

DO NO HARM AND REFLECTING ON PEACE PRACTICE PROJECTS

DNH and RPP in Kosovo

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This document was developed as part of a collaborative learning project directed by CDA. It is part of a collection of documents that should be considered initial and partial findings of the project. These documents are written to allow for the identification of cross-cutting issues and themes across a range of situations. Each case represents the views and perspectives of a variety of people at the time when it was written.

These documents do not represent a final product of the project. While these documents may be cited, they remain working documents of a collaborative learning effort. Broad generalizations about the project's findings cannot be made from a single case.

CDA would like to acknowledge the generosity of the individuals and agencies involved in donating their time, experience and insights for these reports, and for their willingness to share their experiences.

Not all the documents written for any project have been made public. When people in the area where a report has been done have asked us to protect their anonymity and security, in deference to them and communities involved, we keep those documents private.

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Acronyms

ARC	American Refugee Council
ART	Alliance for Rights and Tolerance
BCPR	Bureau of Conflict Prevention and Recovery
CIDA	Canadian International Development Agency
CRS	Catholic Relief Service
EULEX	European Union Rule of Law Mission in Kosovo
DNH	Do No Harm
ICO	International Civilian Office
INGO	international Non-government organisation
KFOR	Kosovo Force
KPS	Kosovo Police Service
LWF	Lutheran World Federation
MC	Mercy Corps
NGO	Non-governmental organisation
OSCE	Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe
RPP	Reflecting on Peace Practice
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
UNV	United Nations Volunteers
WV	World Vision

INTRODUCTION

This case study reviews two projects of CDA Collaborative Learning Projects (CDA), Do No Harm (DNH) and Reflecting on Peace Practice (RPP), in Kosovo. This case also discusses the RPP study on the effects of peacebuilding in Kosovo. The purpose of this case study is to explore how individuals and organizations use and integrate the DNH, RPP and the RPP study learnings and to understand the successes and challenges that they face in this process. It is written with the intention that it will inform CDA's efforts to continuously improve their processes and products (frameworks, tools, etc.)

The structure of this report reviews each of the topical areas (DNH, RPP, The Study) individually. Each section follows a similar format for ease of reading.

Methodology

This case study was in many ways a classic exercise in qualitative research. Using interviews that followed a loose, semi-structured protocol, the material was gathered and reviewed to respond to the overarching questions laid out in the Terms of Reference. What was slightly out of the ordinary in terms of a CDA case study was the multi-dimensional focus; both in terms of multiple CDA projects coupled with numerous participant agencies.

Recognising that a significant amount of effort had transpired between 2008 and the first introduction of DNH in Kosovo almost a decade earlier, the first initiative was to map or tell the story of significant DNH efforts that had occurred outside of CDA's leadership. The hope was that a reasonably comprehensive story of DNH in Kosovo, in terms of activities to promote it, could be crafted. This would serve as the basis to look at uptake, application and ultimate utility.

To map this story three steps were taken. First, in May and June of 2008 CDA emailed the DNH e-mail distribution list asking for anyone who had provided training on DNH in Kosovo over the past decade to notify the consultant. Despite institutional memory recalling numerous non-CDA led efforts, this call resulted in very few responses (and even fewer responses with substantive information) and certainly did not provide anything close to a comprehensive picture.

Concurrently a document review of the in-house DNH and RPP work reports or products was conducted in an effort to understand what work had taken place by CDA itself in Kosovo. To flesh out the CDA-led work further, the consultant emailed two of the initial DNH staff in an attempt to mine their memories; not only on their activities but also on challenges, lessons and uptake. Unfortunately only one responded and that was several months after the field visit for data collection occurred.

In the spring of 2009 a last effort to reach out to those with historical memory was made via email. This was based on names provided during the in-country data collection of people who Kosovars remembered had done DNH work. Approximately 5 people were emailed with not a single substantive response resulting.

As a result, as will be evident, this case study does not provide a historical account of the efforts taken to build DNH or RPP knowledge and skill in Kosovo; outside of the short brief provided by CDA that summarises their own work on these projects.

The field research took place in July, 2008, consisting of seven working days. To develop the interview list, a brainstorm was held with the DNH and RPP Directors to generate a draft list of agencies and individuals who had been active in the projects. This was supplemented by a mining of training and consultation participant lists from previous DNH and RPP events. As there was limited time on the ground, the two contributions were combined into a list that both DNH and RPP Directors reviewed to indicate the interview priority from high, medium, low.

All of the high priority interviews (that CDA had an active email address) were then emailed prior to the field visit requesting an interview and/or if they would be willing to reply to questions via email. This resulted in almost no response, despite numerous follow-ups. Once on the ground the author primarily used mobile phone numbers to contact priority individuals and request interviews. In the end 18 people agreed to be interviewed or respond to emailed questions. This was predominately INGO K-Albanian staff. There were also two Serb NGOs interviewed along with a few representatives of the international community (e.g. donor).

Throughout the interviews a number of documents such as the UNV orientation manual that included DNH were promised to be sent to the case author. Again, despite numerous email follow-ups no documentation was forwarded. The interviews and emails were reviewed against the guidance questions provided in the ToR resulting in a draft report.

The author was surprised by how difficult it was to find people willing to speak about their engagement with CDA. The vast majority of emails requesting an interview or written responses to 2-4 questions about DNH and RPP were not answered, despite repeated follow-up. Once in-country, interviews were difficult to schedule with people. They indicated that they were not sure if they would be of any use, did not have time or simply did not call back. For those met, the interviews themselves rarely 'flowed' in an easy manner.

There are numerous possible reasons for this, though the author can not point to one as more likely over another:

- Time of Transition: the field research took place a little over 3 months after the declaration of independence which created a sense of uncertainty and instability in Kosovo. Further many NGOs, local and international, were re-evaluating their presence in Kosovo creating a sense of professional insecurity with staff who were trying to secure new positions.
- Time Lag: in the case of DNH particularly, it is possible that people felt that it had been too long since they had engaged with the process and content to speak knowledgeably on the topic.
- Fondness of CDA: it is clear that many are fond of CDA and it is possible they were not comfortable speaking to the author who in Kosovo may be seen as too close to CDA. See Appendix B for a biography of the author.
- Vacation Season: though July and August are traditionally the vacation season in Kosovo, it is possible that we were too close to this period with people trying to tie up loose ends before heading off.

Limitations

As with most research there were a few limitations worth noting. In addition to the difficulty already explained about accessing people who were willing to speak about DNH and RPP, there was limited field time for data collection (7 days). In an effort to look across the 'main' agencies

that had been involved, the timeframe meant that inquiry into an agency such as CARE or Mercy Corps was limited to a single interview each. As such it is difficult to tell the story of an agency and its involvement with one or the other project based on one representative's knowledge.

Further many of the same people were involved in DNH or RPP and in some cases the study as well. This meant a traditional hour long interview had to be broken into thirds to cover all three projects. Finally, none of the original international staff who were key champions in promoting DNH are still in Kosovo and as such their experiences are omitted from this report.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF KOSOVO

1999 Conflict & NATO

The conflict started in 1998 between the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA) and the Yugoslavian/Serb military and was the last in the Yugoslav Wars. As it escalated, the West became increasingly concerned that the instability could move beyond Kosovo's borders. This concern, coupled with a sense that the international community did not have a successful track record in diverting crisis and needed to redeem itself resulted in the NATO intervention of March 24, 1999.

Lasting approximately 3 months, the bombing combined with continued skirmishes between Albanian guerrillas and Yugoslav forces resulted in a massive displacement of population in Kosovo. As UNHCR describes it, "The 1999 Kosovo crisis produced possibly the fastest mass exodus and rapid return of refugees in modern history as an estimated 860,000 ethnic Albanian Kosovars fled or were deported to neighbouring states within weeks and then returned just as quickly later in the year. It was also one of the most complex operations in UNHCR's experience, with humanitarian considerations inextricably linked with global military and political developments, and the first exodus-return of ethnic Albanians followed by a second massive flight of 230,000 Serbs and Roma as the fortunes of war changed dramatically."¹ Further, the crisis saw NATO troop involvement at an unprecedented level.

Post Conflict Set-Up

With the end of the NATO intervention, the territory came under the interim administration of the United Nations, officially known as the United Nations Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK). Based on Security Council Resolution 1244 (June 10, 1999), effectively a governing charter for Kosovo, it states the purpose of UNMIK is to provide transitional administration for the people of Kosovo and oversee the development of provisional democratic and self-governing institutions to ensure conditions for a peaceful and normal life for all inhabitants of Kosovo.² Although the Resolution clearly laid out many aspects of this administration, it side stepped the most important and most politically sensitive issue of future status of Kosovo.

UNMIK was initially made up of 4 pillars of civilian activity all reporting to the SRSG. Pillar one dealt with humanitarian affairs and was taken on by UNHCR which was led by a DSRSG. This was an extremely challenging task. In addition to the mass influence of NGOs, and the lack of functioning infrastructure, the scale of the humanitarian crisis was unprecedented, especially in

¹ UNHCR Balkans Website: <http://www.unhcr.org/cgi-bin/texis/vtx/balkans-country?country=kosovo&display=background>

² O'Neill, William, Kosovo An Unfinished Peace, IPA, Occasional Paper Series, 2002

Europe. In addition to the UN, NATO remained in Kosovo with an initial presence of 40,000 troops, under the name Kosovo Force (KFOR).

Current Situation

Since the peak of violence in 1999, the situation in Kosovo has steadily improved with inter-ethnic violence generally declining. Except in the instance of the March 2004 riots, the area has not been a violent environment. One interpretation of the impetus of the riots was that they were largely initiated due to the frustration K-Albanians felt with their uncertain future and a UN that did not seem to be moving rapidly to rectify that uncertainty.



As a result, after many failed negotiations between the two sides, the Ahtisaari Plan was developed to lay out a roadmap for the future. “It includes detailed measures to ensure the promotion and protection of the rights of communities and their members, the effective decentralization of government, and the preservation and protection of cultural and religious heritage. In addition, the Settlement prescribes constitutional, economic and security provisions, all of which are aimed at contributing to the development of a multi-ethnic, democratic and prosperous Kosovo.”³ Unfortunately the UN Security Council was not able to ratify the Ahtisaari Plan, though many in the international community are using it as a roadmap of sorts.

While the international community negotiated and hedged on the status of Kosovo, the Provisional Institutions of Self-Government, an assembly under UNMIK, declared Kosovo's independence as the Republic of Kosovo on February 17th, 2008. Its independence is recognized by some countries and opposed by others, including the Republic of Serbia, which continues to claim sovereignty over it as the Autonomous Province of Kosovo and Metohija.

³ UN Office for the Special Envoy to Kosovo. Executive Summary. Found at: <http://www.unosek.org/docref/020707EXECUTIVE%20SUMMARY-F.doc>

As of summer 2008, KFOR had 16,000 troops located in Kosovo from 36 nations from both NATO and non-NATO partners. Though KFOR is intended to stay, UNMIK⁴ has handed over responsibility to the EU through the ICO and EULEX in alignment with the de facto accepted Ahtisaari Plan.

Do No Harm in Kosovo

The Do No Harm Project began working in Kosovo in 1998, during its implementation phase. Two trips were made before the war, focusing on CRS, CARE and Mercy Corps. After the war, DNH began broader and more intensive engagement with humanitarian and development organizations in Kosovo, starting with workshops facilitated by Stephen Jackson and continuing with advice and a series of workshops by Greg Hansen with the Minorities Alliance Working Group (MAWG, the predecessor, we believe to the NRCG). The main agencies CDA worked with over this time period were Mercy Corps, CARE, CRS and World Vision, although a number of additional agencies participated in the workshops. Greg Hansen also worked with US KFOR. In 2005, when Marshall Wallace came to brief the researchers for the Kosovo study, *Has Peacebuilding Made a Difference?* another DNH workshop was given after a few years hiatus. A timeline of DNH involvement in Kosovo is attached.⁵

Reflecting on Peace Practice in Kosovo⁶

Kosovo was one of three geographical areas in which RPP focused to “field test” the findings of *Confronting War* in order to identify gaps in the findings and generate new learning from experiences of agencies working with the concepts. RPP conducted six workshops from May 2004 to June 2007. The first introductory workshop introduced a number of the findings of RPP (matrix, conflict analysis, criteria of effectiveness). The focus shifted to conflict analysis in response to the interests of the participants, and in 2006 and 2007 back to strategy and using the matrix and identifying theories of change.

The main agencies participating consistently were: Mercy Corps, CRS, Forum Civil Peace Service (and Caritas, where the expat from Forum went), World Vision. After the December 2004 workshop, the participants made a presentation to a group of donors, and CDA was asked by Prizren-based organizations Forum Civil Peace Service and Pax Christi to do a workshop for their partners. The following year (2006), CDA did a brief (half-day) presentation for USAID. Over the course of the workshops, there was some staff turnover and some shifting of participants.

RPP also worked with CRS separately, conducting an introductory workshop for staff of three projects in the Balkans (one cross-border reconciliation project, Mitrovica, and Prizren returns dialogue) in February 2004, and worked with the project staff separately again the following year.

⁴ It should be noted however that until the UNSC declares SC Resolution 1244 null and void UNMIK is technically still the highest authority in Kosovo.

⁵ This description is drawn verbatim from the Terms of Reference for this assignment.

⁶ This section is largely drawn from the Terms of Reference for this assignment.

Has Peacebuilding Made a Difference in Kosovo?

Over 2005-2006, the RPP workshops for NGOs were limited, as CDA's focus moved to organizing and conducting this study. CDA was invited by CARE International UK to lead this research and funded by the Foreign and Commonwealth Office of the UK. The study adhered to the CDA collaborative learning methodology and consisted of a set of case studies examining different communities and the effects of peacebuilding work. Workshops were organized in connection with the study, both as it was being organized to orient the research, while the cases were being written as part of a participatory analysis, and at the end to present the conclusions.

FINDINGS

This section reviews the findings on the utilisation, challenges and success of each of the three projects in Kosovo.

DO NO HARM (DNH)

Introduction to Concepts

There were three primary ways that the 10 interviewees were introduced to DNH; training, reading the book and exposure to other staff who had been trained.

In terms of training, three were first exposed to DNH through their new hire induction process. World Vision (WV), American Refugee Council (ARC)⁷ and United Nations Volunteers (UNV) in Kosovo have included DNH in their official orientation for new staff. For the UNV this is a two paragraph summary in their orientation manual⁸ which is given to all national and international volunteers. The volunteers are expected to read the manual prior to arrival and are then briefed on its main points; including DNH. Approaching this inclusion from a more comprehensive perspective, the ARC included the Alliance Good Practice manual (described further below) in the orientation kit for all new staff.

In the early days, many agencies hosted specific DNH trainings for their staff outside of staff orientations, such as ARC, CARE, ADRA and World Vision. World Vision, for instance, trained all of their staff, regardless of the sector, of approximately 400 people. There were four people involved in this process who identified themselves as having attended those trainings.

Finally, some were exposed to the concept of DNH from colleagues, but never went on to become further informed about the tool. The leadership team at Lutheran World Federation, who have been with LWF since 1999, stated that they had picked up the idea from former colleagues, but were not aware that an actual tool existed. Three interviewees noted that through this type of exposure they became intrigued by the idea and went on to read the book on their own volition. "DNH wasn't a formal activity. I came across the book and made a copy and read it."

It appears that some of the aforementioned initiatives occurred while another NGO collaborative initiative was also taking place. One cannot untangle if the inclusion in

⁷ Note ARC is no longer operational in Kosovo.

⁸ The UNV Coordinator was to forward the relevant paragraphs, but never responded to repeated follow-ups.

orientations, for instance, led to this process or vice versa, but it would appear clear that they were mutually reinforcing phenomena. In 1999/2000 several NGOs decided to create a body to link with minority communities after several ethnically motivated attacks had taken place. After working together in an ad-hoc fashion they realized that there would be value in creating a more formalized structure. The Minority Alliance Working Group (later called the Alliance for Rights and Tolerance ART) resulted with approximately 40 organizations as members including SAVE, CIDA, MC, WV.

One of the first initiatives taken by the group was to develop best practices and a code of conduct. They then determined that they had a common concern around doing no harm. It was explained that it, “was the right context—post-conflict, but with still a lot of problems and a lot of food aid and general assistance.” Greg Hansen, one of the initial DNH-trained staff in Kosovo, had already paid a visit to Kosovo as part of the development of a case study. Through this process he had visited a number of the big NGOs. Based on this prior contact, ACT reached out to Greg and requested some DNH training.

To implement these trainings, ACT aligned themselves with the administrative division of Kosovo into 5 Areas of Responsibility (AOR) and appointed one NGO to be in charge of the training logistics for each area. Greg conducted a two-day DNH training in each of the AORs while also identifying potential trainers within each region as part of the commitment to build local DNH capacity. Originally the hope was to have a Kosovo-wide workshop after the training in the 5 AORs to bring donors and NGOs together to discuss DNH and how it applied to programming in Kosovo. However, ACT was unable to secure participation from “influential people [donors] to participate” so no central workshop was held. At the end of the trainings, all members of ACT “committed to integrate DNH in all of the projects.”

After the trainings, ACT went on to develop a DNH in Kosovo manual. As of the summer of 2008, no one was utilizing the manual with many indicating that they had never heard of it, such as LWF. It should be noted that these people were mostly K-Albanians who would have been staff in these agencies during the time this manual was produced and circulated by ACT.

One group that we had been hoping would be familiar with the tool from direct DNH engagement in the late nineties was KFOR. However the 2007/8 USKFOR civil military officer, as well as her replacement, had never heard of a tool or checklist. The response by the current officer was informative, “You see a lot of these things over the years, but it’s better to stick with the basics and what you already know.” [Email Correspondence] The leadership at Norwegian Church Aid was also not familiar with DNH, nor were staff at UNDP. Though they did not know DNH, interestingly, UNDP Kosovo had recently started to engage in conflict sensitivity, as depicted in the story below

Use of DNH Concepts

Most interviewees, in response to my request to articulate the essence of DNH, elected to not directly respond to the question. For those who did, their responses are interesting and are included here.

- “support one without harming the other”
- “to not separate the different ethnic groups”
- “a tool for those places where there is more than one group”

UNDP was involved in building a football pitch in Mitrovica North in late 2007. After the first week of it being open for play, a Serb flag was placed to fly over the pitch. This resulted in fights breaking out over the 'right' for this flag to fly. By the third week the pitch was destroyed by the outraged communities on both sides.

After several such UNDP community-level interventions resulting in harm, in the spring of 2008 a mid-level person within UNDP decided to create a focal point for conflict sensitivity within UNDP Kosovo. This aligned with priorities at UNDP Global, which was promoting conflict sensitivity through online discussion forums; though country office engagement was voluntary. The position was given to a recently arrived international UNV who had no experience or education in conflict sensitivity or peacebuilding and had never worked in a development, conflict or post-conflict environment, but was enthusiastic about the role.

The internet was used to source resources as they "tried to get support from BCPR but can't get anyone to call [us] back." The resource that had the most influence on the process was the International Alert-Saferworld handbook, which was used as the core resource for the resulting approach and work. This included bringing in Saferworld to do some brief optional training with national UNDP staff; which had a good turn out, but upon reflection (through this interview) realised that only one K-Serb had attended. The focal point also offered to assist project officers on reviewing their proposals from a conflict sensitive perspective. After about a year in this post, the focal point had never heard of Do No Harm.

Representatives of seven agencies⁹ indicated that DNH was used in their programming. The way in which it is used is remarkably similar across the organisations. It is seen to be a mindset that forms the basis of discussion amongst colleagues primarily when developing new programming. People said:

- "We have the DNH idea in our head."
- "We use it in our thinking."
- "We used it in general discussion, it influenced how we discussed the project."
- "It is applied in terms of a framework for thinking about projects."
- "The tool is applied individually; you understand the concept and co-ordinate the action with the concept in mind."

A few also referenced using the concept throughout programming. For instance, one stated, "when we face a crisis in program implementation... such as political status negotiations, we use DNH to assess how far we can go and how we can protect our impartiality." Two agencies [WV, LWF] reported discussing the concept, though not in a formal training or with the label, with their participants. WV also trained the Council for Peace and Tolerance in Mitrovica, which they had supported in establishing, formally in DNH.¹⁰

It seems that DNH establishes a certain 'consciousness' or perspective for aid workers. This appeared to be particularly strong amongst some national staff. As one person noted, "In myself, a huge change resulted. I reflected during the training about blaming people..." Another commented that he has, "seen people really think about it. After you attend a training

⁹ The 7 agencies are: UNV, CARE, WV, MC, LWF, ARC and a local NGO.

¹⁰ Despite much effort, no one could provide a current contact name or telephone number so that the Council could be interviewed.

on it, it is really difficult to go and do something harmful again, as you know it. You have a different consciousness.”

This consciousness does not seem to require the explicit use of the framework or tool. Not one interviewee could recall formally utilising the DNH tool in their discussions with their team. As one person noted, “Our project used it but not with the framework and a flipchart.”

Several agencies provided specific examples of instances when they had used DNH.

CARE

- In 2002 the European Agency for Reconstruction started a Minority Stabilization Program which had micro-grants for Serbs and ethnic minorities only. Though CARE needed the money, they elected to not apply for the funding as they felt they could not operate within the restrictions.
- A donor put out two calls for proposals to empower minorities. One was for Serbs only and the other one was for Roma, Ashkali and Egyptians (RAE). CARE applied for the RAE proposal only and integrated other communities into their programming. They now have income generating activities for K-Albanian and K-Serb businesses as part of the work.
- In 2004 CARE was building houses as part of its return projects. In one village, a council was created of K-Albanian and K-Serbs to direct the work. There were 29 returnees and the council agreed to also build houses for 4 K-Albanian families. Though this was not, “super great, it was better than none” and the families were in consensus with the approach.

World Vision

- In 2002, WV was building a school in a location that had Albanian, Roma and Serb communities. The WV staff discussed the project with representatives from all three communities and decided to locate the school in a place where the three communities connected. In the end, however no Serb kids attended the school because “Belgrade ordered that they shouldn’t go to that school. So now we have Roma, Ashkali and Albanian kids in the school.”

ARC

- In 2000 ARC started writing concept papers on minority integration and as a result in 2001 they started enacting a balancing component to their work.

LWF

- The team was experiencing trouble from men who were upset with the programming LWF was doing for women, such as opening women’s centers. So they started establishing direct contact with men to discuss their opinions on the women center. They managed to ease the men’s concerns resulting in them being able to “organize the women without starting problems with the men.” This work has continued with LWF effort to include women directly in agricultural projects. In their communities some women now own greenhouses and are not bothered by the men.

Interestingly, in response to request for examples of use, some agencies responded that they are no longer using it because it is not the ‘right time’ for DNH. As one interviewee explained,

the approach has become associated to a particular time; it is a tool to use in emergencies. “We are in development here so it is perceived to not be right for us.”

Despite these examples of use, there were also examples given of doing unintentional harm. For instance, during the emergency phase in Kosovo, organisations were implicitly in competition with each other to do more, faster and get more money. So when an organisation’s truck went to a village full of food or building supplies and the villagers offered to help unload it was accepted. In return, to show appreciation those who helped would get a bit extra – one kilogram of flour for instance. According to this individual, this practice has resulted in the erosion of volunteerism and self-support in the villages. Now when agencies show-up villagers inquire about what they will receive in return for their participation.

Challenges and Difficulties of Use

There were no challenges to the use of DNH that respondents commonly identified. This should not be very surprising considering DNH is being used as a general lens rather than a specific tool. In fact, a couple stressed how simple the concept was to grasp. For instance:

- “I understood it quite quickly. It is an easy idea.”
- “It is a great tool, but it is simple.”

That said, individuals did note a few issues that they had faced. Representatives from ARC and WV reflected on the challenge of having such a small minority population to work with. They felt that their agencies sometimes went too far in helping such a small number of people/community, creating a sense among the K-Albanian families that there was favouritism towards the K-Serb community.

Another issue that was raised was the challenge of applying DNH when there are two governments (Belgrade and UNMIK) with different policies, neither of which supported interaction between K-Albanians and K-Serbs. As this person described, “The government was not clear and UNMIK wanted the status quo to continue and they were not supporting integration of minorities. The UN actually fostered ethnic separation between Albanians and Serbs... For instance, we tried to work with Serb communities but the Belgrade government was playing with the people and so they wouldn’t participate.”

Finally, CARE reflected on the challenge of implementation, but from the perspective of “the tension between the different frameworks or tools,” by which they meant DNH and RPP. The following example illustrates their sense of this tension:

“If you look at the parallel structures, do you work with them or not? What is the harm you create if you work with them? In a peacebuilding process we know we need to talk to key people, but in DNH we know that if you deal with them you strengthen them further and weaken those affected. Parallel structures own the local communities and we don’t want to weaken them. If you don’t work with the parallel structures they are going to suffer more, so which one is less bad? This is tricky. They [parallel structures] provide health, education services etc but if you work with them you raise the tensions with the other communities who have built up a public system. Which one is the right one, but here is no right answer, we have to look at which is the least worst solution.”

CARE also noted that they are seeing people saying that they are doing peacebuilding when they implement a DNH approach to development.

The final two challenges raised dealt less with DNH content and more with operational issues. One person commented that they had been involved in the early days of DNH and found that it took far too long to get any feedback from the process that they had been involved with. They noted, “The longer it takes to get the feedback from the thing I participated in then the less I pay attention to it.”

The other challenge came out of an informal conversation about the apparent contradiction between the amount of training some agencies have had and the continuing requests for training from CDA. This individual connected this issue to the lack of functioning knowledge management systems within the average NGO. “We go to CDA because we don’t document this stuff properly. We have no knowledge management system or person in the organisation, so it is hard to know who internally to contact. It is easier to get CDA to train than to find someone [in-house] who is already busy with their own work.”

Organisation Support to Using Concepts

Only the respondent from CARE could comment on the support that was received by CDA in implementing DNH. However it was acknowledged that this was likely not a comprehensive review due to possible gaps in their memory and because it was not their job at the time. CARE was informally in touch with CDA’s consultant during the early years of DNH in Kosovo. The respondent described it as “being quite informal. We were not sitting on the phone for 30 minutes in a coaching session. Mostly touching base.” While UNV and Mercy Corps stated that to their knowledge they did not believe they had ever received support from CDA.

In terms of support from within the agencies on the utilisation of DNH, again the respondents were fairly ill-prepared to comment; stating they did not know or were not directly involved to be able to speak to this. The exception being ARC and WV who clearly pinpointed an internal champion of the concept:

- “Shannon was the engine of DNH”
- “Rudy was keen...really enjoyed the training so he pushed it internally.”

A possibly telling turn-of-phrase was also used to describe one of the trainers, “all ARC staff were trained by a DNH activist”.

These champions appear to be critical for the initial focus, however their departure has been a large blow to the emphasis on DNH. As the former staff person of ARC described, “The main people left, like Shannon, and there was not enough institutionalisation of the concepts; there was no champion left.”

Reflective Lessons and Advice

Several ideas were offered as advice to DNH, all of which dealt with the process of DNH “uptake” and none with the content. Here again, this is not surprising given that staff are not using the tool, but rather the general idea. How can the general idea – Do No Harm – be improved?

The ideas given:

- A representative from ARC, one of the agencies that spent much effort training their staff, felt that having an in-house mechanism to follow up to check to see if projects were following the DNH approach or not would have been useful. Further in order to maintain the emphasis after its champion had left the country, the concepts needed to be institutionalized. This could be done by adopting relevant policies or integrating DNH into project development templates, for instance.
- Two interviewees felt that having a DNH certification program for aid workers would be helpful. This way it would be viewed as an official qualification of a professional worker.
- Two respondents felt that the targeting of the DNH 'roll-out' process should have included more national agencies such as the local government. "Target the national institutions and agencies so that the tool is understood and expected to be used [by the NGO community]." The government has been responsible for implementing a number of community projects and according to these respondents they have done harm.
- One individual suggested that it would be easy to 'require' in the field offices if the headquarters were more conversant in the tool. They suggested targeting the high level annual meetings that many INGOs have where all regional or country directors come together, such as the Mercy Corps Country Director Leadership Forum.
- Several ideas were given in terms of the training, these include:
 - Creating 30-60 minute online modules so that people could get the training on their own time.
 - Provide a variety of different case studies from different regions, so that trainers can pick a context that best meets the context in which they are training. These could be included as annexes.
 - Offer a list of trainer consultants on the DNH website.

REFLECTING ON PEACE PRACTICE (RPP)

Introduction to Concepts

As the Reflecting on Peace Practice project was operating in Kosovo in a far more recent timeframe most of those who accepted to be interviewed were introduced to the content through the RPP trainings and consultations that made up the second phase of the RPP process.

It should be noted, that the leadership team of LWF and the leadership of Mercy Corps stated that they were not familiar with RPP. In the case of Mercy Corps, the Country Director indicated that she had heard of it only upon coming to Kosovo in March 2007 and not prior during her time in MC Headquarters. She indicated that though she heard of it in discussions she had not been trained and has not seen the material herself.

Use of Concepts

Several participants in the RPP process in Kosovo – CRS, CARE, CCSD, Forum ZFD, Pax Christie - noted that they use two of the RPP tools; the matrix and the Kosovo conflict analysis. LWF and

World Vision on the other hand indicated that they have not used any of the RPP tools in their work.

The matrix is reported to be used by more agencies and more often than the conflict analysis. It is used to both analyze and plan as well as in an evaluative fashion; though the former is the more dominant use. As the Forum ZFD staff person noted, “when you use this matrix, you can do it at the beginning when you are planning the project. You can analyze which level you want to intervene in society and you can use it later when you are at a mid-evaluation.” It should be noted, that many people could give examples of the use of the matrix to analyze and-or plan, but no specific examples of how they used it in an evaluative fashion were forthcoming.

They went on to provide an example where Forum ZFD utilised the matrix. In 2005 they assisted local ngos working on peace to establish a network. “We used the matrix because we wanted to analyze where the gaps are in Kosovo. We did a master one for all of them. This showed very clearly, having key people is very much needed. Most organisations were dealing with more and quantity but sometimes quality matters.”

A former staff person from Pax Christie also recalled using the matrix in 2006 “when we were planning our future activities. At the time our focus was on the grassroots and changes at the individual level, but this was really not enough and we needed to reach those people who were important for these changes to occur such as the President of the Municipality and key people to support our aims to change. Now we are more focused on key driving factors in Prizren. Our work is with the courts, KPS but we don’t forget about the grassroots. So with the matrix we added key factors in Prizren regional level.”

Finally, CRS relayed a story of using the matrix to assist in the development of a Swiss foreign ministry funded project on building a school principal coalition in Mitrovica. They tried to identify those principals who are key and involve them. CRS felt that this project was particularly noteworthy as “even after Feb 17th, we were able to work with them to prevent secondary school kids going into the streets. There were no breaks given for protests. This is our big achievement.”

It appears that the notion of engagement with key people struck a cord for many of those working on peacebuilding in Kosovo. As a representative of CARE noted, “I like the notion of key people and how we as NGOs fail to deal with key people because we fear that [by working with] key people we compromise on our vision and mission. This is not necessarily true though.” Forum ZFD made similar assertions, adding that “it is simple, not confusing.”

Conflict analysis was also noted as something that participants in the RPP process took away, though not the tool itself. Rather they used the systems map derived from analysis of Kosovo completed in the multi-agency workshop led by the RPP Co-Directors. Forum ZFD gives the systems map to interested parties coming to Kosovo. For instance, “we have regular visits from German interns and students and we give it to them. The map shows how complex and difficult the situation is in Kosovo. I probably have given it to 20-30 people. It is a great thing to start the conversation in Kosovo.” While CRS noted that they directly refer to this analysis and use it as a basis for discussions.

CRS explained that they do not use the method of analysis themselves because “our staff are not trained enough.” It appears that they feel they understand the underpinning concepts enough to read the map and explain it, but do not feel that they know ‘how-to’ conduct an analysis using systems thinking on their own. This may be exacerbated by the fact that CRS notes that they have not integrated the various tools into their work on a regular or systemic basis. “We don’t regularly sit and reflect on what happened, in the last year for instance. Because (pause) maybe there is (pause) I don’t know, we don’t make it part of the plan and maybe because CDA was doing something every quarter with us and some of our partners and then we would attend. When we did conflict analysis with Peter and Diana and we would see this is where we are and we are okay and just continue. There was not really a need or demand to sit down ourselves.”

In addition, CRS notes that they have not trained their partners in the matrix for the same reason. Though they feel confident using it themselves, they do not feel they have the expertise to train others in the ideas. In terms of disseminating the RPP tools beyond those immediately involved in the RPP process, it appears that there has been some efforts. Forum ZFD used the matrix with their network (as referenced above) where they noted that only 2 of the partners had seen it before; Nansen Dialogue and Community Building Mitrovica. The former Pax Christie staff also commented on using the RPP analysis and matrix with local partners who were new to the idea. He noted, “in terms of the mapping and conflict analysis everyone has it, but the matrix was...” new. By this he did not mean that they have the RPP Kosovo analysis map specifically, but the inclination and skill-set to do an analysis.

In terms of tools not used, only the chart which required staff to give points to how much their project had contributed to a goal was explicitly stated as confusing and only by one agency. Otherwise, it was only CRS who explicitly noted that they do not use all of RPP. They stated, “we don’t install the entire RPP in the project, just parts of it, where we think it is a good fit for what we are going to do.”

Challenges and Difficulties of Use

About half of those involved in the RPP process commented that they found RPP too complicated and not practical enough. As one World Vision staff person noted, “it was too philosophical and it needed to be more practical and on the ground.” Another person reflecting on the analysis stated, “it is too complicated and difficult. There are too many players and too many links.” They went on to say their biggest challenge was “finding the way to make it work in practice.” While CRS noted that “organisations need to understand more about how they can apply it; it needs a step forward.”

Forum ZFD noted that they found the notion of ‘key’ in the matrix a bit of a struggle; particularly when one is referring to different levels of analysis. For instance, “someone in a specific area could be key, but not if you are looking at a higher level.”

Moving from a content focus to a process focus, Mercy Corps indicated that one indicator of the chances of potential uptake is likely “how broadly it [RPP] is known in the organisation.” As described earlier the Mercy Corps Country Director had not heard of RPP until coming to Kosovo and not surprisingly could not give any examples of utilisation of RPP tools within her agency.

The donor dimension came up in relation to challenges of implementation as well. With one INGO staff person indicating that they have some flexibility to select what types of projects they work on, while local NGOs do not have this freedom as they are totally donor reliant. As such it is difficult for them to take up these tools which could point them in a different direction than the donor agenda as ultimately they must align to this agenda.

Finally, about a third of those who participated directly in the process commented on their frustration with the quality of staff that other agencies had sent to the RPP session. For at least one agency this resulted in a decrease in commitment to the process that exhibited itself through the decrease in incentive to make time to attend RPP meetings.

Organisation Support to Using Concepts & Advice

Respondents reacted with energy to the question soliciting their thoughts on the RPP process over the past few years and ways to improve it. The feedback was consistent: CDA always provides value in their trainings and it could be improved by being a more systematic and real-time process. Most made their suggestions with the caveat that they may not be fully informed of everything that had been done by RPP.

Recommendations and comments on the RPP process included:

- The most commonly offered feedback was for RPP to do more follow-up between meetings/ trainings with organizations. It was felt that too much time was allowed to elapse between trainings and there was not a real connection between the different training/meetings.
- In a related vein, many suggested that CDA offer more on-the-ground support so that RPP can provide input to agency work when it fits into the agency work schedule. There is a sense that RPP comes to Kosovo on 'their schedule' rather than on one that works for the agencies. It was suggested that longer-visits would provide more real-time support as would having expertise available in the region. Several people commented on their support for a Training of Trainers in the region, which they understood RPP was planning.
- Provide an overview of what engagement with the RPP process will include from the start of the process, so that agencies are clear what they are getting into and can "plan to make a more serious commitment" to the process. There was a sense that they had not understood that they were part of a coherent process and they want to be.
- Differing views were made on the number of organizations involved in the RPP meetings and trainings with a few saying there are too many organizations involved and others commenting on the benefit of multiple agency perspective. Where there was more consensus was the need for agencies to increase their commitment if they elect to participate.
- Offer more concrete examples from different regions to illustrate the practical application of the RPP concepts. Two who attended DNH and RPP training noted that one thing that they felt DNH did far better was to offer concrete and real-life examples.

One representative summed up many of the aforementioned recommendations by explaining, “take each organization, sign a MOU with the NGO so they are bound with something to participate in the workshop and they contribute with a specific project. That would be the focus and then track [by RPP] after each session to try to help and look at how it [RPP concepts] is applied. NGOs don’t understand the entire RPP process. If they took a project through the entire process and tried to change as much as they can and then provide the feedback to the organizations and that would be key.”

CRS made a few additional comments relevant to their organization-support agreement that they have with CDA on RPP. They felt that there could be greater interaction between the organizations. “It would help if we shared [our work] more with CDA and if CDA gave more input and ideas. There are things that we might not think about and CDA could propose how they could give support on the ground. This way we would know how we could use CDA and we could better plan our budget.”

Only one person had an innovation of a RPP tool to offer. This person makes a slight modification to the shape of the matrix; enlarging the key people column and shrinking the more people column to reflect their consideration that the key people column has a higher priority.

THE STUDY: HAS PEACEBUILDING MADE A DIFFERENCE IN KOSOVO?

Knowledge & Impressions

Ten case study participants commented on the RPP Peacebuilding study; six of which due to their direct participation in the process, such as attending one of the consultations. The other four are employed by organisations that were involved in the Peacebuilding study in some way, for instance, a staff member in the British embassy who arrived after the report was published.

Though it was not directly asked, a number of people elected to make statements regarding the quality of the study. The comments were often quite general and also quite positive:

- “good book”
- “good information to push thinking”
- “we appreciated the study”

Further a few interviewees made explicit note of the importance of documenting what had happened in Kosovo.

That said, three case study participants working in agencies that have been active with CDA across its various projects in Kosovo stated they were not familiar with the Peacebuilding study at all. Further, it was specifically noted that due to turn over staff within DFID are generally not familiar with the document and its findings.

Use of Concepts

Perspectives varied quite starkly on whether the study is a common reference point in the peacebuilding community in Kosovo. This was an inquiry of interest for two reasons: first to determine how well known the report was within the target community and secondly to gain a sense of whether the findings were used as a factor in relevant discussions.

A minority indicated that they do not hear the study referenced in relevant discussions on peacebuilding. This was further confirmed by one study participant reflecting on how he brought the study to a network of local NGOs working on peacebuilding meeting and that none of the attendees were familiar with it.

Conversely a small majority stated that they do hear the study referenced, with CARE stating, “it is mentioned all the time.” The latter raises a chicken and the egg debate, however, as do people reference it because CARE is in the room and the study is very much associated with CARE or would they raise it anyway? Considering the other responses, it would appear that amongst a small community of mostly iNGOs the study is on the conceptual radar. According to CARE, they have distributed approximately 600 copies and 30-40 have been purchased at the local bookstore.

For those that have it on their conceptual radar, there seems to be four ways that the study is being utilised:

1. *Background reading on peacebuilding in Kosovo:* Frequently mentioned was the use of the study as a form of ‘background briefing’ to newcomers and interested parties. For instance, one participant in the case study recalled that when they arrived to work in the British embassy they were given the study as “one of the first things to read as a background document on what has and hasn’t been successful in Kosovo in terms of conflict prevention measures.”
2. *Proposal justification:* Some actors noted that they used the study to support their proposed interventions in proposals to donors. This was supported by the USAID conversation who noted the same iNGOs referencing the study in their USAID proposals.
3. *Informed thinking:* NGO staff noted that the study affected their thinking in a variety of ways, from providing some impetus to think more about why the riots occurred to confirming the course of action/direction that they were already on. For instance, one man stated, it made me think “why did Prizren explode, but I do not have an answer yet.” With follow-up questioning, most of these interviewees indicated it had not changed their actions in anyway hence the distinction with the fourth means of use.
4. *Changes in action:* Four significant agencies were able to directly explain how the study catalyzed changes in their programming and policies; CARE, Mercy Corps, British Embassy in Kosovo and CRS.

CARE

In response to the question as to whether or not the study impacted CARE’s programming, the senior leadership responded with an emphatic, ‘yes’ accompanied with an expressive expelling of air and eye roll for emphasis. In fact, the process of change was still on-going as of late summer 2008. In their own words, as a response to the study CARE has:

“designed a learning project financed by CARE UK... The project looks at incorporating the changes in the agency and it starts with conflict sensitivity within CARE and our partner organizations. Then we designed interventions to address the gaps in terms of conflict sensitivity as well as designing indicators for conflict sensitivity. After this we had a conflict transformation workshop which looked at conflict transformation models and how they could be incorporated into CARE

Kosovo and partner organizations. ...the last one was strategic peacebuilding. Vaso [also] did a lessons learned workshop to document the entire process."

In the fall of 2008 CARE intended to follow up with an external evaluation of the learning project to see how effective they were in adopting the changes.

In terms of their choice to prioritize conflict sensitivity, CARE indicated that after reviewing the study's findings and recommendations they felt that many they were not able to "do anything about. We wanted to start somewhere where it was easy to respond, and we felt that the immediate and urgent need was the conflict sensitivity. This was the key. If you want to do peacebuilding and reconciliation then you have to be conflict sensitive to start."

Finally, the study seems to have real resonance with the CARE Georgia office. Not only was it sent to this office and read and considered. It has been included as a point of reference for the CARE Georgia conflict analysis process which is on-going as of February-March 2009.

Mercy Corps (MC)

The changes the study affected in Mercy Corps are at a different level than CARE, but still represent substantive shifts in programming. To start it was indicated that the study provided more clarity as to "some areas that we [Mercy Corps] needed to move in..." Further even in the late summer of 2008 a proposal MC had recently developed for USAID on leadership issues had at the heart of it "the need to talk about the difficult issues from the study."¹¹

Catholic Relief Service (CRS)

The fourth agency, CRS, also indicated that they had changed their programming due to the study. They stated that "it provided better ideas for us and we tried not to repeat the things that are criticized in the study." Their description as to the elements of the study that most influenced them, however, does raise some possible questions as to the depth or nuance of CRS's understanding of the findings.

"When we talk about the involvement of women in peace processes we refer to [the study]. Concrete examples of how women are more tolerant than men and how they can help in peace processes. [Also] many times, when there is economic development, there is a step forward in the peace process. The study also talked about how business linked people though they may not like each other they will work together. It is a good connector so we are looking into doing more there."

On the issue of women and their role in peacebuilding, the Executive Summary states, under the heading, *Missing the mark? Programmes did not engage many key people and areas* "a significant proportion of programmes identified in this study focused on women, youth and returnees and their receiving communities. This is partly because women and youth are considered natural bridge-builders or focused on the future. Yet youth and women's programming did not support their potential to become key positive forces for peacebuilding in a hostile and polarized environment. There was also little focus on the hard to reach." (Has Peacebuilding Made a Difference in Kosovo, Page xi)

¹¹ The author requested to see the proposal so as to identify exactly how the study findings were utilized, but was declined access to it.

While the finding on economic development was found under the header, *Missing the Mark? Failure to transform individual ties into networks of civic engagement*. The study states, “peacebuilding through economic cooperation tended also to mirror existing, implicit “rules of the game” for inter-ethnic interaction amongst K-Albanians and K-Serbs, which permitted interaction for economic, but not social or political purposes.” (Has Peacebuilding Made a Difference in Kosovo, Page x) It was

Concepts Not Used

While the aforementioned four agencies clearly were engaged in the material of the study, some important institutions, such as USAID, indicated that they had not utilized the study findings or recommendations. For instance, one senior person within the OSCE who had been involved in the study process stated, “the OSCE has not used it in any way whatsoever. None of the international organizations have made use of it either.”

Challenges and Difficulties of Use and Recommendations

For those who commented on the limited application of the study, they often cited the change of context (independence) as a key factor. As a representative from USAID noted, “it was written at a time when there was cooperation between north and south and right after the presentation the situation changed. Now it is different which makes the study no longer relevant. To be useful the study needed to be updated to take into account the new situation.”

Otherwise a few challenges and difficulties were raised, often blended with recommendations which are noted below. It should be recognized that each of these were raised by only a few people. Nevertheless they are of possible interest and thus are noted:

- *Length*: A book is seen to be too long of a product, resulting in people not taking the time or making the effort to read it. A key points brochure was suggested as an easier format to digest.
- *Competing perspectives*: The findings of the study needed to be aligned with the important entities that have a different perspective such as “the donors or communities”. NGOs who want to adopt the study’s findings find it hard when the donors do not have the same perspective. Greater work with the donor community so that the findings were incorporated into donor agendas and policies was strongly suggested.
- *Sponsor*: it was felt that no one in Kosovo claimed sponsorship for the study to push the recommendations forward in the international community and continue the follow-up. “The trouble with an Embassy sponsoring it was that they have no engagement with the local community. They also have political issues they want to focus upon.”
- *Findings – Recommendations Balance*: the findings were thought to be quite specific while the recommendations are too general. “They look more like a peacebuilding vision rather than a response to the findings.”

OVERARCHING THOUGHTS

One common issue come up with respondents when asked what outcomes they had taken out of or used from a DNH or RPP training. It is not surprising but still deserves to be mentioned. K-Albanian staff commented on the difficulty of remembering specific trainings because of the number of trainings that they have been through over the years. As one long term World Vision staff person said, “I think I have had over 25 different trainings since I started this work so it is difficult to remember which happened when.” Another individual commented, “When you learn so many tools and when you are in the peace field since 2001; I have been to so many trainings and learned so many things. You have taken up some actions and you are not aware of who it is according to – it is unconsciously doing it.”

Appendix Bio on Author

Cheyenne Scharbatke-Church teaches Introduction to Evaluation of Peacebuilding & Development, Advanced Evaluation Concepts and a seminar on Post-conflict Corruption at the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy. Cheyanne has been involved in peacebuilding research and practice around the world with specific geographic expertise in West Africa, the Balkans and Northern Ireland.

She is currently the West Africa Liaison for the Reflecting on Peace Practice (RPP) project of Collaborative for Development Action (CDA), which seeks to improve the effectiveness of peace practice. In this role Cheyanne has been an advisor to the United Nations Mission in Liberia as well as working with a number of peacebuilding agencies in Liberia.

Prior to the role in West Africa with CDA, Cheyanne worked on the RPP study Has peacebuilding made a difference in Kosovo? She also sat on the original advisory board for the RPP project in its early days.