EVALUATION REPORT

For the International Development Research Centre

FLACSO GUATEMALA SECURITY PROJECTS

H.P. Klepak
Professor of Latin American History
Royal Military College of Canada

Ottawa
December 2001
TABLE OF CONTENTS

Executive Summary .................................................................................................................. 3

Projects Unlike Most and an Evaluation Sharing Those Characteristics............................. 5

The Background to the Two Projects ..................................................................................... 5

What are the Projects and How Did They Fare? ..................................................................... 6

In General .................................................................................................................................. 6

Capacity Building ................................................................................................................... 7

Knowledge Generation .......................................................................................................... 9

The Influence on the Policy Process ....................................................................................... 11

The Question of Participation .................................................................................................. 12

The Matter of Gender .............................................................................................................. 13

Performance ............................................................................................................................ 14

The Dissemination of Results ................................................................................................ 14

Future Orientations of FLACSO Guatemala Security Research ............................................. 15

Conclusions ............................................................................................................................... 17

Recommendations .................................................................................................................... 17

APPENDIX ............................................................................................................................... 19

Persons formally interviewed on the evaluator’s visit to Guatemala: ................................ 19

Other persons informally interviewed: .................................................................................. 19
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This evaluation looks at the work done in two IDRC projects in the context of the current Guatemalan defence and security scene. They were undertaken after a study team assessed in 1998 the utility of conducting such work in support of the goals of capacity building and knowledge generation in this vital field, and thereby having an influence on policy related to it.

The first of these projects (00460- "Military Policy and Security Agendas") was undertaken in 1999 and was officially terminated in July 2000. It was to study the progress made in implementing the peace accord dealing with the place of the armed forces in a democratic society and the reinforcing of civil control over them. Conceptual analysis of general policy as well as of specific measures to be adopted was attempted here with a book addressing the question of policy options in defence and security as the main end product.

The second project (100648-"Security and Defence Policy in Guatemala") was to join with a UNDP effort using discussions of key issues in this field to produce and disseminate 10 booklets on important security and defence themes in order to strengthen policy engagement capacity.

There have been significant delays in the production of the results of both projects. And while the book resulting from the first project is now ready for publication, the booklets are not. This is especially serious because the debate is currently being launched on the future policy of Guatemala in the defence and security field with a White Paper on Defence being one of the major results in a matter of a short time frame of five or six months. This is especially important at the present time since the political context in Guatemala is seen by many as deteriorating, particularly in terms of the anchoring of democracy and the establishment of proper civilian control over the military.

Despite these somewhat negative aspects of the projects it should be said that the work done so far has been of a high standard. The contribution of the first project's results to the design and carrying forward of the major UNDP effort is acknowledged. The hard work done so far by FLACSO's team of researchers is undeniable. The overall potential contribution of the two projects to the debate on defence and security in the country is impressive. In capacity building and to some extent knowledge generation there is little to criticise. However, the delays so far have meant that to some extent the knowledge generation done has remained limited. In addition, and linked to this state of affairs the same must be said about policy influence.

Conclusions

♦ In terms of the process IDRC wished to support, one helping to anchor democracy and improved civil-military relations more effectively in Guatemala, this project is a success.

♦ In no way does this mean that the kind of faulty planning that led to the mistakes mentioned should be retained. It clearly must be addressed and addressed seriously. But there could be a danger of exaggerating the losses. If further delays are avoided, these booklets should be available and form part of the basis for the national debate on security and defence already underway. They may perhaps prove even more important now, in the present very difficult
political context, because the government has now invited that debate as part of its white paper preparation process and sees that without it the white paper will lack credibility.

♦ This is a key moment in the process of establishing democratic civil-military relations in Guatemala. The public debate over the next five or six months will end with a White Paper on Defence. The crucial moment for the booklets' impact is in the very near future. The *moment must be seized* by a dissemination of the booklets both speedy and linked to specific actors in the target audiences who will make their appearance part of the debate.

**Recommendations**

1) FLACSO should now move with great speed to complete these booklets and hire the person to plan and effect their dissemination.

2) This dissemination should be done in a way that a *real contribution* is made, at this key moment in Guatemalan history, to the current national debate on the issue of defence and security, keeping in mind the *urgency of affecting positively the debate now* and in the next few months, *before* the White Paper on Defence is produced.

3) This dissemination should also take account of the potential impact of these booklets elsewhere in Central, and indeed, Latin America.

4) IDRC should support the idea of setting up a network of specialised research centres on specific subjects of interest in the defence and security field and discuss with UNDP its wider replicability in Central America, with a view to maximising the impact of the limited assistance available and avoiding in so far as possible duplication of effort and jealousies among collaborators.

5) IDRC should accept that the wider objectives of the process within which the IDRC-supported smaller project has taken place have been met and that IDRC support was central in doing so, but it should *insist* that priority now be given to its project and its results' *rapid* dissemination in an effective way.

6) FLACSO should complete the publication of the larger volume on conceptual issues and use it to contribute to the now much wider (if still of course limited) national debate on defence and security currently going on and should do so within the time frames mentioned above.

7) FLACSO should review its planning process to ensure that the sort of errors of judgment made in both these projects are truly addressed in a fashion that will eliminate them except in the most dramatic circumstances and thus permit and facilitate future cooperation between the institution and IDRC as well as other international agencies.

8) FLACSO should move within the next stages of its programme in the defence and security field towards giving an academic course with university credit in the field and should do this in a fashion having a regional approach rather than a merely Guatemalan one. This could lead with time to a proper M.A. level programme in the field at a Central American university.
Projects Unlike Most and an Evaluation Sharing Those Characteristics

The two projects that this evaluation addresses, and especially that dealing with the preparation of booklets for public dissemination in Guatemala (100648), have a number of original elements. The objectives of the first were far-reaching and, as reported before, aimed at a significant contribution to peacebuilding and democratization in that country. And while they were not fully met, as again has been reported to IDRC in previous documents, they did to some extent move forward the desired agenda. And one is hopeful that this progress can now be capitalized upon.

The second project is problematic since none of the tangible objectives have been met as of the time of the conducting of this evaluation. The booklets have not been produced, and have thus obviously not been distributed. They have of course also not directly had any political influence as yet. Evaluating them is thus impossible except in terms of the quality of the researchers currently working on them, and their place in the wider projects of the UNDP and UNOPS into which they feed or for which they are to provide value added.

Nonetheless, as will be shown in this evaluation it is the view of this evaluator that much worthwhile work has been achieved already with this project and its feeding into the wider one. In addition, the persons working now on the preparation of the booklets are very competent and now dispose of virtually full time to complete the work assigned. Their time lines have not been met but revised ones have been established internally in FLACSO Guatemala and appear to be likely to be met.

It is impossible not to suggest that there was a significant need for more careful assessments of time restraints, the needs of the larger project, and the evolution of events in Guatemala in order to have assigned more manageable dates for the completion of this project. The previous project had already led its evaluator to conclude that there were weaknesses in FLACSO's planning process which needed to be addressed in the future. This problem has clearly surfaced again here, as FLACSO freely admits. However, it is extremely important to note two matters here. Firstly, many issues that impinged on the project's timings were truly outside FLACSO's control. Secondly, there has been a direct and highly profitable benefit for the larger international project from the work done, and availability of, the researchers FLACSO hired in support of the IDRC-backed booklets project.

The Background to the Two Projects

IDRC became involved in research related to Guatemalan security and defence after a study team analysed in 1998 the utility of so doing in support of goals of capacity building and knowledge generation, as well as the potential political impact in peacebuilding and democratization. Since then a number of projects have been launched and completed. These two projects are related to this relatively new interest on the part of IDRC in this region and in the consolidation of peace and democracy therein and especially in Guatemala.
Events in Guatemala were both promising and troubling. A 36-year long civil war ended in 1996 with ground-breaking accords promising essentially the remaking of Guatemalan society in ways which would make it much more democratic, inclusive, transparent in its government, and much else. A major element of those accords was that entitled “Accord on the Strengthening of Civilian Power and the Role of the Army in a Democratic Society.” In line with that agreement, a new civilian police force has replaced the militarized one present in the country before 1996. In addition the armed forces were cut, although not to the great extent seen elsewhere in Central American peace processes, and they were brought at least to some extent under considerably greater civilian control. Finally, a civilian Strategic Analysis Secretariat was set up and promises were made to move towards the development of a civilian intelligence service for the country as well as ensure that the armed forces were excluded as far as possible from aid to the civil power missions at home and oriented almost exclusively towards external defence.

Such progress took place under the Arzú government which held power for another three years after the accords were signed. Financial issues combined with general dragging of feet by key sectors to ensure that further progress was slow and uncertain. The new Portillo government which replaced Arzú showed less keenness on reform and argued that in any case it did not have the funds to do much given the country’s nearly hopeless taxation impasse. But the election of a Congress dominated by an opposition led by former president and highly conservative Ríos Montt meant that even with the best will in the world, Portillo was unlikely to achieve much in the highly sensitive security field.

It was in this context that the two projects assessed here saw the light of day. It should be noted that a number of political events, especially the very recent and troubling nomination of serving or retired military officers to key posts in areas of responsibility seen by most observers as being civilian, have increased concern about the direction in which the country is going. As part of the commitment in the accords to reduce the role of the military and increase that of civilians there is much which is worrying in present trends in the country and no where is that more obvious than in the security field.

What are the Projects and How Did They Fare?

This will be the main section of this evaluation and will discuss progress overall, then one by one the impact on capacity building, knowledge generation, and political impact of the work done. In each section there will be a brief background to the specific element under review, followed by a discussion of results, and then a short mention of what the future factors to consider might be.

In General

Project 00460 “Military Policy and Security Agendas” was negotiated in 1999 and ended officially in July 2000. It aimed at studying the uneven progress made in the implementation of the peace accord dealing with the place of the army in a democratic society and the reinforcing
of civil power. It was hoped with research done by FLACSO to contribute to both conceptual analysis of general policy as well as specific measures which were adopted in connection with civil-military relations and the armed forces as a whole. It was hoped thereby to stimulate a first real public debate on defence and security in Guatemala and assist civil society in proposing options in those fields. A book addressing the question of policy options in the defence and security field was prepared and is to be published presently.

While not entirely happy with the results obtained it was still felt at IDRC that the methodology adopted for this project, which involved engaging the security forces in a dialogue on where national defence and security should go in a democratic context, was the right one if any progress of importance was to be achieved. As has been mentioned some elements of the previous project were still left over when the more current one began in the autumn of 2000.

FLACSO had expressed its desire to carry on with its work in this field, an area of specialization over the years, and had submitted a request to do a further project. After meetings with IDRC a satisfactory proposal was eventually submitted and approved. This became project 100648 “Security and Defence Policy in Guatemala.” It proposed to build on the work done in the previous project and specifically to:

- Develop 10 booklets on the themes of security and defence to strengthen policy engagement capacity.
- Strengthen the critical engagement capacity of different actors and social sectors on the themes of security and defence, by providing a vision on those issues that is consonant with the national conjuncture and with the consolidation of democracy.
- Disseminate and evaluate the booklets through activities such as focus groups and workshops involving potential users, to identify the impact and utility of those materials.

The connection to IDRC objectives was varied. The project was seen as fitting under the security sector reform rubric of IDRC work but could just as well be seen within the field of support for human security. Indeed, work on democratization could also include this project without stretching its terms of reference. Thus a number of objectives of the IDRC would be served by such a project as had been the case with the first.

**Capacity Building**

FLACSO Guatemala has an unparalleled record in Guatemala in working on security and defence issues, especially on civil-military relations in democracies. Already in the 1980s there was work done under its auspices in terms of human rights, the roles of armed forces in democracy, civil-military relations, and much else. This involvement evolved over the years with ups and downs in terms of institutional interest in the area but after the peace accords of 1996 interest grew again.

FLACSO Guatemala benefits from a series of linkages with the rest of Central and indeed Latin America in this field. It is not too much to say that it is doubtless the premier study centre on
security and defence matters not only in Central America but in northern Latin America as a whole. And its close connections with FLACSO Chile, an institution also working well and long in this area of study, ensures a special degree of impact and dissemination of products within much of Latin America. It should also be said that FLACSO headquarters in San José, Costa Rica, encourages this work within the context of a Latin America-wide interest in seeing good work done in this vital area, and within its network of faculty throughout the region.

Thus the organization is in many ways already established in the area of defence and security studies. Support for it since 1998 has been coupled with other arrangements to stimulate less well-established centres in Guatemala as part of a dual policy of assisting those already working well in this crucial field while assisting those not so established as yet to become so.

The results with this objective seem to the evaluator to be impressive indeed. This relatively small investment, given its links with other projects undertaken, allowed FLACSO to engage full-time the services of two excellent researchers, as well as to retain the services of perhaps the most important strategic analyst in Central America today in the person of Bernardo Arévalo de León. The team put together is first-rate and received the kudos of simply everyone with whom I spoke on the evaluation trip. This is rare indeed in the context of the race for international assistance funds so visible in Central America today. Despite the reluctance of some in the security forces, and especially the army, to take part in the exercise, even the most recalcitrant were fulsome in their praise of the high work ethic, exceptional professional capacity, and high analytical skills of the team in place.

At one time, however, it had been thought that there might be room to hire more people, perhaps on a part-time basis, for the IDRC-supported project. This did not occur and obviously this affected the total capacity building which occurred as a result of the project. Having said this, it is also important to realize that all three researchers devoted an enormous amount of their time to this project as is clear from the products which resulted so far and which are still being worked on.

A number of observers and participants made the point that while much was achieved ‘in house’, the main capacity building probably occurred outside FLACSO. This was of course part and parcel of the objectives IDRC had in mind. Several civilians involved suggested that while the military came to the wider projects’ ‘mesas’ well prepared to discuss security and defence matters, this was far from the case for the bulk of the civilians attending. The learning process was hailed by all as exceptional and several individuals expressed formally on behalf of their institutions that the building of their own capacity to understand and comment on defence and security matters had been simply transformed by the process and that they now felt vastly better prepared to engage in the national debate on defence and security which is forthcoming and announced in late November.

The FLACSO team did, however, admit to errors made in this regard. These were, in their view several. The main one related to capacity building was not having hired one person with no other responsibilities outside of this project. It was said openly that this was their mistake and that the result was greater effort being given to the much large UNDP project at considerable expense to the smaller enterprise. There had been excessive optimism that this could be avoided. And when
the work load of the larger project grew with the evolution of events, the smaller project’s time lines were bound to suffer.

At the same time all three researchers felt that the feeding in of the work done in the smaller project, as well as that done in the previous IDRC-funded project, meant that the larger project benefited enormously. This was especially true in the area of knowledge generation but also can be seen in the growth of FLACSO and wider groups’ increasing ease with this field of interest.

For the future there was a widespread feeling that further work should include the establishment and maintenance of a network of those working in fields related to defence and security in Guatemala which would also act as a stimulus to a continuing debate on these matters as well as a fortifying of civil society’s ability to review defence decisions and contribute to discussions about them.

Knowledge Generation

The background to this objective needs little discussion. Despite a historic elite with significant cultural credentials, the fact is that knowledge of defence and security matters within that elite has been virtually nil. And if this is true of the elite it is even more so in the case of other sectors of society.

While the armed forces and defence issues have long dominated Guatemalan society in many ways, the military historically insisted that they were its exclusive domain. To involve oneself as a civilian in the analysis of such matters was to invite a highly negative reaction from the security forces and death or exile have for long often awaited those who dared to challenge this chasse gardée of the armed forces. Since democratization, however, this has been changing. Indeed, the military have increasingly echoed most of their Latin American counterparts in suggesting that defence is indeed the responsibility of society as a whole. But this is a relatively recent development and members of society can be forgiven for even now moving into the field with caution and even occasionally trepidation.

Generating knowledge in this context has been a long and hard road to travel. There were and are no formal courses in these fields at Guatemalan educational institutions although this may change, largely as a result of FLACSO’s interest in making its occasional courses a permanently available academic option. Here, however, we are at the beginning of such thinking. Until now, ignorance of even basic matters of defence administration, the roles of armed forces in democracies, military subordination to civil authority and civil oversight of them, strategy, defence planning, equipment procurement, and most other matters considered as normal elements of civilian interest in developed democracies, has been the rule and not the exception.

FLACSO had been at the centre of those efforts made so far. Its own course in defence was over-subscribed when held recently. Its publications since the late 1980s have generally been excellent and truly ground-breaking in the Guatemalan context. It has held seminars on specific and general topics of defence for several years and has tried to stimulate a wide interest in these matters through both its research and educational effort. Finally it has in mind to begin a full Master’s programme in the defence field as soon as possible. The book currently being prepared
for publication as a result of the support of IDRC for the first FLACSO project will act as a fundamental building block in all of this.

After speaking to dozens of participants in the ‘mesas’ process, as well as academics and NGO spokespersons interested in this project, it is clear to this evaluator that an enormous amount of knowledge was generated by the work done on the wider project. The difficulty is, of course, that one is here again working without the specific main product expected of IDRC’s own funded project- the booklets to be distributed widely to specific sectors which one hopes to have take an active part in national debates surrounding these matters. It is clear from discussions with the three researchers that their idea is certainly to ensure the passing on of the knowledge generated both by the ‘mesas’ and the research done for this and the previous project. But at this moment it is of course impossible to judge this as the drafts are not in sufficiently advanced form to do so. Nor is the person who is to be hired to organise that dissemination as yet hired.

There was clearly a great deal of feedback between the ‘mesas’ and the preparation of papers for this and the larger project. PNUD may well not understand fully just how valuable the smaller project was for the success of the larger but in at least three of four ‘themes’ the IDRC-funded project’s input was described by researchers working on both as ‘decisive.’ Indeed, in Mr. Arévalo de León’s view it was only the progress with the previous IDRC-funded and the current smaller project that the bigger project could have been properly designed.

A significant part of the difficulty arose in the sense that the very synergies existing between the two projects ensured that they would be more linked than had been originally thought. This has of course much of value to it but it is not easy to prove. The more action-related research brought about its own very favourable and sought-after dynamic. Many members of groups clearly expressed the view that they had no idea how much of a dynamic would indeed develop and how much work they would be doing. This is of course another (admitted) error in that this domination by the larger project in this sense was not foreseen either.

On the positive side this meant that the people involved in the first project were very much involved in the second. On the negative side, however, the main researchers were greatly overworked not only in the preparation of the ‘mesas’ and the documentation for and from them, but even in their conducting sessions as moderators, facilitators, guides on methodology and the like.

Again here, there is an admission that the design phase of the project was faulty and should have been much clearer and realistic. The result was that there was not at all times a dedicated person from the team working exclusively on the smaller project. And this lead to the delays which came to bedevil the project. In Mr. Arévalo de León’s words, “the time frames, when isolated, made sense, but once joined, no longer did so.”

Despite these difficulties, the team believe that by the end of the month, the major manuscript will be in the hands of the publishers as part of the plan to publish and distribute the findings of the first major research effort. And by February it is planned to produce the first booklets and in March the remaining ones. It was admitted, however, that this is very late although its timing may be fortuitous in that the national debate should be engaged by then.
The Influence on the Policy Process

From the first projects launched by IDRC in Guatemala there has been a deep concern to contribute to the real political evolution of the country towards effective democracy in all the efforts made. The slowing of initial progress in the implementation of the peace accords, followed by the disturbing trends witnessed at the moment in terms of what many see as a retreat from the level of advance made so far, has stimulated IDRC to engage even more actively in that pursuit.

The issues related to security and defence are central to the anchoring of democracy in Guatemala and are the subject of considerable levels of fear at the moment among those working for a stable and effective democratic system. In this country, where political interest in defence has been no greater than academic, the lack of a defence policy generated by civil society and government has meant that the military themselves have virtually always developed it by themselves. And the sad history of Guatemala in this sense has meant that civil society has more than paid the price for this indifference. Yet little has changed. Neither the government nor the opposition parties seem very concerned about security issues. As mentioned elsewhere, virtually no political figures appeared at the ‘mesas’ and when one or two did, it was for plenary sessions only. There was no political participation in the working group sessions where knowledge generation was actually taking place.

This is unfortunately typical and one of the main obstacles to the process of reform in which IDRC-funded projects play. It has meant that in light of the seeming desire of the majority Ríos Montt-led opposition to delay all meaningful reform in the defence sector, FLACSO has had to target individual sympathetic members of Congress for special attention in line with the knowledge generation done. It is as yet unclear what effect this will have.

As for results in the political arena then, there is some debate on the real impact of these two projects on the policy debate in Guatemala. FLACSO tends to be rather self-demeaning in this regard pointing out the negative context for real progress at this time although insisting that this context has lead to real progress in the creation of a dialogue with members of Congress on defence and security.

MINUGUA and several NGO persons interviewed on the other hand felt that FLACSO had been absolutely central, not only in launching a real debate which now feeds in important ways into the national debate called for by the government on 20th November and without which that debate would lack absolutely fundamental elements, but also in providing soon booklets to key sectors which will help greatly in making the debate a real one and a participatory one, all of this for the first time in Guatemalan history.

MINUGUA’s praise was fulsome indeed. Both Dr. Giapponi and his Ecuadorean researcher, Michel Andrade, were insistent that without the two projects supported by IDRC, as well as the larger UNDP project, the debate would be seriously hamstrung. Thus they felt that FLACSO had, in their words, maximised its utility in developing new concepts on which the debate can be
centred, given leadership to other elements of civil society much in need of guidance as to how to proceed in having a voice on these matters, and would be providing direct assistance in the form of the booklets to those who wished to frame their future interventions effectively.

*The Question of Participation*

It has proved difficult to answer IDRC’s well-founded concern about improving and expanding the participation of other actors in the projects done so far and especially in knowledge generation and the wider ‘mesas’ process. Considerable thought was given to how to incorporate these needs into the projects.

The main difficulty arose from the exclusiveness and lack of representation of Guatemalan society, as well as the impact of recent history. It was clear to the researchers that an attempt to go into the countryside to elicit ideas about a conceptualisation of defence would lead inevitably to a widespread expression of the need for the armed forces to take an even more enhanced role in the nation’s security at all levels. It was felt that this would be unfortunate indeed in the present context, even if such a situation and such views can be explained by events in recent history.

In addition, there is far too little real representativeness in Guatemala among those who say they represent this or that group to allow for ease of incorporation of many sectors. Instead, the decision was taken to include those who had good and close relations with a wide range of sectors which would only with difficulty be included in ‘mesas’ and other activities. There was a recognition that this is far from ideal and that further work should be done to move in the right direction here but that this would take time. Indeed, it was felt that the booklets project has this as an objective more than as a base on which to work. On the other hand, both FLACSO and MINUGUA specialists noted the number of indigenous people at the ‘mesas’ and in great measure as a result of FLACSO’s effort, in the wider debate on defence and security currently taking part. It must be noted, however, that this indigenous presence was neither very large nor was it representative of indigenous groups interested in the matters under discussion. One is rather speaking of persons who happen to be of indigenous origin representing other groupings.

The evaluator found much of worth in this assessment of the problem in Guatemala and especially in the security field. However, it is felt that more of an effort will be needed in the future to address this problem, even if one should accept that this will need to be done as slowly as it is surely. It is easy to overlook, however, that in fact the number and variety of people from organisations never before involved in a security dialogue was impressive. Government people unaccustomed to such forums, where free debate is encouraged and where formal or political stands are avoided (such as the Secretaría de Análisis Estratégico) and NGOs such as SEDEM, CIEN (fiscal policy research) and several others broadened effectively and as never before the membership of working groups grappling with security and defence matters.

If there can be more work done in bringing in more and more varied groups, it must also be underscored that the effort made by FLACSO in this regard had never before been equaled and that this change has been noted by government as well.
The Matter of Gender

There was disappointment with the clear lack of incorporation of gender into the projects done so far for IDRC, as well as recognition that more mainstreaming of such issues will be important. However, there was a spirited defence provided related to the priorities of the projects so far which have so much work ahead of them that gender had to take a secondary position for the moment, whatever the views of the researchers themselves. Patricia González was especially vocal in her expression of how important it will be to deal with this matter seriously in order to indeed mainstream it. But she admitted that she also did not know how best to go about this and insisted on the dangers of putting it too forward into the present picture as a move which could well threaten progress in much more central elements of the preferred way ahead.

There appear to have been no spin-offs from work done so far where gender is concerned. The only people to attend the seminar on the question earlier were women assigned by their bosses or with a personal or professional interest in gender issues. And while this underscores the problem it also shows to what extent other priorities might be placed in jeopardy by trying to go too far too fast on this issue. It should also be said that from the viewpoint of this evaluation it was not always clear the approach to this issue which IDRC felt most worthwhile pursuing. As a result it could prove profitable for the Centre to reflect internally on how it approaches this subject. Equally worth noting is that other organisations in Guatemala are moving forward in important ways in this area.

The two persons interviewed from Minugua sought to underscore with us that from their perspective, however, as much progress had been made as was possible at this juncture. They argued powerfully for understanding on this matter where FLACSO was concerned. They felt that indeed women had been very present at the ‘mesas,’ that Patricia was including a gender dimension in so far as possible in the booklets, and that the question of gender had been at least placed on the table in the Guatemalan security field, and that this was a first in this country. They also insisted that there were quite a few women at the ‘mesas’ and that in the Guatemalan security context that alone was progress.

Eduvina Hernández of SEDEM (specializing in security sector reform research) had a different perspective on this issue and one this evaluator found compelling. She argued that there had indeed been progress in the simple fact that the meeting on gender planned under these projects had indeed been held. But she suggested that the approach was wrong. She felt that being lectured to by key analysts of gender issues was useful only to a point. She thought that it would have been much more important to have a true seminar with everyone bringing to bear on the issue of security their more gender-oriented perspectives. In her convincing view, one should be trying to see how to focus better on such matters in company with politicians and military officers who must make real decisions on real issues of importance with regard to gender and security. This is felt by this evaluator to be well worth pursuing.
Performance

In terms of the main questions asked related to this initiative, it must simply be said that in the main the project has not yet reached its original objectives in the sense of the products laid out as to be delivered. Thus it is impossible to say that it has performed in an opportune and efficient manner. There have been major delays and there do not appear to have been strategies to manage risks, delays, and other difficulties which indeed arose in the life of the project. These delays followed on others experienced with the first IDRC/FLACSO project.

As mentioned elsewhere in this report the main difficulties appear to have been that insufficient thought and planning was given to timings and the demands of another, concurrent, and larger project. While this project was closely linked in terms of both objectives and means to the smaller IDRC-funded initiative, it nonetheless took over some considerable energy from the smaller project. Wider results of what are seen by this evaluator as truly great value were achieved, but it is necessary to leave the specific realm of this project in order to assess them.

The researchers on this project clearly worked hard and well for the overall objectives shared by the UNDP and IDRC projects. It is my view that the achievements reached more than make up for the difficulties encountered by the smaller project. And those achievements must be seen against the backdrop of what appears to be a solid book coming from the first IDRC-backed project. However, it remains undeniable that those objectives were not the direct ones agreed to by FLACSO as incumbent on them to produce.

It must also be said that the political environment did not help the project. Events moved quickly in Guatemala in recent months and in no field was this more clear than in defence and security. Indeed, the events that affected the project were not limited to Guatemala alone. The security context in the post-11th September world had significant impact on the project bringing considerable pressures on well-known researchers working in this field. The fact that Guatemala experienced changes in its minister of the interior with a military officer retiring to take the job, and in the naming of another retired officer to the job of anti-terrorism coordinator meant that the environment for security and defence discussions was overtaken by immediate concerns which affected the time available of staff and members of ‘mesas’ alike.

On the other hand, that very centrality of the security issue in the country’s life will mean greater public interest in the findings of the ‘mesas’ as well as in the defence and security debate as a whole. It is clear that the FLACSO efforts, and perhaps especially the conceptual work done in the current and previous projects for IDRC, will help in ensuring the debate on these absolutely vital matters in the anchoring of democracy in the country is much better informed and sensitive to potential pitfalls.

The Dissemination of Results

It is simply too early to say much about the dissemination of the formal results in the form of the planned booklets. There has been a serious delay in their production and as mentioned, there is an expected further delay as of this time. While it can be argued that the impact of the research
and discussion stimulated by this project has fed in dramatically to the larger project, and that this is a major positive achievement, the fact remains that the booklets have not as yet appeared and will not be available for review and dissemination for some time. And as mentioned, the key person to carry out the dissemination and plan the sessions for it has not as yet been hired.

It must also be said that some in the ‘mesas’ do not approve of the manner in which the question of the booklets dissemination is being handled. Some, especially in the military, are fearful that, as according to them during the ‘mesas’ as well, there may well be too much emphasis on the past and in assigning blame for it in the booklets and that this would be unfortunate. They argue that there should be a review of them by all participants before they are released to the public. Others agree that they should be reviewed but not for those reasons but in an attempt to ensure continued consensus on the results. Most, however, seemed to have confidence in the authors to reflect that consensus accurately. This may turn out to be a future difficulty for FLACSO although the researchers intend to have a small committee, made up of representatives of the main trends in thinking seen at the ‘mesas,’ assess the drafts before they are released.

There is also the question of the events which were originally planned to launch the booklets. It is not at all clear whether they can or will take place as planned. Time has moved on rapidly and the key in this country where published material is rarely read, especially by political actors, may well prove to be whether key people in the various sectors can be interested in themselves carrying forth the popularizing of the booklets within their groupings. It is not at all clear what FLACSO can do at this stage although it can certainly be argued that they should do much more than just publish the booklets themselves. In this the role of the person hired to tackle the thorny task of effective dissemination will of course be key.

Against this backdrop it must be said that with the exception of only a few of the armed forces personnel involved in the ‘mesas,’ all expected a first-class product of simply immense utility for those in the country interested in the field, and a highly useful follow-on to the book now going to press. Guillermo Pacheco, a key defence analyst, and a civilian, with the Ministry of Defence, insisted that the major value of the booklets will be their unique position in Latin America, where this exercise has never been undertaken and where interest in its results will often be great. He also felt that they will become points of reference of immense importance for the future debate in Guatemala and that one needs patience to see political impact coming from them in a country like his. He pleaded for IDRC patience on the matter of the speed of their production as a result of their future importance.

Future Orientations of FLACSO Guatemala Security Research

In discussions with Bernardo Arévalo de León and his two main researchers for the IDRC projects, it became clear that the preferred future orientation of their research would be related to the following:

- one two-year project on citizen security (not involving the armed forces this time) using the same methodology as in the second project for IDRC
- WSP projects again with the same methodology which is appreciated by that organisation involving:
  - the establishment and maintenance of a network of organisations working in the security field in Guatemala
  - further work in knowledge generation and training of key persons to work in areas related to defence and security
  - the institutionalisation of security in Guatemala
  - further work on the future security agenda in the country

A network is perhaps one of the most exciting potentially of these ideas. Most analysts agree that a network of agencies working in the field should be created. And most agree that its maintenance would be crucial to success in an area where such networks come and go with grim regularity and have had little staying power. The originality in this project seems to be that its major objective would not be solely that of keeping the various organisations in touch but would principally be in an effort to avoid duplication while doing valuable work.

It is proposed to work, under UNPD auspices, for a network which would also be an actual division of labour among the various agencies working in defence and security in the country. That is, different agencies would propose areas of concentration in which they would suggest they continue working or might begin to work. Under UNPD overview, they would debate who is best suited to each type of work envisaged for future security study and effort in Guatemala and divide the work among them. It is argued that this would have an enormous potential effect in reducing the current rather chronic problem of not only duplication but also inter-agency squabbling.

It was interesting to note that a number of interviewees, and especially the Canadian ambassador, thought this a most worthy idea which should be pursued. FLACSO is very keen indeed and while it might be thought by some that this would be a bad idea for what is usually seen as the lead agency in the field, FLACSO staff felt that the advantages would far outweigh the disadvantages and ensure less negativism in moving forward with the whole range of work needed.

Knowledge generation and training would move towards changing the current ad hoc arrangements for FLACSO-organised training in defence and security matters for civilians. The idea here would be to provide at first a more regular course with academic credit at the end, and one based on a regional approach rather than one centred merely on Guatemala. This would allow further study for the oft-heard proposal for a Master’s programme in defence and security at a Central American university.

The insitutionalisation of security services in Guatemala would be taking off on the basis of current IDRC and UNDP projects and would work on the idea of how to make the provision of
security to Guatemalans an institutionalised process. Related to this would be work on the on-going evolution of the security agenda in the country and region.

**Conclusions**

These sorts of projects frequently are about process as much as about deliverables of a more tangible type. It is clear to the evaluator that in terms of the process IDRC wished to support, one helping to anchor democracy and improved civil-military relations more effectively in Guatemala, this project is already a success.

In no way does this mean that the kind of faulty planning that led to the mistakes mentioned should be retained. It clearly must be addressed and addressed seriously. But there could be a danger of exaggerating the losses. Two of the researchers are actively drafting their assigned booklets at this time. And *if further delays are avoided*, these booklets should be available and form part of the basis for the national debate on security and defence already underway. They may perhaps prove even more important now, in the present very difficult political context, because the government has now invited that debate as part of its white paper preparation process and clearly sees that without it the white paper will lack credibility. This should be seized upon as a key point in the process of establishing democratic civil-military relations in the country. The debate is to take place in a public fashion over the next five or six months and will end with a White Paper on Defence. The crucial moment for the booklets to have an impact is in the very near future. One cannot afford a lost opportunity here. The *moment must be seized* and it can only be so if *dissemination of the booklets is now both speedy and linked to specific actors in the target audiences* who will make their appearance part of the debate.

There is much to be gained from the experience, positive and negative, garnered so far with these projects. Thus some recommendations for the future fall out of the above discussion.

**Recommendations**

5) FLACSO should now move with great speed to complete these booklets and hire the person to plan and effect their dissemination.

6) This dissemination should be done in a way that a *real contribution* is made, at this key moment in Guatemalan history, to the current national debate on the issue of defence and security, keeping in mind the *urgency of affecting positively the debate now* and in the next few months, *before* the White Paper on Defence is produced.

7) This dissemination should also take account of the potential impact of these booklets elsewhere in Central, and indeed, Latin America.
8) IDRC should support the idea of setting up a network of specialised research centres on specific subjects of interest in the defence and security field and discuss with UNDP its wider replicability in Central America, with a view to maximising the impact of the limited assistance available and avoiding in so far as possible duplication of effort and jealousies among collaborators.

9) IDRC should accept that the wider objectives of the process within which the IDRC-supported smaller project has taken place have been met and that IDRC support was central in doing so, but it should insist that priority now be given to its project and its results' rapid dissemination in an effective way.

10) FLACSO should complete the publication of the larger volume on conceptual issues and use it to contribute to the now much wider (if still of course limited) national debate on defence and security currently going on and should do so within the time frames mentioned above.

11) FLACSO should review its planning process to ensure that the sort of errors of judgment made in both these projects are truly addressed in a fashion that will eliminate them except in the most dramatic circumstances and thus permit and facilitate future cooperation between the institution and IDRC as well as other international agencies.

12) FLACSO should move within the next stages of its programme in the defence and security field towards giving an academic course with university credit in the field and should do this in a fashion having a regional (Central American) approach rather than a merely Guatemalan one. This could lead with time to a proper M.A. level programme in the field at a Central American university.
APPENDIX

Persons formally interviewed on the evaluator’s visit to Guatemala:

Mr. Bernardo Arévalo de León   FLACSO
Ms. María Patricia González Chávez   FLACSO
Mr. Manolo Vela    FLACSO
Ambassador Allan Culham   Canadian Ambassador
Mr. José Giopponi   Minugua
Mr. Michel Andrade   Minugua
Colonel Julio Echevarría   Ministerio de Defensa
Mr. Juan Pablo Arce   Researcher ICCPG
Mr. Luis Ramírez    Director ICCPG
Mr. Miguel Angel Sandoval    CALDH
Ms. Eduvina Hernández   SEDEM
Ms. Patricia O’Connor   PNUD
Dr. Miguel Angel Reyes   Sec. Análisis Estratégico
Dr. Gabriel Aguilera    SEPAZ
Ms. Araceli Lazo    SEPAZ
Ms. Carmen Rosa de León    EIPADES
Ms. María Rosa Wantlund    EIPADES

Other persons informally interviewed:

Dr. Edelberto Torres-Rivas   Professor of History and Politics
Mr. Guillermo Pacheco   Civilian analyst- Ministry of Defence
Ms. Christina Laur   CALDH
Col. Edelio Vázquez   Ministry of Defence
Col. Mario Ordón    Defence (ex-Minister of Education)
Col. Ian Nicholls    Former Canadian Forces Attaché