Evaluation of Peace, Conflict and Development (PCD) Research Support in Countries and Regions affected by Violent Conflict.

Palestine case study

Commissioned by the Peace, Conflict and Development (PCD) program - International Development Research Centre (IDRC)

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channel
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1   Background of the evaluation

1.1   Contextualized need for the evaluation

Despite widespread research activities in conflict-affected areas around the world, there has been limited attention paid to the actual process, methods and challenges of conducting research in these contexts. There is substantial literature on research methods in general, but little addresses the ethical and methodological challenges of carrying out research in societies experiencing violent conflict. Yet, researchers working in such circumstances often face difficulties connecting with the mainstream research community and do not receive adapted support, in terms of research design and ethics, required by these specific contexts.

For over a decade, through its Peace, Conflict and Development Program (PCD), IDRC has supported applied research and capacity-building on peace and conflict research in Latin America and the Caribbean, in sub-Saharan Africa, the Middle East and South Asia, – often with a view to advance global norms and learning on cross-regional analysis of peace and conflict processes.

IDRC works in partnership with institutes, universities, policymakers, civil society organizations, as well as networks of researchers. Recognizing the non-linearity of conflict, and the complexity of conflict situations and peace dynamics, IDRC aims at proactively impacting these situations through its support to applied research and policy-influence. PCD is a thematically focused research program that remains responsive to the priorities of Southern partners and also seeks to develop south-south research programs and networks. The four broad thematic areas covered by PCD are the following:
- Democratic Processes in Governance and Peacebuilding;
- Political Economy of Peace and Conflict;
- Security and Insecurity;
- Violence, Trauma, Justice and Reconciliation.

IDRC is now preparing its Corporate Strategy and Program Framework 2010-2015.

Specific context for Palestine

Palestine has been in a state of conflict for most of the past 60 years. For the past 41 years the West Bank and Gaza Strip (WBGS) have been under Israeli Occupation. In addition, the past 2 years have seen an unprecedented internal split at the political and civil society level that has brought in another level to the conflict.

The second Intifada led to a catastrophic deterioration in the humanitarian situation in the WBGS: Palestinians have experienced a drastic decline in living standards and a rise in poverty, high rates of unemployment, social disintegration, absence of social and personal security and political chaos. The Israeli measures of closure, siege, curfews, permit regimes barring Palestinians from entering Jerusalem and their holy

sites, the continued building of the Separation Barrier and expansion of settlements as well as bypass roads have produced a society that is confronted with all types of conflict on a daily basis. These measures affect every aspect of Palestinian life. The internal political fighting between Hamas and Fatah in the wake of Hamas' electoral victory in 2006 and later the de facto coup of the Gaza Strip by Hamas in June 2007 have also played a negative role in what is already a catastrophic situation.

Research capacity in Palestine is existent and there are a multitude of research institutes and initiatives, which employ highly qualified social scientists. IDRC has been supporting a number of partner organisations in Palestine since 1984, with more than 80 projects funded, spending more than CAD $12,000,000. Since the year 2000, the most significant area of programming has fallen under the umbrella of the PCD program initiative. The projects range from conflict analyses to improving policy research capacity, examining the impact of the violent conflict on Palestinian adolescents, as well as examining the possibility of integrating Islamist militants into the political process. The underlying two main aims of the PCD support to research in Palestine has been the creation of conditions in knowledge to return to a viable peace process, as well as to contribute to the Palestinian state-building process. [1]

Despite the fact that programming and project delivery has at times been very problematic due to the ongoing conflict, funding has never been withheld or stopped. Incorporating Palestine as one of the case studies in this evaluation is essential in order to understand the particular way in which the Palestinian partners have coped with these difficulties throughout the research cycle, and how IDRC has adapted its programming modalities to accommodate the difficult realities facing their Palestinian partners on the ground.

This study covers the period of 2002 when the first project, PACT I, covered by this study was commenced until the present day, as 2 of the projects are still ongoing.

1.2   Intended users and uses

According to IDRC's *Evaluation Guidelines*, "*an evaluation user is one who has the 'willingness', 'authority', and 'ability' to put learnings from the evaluation process or evaluation findings to work in some way. The primary intended users are those particular individuals or groups who are affected by the outcome of the evaluation, are in a position to make decisions about the evaluation, and intend to use the evaluation process or findings to inform their decisions or actions.*"[2]

The intended users of this evaluation are PCD program staff (primary intended users), IDRC senior management, IDRC program staff and PCD's partners (secondary users). The audience[3] of the evaluation also include other agencies/donors working in conflict contexts.

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[1] Debriefing in Ottawa, 29-31 April, 2008
[2] IDRC, "Identifying the Intended User(s) of an Evaluation", *Evaluation Guidelines*, p1.
[3] "*It is important to distinguish between the intended audience and the user(s) of an evaluation. An audience is a group, whether or not they are the client(s), who will or should see and may*

The evaluation seeks[4] to improve PCD's programming approach (project and program identification and development, programming modalities, monitoring, reporting and evaluation) in contexts of active conflict where PCD already programs. Building on lessons learnt from previous and current programming experience, it also assesses how, when, and under what conditions PCD could expand programming.

The evaluation also aims at increasing PCD partners' understanding of the value, utility and reach that research might have in contexts of conflict, as well as clarifying PCD and IDRC's role, and the expectations of what PCD and IDRC can and cannot do to support partners in conflict contexts.

1.3   Objectives and evaluation questions

As stated in the revised Terms of Reference (ToR)[5], the main objective of this evaluation is to identify the factors (conditions and programming modalities) that facilitate or hinder the research process for PCD-supported projects in countries and regions affected by violent conflict, and the advantages and disadvantages of PCD programming modalities in achieving PCD objectives in those conflict settings.

This evaluation is not an accountability evaluation, but should be considered as a **learning exercise**. Four specific objectives guide the evaluation which focuses on:

1) **The Conflict Context**: Get a better understanding of what conditions (security, research infrastructure, community of researchers, etc.) need to be in place, especially when a return to violence seems imminent, so that 1) PCD can feasibly support research and 2) partners can feasibly conduct research in line with PCD's program objectives. Each case study, here Palestine, outlines the actual conditions the researchers are working in and sheds light on lessons learnt.

2) **"What Happened" - the Partners' and PCD's Intents and Achievements**: Build a body of learning around the contributions PCD supported research can make in influencing policy, building research capacities, and increase domestic ownership of peace processes when taking into account the prevailing environmental conditions surrounding the research process and ethical considerations.

3) **The "How"- Programming Modalities**: Increase learning around the strengths and weaknesses of PCD programming modalities and its relationships to its research partners in contributing to the achievement of PCD objectives in countries and regions affected by violent conflict.

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react to an evaluation. The audience is interested in the evaluation but has a more passive relationship with it than the primary intended user(s)."Ibid.
[4] For more details on the intended uses of the evaluation, see ToR here attached, p 31.
[5] The ToR have been adjusted following the methodological workshop that was held in Ottawa on the 29th and 30th of April 2008 with IDRC staff and Channel Research team.

4) **Forward Thinking**: With a better understanding of prevailing conditions, challenges and opportunities surrounding PCD supported research as well as PCD's programming modalities: explore the implications (in terms of resources, security, institutional risks, policy influence, how we partner, etc.) of potential expansion of PCD programming into countries and regions affected by violent conflict.

1.4   Values and principles guiding the evaluation process

This evaluation is guided by the **international recognized standards** for evaluation quality, which include impartiality, independence, credibility, transparency and usefulness. The evaluation has been conducted under the standards of **ethics for social science research** (e.g guaranteeing the integrity of data or ensuring that there is no conflict of interest with the evaluator).

Given the complexity and high sensitivity of the conflict context, the evaluation has been conducted from a **conflict-sensitive approach**, at two different levels:
  ▪ First, attention has been paid to the *interaction between the evaluation process itself and the research process,* and/or context: e.g the possibility of visiting communities involved in the research project has always been assessed together with the researchers, trusting their judgement call on the negative unintended effects it could have on the research process itself. In the case of Palestine, a field visit for the Phase III of PACT (Palestinian Adolescents Coping with Trauma) to talk with the respondents in the villages where the study is being conducted was originally planned. However, as a phasing out on the behalf of ICHP was ongoing in order for the community based rehabilitation centre to take charge, a fleeting visit by the centre might have had negative consequences on the perceived ownership of the CBO. The visit was therefore cancelled.
  ▪ Secondly, the evaluation examines the *interaction of the research process with the context setting*, including policy influence, but also unintended negative and positive effects of the research process.

As stated in the guiding principles of IDRC's Evaluation Unit, the "*evaluation should be an asset for those being evaluated. Evaluation can impose a considerable time and resource burden on partner organizations* (...)"[6]. Whereas this evaluation does not aim to evaluate IDRC's partner organizations against results and is strictly orientated towards learning, the process required time from their staff and from the researchers. The evaluation team has taken this parameter into account when it has planned and conducted the field visit.

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[6] IDRC, Guiding Principles of IDRC's Evaluation Unit, http://www.idrc.ca/uploads/user-S/12095810441Evaluation_Unit_Guiding_Principles.pdf

In Palestine, the field trip unfortunately coincided with summer holidays which meant that some key members of the research teams for the projects covered by this study were not present. However, in such cases, information was shared via email and lengthy telephone interviews.

2   Methodology

2.1   Case study approach

According to Robert Yin (2003), "*a case study is an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident. In other words, you would use the case study method because you deliberately wanted to cover contextual conditions – believing that they might be highly pertinent to your phenomenon of study*"[7].

This report reflects the findings of the Palestine country case study. Through a detailed contextual analysis of four IDRC funded research projects, this case study aims to understand what is achievable in contexts which are similar to the Palestinian one. The evaluation particularly examines if the goals/objectives of the selected projects have been or are hampered or enhanced by the context in which they are being carried out.

The selected projects are:

Project 101610 – Between State and Tribe: The Rule of Law and Dispute Settlement in Post-Oslo

Partner: Dr. Mudar Kassis, Institute of Law, Birzeit University (hereby known as the Rule of Law Project)

The overall aim of this project was to produce policy recommendations on the role of customary law in the present and future Palestinian justice system[8]. This project investigated the tensions between the formal and the informal justice systems in Palestine and formulated policy recommendations, based on the findings of the research, on how these two potentially conflicting systems can be reconciled in a future Palestinian judiciary, whether by integrating the two, or encouraging the reform of one or both systems.

While the end objective of this research project was to contribute to efforts to reform the judiciary by recommending ways to approach the plurality of the Palestinian justice system, the primary and secondary research that was undertaken and the publication that resulted were equally important, as they have provided new insight into the growing field of informal justice.

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[7] Yin, Robert K. (2003). *Case Study Research: Design and Methods*, 3rd ed., Applied social research methods series, vol.5, London: Sage Publications, p13..

[8] Second Interim Technical Report, Informal Justice: The Rule of Law and Dispute Resolution in Post-Oslo Palestine, p 3

Project 102990 – Strategic Consequences of Palestine Divisions AND **Project 103849 – Integrating Islamist Militants into the Political Process**

Partner: Khalil Shikaki, Director, Palestinian Center for Policy and Survey Research (PSR)

Strategic Consequences of Palestine Divisions (hereby know as the Young Guards project)
The main objectives of this project was to review current Palestinian domestic and strategic policy choices and likely future scenarios while developing a better understanding of the socio-political changes that led to existing divisions and particularly the emergence of the young guard (within Fatah); and to examine the process of leadership transition within the Palestinian nationalist movement outlining the nature, profile, and outlook of the emerging young leadership. The project aimed to propose strategies to deal with potential consequences of the current Palestinian divisions on the domestic scene and the future of the peace process.

*Integrating Islamist Militants into the Political Process (hereby known as the Hamas project)***This project is co-funded by the Middle East Good Governance Fund (MEGGF)[9].**

The main question that this, still ongoing, project aims to answer is if the integration of Hamas into the political process will serve to moderate the group and bring it closer to mainstream social attitudes and policies. The project aims to examine the new dynamics within Hamas from three perspectives: political governance, social processes and the peace process - as well as attempting to map the hierarchy of the movement both in Palestine and abroad.

Projects 101323, 103302, 104728 – Palestinian Adolescents Coping with Trauma (PACT) (Phase I, II, III)

Partner: Dr. Rita Giacaman (Phase II, III, III), Associate Professor and Director, Institute for Community and Public Health (ICPH), Birzeit University, and Yoke van der Meulen-Rabaia (Phase III), PhD Candidate and Researcher, ICPH, Birzeit University

The Palestinian Adolescents Coping with Trauma (PACT) started in 2002 as a two year project examining the effect of armed conflict, military occupation and other sources of local violence on Palestinian youth. It was a collaboration between the Social Program Evaluation Group at Queen's University in Canada and the Institute

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[9] The Middle East Good Governance Fund (http://www.idrc.ca/en/ev-119658-201-1-DO_TOPIC.html) focuses on the role of civil society and political parties in influencing policy processes, with a focus on Islamist political parties and civil society.

for Community Public Health (ICPH) at Birzeit University in Palestine. The project has since gone through phase II which incorporated a communal perspective of community psycho-social and mental health into existing Community Based Rehabilitation (CBR) initiatives to create a Community Psycho-Social and Mental Health (CPMH) focus for youth. PACT is currently in phase III which aims to expand and elaborate on the model of internal community support which was developed in phase II. The PACT project addresses a central component of conflict, namely the destructive psycho-social effects of violence and the need to assess and address the mental health consequences of extended violent conflict.

It was suggested in the Inception Report that all the pre-selected PCD projects in Palestine would be covered as most of the partners and researchers were concentrated in Ramallah in Palestine and two of the selected projects have the same partner and three projects are phases of the same project. However, Amjad Atallah from Strategic Assessments (SAI) in Washington who was the partner for **Project 102737 – Third Party Intervention** could not be reached at any point during the evaluation and the contact details for his partner Jarat Chopra was only received at a very late stage of the process and a mutually suitable time to discuss the project could unfortunately not be agreed on time. This project has therefore regrettably not been included in this final report.

2.2   Sources and data collection method

Data for this study was collected from numerous sources such as IDRC and partner project documentation, through semi-structured interviews with the researchers involved in the projects either face-to-face in Palestine or over the phone. Discussions were also held with current and past PCD staff. Unfortunately it was not possible to speak to the objects of the research in Palestine, but this has not caused a gap in the findings for the successful completion of this study.

3 Evaluation findings

3.1 On the Conflict Context

Nature of the Conflict

The four projects covered by this study have all been conducted during a period of heightened insecurity and instability in Palestine, both due to the start of the second intifada in the fall of 2000 and due to the death of Yasir Arafat in late 2004 and the mounting internal tension between the different Palestinian factions that has followed. Although the different constraints and complications arising from the reoccupation of the West Bank by Israel has been part of daily life for all the partners and researchers involved in the PCD supported projects, the intensity of the occupation has varied significantly throughout the period.

Although Ramallah and its surrounding villages have not been as dramatically exposed to the Israeli aggressive measures compared to other Palestinian areas, the impact of the overall situation, particularly the closure of roads and siege have at times made life extremely difficult for the population. Infrastructure and basic services may not have been suspended completely, but they were interrupted, especially during the siege and reoccupation of Ramallah and other areas in the West Bank in 2002. Periods of apparent calm could change into chaos in a matter of hours and crucial roads linking cities to each other could be blocked or unblocked from one day to the other.

In January 2006 the instability in Palestine was given a new twist when Hamas won the Palestinians legislative elections. This electoral victory led to further deterioration as the consequence of the democratic election led to an international boycott of the PA now controlled by Hamas. After experiencing fierce fighting between Fatah and Hamas in Gaza during late 2006, negotiations took place in order to find peaceful means of solving the internal Palestinian discord. In March 2007 Fatah and Hamas decided to establish the first Palestinian National Unity Government. However, its life span was brief and in June new internal Palestinian fighting causing at least 300 deaths and more than 700 wounded broke out in the Gaza Strip. Since then Hamas has complete control over the Gaza Strip, while Fatah is in control in the West Bank. The current period is therefore characterised by the strife between Fatah and Hamas, as well as the rifts within the Fatah movement, as these have since become much more evident.

For a full description of the Palestinian conflict context for the period under review, please refer to Annex 2.

Effects on the research process

All the projects were faced with the physical effects of the occupation – some more severely than others. Notably during the early phases of the PACT project, the road

from Ramallah to Birzeit University where the ICPH office was then located was closed for long periods and project staff was forced to work from make-shift offices at home in Ramallah using laptops and mobile phones to communicate with each-other. Checkpoints and restricted mobility were nuisances for all the researchers but not an environment that those involved are not familiar with. Solutions such as having field teams stay in villages for longer periods of time and using local field researchers based in the areas surveyed were adopted when necessary in order to avoid having to cross difficult checkpoints several times a day and for the research or surveying to be more efficient[10].

One of the biggest physical constraints for all the projects covered was the inability to travel to Gaza due to Israeli travel bans, throughout the duration of the projects. The State and Tribe project suffered in quality because of the lack of face-to-face meeting with the fieldworkers in the strip. The supervisors in Birzeit found that although the fieldworkers were generally responsive to the comments and requests of the supervisors, the fieldwork team in Gaza produced work that was of a much lower standard than the work done by the Ramallah/Jerusalem and Nablus teams[11]. Although tele- and video conferencing facilities were used whenever possible, they were not as effective as face-to-face meetings. Similarly, ICPH could not carry out a survey for the PACT project in Gaza, despite initially planning to do so[12].

Whereas the effects of the Israeli occupation on the research could to some extent be mitigated by being flexible in terms of scope and resourceful in terms of movement, communication and dissemination strategies, the effects of the internal political strife and the de facto coup in Gaza by Hamas could not have been foreseen neither by the partners nor IDRC and provisions for difficulties arising from this change in the conflict dynamic was therefore not counted for in the project plans.

While both the Young Guards and the Hamas project by PSR have been affected in scope by the inability to travel to Gaza, the major affect has been the internal political strife, and particularly by the Hamas take-over of Gaza in the summer of 2006. For the Young Guards project it suddenly became impossible to get any statistics on Fatah in Gaza as the movement largely went underground and the supporters of the secular nationalist party were under persecution. Similarly, since Hamas won the Palestinian Parliamentary elections in March 2006, most of the Hamas leaders in the West Bank have been imprisoned by Israel meaning that only Hamas elites in Gaza have been extensively interviewed for the project.

Although the proposal for the Hamas project had been re-formulated together with IDRC to reflect the new situation on the ground after the January 2006 elections, it would not have been possible to factor in all the possible problems that were to arise in the two years following. According to PSR, adaptation in both projects was constant as both the internal and external political situation changed so rapidly. The flexibility on the behalf of IDRC was much appreciated and new ideas such as looking

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[10] Interview with Institute of Law team, Ramallah 17.07.2008
[11] Second Interim Technical Report, *Informal Justice: The Rule of Law and Dispute Resolution in Post-Oslo Palestine*,
[12] Interview at ICPH, Ramallah, 29.08.08

at the future of Palestinian democracy vis-à-vis the interaction between Fatah-Hamas by combining the two projects was well received[13].

The unforeseen split between Fatah and Hamas starting with the Parliamentary elections in January 2006 also had an effect on how ICPH was carrying out their field interviews for PACT. In some communities it became difficult to get adequate representation to the community focus groups as they would either be predominantly Fatah members or predominantly Hamas. Surveying therefore became the most reliable tool. In order for people to feel comfortable with the surveyors, the CBR workers who had been present in the communities for many years would carry out the surveys on the behalf of the ICPH team where possible. The team also mentioned, however, that being from Birzeit University opened many doors as Birzeit is considered impartial.[14]

Timing and sustainability

Due to the nature of the protracted conflict in Palestine where unpredictability is the only certainty, timing will almost never be reliable. Negotiations that are happening one day might be called off the next and a couple months of apparent calm can suddenly turn into war. The importance is to be present for when that window of opportunity to affect change arises.

The decision by PCD not to stop supporting research in Palestine throughout the sustained conflict since the start of the second intifada reflects its policy for the entire period over which it worked in the region. This and the willingness of IDRC staff to regularly travel to Palestine despite heightened tensions was repeatedly mentioned by the partners as a unique feature of IDRC's approach, and has greatly contributed to building and sustaining relationships of mutual trust with the Palestinian partners.

It is clear that the selection of partners has been key in sustaining the programming through the more difficult times. All the partners have solid research capacity and are staffed and run by some of the best researchers in the country. They are well established and well funded institutions that young researchers strive to work with, thereby ensuring low turn-over of staff[15]. There is also a history with certain partners or Team Leaders (such as PSR and Birzeit University) which has added to the confidence of PCD staff regarding the sustainability of both the institutes and the individual projects in Palestine despite the occupation and the internal political turmoil[16].

Security risks

All of the partners admitted to some sort of risk for researchers and field workers always being present in Palestine due to the nature of the occupation. Even when working in areas where the conflict might not be very intense, one can always be at

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[13] Telephone interview with PCR Team Member 26.07.08
[14] Interview with ICPH team, 29.07.2008
[15] Interview with Pam Scholey, 30.10.08
[16] Interview with PCD staff, 26.05.2008

the wrong place in the wrong time. However, common sense is applied in all field operations and surveying on days of particular unrest may be postponed.

As all of the projects deal with sensitive data, there exists a possible ethical risk as to the security of the information. Whereas all partners assured the writer that anonymity of respondents and confidentiality of the data was always ensured by storing it safely, PSR admitted that surveying attracts a lot of attention, and that this may in some cases leave both the surveyor and the respondents rather exposed, but that this was the nature of the research. Analyzing leadership transition dynamics in an unstable political situation is risky. However, according to the team leader, the researchers have been chosen because of their experience with, and access to, young guard leaders. That and the reputation of the PSR for independent policy analysis mitigate this risk.[17] Regarding the Hamas project, when prodded about the potential dangers of a mapping of roles and hierarchy within the very secretive Hamas movement getting into the wrong hands, such as the Israeli military, this had apparently not been considered and was at the time dismissed as not relevant.[18]

In terms of risk to the research participants, IoL admitted to some level of self-limitation in the topics explored in the Rule of Law project to minimize this risk. For example, cases of honor killings and killings of collaborators were consciously excluded from the research due to the very sensitive nature of the subject matter. Including these two topics in the research and fully pursuing such cases could have put both the respondents and the researchers in danger.[19]

All of the respondents agreed that there is no risk to the partners or research participants from the government as Palestine still is democratic enough to allow criticism of its leaders. All the partners and Team Leaders are also well respected and well known members of Palestinian society and considered to be able to speak with authority on their subjects of expertise. In addition, they all have extensive networks of high level contacts both within Palestine and abroad that arguably serve as a shield from any possible backlash by political entities.

It is important to note that local sense of risk is often very different to that of an external observer who is not used to the context. Palestinian researchers would therefore often go about their regular activities as long as it was by any means possible and not an obviously life-threatening situation. The doubled length of a drive due to a new flying checkpoint might be a more likely reason for postponing a field visit than the risk of being caught in the midst of an Israeli Army raid. Whilst it is important to ensure the security of all research staff members on PCD-supported projects, it is also equally important to trust that the partners know what they are doing and allow them to continue work by staying consistent with support throughout periods of heightened conflict.

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[17] Telephone interview with Khalil Shikaki, 26.07.2008
[18] Interview with PSR team, 27.07.2008
[19] Interview with State and tribe team, IoL, 24.07.2008

3.2 On "What Happened" – The Partners and PCD's Intents and Achievements

PCD-supported research is aimed to influence policy, build research capacities and to increase domestic ownership for the peace process. The 4 projects address these goals in different ways and to a varying degree.

Project theory of change

The PCD partners in Palestine are all well placed to influence policy. They are led by respected academics who all have easy access to policy makers because of their personal relations and because of proximity – all the partners are based in Ramallah where most of the Palestinian decision makers sit. However, not all the partners agreed on the role of PCD partners to implicitly try to influence policy makers.

PSR as an organisation is highly connected within Palestinian society as well as abroad and can reach, in terms of audience, the prime minister or the president of the PA. The organisation is well respected across the political factions and is seen as a 'neutral' commentator. The PSR team therefore considered policy relevance a given in their field and informing and influencing policy one of the objectives of the research they conduct. Similarly for ICPH, policy relevance was also not an issue. They have worked together with the Ministry of Health, Education, international and local NGOs for many years on mental health related issues and the researchers and the current and former team leader lobby actively and successfully for policy change and development.

However, IoL struggled with the IDRC understanding of what policy influence meant. The Rule of Law project aimed 'to strengthen the rule of law in Palestine through analyzing the current relationship between formal and tribal justice in the post-Oslo legal system and developing the necessary policy directives for future institutional reform'[20]. The project intended to achieve this by publishing a document outlining the current shape of the Palestinian legal system, and by drafting a set of policy proposals containing system reform advice. These findings and the policy proposals were then disseminated in a policy workshop for policy makers and the public. In discussions with IoL, it was raised that IDRC did not find this sufficient in terms of trying to influence policy by involving further PA officials and members of the Palestinian Legislative Council. However, the team felt that it is not the job of academics to lobby politicians. Quite the contrary – they should stay impartial. The preferred theory of change for the project was more 'natural'; once the project was finished and the results of the research published the people involved would feel exposed. This would allow for some level of checks and balances. The IoL team argues that debate about certain topics in society creates change. It is admittedly a slower process of policy influence, but more sustainable as there is more ownership from the people.[21]

This is an interesting point, especially as the subject matter is the relationship between formal and informal components of the Palestinian judiciary, which are so entrenched

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[20] 101610 Project Approval Document
[21] Interview with IoL team, 24.07.2008

in Palestinian society. The argument is that for there to be true judicial reform in Palestine, a buy-in on the political level is not sufficient. What is needed is social change. Therefore, open debate about the issues in the society are necessary in order for any judiciary reform to take place, or for indeed, rule of law can be imposed effectively by the PA. Whereas IDRC was flexible enough to let the IoL team "step back" to solidly ground the project in appropriate conceptual approaches, there was a strong push for the IoL to produce practical policy recommendations. The team felt that IDRC needs to be more flexible with what it calls 'policy research' as having to 'frame' research questions around policy relevance and 'hot topics' led to other, potentially important, topics being missed out.

When programming in Palestine, it is worth considering what is meant by 'policy influence', especially in the current situation where the government is not democratically elected and not representative of the Palestinian population, therefore making legitimate reform initiated by this specific government very difficult. In addition, the Palestinian Legislative Council has not been functional since the fall of the short-lived Unity Government in June 2007. 'Policy influence', in the way IDRC understands it, might not be relevant for all projects in the Palestinian context.

Methodology and conflict context

In an environment such as occupied Palestine where the conflict dynamics constantly change, flexibility of the approach and the ability to adapt to a given situation is crucial for the success of any research program. Often it is impossible to know how certain situations will develop from one week to another. However, the researchers involved in the projects are all familiar with programming in this environment and methodologies were therefore adapted, where possible, to context changes whenever necessary. The Hamas project required a lot of resourcefulness from the PSR team in order to get the information needed. As interviewing leading Hamas members from the West Bank has become impossible due to their imprisonment by Israel, the team has resorted to scrutinizing articles in the Rizala newspaper, published by Hamas, on a daily basis in order to try to understand the structure of the organization and who is running the show in the West Bank[22].

The Young Guards project has been very affected by the changing context and the findings are yet to be published despite the project having officially finished in 2007. The original proposal aimed to focus around the Sixth Fatah Congress in July 2005 around which PSR was to conduct research, stimulate informed policy discussions about Fatah`s future, produce policy papers, and have them widely disseminated among decision-makers within Fatah`s ranks. It was also foreseen that PSR would monitor and assess the implementation of policy reforms in the aftermath of the Sixth Congress.[23] However, due to the internal political turmoil since the death of President Arafat, Fatah has still to date not held its 6th Convention. Assuming that the convention would be held at some point, the project was modified to feed into the convention by carrying out the study of the young guard in the meanwhile and

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[22] Interview with PSR team, 27.07.2008
[23] 102990 Project Approval Document

publishing just prior to the convention for maximum impact. As there still has been no convention, the research remains unpublished. Although PCD had been flexible and supportive with the methodological changes throughout, PRS strongly believes that publishing at the wrong moment just because of a project deadline would waste 3 years worth of hard work. There has still been some impact, through discussions and deliberations with the different groups of actors, but not as originally hoped.[24]

The PACT project, throughout all its phases, has tailored the methodology to the specific context of Palestine. For example, a participatory research methodology was adopted, in which youth and those connected to them, such as families, teachers and counselors are incorporated into the research design through focus groups and workshops. Bringing in other stakeholders reduces the stigma attached to mental health issues and integrates psycho-social intervention strategies within the community, which is important in order to address the cumulative effects of exposure to violence.[25]

Each phase of PACT has been designed based on revelations and lessons learnt from the previous phase meaning that the methodology used has constantly been adapted to the changing context. For example, the decision to partner with CBR teams was made after the realization that as an academic institution in a conflict setting, ICPH was limited in how far it could go to implement the findings and recommendations of PACT Phase I on the ground. In addition, all researchers on the PACT project know the communities covered by the project very well and understand their coping strategies. This is important in order to get people under high levels of distress to open up using the right approach. However, the team admitted that as they are so used to the ongoing violence, sometimes they do not see how bad things really are. For this reason having an external partner like SPEG at Queen's University is crucial as it allows for checks and balances[26].

PCD team members have been involved in the methodological discussions of all the projects and all the partners were grateful for this support and found it very useful. It was expressed that PCD support (and MEGGF in the case of the Hamas project) at the proposal development stage was particularly helpful as it was sometimes difficult to understand exactly how to tailor the projects to fit IDRC priorities.

Capacity building

In terms of capacity development, the most likely capacity to be developed is that of junior researchers working for the projects as all of the partner institutes and all the team leaders and lead researchers are well established and well known within Palestinian society. These 'usual suspects' will always have a sea of young researchers

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[24] Telephone interview with Khalil Shikaki, 26.07.2008
[25] **101323** Project approval document
[26] Interview with ICPH team, 29.07.2008

wanting to join their research teams. There is therefore a capacity building element in all of the projects, although not all of them necessarily planned for.

Rule of Law had a strong, initially unforeseen, capacity-building element for junior researchers in the Faculty of Law at Birzeit University. A team of interdisciplinary junior researchers was assembled to take part in the research, and they were involved in all phases of the project from design, to field work, analysis, presentation of results to stakeholders, and drafting of final report. Some of the junior researchers have since remained at IoL and are working on subsequent research projects.[27] In addition, IoL made use of some remaining funds – and a time extension from IDRC – to establish a Law and Society Unit within IoL at Birzeit University. It is the first research unit of its kind at an Arab university and they are now delivering course as part of the curriculum at IoL.[28]

The PACT project has through its three phases continued to 'develop innovative methodological practice of understanding and intervening on both individual and communal experiences of trauma'[29]. The programme has also empowered and built the capacity of the CBR team to assist the community in responding to their psycho-social needs and problems who in turn have empowered the community members by raising their awareness of psycho-social issues and how to deal with them. In addition, ICPH has trained, and continues to train, several highly qualified undergraduate and graduate Palestinian public health researchers in both qualitative and quantitative research methodologies and analysis.[30] It is also important to note that the ICPH team is entirely constructed of women.

Both the PSR projects are staffed by professional researchers with social sciences backgrounds and years of experience.

Capacities of individuals are being built across most of the projects, but as the institutional capacity is there in all of the 4 projects, the capacity building aspect for PCD-supported research is not as strong in Palestine as it is elsewhere. The partners are all very well established and they are all led by exceptionally bright and capable individuals who all have a strong and authoritative voice in their fields of expertise. They are also all based in Ramallah which makes policy influencing easier. Whereas this is arguably necessary for research to be carried out successfully in a dynamic conflict context as that of Palestine, and possibly for securing some degree of policy influence, it would be interesting to explore the option in the future of linking up with lesser known and perhaps less 'obvious' partners. This might also take PCD into other cities in the West Bank such as Nablus, Bethlehem and Hebron that all have Universities and independent institutes. This is especially true now that the violence and instability is not as prominent as it was in the years 2000-2004.

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[27] Interview with IoL team, 24.07.2008
[28] Institute of Law website, accessed 28.10.2008
[29] 104728 Project Approval Document
[30] Interview with Pamela Scholey, 30.10.2008

Finally, there are no partners in Gaza. Admittedly a scoping mission would currently not be easy, but perhaps this could be investigated from Ottawa and planned for when there is a period of lull and travel to Gaza would be possible. In terms of capacity building of research institutes and support in policy influence, it seems that Gaza is where it is most needed. However, due to security concerns, IDRC staff have not been allowed to enter Gaza since 2004.

Ethical challenges

The issue of the ethical challenges of carrying out research in the Palestinian context did not seem to be a grave worry for any of the researchers interviewed. They admitted that there were some sensitive data collected, as in the case of Rule of Law and PACT, but that there was no risk of this data getting in to the wrong hands. Audio or camera equipment were not permitted, and anonymity and consent forms were always used. There was no specific coding of the data to keep it extra safe as this was not deemed necessary.

Both PSR and IoL used workshops to discuss their findings prior to publishing in order to be aware of possible responses and therefore have the chance to omit anything that might be considered as too inflammatory. Workshops also allow those involved an opportunity to voice their concerns and an opportunity for recognition for those who so desire.[31] It is also an opportunity to discuss the expectations of those involved in the research in terms of what it will achieve and what, if any, are the possible benefits for the respondents. Managing expectations is important as the understanding of the limits of a research project is not always clear. This aspect is omitted from the project planning phase and the methodology in all of the projects covered by this study and seems to be dealt with on a more ad hoc basis, if dealt with at all, especially as little backlash from unmet expectations is expected. PSR admitted that there was a lot of expectations from the Fatah young guard regarding the outcome of the research when they started, especially as some of the researchers were recruited from the young guards in order to guarantee access. The potential for outbreaks of violence is a risk associated with the local context; however, the team stressed that PSR is experienced in conducting research and carrying out surveys under difficult circumstances, and that it enjoys widespread support and respect among Palestinians.

3.3   On the "How" – Programming Modalities

Criteria of involvement

An interesting feature of the Palestine programme of PCD is that IDRC has a long history of programming there and many of the Palestinian researchers involved in the projects covered by this study have been known to IDRC staff for many years and some have worked on IDRC supported projects in the past. There is therefore a solid

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[31] Interview with IoL team, 24.07.2008

base on which to develop new projects and partnerships. In addition, IDRC's decision to continue programming even during periods of sustained conflict has provided it with a very strong reputation in the region and has allowed it to maintain a respectable name throughout.

In terms of the PCD programming considerations for engagement in pre-conflict, conflict and post-conflict setting, Palestine 'ticks' all the boxes. There is a very capable community of researchers and academic freedom and, thanks to a very limited political circle clustered in and around Ramallah, access to policy makers is easy.

However, whereas IDRC is seen as wanting to engage local actors to change local conditions and always remaining at arm's length from the Canadian government, two of the partners mentioned that IDRC now seems less flexible than in the past in terms of Canadian foreign policy priorities.

The PSR team felt that the Hamas programme encountered problems due to policy change in Ottawa.[32] The funding management of the project had to be very carefully conducted in order to ensure that no member of Hamas could benefit from the MEGGF and PCD funds. This meant that additional funding had to be sought in order to organise workshops where transport and lunch for the participants was covered by the project.[33] This had come as a surprise to the team as it had been understood that in the past, IDRC decisions regarding their programming had largely been independent from the Canadian government.

The IoL team noted that the language in the contract was now more political and that a further shift away from funding 'pure' research had been made in the past few years. This was worrying as centres such as the IoL rely on donors such as the IDRC.

It is important to consider the implications a change in policy will have on the strong reputation of IDRC in Palestine as this could significantly affect future programming and could risk losing some of its best partners.

Financial issues and project cycle

In a context such as Palestine it is safe to bet on timelines hardly ever holding. If it is not the conflict holding up work, it might be the olive picking season, Eid, weddings or school exams. While it was noted by all the partners that IDRC timelines are fairly flexible, it was also noted that additional funding was difficult to secure. The two approaches were considered somewhat contradictory as an extension in time would make little difference if there were no funds to keep on the staff for another 6 months. ICPH admitted that the 2 year project cycle which is not automatically renewable was very labour intensive for them and was not convenient in terms of long-term capacity

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[32] Emma Naughton notes that this was directly related to recent Anti-Terror Legislation here in Canada, by which IDRC must abide,, but not related to any other policy changes at the IDRC level.
[33] Telephone interview with Khalil Shikaki, 26.07.2008

building of the institution. It was underlined that PACT is a programme, not a series of projects. Vulnerabilities regarding being an all female team were also raised as pregnancies and children's illness delay the work and there is no provision by IDRC to hire an extra hand in the absence of one of the team members.[34]

PCD staff

It is encouraging to notice with what care PCD programme officers have been recruited and the case for the Programme Officers for the Middle East is a true testament to this careful process. All the PCD staff that have been involved with the 4 research projects were praised by the partners as very well aware of realities on the ground in Palestine. The former and current programme officers have both lived and worked in Palestine before joining PCD and it is clear that they understand the local context and the way the society functions.[35] This is no doubt one of the reasons behind the successful and lasting partnerships that have been developed and the ensuing strong research proposals. There is a personal commitment to uphold relations and to deepen the impact of PCD-supported research. The current programme officer can support the partners on a methodological and academic level, but also on a human level as there is a profound understanding of the context in which the partners carry out their work. It was noted that this is not always the case with other donors and counterparts and that this unique feature of IDRC is highly valued.

Programming modalities

There was nothing groundbreaking about the programming modalities in Palestine. Two of the projects covered were carried out by institutes within Birzeit University and the other two by a well known independent survey institute.

ICPH was already working together with Queen's University when the PACT I proposal was written so that was a natural partnership initiated by the partner. It was very useful, especially during PACT II as Queen's had more leeway to contract CBR workers than Birzeit had. However, those administrative issues were solved by the time PACT III was approved and at this final stage team members at Queen's are only taking advisory roles through consultancies. However, as stated before, the ICPH team admitted that it is very useful to have an external partner for checks and balances as Palestinian researchers might sometimes miss something because they are so desensitised to the conflict situation.

For the Young Guards project, PSR aimed for the research process itself to bring about change within Fatah by using Fatah young guards as researchers. The methodology was very interesting but it had to be reconsidered as the Fatah 6th Convention never materialized. A gender balance in the team was not achieved despite initial promises to recruit a female researcher. Rule of Law had a team composed of legal experts and social scientists and trained a number of junior researchers.

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[34] Interview with ICPH team, 29.07.2008
[35] Interviews with past and present program officers

Due to the security concerns, PCD staff must obtain permission to travel to Palestine. At the height of the conflict, between 2000 and 2004, it was not always possible to visit the partners and follow-up with the projects regularly. Because of this limited monitoring and evaluation possibility, the selection of partners in Palestine has been so important. This is probably also why the partners selected are only a handful of well established research institutes with a solid track record and capacity enough to work through moments of crises – the 'usual suspects'.

3.4   Forward Thinking

Flexibility

Throughout the discussions with the researchers involved in the PCD-supported projects in Palestine, flexibility in terms of deadlines, project scope and methodologies used was underlined as most important when supporting research in conflict settings.

The correct timing of dissemination and publication is often crucial in order to be able to influence policy in an unstable environment. Dissemination at an inopportune moment could go unnoticed and waste years of work, or alternatively, be very inflammatory and waste an opportunity to affect change. This is something that PCD has to consider when setting deadlines for projects. Bureaucratic and administrative needs in Ottawa must be balanced with realities on the ground.

PCD context knowledge

In order to roll out a successful research support programme in a conflict setting, the necessity for extensive first-hand knowledge of the country and the nature of the conflict cannot be more stressed. Identifying and developing partnerships and building trust in a context such as Palestine takes time and some of the partners need months if not years of courting before a joint project can be found.[36] The project officer for a conflict country/region must really have their 'finger on the pulse' to be able to understand the way the partners work and to support a successful programme.

If the knowledge of the local context is good everything from understanding the project budget lines to knowing how long it takes to get from one project site to another helps immensely if a rapid response to a methodological concern arises due to a sudden change in the context. This rapidity in response is important for the partner to be able to continue with the research in a seamless manner despite the change in the conflict dynamic.

Opportunities

What would have been interesting to see are some of the Palestinian projects linking up with other PCD projects in other countries. Not only would it allow researchers

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[36] Project completion note, Young Guards, Emma Naughton.

from different conflict settings to share and compare experiences of working in conflict contexts, but it would also allow for a more comparative approach of the different disciplines covered. For example, the Rule of Law project could have benefitted from the experiences of the Northern Uganda team of the Generational Analysis of Armed Conflict, Peace and Justice Processes, and Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration project as they are also looking into how to reconcile the tribal justice system with the formal judiciary in Uganda. There are probably many more PCD supported projects with similar parallels that could potentially greatly benefit from being linked up.

Finally, in order to maximize institutional capacity building, it would be possible to design projects that would link some of the very strong partners with new, upcoming partners that do not necessarily have the institutional capacity to run PCD-supported research projects on their own. In Palestine, this would not only allow PCD to explore new, less 'obvious' partners, and therefore gain access to a new set of researchers, but also to expand geographically into other cities in Palestine. Although it is true that much of the capacity when it comes to research is concentrated in and around Ramallah, it is worth at least exploring other institutions around the West Bank and ever more importantly, in the Gaza strip. The practicalities and possible pitfalls of such an approach would obviously have to be examined fully by PCD.

4 Annexes

Annex 1. List of Acronyms

Annex 2. Palestinian conflict context

Annex 3. List of people interviewed

Annex 4. Bibliography

Annex 5. Terms of Reference

Annex 6. Biography of the evaluator

4.1   Annex 1. List of Acronyms

CBR   Community Based Rehabilitaion
ICPH   Institute for Community Public Health
IoL   Institute of Law
IDRC   International Development Research Centre
PCD   Peace, Conflict and Development Program
PSR   Palestinian Centre for Policy and Survey Research
ToR   Terms of Reference

4.2   Annex 2. The Palestinian Conflict Context

During the period under review 2001-2008 a number of significant detrimental political developments have occurred in Palestine. These developments have had significant influence on socio-economic development, on the development of civil society and the humanitarian situation.

The period under review has been divided into three phases:

1) 2001 - 2006   The second Intifada
2) Jan 2006 – June 2007   Governance crisis
3) June 2007 – Dec 2007   Current situation

1) 2001 - 2006: The second Intifada

The failed Camp David talks between Arafat and Barak in the summer 2000 ultimately led to the second Palestinian Intifada in late September 2000. Shortly hereafter Ariel Sharon from the Israel right-wing party Likud won the Israeli elections (January 2001), while George W. Bush took office in the US. With Sharon in power the bilateral talks with the Palestinians ended. The Israelis no longer had a partner for peace as Arafat - in the view of Sharon and the Israeli Government - now headed a 'terror regime'. They held this view due to more and more armed Palestinian resistance against the continued Israeli occupation. After 9/11, this discourse was strengthened.

In contrast to the first Intifada of the late 1980s and early 1990s, the second Intifada expeditiously turned from a mass uprising, primarily consisting of youth throwing stones at the occupation forces, into a militarised conflict in which Palestinian gunmen equipped with rifles were up against the Israeli army with all its might. Also the various Palestinian factions – most notably Hamas and Islamic Jihad – began using suicide bombs with only brief intervals. These facts gave the Israeli government an 'excuse' to retaliate with excessive force. Hence, in 2002 Israel re-invaded the autonomous Palestinian areas, and at the same time the decision by the Sharon government to erect a so-called "security-barrier" (also known as the Wall) between Israel and the Palestinian occupied territories was taken.

The ICJ ruled in 2004 that "the construction of the wall being built by Israel, the occupying power, in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including in and around East Jerusalem, and its associated regimes, are contrary to International Law"[37]

As a result of the second Intifada, the PA more or less disintegrated as a consequence of the Israeli re-occupation of most parts of the West Bank, and the destruction of the PA infrastructure. What was left of the PA was struggling with attempts at reforming the PA, in order to make the Authority more transparent. This was done under

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[37] ICJ: Legal consequences of a Wall in the Occupied Palestinian Territories.

pressure from the international donor community. The weakening of the PA during the first three or four years of the Intifada made the NGOs more important than during the times of negotiations (1993-2000). Also Hamas was rising during these years.

In late 2004 Yasser Arafat died after having been isolated in his Ramallah headquarters for several years. Mahmoud Abbas became the new president after presidential elections in early 2005. However, less than 50 % of the voters showed up at the polls. Local elections were held and Hamas fared very well and clearly showed that the movement enjoyed significant popular support.

In late 2005 the PA received full control of the Gaza Strip, as Sharon decided unilateral disengagement from the Strip, which resulted in the evacuation of some 6000 Israeli settlers from the area.

The international community reacted to the intensified crisis by launching the Road Map in order to salvage the peace process. The Road Map itself is a not a very precise plan[38]. The main idea of the plan states the need for creating an "independent, viable Palestinian state by the end of 2005," side by side with Israel. The Road Map is divided into three phases, and resembles on most issues the Oslo process. It was adopted by the Quartet, consisting of America, Russia, the UN and the EU, as their common policy vis-à-vis the conflict. Due to the deterioration in the political and economic sphere, donor aid shifted from a focus on long-term development to emergency aid during the second Intifada, and the donor community to a large extend relied on UN agencies and civil society to take care of service provision.

The consequences for the Palestinian civil population were severe. The measures taken by the Government of Israel in the oPt are felt by all Palestinians and affect all aspects of life around the clock. The decline of the Palestinian economy since the Intifada has left the per capita GDP at $ 1.129 in 2006.[39] This is a third less than the pre-Intifada level. This decline was primarily a result of the intensification of Israeli closure policies, which led to almost economic standstill and lack of employment opportunities, not only in oPt but also for the large number of Palestinians formerly working in Israel. Social, geographic and economic fragmentation was the ensuing result. Another significant change was signs of increased conservatism, not only in Gaza but also on the West Bank.

3) Jan 2006 – June 2007: Governance crisis

In January 2006 the Palestinians held legislative elections. To the surprise of most observers Hamas won. This electoral victory led to further deterioration as the consequence of the democratic election led to an international boycott of the PA now controlled by Hamas.

Hamas had difficulties in setting up a new government as they attempted to establish a National Unity Government from the beginning. Initially they did not succeed. Only after experiencing fierce fighting between Fatah and Hamas in Gaza during late 2006 more serious negotiations took place in order to find peaceful means of solving the

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[38] For the full text of the Road Map, see http://www.state.gov/r/pa/prs/ps/2003/20062.htm
[39] World Bank, 2007, Two years after London

internal Palestinian discord. In March 2007 Fatah and Hamas – after Saudi Arabian mediation – signed an agreement and decided to establish the first Palestinian National Unity Government. However, its life span was brief and in June new internal Palestinian fighting causing at least 300 deaths and more than 700 wounded broke out in the Gaza Strip. The result gave Hamas complete control over the Gaza Strip, while Fatah was in control of the West Bank. Apart from the strife between Fatah and Hamas, the victory of Hamas also made the rifts within the Fatah movement much more evident.

Economically the period was characterized by total collapse. The Hamas controlled PA did not have the economic means to pay salaries for the PA employees, which among other things led to numerous strikes. The increase in the Israeli closure policies and expansion of settlements led to a complete standstill in the Palestinian economy. Today more than 460.000 Israeli settlers live on the West Bank (incl. Occupied East Jerusalem). Construction is ongoing in at least 88 settlements.[40]

The boycott of Hamas did not cause the donor community to stop aid to the Palestinians, but it was disbursed through a new mechanism called Temporary International Mechanism (TIM)[41], or directly through the office of the Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas. In fact, the international donor community distributed more aid than ever.

In terms of the conflict between Israel and Palestinians the period witnessed a large number of Israeli incursions especially in the Northern West Bank and Gaza.

4) June 2007 – Dec 2007: Current situation

The internal Palestinian fighting in June 2007 led to the existence of two parallel Palestinian governments: one led by Hamas in Gaza and a new "caretaker" government recognized by the West led by Salam Fayyad in the West Bank. The existence of a new secular government in the West Bank also led to the resumption of bilateral talks, which was intensified in November 2007 after the United States initiated the Annapolis conference. However, so far no clear signs of a breakthrough are visible. The Gaza Strip is completely sealed off, and the expansion of settlements in the West Bank continues, as does the construction of the Wall.

The donor aid community currently focuses on state- and institution-building by giving significant budget support to the PA (in Ramallah), while only emergency aid is coming in to Gaza.

According to the World Bank the most severe aspect of the Palestinian economy is its changing composition. Today the GDP is increasingly driven by government and private consumption from remittances and foreign donor aid. Investment in the private sector hardly exists, leaving only little productive basis for the future. Due to the existence of the settlements, the closure regimes, the construction of the Separation

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[40] Peace Now, 2007.
[41] While the TIM was capable of providing much needed assistance to some of the poorest Palestinians, it has been unable to prevent the decline in the humanitarian situation.

Barrier, the lack of freedom of movement and lack of control over external borders all economic development is stifled.

In addition to the economic fragmentation, the social fabric is increasingly fragmented as well. At the same time the conflict between Fatah and Hamas remains unresolved as is the case with the rifts within Fatah.

4.3   Annex 3. List of people interviewed

Name	Research Project (if relevant)	Institution	Contact details
Emma Naughton	PCD	IDRC	
Pamela Scholey	-		
Mudar Kassis	Rule of Law	IoL	
Lisa Taraki	Rule of Law	IoL	
Feras Melhem	Rule of Law	IoL	
Iman Bayuk	Rule of Law	IoL	
Khalil Shikaki	Young Guards	PSR	
Mahmoud Jaraba	Hamas	PSR	
Alaa Lahloh	Hamas	PSR	
Jehad Harb	Young Guards	PSR	
Waleed Ladadweh	Young Guards	PSR	
Rita Giacaman	PACT	ICPH	
Yoke van der Meulen-Rabaia	PACT	ICPH	
Suzan Mitwalli	PACT	ICPH	
Suha Qasem	PACT	ICPH	

4.4   Annex 4. Bibliography

General documentation

IDRC, 2007. "Working Together to Strengthen Skills: IDRC' Strategic Evaluation of Capacity Development, Phase 3: Developing the Framework", *Evaluation Guidelines*.

IDRC, 2004. "Identifying the Intended User(s) of an Evaluation", *Evaluation Guidelines*.

IDRC, Guiding Principles of IDRC's Evaluation Unit,
http://www.idrc.ca/uploads/user-S/12095810441Evaluation_Unit_Guiding_Principles.pdf

Yin, Robert K., 2003. *Case Study Research: Design and Methods*, 3rd ed., Applied social research methods series, vol.5, London: Sage Publications.

Case study-specific documentation

Palestine/Middle East:

12. 101610 Between State and Tribe: The Rule of Law and Dispute Settlement in Post-Oslo
     - PAD, PP, 1-3 Interim Reports, First and Final Narrative Report, PCR, Trip Reports

13. 102990 Strategic Consequences of Palestinian Divisions
     - PAD, PP, First Tech Report, PCR, Trip Reports

14. 103849 Integrating Islamist Militants into the Political Process
     - PAD, PP, Trip Reports

15. 101323, 103302, 104728 Palestinian Adolescents Coping with Trauma PACT (Phases I, II, III)
     - 101323: PAD, PP, PCR, First and Last Technical Report
     - 103302: PAD, PP
     - 104728: PAD, PP
     - Trip Reports

4.5   Annex 5. Terms of Reference

Evaluation of Peace, Conflict and Development (PCD) Research Support in Countries and Regions affected by Violent Conflict

REVISED TERMS OF REFERENCE (April 2008)[42]

1.   Background:

The International Development Research Centre (IDRC)'s Peace, Conflict and Development (PCD) program initiative has a long history of involvement in countries experiencing active violent conflict or war-to-peace transitions, including Guatemala, Colombia, Palestine, Sri Lanka, Kashmir, Sudan, Uganda, and South Africa. In many cases, PCD initiated programming during a time of war-to-peace transition, but the violent conflict did not always cease. In fact, PCD's name change from "Peacebuilding and Reconstruction" in 2005 is a recognition that "the peace-to-conflict is not linear, and frequently sees recidivism to violence and uneasy, unstable and partial peace". Currently, PCD is "programming in select contexts marked by armed violence (Palestine, Colombia), and will carefully consider engagement in additional such contexts"[43].

With this in mind, PCD wants to learn more on how PCD-supported research can be effectively conducted, managed and communicated in environments in which the effects of violent conflict have a significant impact upon the research process. This evaluation was first outlined in the 2005-2011 Prospectus. Also, the 2003 external review for the program initiative, then called Peacebuilding and Reconstruction (PBR), noted: "While the review found no research ethics problems in any of the projects reviewed, there is a need for PBR to develop guidelines, procedures, or "lessons-learned" addressing the particular ethical challenges of research programming in conflict-prone areas."[44] This evaluation will address some of those ethical challenges as well.

This evaluation also reflects IDRC Centre-wide programming and policy. In recent years, IDRC has become increasingly concerned about reflecting on the complexities of supporting researchers and their research institutions in politically difficult environments, including contexts where there is unstable peace or risks of recidivism to political violence. In 2005, the Centre examined its involvement in countries in transition[45]. The transition study invited Centre staff to assess the prospects for change in transition contexts and to consider "the wider political, research and institutional environments […and] to think strategically on how changing contexts may impact programming and require responsiveness and flexibility"[46]. This concern is, in part, a

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[42] The ToR have been adjusted following the methodological workshop that was held in Ottawa on the 29th and 30th of April 2008 with IDRC staff and Channel Research team.
[43] PCD Prospectus 2005-2011, p. 17.
[44] Brynen, Fox-Decent, and Brown, 2004
[45] Smyth, Nancy and Maggie Gorman (2005). Corporate Assessment Framework: Strategic Intelligence Performance Area "Understanding Local Realities in Countries in Transition", Policy and Planning Group, IDRC.
[46] *Ibid*, p. 35

reflection of the Canadian Foreign Policy community's increasing humanitarian, military and development assistance in conflict contexts and "fragile states".

This calls for more careful reflection on the conditions in which the diverse types of research support typically provided by IDRC is appropriate and viable, as well as determine how, when, and under what conditions PCD's programming can extend to additional countries where conflict is ongoing. The broader topic of IDRC support of research in conflict settings will be explored as part of IDRC's next environmental scan; and the PCD evaluation will feed into this Centre-wide discussion. The Evaluation of PCD Research Support in Countries affected by Violent Conflict will also explore questions of security and risk management to staff and project partners, which is a key concern for IDRC. Finally, the evaluation will explore some of the ethical issues involved in supporting peacebuilding research in violent conflict contexts. This evaluation should assist PCD in managing the tension between the need to be responsive in areas affected by violent conflict and being realistic in terms of both financial and human resources and political capital required.

Principles and Approaches to Programming
The **International Development Research Centre (IDRC)** is a public corporation created by the Parliament of Canada in 1970 to help developing countries use science and technology to find practical, long-term solutions to the social, economic, and environmental problems they face. Support is directed toward developing an indigenous research capacity to sustain policies and technologies that developing countries need to build healthier, more equitable, and more prosperous societies.
In carrying out its mission, IDRC provides funds and expert advice to developing-country researchers working to solve critical development problems. IDRC:
▪ **funds applied research** by researchers from developing countries on the problems they identify as crucial to their communities. Most projects supported result from direct exchanges between the Centre and developing-country institutions;
▪ **provides expert advice** to those researchers;
▪ **builds local capacity** in developing countries to undertake research and innovate.

Peace, Conflict and Development (PCD) is an IDRC program initiative which supports research *for* specific peacebuilding processes, as well as research *on* key peacebuilding challenges. PCD mainly responds to requests from research institutes, universities, policymakers, South-South and North-South networks, and civil society organizations. PCD encourages multidisciplinary approaches, encompassing economics, political science, anthropology, law, and social and gender analysis, as well as participatory/action research and other qualitative and quantitative methodologies.
PCD aims:
▪ to generate evidence-based findings that can be used to inform policy and programming decisions on root causes of violent conflict, the prevention of conflict, and equitable and sustainable development
▪ To build domestic ownership of peace processes
▪ To open spaces for discussion and dialogue

- To influence global policies and practices
- To build capacity for more rigorous, methodologically creative, and collaborative research.

2.   Objectives:

General Objective:

The main objective of this evaluation is to identify the factors (conditions and programming modalities) that facilitate or hinder the research process for PCD-supported projects in countries and regions affected by violent conflict, and the advantages and disadvantages of PCD programming modalities in achieving PCD objectives in those conflict settings.

Specific Objectives:

1. On the Conflict Context: Get a better understanding of what conditions (security, research infrastructure, community of researchers, etc.) need to be in place, especially when a return to violence seems imminent, so that 1) PCD can feasibly support research and 2) partners can feasibly conduct research in line with PCD's program objectives.
2. On "What Happened" - the Partners' and PCD's Intents and Achievements: Build a body of learning around the contributions PCD supported research can make in influencing policy, building research capacities, and increase domestic ownership of peace processes when taking into account the prevailing environmental conditions surrounding the research process and ethical considerations.
3. On the "How"- Programming Modalities: Increase learning around the strengths and weaknesses of PCD programming modalities and its relationships to its research partners in contributing to the achievement of PCD objectives in countries and regions affected by violent conflict.
4. Forward Thinking: With a better understanding of prevailing conditions, challenges and opportunities surrounding PCD supported research as well as PCD's programming modalities: explore the implications (in terms of resources, security, institutional risks, policy influence, how we partner, etc.) of potential expansion of PCD programming into countries and regions affected by violent conflict.

3.   Users and Uses of the Strategic Evaluation:

Primary Intended Users:
- PCD program staff

Secondary Users:
- IDRC senior management and IDRC program staff
- PCD's partners
- Other agencies/donors working in conflict contexts

Uses

PCD program staff can use the evaluation to:

- Learn how to improve its programming approach (project and program identification and development, programming modalities, monitoring, reporting and evaluation.) in contexts of active conflict where PCD already programs;
- Build on previous and current programming experience to assess how, when, and under what conditions PCD could expand programming;
- Identify PCD's comparative advantage in supporting the management and dissemination of research in conflict contexts, including capacity building;
- Assess how and when can PCD-supported research can influence policy, and what particular capacities PCD can/should be supporting in such environments;
- Identify the ethical issues surrounding programming in conflict contexts, as well as assess security and risks for PCD staff and its project partners.

IDRC senior management and other IDRC program staff can use the evaluation to:
- Learn about programming in conflict contexts with a wide variety of programs, IDRC's comparative advantages, and "lessons learned" from PCD's experience;
- Assess security and risks for IDRC staff and its project partners with any project in a conflict context;
- Assess how IDRC can/should address the particular challenges of working in a conflict context, including risks to IDRC's partner organizations, in particular when expanding programming into countries affected by violent conflict.

PCD partners can use the evaluation to:
- Increase their understanding of the value, utility and reach that research might have in contexts of conflict;
- Assess the utility of different programming modalities and better understand the strengths and limitations of PCD;
- Clarify PCD and IDRC's role, and the expectations of what PCD and IDRC can and cannot do to support partners in conflict contexts.

Other agencies/donors working in conflict contexts can use the evaluation for:
- Reflection on their own programming in conflict contexts.
- Get a better understanding of PCD's comparative advantage in programming in countries and regions affected by conflict.

4. Range of Issue and Evaluation Questions to be Considered

Specific objective 1: On the Conflict Context
Get a better understanding of what conditions (security, research capacity, institutional strength, ethical considerations etc.) need to be in place, especially when a return to violence seems imminent, so that 1) PCD can feasibly support research and 2) partners can feasibly conduct research in line with PCD's program objectives.

Lead questions: What kind of challenges and opportunities did the conflict context present to the research project? What kinds of dynamics were present at the political and institutional level? What were the capacities on the ground?

Range of potential sub-questions:
- What is/was the nature of the conflict context at the time of the research? Did PCD staff and/or partners conduct a conflict and/ or risk assessment as part of the project design process?
- Was the timing of the research assessed in terms of the political context, the policy environment, etc.?
- Did the conflict context change significantly during the course of the research? If so, did this affect the research process and how?
- Was there an assessment of the sustainability of the project's objectives and/or sustainability of the institution/network?
- Did the research project encounter potential or actual ethical and/or security risks, including: risks to the researchers, including differential risks to team members in regions with varying levels of conflict, and interference or pressure by political or armed entities; risk to the research participants, including participants' right to maintain anonymity, informed consent, the safe storing of data, and the use of tapes/filming.
- Are there particular issues regarding institutional risks that are particular to conflict context, including institutional fragility, uncertain resource flow, excessive workloads, and staff turnover? How are these addressed by PCD and PCD's partner organizations?
- What kinds of challenges, if any, are present in getting country clearance for a project, and what is the effect on the research project?

Specific objective 2: On "What Happened" - the Partners' and PCD's Intents and Achievements
Build a body of learning around the ways in which PCD research partners adapt to the prevailing environmental conditions in conflict settings and address ethical considerations, and what contribution PCD-supported research can make in these conditions to influencing policy, building research capacities and increasing domestic ownership of peace processes.

Lead questions: What did the research partners and PCD set out to do (intents)? What actually happened? Why did it happen that way? What were PCD and its partners' coping strategies? In which ways did the research partners and PCD develop and adapt research questions, methodologies and approaches, capacity building and dissemination in a conflict setting? Are there particular strategies which where more successful?

Range of potential sub-questions:
- What kind of change in the environment is envisioned in the project (i.e. the project's theory of change)? For example, would change occur through

individual change? Institutional change? By addressing root causes? By withdrawing resources for the conflict, etc?

- How did the suggested research methodology take into account the conflict context? Was the methodology adapted or modified if the context changed? What is PCD's role in developing the methodology? The research partners' role?

- Were there difficulties in accessing and collecting primary and secondary data? Did the research methodology include gender and/or generational analyses, multidisciplinary or comparative approaches, and/or worked with marginalized communities?

- Were there risks highlighted (institutional, personal security, objectives maybe not attainable), and if so, in which ways were these handled by PCD and its partners?

- During the course of conducting the research, what were the other practical, financial, political, methodological and ethical challenges related to the conflict context? These could include risks and challenges associated with potential unintended uses of research findings, for example.

- Was there an aspect of capacity building (individual or institutional) build within the research project, and what was the research partners' and PCD's role in developing that capacity building element?

- What has been PCD's role in dealing with research ethics challenges from the outset of the project? How have ethical challenges (if present) affected the research process?

- How was the research team composed? Has the conflict context affected the research composition? If it was composed of researchers both in and outside of the conflict context, was there a different level of risk between the researchers?

- How was the research disseminated and communicated? Were policymakers part of the target group? What kinds of challenges and opportunities in dissemination and policy influence were present because of the conflict context? What political sensitivities existed, and how were those dealt with?

- Were there unintended consequences of the research process?

Specific objective 3:On the "How"- Programming Modalities:
Increase learning around the strengths and weaknesses of PCD programming modalities and its relationships to its research partners in contributing to the achievement of PCD objectives in countries and regions affected by violent conflict.

Lead questions: What are the different programming decisions that PCD and its partners make regarding research taking into account a context of violent conflict? What modalities seem more successful, and under what conditions? What can PCD learn about this?

Range of potential sub-questions:

- How do PCD criteria for involvement in conflict contexts fare in terms of feasibility and flexibility in conducting, managing and disseminating research, especially considering the potential "instabilities" in the context?
- How does the research team assess the strengths and weaknesses of PCD's programming approach?
- What kind of programming modalities were considered and chosen by PCD partners and PCD staff (e.g. supporting an institution inside or outside of the conflict zone, composition of research team, research project vs. research support project, working in networks, capacity building, etc.). What adaptations have been/need to be made in design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of results? Does it differ from programming in any other contexts, and if so, how? What modalities seemed to be more successful, and under which circumstances?
- To what extent did PCD partners and PCD staff act with flexibility and responsiveness under changing circumstances? What institutional tools, mechanisms or constraints (e.g. financial constraints, institutional policies, etc.) were taken into consideration?
- During the course of managing the research, what practical, financial, political, methodological and ethical challenges came up? How were they dealt with? Are there particular strategies which where more successful?

Specific objective 4: Forward Thinking
With a better understanding of prevailing research conditions as well as PCD's programming modalities, explore the implications (in terms of resources, security, institutional risks, policy influence, how we partner, etc.) *of potential expansion of PCD programming into countries and regions affected by violent conflict.*

Lead questions: What conclusions can be drawn from how external dimensions affect the research process? What are the manageable factors, through the partnership between PCD and its research partners? What are the strengths and weaknesses of PCD programming approaches to research in conflict settings? What lessons can be drawn in terms of the opportunities, challenges, and obstacles to potentially expanding PCD's programming into context of violent conflicts where it has not previously programmed significantly?

5. Methodology

The evaluation will consist of two components:
- Four case studies that examine the challenges and opportunities of PCD's programming in countries or regions affected by violent conflict;
- A fifth paper consolidating case study findings and providing strategic forward planning on the feasibility of expanding PCD's programming, both in countries where it already programs and in new countries/regions.

Case Study Sampling:

Case study countries/regions are selected to reflect:

- Significant recent PCD involvement: several projects ongoing or approved in those regions since the start of the 2005-2011 PCD Prospectus
- Balanced geographic coverage to the extent possible
- Selected case study countries/regions: **Colombia, Palestine/Middle East, East Africa, and Sri Lanka**
-

Case study projects are selected based on:

- Ongoing or approved in current Prospectus period
- Research was managed or conducted, all or in part, in a country or region with violent conflict
- Projects that present learning opportunities on the development, conduct, management and dissemination of research in conflict contexts
- NOTE: A list of selected projects will be available to the selected consultants once hired

Evaluation Methodology:

The evaluation methodology and instruments will be developed in discussion with PCD staff and the consultants, and this will be the focus of a methodology workshop (to be held before the start of the evaluation – date TBD).

Case study authors are expected to use qualitative methods as the primary source of data collection, including semi-structured interviews with staff, partners and beneficiaries. Document review of key project documents will also be critical to gain an in-depth understanding of the research problem and of PCD/PCD partners' perceptions of how peace can best be supported through research. The case study methodology will include a desktop review of relevant project documentation, interviews with relevant PCD staff, project leaders and relevant stakeholders.

A final workshop will bring together relevant project participants to discuss the draft report and exchange experiences and insights gained from conducting, managing and dissemination research in conflict-affected countries.

6. Roles and Responsibilities

Consultants Will:

- Be available for a Methodology workshop (before the beginning of the study, date TBD) **and** a Results workshop (date TBD, after the study is completed) in Ottawa
- Develop and use high quality methods:

- o Well done surveys, interviews that follow protocols, outputs that are insightful and well-written; these instruments/methods should be detailed in the workplan developed by the author for review by the evaluation manager.
    - o Conduct all communications including interviews with respect for our partners and their work.
  - ▪ Produce high quality outputs:
    - o Workplan (with instruments/methods, survey questions, etc.)
    - o Iterative process with report draft
    - o Full report and a short summary/brief of findings
  - ▪ Be resourceful:
    - o Search for:
      - • Additional documentation
      - • Additional potential interviewees
    - o Get general information on:
      - • The case study organization
      - • Its other donors
      - • Its other projects
      - • On capacity development and organizational capacity

Evaluation Manager (PCD):
  - ▪ PCD will provide:
    - o A list of case study project
    - o An initial list of contacts and documents (Project Completion Reports, project proposals, etc.)
    - o Support on travel logistics
    - o Input on workplan and drafts of report
    - o Background documentation

7. Expected Outcomes and Outputs/Report Requirements for Complete Evaluation:
  - ▪ Participation of all consultants in a methodology workshop with PCD staff and other consultants (early 2008);
  - ▪ Four case studies, 20-25 pages in length each;
  - ▪ A 25-30-page paper to consolidate case study findings and provide strategic forward planning assessing the feasibility of expanding PCD's programming, both in countries where it already programs and in new countries/regions.
  - ▪ A total of five briefs (2-4 pages each) on studies – one for each of the four case studies and a fifth summing up the findings of the consolidating/strategic planning paper;
  - ▪ Participation of all consultants in a results workshop with IDRC staff, project partners, and other donors.

9. Estimated timeline and activities (in 2008 – dates TBD with availability of hired consultants):

Case Study Authors (Per Case Study – 4 case studies total)

Activity	Timeline (by month from beginning of contract)	Billable days per activity
Methodology workshop	1st month	Days, as follows: -1 day of workshop -1.5 days in transit
Workplan	Submitted in 2nd month	2 days for workplan development
Background research	2nd month	3 days
Field Work	3rd month	7 days, as follows: -5 days in field -2 days in transit
Writing report and summary/brief	3rd and/or 4th month	6 days
Submission of report and brief/summary	5th month	
Revision of report and brief/summary	6th month	2 days
Participation in results workshop and submit final report	8th month	2.5 days, as follows: -1.5 days in transit, -1 day of workshop
Total Billable Days per Case Study:		25 days

Author writing consolidating/strategic planning paper

Activity	Timeline (by month from beginning of contract)	Billable days per activity
Methodology workshop	1st month	Days, as follows: -1 day of workshop -1.5 days in transit
Workplan	Submitted in 5th month	3 days for workplan development
Developing and Writing report and summary/brief	5th and 6th month	20 days
Submission of report and brief/summary	End of 6th month	
Revision of report and brief/summary	7th month	2 days
Participation in results workshop and submit final report	8th month	2.5 days, as follows: -1.5 days in transit, -1 day of workshop
Total Billable Days:		30 days

10. Quality of the Evaluation Report

The quality of the evaluation report produced by the evaluators will be judged by IDRC's Evaluation Unit on four internationally recognized standards: utility, feasibility, accuracy, and propriety. A copy of IDRC's Evaluation Guideline 3 "Formatting Evaluation Reports at IDRC" and Evaluation Guideline 4 "Quality Assessment of IDRC Evaluation Reports" will be provided to the evaluator/ evaluation team.

4.6   Annex 6. Biography of the evaluator

Annina Mattsson

Mrs Annina Mattsson holds a Masters degree in Violence, Conflict and Development from the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS) at the University of London, England. She has proven knowledge and hands-on experience of conflict and development settings as she has lived and worked in Ramallah in the Palestinian territories for 16 months. She has extensive research experience of the different issues development initiatives in conflict settings are faced with, especially in the Palestinian territories, having written her Masters thesis on the various aspects of donor funding present. As a consultant for Channel Research, she has taken part in studies and evaluations related to conflict, human rights and peacebuilding in the Middle East (for example in Palestine with the Swedish Agency for International Development (Sida)) and has been involved in a number of evaluations in active conflict settings such as Sudan and Sri Lanka.

Mrs Mattsson is a Finnish national and speaks fluent Finnish, Swedish, English, Spanish and French, and can converse in colloquial Arabic.