

Developing better prospects for life



Striving for justice
Promoting peace



In 1994 within merely one hundred days almost a million people were killed in Rwanda in a wave of hate and violence. The basis for a new Rwanda can only be formed if the memory of these events is not suppressed. The traumatised country is striving for inner peace. "What would you have done?" Kofi Setordjis' multimedia installation in remembrance of the genocide asks – an artistic contribution to coming to terms with trauma.

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Ulrich-von-Hassell-Str. 76, 53123 Bonn, Germany
Tel. +49 (0) 228 81 01-0, Fax +49 (0) 228 81 01-160
eed@eed.de, www.eed.de

Authors: Wolfgang Kaiser, Wolfgang Heinrich
Editors: Julia Rode, Mechtild Ritter

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Peace grows from within

The number of wars between countries is constantly declining. But more and more societies are being torn apart by inner violence. All violent conflicts are directly and indirectly linked to the economic and political policies and actions of other countries, even when the conflict is raging at the other end of the world. It is because of this fact that the ecumenical community is dedicated to striving for peace.

The early 1990s were characterised by the hope for a "peace dividend": the hope that the end of the East-West conflict would release new energy and additional resources for peace and development. However, by the mid 1990s disillusionment had spread. The fact that genocide in Rwanda was not prevented and the spectacular failure of the UN peace mission in Somalia clearly revealed two things: there was no political will to use the funds released by the end of the "cold war" for peace and development, and the conflict control mechanisms of the international community of states are not effective in the case of violent conflict within states. This is why civil society actors and churches increasingly became involved in local peace building projects.¹

Churches and non-governmental organisations in all societies are actively engaged to prevent or end violence. They aim to create the basis for a culture of peace. The ecumenical community and church development organisations want to contribute towards building peace and justice. But no one can make peace for others. This experience has been confirmed time and again by church agencies in decades of cooperation with partners in Asia, Africa, Latin America and South-East Europe. Peace must grow from within – from the outside we can support the struggle for peace and justice.

This brochure presents experiences of local churches and peace organisations in this im-

portant field of work. It describes how EED, the Church Development Service, supports and promotes this work and the instruments.

How can peace be established?

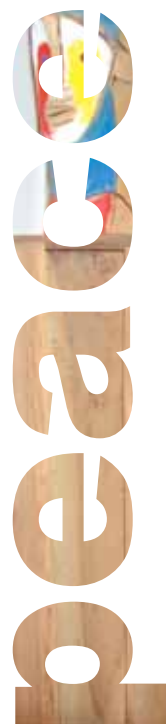
The future of Mindanao, the second largest Philippine island, greatly depends on whether the conflict between the Muslim Moros, the Lumad minorities and the Christian majority can be resolved. The conflicts are rooted in access to and ownership of land. Moros and Lumads were driven out of other parts of the country by Christian immigrants. Christian peace initiatives organise regular talks between the groups in order to promote mutual understanding.



Public participation, education in democracy, and safeguarding the respect of human rights: these are also important objectives of several projects supported by EED in Colombia. In the most populous Andean country people have lived in fear and terror for decades. The military, guerrilla organisations, right wing extremist death squads, drugs mafia and common criminals created a "pit of violence" which cripples the development of the country.

The Alliance for Community Development and Youth Work (ADEJUC) is working in 253

¹ Cf.: Association of the Churches' Development Services (publisher): "Mit Konflikten umgehen- die Perspektive wechseln" (Dealing with conflicts - changing the perspective); http://www.eed.de/fix/files/doc/eed_mit-konflikten-umgehen_09_deu.pdf



Mayan villages in Guatemala. It concentrates on areas where people have been most badly affected by the civil war. In previous conflict regions in particular, former decision-makers from the military and vigilante groups still hold influential positions. This makes it difficult for the victims of violence and oppression to participate in the reconciliation and rebuilding process. In the programmes supported by EED approximately 6.900 peasant families learn new agricultural methods that do not only improve their income situation and their provisions, but also maintain the soil and protect the environment. At the same time, people - especially women and children - are encouraged to actively participate in decision-making processes. Citizens' radio with the meaningful name "Voice of the people" plays an important role in building up democratic structures.

Using own resources for development

The struggle for access to and control of resources is a reality in many countries. Often, both internal and various external players are involved. The legal vacuum that frequently goes hand in hand with armed conflicts offers numerous advantages to violent factions: they can take control of mineral and other resources and of the people who live in the area. Ethnic and religious differences are often abused as a pretext for legitimising violence, which really only serves to exploit resources in order to finance the warring factions.

Mining of Coltan is big business in Eastern Congo. Manufacturers of mobile phones and manufacturers of modern weapons systems are dependent on this expensive raw material which is very sought-after on the world market. Several governments, rebel groups, local rulers and international companies compete for control of mining and intermediate trade. This has devastating consequences for the civilian population, the environment and agriculture, as a study by the local POLE Institute showed. EED's partner lobbies at local, national and international level for the revenues from Coltan mining to be invested in the future of the people in Eastern Congo.

Stopping arms exports

Large numbers of small arms and light weapons are found in all crisis regions. Collecting them is not enough. One project supported by EED in the Horn of Africa takes a deeper approach: local researchers investigate the causes of conflicts together with local people. They sensitise community leaders to the issues involved, initiate talks between local rulers and civil society initiatives and develop structures and processes to enable effective local control of the use of weapons. At international level EED brings up the connection between local war economies and the world market as a subject for political discussion in Germany and Europe. At the same time EED establishes links between partners on different continents and in different countries who are concerned with similar problems, and promotes the exchange of knowledge in order to develop solutions to conflicts. The two big churches in Germany concur in calling for arms exports decisions to be made with consideration of their impact on human rights and development policy as well as economic factors and alliance policy. To this end EED works together with the Catholic organisation



Justitia et Pax within the framework of the Joint Conference on Church and Development. It also supports initiatives and groups that educate people on this subject, for example the campaign "Für das Leben - Rüstungsexporte stoppen" (For life – stop arms exports).

Landmine clearance

Mines are a particularly problematic legacy of wars. Since the treaty to ban land mines came into force on 01 March 1999 30 million land mines have been destroyed in 55 countries. In former conflict regions EED supports mine clearance programmes which are implemented by its partner organisations in connection with their development programmes. For example, fields are cleared of mines in the Cambodian province of Kompong Thom because the farmers can only assure their livelihoods themselves if they are able to cultivate their fields. Immediately after the anti-mine treaty came into force, the organisation "Operation Save Innocent Lives" in Sudan started clearing anti-personnel mines to create the conditions for internally displaced people and refugees to return and rebuild their lives when hostilities cease.

Coming to terms with traumatic experiences

The path to reconciliation is a stony one. The conclusion of a peace agreement is only a first step that must be followed by many more – from coming to terms with the crisis personally to economic recovery and development of a new society. And people must be able to deal with the mental impact of their war experiences. Otherwise their actions and way of thinking



will be influenced by the violent past. Manuela Ziskoven, a professional who spent time working in Bethlehem, regarded her work there as a "mosaic stone for peace". The graduate sociologist and psychotherapist seconded by EED

supported social workers who treat traumatised children and young people. At a counselling centre she provided staff further training and worked with teachers at several schools – for it is the children and young people in Palestine and Israel who pay the highest price for hatred and violence: they have nightmares and suffer from anxiety and attacks of fear. The counselling centre helps them to deal with their experiences.

The young Cambodian Ea Meng-Try received funding for a course in "Peace Studies" at the University of Coventry in the United Kingdom. This qualified him for a new area of responsibility in his home country: the documentation centre in Phnom Penh deals with the genocide during the era of the Khmer Rouge. Young people with professional experience from developing countries who want to broaden their knowledge and skills at universities in Germany or other European states can apply for an EED scholarship.

Overcoming violence

Promoting peace also means de-escalating potential conflicts as they emerge. The more all citizens are able to participate in political decisions, the lower the probability that disputes will be settled with violence. People who are able to exercise their rights and make themselves heard do not need weapons to fight for matters that concern them. However, warring factions are increasingly including development aid in their calculations. EED and its partners therefore always examine the extent to which their own activities minimise violence or intensify conflict.



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Promoting peace as a field of work for EED

"Der Entwicklungsdienst der Kirche – ein Beitrag für Frieden und Gerechtigkeit in der Welt" (The Churches' Development Service – A Contribution Towards Peace and Justice in the World) – this is the title of the memorandum on the Church Development Service published in Germany in 1973 by the Council of the Evangelical Church in Germany (EKD). In it the Council of EKD stated: "Injustice in both domestic and world policy is a constant threat to peace. The efforts to establish peace must therefore include the pursuit of more justice and the reconciliation of social tensions through worldwide development pro-



grammes. Consequently, responsibility for development and lobbying for justice and lasting peace are directly linked with one another" (item 14). For EED this is a mandate to combat poverty, establish justice and build peace together with its partner organisations. This calls for conscious and intensive preoccupation with the causes of poverty and violence and how they can be dealt with and resolved at the same time. With increasing frequency local development organisations find that development processes are blocked and experience the negative consequences of political conflicts at national and international level for the life opportunities of the people. This is why EED also regards activities that deal directly with conflicts as an integral part of its development mandate: conflict transformation, the ability to settle conflicts peacefully, post-conflict care and crisis prevention.

Promoting development and peace work

In crisis regions EED specifically supports church-based and non-governmental organisations, for example in Colombia, Sudan or Congo. These carry out development and peace work in the conflict regions and at the same time lobby for the necessary political reforms at national and international level to enable lasting peaceful and just development. EED finances this work with church and public funds and seconds experts – e.g. via the Civil Peace Service – to partners in Africa, Asia, Latin America, the Balkans and the Caucasus.

Creating the conditions for peaceful conflict settlement

In countries that are not typically perceived in the North as acute crisis regions and which therefore receive less public and political attention EED also has long-term cooperation with partners who lobby for a democratic framework, responsible governance and a sound civic consciousness. In this way they create the structural and cultural conditions for dealing with conflicts in a non violent and constructive way. An example is the peace and democracy education programme of the National Council of Churches in Kenya set up in the late 1980s.

Creating space for civic action

The specific activities of churches and civil society actors vary from country to country and depend both on their political self-image and the degree of freedom in the society concerned. In societies where people are able to participate in political decision-making processes and where civil, economic, social and cultural human rights are respected, they can make contributions to dealing constructively with conflicts at different levels in society and creating "peace from within". Where this is less the case the opportunities for civil society actors are more at local level – in reducing the effects of violence on large sections of the population or in building up long-term expertise for non violent conflict settlement and

breaking down structural factors that lead to tensions or violence.

'Conflict-sensitive' cooperation

An important principle for EED when cooperating with foreign partners is to organise projects in a way that is sensitive to the context of conflict so they contribute to settling conflicts which occur inevitable during processes of profound social change without violence. EED therefore joined Collaborative for Development Action (CDA) in a process that developed the "Do No Harm" approach. In the Horn of Africa region and in Northeast India more than 100 civil society organisations have participated in a process of training and consultancy that aims at introducing and adapting this approach.

Calling for responsible action from external actors

In most conflict regions external interests and foreign actors share responsibility for the causes and the course of violent conflicts. This is why EED supports programmes which enable civil



society from the North and the South to exchange experiences and develop joint activities. For example, EED participates in the Ecumenical Peace Service in Palestine and Israel, is involved in the peace work of churches in Sudan and actively promotes German-Egyptian dialogue on the role of religion in state and society. All these projects aim to also accompany social transformation processes at international level and in this way to strengthen approaches that reduce violence.

Education and lobbying in terms of development policy

The fostering of peace and civil conflict resolution are also central issues in EED's education work and lobbying in Germany. The spectrum of activities ranges from supporting peace policy initiatives by parishes and civic action groups engaged in development policy to film work concerned with development policy and EED's participation in the debate about Germany's development and peace policies. For example, EED is a member of the Working Group on Development and Peace (FriEnt) in which governmental and non-governmental actors work together in Germany. EED collaborates in the expert group of the Joint Conference on Church and Development which is dedicated to this topic.

Accepting responsibility

In addition to the roles outlined above as a supporter of the work carried out by local organisations which are engaged in civil crisis prevention and conflict resolution in their own society and in this way contribute to building peace from within, EED sees a further task for the association in working towards maintaining the worldwide elimination of poverty, the prevention of violence and the management of conflicts primarily with civil means on the agenda of German and European politics as primary and independent international commitments. This is particularly important as these objectives may drop out of focus because of a restricted perception of threats and security by German or European policy makers.





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The number of wars between states is declining. But more and more societies are being torn apart by internal violence. A typical feature of these conflicts is that they are often linked to the economic and political interests and actions of countries in the North. This is why the ecumenical community is committed to building peace.

However, inner violence cannot be prevented from outside. Peace must grow from within. Churches and local peace organisations intervene at different levels in regions affected by violent conflict to promote peace processes and check violence. EED, the Church Development Service, supports these endeavours with various approaches and instruments.