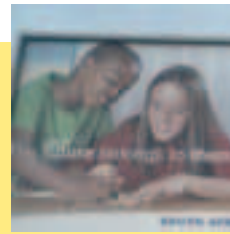


*VENRO Project »Prospects for 2015 –
Combating Poverty Requires Involvement«*



Poverty Reduction and Crisis Prevention

How Can Poverty Reduction Be Shaped
Conflict-Sensitively?

2015
in Dialogue

6

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Conflict-Sensitively?

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Summary

Wars and civil wars reverse years of development. They destroy physical infrastructure and the natural bases of life. They disrupt social structures and result in the flight or displacement of large numbers of people. Based on Willy Brandt's conviction that »development policy is the peace policy of the 21st century«, it was hoped that the concept of »crisis prevention« would prove an effective tool to curb armed conflicts and dismantle the structural causes of conflicts after the end of the Cold War. However, the financial resources provided by the international community for long-term crisis prevention are still pitifully small, and appropriate and early action in response to political crises is only taken in the rarest of cases. The Federal Government has frequently acknowledged the need for a further expansion of the international community's capacities to settle conflicts and crises by peaceful and non-military means. Its Program of Action 2015 therefore contains a section on »Resolving Conflict Peacefully – Fostering Human Security and Disarmament«, which bridges the gap between poverty reduction and crisis prevention in theoretical terms.

The present study by Martina Fischer and Oliver Wils from the Berghof Research Center for Constructive Conflict Management explores the complex link between war and poverty. Poverty and war may be mutually reinforcing, but development programmes and projects do not automatically prevent the outbreak or escalation of armed conflicts. The study therefore investigates the correlation between development and violent conflict and the interaction between poverty reduction and crisis prevention. It starts by outlining the current peace and development policy discourse on crisis prevention and poverty reduction. This is followed by a discussion of two hypotheses: »War leads to poverty« and »Poverty leads to war«. While

it is agreed that civil wars have a negative impact on development processes, the study reveals that on its own, poverty does not necessarily lead to violent conflict.

The Federal Government and multilateral organisation such as the EU, the OECD and the World Bank attach great importance to crisis prevention and poverty reduction, but their conceptual and practical implementation notably fails to match up to their aspirations. Consequently, the practical measures for this area set out in the Federal Government's interim report must be described as modest. The study also highlights a number of weaknesses, e.g. the need for a coherent poverty reduction policy which ensures that the international trade and financial institutions are geared to cushioning the negative impacts of economic globalisation as part of global structural policy.

Building on the definition of basic principles for conflict-sensitive poverty reduction, the study then discusses methodologies, instruments and actors. Conflict-specific analysis of the baseline situation and impact monitoring of poverty reduction programmes are identified as key instruments. In this field in particular, the »Do no harm« principle and *Peace and Conflict Impact Assessment* (PCIA) are promising new theoretical approaches to conflict analysis. The various fields of action are supplemented by project case studies from VENRO member organisations, reflecting the state-of-the-art in the project work being undertaken by German non-governmental organisations (NGOs). The final chapter sets out conclusions and makes recommendations to the Federal Government, which is urged to establish framework conditions conducive to conflict-sensitive poverty reduction.

Peter Runge and Klaus Wardenbach, VENRO

1. Introduction

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Since the start of the 21st century, poverty reduction and crisis prevention have been defined as core areas of German and international development cooperation (DC). In its Program of Action 2015, the Federal Government thus describes poverty reduction as an »overarching task«,¹ while crisis prevention has been defined as a cross-cutting theme in DC since 1998. It would therefore seem appropriate to explore the overlaps and differences between these two areas in more detail.

In empirical terms, a close correlation between the problems of poverty and war can be observed. According to the British development economist Frances Stewart, eight of the ten countries with the worst *Human Development Index* (HDI), and similarly eight out of ten countries with the lowest GNP per capita, have had major civil wars in the last twenty years.² In 2002, 18 out of a total of 29 wars identified by the Working Group on the Causes of War (*Arbeitsgemeinschaft Kriegsursachenforschung* – AKUF) and 17 out of a total of 18 armed conflicts occurred in countries which the *United Nations Development Programme* (UNDP) classified in the lower income group, i.e. with an annual GNP per capita of less than US \$ 755.³ A glance at the world map reveals a major concentration and overlap between poverty and war/armed conflicts in sub-Saharan Africa.

In the academic debate about the causes of war and armed conflicts, poverty on its own is not regarded as a causal factor. Instead, it is assumed that poverty only exerts a destabilising effect in combination with other factors. Nonetheless, it is generally agreed that violent conflicts and civil wars result in massive psychological, social and economic consequential costs, thereby greatly exacerbating poverty.⁴ However, given that most armed

conflicts drag out for years and decades, the issue of the primary cause is academic. As a general rule, it can be assumed that complex phenomena such as poverty and war are mutually reinforcing, triggering a steep downward spiral.

Against the background of this mutually reinforcing relationship, it is obvious that poverty reduction initiatives can only be successful under the following conditions:

- a) in countries where violent conflicts are latent, poverty reduction must be geared towards crisis prevention. This applies especially to countries affected by civil wars in the recent past (post-conflict situations), which are especially susceptible to renewed escalations of violence;
- b) in countries where violent conflicts have already broken out, the measures must be designed in a way which contributes to reducing and curbing violence;
- c) country-specific strategies must be supplemented and expanded through regional initiatives. This applies not only to regional war zones but also to the stabilisation of regions such as Southern Africa, which – alongside their individual national Poverty Reduction Strategies – need far more support from global structural policy than is currently being provided.

This paper aims to shed light on the interaction between poverty and violent conflict and, on this basis, to develop criteria for strategies to overcome these phenomena, especially for the continuation and implementation of the Federal Government's Program of Action 2015. After reviewing various approaches to integrating crisis prevention methodologies into the development cooperation undertaken by the Federal Government and the international organisations – such as the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), the European Union (EU), the United Nations and the World Bank – the existing gaps and weaknesses are examined from a conflict research perspective. In this context, the possible contribution of poverty reduction to curbing and transforming violent conflicts is explored in more detail and an attempt is made to identify methodologies, instruments and actors. The paper concludes with a number of recommendations to the Federal Government.

1 More details of Germany's policy reduction policies can be found in VENRO 2001.

2 Stewart 2002: 105.

3 AKUF 2003; UNDP 2003.

4 During the 1990–2000 period alone, the international community invested around US \$ 100 billion in programmes for the reconstruction of war-torn societies. Funding was provided not only for contracts to reconstruct infrastructure, but also for measures to build conflict mediation institutions, promote economic development, and provide incentives for good governance. Forman/Patrick/Salomons 2000: 1.

2. The link between poverty and war

Before we examine the question of poverty reduction and crisis prevention in the following chapters, the issues of poverty and war should be explored in more detail. After clarifying the terminology, the current peace and development policy discourse will be outlined, followed by a discussion of two simple hypotheses on the causal link between war and poverty:

- War leads to poverty
- Poverty leads to war.

Terms and definitions

A. Poverty

For a long time, poverty was defined in purely monetary terms, either on the basis of per capita income or available household consumption expenditure. The World Bank still defines *absolute poverty* as an income of less than US \$ 1 per day (adjusted to reflect local purchasing power parity – PPP). In general, however, a far more comprehensive and multidimensional definition of poverty has emerged in the recent poverty reduction debate. The Federal Government uses the comprehensive definition of poverty formulated by the OECD's Development Assistance Committee (DAC) and similarly by the World Bank.

The DAC/OECD definition of poverty

Poverty is multidimensional. Poverty denotes people's exclusion from socially adequate living standards and it encompasses a range of deprivations. The dimensions of poverty cover distinct aspects of human capabilities: economic (income, livelihoods, decent work), human (health, education), political (empowerment, rights, voice), socio-cultural (status, dignity) and protective (insecurity, risk, vulnerability). Mainstreaming gender is essential for reducing poverty in all its dimensions. And sustaining the natural resource base is essential for poverty reduction to endure.

Source: OECD 2001b: 9.

This concept encompasses the perception of poverty from the affected person's perspective. It also takes account of the fact that lack of income is just one aspect of far more complex social, political and economic deprivation. It describes poverty as a range of deprivations. Consequently, strategies to reduce poverty should not be one-dimensional, focussing solely on improving the income situation; instead, they must be flanked by healthcare and education measures, which are especially important for the chronic poor.⁵ The OECD and World Bank definitions also form a better basis for practical approaches as they highlight the capacities and capabilities of the persons affected by poverty and thus recognise them as autonomous actors. This facilitates the development of measures which open up new prospects by addressing the realities of life of the affected households.⁶

Yet despite the benefits associated with a broader interpretation of the term »poverty«, the concept lacks a precise definition. Civilian populations affected by civil wars and violent conflicts and war refugees are subject to similar political, social and economic deprivations. It therefore seems appropriate to start with a theoretical distinction between acute and chronic poverty, and then to identify the reasons for acute poverty more precisely.

While the comprehensive definition of poverty focusses attention on thwarted capacities, the concept of *human security* highlights the threats and limitations to which individuals, households and communities see themselves exposed. It is therefore appropriate to distinguish between chronic and acute threats.

Besides UNDP, the Governments of Canada and Norway in particular have taken up this concept. They also took the lead in establishing a *Human Security Network*, now comprising 13 states which cooperate closely with non-government organisations.⁷ The concept has also

5 On the concept of *chronic poverty*, see Hulme, Moore and Shepherd 2001.

6 This is also the starting point for the *Livelihood Systems Approach* applied, in particular, by the UK's *Department for International Development*. See Schafer 2002; Korf et al. 2001.

7 As well as Canada and Norway, they are Austria, Chile, Greece, Ireland, The Netherlands, Jordan, Mali, Slovenia, South Africa and Thailand. Members are committed to 1) protecting and promoting human rights, 2) democratic governance, 3) a culture of peace and the peaceful resolution of conflicts, 4) building a just

Human Security (based on UNDP)

Human Security [...] means, first, safety from such chronic threats as hunger, disease and repression. And second, it means protection from sudden and hurtful disruptions in the patterns of daily life – whether in homes, in jobs or in communities. Such threats can exist at all levels of national income and development.

Source: UNDP 1994: 23.

8

been adopted by numerous research institutions and other international organisations.

The concept focusses on:

1. economic security (freedom from poverty)
2. food security (access to food)
3. health security (access to healthcare)
4. environmental security (protection from such dangers as environmental pollution and depletion of the natural bases of life)
5. personal security (physical and psychological integrity, protection from violence, torture, war, etc.)
6. community security (right to cultural autonomy and identity, e.g. language, ethnicity, age, religion, nationality) and
7. political security (enjoyment of civil and political rights, freedom from oppression).

The peace-policy dimension of this concept is that it relativises the importance of military security strategies. These are subsumed as just one aspect among many in favour of non-aggressive self-defence, collective security, and non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, i.e. arms control and confidence-building.

With *human security*, a political counter-concept⁸ to a security concept based primarily on the military and police has been developed, which can also serve as an overarching framework in which to unite approaches based on civilian conflict management and crisis prevention, on the one hand, and poverty reduction measures, on the other. The OECD describes this linkage as follows:

A human security approach identifies and addresses the sources of risk affecting poor women and men. It breaks out of the increasingly artificial separation between conflict prevention and resolution, post-conflict reconstruction, natural disaster preparedness and re-

and peaceful world order, 5) alleviating poverty and safeguarding sustainable development.

- 8 There are divergent and in some cases highly critical views on the extent to which this aim can be achieved in practice. For a discussion of the concept's ambivalence, see Brock 2001, Cockell 2000, Paris 2000, v. Braunmühl 2002.

*lief, and work on rights-based governance. An increasingly important approach to anti-poverty action concentrates on reducing the multiple sources of risk [...] and assisting poor people to contend with them.*⁹

On the other hand, it is axiomatic that a certain measure of »human security« must already be in place if a poverty reduction strategy based on participation is to be developed and implemented. Yet in reality, this cannot always be achieved. For example, in 2001, the World Bank defined 20 out of the total of 47 HIPC countries as »*conflict affected*«, including a number of countries involved in the *Poverty Reduction Strategy* process (World Bank 2001b). If we apply the classification developed in the *Peace and Conflict Survey* by Marshall/Gurr (2003), it emerges that out of 51 countries participating in the PRS process in 2003, only around half (26 countries) fulfil the *human security* criteria. The situation in all the other countries is described by Marshall/Gurr as ranging from problematical to threatening.¹⁰ Moreover, no more than a handful of the countries participating in the PRS process demonstrate a high level of *peace-building capacity*.¹¹

B. Violent conflicts

In comparative peace and conflict research, violent conflicts and wars tend to be defined pragmatically on the basis of identifiable actors, matters in dispute and the scale of the violence. The distinction between wars and armed conflicts is generally a gradual one.

As the number of inter-state wars has fallen, the relative importance of domestic and regional violent conflicts has increased. In most cases, these conflicts can be described as follows: they involve a mobilisation along ethnic, religious or cultural divides (ethno-political conflicts) and between unequal parties (asymmetric wars). The vast majority of victims and casualties in these conflicts – which are described as »new wars« – are noncombatants. The recent debate has also focussed on the role played by the belligerent parties' economic motives (economies of violence) and the privatisation of violence under conditions associated with state failure. However, these wars occur in resource-rich and resource-poor regions alike.

9 OECD 2001b: 37.

10 The authors base their classification of the *human security* situation on information relating to »armed conflicts and rebellions, inter-communal fighting, refugee and internally displaced populations, state repression, terrorism, and, in a few cases, genocide.« Marshall/Gurr 2003: 9f.

11 According to Marshall/Gurr (2003), Bolivia, Mali, Moldova, Nicaragua, Macedonia, Guyana, Benin and Honduras display a relatively high *peace-building capacity*, which is based on six *Human Security* indicators: *Self-Determination, Discrimination, Regime Type, Durability, Societal Capacity* and *Neighbourhood*.

Definition of armed conflict and war (based on PRIO)

An *armed conflict* is a contested incompatibility that concerns government and/or territory where the use of armed force between two parties, of which at least one is the government of a state, results in at least 25 battle-related deaths [per year].

War is a major armed conflict and results in at least 1000 battle-related deaths per year.

Source: *International Peace Research Institute, Oslo (PRIO) 2003: 2f.*

(Other – sometimes divergent – definitions can be found in AKUF 2003: 10, and Heidelberg Institute of International Conflict Research (Heidelberger Institut für Internationale Konfliktforschung e.V.) 2002: 2)

A common feature of these generally protracted conflicts is the resultant entrenchment of milieus and structures, with some participants having a vested interest in perpetuating these conditions. These include sections of the army and various militias, security forces, arms dealers, the recipients of land, capital and political positions, and persons who exploit the devastated structures and corruption in order to make a profit from illegal business activities. As a result, economies of violence emerge, accompanied by deeply violent cultures and hostility between population groups. For private individuals, there is less and less scope to oppose the proliferation of violence and the hardening of relations.¹²

Definition of conflict

Conflicts are incompatibilities of interest (divergent positions) over national values (territory, independence, self-determination, autonomy, ideology, power, resources) with a specific duration and range between at least two parties (states, groups of states, organised groups) who are determined to resolve the matter to their own advantage. At least one of the parties involved must be the organised government of a state.

Source: *Heidelberg Institute of International Conflict Research (Heidelberger Institut für Internationale Konfliktforschung e.V.) 2002: 2.*

The descriptions and definitions presented here underline, above all, the destructive potential of conflict. Yet it is undisputed that conflicts also have the capacity to be positive. Conflicts are an essential catalyst for social change. They should therefore not be suppressed; instead, the underlying incompatibilities of interest should be identified as issues and addressed openly. This is of cen-

tral importance in combating poverty as well, because key issues – such as the redistribution of resources, land rights or political participation – are highly conflictive. However, the aim should be to prevent these conflicts from being conducted through violence and causing large numbers of human casualties and physical destruction.

For that reason, the term *crisis prevention* (rather than conflict prevention) has now been adopted in many German institutions involved in peace and development. It denotes early, systematic and coherent action to prevent and curb the eruption of violent conflict.

Crisis prevention

Starting from ideal-typical progressive forms of violent conflicts, a dynamic understanding of prevention (the »prevention cycle«) has emerged internationally, based on three phrases in which different prevention efforts take place:

1. *Early prevention (primary prevention)*, which prevents the emergence of violent conflicts.
2. *Late prevention (secondary prevention)*, which prevent the further escalation and spread of violent conflicts.
3. *Continuous prevention (tertiary prevention)*, which is intended to prevent the recurrence of violent conflicts.

Source: *Matthies 2002: 127.*

Peace-building in war-torn societies is therefore also understood as an element of prevention, i.e. »follow-up« tertiary prevention. The peace researcher Volker Matthies describes this as follows:

[Peace-building] initially has a close practical or chronological connection with the foregoing violent conflict. However, as peace-building activities distance themselves, both practically and chronologically, from the foregoing conflict, they can assume the character of renewed primary prevention, entirely in line with the concept of circularity, since the »post-war era« always has the potential to become a »pre-war era« once more.¹³

Whereas »crisis prevention« is interpreted primarily as the prevention or control of violent escalation, the concept of conflict transformation denotes the more far-reaching effort to overcome the causes of conflict and build constructive social mediation and regulatory mechanisms. The aim here is to encourage the conflicting parties to reflect on opportunities to settle the dispute and attempt to deal with its causes. In this sense, crisis pre-

12 See Ropers 2000: 68.

13 Matthies 2002: 127.

Conflict transformation

Conflict transformation describes activities which aim to overcome the structural causes of conflict, but also the attitudes and behaviours of the parties to violent conflict, and which contribute to reinforcing constructive conflict management capacities. Conflict transformation goes hand in hand with a change in the parameters of the actors' behaviour or their perception of the problem, so that the conflict is defused and a settlement comes within reach.

Source: *Berghof Handbook for Conflict Transformation 2001; Debiel 1996: 3.*

vention – which is aimed not only at the short-term suppression of differences and violent escalation but also at achieving and securing a sustainable peace – necessarily entails conflict transformation. This must be provided not only by state actors, such as the Federal Government; it also requires the support of civil society actors (involvement of the *societal world*).

In recent studies on constructive conflict management, the terms »crisis prevention« and »post-conflict peace consolidation« are abandoned in favour of the overarching term »*peace-building*«. This describes »the systematic, targeted and long-term process of managing the deeper causes of violent conflicts and building the overall conditions, institutions and norms of structurally peaceable societies.«¹⁴

In this context, a distinction is made between preventive, i.e. peace-building activities – *structure-oriented measures*, which target the underlying causes of conflict and violence and must be viewed in a longer-term context – and *process-oriented initiatives*, which are designed to have a de-escalating effect on already tense conflicts which have not yet been (or are no longer being) conducted violently.¹⁵ British and American authors refer to »deep/light interventions« in this context.¹⁶

Having clarified these key terms, the link between poverty and war will now be explored. In this context, the hypotheses presented at the outside (»war leads to poverty« and »poverty leads to war«) will be tested in substantive terms.

Hypothesis 1: War leads to poverty

Comprehensive and empirically sound studies point out that violent conflicts cause massive social and economic consequential costs and thus greatly exacerbate or, in the

case of long-lasting civil wars, permanently entrench impoverishment processes.

Armed conflicts and civil wars are first and foremost an appalling human tragedy, resulting *inter alia* in displacement, physical and psychological violence against noncombatants (mainly women, children and the elderly) and the destruction of economic assets and (social) infrastructure. At macro level, economic performance is reduced due to high levels of military expenditure, lack of investment and looting, which reduce income and income-generating opportunities for individual households and communities. As many conflicts drag out for years, if not decades, households increasingly resort to the shadow economy (smuggling, prostitution, drug cultivation and trafficking) to safeguard their livelihoods. This shift towards the illegal economy speeds up the erosion of state institutions that inevitably occurs in violent conflicts, and in some cases may result in lawlessness and the emergence of territory outside the control of any recognised government.

A recent study by the World Bank on the costs of civil wars explores the negative impacts of violent conflict on development and clearly reveals that failure to develop greatly increases the chance that a country will be caught up in civil war, and that such conflicts in turn destroy the foundations for development. The costs are so high that the authors refer to *development in reverse* here. They also point out that the spill-over of local conflicts can have massive region and international consequences.

Development in reverse:

The social and economic costs of civil wars

In the draft Policy Research Report *Breaking the Conflict Trap: Civil War and Development Policy*, published in 2003, a team of authors from the World Bank classify the social and economic costs of civil wars in three »rings of suffering«, each having a different geographical range:

- The inner ring is the displacement, mortality and poverty inflicted on noncombatants in the war zone. 90 percent of the casualties of civil wars are civilians. A typical civil war lasts seven years and by the end of it, incomes are around 15 percent lower than they would otherwise have been, implying that around 30 percent more people are living in absolute poverty. Many of the economic costs of war, such as high military expenditure and capital flight, persist for years after the end of the conflict, as do heightened mortality and morbidity rates.

14 Matthies 2002: 126.

15 Ropers 1995: 211f.

16 Miall 2000: 25.

- The second ring of suffering affects neighbouring countries, where high costs result from refugee flows and increased military expenditure and economic growth clearly declines. As a result of the refugee flows, there is a dramatic rise in infectious diseases, especially malaria: statistically, for every 1000 refugees in tropical countries, the host country sees around 1400 additional cases of malaria.
- The outer ring of suffering is global. Civil war creates lawless territory outside the control of any recognised government – an ideal breeding ground for terrorism and drug trafficking. Around 95 percent of the global production of hard drugs occurs in countries with civil wars.

Source: World Bank 2003: 33f.

Whereas it is undisputed that civil wars have a negative impact on development and are conducive to poverty in a given country or region, the role of poverty as a causal factor in the emergence of civil wars and organised violent conflicts is still controversial. Poverty alone is certainly not the primary cause of civil war or armed conflicts.

Hypothesis 2: Poverty leads to war

Various studies have shown that poverty alone is not a catalyst for civil wars and violent conflicts. For example, according to UNDP, Malawi is at the bottom end of the scale in terms of per capita income and the *Human Development Index* (HDI), ranking 170 and 163 respectively out of a total of 173 countries, yet an increased tendency to violent conflict is not apparent in that country.¹⁷ A broad-based empirical study by the World Bank's Policy Research Department (161 countries, 78 civil wars) reveals that income disparities (vertical inequalities) also do not increase the likelihood that a country will descend into civil war.¹⁸

Poverty can undoubtedly be a catalyst for unrest and potential violence. The worldwide civil unrest directed against IMF and World Bank policies – documented by the British NGO *World Development Movement* – is mainly carried out by marginalised or impoverished sections of the population or those at risk of poverty.¹⁹ In other contexts, violence is also imposed »from above« by privileged elites against the impoverished majority of the population.²⁰ Significant income disparities undoubtedly

increase society's conflict potential. However, poverty is not necessarily an indicator of violent escalation. Other factors and influences are required as well.

Recent research into the causes of war has focussed on two factors in this context: »horizontal inequalities« and »dependence on natural resource exports«. However, violent conflicts are also increasingly being examined in terms of the destructive potential unleashed in the context of globalisation.

Horizontal inequalities

Horizontal inequality is viewed in the academic debate as a key variable in explaining the causes of violent conflicts.²¹ The concept of horizontal inequality assumes that collective violence is most likely to occur when groups experience a relative reduction in their opportunities or a sudden worsening of their living conditions. The associated *grievances* can be mobilised by political leaders along ethno-religious divides. Frances Stewart, who coined the term to a substantial extent, defines four categories of horizontal inequality: a) political participation, b) *economic assets*, c) incomes and employment and d) social aspects and access to services.²²

There are many arguments in favour of explaining the mobilisation of groups in terms of a group-specific perception of their economic, political and social opportunities. However, this is not enough to explain the outbreak of violence. Other factors are required as well. In this context, a key role is played by the weakness of state structures that can be observed in many developing countries, as well as the absence of other institutions which could contribute to the peaceful settlement of conflicts.²³ A weak state does not fulfil this function as it either has no mediation procedures that are recognised by society, or does not possess the means to enforce them without considering other particularist interests. Often, the state apparatus is dominated by one social group and mainly serves to assert its specific economic and social interests. As well as the absence of regulatory mechanisms, horizontal inequality can be catalysed by external shocks, e.g. massive social pressure to adapt, or impoverishment processes.²⁴ The Swedish peace researcher Leif Ohlsson describes this process as follows: »It is the rapid process of change resulting in a sudden fall into poverty, more than the en-

21 See Anne-Marie Gardner 2002. The other variables mentioned by Gardner are »lack of security«, »personal incentives« (for enrichment), »perception« (of causes/progress of the conflict etc.).

22 See Stewart 2002: 111.

23 An overview of the debate about the role of the state and the weakness of state institutions in the context of violent conflicts is provided *inter alia* in Ayoob 2001 and Rotberg 2003.

24 See DFID 2001.

17 UNDP 2003: 152.

18 See Collier 2001 and Collier/Hoeffler 2002.

19 See World Development Movement 2003.

20 See, for example, Azzellini 2003 on Colombia.

democratic condition of poverty, which creates the potential for [...] conflicts.²⁵

Dependence on natural resources

In recent years, however, another research trend has come to the fore, competing with the grievance debate. It assumes that conflicts can be explained primarily in terms of the interest in private enrichment, i.e. through greed, especially among warlords and entrepreneurs profiting from war. This political-economic explanation has been reinforced, in particular, by the findings of a World Bank study led by Paul Collier. Based on an extensive survey of data on civil wars between 1965 and 1999, the study investigates different proxy indicators to determine whether they significantly affect susceptibility to civil war.²⁶ The study concludes, among other things, that the most important risk factor that could be identified is a country's dependence on natural resource exports.²⁷ By way of explanation, Collier argues that natural resource exports, due to the permanence of their value as assets, offer a high incentive (»lure«) for capturing the state in question.²⁸

These studies on the political economy of civil wars offer a highly plausible explanation, at least for a number of African countries, such as Sierra Leone, Nigeria, Angola, Liberia and DR Congo – to cite just a few examples – which have important natural resources (diamonds, precious metals, hardwoods, oil). Wars are legitimated externally in ideological terms, but the real issue is control of these resources. Warlords function as »entrepreneurs of violence«, channelling their wares into the global economy via middlemen and dealers' networks. Numerous economic interests become inter-meshed with warfare – hence the duration and permanence of this type of violent conflict.

However, the *greed* argument also has analytical weaknesses. By reducing the discourse to economic factors, the political and institutional conditions underlying the observed fragility of state structures are not explored as an issue. Reno refers in this context to the emergence of »shadow states«.²⁹ Yet there are countries such as Botswana, which like Angola possess profitable diamond re-

sources but are able to exploit them in an economically and socially useful way. Michael Ehrke therefore criticises the *greed* argument, arguing that it is only relevant as an explanation in the context of *failed states*.³⁰ Reno also proposes that the *greed* argument primarily applies to situations in which state failure occurred before the outbreak of violent conflicts: »In these cases, predatory personalist rule and state collapse destroyed other economic opportunities that depended upon more stable state institutions.«³¹

This criticism highlights the fact that war economies and economies of violence are highly complex systems which cannot be reduced to warlords' greed. In situations with progressive state failure and the resulting vacuum of authority, *warlords* take on a wide variety of roles. In particular, this can include guaranteeing some measure of security for specific groups and territories.

The *greed* argument also harbours an inherent threat of political manipulation. If it is argued that violent conflicts arise solely as a result of greed, this may result in the structural deficits and problems that occur when people are deprived of their political and social rights being ignored or downplayed as a factor in analysis.

The »greed« argument [...] can be used to de-legitimize political projects and authentic forms of protest. In Central Asia for instance, regional governments have attempted to criminalise Islamic groups by drawing links between them and the drug trade. The policy response has been to focus on anti-terrorism, drugs and border controls rather than poverty and political exclusion. In other words there is a tendency to use »greed« as an excuse to ignore »grievance«. In the long run this is likely to fuel the insurgency.³²

The danger inherent in this one-dimensional understanding of the causes of conflict has certainly not diminished as a result of the *war on terror* declared after 11 September 2001. It must be countered with meticulous conflict analyses.

Economies of violence as the result of globalisation processes

Another proposed explanation for the emergence of economies of violence goes beyond the issue of suffering and greed and focusses on the dynamics and effects of globalisation processes. According to Mark Duffield, globalisation produces instabilities and a lasting vacuum of authority due to the nation-state's relative loss of signif-

25 Leif Ohlsson 2002: 3.

26 See Collier 2000, 2001; Collier/Hoeffler 2002.

27 Other risk factors relate to the geographical distribution of the population, the history of the conflict, diaspora, education levels and – less significantly – demographic and economic growth. A further interesting finding is that the ethnic composition of a country only plays a negative role if there is a dominant ethnic group comprising between 45 percent and 90 percent of the total population. Otherwise, according to the study, religious and ethnic diversity reduces the risk of conflict.

28 Collier 2001: 151.

29 See Reno 2000.

30 See Ehrke 2002.

31 Reno 2003, p. 47.

32 Goodhand 2001: 27.

icance.³³ Whereas the impacts of globalisation are ameliorated in the industrialised countries by supranational integration, they have a centrifugal effect in developing countries. Duffield therefore describes the violent conflicts as *post-nation-state conflicts*. In these conflicts, the actors have no interest – and nor do they think it necessary – to secure their power over state bureaucracies and pursue their enrichment strategies within the framework of nation-state legality.³⁴

Peter Lock points out that at least half of the world's population is excluded from the regular economy (defined as a living environment in which trade takes place within the framework of a legally operating economy and the state has the legitimate monopoly on the use of force). Lock coins the term »shadow globalisation« to point out, like Duffield, that in the wake of globalisation, internationally organised, mainly criminal trafficking and smuggling networks have formed, finding ideal conditions in the lawless territories of these conflict regions.³⁵ *Warlords* are reliant on these international criminal networks as they offer the opportunity for them to channel their illegal goods into the regular economy. Half of intra-African trade takes place via the shadow economy. Even in Latin America, a relatively developed region, the *International Labour Organisation* (ILO) noted that the informal sector accounted for 56 percent of the working population at the end of the 1990s. It is the most rapidly growing sector worldwide. The exclusion of the majority of the Third World's population from legal economic relations is therefore structurally entrenched. Provision of public goods, e.g. schools, educational opportunities and other infrastructure is also completely inadequate for the majority of the population.³⁶

If we recognise that in many developing countries, the state is ineffective and cannot perform most of its primary tasks, the issue which arises is this: how can minimum regulatory capacities (including the monopoly on the use of force) be re-established? This key problem must be resolved if poverty reduction and effective crisis prevention are to have any real prospect of success. In light of the discussion outlined above, it becomes apparent that fundamental issues concerning global structural policy arise here.

Youth poverty: heightening the potential for violence

A key issue within the general problem of poverty is the lack of economic prospects for the young generation. Young people can negatively influence crises and violent conflicts because due to economic globalisation

worldwide, the lack of economic prospects and exclusion from the regular economy, they form a major pool of human resources for markets of violence and criminal structures.

The time bomb is ticking: Youth unemployment – small arms – loss of identity

The devastating impacts of youth unemployment and poverty, and the associated feelings of insecurity and loss of identity – especially among males – combined with access to small arms are vividly described by conflict researcher Peter Lock. With specific reference to the African continent, Lock argues that in the wake of globalisation, young people are being excluded from the modern »regular« economy, while traditional rural structures are breaking down at the same time. The young generation is thus becoming an inexhaustible resource for criminal entrepreneurs:

»The modernisation trend associated with neoliberal deregulation devalues traditional rural structures and leads to spatially concentrated social segmentation of societies in megacities. Social reality in very many countries will thus continue to be defined by the mass exclusion of large numbers of young people from the regular economy. They must organise their survival in the cut-and-thrust of the poverty belts surrounding the cities, and these fall within the domain, or at least the sphere of influence, of entrepreneurs of violence outside the state's structures and authority.«

This »increasingly, primarily intergenerational apartheid« is vividly illustrated by the situation in North Africa. In Algeria, for example, half the population is under 15, while an estimated 60 percent of Algerian school-leavers are currently unemployed. According to Lock, where there are no prospects, the availability of instruments of violence exerts a powerful appeal, for »with a gun in his hand, a young man is shown respect by other people for the first time in his life, even if it is simply sheer terror on the part of the persons threatened, which he perceives as respect. Violence involving an automatic weapon becomes a form of defence against social exclusion. Violence promises access to the world of industrial mass consumption to which people are constantly exposed through the media even in remote corners of the world.«

The majority of actors in the armed conflicts observed worldwide are male, which Lock attributes to the radical devaluation, due to economic modernisation, of the once exclusively male roles in the production process. As a reaction to this, and with a lack of cultural-emancipatory or economic alternatives, male identity is constructed through violence, providing those involved with a sense of superiority and autonomy. The lost position in the production process is replaced by participation in the production of violence within society.

33 See Duffield 2000.

34 See Ehrke 2002: 160.

35 See Lock (no year); 2002.

36 See Lock 2001.



Street children in Johannesburg, South Africa

The explosive combination of youth poverty, small arms proliferation and loss of identity generally still receives far too little attention. International and bilateral development agencies are only gradually beginning to realise that working with youth as a target group within the context of poverty reduction and crisis prevention is crucially important. The World Bank has therefore started to address this issue, and the German Agency for Technical Cooperation (GTZ) devoted its Development Policy Conference in June 2003 to youth work. The key message is that young people can provide significant impetus for social innovation and that it is important to explore how young people's capacities can be used to promote peace. Although a number of innovative youth projects have been launched – combining income-generating opportunities with peace-policy instruments³⁷ or offering assistance to traumatised child soldiers and helping them reintegrate into society³⁸, for example – it must be conceded that given the scale of the problem, development

The fact that statistically, boys are more likely to use armed violence should not make us lose sight of the fact that girls are equally affected by poverty and are involved in economies of violence. Their role as combatants is also often overlooked in demobilisation programmes because they are in the minority in numerical terms.

Source: Peter Lock 2001.

policy will reach its limits here unless it is embedded in a comprehensive international structural policy which can cushion effectively the negative effects of economic globalisation in the southern countries.

Summary

The various explanations for the causes of violent conflicts and economies of violence, described above, address many different levels and illustrate very clearly that the link between poverty and war is extremely complex. It would therefore be wrong simply to assume that »poverty reduction equals crisis prevention or peace policy«. The target group for poverty reduction initiatives – in the context of the UN's Millennium Development Objectives, it is those living in extreme poverty – therefore does not necessarily equate with the most at-risk groups in civil wars and armed conflicts. Jessica Schafer draws attention to a study on Southern Sudan which reveals that in this conflict, the Dinka – due to their relative resource wealth – are one of the groups most at risk.³⁹

In some circumstances, poverty reduction can also exacerbate conflict. If the rights of marginalised groups

37 See Fischer/Fischer 2003.

38 See Steudtner 2001.

39 Schafer 2002: 30.

are enhanced, as the *Entitlement* approach envisages,⁴⁰ for example, the intended better access to political and economic resources can also escalate conflicts over distribution. Rapid social and political change is often associated with violent conflicts, as a glance at the »young democracies« or transition countries shows.⁴¹ This applies especially if the rising potential for conflict is not flanked by constructive conflict management institutions and

processes. Firstly, during the redistribution measures, the hitherto privileged groups will refuse to give up their exclusive rights. Secondly, the access to resources among previously deprived groups or regions can trigger dynamics and mobilisation processes along ethno-political divides, contributing to the further escalation of violent conflicts.



Refugee camp in Shelab, Eritrea

40 On this point, see Verstegen 2001.

41 See Mansfield/Snyder 2001. The authors stress that a transition to democracy increases the risk of violent conflicts: »In fact, states undergoing regime change in a democratic direction are about twice as likely to fight wars soon thereafter as are states that are not undergoing regime change.« (p. 113).

3. The current situation: the importance of crisis prevention in reducing poverty

16

Against the background of the link between poverty and violent conflict, discussed in Chapter 1, the question of the practical instruments to deal with this complex problem arises. To what extent is crisis prevention being incorporated as an objective into the poverty reduction programmes established by the Federal Government and multilateral organisations such as the OECD, the EU and the World Bank, and how is crisis prevention defined in this context? These questions will be explored in this chapter.

The Federal Government's Program of Action 2015

The Comprehensive Concept of the Federal Government on Civilian Crisis Prevention, Conflict Resolution and Post-Conflict Peace-Building, adopted in 2000, defines the role of various policy fields in addressing these tasks. In this context, development policy is assigned the task of helping to dismantle structural causes of conflict and promoting mechanisms for non-violent conflict management. The Federal Government has made civilian conflict management a priority area. The governing parties' coalition agreement of 2002 contained a commitment to presenting a joint plan of action to implement the Comprehensive Concept. This plan of action is currently being developed under the leadership of the Federal Foreign Office.

The Program of Action 2015 – The German Government's Contribution Towards Halving Extreme Poverty Worldwide, which was drafted by the BMZ as the lead ministry and adopted by the Federal Cabinet in Spring 2001, states that poverty and violence can reinforce each other; hence it is essential to promote crisis prevention and peaceful conflict settlement if poverty reduction is to be attained.⁴² In this context, a wide definition is applied, as proposed in Chapter 1 of this report.

In particular, the following fields of action are defined:

- making a stronger contribution to international peace processes, also in personnel terms;
- strengthening international law and other international rules based on the renunciation of the use of force;
- giving stronger support to crisis prevention and the consolidation of peace as a focal area of its development cooperation with interested countries;
- working for a reduction in military spending worldwide and for regulations to restrict the international trade in arms, especially to reduce the proliferation of small arms;
- supporting activities for strengthening civil and legal control over security organs;
- assessing the impacts of development cooperation on conflicts.

As the first interim report produced in 2002 emphasises, a number of – albeit very modest – initiatives have already been adopted. Besides political commitment and financial support for small arms control, support of local peace initiatives through the expansion of the *Civil Peace Service* should be mentioned in this context. A further success is that four of the BMZ's partner countries have agreed to define crisis prevention and monitoring of peace processes as priority areas in development cooperation with Germany.⁴³ The methodological development of conflict-sensitive impact monitoring was also mentioned in the report.⁴⁴ However, there are many other examples of crisis prevention measures and projects in German development cooperation, as the initial results of the Utstein study show.⁴⁵

43 They are Colombia, Guatemala, Sri Lanka and Senegal. As Sri Lanka and Senegal have recently also developed a PRSP, it will be interesting to see how the overlaps between poverty reduction and crisis prevention are reflected in the BMZ's country policies.

44 See BMZ 2002.

45 See Joint Utstein Study on Peace Building 2003.

42 BMZ 2001: 37.



Returning refugees in front of their destroyed house in Ivanic Grad, Croatia

Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)

The Guidelines issued by the OECD's Development Assistance Committee (DAC) are generally very influential. For example, the Policy Statement on *Conflict, Peace and Development Co-operation on the Threshold of the 21st Century* and the DAC *Guidelines: Helping Prevent Violent Conflict*, adopted in 2001, were ground-breaking.⁴⁶ With the *Guidelines for Poverty Reduction*, also published in 2001, the DAC presented an extremely comprehensive and practical strategy paper. The report addresses the issue of crisis prevention at various points and emphasises that it must be an integral element of poverty reduction. However, crisis prevention is noted only as a sub-point in the list of planning instruments for poverty reduction programmes. The DAC Guidelines for Poverty Reduction thus lag well behind the priorities set in 1997 and the recommendation that conflict analyses be integrated into the planning process for DC projects.

European Union (EU)

The EU has identified crisis prevention as an important policy area and has developed a number of strategies to overcome structural causes of conflict in the DC field⁴⁷. As yet, however, it has not established sufficient linkage between these strategies and the overarching objective of poverty reduction.

In June 2001, during the Swedish Presidency, the EU Programme for the Prevention of Violent Conflicts was adopted in Gothenburg, in which the EU underlines its commitment »to pursue conflict prevention as one of the main objectives of the EU's external relations«.⁴⁸ Shortly before, the European Commission had also underlined the importance of crisis prevention in its *Communication on Conflict Prevention* and identified development policy as the most powerful instrument at the Community's disposal for treating the root causes of conflict.⁴⁹ Following on from this, the Commission highlighted the need to mainstream conflict prevention in cooperation programmes.

On a practical level, *Country Strategy Papers* (CSP) were identified as the key tools for improving the coherence and coordination of crisis prevention and development cooperation. A list of crisis and conflict indicators (»the check-list of root causes of conflict«) was drawn up, to be systematically checked when drafting the Country Strategy Papers and performing both an early warning and a monitoring function.⁵⁰

The EU has many crisis prevention instruments at its disposal – in development cooperation, political dialogue, human rights work, etc. – but so far, it has not coordinated them adequately or developed them to the full. The CSPs are too unspecific and take little account, for example, of the EC *Conflict Prevention Assessment Missions* in crisis regions such as Nepal, Indonesia and Sri Lanka. Nor has the recommendation to deploy, in the delegations for a given country or region, a multidisciplinary team of independent experts in the field of conflict manage-

46 See OECD 1997; 2001a.

47 See Debiel/Fischer 1999.

48 See EU 2001.

49 European Commission 2001: 9.

50 See European Commission 2002b.

ment been acted upon. Overall, the EU focusses too much on the macro level, although there are notable exceptions such as the cooperation with NGOs in the Horn of Africa and support for conflict transformation measures in the Great Lakes region (especially DR Congo). In 2001, the Commission established its own *Conflict Prevention Unit*. However, by terminating the contract with the *Conflict Prevention Network* at the same time, the Commission lost a significant pool of expertise which it urgently needs – not least due to the particular complexity of the EU's organisation.⁵¹ An ongoing problem is the departmental rivalry between the Directorate General for Development and DG External Relations (RELEX).

In its declarations, the EU identifies poverty reduction as a priority area and gears its activities towards the PRSP approach, although this has not been conflict-sensitive until now. A major obstacle to effective crisis prevention and poverty reduction is that the different pillars of EU policy (agricultural policy, external trade, and home affairs) are inadequately coordinated in terms of North-South policy. In recent years, critics have repeatedly and quite rightly drawn attention to problems of coherence with EU agricultural policy, especially the problem of the disruption to domestic markets in developing countries caused by subsidised agricultural exports from the EU.

The EU could develop considerable capacities for conflict-sensitive poverty reduction if it adopted fundamental policy changes here and coordinated its various policy areas towards this objective. A Commission working document notes self-critically:

In the agricultural field, there is an evident need to reduce trade-distorting domestic support including all forms of export subsidies and to improve market access to address developing countries' interest in special and differential treatment, as well as the importance of non-trade concerns of agriculture such as food security, as was agreed in the WTO Ministerial Meeting in Doha. Food security is a multidimensional issue which needs to be addressed with coherent and long-term multi-sectoral strategies, both from an international and domestic point of view. Together with political dialogue and development cooperation, trade is a key component of EU external action to contribute to poverty reduction.⁵²

The United Nations

Numerous declarations and policy papers by the former UN Secretary-General Boutros Ghali (including *An Agenda for Peace*, published in 1992, and *An Agenda for Development*) emphasise the link between peace and social justice. His successor, Kofi Annan, has also taken up this issue, noting:

Every step taken towards reducing poverty and achieving broad-based economic growth – is a step towards conflict prevention. All who are engaged in conflict prevention and development, therefore – the United Nations, the Bretton Woods institutions, governments and civil society organizations – must address these challenges in a more integrated fashion.⁵³

It is above all the link between threats to peace and social injustice which is identified here. The report goes on to point out that in many poor countries, poverty is linked to strong ethnic or religious divides, the rights of disadvantaged groups are often disregarded, government institutions are undemocratic, and the distribution of social resources is organised for the benefit of ruling elites.

The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) – as mentioned in the first section of this paper – specifically identified »freedom from poverty« as an integral element of »human security« as early as 1994. In various subsequent working documents, it notes that many emergencies in southern countries escalate into violent conflict arising from social exclusion, economic injustice and poverty. They often stand out among the »root causes of the conflict«.⁵⁴

UNDP defines its development policy mandate as inseparable from the task of supporting the prevention and management of violent conflicts:

The increased incidence and risk of violent conflict and natural disaster in programme countries means that the demand for UNDP services in crisis and postconflict (CPC) environments is also on the increase. The commitment of UNDP to eradicating poverty and empowering the poorest and most vulnerable groups shapes its growing development work to break the pernicious cycle of crisis, poverty and risk that is fuelling instability worldwide.⁵⁵

The need for a global »culture of prevention« is underlined, and it is noted that strategies, both in development cooperation and in the UN's other areas of work, must be reformed accordingly. More programmatic co-

51 See Hummel 2003.

52 See European Commission 2002a.

53 Kofi Annan 2000: 45.

54 UNDP 1999: 6.

55 UNDP 2001: 1.

herence, not only between the instruments applied by UNDP but also in relation to the approaches adopted by other actors, is called for. It is pointed out that priority support must be targeted in this context to vulnerable groups, especially women and children, as in existing UNDP strategies. The following priorities are defined:

- Continuing the *Area Development Programme* approach
- Promoting the establishment of institutions for democratic governance and the rule of law.
- Support for societies in transition, with improved coherence between humanitarian aid measures and development cooperation.

Through *capacity-building* initiatives, UNDP aims to promote good governance, the establishment of democratic institutions and procedures, legal certainty, and administrative reform. In addition to these tasks, UNDP has in recent years also focussed primarily on the reintegration of refugees and displaced persons and the demobilisation of ex-combatants. In its activities in conflict regions, UNDP is committed to upholding the principle of neutrality.⁵⁶

UNDP's role in crisis regions is strictly limited to addressing the development dimensions, thereby supporting its broader mission to enable social and economic development, and the substance of its work in crisis and post-conflict environments – as stated in the Working Paper by UNDP's Executive Board – namely *local capacity-building, needs-identification* and *management*, is not intrinsically different from its work in other circumstances. The way in which the organisation operates in these environments, however, must be different and failure to deal with this reality in the past has led to an uneven performance and problems during implementation.⁵⁷

The *Executive Board* also notes that a key challenge is establishing more robust coordination systems between the various UN organisations in order to align poverty reduction with CPC programmes. The well-received *Report of the Panel on United Nations Peace Operations* (Brahimi Report), published in 2000, specifically called for an integrated, »holistic« approach to all crisis prevention, peacekeeping and peace-building measures in the UN context. The Report states that UNDP is »best placed to take the lead in implementing peace-building activities« and highlights the key importance of social equality and sustainable development for peace.⁵⁸

The demand for coherence is echoed by many experts – also in view of the UN's contribution to regenerating war-torn societies – who highlight the lack of coordination within the UN system. The discrepancies and variations in budgetary, institutional and operational procedures impede cooperation between development and humanitarian departments, especially when planning missions, mobilising resources and implementing activities, not least because they are funded from different sources.⁵⁹ One outcome of this lack of coherence is that the resources invested in some post-war regions could not be used beneficially, have caused more harm than good, or have simply been wasted. Often, too much of the wrong sort of aid has been provided at the wrong time and in the wrong place. In other cases, resources supplied by the international community for the reconstruction and regeneration of war-torn societies are deployed far too slowly and in an uncoordinated way.

A reform of the financing system is therefore required, including the establishment of a fund administered by the UN and involving the Bretton Woods organisations, regional organisations, governments and NGOs.⁶⁰ Restoring coherence and complementarity between the activities of UNDP and the World Bank, as called for by UNDP itself, will pose a major challenge in future.⁶¹

The World Bank and IMF

In its report *Attacking Poverty*, the World Bank notes: »Violent conflict constitutes one of the most urgent and intractable areas for action affecting some of the poorest people in the world.«⁶² However, the report fails to draw any methodological or practical conclusions from this observation. Admittedly, one chapter is devoted to the issue of security, but it mainly refers to the economic vulnerability of poor households and makes recommendations on building social institutions and managing natural disasters.

The somewhat tentative inclusion of crisis prevention in the World Bank programmes is partly due to its mandate, which states that the Bank must be guided solely by economic, not by political, criteria.⁶³ On the other hand, this statement is rather misleading – not only because the

56 UNDP 2000: 50.

57 UNDP 2001: 2.

58 Brahimi Report 2000: Report of the Panel on United Nations Peace Operations (A/55/305-S/2000/809) to the Secretary-General, paragraph 46.

59 Forman/Patrick/ Salomons 2000: 54.

60 On the recommendation for a *Strategic Post-Conflict Recovery Facility*. Forman/Patrick/Salomons 2000: 57.

61 UNDP 2000: 50.

62 World Bank 2001a: 11.

63 The World Bank Operational Manual on Development Cooperation and Conflict mentions the following basic principle: »The Bank's Articles of Agreement explicitly prohibit the Bank from interfering in the domestic affairs of a member or from questioning the political character of a member; only economic considerations are relevant to the Bank's decisions.« World Bank 2001c: 2.



Bank does indeed involve itself in other highly »political« areas (such as *good governance*, democracy-building, strengthening civil society) but also because it has already drafted a number of preliminary strategies to integrate crisis prevention into its programmes.⁶⁴ A more plausible explanation is that integrating new concepts into the Bank's policy guidelines and practical work is a slow process – poverty reduction being a case in point. In theory, the wider definition of poverty, a poverty-oriented growth strategy and the PRSPs are approaches which indicate a clear shift away from the World Bank's much-criticised structural adjustment policies. In practice, however, the situation is ambivalent, and critics point to the usual package of trade liberalisation, privatisation and deregulation as a sign that the Bank's new Poverty Reduction Strategy is little more than a smokescreen.⁶⁵

The recent study published by the World Bank, *Breaking the Conflict Trap. Civil War and Development Policy*, indicates that in future, crisis prevention will play a more prominent role in the World Bank. To this end, however, the conflict-specific impacts of structural adjustment pol-

icies must be critically assessed. In this context, we should cast our minds back to the social unrest which followed the introduction of subsidy cuts, for example,⁶⁶ but also, and above all, to the instabilities resulting from the deregulation of state apparatus. Against the background of globalisation's centrifugal tendencies and the debate about state failure described in Chapter 1, a fresh analysis and appraisal of the loss of state regulatory and control capacities are urgently required.

The PRS process – at least if the involvement of the population is taken seriously – offers the opportunity to develop and reinforce the social contract existing between government and society. As a World Bank staffer aptly explained, the PRS process also has great potential as a tool for crisis prevention and peace-building: »In fact, when implemented on a full scale, the roadmap for the PRSP formulation would be the ideal venue for the discussion of a peace strategy.«⁶⁷ As yet, however, the link between poverty and poverty reduction, on the one hand, and crisis prevention, on the other, has not been established, or only to an inadequate extent, in the PRSPs. This is especially problematical in countries which continue to be affected by violent conflict and civil wars. In the PRSP for Senegal or Indonesia, for example, the current crisis is not mentioned at all, and there is certainly no reference to any specific measures which should be adopted urgently in the context of poverty reduction. For Rwanda too, the genocide is discussed as an issue, but with the assumption that it is a thing of the past. The current conflict situation is not mentioned in the PRSP. Indeed, there is no reference to prevention even in relation to the group of countries which are highly at risk from crisis. For example, in the PRSP for Azerbaijan, not a word is said about this problem.⁶⁸ In Sri Lanka, the standard-setting Framework for Relief, Rehabilitation and Reconstruction was overshadowed by the PRS process and its integration into this process was inadequate. A study commissioned by the UK's Department for International Development (DFID) on PRSPs in countries affected by violent conflict thus concludes that a) criteria should be developed to clarify when it is useful to initiate a PRS process at all, b) PRSPs should be enhanced with conflict-specific analytical tools, c) complementarity is needed between PRSP and other conflict-specific programmes, and d) coherence must be established with other donor and NGO strategies.⁶⁹

The World Bank and IMF cooperate on developing and evaluating the PRSPs. On the issue of the conflict-sensitive development of the Poverty Reduction Strategies, the

64 See, for example, the background materials on the World Bank web page on PRSPs in Conflict-Affected Countries: www.worldbank.org/poverty/strategies/review/semseries/conflict.htm.

65 Focus on the Global South 2003.

66 On this issue, see the annually updated documents produced by the World Development Movement.

67 Lopes 2000: 1.

68 The Strategy Papers can be accessed at <http://www.worldbank.org/poverty/strategies/>

69 PRSP Monitoring & Synthesis Project 2003.

IMF – not least due to its far more restrictive mandate in this area – is more constrained than the World Bank. Naturally, this does not imply that the IMF's policies cannot have a significant impact on a country's susceptibility to crises. On the contrary, economists and finance experts have repeatedly called for the IMF to establish an early-warning system and backstopping mechanisms for economies at risk from crises. This demand is based on the recognition that in fragile political and economic systems in particular, wars can often be triggered by external shocks, that financial crises – as in Mexico in 1994/95 or South-East Asia in 1997/98 – impact on economically weak countries worldwide, and that their effect may be to worsen crises. Economies with poor diversification, limited access to foreign markets and a high dependence on natural resource exports are especially susceptible. Falls in the price of natural resources can trigger crises which threaten political stability and jeopardise the livelihoods of large sections of the population. In Rwanda, for example, the collapse of coffee prices in the late 1980s and early 1990s heightened an already tense social situation, which was exploited further by extremist leaders. The IMF thus continues to have a duty to develop the early-warning system and effective backstopping mechanisms for financial crises, as mentioned above.

Summary

A generally positive point is that both the Federal Government and the multilateral organisations – the OECD, EU, UN and World Bank – have recognised the importance of shaping poverty reduction and development

programmes in a conflict-sensitive way. A further positive point which should be stressed is that with the adoption of the Gothenburg programme in June 2001, the EU undertook to mainstream crisis prevention in its development programmes. As far as practical and conceptual implementation is concerned, however, the Federal Government and the multilateral organisations are notably failing to match up to their aspirations. Yet in light of the enormous challenges – such as entrenched structures in economies of violence – a coherent and targeted approach is essential to promote joined-up thinking and overcome the divides between individual policy areas.

Conflict-preventive and conflict-sensitive poverty reduction also requires international structural policies which ensure that not only multilateral and bilateral development policy but also the international trade and financial institutions are geared to cushioning the negative impacts of economic globalisation on many countries. However, none of the actors described above is close to achieving this goal.

Critics point out that liberalising capital markets – vigorously promoted by the World Bank and the IMF – has counter-productive effects on poverty reduction in many countries. They argue that the islands of economic prosperity in the midst of general economic decline tend to be countries which have partly resisted the policies of the IMF and the World Bank, such as China, which has increased its economic performance by 392 percent per capita in the last twenty years, or India, Malaysia and Chile.⁷⁰ The secret of their success seems to be that they have not fully liberalised their capital markets and have maintained strong import control regimes for those sectors of the economy in which they were not fully competitive.

70 Schumann 2003: 29.

4. Methodologies, instruments and actors in a conflict-sensitive poverty reduction strategy

22

In general, many elements of a poverty reduction strategy also positively impact on the conflict management capacities of society and state. For example, *Good Governance* not only encompasses the rights, duties and responsibilities of government and civil society but also underlines the importance of building and consolidating appropriate institutions. A broader definition of poverty reduction – which underlies the eight *Millennium Development Goals* (MDGs), for example – identifies key economic and social criteria for the participation of marginalised groups in political and economic life.

The UN Millennium Development Goals

1. Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger
2. Achieve universal primary education
3. Promote gender equality and empower women
4. Reduce child mortality
5. Improve maternal health
6. Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases
7. Ensure environmental sustainability
8. Develop a global partnership for development

Source: German United Nations Association/UNDP 2003

One objective of the PRS process supported by the World Bank and the IMF is the political participation of civil society and especially marginalised groups. At declaratory level, at least, their empowerment is placed at the heart of the Poverty Reduction Strategy.⁷¹ This political integration is flanked by a poverty-oriented growth strategy (*pro poor growth*) and associated opportunities to strengthen marginalised groups through targeted regional and sectoral economic development and structural policy. This can help to avoid conflicts based on horizontal inequality.

As discussed in Chapter 1, the redistribution mechanisms associated with poverty reduction and the (feared) loss of privileges among certain groups can also reignite conflicts. Conflict-sensitive poverty reduction should therefore comply with a number of basic principles. These include minimum criteria (*musts*) as well as challenges/

dilemmas which should be addressed when developing programmes and projects (*shoulds*).

Basic principles for conflict-sensitive poverty reduction

A. Minimum criteria (*musts*)

Conflict-sensitive poverty reduction should comply with the following principles as »musts«:

- coherence and coordination
- the greatest possible multidirectional partiality/inclusion of non-state actors
- complementarity with local approaches/reconciliation policies
- long-term commitment/support for the dismantling of structural causes of conflict

Coherence and coordination

The importance of these principles in development cooperation has already been explained in the previous chapters and requires no further discussion here. Coordination with other donors and coherence between different programmes are especially significant. External actors already have only limited opportunities to influence the conflicting parties, which is why it is essential to pool and coordinate their various programmes. Furthermore, there must be agreement on the objectives and scope of these programmes: whereas structural and governance policy measures which are effective on a cross-regional basis are required in economies of violence, reconciliation processes must be adapted in line with local conditions.

Multidirectional partiality

Like any other state actor, the Federal Government is confined to working primarily with other governments. As these governments are often conflicting parties themselves in crisis situations, a certain distance and the abil-

71 See, for example, the World Bank's draft document on *Empowerment and Poverty Reduction*; World Bank 2002.

ity to engage in critical dialogue must be maintained in order to come close to complying with the key principle of multidirectional partiality. Cooperation with other social forces is essential in this context.

The need for a complementary approach

External actors can only contribute to preventing crises to a limited extent: sustainable solutions must be developed and implemented by the societal actors in the country itself. It is therefore especially important to recognise the role of local peace initiatives and potentially unifying elements/actors (»connectors«). These can be supported if appropriate, but under no circumstances should a lack of awareness lead to parallel structures being established or projects being implemented which cut the ground from under local activities. Paul Stubbs has described very vividly the consequences of such ignorance with reference to the post-war regions in the Balkans, particularly Bosnia-Herzegovina.⁷² As part of a sensitive and complementary approach, it is also essential to avoid depriving local institutions and NGOs of their qualified staff, e.g. through the payment of higher salaries.

Long-term commitment/support for dismantling structural causes of conflict

Conflict-sensitive poverty reduction must be based on long-term commitment. *Peace-building* and peace consolidation require the development of *Good Governance* structures as well as effective conflict resolution mechanisms. This cannot be achieved with short-term programmes. Here, the donor countries are also called upon to make longer-term commitments and embed short-term measures, such as emergency relief, in a long-term perspective, thus enabling funding agencies to plan ahead with the greatest possible certainty.

B. Challenges and dilemmas

As well as these »musts«, a number of other principles can be identified for conflict-sensitive poverty reduction. These are challenges and dilemmas which should be considered in project planning and implementation.

Targeting at-risk groups

A basic dilemma which demonstrates the need for a highly sensitive approach by international actors, especially in post-war regions, arises from the problem that

the groups most affected by conflict are not necessarily the poorest groups in the region; similarly, the poorest groups are not necessarily those who form the greatest conflict potential.

A particular priority in post-war regions must be the (re-)integration of refugees and *internally displaced persons* (IDPs), as well as ex-combatants. (The urgent need to address young people as a target group is discussed above.)

Challenges for the integration of refugees and displaced persons

War-related migration processes often have massive impacts on the provision of resources and the ecological balance in areas where many people settle. There are winners and losers in this process, and it would be wrong to assume that refugees are necessarily the most disadvantaged group and hence the losers. In many regions, inequalities arise if refugees are better provided for than the local population outside the refugee camps. Unless compensation measures are taken, the local population may be disadvantaged compared with the refugees. Further tensions may arise if the local population also faces additional burdens caused by the intensified use of local resources (such as land and water).

One of the main lessons to be learned here is that (re-)integration initiatives should under no circumstances be restricted to one specific target group highly affected by crises and violent conflicts. An inherent danger in restricting the provision of goods and services, seeds, tools, accommodation or education to one specific group (e.g. refugees or ex-combatants) is the implicit discrimination or exclusion of other groups who in some cases may live not in better but in worse conditions.

Reintegration of ex-combatants

The economic and social integration of ex-combatants is a major challenge in controlling cycles of violence, as ex-combatants otherwise form a pool of potential recruits for criminal, mafia-style organisations, economies of violence and *warlords*.

An evaluation of programmes aimed at the (re-)integration of ex-combatants, undertaken by peace researchers at the *Bonn International Center for Conversion* (BICC)⁷³, concludes that reintegration programmes are most likely to be successful if they are embedded in measures to promote general economic development; in other words, if at the same time viable employment structures are established in the target country and full preparation for employment is provided on an individual basis.

72 See Stubbs 2001, 1999.

73 Heinemann-Grüder/Pietz 2003: 31.

The study also shows that programmes which focus solely on economic reintegration and job opportunities fall short of the mark. Instead, the measures must be tailored to the individual circumstances and psychological state of (both male and female) ex-combatants. It is often apparent in post-war regions that many demobilised combatants are poorly prepared for civilian life, both in terms of their education and their psychological state. Authoritarian ways of thinking and ethnically rigid images of the world, which are encouraged in military organisations in particular, must also be dismantled. The *International Organisation for Migration* (IOM) has therefore introduced compulsory seminars on democracy, human rights, civil society etc. in its reintegration programmes. It is also apparent that psychological mentoring for ex-combatants is essential, but this is rarely provided in most reintegration programmes.

Empowerment of women

Women are one of the most disadvantaged groups in crisis regions. They are often affected by poverty to a far greater extent than men, and the proportion of women among refugees and displaced persons in violent conflicts is also far higher. Yet women's potential for conflict transformation and peace-building is underestimated and under-exploited. The empowerment of socially disadvantaged groups is therefore essential for sustainable peace-building. *Empowerment* encompasses, firstly, the enhancement of self-esteem and support for the articulation of individual interests and political participation. Secondly, it encompasses social justice – a key prerequisite for creating peaceable societies, which should not be overlooked.

What is therefore required, especially in post-war regions, is targeted job- and community-oriented work to support women. Development agencies and humanitarian relief organisations have often criticised the fact that peace-building measures frequently neglect gender equality as an integral element of social justice. A basic problem is that after the end of armed conflict, women are generally marginalised and play little part in decisions on reconstruction, while reconstruction programmes generally do not cater for women's specific needs. It is also important to help women protect the freedoms and new roles that some of them have achieved during the war and utilise these for subsequent peace-building. A key task in this context is to identify strategies which – while taking account of culture-specific aspects – change roles without overwhelming the subjects.

At the same time, the international debate is increasingly focussing on the upsurge in domestic violence in post-war situations. Reports by the UN *Special Rapporteur of Violence against Women* show that a shift in violence occurs, away from the public and into the private

sphere. In a policy paper published by the British NGO *International Alert*, this is summed up as follows: on their return home, male combatants generally direct their unresolved trauma, but also their frustration about the lack of prospects, against their families in the form of violence. The result is an increase in assaults and rapes. There are therefore calls for women to be included to a greater extent in the security policy debate. A frequently cited example is women's influence on the drafting of the mandates for the police and the military in South Africa. Here, police and military units were given gender training and the number of women in the South African *peacekeeping forces* was increased in order to build confidence among the local population.⁷⁴

Integration of gender roles in the analysis of violent conflicts

The realities of life in armed conflicts are often very different for men and women. The same applies to the needs of men and women in post-war regions. These are defined by society's expectations of their roles, which are determined by the local culture. Peace-building activities involving external actors within crisis regions must take account of these factors.

Above all, the link between *gender*, power (or dominance) and culture must be considered. In this context, culture takes on an added importance because the oppression of women is often explained, or even legitimated, in cultural terms. Intervention strategies adopted by external actors in crisis or post-war regions must therefore also take account of culture-specific factors affecting the social status of men and women.⁷⁵

A real challenge for external actors is to incorporate gender aspects into their range of conflict and impact analysis tools. This means developing criteria relating to the impact of identity patterns, e.g. militarised masculinity. In order to overcome cultures of violence, projects should be designed to break these patterns, instead of reinforcing them. Investigating the psychosocial effects of war and post-war situations for men, and shedding light on the link between (loss of) identity and conflict dynamics, are often very important in developing realistic strategies. Male trauma must also be taken into account in

74 Anderlini 2001: 37.

75 A comparative study on the peace processes in the South Pacific shows that in Bougainville, the involvement of women's groups at the lower level of society and, at the same time, in the negotiating process (combined with the presence of female peacekeepers) helped to achieve successful outcomes because traditional forms of conflict management could be drawn on. In the Solomon Islands, by contrast, women's traditional role (e.g. as »owners« of the land in the matrilinear traditional communities) was systematically negated and the decision to deploy a male-only peacekeeping unit obviously contributed to the collapse of the peace efforts there. See Böge 2002.

demobilisation programmes. Thus the task is not only to boost women's active role in crisis regions and prevent discrimination, but also to determine to what extent social constructs of femininity and masculinity influence the dynamics of violent conflict and how they can be changed in order to break this cycle.

External actors working in crisis regions can utilise women's potential for both development and peace-building if they analyse women's social roles accurately and take account of their status. The correlation between gender roles, power and culture is extremely important in this context.

Linking poverty reduction with environmental policy

Wars in poverty regions often cause ecological damage and conflicts over natural resources (e.g. water, pastureland). For this reason, the link between environmental destruction/environmentally compatible economic management and poverty reduction plays an important role. In order to develop policy options in this area, it is essential to abandon the cliché that poverty necessarily causes environmental destruction. On a global scale, it is not the poor, but the consumption and production behaviour of the rich which pollutes the environment. Numerous project case studies presented by UNDP, DFID and the World Bank have shown that the poor can be encouraged to become partners in environmentally compatible resource management and measures to overcome environmental pollution. It is therefore proposed that strategies to link these two areas be integrated in the various country-specific development strategies.⁷⁶

Multidimensionality

Conflict-specific poverty reduction must be multidimensional in approach and be directed at different levels – state and society, individual and collective. That means that political elites and government advisors must be involved in just the same way as opinion leaders from the associations, members of NGOs and even citizens' group at local level. However, a key feature of multidimensionality is also that different instruments must be deployed, depending on the objectives and priorities set. These can range from supporting legal reforms to trauma work in rural communities. Finally, different timeframes should be also be adopted for the measures at the various levels and coordinated appropriately.

Fields of action and instruments

The literature on crisis prevention/conflict management already identifies and describes numerous instruments and methodologies⁷⁷ which are ideally suited for integration into development cooperation, and it is beyond the scope of this paper to discuss them in detail. However, some of them directly relate to the planning, implementation and evaluation of poverty reduction programmes and are outlined below.

The list therefore does not claim to be exhaustive. The following areas will be briefly discussed:

- Conflict-specific analysis of the baseline situation and impact monitoring of poverty reduction programmes
- Coordination with other donors/external actors
- Strengthening mediation and conflict management institutions
- Overcoming the effects of war.

This list is supplemented by project case studies from various VENRO member organisations. As the task of developing activities in a conflict-sensitive way is a new challenge for NGOs too, these project case studies are not intended to be models of best practice, but simply show the state-of-the-art in learning and reflection. Effective conflict-sensitive poverty reduction requires interaction and coordination between government and non-government organisations, whose activities operate on different levels over a different range. The NGO project case studies therefore reach far beyond their own horizons and can serve as a source of information for governments and international organisations alike.

A. Conflict-specific analysis of the baseline situation and impact monitoring of poverty reduction programmes

1. Carrying out a conflict analysis (based on participation)

A comprehensive conflict analysis is a core element of a conflict-sensitive poverty reduction strategy. It is essential to identify central fields of conflict, actors and dynamics as well as possible methodologies for crisis prevention measures. In line with the »Do no harm« approach, this must include identifying »dividers« and »connectors«, i.e. persons or groups in a region or community who have a polarising effect or can play a bridging role. The conflict analysis should be carried out during the planning phase of the poverty reduction project. Undertaking the con-

76 See DFID/EC/UNDP/World Bank 2002.

77 See, for example, Lund 1996; Mehler/Ribaux 2000.

lict analysis at a later stage is sensible only if there is a possibility of adapting the project to take appropriate account of the new findings.

A conflict analysis also facilitates coordination with other organisations and actors, allowing different assessments of the situation to be shared and discussed. This also facilitates joint project design with local actors. A conflict analysis based on participation can be a very complex process, but if all the relevant stakeholders are included, it can be the first step in conflict transformation.

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2. Monitoring and evaluation of the project's impacts on the conflict

A further task in conflict analysis and project planning is to formulate objectives and indicators for the intended crisis-preventive impacts of the project. As has emerged in the recent debate about the »Do no harm« approach and *Peace and Conflict Impact Assessment (PCIA)*, monitoring the impacts of crisis prevention and conflict-sensitive projects poses major challenges, not least due to the intense dynamics and complexity of violent conflicts.⁷⁸ It is therefore important to ensure that impact monitoring is also viewed as a learning process and that projects are designed as flexibly as possible.

The application of the »Do no harm« approach is illustrated by a project undertaken by German Agro Action in Burundi.

German Agro Action: Conflict-sensitive project planning (»Do no harm«) in Burundi

Based on the recognition that development assistance can also escalate violent conflicts, the »Do no harm« approach has been developed as a conflict-sensitive analysis, planning and monitoring instrument. German Agro Action is one of the organisations which are increasingly integrating the »Do no harm« approach into their projects in order to minimise conflict-escalating impacts and boost local peace capacities. The following case study from Burundi illustrates the type of experience which can be drawn from the application of the »Do no harm« approach.

In Burundi, which has been affected for years by armed conflict between Hutu rebel groups and the Tutsi-dominated government army, German Agro Action launched various projects in four communities in the north-east of the country in November 2000. These include providing meals for (a total of 21 000) schoolchildren, reforestation programmes and seed distribution to needy households.

At a »Do no harm« workshop in November 2001, the project staff identified dividers and connectors (persons or groups in a region or community who have a polarising effect or can play a bridging role) in the violent conflict and then explored the intended and unintended impacts of the project activities. The »Do no harm« analysis raised the following issues:

1. Provision of school meals: Here, one question which arose was whether children who cannot attend school should be targeted as well. The key importance of the ethnic composition of the school committee responsible for distributing the meals was also underlined and identified as a key connector.
2. Reforestation programme: Here, the major importance of establishing transparency and publishing the criteria governing the selection of project areas, and issues such as who the owners are, who controls the use of trees, etc. was recognised.
3. Seed distribution: Here, it became apparent that other forms of seed distribution should be considered, as the activities to date have caused tension in the communities (theft of seed, protests from non-recipients etc.).

The outcomes of this first »Do no harm« analysis clearly showed that the impact of project activities should be reviewed regularly and that flexible and dynamic project planning is essential. The findings were incorporated into the planning process for the next project phase. The reforestation programme was expanded, whereas the seed redistribution programme was cancelled due to improvements in the general situation and also due to the difficulties which had arisen. For 2004, German Agro Action is planning to transfer the project to a food security programme with special emphasis on conflict management and crisis prevention.

Source: German Agro Action

B. Coordination with other donors/external actors

1. Donors' meetings

In cases where donors' meetings are already well-established in a country or region, it is sensible to initiate exchange and coordination on conflict prevention measures too. If no donors' meetings currently take place, it is useful to coordinate a regular exchange among the external actors, especially for national programmes or in regions where a great many external actors are involved. These meetings should also involve NGOs which are involved in conflict management and crisis prevention activities.

78 On the requirements and difficulties of PCIA, see Austin/Fischer/Wils 2003.

2. Strategic planning

Joint strategic planning between the (external) actors involved in crisis prevention is appropriate. Coordination can take place across the following areas: evaluation of the conflict situation and its causes; coordination of conflict-relevant activities; possible development of networks, alliances etc.; coordination of instruments, methodologies, geographical range and timeframes. Building on the principle of complementarity, gaps can be identified and new activities planned.

3. Awareness-raising for advisors

Advisors in war and crisis regions should be fully prepared and equipped with an awareness of crisis prevention issues. At the minimum, they should have familiarised themselves with the conflict situation beforehand and be aware of the basic principles of conflict prevention and good practice.

C. Strengthening mediation and conflict management institutions

1. Promoting democracy

Building and supporting effective institutions is a key aspect of conflict transformation. In this context, it is important to take account of specific conflict-relevant factors. The system of government (and any discussion about its reform) must guarantee the fundamental participation of marginalised groups, refugees and minorities. However, promoting democracy also involves strengthening social organisation and control mechanisms (e.g. civil society and democratic media culture). It is important, in this context, to recognise that democratisation can also escalate conflict potential. The Church Development Service (EED) has provided an interesting case study on this issue.

**Church Development Service (EED):
Promoting democracy through non-government actors in Kenya**

In 1991, the Kenyan Government, in response to massive pressure from domestic opposition movements and the international donor community, was forced to reintroduce a multiparty system. As a result, heightened tensions in many parts of the country escalated into violence in the run-up to the elections. At local level, there had always been tensions between various ethnic groups, primarily between nomads and farmers. However, in the past, such tensions had rarely esca-

lated into open warfare, as the communities concerned were generally able to deal with these problems themselves. Now, however, these tensions were systematically exploited by politicians for their own purposes.

During these new conflicts, modern weapons were used. Tens of thousands of people lost their livelihoods, thousands were killed, and relations between ethnic groups which had generally coexisted without violence for years were soured. The Kenyan church organisations responded initially with emergency aid and support for the victims. From the outset, the churches' objective was to help the victims rebuild and regain control of their lives. They launched a peace and reconstruction programmes, taking the view that a prerequisite for reconstruction was to transform the hostility between the feuding groups into good-neighbourly relations.

Training was provided for »peace animators« who held peace and problem-solving workshops at local and district level, involving the local authorities and elected representatives. At the same time, the National Council of Churches of Kenya (NCCCK) together with the Catholic Justice and Peace Commission, launched a nationwide democracy education programme which – quite independently of the government and parties – informed voters about their rights and duties as citizens of a democratic state. Election monitors were also trained as part of this programme. The churches were able to mobilise more than ten thousand monitors for the national elections (1997, 2002) who carefully scrutinised the entire process: from voter registration, the election campaign to polling and vote-counting. For the 2002 elections, the National Council of Churches of Kenya joined forces with the Supreme Council of Kenya Muslims (Supkem) and the Hindu Council of Kenya (HCK) as well as with various non-government organisations to form a coalition, the Kenya Domestic Observation Programme (K-DOP).

Finally, the Kenyan churches worked intensively with other civil society actors in the legislative process (e.g. election and media legislation) and participated in the debate about the reform of the Kenyan constitution. They organised a broad-based public debate about the reform proposals presented by the various interest groups, drafted their own proposals and ensured that the constitutional reform was a transparent and public process.

Source: Church Development Service

The following project case study from Misereor shows that empowering poor population groups and building political institutions for citizens' participation is a long-term process.

**Bischöfliches Hilfswerk Misereor:
Promoting citizens' participation, integration of
returning refugees and displaced persons, and
strengthening the representation of interests
among poor population groups in Guatemala**

In Ixcán/Quiché (Guatemala), around 75 000 people live in 173 small settlements. In 20 villages, former refugees who have returned to Guatemala from Mexico, together with ex-guerrillas, internally displaced persons, former members of the paramilitary Civil Defence Patrols and ex-combatants comprise the majority of the population. In all, there are 12 ethnic groups in the region.

Since 1999, Misereor has supported the local social pastoral programme whose former focus was on promoting human rights at a time when the key issue was to highlight violations of civil and political rights. The focus of the new project is on empowering the inhabitants of 60 settlements to exercise their rights of participation at municipal level and to engage in social monitoring. Through this empowerment of the poor population groups, the aim is to improve the socio-economic position of former refugees and displaced persons and other victims of the civil war.

In order to achieve this goal, 300 representatives of grassroots organisations, farmers, housewives and students, who in some cases are already qualified in promoting rights, will be trained in this area of work. Coordination meetings with other groups from the social pastoral programme, NGOs, the political communities, the Ombudsman's Office and other organisations are also being planned. Through the courses, the grassroots representatives will be encouraged to take an active role in the commissions for security, justice and human rights and participate in local and regional development councils. There are also plans to influence public opinion through radio broadcasts and publications.

Since citizens' participation and decentralisation have only been regulated by law for a year, there is still very little experience in these areas. However, the starting conditions in Ixcán seem reasonably favourable, as there are already organised and – within limits – trained grassroots representatives here. It is hoped that through the joint work in the commissions and councils as well as through real improvements in living conditions, the ethnic differences and tensions of the past can gradually be overcome.

Source: Misereor

2. Legal system

When establishing a reliable legal system, it is essential to ensure that it is independent from any political influence or arbitrariness, especially from the government. The judiciary plays an important role in dealing with war crimes and human rights violations. However, it cannot replace the necessary social debate. As Gunnar Theissen has pointed out, there is often tension between the objectives of »justice« and »reconciliation«.⁷⁹

3. Reform of the security sector

When reforming the security sector, the first task is to reorganise the security agencies (military, police, secret services) and ensure that they are subject to effective control by democratic institutions. Secondly, a public debate (including civil society) about the tasks, role and mandate of the security organisations should be facilitated. In the context of poverty reduction, particular attention should also be paid to issues such as the budget for secret services and the military, focussing especially on the proportion of government funds spent on defence.

4. Supporting dialogue forums

Before and after conflict escalations in particular, dialogue forums are an important means of clearing up misunderstandings and promoting the acceptance of different interests. Dialogue forums can take place at different levels of society and should include key stakeholders in the conflict. The dialogue between state and society is also important. In principle, the PRS processes should also be based on this type of dialogue.

**Eirene: Mediation between cattle breeders
and farmers in Chad**

Due to the seasonal cattle-driving between the northern and southern regions of Chad, there is a centuries-old symbiosis between nomadic cattle breeders and settled farmers. In recent decades, this coexistence has been permanently disrupted. The environmental degradation in the Sahel region, increasing agricultural production for export (cotton) and political differences have resulted in an escalation of conflicts over increasingly scarce resources. The precarious economic situation of the small farmers and simple nomadic herdsmen goes hand in hand with an unstable political situation in which one small population group is virtually holding the state to ransom.

79 See Theissen 2001.

Furthermore, the country is swamped with small arms. Violent conflicts are on the agenda. The project is being carried out jointly with the local organisations ATNV (Association Tchadienne pour la Non-Violence), AMECET (Association pour la Médiation entre Cultivateurs et Elévateurs au Tchad) and ACTT (Association des Chefs Traditionnels au Tchad). It aims to achieve a positive settlement to the recurrent conflicts. The target groups (representatives of the cattle breeders and farmers; traditional chiefs; local authority representatives) form conflict settlement committees at local level with the support of the local authorities. Through training and the drafting of appropriate model solutions, it is possible to develop lasting settlements and mechanisms for their implementation. The theme is underpinned by media presentations, education and lobbying targeted at the public. Through cooperation with development projects, solutions to the conflict which are based on rural development (e.g. construction of water holes) can be integrated in the project.

Source: Eirene

5. Strengthening the crisis prevention capacities of local NGOs

Local organisations working in crisis prevention and conflict management can be supported through a range of measures: capacity-building in the field of training (for constructive conflict management), training of facilitators for dialogue workshops, supporting peace constituencies and other crisis prevention networks, organisational advice, supporting lobby work, fundraising etc.

In this context, there should be a particular focus on projects which aim specifically to strengthen the peace-building capacities of young people.

Plan International: Youth people as peace-builders in Colombia

In its »Young People as Peace-builders« project, Plan International is training 160 young people to become peace-builders. Boys and girls aged between 13 and 18 will act as multipliers and engage in outreach work involving their peers, families and communities in order to change values and behaviours, which are shaped by fear and have legitimated violence for decades. In cooperation with other NGOs, peace educators teach the young people to deal with conflicts, to take responsibility for others, and to understand the significance of human and child rights and the meaning of equality, justice, respect, solidarity and consideration for others. In parallel, teachers and parents are trained to support the young people involved in the project. Train-

ing opportunities are also provided for unemployed young people so they do not join violent youth gangs or militant groups.

The project combines a number of elements. Firstly, it aims to promote knowledge and change behaviours through peace education. Secondly, it is intended to yield academic information about the behaviours, values and attitudes of the young people, especially towards peace and violence.

A start has already been made: within the project framework, the first national forum on »Youth as Peace-builders« took place in Bogotá/Colombia in September 2003, organised by Plan International together with other NGOs. 70 young people from various regions of the country came together for the first time to exchange their ideas about peaceful coexistence.

Source: Plan International Germany

It is also important to support projects and programmes involving the different stakeholders or potential adversaries.

6. Strengthening local conflict management approaches

Interventions by external actors that are aimed at crisis prevention should, wherever possible, build on local structures, initiatives and actors. Often, there are traditional forms of conflict management which can be reinforced and expanded. Women, young people, but also traditional and spiritual leaders can take on key functions here, as the following example of a World Vision project in Indonesia demonstrates.

World Vision Germany: Trauma management for religious leaders in Indonesia

This project in a province of the North Moluccas in Indonesia is embedded in a peace and reconciliation programme which currently includes two other World Vision projects. The first project focusses on peace education for children; the second aims to produce a children's magazine on peace and tolerance. These peace-building measures are integrated into a World Vision training programme (including computer training for young people from both religious communities) as a poverty reduction measure.

The purpose of the trauma management project is to develop a training cycle and produce and trial a training manual. The manual will then be evaluated and revised. After that, a thousand copies will be produced and distributed in the communities. The project is targeted at religious leaders, as they are considered

by local people to play a key role in restoring peaceful relations in the region. The religious leaders from both communities (Islam and Christianity) should be empowered to resume their leadership roles within their communities by equipping them with the means to deal effectively with their own traumatic experiences and those of the members of their community. The treatment of trauma is key in achieving peaceful social transformation. The religious leaders will themselves participate in the development of the training module and in future will act as trainers, passing on the knowledge gained in their spheres of responsibility.

The project, which is funded by the Federal Foreign Office, is managed by World Vision Indonesia in cooperation with local experts trained in psycho-social rehabilitation. The manual on trauma healing will be an important aid for the communities. It will be produced with the participation of Indonesian stakeholders. It takes account of the local culture and needs, as it is designed on the basis of participation and incorporates existing knowledge and expertise.

Source: World Vision Deutschland

D. Overcoming the effects of war

1. Disarmament, mine clearance and integration of ex-combatants/child soldiers

Initiatives aimed at demobilisation and reintegration are of great symbolic significance after the end of a violent conflict, but they are also necessary to restrict the recruitment potential that makes an outbreak of fresh violence more likely. In the medium term, these measures must be embedded in a comprehensive reform of the security sector and economic development programmes. Measures to support ex-combatants should not, however, lead to fresh injustices by providing retrospective rewards for individuals involved in war crimes. Income-generating measures should therefore be designed with care and developed in consultation with local communities. Furthermore, for effective integration, there must be linkage with individual trauma management programmes and democracy education.

Mine clearance programmes are also extremely important in restoring normality in war-torn societies. Here, the key challenge is to organise mine clearance campaigns in line with the needs of the local population. These should be addressed not only in information campaigns but also, and above all, in training programmes for the mine clearance teams. There is no reason why foreign experts should mainly be involved in this task when the local population has few opportunities to work and earn a living.

2. Transformation of war economies

In many crisis regions, it is sensible to identify and support economic alternatives which help to overcome the logic of violence as a survival strategy. In the urban slums in particular, this is virtually the only way to address the problems caused by marauding youth gangs. Caritas International demonstrates in a project case study that re-establishing »human dignity« is certainly a viable goal as well. If markets of violence have emerged on a large scale in the wake of civil wars, however, income-generating programmes and alternative incentives are only feasible if parallel initiatives to restrict these markets of violence are adopted through regional economic governance measures.

Caritas International: Peace and reconciliation programme, Sierra Leone

The civil war in Sierra Leone, which lasted for many years and was waged with extreme brutality, opened up deep rifts between the victims and the perpetrators. Since the end of the war, numerous refugees and displaced persons have returned to their home villages. This process has brought the conflict out into the open. Many returners are filled with hatred and are determined to seek revenge against the people who forced them to flee. This applies especially to returners who find that they have nothing when they get home. However, there are also problems between the returners and people who did not flee. Often, this latter group exploited the opportunity and seized the houses, fields or other property abandoned by the refugees. As a result, there have been many outbreaks of open conflict, and entire villages are divided into hostile camps. The situation is especially tense in the diocese of Kenema in the eastern part of Sierra Leone – the main focus of the conflict between government troops and rebels.

With the help of rural awareness-raising and information campaigns which match the level of awareness of the target groups (including, for example, the involvement of drama groups) and which are held primarily in schools and other education establishments, the aim is to establish a social climate which breaks through the vicious circle of violence, revenge and retaliation and permits a return to something approaching normality. To implement this peace work, the necessary specialised personnel (*peace agents*) will be trained during the first phase of the programme. In further phases, these *peace agents* will then train suitable persons as conflict mediators in the villages. Rehabilitation measures which promote the community are also envisaged in order, firstly, to supply the necessary material basis for the reconciliation process and, secondly, to overcome, through joint relief campaigns,

a way of thinking which entrenches differences and conflicts. In total, 30 villages in the districts of the diocese worst affected by the civil war will be included in the programme.

Source: Caritas International

3. Trauma work, reconciliation programmes, truth commissions, prosecution of war crimes, compensation for victims, resolution of property claims

In post-war situations, poverty reduction must be sensitive to people's traumatic experiences and take account of the current discourse on truth, justice and reconciliation. Truth, justice and reconciliation often exist in a field of tension. Poverty reduction must position itself within this field of tension. It should provide support as individuals and society seek to deal with the experience of violence and injustice. At the same time, international aid programmes must ensure that individuals who were involved in human rights violations are not rewarded retrospectively.

The following example from medico international shows that poverty reduction in regions shaped by violence can be successful if it reinforces the participants' capacities for conflict management and cooperation and restores the social relationships that have been massively disrupted by the traumatic experiences. A key issue in this context is the integration of psycho-social concepts into conflict management and poverty reduction.

medico international: Community-oriented conflict management and poverty reduction in South Africa

Sinani – Kwa-Zulu Natal Programme for Survivors of Violence, the local medico project partner, is an integrated, process-oriented conflict management and poverty reduction programme in around 15 communities in KwaZulu-Natal which are worst affected by political violence between rival parties as well as being some of the poorest regions in the province.

An integrated and context-specific approach is adopted in each community. The starting point is the idea that a solution to violence must be as multidimensional as its causes. With the help of negotiations, discussions and participatory research, the social, economic, political, historical and gender-specific causes of violence are researched in each community as a first step towards building relations and confidence. In parallel, joint targets for resolving the underlying conflicts are formulated and groups are formed with the community, e.g. youth groups who want to develop income-generating projects, women's groups who

want to regulate access to the water supply and land use, groups of community leaders who want to rebuild a burnt-out clinic, and children's groups who want to create space for shared games. Depending on the level of mistrust between the conflicting parties, the programmes are carried out jointly or in parallel so that in the longer term, they can coalesce through the interest in shared goals.

In this process, conflicts and unresolved feelings emerge, which can be addressed in the group or individually with the support of qualified mentors (ongoing and through trauma workshops lasting several days at a neutral location). As well as building self-confidence, the shared development goals help to re-establish social relations within the groups, which must develop cooperation and conflict management skills. This also enables links to be established with other individuals and structures within and outside the community. In this way, poverty reduction can address various levels and contribute to peace-building in the long term

Source: medico international

Summary and conclusions

The above overview of *musts* and *shoulds*, fields of action, instruments and practical examples demonstrates the range of available options for action as well as the major challenges which conflict-sensitive poverty reduction must address. The intention is not to supply a blueprint but merely to provide an impetus for good project design. Nor does the list claim to be exhaustive. A key task will be to ensure that the various actors gain experience which they can then process systematically, analyse and make available in a transparent way to others.

NGOs in particular must become more aware of the links between poverty reduction and crisis prevention. They must embed the resulting knowledge consistently in their practical work and develop it systematically. Organising an exchange of information and joint learning processes is essential here. This applies especially to government actors, who must establish an appropriate framework for this process. The options for action are set out in more detail in the final chapter which contains recommendations to the Federal Government.

5. Recommendations

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1. The Federal Government should coordinate the two key areas of poverty reduction and crisis prevention to a greater extent than at present.

As demonstrated in this study, the link between poverty reduction and crisis prevention is recognised by the Federal Government, but is implemented inadequately in political practice. In order to address this situation, the Federal Government should 1. encourage the exchange of information and ideas between the relevant ministries, 2. carry out pilot projects and assess their impact, 3. raise awareness and provide training and development for staff dealing with programme planning and implementation, and 4. intensify the dialogue with NGOs and academics. The option of establishing dedicated country-specific working groups or dialogue forums for this purpose should be assessed.

In order to enhance the effectiveness of preventive approaches, a sectoral and regional focus of activities will be required.⁸⁰ For example, various actors could provide specific services in which they have particular expertise. As the resources for crisis prevention measures are limited, a regional focus would seem essential. However, pooling the resources for specific country groups and regions must be coordinated at international level and comply with clear and transparent criteria. Following on from this new regional focus, the BMZ should in future give greater priority to sector projects, rather than numerous individual projects, in its development cooperation, and pool resources and political energies on a regional basis. It would also seem appropriate to review the selection of countries on a regular basis against prevention policy benchmarks.

A conflict-sensitive approach to poverty reduction can only be achieved if foreign trade policy is also targeted alongside development policy. The Federal Government's policies should be based on the following minimum criteria (*musts*): 1. coherence and coordination; 2. the greatest possible multidirectional partiality and the inclusion of non-state actors; 3. long-term commitment to supporting the dismantling of structural causes of conflict; 4. complementarity with local approaches. In general, the

experience and expertise of local development actors should be integrated into programme planning and project development to a greater extent.

2. The Federal Government should work at international level to ensure that the UN's poverty reduction and crisis prevention capacities are enhanced.

Within the UN framework, the Federal Government should work to ensure that the UN's problem-solving capacities in the social and economic field are enhanced. Multilateral development policy plays a key role in this context. The Federal Government should reinforce these approaches and, in this context, boost its own credibility by showing greater commitment at UN level and implementing UN agreements (e.g. by allocating 0.7 percent of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) to development cooperation). The Federal Government should also lobby for greater coherence between the UN agencies in the field of crisis prevention. UNDP should play a leading role in coordinating the various approaches. The Federal Government should also work to ensure that UN exerts greater control over companies operating in conflict regions and encourage them to adopt conflict-sensitive business practices.

3. The Federal Government should bring its influence to bear in the bodies and organs of the World Bank and IMF so that the policies of these institutions are developed in a more conflict-sensitive way.

In Chapter 2, it was pointed out that the World Bank has already drafted a number of preliminary strategies to integrate crisis prevention into its poverty reduction programmes. The Federal Government should therefore work to ensure that these approaches are given a higher priority in the decision-making bodies of the World Bank (and the IMF), and that the PRSPs in particular are developed in a conflict-sensitive way. The Federal Government should also initiate and support research projects on the conflict-specific impacts of structural adjustment programmes. In addition, the conflict sensitivity of World Bank advisors working in conflict-affected

80 Debiel/Fischer 2001: 22.



countries should be enhanced through appropriate training and development.

This approach should be combined with a comprehensive reform of the IMF and the World Bank in order to promote the democratisation of their decision-making processes through measures designed to improve the developing countries' rights of participation (voting rights, composition of Board of Executive Directors etc.).

The Federal Government should also use its influence within the IMF and the World Bank to reinforce one key demand: as part of the PRSP process, military spending should also be made transparent and shown in full in national budgets.

4. The Federal Government should work to ensure that poverty reduction and crisis prevention are implemented in the EU's development cooperation to a greater extent than at present.

VENRO – in cooperation with other European NGO networks – has already put forward numerous proposals for a reform of EU development cooperation in its brochure »Tackling Poverty/ Globale Armut – Europas Verantwortung«.

In addition to the proposals, presented in the brochure, for a stronger focus on poverty in the EU's development policies, the Federal Government should also push for the

implementation of the Gothenburg programme, which was adopted by the European Council in June 2001 and highlights the need to mainstream conflict prevention in cooperation programmes. In order to reinforce this issue, the first step should be to appoint a *Conflict Prevention Advisor* to support the EU delegations working in the field in conflict regions. The Federal Government should press for the EU's civilian capacities in the field of early warning, conflict analysis and peace-building to be expanded and equipped with more funds. The current trend for some Member States to provide significantly more funds for military (intervention) capacities than for civilian prevention measures must be curbed and this imbalance corrected. Whereas activities in the military sphere will in future be coordinated by a Defence Agency, there is no effective pooling and coordination of resources in the civilian sphere. The Federal Government should therefore endorse the proposal put forward by the NGOs forming the *European Peace Liaison Office* (EPLO) and press for the EU to establish a *European Peace Research and Capabilities Agency*. In September 2003, EPLO proposed a corresponding amendment to Article 40 of the current EU draft constitution as follows:

Member States shall undertake progressively to improve their civilian capabilities. A European Peacebuilding Research and Civilian Capabilities Agency shall be established to identify operational require-

ments and capability goals, to promote measures to satisfy those requirements, to set common standards for the training and recruitment of personnel for civilian operations, to monitor, review and promote best-practice in the implementation of EU missions and programmes, to promote coherent co-operation between the EU, UN and OSCE, and to support research into the further development of conflict prevention and civilian crisis management instruments and capabilities.⁸¹

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The Federal Government should also work for coherence in all areas of the EU's external relations and lobby for poverty reduction and crisis prevention to be integrated as equal objectives into all the EU's policy pillars (agriculture policy, external trade, home affairs).

5. The Federal Government should support the preparation of conflict analyses and the integration of their findings into the poverty reduction planning process.

The practice of preparing country analyses which has now been initiated by the BMZ should be expanded, and poverty reduction issues should be linked in with crisis prevention. These analyses should monitor the progress of all the BMZ's major projects and programmes. However, they can only have crisis-preventive effects if, at political level, there is a willingness to engage in self-critical reflection and adopt different strategies if necessary.

The Federal Government should work to ensure that conflict analyses are prepared in advance of poverty reduction measures. This should apply not only to those countries where conflicts have already escalated into violence, but – as a preventive measure – to those countries with a high susceptibility to crisis and in post-war situations. The findings of this conflict analysis should be integrated into project planning. The Federal Government can support this mainstreaming process by working with NGOs to develop a set of minimum criteria (*musts*) encouraging good project design for conflict-sensitive poverty reduction initiatives.

6. The Federal Government should provide more resources for conflict-sensitive poverty reduction in future.

Conflict-sensitive poverty reduction requires long-term commitment as well as flexibility and openness in programme planning in order to respond appropriately to new conflict dynamics and parameters. The Federal Government and the BMZ, as the lead ministry, should es-

tablish the overall conditions necessary for this process. Furthermore, conflict experts should be involved in the development of poverty reduction programmes in bi- and multilateral DC. In cooperation with the GTZ's Crisis Prevention Programme, a database of experts working at the interface between poverty reduction and crisis prevention should be established so that there is a pool of expertise to provide advice on programme design and to undertake monitoring and evaluation.

The Federal Government must take account of the critical dialogue with partner governments. In this context, it is important to expand cooperation with civil-society agencies involved in conflict transformation and peace-building, as well as cooperating with state actors. Instruments such as the Federal Foreign Office's budget title for Peace-keeping Operations (FEM) or the BMZ's Civil Peace Service can be deployed for this purpose. In this context, establishing coherence and complementarity should be a priority. Above all, it is important to bear in mind that peace processes should not be initiated first and foremost by external actors, but must come from within the society concerned. Far more resources should be made available to support local initiatives and civil society actors involved in conflict management and peace-building. Programmes and funding criteria which are designed to support civil society actors should be made more flexible and focus to a greater extent on project reality and the relevant need for action.

Local partners, for their part, must be carefully selected to ensure that they are genuinely pursuing peace-building strategies and social transformation, and are not motivated primarily by economic factors. The emergence of artificial NGO sectors which tend to prevent rather than promote change in social structures should also be countered.

7. The Federal Government should give particular support to projects and programmes directed at young people.

Particular importance should be attached to young people as a target group in conflict-sensitive poverty reduction. If neglected by society, young people can develop an extremely destructive potential. A lack of training and employment prospects can result in young people turning to crime or forming a willing pool of recruits for political leaders who have a vested interest in the perpetuation of violent conflict. The Federal Government should work to ensure that this issue is given priority in bilateral and multilateral DC now and in future. The real challenge is to combine targeted opportunities for education and training with peace education and psycho-social measures.

81 See www.eplo.org

8. The Federal Government should ensure that the gender dimension is taken into account in country analyses and programme development to a greater extent.

A sound analysis of the cultural context and the social status of women and men is essential to produce development and poverty reduction policies which are gender-sensitive and geared to crisis prevention. This aspect must be taken into account in country analyses. Appropriate programmes should be deployed to ensure that women's potential for economic development and peace-building is mobilised. The strategies should focus, firstly, on building self-esteem and supporting the articulation of individual interests and political participation. Secondly, women should be included in a targeted way in the planning of reconstruction and institution-building. They should also be treated as a target group for income-generating measures. Developing adequate provision for vocational training and employment is a particular challenge.

However, the gender aspect should not be confined to women's specific contribution to peace-building. Instead, conflict-sensitive poverty reduction approaches and strategies should be highly sensitive to the different realities, gender roles and needs of men and women and seek to overcome traditional gender-role stereotypes (e.g. militarised masculinity) and identity crises. A further challenge is providing services which aim to bring about change without overwhelming the target groups or individuals by taking too little account of the local context (i.e. culture, dominance structures).

9. The Federal Government should support/initiate long-term strategic plans involving international organisations and NGOs.

In light of the entrenched structures in war economies, effective and intelligent packages of measures are required. Different aspects must be taken into account in this context: 1. coordination between actors; 2. coordination of timing and geographical range (e.g. local projects to integrate child soldiers, on the one hand, and large-scale/regional governance initiatives on the other); 3. the involvement of different actors from state, civil society and economy; and 4. the application of different instruments. In order to resolve this challenge, cooperation with other government and non-government organisations is essential. Similarly, the advantages and disadvantages of separating responsibilities and encouraging greater specialisation must be considered. In this context, as well as working with development networks such as VENRO, close cooperation with the groups, organisations and research institutes forming the Platform for Peaceful Conflict Management in Germany and the European Platform for Conflict Prevention and Transformation is recommended.

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The VENRO Project »Perspektive 2015«

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In order to contribute to the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), internationally agreed at the UN Millennium Summit in the autumn of 2000 and supported in Germany by the Federal Government's »Aktionsprogramm 2015« (Program of Action 2015), VENRO launched the project »Perspektive 2015 – Armutsbekämpfung braucht Beteiligung« (Prospects for 2015 – Combating poverty requires participation). This project is chiefly aimed at improving the level of information among the German public regarding the goals of halving poverty and socially and environmentally sustainable development related to 2015. Here, particular emphasis is placed on reporting on current developments at international level (above all the UN, the World Bank and the EU) as well as on initiatives run by the NGOs. Also, the project has set itself the target of urging the objectives that are described in the Federal Government's Action Program – usually only in a general and vague form – to be put into practice and of contributing to conceptual advancement.

The project consists of four components:

1) The *Project Website* »www.2015.venro.org«, which is constantly provided with new texts and up-to-date information in addition to containing the basic aspects of the MDGs.

2) The *Website* »www.prsp-watch.de« compiled in cooperation with the Institute for Development and Peace (INEF), which provides basic information on the compilation and implementation of the Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers/PRSP launched in the context of the 1999 Cologne G7/G8 Summit's debt cancellation initiative. At present, 53 country profiles (from »Äthiopien« to »Zentralafrikanische Republik«; English summaries under preparation) are available that contain the contents of the (preliminary or final) PRSP and civil society's involvement in the PRS process.

3) The *Newsletter* »2015 aktuell«, which appears once a month and provides news on the international debate and NGO activities concerning the MDGs on three to four pages an issue. The newsletter (only in German) can be subscribed to online via the two project websites.

4) The *publication series* »2015 im Gespräch/ 2015 in Dialogue«, which offers a collection of policy and lobbying papers on the various fields of combating poverty. The brochure on hand on Crisis Prevention and Poverty Reduction represents No. 6 of this series. The titles of the publications issued so far are:

- No. 1: »Armut bekämpfen – Gerechtigkeit schaffen. Folgerungen aus der internationalen und nationalen Debatte über Armutsbekämpfung für die deutsche Entwicklungspolitik«
- No. 2: »Development Needs Financing – How Financing for Development Can Contribute to Reaching the 2015 Goals«
- No. 3: »Globale Armut – Europas Verantwortung. Ein Vorschlag zur Reform der EU-Entwicklungszusammenarbeit« (German version of the BOND paper »Tackling Poverty – a proposal for European Union aid reform«)
- No. 4: »PRSP – Prospects and limits of civil society involvement«
- No. 5: »Trade – A driving force in combating poverty? Development perspectives regarding the WTO Doha Round«

These papers can be found on the Website »www.2015.venro.org«.

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