option of complaints proceedings, parallel reporting and litigation. Informal structures are the instruments of public relations work or the work of investigative journalists.

Advocacy work belongs, in any case, to the core activities of any strategy for human rights protection. Advocacy to protect human rights builds on the documentation of violations and uses formal and informal means to highlight these violations and demand a remedy. The OED supports those affected to undertake advocacy on their own behalf. Where this is not possible, aid organisations such as the OED or other protagonists must take action.

### **Playing a role in shaping the instruments of policy**

The OED is already in direct communication with politicians and debating critical issues. Involvement in networks increases the opportunities of having a long-term effect on shaping policy and developing civil instruments. Initial experience with new forms of organisations and institutions such as FriEnt<sup>13</sup> or the committee on civil society for the German government's action

plan<sup>14</sup> favour the use of these opportunities. However, as the development of the civil crisis prevention action plan shows, such efforts at the highest political level are only adequate to the extent that they are driven forward by committed protagonists and if regular warnings are given in the form of continuous pressure from the outside. An access has been created at European level via the RoCS process (Role of Civil Society)<sup>15</sup> so that here, too, at least a hearing is given to their own positions. All this requires continuous coexistence, with a high level of division of labour, of protagonists of civil society, who must demonstrate their abilities to develop a global civil society. They must learn to work together effectively on a continuous basis, without losing sight of the priorities. Influence that shapes politics and develops civil instruments is implemented in ecumenical contexts (EKD, APRODEV, WCC), in close cooperation with the EED and the Platform for Peaceful Conflict Management.

### **Advocacy for the independence of humanitarian aid**

Particularly within the framework of civil humanitarian networks in Germany and Europe, DKH has stood up actively to the German government and the European Union for humanitarian principles to be respected by governments and armies and for the activities of humanitarian aid organisations in conflicts to be independent and impartial. These positions are reflected in documents such as the VENRO policy paper on armed forces and humanitarian aid. The European consensus on humanitarian aid, which was adopted by all EU members in December 2007, is also the result of joint humanitarian advocacy. DKH considers the continuation of this commitment within the German, European and UN framework to be an important task. It is essential to gain

<sup>13</sup> See: [www.frient.de](http://www.frient.de)

<sup>14</sup> Over six years ago the German government, which was then a coalition of the Social Democratic and Green parties, passed an overall concept for civil crisis prevention, conflict solution and consolidation of peace and came out in favour of improved prevention of violent conflicts. Accordingly, strategies and instruments of civil crisis prevention were to be developed and extended in Germany. Here the crucial implementation instrument of the German government is the civil crisis prevention action plan.

<sup>15</sup> See: [www.eplo.org/index.php?id=220](http://www.eplo.org/index.php?id=220)

acceptance and support for these ethical principles in the political arena, particularly in specific conflicts.

#### 4.5 Public relations work and ecumenical learning

It is often, but not always the case, that peace work and conflict transformation need publicity. The public perception of civil conflict transformation expertise is still underdeveloped. Although the voices of “Brot für die Welt” and DKH are heard, we do not raise them loudly enough. Equally, only rarely do we use the opportunities to highlight the growth of competence of our partners when it comes to conflict transformation and here, too, give signs of hope.

Initial experience in improving the public perception has been gained with the Colombia special programme and in work with the Institute for Peace Education, the Peace Counts network of journalists, the Platform for Civil Conflict Management and the networks for specific topics and regions. These can be used as a basis on which to proceed. Greater use can be made of the International Day of Peace to raise the profile of peace-makers in Germany. Journalists can research and prepare contributions on the experience and commitment of partners. More references need to be made to the Decade to Overcome Violence, in particular in relation to the International Ecumenical Peace Convocation in Jamaica in 2011. This includes establishing a debate on this Policy Paper within the scope of meetings on ecumenical partner structures. The Tour de Paix can also be used to bring peace education activities in various countries to the attention of the German public. The websites of “Brot für die Welt” and DKH – in particular the foreign language pages – can raise the profile of the many different ways in which partners and colleagues demonstrate their commitment to peace.

Prizes for peace and human rights activities can be used to boost selected partners and bring aspects of the subject onto the political agenda. The human rights team has already prepared an information sheet for employees containing an introduction to many of these prizes (cf. Team Menschenrechte 2006). The Diakonisches Werk (Social Service Agency of the EKD) is a co-sponsor of the Martin Ennals Award for Human Rights Defenders.<sup>16</sup>

#### Contributing to a culture of peace

Peace education hopes to help people to develop skills that promote peace and conflict management and then go on to negotiate peace. This is just as important in Germany as in the countries of the partners. “Brot für die Welt” has made an important contribution to peace education through a series of educational materials produced in cooperation with the Institute for Peace Education<sup>17</sup> in Tübingen.

Links have now been established between peace education work in the Northern and Southern hemispheres. Even though the methods and content of peace education depend on the learning locations, the important aspect everywhere is to learn how to deal with conflicts in a constructive way. At the same time, there is a desire for peace education to make a contribution to establishing a culture of peace, both in the societies concerned and worldwide (cf. Jäger 1996, Jäger/Gugel 2000). Issues pertaining to conflict transformation will continue to be aired in the magazine *Global Lernen*.<sup>18</sup>

<sup>16</sup> See: [www.martinennalsaward.org](http://www.martinennalsaward.org)

<sup>17</sup> See: [www.friedenspaedagogik.de](http://www.friedenspaedagogik.de)

<sup>18</sup> See: [www.brot-fuer-die-welt.de/schule-aktiv/index.php](http://www.brot-fuer-die-welt.de/schule-aktiv/index.php)

## 5 Key regional priorities and issues

The challenges are overwhelming. Key priorities need to be selected if the available resources are to be deployed sensibly. This applies to countries and regions as well as to issues. Selecting key priorities means the conscious concentration of efforts into different areas of activities, e.g. establishing networks and advocacy work.

### 5.1 Key regional priorities

The Projects and Programmes department and DKH take the lead when it comes to establishing key regional priorities. Key priorities have been established for individual countries (e.g. Sri Lanka, Colombia) and regions (e.g. the Horn of Africa). Key priorities have evolved if

- exchange and dialogue processes for partners have been encouraged;
- education and commitment of ecumenical structures and networks – over and above individual projects in conflict regions – have been supported (financially and through active involvement) and/or
- especially intensive cooperation for specific conflict regions has evolved between different departments of the OED.

Key priorities have always been established, including at the initiative of partners. Key regional topics have developed from practical requirements, which give the work of the OED its current profile in conflict situations. Here the points of reference described above – conflict transformation, local peace potential, gender equality, guidance on human rights, humanitarian aid – bear fruit as a contribution to peace in constellations which continually renew themselves when working in the field.

The key regional topics are described in greater detail in Appendix 1.

### 5.2 Key issues

Many partners and projects, particularly in Africa, have focused on the issue of raw materials and conflict. The human rights team has provided support in many ways.

Conflict transformation in this area is a highly complex matter. Neither individual projects nor individual instruments of conflict resolution will be able to transform such problems alone. Here many threads need to come together which at first sight are only indirectly linked to conflict transformation, such as fighting corruption, preventing illegal trading in raw materials or strengthening the structures and negotiating power of the population.

The potential of conflict transformation becomes apparent in its interaction in certain regions especially affected by these problems. Work in various arenas is required, based on extensive analyses and an overall perspective. In this respect, there are many contact points but new alliances are required as well.

Partner organisations have already identified the linkage between armed conflicts and mining industries and have developed strategies for action at various levels. The partners are qualified in many relevant areas (analysis, documentation of human rights violations, development of strategy; international instruments for demanding that companies act responsibly, etc.) and have made it possible for themselves to obtain services from advisors and lawyers of their own choice. They are already networked at national, regional and international levels.

Equally, companies that deal in raw materials have become more aware of the needs and potential of the local population affected. They are ready to talk to experienced development organisations.

In the intermediate term, the target must be for processing industries and traders in Germany to share the responsibility for the conditions under which raw materials are produced. The outcome must be stricter international standards (OECD Guidelines, certification

processes, transparency of payment flows), and these must be enforced at companies and banks. Measures are necessary to fight corruption effectively, and development must be financed from revenues generated by mining. Suitable instruments to provide the population with comprehensive explanations and participation must exist in all phases of raw materials production. These include the creation of forums for communication in which those affected can negotiate directly with protagonists in development projects.

The task of the OED here is to continue to be actively involved in shaping the advocacy, lobbying and research work for the networks. It can promote the specific initiatives in which partners carry out research and exchange ideas, as a result of which the relationships can be explained and instruments can be developed further. The OED can again take up the dialogue with corporations on specific aspects (development and prevention of violence) within the framework of networks (Fatal Transactions or the Chad-Cameroon petroleum working group).



## 6 Moving from the Policy Paper to action

The dialogue with partners, experience in practice and also shifts in the underlying conditions will make changes in the Policy Paper necessary.

In view of violence and conflicts with heightened tensions, the OED is reinforcing its commitment to peace and justice. The organisation wishes to use all the options open to it to help to overcome violence and ensure conflicts take place in a constructive atmosphere. It views conflict transformation not as a fast solution but as a process in which deprivation is alleviated and new relationships are established, truth is revealed and forgiveness is possible. In this process institutions are established, a dialogue on standards and values takes place, competencies are created and hope is born.

With this process of reflection and dialogue the OED has set out on a path which is intended to extend beyond what its departments, together with its partners, currently achieve in conflicts. This is an open process which is carried by awareness of the varieties of mandates and tasks.

With this process, the OED takes on an obligation to face up to the challenge of conflict situations and attack it with a transformative approach, coherent actions and through maximising synergies. The OED is aware that it can only make a small contribution but that it can boost this contribution considerably if it knows how to use and develop its potential wisely.

The purpose of the Policy Paper is to provide an impetus to develop specific measures in the individual fields of action. A Policy Paper does not replace action. The next step in the process will be to develop plans which draw together how the individual components of the Policy Paper can be implemented in practice. Here the setting of key priorities will be a core task, especially for annual planning and outstanding strategic planning. Key regional priorities and issues will evolve during a dialogue with partners. Resources must be focused on work-related issues so that a priority issue will develop from a specific challenge. The Policy Paper has been translated into the four working languages of the OED as this will intensify the dialogue with partners.

### Key regional priorities

The aim of this description of regional priorities is to highlight the diversity of involvement. In addition to the countries and regions described, there are a number of other individual projects and programmes, which are either implemented within the context of violent conflicts or are directly aimed at overcoming violence. For instance, the international project on overcoming domestic violence has contributed to many partners working in this field.

The following text only provides examples to illustrate this.

#### 1 Africa

The causes of the many conflicts in Africa are multifaceted and vary greatly in the different regions. In spite of this, there are conflict factors which occur in many countries and either cause conflicts or lead to them becoming more intense.

■ The weakness (or absence) of democratic institutions: In many African countries political power has been usurped by small cliques and the majority of the population are therefore excluded from participation and policymaking. In addition, there are disputes about the right to self-determination on account of the widespread marginalisation of whole regions and ethnic groups. There are no opportunities to participate in politics, the rule of law is absent, criminality goes unpunished and corruption is rife. As a consequence, people resort to violence.

■ The countries are extremely dependent on valuable raw materials (mineral resources, natural resources, etc.): The legal and illegal exploitation of raw materials contributes in many ways to intensifying existing conflicts. Interests of states and companies based on other continents are closely enmeshed in such conflicts, making the search for routes to manage the conflicts in a way that is free of violence more complicated. The cultivation of plants for the production of biofuels, which is

still relatively new in Africa but expanding rapidly, will probably aggravate further the absolute poverty of many people and thus the potential for conflict.

■ The considerable poverty and the low level of education: The increasing scarcity of natural resources such as land, water and food, along with the most recent increases in the price of foodstuffs, make poverty worse and thus increase the potential for conflict. The absence of education and lack of prospects encourage a willingness to resort to violence and interest in “the art of warfare”, particularly among young people.

A further escalation of violent conflicts in different regions (the Horn of Africa, central Africa including Chad and Sudan, the Great Lakes area of Congo, and Zimbabwe in southern Africa) is looming on the horizon. It is therefore necessary for “Brot für die Welt” to support conflict resolution activities in the region yet, at the same time, also to promote and qualify international lobbying in order to give civil society in the Southern Hemisphere a voice.

In countries recovering from war and unstable situations, work is concentrated on the prevention of violence. This is encouraged through the establishment of democratic structures, reconciliation and development in countries like Sierra Leone, Uganda, Togo, Niger, Angola, South Africa, Burundi, Rwanda and Zimbabwe. The work includes development programmes, reintegration of child soldiers, trauma work, human rights work, training in non-violent conflict resolution, programmes to overcome domestic violence, initiatives against genital mutilation, and securing land rights.

The areas of priority are the Horn of Africa, the Great Lakes region, parts of central Africa (Chad, the Darfur area of Sudan, the Central African Republic) and Kenya. The conflicts there have regional links and all have a strong international dimension. Therefore, measures with activities in all areas are supported and implemented throughout the whole region. The Sudan Ecumenical Forum and the Sudan Focal Point work together with the churches in Sudan and non-governmental organisations for the implementation of the peace treaty, the

granting of rights of self-determination, reconciliation and a fair and lasting peace. The European Coalition on Oil in Sudan (ECOS) concerns itself with conflicts that result from oil production, and it stands up for sensible and fair use of oil resources.

In Ethiopia conflict resolution concentrates on support for organisations which make a contribution to education on democracy or human rights work.

It is difficult to find points for beginning work in Somalia. The search continues here. In particular, there is a desire to contribute to peaceful solutions through promoting an inter-religious dialogue between Christian and Muslim leaders.

In Kenya the first objective is to gain a better understanding of the sudden escalation of violence in early 2008. Here, light will be shed on the role of the church in the conflict. The aim is to apply suitable measures to facilitate reconciliation and trauma work, as well as tackling basic socio-economic causes. Cooperation partners here are mainly the National Council of Churches of Kenya (NCCCK), the regional association of the Fellowship of Christian Councils and Churches in the Great Lakes and the Horn of Africa (FECCLAHA) and the Nairobi Peace Initiative (NPI).

In the crisis in Chad in early February 2008, the international cooperation built up over many years proved their worth. It was possible to protect human rights defenders and peace-makers and mobilise advocacy work in the EU, the USA and Switzerland at short notice.

Networks relating to the work on Darfur (Sudan), Chad and the Central African Republic are continuously improving. The support of ecumenical initiatives is playing a major role here. These initiatives are supplemented by work relating to the Chad-Cameroon petroleum network, which is highly significant.

An ecumenical peace and advocacy programme operates for the whole region under the aegis of the All African Conference of Churches in the Horn of Africa, Kenya and the Great Lakes region. Important priorities for the

work of this programme are ecumenical presence and peace missions, inter-religious peace and reconciliation work, development of expertise for religious leaders, establishment of advocacy, and dialogue between religious communities and politicians.

In South Africa, the Treatment Action Campaign is an example of how dealing with conflict in an assertive but constructive way can lead to sustained improvements. The campaign has intensified the conflict between those who are HIV positive and the government. The outcome of court cases, demonstrations and a campaign of civil disobedience is that the government's policy has changed and South Africa has now designed and adopted a well-devised national prevention and treatment strategy on HIV, together with civil society.

DKH currently focuses its development strategy on Africa. The main countries in Africa in receipt of development aid are Somalia, Sudan (Darfur and southern Sudan) and the Democratic Republic of Congo.

The main areas where support is provided are in acute survival situations for victims of violent conflicts, such as internally displaced persons, and rehabilitation, for instance agricultural self-sufficiency or basic services in the fields of health and education.

Together with ACT International and Caritas, DKH works in a programme for refugees called Darfur Emergency Response Operation (DERO). The focus is on trauma work and on education courses for trainers on peace building and advocacy work to protect the civil population and support local peace initiatives.

## 2 Asia

The situation in various countries in the Asia-Pacific area is affected considerably by international and national conflicts. In particular, struggles by ethnic minorities for political autonomy or independence and the response of the respective governments make their mark on conflict situations. In the majority of cases, there are considerable violations of human rights and expulsions. Basic social services are no longer available.

## Appendix

In many countries of the region, conflicts manifest themselves along religious lines. The extent to which conflict resolution must be tailored to the individual case and how much it depends on the partners is reflected in the individual priority countries. In many countries, particularly in southern Asia, there are established partners and well-developed network structures, whereas in other regions, such as the Middle East, work is only just starting on developing a partner network and the main focus is on guidance. In the Middle East – but in Sri Lanka, too – the nature of the conflict makes a flexible approach to programme priorities imperative. The following overview names important partners, networks and priorities in the countries most seriously affected by conflict situations.

**Middle East:** The cooperation, started in 2006, with an Israeli-Jewish partner (New Profile) with the aim of raising awareness within Israeli society. It is scheduled to be continued after a successful pilot phase. Further cooperation in this area is planned. A joint project of “Brot für die Welt” and DKH to support their partner organisations in the Palestinian territories in the field of conflict transformation, in cooperation with the FT office, was developed in 2007 and the first phase implemented. Awareness of participating partners was raised at different levels, and they were supported when dealing with conflicts. The aim is to build up their expertise in resolving conflicts. Parallel to this, a survey of needs was carried out among the partners on the subject of conflict (focussing on the Palestinian territories and Israel). It is planned to take up the dialog on the subjects of gender and conflicts.

**Sri Lanka:** In the last few years, the escalating conflict has led to a shift in priorities in favour of prioritising “overcoming violence – promoting democracy” in the programme. All planned projects contain this focus, either partially or exclusively. In particular, the intention of these projects is to help to reinforce structures of civil society which stand up against discrimination, favour a democratic state, and uphold civil and human rights. This work must also make provision for the increasingly difficult situation of refugees. International advocacy work forms an important element of human rights and

peace work. Here a good basis has been established through the cooperation with German and European NGOs.

DKH’s work in Sri Lanka focuses on support for newly expelled internal refugees (Batticaloa, Mannar) and support for returning refugees (Batticaloa).

In Bangladesh cooperation with the Bangladesh Forum is being continued with the aim of providing additional support for civil society and shared advocacy work. The issues of violence against women, domestic violence and women’s rights are part of a longer dialogue with the aim of integrating into development activities measures to overcome violence against women (e.g. in relation to the feminisation of HIV/Aids).

In Indochina overcoming domestic violence is at the forefront of many programmes. The link between domestic violence, gender inequality, the risk of contracting HIV/Aids and the trafficking of women as a violation of human rights is becoming increasingly clear and is dealt with in the projects.

In India cooperation focuses on overcoming discrimination against Dalits and violence against women. There is also a discussion with partners on violence relating to religion or ethnicity. The campaign to prevent atrocities against Dalits (and, in particular, against Dalit women) is pursued within the framework of the International Dalit Network.

Support for projects and advocacy work at a national and international level go hand in hand here. Various instruments of the United Nations human rights institutions are used, including the Universal Periodic Review, the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD), the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) the Committee on the Rights of the Child (CRC) and the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (CESCR). The work to achieve human rights for Dalits and to prevent their discrimination and social marginalisation is an example of asymmetric conflict. Here one group in society is marginalised to such an extent that

it has, to date, been impossible for them to gain a hearing to discuss their oppression, exploitation and marginalisation. The injustices are brought to the public's attention through empowerment and advocacy work. As a result of this, to a certain extent, a smouldering conflict was brought to a head. However, this was the basis for transformation. Inequality in society, injustice, neglect and marginalisation were discussed; demands to participate in society and distribution of power became clear and therefore subject to negotiation. Here the special challenges for conflict transformation lie in ensuring that, in this process of deliberate intensification, all steps remain free of violence and constructive paths for transformation are found.

The exhibitions "Peace counts – Learning how to make peace" and "Rosenstrasse 76 – Overcoming domestic violence" have been adapted by partners to what is appropriate for India and used for peace education work.

Philippines: "Brot für die Welt" has joined Action Network Human Rights – Philippines, which is supported by several German aid agencies and is engaged in advocacy and lobbying work against political murders. A round table event on civil conflict resolution with partners from Mindanao has helped the partners to network more effectively and to share each others' ideas on the relevant key areas of work. Dialogue, qualification, peace education and public relations work have been intensified in collaboration with the Peace Counts Network and the Institute for Peace Education.

With the Kadtuntaya Foundation (KFI) "Brot für die Welt" has a partner which is a development organisation yet faces up to the challenge of conflict and violence and has developed a high level of expertise in the field of conflict transformation. KFI supports the popula-

tion in the efforts to agree peace zones with the warring parties.<sup>19</sup>

When the conflict in Mindanao flared up again in 2007, partners of DKH were able to deliver humanitarian aid to civilians caught between the warring parties.

### 3 Latin America

Many violent conflicts in Latin America can be attributed to extreme inequality when it comes to the distribution of resources (land and mineral resources), income and/or undemocratic forms of government. Even today the consequences of dictatorships in Central America (particularly in Guatemala, El Salvador and Nicaragua) and South America (especially in Chile, Argentina, Uruguay, Paraguay, and Brazil) have left their mark.

In many cases, the process of coming to terms with the human rights violations of the past has been inadequate or incomplete, and even today crimes are not adequately punished by the state in many countries. At the present time the potential for conflict is growing as a result of increasing poverty of large sections of the population and rises in food prices. This is a direct consequence of the use of increasingly large areas of land to grow animal feeds or biofuels for export. "Brot für die Welt" is active in the priority countries listed below. In addition to supporting projects, it is involved in local networking and undertakes advocacy work at the German and European levels in combination with others.

In Brazil the issue of violence against and by young people has been a latent problem for years, but in the recent past it has become an explosive subject, particularly in cities. "Brot für die Welt" is therefore becoming increasingly involved in work to show young people from

<sup>19</sup> KFI has, with others, achieved what sounds impossible: On 21 September 2007 at the International Day of Peace in Bonn, Guiamel Alim reported: "The people were fed up with war and looked for ways out." One idea was that fighting should, at least, be stopped on the land of individual villages. "It had a great deal to do with making people strong and we supported them here. They had to understand their situation. They had to develop ideas on what the future should look like. They had to find the courage to face up to their enemies. Finally, they went to the military and said: We want to declare our village as a peace zone." They negotiated with the military and rebels. Initially, they were reluctant, but it was then possible to convince them.

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poor backgrounds ways of escaping violence. It is also assisting government agencies to implement the laws on children and young people, which have been on the statute book for 18 years, or identify violations of these laws and heighten their awareness of the social and economic causes of violence.

Mexico and Guatemala, too, are countries in which commitment to the field of conflict transformation has a high priority. In these countries the rights of the indigenous population are frequently ignored and protests are suppressed with violence. A growing number of human rights violations have been reported in Mexico, where forced expulsions take place to make way for planned major projects. Movements which stand up for social justice and the respect of human rights are criminalised and suppressed. Race-related violence and gender-specific violence against women is widespread. Murders targeting women are frequently reported in all countries of Central America. Rates of domestic violence are high, as is violence against young people and by young people, which even extends to the formation of gangs.

Approaches towards conflict transformation and reconciliation work exist in both countries. The Catholic Church, some protestant churches (e.g. ILUGUA) and a few human rights organisations (SERAPAZ Mexico, Fundación Myrna Mack Guatemala) are developing alternatives and are becoming involved in initiatives to come to terms with the past, mediating in specific conflict situations, and strengthening marginalised groups of the population and victims of violence. They are also developing and strengthening institutions which allow conflicts to be resolved without resorting to violence (legislation, setting up of ombudsmen's offices, human rights committees, points of contact for indigenous women, and organisations for involvement at local level).

For over 40 years Colombia has seen one of the most bloody political confrontations in the world. Paramilitary groups, the military and guerrilla groups are fighting for territorial and political power and control. A major part of the conflict is financed by the drugs trade, in which nearly all parties are involved. The precarious and diffi-

cult situation of the largest of the group of victims needs to be emphasised here; these are the over 3.5 million internally displaced persons.

The systematic violation of human rights and the high level of immunity from criminal prosecution (almost 97%) are confirmed by UN human rights reports. Military and paramilitary protagonists commit crimes against the civilian population. The rural population – and thus their fertile land – are particularly subject to terror and control, the purpose being to implement megaprojects for the agricultural industry (livestock production, cultivation of palm trees for oil, cocoa and bananas) and mining. The guerrilla organisations continually violate humanitarian international law, in particular as a result of forced recruiting, kidnapping of civilians and attacks on civilian infrastructure (power and oil lines, etc.).

A special programme has developed from managing the complex conflict in Colombia. “Brot für die Welt’s” special programme for Colombia is a targeted campaign to raise awareness of the situation and the concerns of partners and to make a contribution to protecting the partner organisations. Synergies between OED departments and teams are selectively created in special programmes, in particular between project support, advocacy and public relations work.

“Brot für die Welt” supports many human rights organisations in Colombia, with the aim of improving the situation in respect of human rights. Groups of lawyers defend the rights of disadvantaged groups such as Afro-Colombians and the indigenous population, in particular. The rights to territory, food and culture are defended by lawyers at the national and international level, and impunity from prosecution is opposed.

In some regions support is provided for villages which try to create peace zones using non-violent means and thus defend their land and their rights. Initiatives are also supported to promote the rights of young people through public relations work and political lobbying. The networking of “Brot für die Welt’s” partners in the regions and at national level in Colombia is an important part of this support.

Reconstruction, reinforcement of the social safety net and articulation of common needs play an important role. Colombian human rights coordinators work closely with European and German networks. “Brot für die Welt” takes part in lobbying work at the German and European levels.

In Latin America DKH primarily focuses its aid on projects in Colombia and Haiti. In Colombia (which has the largest number of internally displaced persons in the world after Sudan) DKH endeavours to strengthen protective mechanisms through humanitarian aid, which allows the most threatened population groups to survive. At the same time, it provides support for processes to overcome trauma and enters into a dialogue with the UN organisations for the respect of humanitarian international law. On Haiti DKH works to improve the nutrition of the poorest population groups.

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