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Peace & Conflict Impact Assessment (PCIA) Program External Evaluation Report

By

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December 2004

**Commissioned by IDRC
Peacebuilding and Reconstruction
Project number: 100226**

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Executive Summary

In August, 2004 IDRC commissioned the following external evaluation of the Peace and Conflict Impact Assessment project. The purpose of the evaluation was to measure initial impacts that the PCIA project and its outputs are having with intended users and to gather the information necessary to render an account for this project and its results to CIDA. A secondary and lesser objective was to facilitate institutional learning through reflection on IDRC's role and involvement in this project.

The methodology of this study consisted of a review of background documents including the project proposal, project activity and progress reports, internal IDRC documents including assessments, handover notes, email correspondence and the major research output of this project, The Resource Pack. Web searches were made using "conflict sensitivity" and "peace and conflict impact assessment" as a way of tracking references to this project that might suggest some level of influence or uptake in the fields of humanitarian assistance, development and peacebuilding targeted by this project. A total of 39 interviews were conducted with key interlocutors of the project including the project partners, donors, NGOs, and potential users of the Resource Pack. This study is limited by the fact that significant data was gathered in only one of the three Southern contexts where the project was implemented. A field officer of IDRC was able to travel to Sri Lanka to conduct interviews with a number of stakeholders involved in the local implementation of the project. No such field officer was in place in Uganda or Kenya to conduct on-the-ground interviews. Efforts to gather data via email correspondence and phone interviews were not effective.

There were four primary objectives of this project: 1) Develop practical resources and approaches to PCIA and conflict-sensitive development; 2) Enhance awareness and use of conflict-sensitive approaches to development among practitioners, governments, donors and non-governmental organizations; 3) Collate lesson learned from the operational application of resources and approaches; and 4) Facilitate dialogue between southern NGOs and communities, their governments and donors through consultations, thus promoting the representation of civil society perspectives in development assistance programs and projects.

The project was implemented with a consortium approach involving three UK-based organizations and three Southern-based partners. One of the successes of the project was the way in which the Consortium partners were able to manage the inherent complexity of needing to coordinate work across so many organizations spanning from North to South. The complexity of this project was exacerbated by the fact that this project was conceived and designed by individuals at one level, managed at another level and implemented by partners in the South.

Other challenges encountered during the implementation of this project include: 1) a conceptual shift from "PCIA" to "CSA" representing a broadening of perspective; 2) staff turnover rate of nearly 100 percent in the Consortium partners as well as IDRC and CIDA staff involved in this project; 3) the decision to produce the entire Resource Pack rather than just the first three modules which constituted an operational shift influencing other important components of the project such as training, national applications and

lessons learned reports; and 4) FEWER's financial difficulties and resulting bankruptcy that brought the project to a premature end.

Satisfying the different interests and expectations of multiple donors, the six consortium partners as well as beneficiaries of the project involving stakeholders from humanitarian assistance, development and peacebuilding organizations posed a significant dilemma of how general or specific the Resource Pack should be in terms of the following issues: 1) target audience (international organizations, governments, donors, NGOs, CBOs, or all the above); 2) context (local, national, regional); 3) focus (sector-specific or more generic); and 4) method (prescriptive or descriptive). Regardless of how these questions were answered, tradeoffs were required in terms of outcomes.

Within the context and conditions of this project, there was no "right" way to respond to these questions without some tradeoffs. It was decided that the Resource Pack would target all stakeholders and present an array of tools and approaches rather than prescribe a selected set. Though a chapter is given to sectoral work, the focus would remain general and generic in order to serve the broader public across contexts and sectors.

One of the significant contributions of this project is the way in which the decision to privilege breadth and generality over depth and specificity allowed for the cross-fertilization of ideas and practices by gathering, analyzing and making public the experiences and knowledge related to conflict sensitive practices accumulated within the private domain of many different organizations

The design of the project and consortium approach resulted in a rich and dynamic process that successfully engaged an extensive array of stakeholders on both global and local levels in conversations about conflict sensitivity. The strategy used locally in the three Southern contexts of bringing stakeholders together from government, donors and NGOs created not only the possibility of increased awareness of conflict sensitivity in their own work, but also the possibility of developing a common language and vision extending across these different stakeholder groups as they work collectively at conflict-sensitive development in their regions. Awareness raised at the global level throughout this project has contributed to that fact that conflict sensitivity has now become part of the lexicon of many development, humanitarian and peacebuilding organizations.

The Resource Pack produced under this project has made an important contribution to the global literature on peace and conflict impact assessment methodologies and conflict sensitivity particularly in light of the fact that it is the only compendium which documents and analyses from a critical perspective, the relative strengths and weaknesses of PCIA tools, guidelines and practices currently in use amongst bilateral, multilateral and international NGOs.

While initial indications of impact suggest the project has had greater influence in Northern-based donor and international NGOs, impact in Southern-based organizations working at the local level has been more limited. The prospects for sustainability and increased impact will depend upon the extent in which partners in the South continue to move forward with the trainings and national applications processes that have only recently begun. Contextualizing the Resource Pack, framing its contents in a more

appropriate language and level of abstraction will be a vital step towards making it more immediately relevant for local practitioners.

Another important contribution of this project was the systematic way in which conflict sensitive approaches were linked to the entire programming cycle. Issues and suggestions about how conflict sensitivity can inform each step in the programming cycle are effectively addressed in the Resource Pack. However, it stops short of providing comprehensive case studies drawn from experience illustrating the application of conflict sensitivity throughout the entire cycle. An important next step would be further research to observe, document and produce case studies involving the application of CSA throughout an entire programming cycle. This could involve more traditional case-study research on existing experiences or the design of a participatory action research project in a Southern context. The development of local as well as sector-wide case studies to accompany the Resource Pack would greatly enhance its relevance and utility for practitioners at all levels

Background and Context of the Evaluation

IDRC's involvement with the concept of Peace and Conflict Impact Assessment reaches back to 1997, when the Peacebuilding and Reconstruction Program (PBR) commissioned a working paper on the topic. Between 1998 and 2001, PBR nurtured this line of work through a variety of actions including, the hiring of consultants to field test PCIA as a methodology and the development of a three year multi-stakeholder PCIA project. This "flagship project" was managed first through a PCIA Unit which was set up in PBR. This period witnessed an increased interest amongst bilateral and multilateral organisations - and to a lesser extent amongst international NGOs - to develop PCIA tools in order to mainstream conflict analysis into their programs and projects.

In mid-2001, IDRC decided that PCIA should be rolled out to the field - particularly to southern partners. PBR formed a partnership with the Peace and Security Unit at the Canadian International Development Agency - CIDA (formerly the Peacebuilding Unit) in order to co-fund a CAD \$696,000 program implemented by the UK-based Forum on Early Warning and Early Response (FEWER) in collaboration with its member organisations International Alert and Saferworld, and three Southern-based organizations, Centre for Conflict Resolution (CECORE) in Uganda, African Peace Forum (APFO) in Kenya, and Consortium for Humanitarian Assistance¹ (CHA) in Sri Lanka. Together, they have endeavoured to promote mainstreaming of conflict sensitive approaches to development, humanitarian and peacebuilding assistance and to enhance the capacity of practitioners to apply conflict sensitivity in their work.

On September 29, 2003, PBR supplemented and extended this project, and extended FEWER's grant to March 31, 2004. This was done in order to allow the project partners additional time to complete and disseminate the resource pack, conduct an awareness raising seminar in Ottawa, undertake translations of the pack into French and Spanish, further develop the web platform for the resource pack, and conduct an evaluation. Though no further funds were requested of them, CIDA had already agreed to a project extension, giving IDRC until June 30, 2004 to oversee completion of the work of the recipients as well as to prepare the final technical and financial reports.

With the resource pack completed and 2,500 copies disseminated, IDRC and CIDA jointly hosted an awareness-raising seminar in Ottawa in February of 2004, inviting representatives from NGOs in Canada working in the conflict and peacebuilding fields, as well as experts and representatives from CIDA, IDRC and Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade - DFAIT. The project consortium (FEWER, International Alert, Saferworld), including the regional partners, led this exercise and launched the resource pack for the first time. Immediately following the seminar, PBR and CIDA met with the members of the consortium project team to discuss remaining work left to be done on the project. This included the translations, web site development and launch, a report on lessons-learned in the field and a final evaluation. The research team indicated it would likely need more time beyond March to complete the work, but funds remaining would not cover all costs expected. It was agreed that the team would submit

¹ CHA joined the project after the project's inception and once the project secured additional funding (Dutch).

to IDRC a proposal of what could reasonably be achieved to complete the project in the time remaining prior to the finalization of the project at the end of June 2004.

Regrettably, IDRC was informally warned by International Alert on April 14, 2004, that FEWER was experiencing major financial difficulties but that they and the other project partners remained committed to the project and its completion. FEWER's financial instability was confirmed by its director, Marcel Smits and by Fisher Partners (a private firm that deals with insolvency) who, on April 20, 2004, formally notified IDRC that FEWER had declared bankruptcy and was being liquidated. An examination of FEWER's books is currently underway by the insolvency practitioners. In this regard, IDRC's General Counsel Office engaged a lawyer in the UK to assist with the representation of IDRC as a creditor concerning the outstanding commitments to this project. PBR has also fully notified CIDA of the situation and other internal IDRC units were also informed. An internal IDRC meeting was held on May 21st to discuss next steps for this project and the best ways to ensure that as many of the maximum number of the desired outputs and commitments of the project could be achieved. CIDA, through its Peace and Security Unit, was kept abreast of these developments by PBR.

IDRC expects to receive an updated financial report for this project from the liquidators as soon as the process of reviewing FEWER's books is completed. In the meantime, PBR has received approval from CIDA via email to extend its agreement with them until December 31, 2004 to allow for additional time for the financial reports to be received and an initial assessment to be made of the impact this situation has had on project commitments.

Purpose of Evaluation and Intended Users

The primary purpose of this external evaluation is to measure initial impacts that the PCIA project and its outputs are having with intended users and to gather the information necessary to render an account for this project and its results to CIDA.

A secondary purpose is to facilitate institutional learning by reflecting on IDRC's own role and involvement in this project (included in separate annex).

The readers of this evaluation will be CIDA and IDRC. Comments on institutional learning will be addressed in a separate confidential annex intended exclusively for IDRC.

Methodology

The scope and methodology of this evaluation were conditioned by the following considerations related to the timing and context in which it took place:

- 1) With questions still outstanding concerning the financial issues related to FEWER's bankruptcy and the liquidation process, funding for the evaluation needed to be kept to a minimum. This meant relying on IDRC field staff for on-

the-ground interviews in the countries of the Southern project partners rather than having the evaluator travel to these locations.

- 2) Still unclear about the full impact of FEWER's bankruptcy on the project partners, IDRC recognized and wanted to be sensitive to fact that the partners' time and availability to participate in an evaluation at this time might be very limited.
- 3) Because of an unexpected turnover in staff, IDRC did not have a field officer in place in Africa that could interview partners and organizations related with the project in Uganda and Kenya.
- 4) Due to significant changes in the project itself as it unfolded (to be discussed later) along with its unexpected interruption and termination because of FEWER's bankruptcy, IDRC recognized that a more thorough evaluation of project results and impact at this time was, to a large extent, premature. The two years of implementation were mostly consumed in research, consultation and drafting the Resource Pack. With the Resource Pack completed, awareness-raising, training and the national application processes mentioned in the project proposal were only recently beginning to unfold.

In a meeting with the consultant contracted to conduct this external evaluation, IDRC discussed these conditions and together the following decisions were made concerning the scope and design of the evaluation process:

- 1) Methods of data gathering would include:
 - a. **Desk-top reading** of background documents relating to the project including the project proposal, project activity and progress reports, internal IDRC documents including assessments, hand-over notes, email correspondence, etc., and the major research output of the project (the Resource Pack). A list of documents reviewed for this study appears in annex 1.
 - b. **Web searches** on "conflict sensitivity" and "peace and conflict impact assessment (PCIA)" to discover references tracing back to this project that might suggest some level of influence in the fields of humanitarian assistance, development and peacebuilding targeted by this project.
 - c. **Interviews** (face-to-face, telephone) and exchange of written information (emails) with key interlocutors of the project including the project partners, donors, NGOs, government officials and potential users of the resource pack. Annex 2 contains a list of individuals interviewed.
- 2) The number of interviews would be primarily limited to those persons and organizations directly involved in the implementation of the project, i.e., CIDA, IDRC and the six consortium members. While a more thorough evaluation would require more extensive interviewing of direct and indirect beneficiaries as well as other important actors in the field of implementation, especially in the southern contexts where this project was carried out, the aforementioned conditions forced a more limited scope.

- 3) In Kenya and Uganda, interviews would be conducted by the evaluator via telephone and email correspondence. Given the awkwardness of this medium of communication, interviews would be limited to the project partners directly responsible for the implementation of this project in these two southern contexts.
- 4) In case of Sri Lanka, an IDRC field officer would travel to the region and conduct face-to-face interviews on the ground and report back the findings to the external evaluator.

All interviews were based on a loosely structured protocol of open-ended questions that sought to elicit stories, anecdotes and other information that responded to the set of specific questions identified by IDRC in consultation with CIDA and listed in annex 3 of this document. In general, the interviews revolved around the following questions: success stories with regard to application of PCIA (CSA) within target organizations; key challenges faced during the process; experience of partnership between UK-based partners and the Southern-based partners; learnings concerning North/South partnerships in joint research and knowledge creation; the uptake of the Resource Pack; initial signs of impact and how project or program initiatives have been informed by it; its significance to the local context; how PCIA (CSA) has been received by local, national, regional and international organizations; the role and functioning of the Advisory Committee.

A total of 39 individuals were interviewed. Each interview lasted on average 75 minutes. Unfortunately, the degree to which the findings in this report can adequately reflect the project's experience in the South is severely limited due to a number of unsuccessful attempts to gather data from two of those contexts. Input directly from the African partners in Kenya and Uganda was limited to a very brief phone conversation, complicated by a poor connection, and an equally brief response from one of the partners to a questionnaire sent via email. Fortunately, it was possible to reach an expanded array of stakeholder organizations in Sri Lanka and gather important data concerning some Southern perspectives on this project.

Evaluation Findings

The PCIA project was designed with two aims in mind: 1) To mainstream peace- and conflict-sensitive development practice into the planning, design, monitoring and evaluation of development, humanitarian assistance and peacebuilding work; and 2) Enhance the capacity of development, humanitarian and peace-building practitioners, as well as local governments and civil society organizations to contribute more effectively to conflict prevention.²

The objectives of the program were to:

1. Develop practical resources and approaches to PCIA and conflict-sensitive development practice that are built on local experience and capacity;

² Taken from Peace and Conflict Impact Assessment: A CPRN Programme November 2001.

2. Collate lessons learned from the operational application of resources and approaches;
3. Enhance awareness and use of conflict-sensitive approaches to development among practitioners, governments, donors and non-governmental organizations, through the widespread use of the resources and approaches developed in these applications;
4. Facilitate dialogue between southern NGOs and communities, their governments and donors through consultations, thus promoting the representation of civil society perspectives in development assistance programs.

Expected results in terms of outputs include³:

- A resource pack to serve as a tool for humanitarian and development practitioners, providing methods and mechanisms for conflict-sensitive approaches to development assistance;
- Increased awareness among practitioners of conflict-sensitive approaches to development through dissemination of the resource pack, lessons learned newsletters, and web site updates, as well as expert meetings, awareness raising seminars and training workshops;
- A training module prepared and development practitioners trained in PCIA;
- An inclusive governance and advisory Steering Committee to ensure that the program is effectively implemented and benefits the peacebuilding and conflict prevention community.

An evaluation of any initiative is assessed not only against its proclaimed aims and objectives, but also against the often dynamic context in which the process of its implementation unfolds. Changes in the process or the context often result in the need to either modify the objectives themselves or adjust the degree to which the original ones can be expected to be achieved. Understanding and valuing the process becomes as important as the results or outcomes produced.

Because this is particularly true for the PCIA project given its inherent complexity, the discussion on findings begins by addressing some important challenges encountered as the process of implementation unfolded. The following outputs identified in the project's log frame will then be discussed separately: The Resource Pack; National Applications; Awareness-raising & training; Lessons-learned reports; and the Steering Committee. Ending this section will be a discussion on some more general issues related to this project.

³ IDRC's webpage on project. http://web.idrc.ca/en/ev-33786-201-1-DO_TOPIC.html

Project design and implementation: Some important challenges

The Consortium Approach & Institutional Challenges

One of the great strengths of this project contributing to its success was the use of a consortium approach that brought together organizations from both the North and the South. The three Northern UK-based partners brought to the table significant experience and expertise in research on a global level⁴ as well as a large global network (FEWER) that would be of strategic importance to the project. The three Southern-based partners offered specific contexts in which local knowledge and practice could help shape the research and development of the concepts, tools and approaches ultimately intended to serve these same and similar contexts in developing countries. One of the influences of the South on the project happened early on where feedback received from the Southern partners resulted in a change of language from Peace and Conflict Impact Assessment (PCIA) to Conflict Sensitive Approaches (CSA) which also marked a conceptual shift away from a more mechanistic tools-centered approach to much broader way of seeing and approaching development work.

One of the reasons this approach added value to the project was the way in which together these six organizations allowed the project to extend its reach globally through a number of awareness-raising opportunities mentioned below, while at the same time grounding it locally within the specific contexts of the three southern partners. This allowed the project to engage a broad array of stakeholders including international NGOs and donors as well as government and local NGO actors.

The consortium partners cited successes and significant challenges in navigating the division of responsibilities between the institutional challenges and complexity inherent in a project requiring close coordination and collaboration from six organizations based in both the North and the South. One respondent expressed a high level of satisfaction regarding effective inter-institutional relationships achieved in this project since the same has not always been possible on other projects.

IDRC indicated that throughout the project's lifetime, the three UK-based organizations endeavored to forge a common agenda and approach with partners in the South. This was not always easy given the different institutional cultures and learning styles particularly between North and South.

Two particular institutional challenges faced during this process are important to mention as a way of understanding some confusion and inconsistencies that emerged in the interviews around how respondents understood and explained the national applications and lessons learned components of this project (discussed below). First, this project was conceived by one group of people, managed by another, and implemented by yet other partners in the South. Adding to the complexity of this situation was the second challenge of high staff turnover where during the course of this

⁴ While many strong research initiatives or centers exist in the South, they tend to be local or regional in scope, with very few (or none) working at research on a global level.

project turnover of those dedicated to this project was almost 100 percent not only in the consortium partners, but also in IDRC and CIDA.

One of factors that helped mitigate the impact of these two challenges was IDRC's willingness to accompany the process and the Consortium partners much more closely than originally expected. While these challenges were managed well during the project, gaps in understanding did occur that had an influence on how specific components or outcomes of this project were understood and explained.

Conceptual / Methodological Challenges

Satisfying different interests and expectations of donors, consortium partners and members of the advisory or expert committee concerning the Resource Pack constituted another significant challenge. Decisions had to be made around the core dilemma of how general or specific to be in terms of target audience, focus and method.

Careful consideration was given to the following questions around this dilemma, knowing that any decision would have both advantages and disadvantages in terms of usefulness of the Resource Pack:

- Should the Resource Pack target the international community of NGOs and Donors in order to serve desk officers and policy analysts working on country-wide programmatic level; or should it target field workers in local organizations and institutions more closely related to local project design and implementation. The interests and needs, skills and competencies ranging between these extremes differ greatly as does the language that is appropriate for each group. Targeting one or the other group would permit the possibility of greater specificity and contextualization at the cost of losing relevance for other important stakeholders. Targeting all levels would allow the project and Resource Pack to remain more generally relevant to all stakeholders at the expense of being more specifically useful to any of them.
- Should the Resource Pack be sector specific or more generic in focus? Again, at stake is the tradeoff between greater relevance and utility for specific sectors versus more general relevance for a much broader range of publics and contexts.
- The question of method was whether to develop and prescribe one or several specific tools and approaches in more depth that could be used across contexts; or avoid being more prescriptive by presenting a broad array of tools and approaches that exist across contexts in order to allow potential users to then pick and use what they consider most relevant, or develop their own tools and approaches drawing on the vast array presented.

Regardless of how these questions were answered, tradeoffs were required in terms of outcomes. Within the context and conditions of this project, there was no "right" way to respond to these questions without some tradeoffs as will be mentioned in the discussion on the Resource Pack. It was decided that the Resource Pack would target all stakeholders and present an array of tools and approaches rather than prescribe a selected set. This was in keeping with the robust pace of development of PCIA type

tools amongst multilateral and bilateral donors and international NGOs. Though a chapter is given to sectoral work, the focus would remain general and generic in order to serve the broader public across contexts and sectors.

Operational Challenges

As a result of first stakeholder meetings in Kenya and Uganda and the first meeting of the international advisory group, the decision was made, early in the process, to produce the entire Resource Pack upfront rather than just the first three modules as outlined in the original proposal. This created a significant operational challenge in terms of the implications this had for the implementation of the other components of this project like training, national applications and lessons learned reports. Part of the confusion mentioned around these components may also be a result of failing to make sufficiently explicit how these would be affected by the decision to complete the entire Resource Pack upfront.

Another operational challenge involved the fact that the Sri Lankan experience came into the process only after significant advances had already been made in the two African contexts with CECORE and APFO. While the process of stakeholder consultations in Uganda and Kenya began with only a topical outline of the draft modules, by the time the process began with CHA in Sri Lanka, the draft modules were partially developed. The Consortium partners managed well the difficulty related to juggling these different stages of the project. The decision to involve the African partners in Sri Lanka and vice versa seemed to be a useful way of sharing knowledge and experience between the southern contexts and allowing each to learn from the other.

Another operational challenge inherent in the consortium design involving North/South collaboration is the difficulty of coordinating tasks between cultures that often follow very different rhythms in their working style, based on different concepts of time.

Challenges related to scope of the proposed project objectives:

From the outset, a challenge was borne from what could be considered overly ambitious expectations of achievement given the timeframe and the financial limitations that faced both IDRC and CIDA as funder of this project. Significant delays were experienced in securing the CIDA and IDRC agreements needed to get the project underway; as mentioned earlier both organizations experienced a constant turnover of staff. These would have been minor nuisances, were it not for the fact that the project was conceived as a two year undertaking while funding was only provided for one year. It was also intended that the UK consortium, with the assistance of IDRC where appropriate, would fill out the rest of the budget by securing other significant donor contributions in addition to CIDA and IDRC's core funding. As a result, the CIDA/IDRC contribution of CAD 696,000 to the project was meant to cover the anticipated budget for one year. In reality, this amount was stretched to encompass the duration of the project until March 2004⁵, with only modest additional donor contributions from GTZ and SIDA. When the UK consortium secured Dutch funding, it was allocated to a Sri Lanka national application, rather than applied to deficits in other budget areas.

⁵ In June of 2003 IDRC put in supplementary funding of CAD \$140,000.

This constraint, coupled with the decision to complete the resource pack in its entirety, may explain some confusion concerning the achievable objectives for CIDA/IDRC funding and some of the deficiencies in other project outputs. Yet, the total amount raised for the project was not insignificant. Efforts perhaps should have been made to streamline some of the activities being undertaken in the project and reduce the amount of institutional dependence upon the budget to maintain staffing levels and for equitable administrative costs between all consortium members.

Project Outputs

Resource Pack

One of the core outputs of this project was the development and publication of “Conflict-sensitive approaches to development, humanitarian assistance and peacebuilding: A Resource Pack.” It was produced in both hardcopy as well as electronic format for distribution via the Web. As mentioned earlier, any intent to measure the impact the Resource Pack has had would be premature at best given the fact that it has only recently been published and trainings in its use are only now beginning.

Nonetheless, a summary of some of the initial reactions of stakeholders or potential users that were interviewed is offered below in no particular order. Examples gathered to illustrate uptake of the Resource pack are then given.

Summary of Initial reactions from stakeholders and potential users⁶

- a) *Good compendium of tools and approaches:* Many affirmed the usefulness of the Resource Pack as a good compendium of tools and approaches and a helpful bibliography to facilitate more in depth study as needed. The method of describing many tools and approaches rather than prescribing specific tools was valued. More could have been developed in terms of a diagnostic tool to guide users in the process of discerning which tools would best serve a given context.
- b) *Great for beginners:* For some, the Resource Pack was seen as a very useful tool for beginners in terms of providing basic information and helping people begin to think about conflict sensitivity. However, for people with more experience in the field it is less useful because it lacks depth and specificity. For instance, some of the tougher, more advance issues that are not addressed in depth include: analysis of issues of power, methods for measuring conflict, and analysis of PCIA indicators.
- c) *Limited usefulness without further contextualization:* In Sri Lanka, there seemed to be a sharp divide between Northern and Southern responses concerning the usefulness of the Resource Pack. While those from the North tended to affirm its usefulness and relevance for their work, the general perception of local stakeholders was that its usefulness and relevance was limited by its lack of contextualization.

⁶ Since no data was gathered directly from stakeholders in the African countries, this summary does not claim to represent the views that may be held in Kenya and Uganda

Usefulness at the more local level depends on the extent to which contents are expressed at an appropriate level of abstraction and in language and categories more compatible with local knowledge. This critique reflects one of the tradeoffs in the decision to focus the Resource Pack more broadly. Had it been more contextualized to a specific context, its relevance beyond that context would have diminished.

- d) *Good content...but won't be read:* Many responses, while recognizing the potential value of its contents, emphasized that field workers and desk officers alike who are already overloaded simply do not have the luxury of time necessary to sit and read this much information. This content needs to be reduced to two-page executive summaries that can be read and digested. This has been an important learning for International Alert in their work with private sector companies on conflict sensitivity where documents longer than a couple pages have no place. The challenge is how to further abbreviate the contents while avoiding over simplification of the concept and approaches to conflict sensitivity.
- e) *Donor driven, northern-based product:* The fact that all the tools for conflict analysis included in the Resource Pack came from the North and the vast majority of them are geared towards analysis at the country and regional levels were reasons given for the perception of some that this product responds to the needs and interests of the North rather than the South. The question was raised concerning the extent in which these tools and approaches promoted bottom-up strategies that could be useful for enabling communities to articulate in a systematic way their own needs and interests in response to development actors who try to impose development on them. From this perspective, the direction of CSA as presented in the Resource Pack is external and downward, rather than internal upward.
- f) *Integration of CSA to the programming cycle:* One of the contributions valued in the Resource Pack is the way in which it applied and integrated the concept of conflict sensitivity throughout the entire programming cycle in a more systematic way. While the work of many organizations has reflected conflict sensitivity, these experiences tend to be less systematic, more ad hoc. The Resource Pack, for some, is very helpful for thinking about how to mainstream conflict sensitivity through the entire programming cycle.

Examples of Uptake

While this list does not pretend to be exhaustive, it does provide some examples gathered in the interviews and web searches that suggest that the Resource Pack has proven to be a valuable resource...at least for northern-based donors and international NGOs.

- WANEP (West Africa Network for Peacebuilding), based in Accra, Ghana used the Resource Pack in their program in Ghana on building civil society capacity for conflict prevention (This was the only example given that came from the South).
- The Peacebuilding Unit at Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation is directly incorporating the Resource Pack into its institutional conflict toolkit.

- Trócaire, is the official overseas development agency of the Catholic Church in Ireland, references the Resource Pack in some of its materials and has adopted the terminology in its Policy Paper on Conflict Sensitivity and Peacebuilding – see <http://www.trocaire.org/newsandinformation/peacebuilding/peacebuildingdiscussionpaper.htm>
- A UK-based Working Group on Conflict and Peace involving NGOs from the development / humanitarian field along with Saferworld and International Alert has been formed and much of its Terms of Reference have been inspired by parts of the Resource Pack.
- School of International & Public Affairs (SIPA) at Columbia University is interested in including the Resource Pack in course materials.
- The Director of the Conflict Transformation Program at the Life & Peace Institute in Upsala, Sweden has expressed interest in incorporating and applying materials from the Resource Pack in work carried out under the this program.
- The Transition, Conflict and Peace (TCP) Working Group of InterAction, the largest alliance of US-based international development and humanitarian NGOs was engaged in the process and has posted the Resource Pack on their website to help distribute it among its member organizations. They are currently trying to secure USAID funding for training in ‘conflict sensitivity.’ See <http://www.interaction.org/disaster/TCP/index.html>
- The Resource Pack is explicitly referred to as a resource to promote conflict sensitivity in the new comprehensive high-level Norwegian Government Policy on Peacebuilding – see “Peacebuilding – A Development Perspective: Strategic Framework” at <http://odin.dep.no/filarkiv/221493/peace-engelsk.pdf> - page 15.
- The Resource Pack was also featured in a special session of a major conference on the Role of Civil Society in the Prevention of Armed Conflict that brought together over 200 peace and development practitioners and politicians at the Ministerial level--in Dublin. <http://www.xs4all.nl/~conflic1/Dublin/conference%20report.pdf> (page 38) takes a while to download.
- The UNDP has also used whole sections of the Resource Pack in its guidance notes on conflict prevention see: http://hdr.undp.org/docs/nhdr/thematic_reviews/Conflict_Guidance_Note.pdf
- The Resource Pack is featured on the German Government-NGO working party on conflict and development as a key resource <http://www.frient.de/links/links.html>
- GTZ has also referred to the Resource Pack when looking at assessments in post-conflict settings - http://www.gtz.de/crisisprevention/download/pcna_reviewanalysis.pdf
- The Resource Pack has been profiled in ‘state of the art’ research thinking and overviews see a recent on by Swiss Peace Foundation and the Koff Center for Peacebuilding has a link to the consortium website. http://www.swisspeace.org/koff/uploads/InfoSheet/InfoSheet2_PCIAandConflictSensitivity.pdf
http://www.swisspeace.org/koff/t_tools_pcia.htm
- Drawing on the Resource Pack and in collaboration with a number of its authors and creators, the Pearson Peacekeeping Centre is running with Saferworld a training session on THE ROAD TO PEACE: Conflict-Sensitive Programming in Fragile States. This session is listed on the United Nations Peacekeeping Best Practices website.
- One of the largest international networks of front-line practitioners of Conflict Transformation is the Action for Conflict Transformation network. The majority of their members are nationals rather than internationals. They are having a session at their annual conference on the Resource Pack given jointly by Saferworld and an Action Member who works for Africa Peace Forum.
- The Resource Pack is mentioned in “Introducing the Peace and Conflict Assessment Model (PCA)” by Thania Paffenholz and Luc Reyhler. June 2004. See Field Diplomacy Initiative FDI website: <http://www.fielddiplomacy.be/English/Welcome%20Frameset.htm>

- International Alert's publication, "Building Institutional Capacity for Conflict-Sensitive Practice: The Case of International NGO's" by Maria Lange, 2004 draws on and references the Resource Pack. [Building Institutional Capacity for Conflict-Sensitive Practice: The Case of International NGOs](#)

Dissemination

In spite of the complications related to FEWER's bankruptcy, Saferworld and International Alert continue to move forward with the process of dissemination, even though this has required use of their own core funding. The Resource Pack is available in PDF format and can be downloaded from www.conflictsensitivity.org as well as from IDRC's website (http://web.idrc.ca/en/ev-60789-201-1-DO_TOPIC.html). Other websites such as InterAction have also included a link to the conflict sensitivity website as a way of raising awareness and helping to distribute the electronic version. Annex 4 contains the plan for dissemination of the hard copies as funding becomes available.

Translation⁷

In a February, 2004 meeting with IDRC, CIDA and the Consortium partners, an agreement was reached that a priority would be placed on having the translation of the Resource Pack translated into Spanish and French. This work was not completed due to the insolvency of FEWER and the interruption of the project.

The Organization of American States has expressed strong interest in carrying out the translation into Spanish and using it as part of a new process to bring conflict sensitive approaches to Latin America. The translation would take place through a process of contextualization involving a number of consultations in the region. However, due to legal complications related to the liquidation of FEWER and copyright laws, the OAS has not been able to move forward on this.⁸

With regard to the French translation, no progress has been made.

National Applications

Both in the documentation reviewed as well as in the interviews with the consortium partners, the concept of national applications was unclear and inconsistent. Early in the process, confusion was expressed⁹ about whether it referred to testing the usability of the Resource Pack or field-testing specific tools and methodologies by applying them to specific projects or programs at some point in the programming cycle, or both. This confusion seems to persist throughout the process.

For example, in an email dated August 8, 2002, IDRC refers to national applications as working "with a core group over the course of several months to *help them apply certain*

⁷ Translation of the Resource Pack was not foreseen in the original project budget. French and Spanish translations were to be resourced through supplementary resources provided by IDRC in August of 2003.

⁸ There is a meeting tentatively planned for January, 2005 in which IA, in consultation with Saferworld will continue working with the OAS to move forward with the Spanish translation.

⁹ See minutes of first Advisory Committee meeting in May, 2002; minutes from the stakeholder meeting in Uganda, August, 2002;

PCIA tools to their selected programs or projects, at different points in the programming cycle – ante, during, post’ (emphasis added).

Later, in another memo to CIDA dated December 16, 2002, IDRC seems to understand national applications as limited to the field-testing of the manual rather than testing tools with national actors. “We have relayed your concern about their use of the terms “national application” and “field-testing” – which we also find confusing. We have suggested that they should re-visit the use of these two concepts and consider sticking to the term “field-testing” as we understand that *they are actually field-testing the manual, rather than engaging with national actors to apply PCIA tools throughout the programming cycle*” (emphasis added).

An informational brochure produced by the consortium partners presents the component of national applications as a process of testing “the applicability of selected tools on the ground in relation to specific projects currently being designed, implemented or evaluated by donors, governments and/or local and international NGOs.” And yet in a slide presentation apparently given in Ottawa in October, 2003, consortium partners present the national application component of the project as “consultations on, and testing of, drafts of the resource pack.”

One of the significant challenges this project has had to face is the tremendously high turnover rate in staff working with this project. In both CIDA and IDRC staff turnover was 100 percent and among the three UK-based partners, turnover was nearly the same, with only one person, Paul Eavis, that has remained with the project since the beginning. So the confusion and apparent lack of conceptual clarity regarding the national applications component can be partly explained by this problem of turnover. Also, the fact that this project was conceptualized by one group of people, managed by another and implemented by yet another group introduces a level of complexity that exacerbated the problem of staff turnover throughout the process.

Another aspect that probably contributed to this confusion was the recognition early on in the process of the need to produce the entire Resource Pack up front, rather than just the first three chapters as initially projected. This made sense given that awareness raising, training and national applications with only half a product would be difficult and ineffective. This meant that the national applications component as originally conceived would have to be deferred until the Resource Pack was completed or at least sufficiently advanced in order to have tools and methodologies available, offer training and then test and apply them. I could find no documentation where this last point was recognized explicitly.

Rather than recognizing the premature timing of the national applications component as it was originally conceived, confusion entered and for some, it was reduced to the consultation process for testing the usability of the Resource Pack. For others, it referred to the entire package of activities carried out in the partner countries beginning with the research, mapping and data gathering for the draft modules.

In the initial project proposal¹⁰, the first 6 months were to be spent doing desk research to gather and collate the tools and methodologies that would make up the first three

¹⁰ Peace and Conflict Impact Assessment: A CPRN Programme. Nov. 2001

chapters of the Resource Pack. With this draft of the first three chapters ready, the process of national application would begin with the purpose of *both* testing the draft modules *and* beginning the field testing of specific tools and methodologies with specific projects being implemented by several (“up to three”) selected organizations. The process outlined for the national applications involved¹¹:

- 1) A two-day seminar involving a broad group of ONGs, community groups, governments from the region, and representatives from the donor community. The purpose of this seminar is to review the content of the modules and test their applicability.
- 2) Immediately following the seminar, a five-day training workshop would be held involving a smaller number of practitioners from the region with the purpose of working through each of the modules in more detail and unpacking some of the tools and methodologies presented.
- 3) Upon completion of the seminar and training workshop, field-testing would begin with the purpose of applying, testing and refining some of the tools and methodologies in several projects being implemented on the ground.

The national application process was not implemented as specifically outline above. Stakeholder consultation seminars for the purpose of reviewing the draft modules did take place in Uganda, Kenya and Sri Lanka. In each of these consultations, the project was successful in getting a broad representation of stakeholders from government, NGOs and the donor community as illustrated in the following table.

Stakeholder Consultation Meetings		
August 26-27, 2002	Nairobi, Kenya	30 participants ¹² (approximately 50% INGOs, 25% Gov't, 25% donors)
August 29-30, 2002	Kampala, Uganda	26 participants (9 donor, 4 INGOs, 8 local NGOs, 5 Gov't)
March 27-28, 2003	Colombo, Sri Lanka	37 participants (7 Gov't, 10 local NGOs, 13 INGOs, 7 donors)
June 13-15, 2003	Negumbo, Sri Lanka	31 participants (mainly donor community)

However, the five day training workshops that were to follow these seminars were not implemented. Time did not permit simultaneous development of both the Resource Pack as well as the training modules necessary for these trainings. From the data gathered, it seems as though the idea of accompanying several organizations over time in the application of several tools and methodologies in part of the programming cycle of a project was also not possible. Again this is understandable given its dependency on the Resource Pack and developed training modules.

Nonetheless, since the interruption of the project in April of 2004, a reduced version of national applications was carried out in Uganda. Consortium partners helped facilitate a five-day training in Uganda with World Vision and a consortium of NGOs. During these three days, the participants reviewed in more detail a number of conflict analysis tools and then crafted one of their own which they then used to conduct an analysis of a

¹¹ Ibid p7; Minutes from Advisory Committee Meeting, May, 2002

¹² Number of participants cited does not include project staff / facilitators

specific region in northern Uganda. The resulting analysis was given to some of the Consortium partners for review and feedback. This is an example of effort made to work with local organizations in the testing of tools. It was not clear from the data whether or not there was ongoing accompaniment with these organizations in terms of how the analysis then informed any aspect of their programming cycle.

In Kenya, Saferworld is now involved in a process funded by the Swedish in which 85 District Commissioners were trained in conflict sensitivity. These District Commissioners then suggested to the Office of the President that all the staff in the District Offices also receive this training. These trainings worked on skill-building by having four people from each district working together doing case analysis and developing action plans.

In Sri Lanka, the national applications component consisted of forming a Core Group of organizations that would receive more in-depth training and then pilot some of the tools in their own projects or programs. Important lessons were learned throughout this process including the need to better tailor the training to incorporate local methods of learning specific to the Sri Lankan reality. This Core Group has only recently been formed and so the national applications are only now getting underway.

Lessons learned reports

The original project called for two lessons learned/best practice reports to be developed each year to highlight insights gained from the national application and field-testing activities.¹³ When asked about the status of these reports, there was some level of confusion about whether two reports were to be produced each year or one report at the end of the project. Again, this confusion can be understood in light of the high turnover rate in staff as well as the decision to produce the entire Resource Pack up front and the implications this had for other component parts of the project. (See discussion above under national applications).

Representatives of CIDA and IDRC met with Consortium partners in Ottawa in February, 2004 to discuss the status of project outputs and prioritize what needed to be completed in the limited time remaining. In a memo of response dated March 5, 2004 FEWER acknowledged the need to produce a lessons-learned report and outlines possible themes to be included and how this report would be produced. However, in the following month IDRC was formally notified of the bankruptcy and liquidation of FEWER.

Though no lessons learned reports have been produced, Saferworld and International Alert are currently in the process of writing an article for the Berghof series in which they reflect on lessons learned from this project. A publication for the Journal of Peace and Development is also in production.

¹³ Peace and Conflict Impact Assessment – A CPRN Programme November 2001 and PCIA logframe – One Year.

Awareness-raising & Training

Awareness-raising

One of the important outcomes of this project was increased awareness among practitioners of conflict-sensitive approaches to development. Considering the significant uptake of the Resource Pack mentioned earlier in the relatively short period of time since its completion, it can be concluded that the project has accomplished this outcome with great success. It was estimated that through the activities mentioned below around 600 practitioners have been in contact with the project.

The Consortium partners worked diligently at taking advantage of many different contexts to promote the conflict sensitivity and raise awareness about the work being done in the project. Some examples of specific conferences or meetings where they were able to promote the project include:

- A workshop requested by the Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs on “Good Organizational Practice” for operational and policy desk officers dealing with conflict issues. This was held in London, 2003.
- A formal presentation in the 10th Conflict Prevention and Post-Conflict Reconstruction Network (CPRN) in Berlin – January 2003.
- Under the umbrella of the CSA program FEWER, in conjunction with International Alert and Saferworld, organized a workshop on conflict analysis and planning methods in order to facilitate the development of country programs and strategies among desk officers. This training, commissioned by the CIDA, was held in conjunction with the 10th CPRN.
- Conflict Analysis for Prevention and Peace-building: Exploring the roles of NGOs – Washington DC March 2003.
- Presentations made in a meeting of DANIDA and Danish humanitarian organizations in November, 2004 in Copenhagen.
- At Trócaire in Ireland in June and October, 2004; In Nepal in March, 2004 in meeting with 35 representatives from major donors, NGOs and media (see cocap.org.np).

Informally, consortium partners were present and able to promote the project in the following events:

- DAC-OECD Conflict, Peace and Development Network in November 2002
- Japan – UK seminar on Peace-building, Post-Conflict Reconstruction, & Return of Refugees, March 2003, University of Oxford, UK.

One-page brochures and project summaries were designed and made available both for the regions where the project was being implemented as well as at global levels. Four newsletters were also produced and are available electronically on the conflict

sensitivity website. Also contributing to awareness-raising is the current process of dissemination of the Resource Pack mentioned earlier.

While the stakeholder meetings held in the three different regions of the project were framed as consultations to test drafts of the Resource Pack, the awareness-raising that occurred through this process with the diverse range of stakeholders acting in the region should not be underestimated. Similarly, the process of mapping conflict sensitive knowledge, tools and methodologies carried out in the regions during the research phase of this project also contributed to awareness-raising. As Action Research recognizes, simply asking questions to gather data is an act of intervention that should not be underestimated.

While the original project proposal mentions a formal awareness-raising seminar to be given in both Ottawa and Brussels, only one took place. In February, 2004, a two-day awareness-raising seminar was held in Ottawa involving 86 individuals representing both the NGO and donor community. A separate program was also offered as well to CIDA desk officers.

Finally, the project was to produce an operational website and listserver as a way of continuing to promote awareness and provide a forum for ongoing knowledge creation and sharing among practitioners. Following FEWER's bankruptcy, International Alert purchased and maintains the website, www.conflictsensitivity.org where the electronic version of the Resource Pack is posted as well as other key documents related to the project. Responsibility for the administration of a listserve by Bellanet (an IDRC Secretariat) was to have been by FEWER in 2003. However, this did not happen and this evaluator was not able to ascertain whether a new listserve facility exists through either Saferworld or International Alert.

Training

Part of the national applications process involved a five-day training with a smaller group of practitioners following the stakeholder consultations in each of the southern regions of the project. As explained in the discussion on national applications, it was not possible to offer these trainings without first completing the Resource Pack and without the addition of additional funds. At the time of FEWER's bankruptcy and the premature end of the project, training modules and trainings called for in the project proposal (other than the awareness-raising activities) had not been completed.

Consortium partners have been involved in several different training initiatives in the different regions including the Ugandan experience with the World Vision lead consortium and the experience with the District Officers in Kenya – both mentioned earlier under national applications. In Sri Lanka, International Alert has been working with CHA in the development of training modules¹⁴ for the Resource Pack as well as implementing a Training of Trainers program that began in March of 2004 with a group

¹⁴ IA reports that these modules are now completed. Though no funds are available for printing, PDF versions of these modules designed to be consistent with the Resource Pack will be available for download from the website.

of 20 people representing 16-18 different organizations¹⁵. These training modules will be used in the African regions as well.

Role of the Steering Committee

The project states that “an inclusive governance and advisory Steering Committee will be established to ensure that the programme is effectively implemented and benefits the broader peacebuilding community.”¹⁶ This committee was to meet for two days each year as well as hold quarterly teleconferences to monitor implementation and address issues that may have arisen. Its membership was to include key stakeholders, conflict resolution specialists and representatives of partner agencies in the developing world. The intent was to establish a mechanism to promote inclusivity ensuring the presence of different voices from all levels accompanying this process.

On May 23-24, 2002 the Advisory Committee met for the first and only time. Following this meeting it was decided that correspondence via email would replace the original idea of quarterly teleconferences due to the committee’s size, logistical difficulties given the many different time zones of the members, and the need to be more cost effective. Though the Consortium partners did follow through by sending periodic progress reports to the committee with the expectation of receiving feedback, very few responses were received from the committee. Other than the initial meeting in May 2002, the intent of the project to create and sustain “an inclusive governance and advisory steering committee” was ineffective.

The following factors may have contributed to the failure to achieve an active and engaged steering committee:

- The design of the project already involved a broad number of voices when one considers the consortium approach involving six core implementing organizations from both the North and the South; five donors (IDRC, GTZ and Dutch MoFA, CIDA and Swedish SIDA); and beneficiaries drawn from peacebuilding, humanitarian and development spheres representing government, civil society, donors and INGOs. The decision to include a large steering committee¹⁷ to this structure added a level of complexity that the project was unable to adequately manage.
- Consortium partners expressed an inherent tension that existed between being transparent and public about the work being done and at the same time maintaining some proprietary control over the products. Concern was expressed about how some members of the International Advisory Group used materials received from the project for the ends of their own work as professionals/academics or the work of the organizations they represented. Similarly, concern was expressed that some members of the committee may

¹⁵ IA reports that in Sri Lanka, twenty CSA workshops/trainings have been undertaken so far, with another seven anticipated by the end of January, 2005.

¹⁶ Peace and Conflict Impact Assessment – A CPRN Programme November 2001 and PCIA logframe – One Year.

¹⁷ It should be noted that the Advisory Committee did include the partners and donors of the project.

have been reluctant to engage more fully with the project because of their own concerns regarding the use and ownership of intellectual ideas.

- In the documents reviewed, no terms of reference or memo of understanding were found in which explicit expectations concerning the role and function of the Steering Committee or issues of intellectual property were addressed. So it is unclear the extent to which the committee was set up as a formalized structure or was more informal in nature.
- The size of the committee (24 people including 2 donors, 2 authors and four consortium members¹⁸) may have contributed to its ineffectiveness as well. Membership involved high profile individuals with very limited time due to their involvement in multiple commitments. The possibility of disengaging or not responding more actively as a committee member is increased with large committees where each can assume other members are responding and providing needed feedback.

Other considerations

Gender

While in several documents IDRC strongly encouraged the consortium members to incorporate gender analysis more explicitly (materials and bibliographic sources were shared with this purpose in mind), no data gathered suggested the explicit use of gender analysis throughout this project. Though the assumption may exist that an effective conflict-sensitive approach by definition includes a gender component, this could have been made more explicit.

North / South Research

While the intent of the project was to develop resources “built on local experience and capacity,” the research data used for the development of the draft modules was *primarily* Northern-based data¹⁹. Desk research involved gathering and collating existing tools and methodologies primarily from the North. The mapping process carried out in the Southern contexts involved interviews with a number of organizations, many of which were Northern-based donor or international NGOs.²⁰

These observations are not meant to question the rigor or competence with which research was carried out in the project. The intent, rather, is to recognize the fact that efforts to gather and systematize Southern knowledge and experience that begins with language, frameworks and paradigms originating in the North conditions and limits research findings. Often Northern ways of knowing and talking about experience is quite different from Southern ways of knowing. For instance, the number and type of questions (6 pages of questions) in the protocol used for field interviews reflects a

¹⁸ This number is taken from list of email recipients in progress reports sent. Documentation received did not include an explicit list of committee membership.

¹⁹ The inability to find southern tools should not obscure the fact that the development of thinking, material and the project itself was significantly informed by conflict-sensitive information and approaches harvested in the South. It was suggested that the tool-biased approach taken by the North is not shared by the southern agencies.

²⁰ No data was gathered concerning the number or range of organizations involved in these interviews

Northern approach to knowledge that privileges explicit knowledge that can be gathered through specific direct questions. This approach neglects other ways of knowing that need to be considered if local knowledge and experience is to be thoroughly explored and explicated. For example, tacit knowledge might only be uncovered through storytelling or other processes of critical reflection. Had a research process based more on the principles and methods of participatory action research been used, it may have been possible to discover, codify, systematize and incorporate into the Resource Pack knowledge more reflective of Southern-based practice and experience. This, however, would have required investing more time in the research process.

IDRC's involvement along the way

In this project IDRC was in the unique position of being both a donor as well as a recipient of another donor's funds for the same project. In addition, IDRC had a particular interest in contributing their intellectual capital to this project. Adding to the complexity of assuming these different roles, IDRC experienced a complete turnover in staff dedicated to this project. In spite of these difficulties IDRC demonstrated an unwavering commitment to excellence and carried out these roles successfully.

Several Consortium members commented on their high level of satisfaction in the relationship they had with IDRC as a donor. When asked about key learnings in this process, one highlighted the importance of a good working relationship with donors, especially in projects as complex as this one, and then referred to the IDRC/Consortium relationship as a good model to follow.

The two CIDA officers interviewed that had worked directly with this project were also very affirming of IDRC's involvement. While some concerns were expressed about the Resource Pack²¹ and other aspects of the project, they were quick to affirm IDRC's diligence in good communication and flow of information and competent management of the file.

Moving beyond the donor role, IDRC has also contributed intellectual capital to this project as reflected in their active participation in the Expert Advisory Committee Meeting in London, May 2002; ongoing support of efforts of the UK partners to fine-tune the program proposal; the significant feedback offered on the draft modules of the Resource Pack, both in terms of content and form, as well as the way in which they worked very closely with the Consortium in many of the decisions made throughout the implementation of this project.

On Mainstreaming

The project was overly ambitious in suggesting that one of its aims was to "mainstream peace- and conflict-sensitive development practice." It would have been more appropriate to frame this aim as "contribute towards the mainstreaming of..." given that

²¹ One considered the Resource Pack a good introduction to the field, but less useful for the more experienced POs requiring more in-depth analysis and information. Another suggested that simplifying the language and offering a more concise summaries would increase the usefulness and usability of the Resource Pack.

mainstreaming in organizations requires conditions that extend beyond the reach of this project. To suggest that this project was successful at mainstreaming or that mainstreaming has occurred because of this project runs the risk of reducing the concept of mainstreaming to the overly simplified use of a tool or development of a policy document. While these may be helpful indicators, mainstreaming refers to the incorporation of a set of attitudes, values, and organizational practices that permeate the way of working and being of the entire organization.

One of the risks of prematurely forcing or requiring the process of mainstreaming in organizations is the possibility that tools are adopted and documents are generated in order to “comply” with expectations, while organizational practices remain largely unchanged. Consider the experiences of mainstreaming with gender, conflict transformation, human rights, etc where many organizations adopted new language and approaches simply as a way of satisfying donor requirements, without fully understanding the implications of how these new “lenses” ought to inform their work. Some expressed concern that the same risk applies to CSA – that to the extent CSA is donor-driven, more opportunistic organizations may be quick to adopt and “mainstream” CSA in order to access resources.

One of the questions raised concerning mainstreaming was related to the high level of “roll-out” fatigue where excessive and constant mainstreaming of gender, environment, result-based management, human rights, conflict transformation, HIV, etc., has resulted in organizational cultures that simply can not take more. Just the mention of mainstreaming creates internal resistance for understandable reasons. One can only use or apply so many “lenses” or frameworks at once. How should these lenses be prioritized? Can they be prioritized? Does one trump or implicitly include others? While addressing these issues of mainstreaming further is beyond the scope of this report, they are mentioned as a way of understanding why achieving the project’s aim of “mainstreaming” was limited.

Several examples illustrate how the project was successful in *contributing towards* mainstreaming in some organizations. The best example of explicit efforts towards mainstreaming involves one of the UK partner organizations. The reorganization of Saferworld was motivated largely by the Resource Pack in efforts to begin institutionalizing CSA throughout the organization. A conflict advisor position was created and filled within the organization that is dedicated to helping the geographic teams become more conflict sensitive. They are now developing regional and country strategy papers in which more analysis is given to the contexts and situations where they work. These documents are used to inform their strategies. CSA has also been integrated into their Training of Trainers program on small arms.

Efforts towards mainstreaming CSA in International Alert have included extending the scope of their work with conflict sensitivity to include work with private sector companies from the extractive industries. CSA has had influence across the organization and forms an integral component of a number of its existing and future projects. It is reported that a large percentage of IA staff now understand conflict sensitivity and use this knowledge to inform their own work and that of their respective partners.

Within CIDA, one of the policy advisors (formally related to the PCIA project) talked about how concepts in the Resource Pack were explicitly integrated in the Country Development Programming Frameworks for Tajikistan and Georgia. He also mentioned considerable work towards mainstreaming being done with FAST, the early warning project of Swiss Peace, to develop analytical frameworks for each of the 23 different countries where they are involved. Part of funding provided by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation was used to hire a person responsible for monitoring throughout the Swiss bureaucracy how these early warning reports are being used.

Other examples where the language of conflict sensitivity has been adopted in policy statements were included in examples of uptake mentioned earlier.

Conclusions

The PCIA project, reconceived as CSA, has been successful in making significant contributions to the field of conflict sensitive approaches to humanitarian, development and peacekeeping work. It has constituted a serious effort to extend the conversations and public debate on these methodologies and approaches to include the voice of partners in the South. Further, it has provided an important space for cross-fertilization of ideas and approaches by gathering, analyzing and making public the experiences and knowledge related to conflict sensitive practices accumulated within the private domain of many different organizations.

The Resource Pack produced under this project has made an important contribution to the global literature on peace and conflict impact assessment methodologies and conflict sensitivity particularly in light of the fact that it is the only compendium which documents and analyses from a critical perspective, the relative strengths and weaknesses of PCIA tools, guidelines and practices currently in use amongst bilateral, multilateral and international NGOs.

The design of the project and consortium approach resulted in a rich and dynamic process that successfully engaged an extensive array of stakeholders on both global and local levels in conversations about conflict sensitivity. The strategy used locally in the three Southern contexts of bringing stakeholders together from government, donors and NGOs created not only the possibility of increased awareness of conflict sensitivity in their own work, but also the possibility of developing a common language and vision extending across these different stakeholder groups as they work collectively at conflict-sensitive development in their regions. Awareness raised at the global level throughout this project has contributed to that fact that conflict sensitivity has now become part of the lexicon of many development, humanitarian and peacebuilding organizations.

While initial indications of impact suggest the project has had greater influence in Northern-based donor and international NGOs, impact in Southern-based organizations working at the local level has been more limited. The prospects for sustainability and increased impact will depend upon the extent in which partners in the South continue to move forward with the trainings and national applications processes that have only recently begun. Contextualizing the Resource Pack, framing its contents in a more

appropriate language and level of abstraction will be a vital step towards making it more immediately relevant for local practitioners.

One of the important contributions of this project was the systematic way in which conflict sensitive approaches were linked to the entire programming cycle. Issues and suggestions about how conflict sensitivity can inform each step in the programming cycle are effectively addressed in the Resource Pack. However, it stops short of providing comprehensive case studies drawn from experience illustrating the application of conflict sensitivity throughout the entire cycle. An important next step would be further research to observe, document and produce case studies involving the application of CSA throughout an entire programming cycle. This could involve more traditional case-study research on existing experiences or the design of a participatory action research project in a Southern context. The development of local as well as sector-wide case studies to accompany the Resource Pack would greatly enhance its relevance and utility for practitioners at all levels.

Annex 1

List of documents reviewed

- Berghoff Handbook for Conflict Transformation, 2001:
 - “Peace and Conflict Impact Assessment” – A Dialogue Article
 - “Evaluation and Conflict Impact Assessment” – Mark Hoffman
 - “Towards a Unified Methodology: Reframing PCIA” – Manuela Leonhardt
 - “PCIA as a Peacebuilding Tool” – Marc Howard Ross
 - “Peace and Conflict Impact Assessment Methodology: A Development Practitioner’s Perspective” (response paper) – Hans Gsanger & Christoph Feyen
- “Peace and Conflict Impact Assessment (PCIA) Five Years On: The Commodification of an Idea” (response paper) – Ken Bush
- Conflict-Sensitive Approaches to Development, Humanitarian Assistance and Peacebuilding: A Resource Pack
- Final Project Proposal for RP # 100226 “Operationalizing Peace and Conflict Impact Assessment”
- Handover Note on RP 100226, S. Baranyi 2003
- FEWER project reports to IDRC
- IDRC project reports to CIDA
- Trip reports on visits to Conflict Sensitivity project, S. Baranyi and E. Alma
- Email correspondence between IDRC and UK partners
- Newsletters produce by consortium partners Volumes 1-4
- Policy papers (CIDA’s CDPFs for Tajiskistan and Georgia) as well as web-based documents related to uptake of the Resource Pack.

Annex 2

List of Individuals interviewed

Eileen Alma	Project Coordinator, IDRC
Colleen Duggan	Senior Program Specialist, IDRC
Terry Smutylo	IDRC Evaluation Unit
Stephen Baranyi	Former Program Specialist in IDRC in charge of project
Ken Bush	Former IDRC Evaluation Unit
Michael Koros	CIDA (former officer in charge of PCIA project)
Alain Adibe	CIDA, former officer in charge of PCIA project
Serge Koskinen	CIDA, project officer in Peace and Security Unit
Paul Eavis	Executive Director, Saferworld
Hesta Groenwald	Saferworld
Rachel Goldwyn	CARE International, UK (Formerly at International Alert)
Adam Barbolet	International Alert
Andrew Sherriff	Formerly at International Alert
Leyla-Claude Werleigh	Formerly at FEWER
Celine Moyroud	Bureau for Crisis Prevention and Recovery (BCPR), UNDP, New York (formerly worked on the project with Saferworld in Nairobi)
Alex Nyago	APFO, Kenya
Rose Othieno	CECORE, Uganda
Yadira Soto	Organization of American States
Interviews from Sri Lanka	
Jeevan Thiagarajah	Executive Director, CHA
Lara Perera	Psychosocial Coordinator, CHA
Srinatha Perera	Deputy Executive Director, CHA
Chamindri	CHA
R. Bhakeerathan	CHA District officer, Jaffana
Aruna Dayaratne	Program Officer, Oxfam
Patrick Brochard	CIDA Director Program Support Unit, Colombo
Agnus	CIDA Coordinator Shakti Gender Equity Programme
Joe Williams	CIDA Senior Program Officer, Programme Support Unit, Colombo
Bandula Hennadige	Senior Program Officer, Royal Netherlands Embassy
M.A. Lahiru Perera	Director of Programs, CARE Sri Lanka
Nikki Burns	Peace and Reconciliation Coordinator, CARE International Sri Lanka
Jegananthen	Training Officer CARE Sri Lanka
Ragina Ramalingam	Director Evaluation and Training, FORUT: Campaign for Development and Solidarity IOGT Movement of Norway
Ruby Karunakaran	Program Officer, Helvetas (Swiss Association for International Cooperation, Sri Lanka)
Nilhan de Mel	National Peace Council, Sri Lanka
Rudy	Info Share, Colombo
Anthea Mulakala,	Reconciliation and Development Advisor, DFID Sri Lanka
Brian Smith	Post Conflict Specialist, Asian Development Bank, Sri Lanka Resident Mission
Jan Koetler	Conflict Transformation Expert, FLICT (Fund for Local Initiatives for Conflict Transformation, supported by GTZ, Germany)
Malathy de Alwis	Feminist author and a senior fellow at the International Centre for Ethnic Studies, Colombo.

Annex 3

Questions posed by IDRC for the Evaluation

General:

What has been the influence and reach of the project's tools for peace and conflict impact assessment (PCIA) in Sri Lanka, Uganda, and Kenya?

Who is using the resource pack? For what purposes? Is anyone who should be using it/should have been introduced to it not aware of it?

How are they employing it in their work? Comment on potential and actual outcomes.

Achievement of overall project objective and results:

What evidence can you find that governments, NGOs and donor agencies have used the resource pack to mainstream peace and conflict sensitive development practice into their approach, policies and programs for development, humanitarian assistance and conflict prevention?

Which outputs were not produced and why?

Gender and social analysis:

How did the organizations involved and the research results produced reflect/not reflect a sensitivity to gender inequalities or otherwise incorporate/not incorporate gender analysis?

Did this project and its outputs have any negative impacts on specific groups or individuals?

What were these and how could they have been mitigated?

Coordination:

To what extent did the UK-based organizations involve southern partners? What problems were encountered? How were the problems handled?

What were the coordination challenges encountered between FEWER, International Alert and Saferworld? How were the challenges handled?

Lessons learned in application of PCIA tools (outlined in resource pack):

What were the challenges faced/lessons learned in the National Application workshops run in Sri Lanka, Uganda and Kenya?

How did/didn't the national application workshops/dissemination of the resource pack help to facilitate dialogue between Southern NGOs and their governments on issues of development?

Prospects for sustainability:

Bearing in mind the unexpected interruption of this project, which components have been picked and are now being used or may be used in the future by local or international organizations or governments?

Role of the Steering Committee:

What role did the steering committee play in the implementation of this project? What were the challenges it encountered? How were the challenges handled?

Annex 4 Dissemination Plan²²

ACTIVITIES	<i>ORGANISATIONS / TARGETS</i> (EXAMPLES ONLY - an exhaustive listing of all targets is on the database)	AMOUNT
HARD COPY MAILINGS		
APFO, CHA, CECORE	For count distributions and own resources	2250
FEWER Secretariat International Alert Saferworld	Regional Programmes and Thematic Programmes within the Organisations	60
Authors, Funders, and Advisory Committee	Author(s) of the document Funders of the document (with special cover letter) <u>Advisory Committee</u>	60
FEWER Network Members, Alert and Saferworld wider group of institutional partners in other geographical settings	Network members of FEWER Alert's partners in Africa, Eurasia, Asia, Latin America Saferworld partners in Africa, Europe, Asia	200
Operational Humanitarian / Development, Peacebuilding Agencies Headquarters in the North	<i>EXAMPLES ONLY</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oxfam • Merlin • Action Aid • Red Cross • SCFUK • Christian Aid • Action against Hunger • Islamic relief • etc. 	100*
Northern Umbrella Development / <u>Humanitarian agencies</u>	<i>EXAMPLES ONLY</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • VOICE • InterAction • Steering Committee for Humanitarian Response • BOND <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ EPLO ○ CPCC 	20
Other Relevant Conflict Resolution Organisations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conciliation Resources • Search for the Common Ground • International IDEA • International Crisis Group 	50
Key Donors Agencies (some of these may also appear elsewhere in this dissemination strategy) (relevant departments within agencies 'i.e. Conflict Affairs, and also	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CHAD-DFID • EU Contacts • DFID (EU Dept/Africa Policy/CHAD) • Sida - • Dutch MFA • Danida • Dutch MFA • Irish MFA/Development Co-operation 	100

²² CSA Consortium memo to CIDA and IDRC dated March 5, 2004

regional desks in the countries of national application)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Swiss Agencies for Development Co-operation • Norwegian MFA • CIDA & DFAIT • DfID & FCO • GTZ/BMZ • Japan • Etc. 	
General Donor Umbrella Groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All DAC/OECD Network Members • CPRN 	100
UN agencies (head-quarters in Geneva/New York a relevant country offices - key conflict people within them)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UN - Secretary-General's Office • UNDP, UNHCR, UNICEF, WFP • UNOPS, OCHA, UNDESA • UN regional 'economic commissions' • Etc. 	50
EU	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • all Consortium EU contacts (RELEX, DEV, EUROPEAID ACP Secretariat) 	10
Regional Organisations (particularly those units concerned with conflict issues)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • African Union • IGAD • Organization of American States • ASEAN 	50
International Financial Institutions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • World Bank • IMF • Regional Development Banks (Asia, Latin America, Africa) 	20
Libraries & Documentation Centres (ensuring the 'intellectual heritage & accessibility' of the documents)	<p><u>Copyright libraries:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • British Library and Copyright libraries agency (5 copies) <p>(It is a legal requirement to deposit copies in these libraries & copyright protection for everything published in the UK such as the Resource Pack)</p> <p><u>National libraries (of donors):</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Canada • Netherlands • Germany • Sweden <p><u>Key specialist libraries:</u></p>	50
Key Northern/Southern Training Organizations products that they produce)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Responding to Conflict • Coalition for Peace in Africa • INTRAC 	50
Relevant (Practitioner, Policy and Academic) Journals (for reviews and profiling of Resource Pack)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Journal of Humanitarian Assistance • Disasters • Journal of Development and Peacebuilding • Journal of Conflict, Security and Development • Journal of Development Studies • European Journal of Development Research • Security Dialogue 	50
TOTAL		3,220
Hard copy mailings through Commercial Channels	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transparency International • Christian Aid 	400

Annex 5

Institutional Learning for IDRC

A second and lesser part of this evaluation was to explore what institutional learnings might be harvested from IDRC's experience with the PCIA project. I think there was some hope that the experience of this project might be useful in surfacing some broader institutional issues and patterns of practice such as staffing logic, workloads, etc. In addition, there was interest in reviewing the whole story of IDRC's involvement with PCIA with an eye towards understanding the shift from intellectual pioneering work to what became a more traditional donor role in the project under review in this evaluation.

Unfortunately, given the priorities established for this evaluation, I was unable to gather the data that would allow me to confidently offer some conclusions or opinions regarding institutional issues or lessons emerging from this experience. For instance, a clear theme throughout this project relates to severe workload issues, staffing logic where time is divided between different initiatives and 100% turnover in staff. However, understanding these issues and to what extent they constitute a institutional pattern of practice would have required more time and further conversations with IDRC staff. Because the interviews centered on the PCIA project itself, very little time was given to these other issues.

I can only offer the following initial observations or questions that emerged based on the limited information I was able to obtain with the hope that they prompt further reflection as IDRC seeks to maximize their learning from this experience.

IDRC as 'intellectual pioneer' in the field of PCIA

There is no doubt that IDRC, through the work of Ken Bush and the Evaluation Unit, accomplished groundbreaking work that positioned IDRC as an intellectual leader/pioneer in the newly emerging field of PCIA. However, as noted in the internal document "*IDRC and PCIA: Retrospective, Update, Perspective and Options*" IDRC's role shifted from being an ideas generator and intellectual pioneer to the more traditional role of funder and supporter. As explained in the report, IDRC did continue to make significant intellectual contributions throughout the project. Nonetheless, it seems as though IDRC failed to maximize its intellectual leadership established early on in this field. Some of the factors contributing to this loss of intellectual leadership include:

- The decision to hire a PO for Latin America (S. Baranyi who was also expected to take on PCIA work) rather than Ken Bush: I was unable to interview Necla and the reasons for this decision remain unclear. However, Ken's departure illustrates how an institution's intellectual capital too often resides in individuals. With Ken's departure and IDRC's lack of real capacity in this field, it became necessary to farm this work out to others. Consultants were hired to develop a paper for the expert meeting since IDRC could no longer do this internally.

- Significant changes within PBR: A number of contextual circumstances all happening around the same time limited IDRC's internal capacity resulting in the decision to turn to the UK consortium. The closing of South African office, Middle East PO fired by regional office, Necla on the way out, Michael Koros' resignation, and Stephen Baranyi going on parental leave all contributed to what was described as the "implosion" of PBR.
- 100% staff turnover through out the PCIA story
- Staffing logic that divides ROs time between projects that may limit the level of concentration and depth given to any one project.
- Political work not done for Zimbabwe: M. Koros positioned IDRC for on-the-ground research with the application of PCIA to land reform. However, failure to understand the political work necessary for such an undertaking (PCIA is political) resulted in the abortion of what could potentially have been a significant applied research project. This situation caused some to question whether or not IDRC was really ready to recognize and assume the political consequences of PCIA work.
- Mixed goals or agendas: It seems as though within IDRC three different goals were at play: continuing to develop and assume intellectual leadership in PCIA, developing and strengthening southern capacity, and fund raising. In the end, the latter interest of fund raising was privileged in the decision to develop big project and seek funding rather than continue building on PCIA work with Ken. IDRC's intellectual leadership was largely lost. Though the project was farmed out to the UK based consortium, IDRC held on to their commitment to developing southern capacity by funding directly the Sri Lanka experience and supporting the UK work in the African contexts.

IDRC: Donor or Researcher

Here my own lack of knowledge about IDRC comes into play. Given its name, International Development Research Centre, I assumed the primary work of IDRC is research. However, in this project, it seems as though decisions were made that undervalued the importance of research. For instance, the decision to hire PO for Latin America rather than continue investing in Bush's work, or the lost opportunity to apply PCIA to land reform in Zimbabwe (again, I recognize many intervening variables here and don't wish to over simplify). Ultimately, IDRC's role in this project was primarily that of donor which may be more reflective of IDRC's work in general...supporting other research initiatives rather than doing the research. Nonetheless, the experience of the Evaluation Unit as well as initial pioneering work of Ken demonstrates IDRC's capacity to move beyond the role of donor and do good research and assume intellectual leadership.

Given IDRC's interest in bringing Southern voices into the conversation and strengthening Southern capacity, I was left wondering why IDRC was not more involved in shaping the research aspects or methodology (rather than contents or results) of this project, supporting more applied or participatory action research in the

South. Though southern contexts were involved in the project, the research methodology was very Northern and limited in its potential for adequately harvesting knowledge and experience in those Southern contexts. (I recognize my own biases regarding research goals and methodology, which may be quite different from IDRC's...so again, forgive my lack of familiarity with IDRC's work).

Use of PCIA within IDRC

It is interesting to note that while one of the aims of the PCIA project was to contribute towards the mainstreaming of PCIA in development, humanitarian assistance and peacebuilding organizations, use of PCIA within IDRC has been limited. It would not be realistic to assume that mainstreaming of PCIA should have already occurred within IDRC. Prior to the project, no consolidated framework or resource pack existed that could map out strategies for mainstreaming. IDRC has been learning on-the-go. Also, the phenomena of "mainstreaming fatigue" and other mainstreaming challenges referred to in the report also exist within IDRC. Hopefully now, with the Resource Pack and learnings from the project, IDRC will engage in the long process of trying to institutionalize PCIA as another operative framework for informing future projects and programs.

While little progress on mainstreaming is understandable, I do question why PCIA did not at least remain embedded in the Evaluation Unit where it was born. Somehow the gap was not bridged between the pioneering work of Ken Bush on PCIA and the equally pioneering work that led to the development of Outcome Mapping. Had PCIA been integrated into the Outcome Mapping framework (which incidentally covers the entire programming cycle), the many organizations around the globe now using Outcome Mapping would already be familiar with the importance of PCIA as an operative lens through which to conceive, design, implement, monitor and evaluate development work. One of the main assumptions of PCIA is that development work will have an impact, for better or worse, on human relationships...it is not value-free. Yet, Outcome Mapping seems to assume a value-neutral approach...which is why gender is not explicitly incorporated either. This is not meant to be an evaluation of Outcome Mapping – just a personal observation of a relationship that seems obvious to me, but is essentially non-existent within IDRC. In talking with Terry, he initially hadn't recognized the possible relationship between these two fields.

This may be one concrete area to explore immediate implications and possible application of PCIA internally as one effort towards mainstreaming.

Staff committed to excellence

Regardless of adverse conditions such as severe workload issues, staff turn-over, etc, the persistent commitment to excellence demonstrated in IDRC staff is noteworthy. As noted in the report, consortium members suggested IDRC's way of engaging and working with partners provides a good model for other donors to follow. They were actively involved and engaged with the substance of the project, offering opinions and feedback while at the same time remaining flexible and respectful of the partners'

interests and perspectives. The documentation reviewed was impressive in terms of the level of detail and organization that again demonstrates the high level of professionalism with which work is conducted. Equally impressive is the willingness to make the sacrifices necessary to get the job done well (unfortunately, this willingness also permits the perpetuation of an unhealthy system characterized by severe workloads). For instance, even when no more funding is available for RO position, she continues to offer assistance and what resulted in the need for accompaniment of the UK consortium on an almost daily basis.

The same can be said of the UK partners who also made sacrifices towards the end in order to fulfill project obligations. In the end, IDRC set a great example.

Possibilities for future contribution to PCIA/CSA development

As noted in the report, one possible role for IDRC could involve investing in more Southern-based research the goal of developing thorough case-studies illustrating PCIA throughout the programming cycle. I'm not sure to what extent IDRC uses or funds participatory action research methodologies, but it seems as though this would be a powerful way of following up on work begun in the PCIA / CSA project. In order to develop case-studies of the entire programming cycle, a longer research project would be required since the time between design, implementation and evaluation can not nor should not be compressed.

Continuing to build Southern capacity may require new ways of doing research that allows effective and appropriate codification of southern knowledge and experience – moving beyond Northern paradigms.

One of the significant contributions of IDRC in this project was the way in which it facilitated the sharing of knowledge across organizations and institutions, from North to South. While many organizations will continue advancing their own internal PCIA/CSA work, space needs to be created for this ongoing cross-fertilization. This may also be a role that IDRC chooses to continue to fulfill.