PEACE ON A PLATE: AID, REINTEGRATION AND THE THESIS OF LIBERAL PEACE TIMOR LESTE, 1999-2004

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RUTH HUBSCHER

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ABSTRACT

This thesis examines the impacts of aid agencies on the reintegration of repatriated refugees to Timor Leste. Scholars and aid practitioners involved in post-conflict peace building suggest that refugee reintegration is vital to the achievement of durable peace. They claim that reintegration will best occur through the reversal of structural inequalities and the adoption of a representative democratic structure and a market economy. Many of the relief and development activities aid organisations instigate are intended to contribute towards these ends. They are thus claimed to build a facilitating environment for returnee reintegration.

The research is based upon the interviews of ninety-seven groups of returnees, stayees and community leaders and a number of aid agencies, which operated programmes between 1999 and 2004 in Timor Leste. The research concludes that aid agencies played a positive role in refugee reintegration however the non-aid aspects of people's lives were of greater significance to the success of their overall reintegration. The short time spans that most aid agencies operated in and their failure to develop close working relationships in the communities they operated in, prevented them from significantly contributing to deeper level social, political and economic change that may have contributed to the state of liberal peace.

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My final thanks and thoughts go to the Karenni refugees of Kayah State, Burma who live in exile in Thailand, as it is the years spent living and working with them, that inspired my original interest in refugee issues.

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.1 PURPOSE OF THE THESIS

The reintegration of returnees into their communities is often argued to be a critical aspect of post-conflict peace building, which is necessary to ensure the development of sustainable peace. Reintegration is dependent on returnee's physical security, their economic well-being, and their inclusion in the social and political spheres of life. It is argued that reintegration will only be durable if these conditions evolve into a state of liberal peace, with the development of a representative governmental structure, a market economy and an active civil society.

Aid organisations claim to play a critical role in this arena, operating programmes, which have the ability to instigate the reintegration of communities through the development of liberal peace. This thesis is based upon the experiences of ninety-eight groups of returnees and stayees from four sub-districts of Timor Leste. It explores the degree to which efforts by aid organisations were able to contribute to the construction of norms, conditions and institutions of liberal peace at a local level and determines to what extent their interventions have enhanced the ability of returnees to reintegrate into their communities.

1.2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Since the late 1980s the reintegration of refugees has been seen as an increasingly important aspect of peace building. This change in status was largely triggered by the end of the Cold War, which helped bring about the cessation of a number of proxy wars and the consequent repatriation of hundreds of thousands of refugees across Africa and Asia. Rather than leading to widespread peace, the cessation of the bi-polar rivalry illuminated a change in the nature of war and with it, the nature of refugee movements. These new wars, commonly called *complex political emergencies*, saw the line between civilian and soldier; perpetrator and victim become increasingly unclear. Warring parties used the forced migration of populations to shore up their position and consolidate their power. International actors, unwilling to be held accountable for contributing to the perpetuation of violence, became increasingly wary of providing long-term support of refugee populations. Accordingly, this has led to the current policy and funding priorities of international actors, which promotes speedy refugee

repatriation following conflict. A significant outcome of the approach is that people are returning to their homelands while the wounds of war are still fresh. The salient issue for refugee reintegration following complex political emergencies may therefore be reconciliation as much as economic, political and legal reintegration, as a recently traumatised and divided population must find a way to coexist.

Significant claims are made concerning the importance of aid interventions to the reintegration of returnees, yet there continues to be little effort to examine their effectiveness beyond the period of project implementation. What research there is, has generally been done in the context of the reintegration of people following Cold War conflicts. Research has tended to be project-focused and few long-term, holistic studies have been published, which assess the collective impact of organisations and actors operating in post-conflict communities. Furthermore, it is rare that returnees or stayees[1] are given a voice or are able to discuss their experience of return and the impacts they feel aid interventions have had on this process. Instead analysis tends to represent the perspectives and opinions of governments, aid workers academics and other industry experts.

Timor Leste[2] provides an interesting and timely case study of refugee repatriation and reintegration. It shares some commonality with other post-conflict countries. The population experienced widespread violence and intimidation during a complex political emergency and a significant proportion of the population fled the country's borders. The majority of refugees returned to their home within six months of their original flight and most others have trickled back over the last five years. While most people who stayed in the country supported independence, many of the refugees were associated with the pro-Indonesian militia. Reintegration therefore is not only a matter of economic and political reintegration, but also social reconciliation.

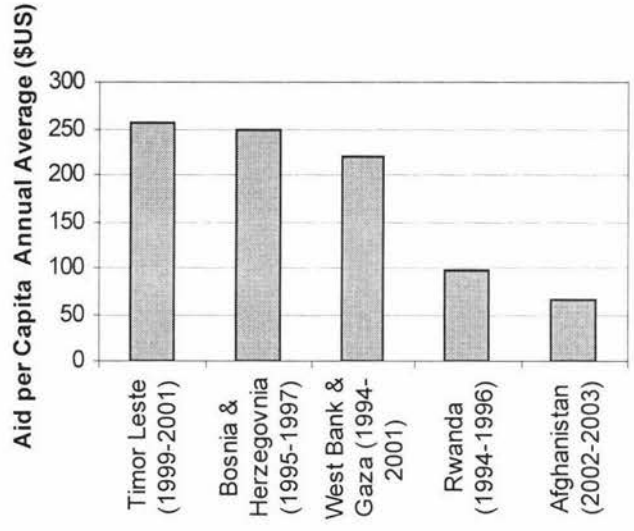
East Timor was the darling of the development community in the late 1990s. Perhaps appealing to people's romantic ideals of David triumphing over Goliath, the eyes of the world turned to the territory. Aware of the value of the country managing a successfully transition to democracy and hoping to avoid further instability in the region (Clarke 2003:5), donor countries poured in substantial quantities of foreign aid, with per capita Overseas

[1] 'stayees' is the term used to describe people who were not displaced outside Timor Leste's borders.
[2] Timor Leste was called East Timor prior to Independence in 2002.

Development Assistance (ODA), far exceeding the amount donated to the relief and redevelopment of Bosnia, the West Bank, Afghanistan or Rwanda (see figure 1).

Relief, reconstruction and development were to be an immense task. Not only had the country been devastated during the pre- and post-ballot violence, it had previously been the poorest province in Indonesia (UNDP 2002:57), with little economic base, a poorly educated population and few people with the skills and experience to bring to the management of the territory (UNDP 2002:11). Any euphoria over independence was quickly moderated as people confronted the enormous problems of survival in the devastated and traumatised country.

Figure 1: Post-conflict Countries: Comparison of Per Capita Overseas Development Aid Received



(Source: Bennet 2003:2)

The end of the emergency period in Timor Leste and the reduction and withdrawal of many UN and emergency aid organisations provides an appropriate time to assess the impact of their operations and the situation of returnees relative to other Timorese. Was aid able to assist returnees to reintegrate economically, socially and politically? Through their interventions, were aid agencies able to contribute to the strengthening of liberal peace? It is these questions upon which this study attempts to shed some light.

1.3 Terms and Concepts

There are a number of terms and concepts that will be referred to throughout the study. A *refugee*, according to the 1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees is a person, who due to a "well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality or membership of a particular social group or political opinion" is unable to enjoy the protection of their country of origin (Article I, 1951 UN Convention relation to the Status of Refugees). Although the definition of a refugee has not been altered since 1951, some organisations and the UNHCR itself occasionally widen their interpretation to include peoples who have been displaced across an international border due to warfare or natural disaster (UNHCR 1997:52). For the purposes of this study, the term refers to any person who crossed from East Timor into West Timor during or following the violence of 1999.

It is important to note that returnees can not be treated as a homogeneous group, and their experiences of repatriation and reintegration have differed significantly. Refugees from Timor Leste fled for a number of reasons. Not all refugees were all pro-integration or were willingly associated with the militia. Thousands were forced across the border by pro-Indonesian forces and many youth were intimidated into joining militia forces while secretly hoping for independence. Nonetheless, there were also a significant number of refugees who were involved in the intimidation and violence and some were involved in gross human rights abuses. All refugees who fled to West Timor and then returned to East Timor will be referred to as *returnees* and it is on these people that this study focuses.

Virtually the entire population of Timor Leste was uprooted during the violence. Two thirds of the population were internally displaced within the country, seeking shelter in the hills and mountains. Following the arrival of the United Nation's Peace Keeping Force in September 2002, the majority of these people were able to rapidly return to their homes. For this reason, they will be referred to as *stayees.*

Repatriation and *reintegration* are related but distinct terms. Repatriation refers to the logistical process of return to the country of origin. Reintegration is a much more complex process. Following the violence that caused the original flight, the relationship between returnees and the receiving community may have altered considerably. There are commonly high levels of distrust between the receiving population, internally displaced people, demobilised soldiers and returnees as people experience feelings of anger, contempt or humiliation (Black & Koser

1999:11, Eade & Williams 1995:838, Langren 1998:2). Rather than being welcomed, returnees may be ostracized, targeted or abandoned by former neighbours, family or their communities (Maynard 1997:207).

In many cases returnees will not return to their original homes or communities (Eastmond & Öjendal 1999:54, Stein 1997:161). Furthermore, in many cases the country may have undergone massive social and political transformations (Öjendal 1999:54) and in a number of cases, the entire state apparatus and occasionally even the state may have been newly formed during the period of exile[3] (Black & Koser 1999:9). While reintegration may be associated with a form of homecoming, and imply a restoration of normality and wholeness, in many instances it should be viewed instead as a new beginning (Hammond 1999:229, Helton 2002:177, Stein 1997:162).

Stein maintains that until returnees cannot be considered reintegrated until they are able to take part in the economic and political life of their homeland (Stein 1997:161). He sees reintegration as the process where individuals re-establish a space within society: creating social, economic and political bonds with their communities, the state and other sectors of society (Stein 1997:163). The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) suggest that reintegration, "entails the erosion – and ultimately the disappearance – of any observable distinctions which set returnees apart from their compatriots, particularly in terms of their socio-economic and legal status" (UNHCR 1997:159). Reintegration is therefore much more far-reaching and complex than repatriation itself (Stein 1997:162).

This study is primarily concerned with the effects that aid interventions have had on the reintegration of returnees. There are a number of players that have been involved including the international financial institutions (IFIs), bi-lateral aid donors, international governmental agencies such as the UNHCR, a diverse number of international non-governmental organisations (INGOs), and a number of local non-governmental organisations (LNGOs). Although they may occasionally be referred to as the *International Community*, this ought not be interpreted to indicate coherence of purpose. Despite their occasionally contradictory and diverse mandates and working styles, most major organisations operate in a manner consistent with the values of *liberal peace*. This paradigm holds that sustainable peace is a function of

[3] Instances of states being formed during the period of exile include Eritrea (1993) and the former Yugoslavian states (1990s).

liberal democracy and a market economy. It contends that the balance of civil society, the state and the market create a system through which people can mediate their differences and develop in peace and prosperity (Richmond 2004).

1.4 METHODOLOGY

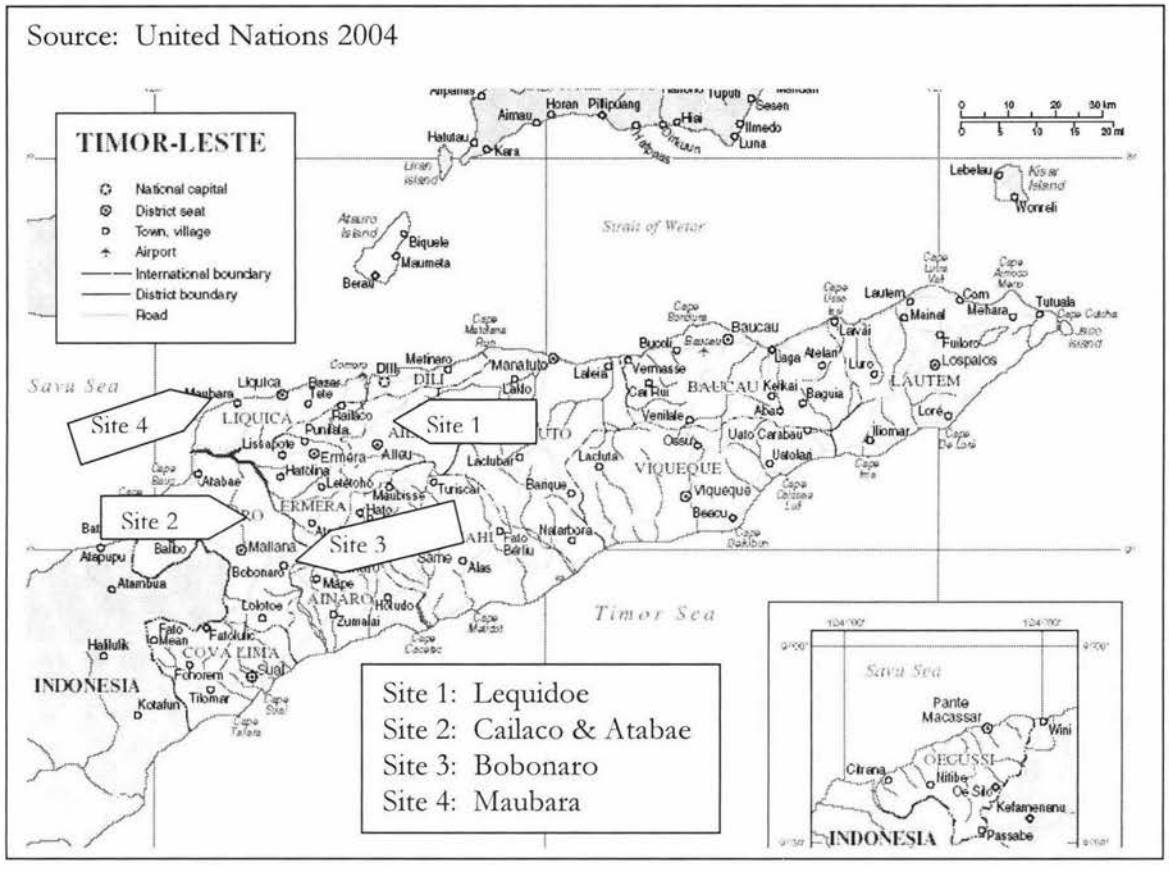
This research was carried out using a case study approach in June and July 2004. Interviews were conducted with returnees, stayees and community leaders over a series of week-long visits to four different sub-districts situated in the central and western provinces of Timor Leste (see Figure 2).

The use of case studies was felt to be a suitable tool to examine people's experience of reintegration as the methodology enables the collection of rich and detailed information from a complex real world situation. It is a holistic approach where information is gathered from a multitude of sources. The approach recognises the validity of a variety of truths and accepts that each person will experience and understands their reality differently (Creswell 1998:61, Neuman 2000:148).

Case study sites were selected which had experienced a large amount of militia activity, high levels of displacement, and a large proportion of the population fleeing and then returning from West Timor. In addition each site was geographically and economically dissimilar. Lequidoe and Bobonaro are located in the central highlands, and residents derive their income from coffee, cattle and trading. Cailaco is situated on the rice growing plains of Maliana and Maubara climbs from coastal areas up into the foothills of the mountains.

Due to limitations of time, finance and a desire to minimise the burden on hosts, visits to each site were limited to a week's duration. Although these short stays could provide only a superficial understanding of community dynamics, the period proved adequate to uncover a range of issues and usually by the end of each visit, there would be some degree of repetition in the information respondents shared. It is likely that a much greater period of time would be required in order to develop the trust necessary to obtain a more complex depth of understanding.

Figure 2: Map of Timor Leste



Following each trip to a case study site, follow-up interviews were conducted with aid organisations that had been active in the site and continued to operated an office, usually in Dili (see Appendix A for a list of organisations). The fieldwork was complemented with a review of published and unpublished literature pertaining to the topic.

Data Collection in the Field

Respondents were identified using a variety of techniques including snowballing and stratified sampling. Upon entering a sub-district an initial interview would be held with the sub-district leader to identify from which *sucos* (villages) the greatest numbers of refugees had fled and then returned and which sites had experienced higher numbers of people associated with militia forces. Visits were then made to the *sucos* and if possible would include an interview with the *Chefe de Suco.* The *Chefe de Suco* would occasionally provide the names of suitable *aldeihas* (hamlets) to visit.

The selection of *sucos* was limited by accessibility. While Chambers' (1983:13) spatial tarmac bias was avoided (not a particularly difficult feat in Timor Leste), following a particularly hair-raising motorbike journey down a mountainside, the decision was made to limit the study to sites which were not life endangering to reach! The research attempted to understand how aid had impacted people's ability to reintegrate, but rather than starting from a list of project participants, respondents were identified according to housing style, distance from the road and attempts were made to ensure that a gender balance and a diversity of age groups were represented.

Some interviews were prearranged with the help of *suco* leaders, however the majority were conducted without an appointment during daylight hours in people's own homes. In general, respondents were in or around their homes, however in necessary, a house would be returned to if a respondent was unavailable at the time of the first visit.

Interviews were informal and were kept as low key and conversational as possible. Questions were based around a semi-structured interview developed in New Zealand and were piloted in Dili. Very often a small crowd of neighbours and children would come and see what the *malai* (foreigner) was doing – and they would often join in the discussion, contributing their own opinions and experiences.

A total of ninety-seven semi-structured focus group interviews were carried out across four sub-districts with local leaders, returnees and stayees (see figure 3). Respondents were not explicitly asked whether they had been involved in militia activity but it was often possible to identify militia through things they said during the interview, comments made by other respondents and also the location and type of their homes.

Figure 3: Table of Interviews: Sub-districts

	Lequidoe, Alieu 8/6 - 12/6	Cailaco, Bobonaro 21/6 – 29/6	Bobonaro, Bobonaro 30/6 – 6/7	Maubara, Liquicia 12/7 – 17/7
Leaders	2	2	5	3
Returnees	8	13	7	5
Stayees	12	16	10	15
Total	**22**	**31**	**21**	**23**

I chose not to use a tape recorder as I find them cumbersome and somewhat intimidating. When I worked with a translator, I used the moment between each question to take notes while the translator was talking. In interviews with English speakers it may have been useful, as often I would strain to make sense of my notes at the end of the interview. Following

completion of the fieldwork, my field assistant read through the case study results to ensure that my results accurately reflected respondent's comments.

Data Analysis

Information was sorted by case study location using a form of open coding to determine emerging themes and viewpoints. Overriding themes were isolated around which these categories were clustered (Neuman 2000:423). Data was analysed to identify areas of agreement and disagreement between respondents and the frequency with which various issues were raised (Neuman 2000:422).

Ethical Considerations

The communal nature of Timorese society made it difficult to protect respondent anonymity at a local level other than keeping questions to 'safe' topics. To protect people's anonymity in the dissemination of the research results, a form of coding has been developed which masks the identity of the *suco* and respondents within it[4]. Each *suco* has been allocated a random number and *aldeihas* (hamlets) are not identified at all. Respondents are not identified individually, but by the groups with whom they took part in the interview. On occasions groups may have comprised a single woman, a couple, or a group of friends and neighbours. The numbers of respondents within groups often fluctuated during interviews so it was not practical to attempt to identify each group member. Where, however, a group involved mixed groups of stayees and returnees or people who had returned at different times, I would record them as different groups and note who had made which comments.

The coding system works as follows: *Sucos* have been allocated a letter and the status of the respondents have been noted as either 'S' followed by a number for stayee or 'R' followed by the year they returned and then a number to identify returnees. So codes might work as follows:

AS3 - The third group of stayees interviewed from *Suco* A, Lequidoe.

AR02/3 - The third group of returnees to *Suco* A, Lequidoe in 2002.

BCDS – *Chefe de Suco* (village leader), *Suco* B

CDP – *Chefe de Posto* (sub district leader)

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[4] This process passed the Massey Human Ethics process (www.massey.ac.nz/~muhec/).

In order to maximise the security of my research assistant and I, upon arrival in each sub-district, we reported our presence to the local police and confirmed with them that the area was safe to visit.

Following completion of the field research, I sent an outline of my research findings to all the aid organisations that had operated programmes in the areas visited. Several organisations consequently decided to follow up issues relating to the exclusion of returnees from assistance.

Strengths and Limitations of Process

I was lucky to have the assistance and guidance of a fellow student and Timorese national who had worked extensively throughout the area, and had a wide network of contacts and a deep local knowledge. This was particularly valuable in gaining access to informants in the field, learning some of the local history and provided a lens through which responses could be viewed. A negative outcome of this was that his close ties to people in these areas and his own political and historical experience of the period may have coloured his views and interpretations of people's responses so he became a participant observer, with his personal involvement affecting his own and then my own ability to seek out 'truth' in a positivistic and non-subjective manner (Hermann 2001:79).

My inability to speak Tetum (the *lingua franca*) meant that all interviews in the field had to be translated by my research assistant. Although the standard of translation was very good, simultaneous verbal translation will always lose a degree of accuracy (Hermann 2001:83).

Sometimes translations in an interview were three way: English, Tetum the local dialect and then back again. The translator would summarise what he thought were the most important points – and omitted things he thought weren't relevant – as my comprehension of Tetum improved I was able to ask further questions about what interviewees might have said.

A major limitation of the research methodology was the difficulty in assessing projects that had happened in past. The research was carried out as a snapshot in time, but was attempting to measure long-term impacts of programmes on people. Projects, which were either particularly successful and had eliminated a problem, or totally unsuccessful in achieving their aims were often not recalled by respondents. This was particularly evident with the World Bank's 'Community Empowerment Programme (CEP), which were only ever mentioned following the prompting of my research assistant who had previously been employed on the programme.

People were also more likely to talk about problems that were currently in the forefront of their minds and omit, probably due to oversight, issues and projects that may have been of concern in the past.

As with all research the existence of a single truth is questionable, as each person comprehends and expresses their reality differently (Pratt & Loizos 1992:38). Respondents' comments will also be biased by their attitudes towards other people present during the interview including other respondents and the research team (Beebe 2001:47). Despite my repeated assertions that I was a student and had no links to NGOs or UN agencies, I suspect that some respondents hoped that I would be able to facilitate the arrival of aid to the area and I am sure that on occasions people shaped their answers around this assumption.

There were also differences between the information men and women would share. Usually when men were present, they would dominate the discussion however women would often contribute ideas or nod their heads in agreement to things that their husbands said. Women's contributions were often particularly valuable and I often had the feeling that men would tell you how things ought to be, or how they thought you ought to understand the situation, whereas women would be more likely to tell you how things were. The need to triangulate was particularly evident. Within interviews triangulation allowed us to cover for errors of translation, misunderstandings and to clarify understanding. I also attempted to triangulate between groups to identify and verify trends and themes.

It is difficult to make a judgment about the effectiveness of a programme in the chaos of a post-conflict society, where there is no certainty, little trust, poor communication networks and the threat of further outbreaks of violence. As a researcher, I am aware that it is all too easy to gloss over these difficulties and identify the failures without seeing the successes. The discussion that follows can be no more than an introduction to themes that emerged and can in no way be said to provide a measurement of project impact on the lives of returnees or the reintegration of communities.

One serendipitous outcome of the process was that people seemed to enjoy the opportunity to talk through the last few years and deliberate over the problems that had confronted them and their communities. Following one interview, a former TNI[5] soldier thanked me saying that the process had enabled him to look at the situation of his community from a new perspective.

[5] Tentara Nasional Indonesia, Indonesian military

1.5 Outline of Thesis

This thesis is broken into seven chapters. The introduction lays out the basis of research question. It provides an introduction to some of the key terms and concepts and discusses the research methodology utilized.

Part One examines the theoretical paradigm within which the research question is situated. Chapter Two explores the relationship said to exist between reintegration and peace building in the post-Communist era. Current thought holds that reintegration and peace reside on the development of the conditions of liberal peace. Chapter Three looks more critically at the component pieces of reintegration. It examines economic, political and social aspects of reintegration, exploring the development of theory over the period and the manner in which external actors have attempted to put these theories into practice in post-conflict situations since the 1990s.

Part Two sites the study in Timor Leste and examines the Timorese experiences of reintegration. Chapter Four provides an historical overview of Timor Leste and provides the background within which the study is set. Chapter Five sets out the major results of the field work, which was conducted in Timor Leste over June and July 2004. Using the voices of Timorese people from rural communities, it illustrates their experiences and perspectives of reintegration and the impact of aid organisations on themselves and their communities.

Chapter Six discusses the contribution of aid interventions to the reintegration of returnees in Timor Leste. It considers dominant themes, which emerged in Chapter Five in light of the opinions of aid workers, the literature produced by their organisations and other academic sources of literature which address post-conflict peace building and reintegration.

Chapter Seven concludes the thesis by evaluating the effectiveness of the theory of liberal peace in assisting returnees to reintegrate in Timor Leste and suggests some changes in the approaches aid agencies take when working with communities where people are reintegrating.

PART ONE: CONCEPTS

CHAPTER 2 - CONCEPTUAL BACKGROUND: REINTEGRATION, PEACE BUILDING AND LIBERAL PEACE

This chapter explores the conceptual baggage that accompanies discourse on reintegration. It relates current theories regarding refugee reintegration to the growing interest in peace building and sites its origins in the legacy of the Cold War, the ideological hegemony of liberal democracy and the growing interest in security in the what became known as 'the New World Order'.

A number of profound changes accompanied the dismantling of the Soviet Bloc and the cessation of the Cold War. Refugees in the New World Order lost their political value. Aid agencies involved in refugee support confronted tightening budgets and shifted the focus of their assistance from an exile-based approach to a more proactive search for durable solutions. At the same time, the international community become increasingly interested in the peace building process, recognising the spill over effects of unrest and forced migration on regional neighbours and also their own societies. Whereas underdevelopment and political failure were claimed to be a key factor in the creation of conflict, the development of liberal peace was argued to provide the basis for reintegration and sustainable peace. This analysis provided development agencies with justification for claiming a crucial role in the operation of programmes that assisted returnees and their communities to achieve political, social and economic reintegration in a manner consistent with the tenets of liberal peace.

Aid instigated reintegration and development projects have been subject to a degree of criticism. The movement from relief to development is more complex than the models depicted by scholars. The projects implemented by practitioners are also limited in their reach by environmental and organisational shortcomings. Furthermore, there is a critique that project evaluation remains aid-centric, where reintegration is measured according to project timeframes rather than the well-being of returnees.

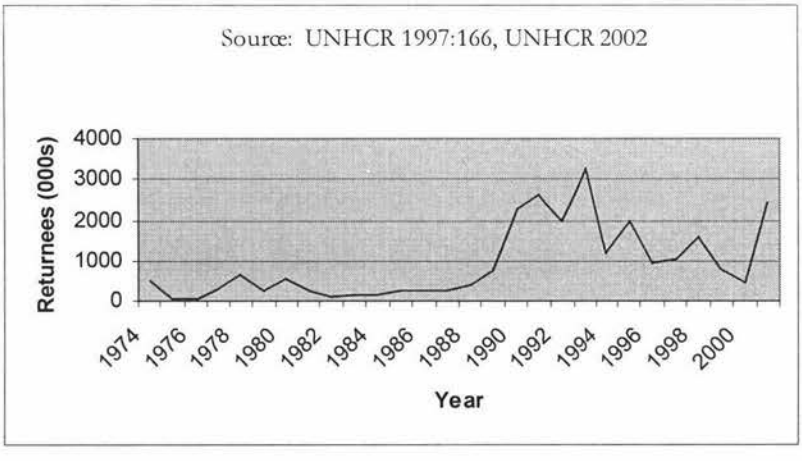
2.1 Complex Political Emergencies: A Cry for Development?

> War retards development, but conversely, development retards war. This double causation gives rise to virtuous and vicious circles. Where development succeeds, countries become progressively safer from violent conflict, making subsequent development easier. Where development fails, countries are at high risk of becoming caught in a conflict trap in which war wrecks the economy and increases the risk of further war. (Collier et al 2003:1)

The end of the Cold War heralded a new period in international relations. Francis Fukuyama in his seminal article "The End of History" (1989) resigned himself to the triumph of liberal economics and democracy over both fascism and communism. Liberal democracy he contended, had been proven the apex of modernity, the culmination of the process of development. As such development would henceforth imply the emergence of liberal democratic governance and market based economics.

The period in which Fukuyama wrote saw momentous changes occurring across the global landscape. With the crumbling of Soviet Union came the rapid cessation of a number of proxy Cold War conflicts, including those in Cambodia, Mozambique, and Guatemala. From 1991 a flux of refugees and displaced people were able to return to their countries of origin, often after decades spent in exile (see Figure 4) (UNHCR 1997:146). Sadaka Ogata, the High Commissioner of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), labelled the 1990s the Decade of Voluntary Repatriation (Loescher 2001:280).

Figure 4: Annual Returnee Totals 1975-2002



To the surprise of many observers however, the dissolution of the Soviet Bloc did not result in a period of world peace. The developing world did not benefit from a 'peace dividend' of political stability and prosperity and there was little corresponding shift in funding from military operations into development programming (UNDP 1994). Instead, a perception grew that the number of civil wars throughout Asia, Africa and Europe had exploded.

Discourse on the cause of these conflicts was initially attributed to the vacuum caused by the withdrawal of superpower forces (eg Black & Koser 1999:2, Munslow & Brown 1999:208). Few countries during the Cold War had managed to stay neutral. In exchange for continued allegiance, corrupt and autocratic regimes from around the world based their rule on the financial and military support they received from their respective superpower benefactors.

With the end of the conflict, the incentive for the remaining superpower to provide ongoing support to some of its more questionable allies disappeared. The levels of overseas development assistance received by developing countries dropped significantly (Macrae 2001:25) and the receipt of aid and other forms of assistance became contingent on undertaking movements towards democratisation and unpopular economic reform (Addison 2000:407, Atwood 1998:186, Macrae 1999:6, Schultz 1995:81). Without a broad base of electoral support, the leadership in countries as diverse as Indonesia, Zaire and Chile found themselves challenged by internal contenders. Facing rising public discontent and lacking the means to suppress opposition, the environment was ripe for domestic contenders to challenge existing power structures.

Closer examination of these conflicts found this narrative unsatisfactory. Most wars were not new, and at least half of the seventy-nine conflicts of the 1990s had been in existence for over a decade (UNDP 1994:47). Many more were continuations of conflicts that had broken out in the 1960s (Durr 1993 in Taras & Ganguly 2002:2). The increased visibility of intrastate conflict was attributed to conflicts either having been previously ignored or being interpreted only in terms of the ideological struggle between communism and liberal democracy (Krop 1998:157).

Diagnosis of the cause of intrastate conflict then turned its focus to internal issues. The first label to gain currency was *ethnic* conflict. Maynard (1997:7) wrote, "the world was shocked to discover the force of animosity among many of the world's five to eight thousand ethnic groups". Primordial theorists of the 1970s and 1980s argued attempts at modernisation were

not able to loosen the immutable bonds shared between members of the same ethnic groups. Innately competitive and defensive, it was hypothesised that ethnic groups would respond with militant violence to threats to their autonomy (Schultz 1995:78, Taras & Ganguly 2002:4).

These theories were eventually supplanted by the rise of the more nuanced *identity-based* conception of conflict. Ethnicity was seen to be too limited to explain current conflicts. Instead acknowledgement was made of wider factors such as religious, regional and linguistic difference, which demarcated the lines along which groups formed (Lederach 1997:8, Maynard 1997:6). The cause of violence was also re-examined. Deterministic primordial explanations, that asserted a predisposition to competition and conflict in ethnic groups, were held to be racist and inadequate to explain the incidence of violence.

This school of thought was to some extent replaced by the paradigm of developmentalism. Developmental explanations attribute the emergence of complex political emergencies primarily to the failure of political systems. Resulting in repression, poverty, resource scarcity, and environmental damage, ineffectual governance has created an environment ripe for conflict (Atwood 1998:148, Collier et al 2003, Kumar 1997:2, UNHCR 1995:144). This present reading has become very influential within the aid industry. Its rational provides greater impetus than a sense of moral obligation or humanitarianism to help the poor and vulnerable, as it explicitly links the reduction of poverty and the development of the Third World to the creation of durable peace and stability across the developing and developed world (Duffield 2001:113, Fox 2002). Despite the criticism to which Fukuyama was subjected, his observation that political and economic liberalism are the only viable mechanism to create development has been widely supported.

Complex political emergencies have been socially, politically and economically devastating. Affecting large parts of the population, they have been characterized by a "breakdown of limits, institutions, governance, widespread suffering and massive population displacement" (Kreimer et al 1998:2). Civilians have become both targets and perpetrators of violence and the distinction between civilians and military has diminished. As opposed to the beginning of the twentieth century, where only ten percent of casualties were non-combatants, by 1994, the figure had risen to ninety percent (UNDP 1994:47). Lewis (1999:96b) claims that "the least dangerous place to be in a war today is in the military". A consequence of the increase in these emergencies is that the number of people seeking refuge outside their own countries' borders

has also risen significantly: excluding the internally displaced, the total number of refugees worldwide increased by ten million between 1987 and 1997 (UNHCR 1997:30).

2.2 Refugees and the New World Order

Refugees in the New World Order are likely to find themselves less welcome than their counterparts in earlier decades. Throughout the Cold War, they had been valued for the symbolic role they represented in the ideological struggle. Eastern European defectors, the mujahideen in camps on the border of Afghanistan, and refugees fleeing struggles in El Salvador, Guatemala, and Nicaragua provided evidence of the brutality of the systems they escaped. Their exile discredited the government in their country of origin, enhanced the image of the country of asylum and in a number of instances provided a ready army which could be trained, equipped and manipulated by the superpower forces (Helton 2002:9, UNHCR 1995:37, Zohlberg 1994). Between 1976 and 1992 the number of refugees worldwide increased six-fold and the budget of the UNHCR increased from US$300 million to one billion dollars per year (Gallagher 1994, Sollis 1994).

The collapse of the bi-polar balance has led to a reduction in the symbolic value of refugees. Formerly presented and viewed as victims escaping from the crossfire of ideological conflict, they are now recognised by internal and international actors to play an integral part in the conflict with the forced displacement and intimidation of populations increasingly used as a military strategy by warring parties (Stedman & Tanner 2000, UNHCR 2000:282). Today, rather than being viewed as victims of political oppression, they are more often treated with antipathy or distrust by both donors and host communities (Gorlick 2003:84, Helton 2002:13, UNHCR 1995:219).

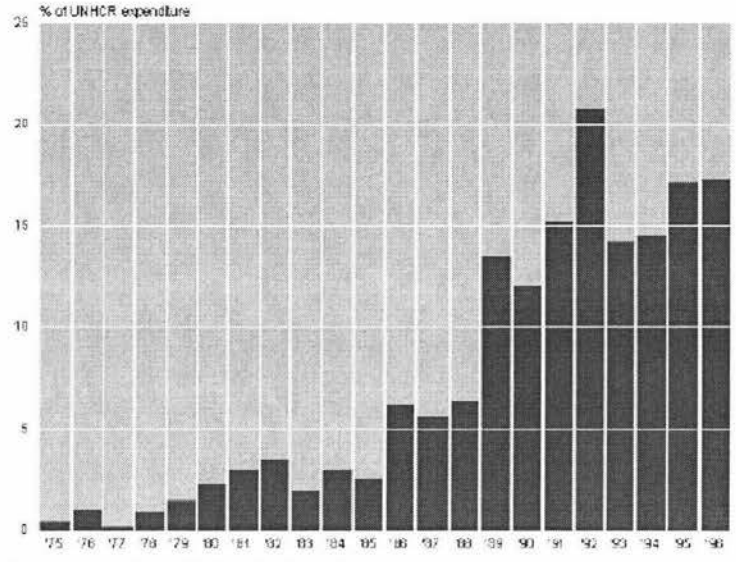
Outcomes of complex political emergencies may include higher numbers of refugees seeking shelter in neighbouring countries, and increasing numbers of migrants and asylum seekers seeking shelter in the First World. On a number of occasions, refugees have been accused of perpetrating violence and destabilising peace within their country of origin, their host country and other neighbouring regions (Crisp 2004:5, Gallagher 1994, Helton 2002:10). In instances such as the Hutu refugee camps following the Rwandan genocide of 1994, refugee aid has been accused of prolonging conflict, through maintaining a population either loyal or held captive to insurgent groups (Addison 2000:394, UNHCR 2000:248).

Refugee camps often disrupt or threaten the security of host countries. Forced migrants may bring unsociable habits, be accused of spreading communicable diseases, put pressure on local resources and infrastructure and compete with the local workforce for employment. The presence of camps can also cause jealously among local populations who do not receive the same assistance and interest from the international community (Chimni 2000 in Gorlick 2003:83, Collier et al 2003:36, UNHCR 2000:253).

Conflict has been linked to the development of markets for arms trading and drug trafficking (Maynard 1999:8) and can create breeding grounds for terrorism (NZAID 2004). Strategic concerns continue to be a influential factor in determining the distribution of aid with donor countries particularly interested in containing or averting violence which threatens regional or international stability (Addison 2000:407). This is particularly evident in cases such as the former Yugoslavia, and more recently the Australian intervention in the Solomon Islands (Downer 2003).

The change in the perception of refugees and conflict has corresponded with a reduction in levels of financing channelled towards their welfare (Loescher 2001:283). The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees is the international body mandated to ensure the protection of refugees. As a result of the new political environment and consequent change in the political status and attitudes towards refugees, the agency has become increasingly involved in attempts to contain and reverse refugee flows. It has reinterpreted its mandate from an exile-based focus, to placing greater attention on seeking durable solutions for refugee populations. Of the three solutions to refugee caseloads; resettlement in a third country, integration into the host country or repatriation, it is the latter which has been accepted as the most viable option. The agency has thus increased its expenditure on activities in the country of origin in order to promote the voluntary repatriation of refugees (See Figure 5) (Loescher 2001:283, Whitaker, 2003:145, UNHCR 1995:82).

Figure 5: Percentage of UNHCR expenditure on repatriation: 1975-1996



Source: UNHCR 1997:167

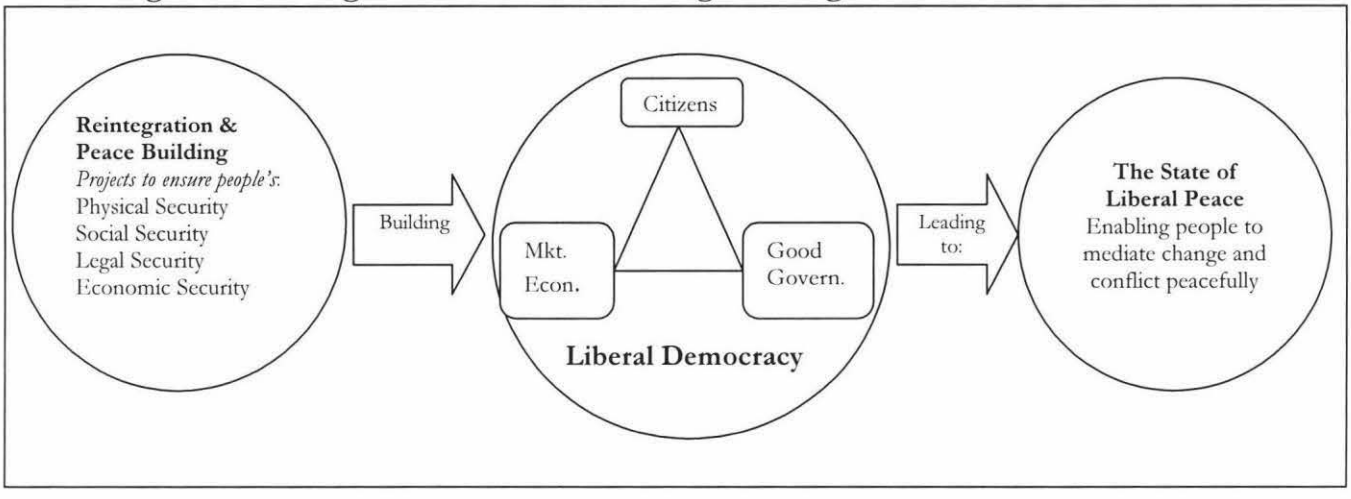
2.3 Reintegration and Peace Building: The Road to Liberal Peace

Scholars and development practitioners argue that the successful reintegration of returnees is vital to the establishment of long-term peace and stability in a country following conflict (Ahmed 2002:6, Chimni 2002:168, Eastmond & Ojendal 1999:54, Fagen 2003:221, Helton 2002:30, Maynard 1999:87, UNHCR 1997:162, Wood 2001:47). The UNHCR describes the relationship between reintegration and peace building as 'symbiotic', and claim that unless returnees are able to resume a life of security, peace may be delayed or even reversed (UNHCR 1997:143). These claims are reiterated by other authors: Arowolo (2000:66) argues that a failure to reintegrate will lead "again to internal strife, political agitation and civil war" while Chimni (2002:168) claims it could also lead to a repeat of the exile of the returnees.

Academics and development practitioners regularly refer to the complex historic, economic, political and social idiosyncrasies of each post-conflict situation and argue that for this reason, no single remedy exists applicable to all circumstances (Ahmed 2002:15, Pugh 2000:4). Paradoxically however, these same people argue that reintegration and peace building must feed into the developmental paradigm of liberal peace (see figure 6). From the various arms of the United Nations to the World Bank, there is consensus that durable peace and prosperity are dependent on the existence of representative government, the rule of law, a market economy, security and a strong civil society. These networks and institutions are claimed to

ensure that citizens' rights are respected and thereby enable people to mediate change and conflict peacefully (Boutros Boutros Ghali 1992:point 57, Collier et al 2003, Keating 2003:175, Pugh 2000:4, Wood 2001:13).

Figure 6: Reintegration and Peace Building: Feeding into Liberal Peace



Based around Galtung's 1972 concept of positive peace[6], liberal peace theories contend that the removal of structural injustices through the creation of institutions of political liberty and social justice will reduce the risk of conflict (Goodhand & Hulme 1999:15, Loescher 1994:34, Pankhurst 1999:239). Associating the noun 'development' with the conditions of liberal peace, a UNDP publication sums up this relationship, explicitly linking the achievement of peace to development:

> ... development is not only necessary for people to achieve better living standards and more life choices but ... is essential to preventing conflicts and preserving peace. (Ahmed et al 2002:18)

Reintegration and peace building are claimed to interact and reinforce each other, with successful reintegration dependent on concurrent peace building activities (UNHCR 1997:174, Wood 2001:16). Integration is said to be a function of representative, democratic governance, justice, economic growth, an active civil society and physical security (Helton 2002:179). Accordingly it is maintained that without the creation of the conditions of liberal peace, reintegration will not be possible:

[6] Galtung described liberal peace is the absence of structural injustice whereas negative peace was the absence of war (in Pankhurst 1999:239).

> The peacebuilding process incorporates a dozen different but interlocking tasks: strengthening the capacity of official institutions; holding free and fair elections; monitoring and promoting human rights; addressing the problem of accountability for previous human rights violations; building a strong civil society; demobilizing combatants; removing land-mines and unexploded ordnance; reforming the security services; restoring education and health facilities; assisting war-stricken children; reviving agricultural production; rebuilding the physical infrastructure; and instituting macro-economic policy reforms. What is more, all of these peacebuilding activities must be carried out simultaneously if displaced populations are to be effectively and sustainably reintegrated in their own society. (Kumar in UNHCR 1997:174)

This developmental interpretation of peace building has enabled the aid industry to rationalise its intervention in post-conflict states (Duffield 2001:115). Involvement is based around the assumption that external actors hold the 'power and moral authority' to intervene in post-conflict states to create the peace which internal actors have been incapable of doing (Pugh 2000:3). This imperative encompasses intervention and support of the reintegration process.

Aid agencies have been attributed with the ability to build returnees' productive capacity, contribute to improved intra-community relations and thereby enhance the peace building process (Fagen 2003:199, McSpadden 1999:71, UNHCR 1999 in Macrae 1999:12). Furthermore, it is argued that without these interventions, reintegration will be unsuccessful, which may in turn lead to further conflict and displacement. Assistance is generally seen in terms of development and the ability of returnees to resume a productive life.

In 1993 the UNHCR stated that unless return is "followed by *development programmes* that address people's immediate needs as well as longer-term goals, it may undermine rather than reinforce the prospects for reconciliation and recovery" (p112, my italics). The UNHCR argued that unless people were able to re-establish their productive capacity, "a vicious circle of renewed disintegration and displacement is likely to emerge" (UNHCR 1993:11).

In 1995 the agency went a step further, arguing that the stress and social disruption that exists across the country of origin could even act as a disincentive to return, providing further necessity for long-term developmental support and reintegration programming at the site to which refugees returned (UNHCR 1995:173; 176). Similar arguments have been presented by

a number of other authors. The UNDP identified the need for reintegration assistance by the international community to countries undergoing a transition from war to peace (Wood 2001:47). Pugh (2000:24) argued that the repatriation and reintegration of refugees was a key area requiring the support of the international community to lay the foundation of sustainable peace. Lewis (1999a:196) states that "broader action is needed" to facilitate the reintegration of refugees (and other displaced people) into their communities and Crisp (2001:179) argues that successful reintegration will not occur without the resumption of development activities at the site of return.

2.4 Reintegration Programming: The Link Between Relief and Development

Traditionally, foreign aid agencies focused exclusively on either relief or development. This division reflected the site and context within which programmes operated. Relief aid (humanitarian aid) was provided in refugee camps or in times of crisis. It was viewed as a temporary measure, at the micro-level, which enabled people to survive when all other mechanisms failed until such a time that normality resumed (Fagen 2003:200). Relief aid usually occurred independently of governing structures, thus maintaining an apolitical aura. Conversely, development agencies tended to be closely aligned to governing bodies and state structures. Programme goals were to develop local infrastructure, systems and capacity, enabling local organisations to increase their efficiency and effectiveness, through which community well-being could be enhanced. Whereas relief aid worked outside state structures, development aid legitimised existing state institutions (Macrae 2001:36).

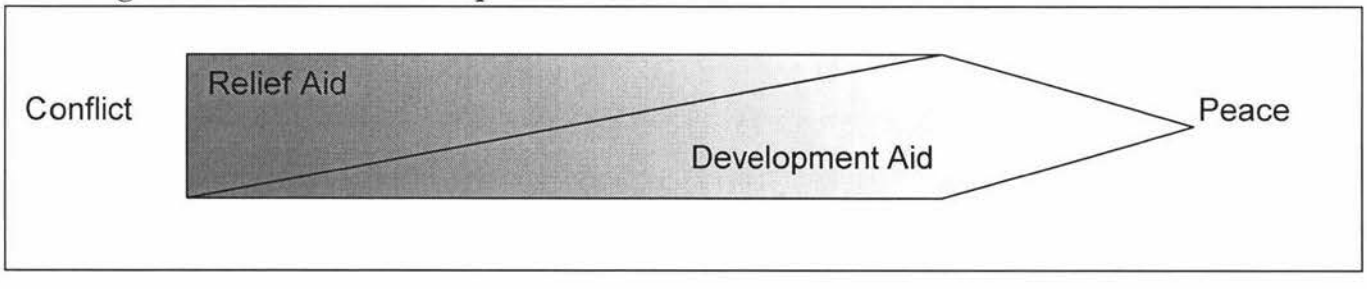
The New World Order brought about a number of changes to people's perceptions of conflict and aid. Internationally there was increased acceptance of the premise that development played an important role in peace building. A corollary of this relationship was that the interventions of development organisations were attributed an importance greater than altruism alone. Concurrently, there also grew an increasingly negative critique of relief aid. It was accused of discouraging recipients from developing the capacity to withstand shocks, but instead contributed towards an attitude of dependency. The second accusation was of greater concern. Through the refusal of relief organisations to engage with the political dimension of their humanitarian work, it was accused of contributing to the ongoing nature of the conflict

(Macrae 2001:29, Terry 2002). Responding to these challenges and to their relatively new ability to access conflict affected zones, relief agencies began to take a more developmental approach to their work. Reintegration programming attempted to tie relief aid to programmes that developed returnees' productive capacity. It was designed to link micro-level and macro-level assistance in order to re-establish the bond between returnees, their communities and the state (Eastmond & Ojendal 1999:54, Maynard 1999:87, UNHCR 1995:151).

> Reintegration assistance attempts to develop programs for localities, vulnerable populations, individual refugees and organised groups, and to connect these programmes to national development and political efforts (Stein 1997:163).

Whereas state governments in conflict affected countries often lacked the financial or institutional capacity to cope with the task of resettling large number of returnees, aid organisations felt this was a gap that they had the skills and capacity to fill (Smillie 1998:1, UNHCR 1997:165). Based on around the assumption that post-conflict countries sat on a continuum between war and peace, with conflict at one end of the spectrum and a peaceful democratic state at the other end, the type of assistance was designed according to where on the continuum states sat (see eg figure 7). A number of versions of the model have been developed over the years (see eg Crisp 2001, Ross et al. 1994). Earlier versions of the model claimed distinct phases of relief, followed by reconstruction and then development whereas later models argued the need for a more integrated approach, with repatriation and relief programming being development oriented from the outset.

Figure 7: The Relief-Development Continuum



All the models have been limited in their usefulness. The existence of a simple linear progression between conflict and peace, such as Harris's (1999:46) Relief, Reconstruction and Development Continuum, which puts a time frame around each 'stage' between war and peace, is widely recognized to not accurately reflect the reality of post-conflict situations.

Instead most post-conflict situations experience continuing low intensity conflict and insecurity long after peace declarations of peace have been announced (Eade & Williams 1995:836, Kreimer et al 1998:9, Lindenberg & Bryant 2001:116).

The development component of the model also hit snags because in many post-conflict environments, there is no accountable or mandated governing body with the capacity to take on the functions of government (Macrae 1999:20). Examples include the more extreme cases of countries such as Somalia where the country remains leaderless following fourteen years of conflict (Ahmed & Herbold 1999), to countries such as Afghanistan where the government does not control much territory outside Kabul. Aid organisations must make judgements about whom they will support, aware that in cases it will legitimise some groups and delegitimise others (Macrae 2001:42).

In other instances disagreement may exist between the ruling body, donor organisations and aid organisations regarding preferred policies, procedures and priorities. In Rwanda there existed major disagreement between the government, NGOs and donor agencies regarding the direction and implementation of policies and procedures. The refusal of external agencies to act according to governmental directives, led to the expulsion of over thirty aid organisations and the discontinuation of eighty other projects (Fagen 2003:208).

On occasion, the pressure of aid organisations will weaken public systems, as they jostle to force their key projects onto the government, reducing the ability of local organisations to take over planning functions (Macrae 2001:163). Fagen claims that one of the major problems with reintegration programmes and projects in Mozambique and El Salvador was the inadequate involvement of local governments in the planning or the development of sustainable mechanisms or support structures. Without a sense of ownership over the programmes, most projects and programmes folded when donor aid was withdrawn. This was particularly evident when the programmes benefited returnees and internally displaced people who were associated with former opposition forces (Fagen 2003:220).

The model is also hindered by the lack of consensus that exists between international actors regarding the fundamental role of state. While it assumes the eventual existence of a benign developmental state, throughout the period of the Washington consensus and still evident today, there is a move, particularly from IFIs, to dismantle state structures, leaving the development of economic growth and the provision of a social safety net to non-state actors

(Duffield in Pugh 2000:117, Ross et al 1994:11). Even the concept of development itself is contested; is it a process or an end and should it be a process, a process towards what? Duffield argues that the present reading of development is little different from relief, providing people with a safety net to lessen the vulnerability of marginal groups, while not challenging the overall structures of their oppression (Duffield 1997:529).

The linear nature of most models might also be misinterpreted to indicate a high level of consensus between the various aid actors. Despite efforts to harmonise procedures and policies between organisations, the unregulated and occasionally competitive nature of the industry often leads agencies to be more accountable to donors than to either the state or supposed beneficiaries. Institutional differences in mandates and operational practice often lead to project duplicity, uneven coverage and organisations working at cross-purposes to each other. The reintegration of returnees, while a key mandate for some organisations, is not a primary concern to others, who instead focus on broader issues and localities (Helton 2002:84). Duffield argues that the 'projectisation' of development has created a series of 'disconnected, discontinuous, technical, projects rather than holistic theorised practices' (in Albert 2000:174). Attempts to increase levels of coordination have for these reasons been largely unsuccessful (Crisp 2001:185).

The short-term funding cycles that most aid agencies operate under also reduce their ability to implement long-term support and capacity building (Munslow & Brown 1999:209). Programmes may be flooded with funding, which must be spent before the capacity has been developed to spend it effectively, only to dry out almost as quickly. Relief aid still receives greater proportions of ODA than development work. Spending is fairly inconsistent and reflects geo-political considerations regarding security and also the degree to which events have gained public awareness and sympathy (Keating 2003:174, Munslow & Brown 1999:208). For this reason some crises have received large amounts of funding whereas others have received little support at all. However much of the media inspired funding dries up as quickly as it arrives as the media move onto newer and fresher emergencies. The erratic levels of foreign support were identified by as a key reason that the Namibian reintegration programmes failed (Adelman n.d.:37).

An underlying problem with these post-conflict reintegration and development programmes, is the tendency of organisations to apply a blueprint approach. Chimni suggests that in many

cases, imposed reforms have lacked a complex understanding of the dynamics of state, population or returnees, leading to poor project design and consequent project failure (Chimni 2002:164). This is reiterated by Crisp, who argues that initiatives to link returnee assistance to long-term development have "generally been flawed in their conceptualisation and implementation and have consequently failed to meet their intended objectives" (Crisp 2001:168). Pugh maintains that on occasions this superficial understanding of what is actually a complex and dynamic situation has resulted in projects exacerbating problems and contributing to further instability (Pugh 2000:5).

The latest attempt to create a harmonised model has been developed by the UNHCR in conjunction with the World Bank and the UNDP. Named 'the 4R model' (repatriation, reintegration, rehabilitation and reconstruction), it foresees a 'country driven/bottom up programme' which produces 'good local governance; protection of the rights of communities inclusive of returnees' improved social services including infrastructure, co-existence and confidence building, economic revival and livelihood creation, and improved access to services' (UNHCR 2003:15). The programme still raises the paradox evident in much post-conflict peace building programming of how programmes can claim to be bottom up when the outcomes has been decided in advance.

Despite accusations that discourse on reintegration is aid-centric and lacks any recognition of the greater non-aid dimensions of people's lives (Macrae 1999:12), most scholars and organisations have acknowledged the key role that returnees themselves play in determining the success of their reintegration. Bascom (1996:66) and Rogge (1994:34) both contend that that while the forms, size and timeliness of available assistance will affect the degree to which reintegration can be seen as a success or failure, the returnees themselves are the principle actors. Maynard also acknowledges that the refugees' experience of repatriation is affected by their own attitudes and other factors beyond the reach or power of aid organisations (1999:100). Stein and the UNHCR concur that refugees are not the powerless group that they are occasionally presented as, and in the majority of refugee situations, most refugees return without international knowledge or assistance (Stein 1997:161, UNHCR 1995:236).

Notwithstanding the theoretical debate on the issue, the frequency with which reintegration is mentioned in post-conflict texts, or the funds spent on reintegration and peace-building programmes, there has been little scholarly inquiry into the well-being of repatriates following

the exit of aid organisations and the closure of their programmes (Chimni 2002:164, Maynard 1999:87). Repatriates are said to be largely invisible, and little post-repatriation monitoring is ever carried out to ensure their well-being (Black & Koser 1999:10, Shaffer 1996:12).

The small amount of research that has been carried out, suggests that returnees may remain socially and economically vulnerable for years after their return. Law in his 1995 assessment of the reintegration of Cambodian refugees found that despite the immense spending by the international community on community repatriation and reintegration, at least forty percent of returnees were less well off than people who had not fled. Returnees had higher levels of food insecurity, poorer housing and were less financially stable than other members of the population. He argued that reintegration programming had been poorly implemented and limited by their inadequate time frames and had been largely ineffective (1995:77). These findings were reiterated by García Rodicio (2004), who conducted a similar study four years later.

Alberto's study of returning youth to Mozambique and Angola concluded that returnees experienced a loss of cultural values, dignity and legitimacy and were distrusted by society, their families and communities. Their failure to re-establish a place in society resulted in a tendency to turn to criminal and antisocial behaviour (1998:120).

Juergensen (2000:27) found little relationship between reintegration and the imposition of liberal peace. He observed that in Mozambique, the repatriation of returnees to areas that did not receive external assistance did not prevent their successful reintegration. In addition, he contended that the goals of democracy, development and the rebuilding of civil society had been externally imposed and following the departure of the said organisations, failed to take root. Despite the success of the repatriation, he warns that the continued absence of structural peace increases the likelihood of an eventual return to conflict.

Adelman (n.d.:38) and (Stein 1994:46) both dispute the assertion that a failure to reintegrate economically will lead to further conflict. Instead Adelman, in his unpublished study assessing the well-being of returnees following fifteen civil wars, found that a failure to reintegrate often lead to a drift to cities, unemployment and a rise in criminal activity. The failure of returnees to reintegrate did not lead to a resumption of hostilities, but it did have long-term consequences for the development of positive peace.

Macrae accuses relief and development organisations of making increasingly greater and often-unfounded claims regarding their ability to create the conditions of long-term peace (1999:24). Pugh suggests that while the rhetoric may be impressive, efforts to implement the peace building agenda have in fact been little more than sporadic (Pugh 2000:4). Paris argues that liberal peace is little more than an experiment in social engineering – "transplanting Western models of social, political and economic organisation into war-shattered states in order to control civil conflict: in other words, pacification through political and economic liberalisation" (Paris 1997:56).

2.5 SUMMARY

This chapter has explored the theoretic basis used to justify the intervention of aid agencies in reintegration programming in post-conflict states. The current consensus holds that the reintegration of returnees is fundamental to the achievement of durable peace and it is argued that unless communities are able to successfully coexist, further violence or displacement may occur.

Intrastate conflict is widely claimed to be based in structural inequality and underdevelopment. This conception holds that durable peace can only occur through the adoption of a development model of liberal democratic governance. This logic holds that the reintegration of returnees is essential to this overriding goal.

In terms of programming, reintegration is seen to fill the gap between relief and development, linking returnees back into the political, social and economic fabric of their society. Aid will often make reference to the dominant themes of community empowerment, economic development and governance, which are accorded the ability to enable communities to develop peacefully and mediate conflict peacefully. Nonetheless, there exists some critique of the effectiveness of aid organisations to actually carry out these peace-building functions and evidence suggests that often returnees have been overlooked in the process.

CHAPTER 3 - UNPACKING THE COMPONENTS OF REINTEGRATION: THE THEORY, THE PRACTICE

We return to the original definition of reintegration as put forward by Stein (1997:163):

> Integral reintegration assistance tries to restore the institutions of civil society and the bond between citizen and state. Rather than limiting itself to the emergency relief needs of returned refugees, reintegration assistance makes an integrated response to the rehabilitation and development needs of local communities and the larger society.

Furthermore, reintegration, according the UNHCR,

> ... entails the erosion – and ultimately the disappearance – of any observable distinctions which set returnees apart from their compatriots, particularly in terms of their socio-economic and legal status (1997:159).

Reintegration is the process by which returnees relink into the social, political and economic spheres of their homeland. Projects which attempt to enhance returnee reintegration span from the local to the international, encompassing much of the philosophy that lies behind liberal peace. Reintegration and peace building are perceived to share a mutually reinforcing relationship, where each contributes to the development of the other. As such, many of the activities organisations undertake to provide the basis for peace are concurrently said to enhance returnee's reintegration into their home societies. Reintegration is a complex and dynamic process, the sum of many parts. Reintegration projects have thus included activities as diverse as legal and judicial capacity building, land distribution and the construction of schools and wells (UNHCR 1997).

As was demonstrated in the previous chapter, there have been considerable changes since the end of the Cold War, regarding the treatment and policies regulating refugee issues and the priorities of the international community in peace building. This movement has also been visible in the methodologies adopted by the international community to deal with peace building and reintegration in conflict-affected communities. Nonetheless, despite shifts in policy, the overarching goal of liberal peace remains constant, where the development of a democratic state apparatus, an active civil society and a free market is pre-eminent.

This chapter has been organised according to the themes of political, economic and socio-cultural reintegration. It is recognised that this division is somewhat arbitrary, and often interventions will have impacts that reach into domains beyond their original classification. An effort will therefore be made to describe their crosscutting nature. The chapter is broken into further subcategories, with each section briefly describing current theoretical thought in that area and discussing projects and programmes that aid organisations have operated as they relate to the reintegration of returnees.

3.1 Economic Reintegration

Poverty is associated closely with conflict. There is broad consensus that economic revitalisation through the development of a stable domestic market and involvement in international trade will act as a disincentive to insurgency and conflict (Addison 2000:389, NZAID 2004, Stevenson 2000:23). Economic security is said to be vital to establishing a wider sense of security and to begin a process of healing (Maynard 1999:134). This premise is also applied to reintegration programming, where employment and a viable livelihood are claimed to be essential to people's reintegration (del Castillo 2001:1970, Lewis 1999a:197, UNHCR 2000a:285). Returnees are thus posited to require access to commercial, financial and labour markets. Taking into account the impact returnees' ethnicity; class, gender and age will have on their ability to achieve economic integration (Ballard 2002:67), it is still assumed that an absence of social safety nets or employment-generating opportunities will increase the danger of flight or further conflict (Cernea 2000:17, Coletta & Cullen 2003:109, UNHCR 1993:112).

Stein (1994, 1997:162) contests this viewpoint, arguing that most refugees return during conflict, rather than following its conclusion. While not downplaying the capacity of economic and social improvements to enhance reintegration, he argues that economic growth is neither necessary nor essential to reintegration and only rarely will economic hardship drive returnees to flee once again. Furthermore, he maintains that the problems of physical and socio-economic reintegration are of lesser importance than the political and civic reintegration of returnees, where the cause of the original flight is linked to problems of power and politics. Interestingly in his study of reintegration in Central America, he found that while most international assistance was "sought and defined in economic terms", it's greatest impact was

in increasing political space and expanding civil society through implementing practices of consensus building and impartiality that encouraged reconciliation (Stein 1997:173). Duffield (2001:122) and Wood (2001:18) also question this association, arguing that poverty has not always caused conflict and neither has wealth prevented its occurrence.

Despite this lack of consensus, much support to returnees and other members of post-conflict communities continues to target their economic well-being with aid agencies citing the relationship between poverty and conflict. Assistance will often contain both relief and development aspects. Early support may include grants and relief aid however most projects and programmes contain a development aspect. The programmes and projects will aim to develop returnee's ability to generate a livelihood robust enough to sustain them in the long-term without ongoing dependence on outside assistance. The success of these programmes are all said to be overshadowed by the levels of macro-level economic growth in a country, which to a large degree will limit the ability of returnees to lift their standards of living beyond subsistence levels.

Income Generation

On a micro-level, aid organisations have become involved in a variety of activities that are intended to secure livelihoods through the stimulation of employment and economic growth. In order to facilitate social reintegration, aid organisations will generally target localities rather than specifically targeting returnees. In the period immediately following conflict, aid agencies may become involved in employment generation schemes to rehabilitate infrastructure such as roading and transportation links. Aid sponsored reconstruction projects are claimed to provide short-term employment, inject cash into the economy, and through the rehabilitation of infrastructure, provide the basis for the reestablishment of economic trade (in Harris & Lewis 1999:57).

One activity currently enjoying high levels of popularity among donor organisations is micro-finance. These projects have been particularly successful among women borrowers, who use small amounts of seed money to start up small-scale income generation projects. Ballard (2002:75) notes that the success of these programs is dependent on the existence of a vibrant economy with a strong demand for labour and a market for small business activities. Micro-finance has also been subject to a degree of criticism, where it is accused of doing little more than plastering over the gaps of rampant poverty. Among people with little commercial

background, recipients of the loans often lack the skills to create successful business ventures and are often able to only earn minimal income (Singh & Wysham 1997). The small business and the pressure to make loan repayments may also place a substantial time and stress burden on borrowers (often women) who are already struggling to manage. This burden may far exceed the profits gained from the venture (Syed Masud Ahmed & Chowdhury Abbas Bhuiya 2001).

Agricultural Production

Agricultural production is claimed to be a crucial area to re-establish following complex political emergencies. It is the largest single employer across much of the Third World, earning a significant proportion of countries' gross national product. Furthermore it is often the mainstay of people's financial and subsistence existence (Kumar 1997:27).

Rural communities emerging from complex political emergencies are often in disarray. Agricultural cycles may have been disrupted, seed stock and livestock destroyed or eaten and machinery and other capital equipment destroyed or stolen. Households may have lost key members of their workforce. Furthermore, even in areas where fighting was less widespread, farmers may be unable to access required agricultural inputs, such as seed and fertilizer. Where marketing channels still exist, poor transportation links and on-going pockets of violence may also prevent farmers from transporting produce for sale. In areas where fighting occurred, the presence of land mines may prevent people from accessing fertile agricultural land. (Kumar 1997:27, Lewis 1999a:199, Tardif-Douglin 1997:268)

People emerging from a conflict zone often have few resources to fall back on and are particularly vulnerable if there should be a crop failure. Returnees may not arrive in time to replant crops and are at risk of food insecurity (UNHCR 1997:158). In an attempt to minimise intra-community conflict, aid organisations working in post-conflict communities usually target localities rather than individuals.

Often aid organisations provide food aid as a transitional support until crops can be re-established (Eastmond & Ojendal 1999:53, Harris & Lewis 1999:59). This enables people to survive without cannibalising their often-small stock of income earning assets in the period between arrival and their first harvest (Ballard 2002:70). A negative consequence of this support however may be that prices for local products are driven downwards, and people's level of dependency increased, particularly if the assistance was provided to people who were

not in need of it (Harris & Lewis 1999:59). Tardif-Douglin (1997:279) described the drive from Rwandan officials to stop free general distribution, which they saw as eroding incentives to achieve self-sufficiency and contributing to a culture of dependency.

As aid agencies move from relief into more development oriented programming, aid agencies may provide grants to individuals or community groups for seeds, tools and stock, or support the development or rehabilitation of animal or rice banks, irrigation schemes or environmental preservation projects (UNHCR 1995:182). There have been a number of common problems identified in seed distribution projects, including distribution of seed strains unsuitable for an area's environmental conditions and the distribution of aid in areas it has not been required (Tardif-Douglin 1997:272). Tardif-Douglin (1997:276) also described the common occurrence of people eating seeds, which donors had anticipated recipients would plant.

Property Rights

The reestablishment of property rights is crucial to the viability of rural returnees' day-to-day subsistence and their ability to generate income (Ballard 2002:73, Cernea 2000:17, Eastmond & Öjendal 1999:53). Land titles are often not clearly documented and can be subject to a number of competing claims (Ballard 2002:73, Stepputat 1999:219, UNHCR 1993:116). The politically vulnerable position of returnees often prevents them from laying claim to land they should be entitled to (Ballard 2002:73, Chimni 2002:169, Eastmond & Öjendal 1999:45) and even in circumstances when refugees have officially been allocated plots of land, there is often a lack of enforcement at the local level. This situation is often worse for women headed households whose rights are constrained by structural gender inequalities (Chimni 2002:169).

In many instances, the ownership of land enables people to access assistance. Many development projects in Cambodia inadvertently excluded the landless poor – of whom returnees comprised the largest group (Eastmond and Öjendal 1999:53). In some situations the UNCHR has become involved in assisting with the settlement of land disputes or facilitated the provision of capacity building to local and central government departments in order to facilitate a speedy and just settlement of conflicts over land.

Physical Reconstruction

The reconstruction of infrastructure encompasses both emergency and longer term developmental needs. Returnees' immediate needs will include shelter and access to potable water. The reconstruction of infrastructure such as transportation routes and irrigation are essential to longer-term economic development. Furthermore, rebuilding removes some of the more tangible reminders of the conflict and thus assists in the people's overall sense of rehabilitation and order (Afzali & Colleton 2003:11).

Initial reconstruction programmes will often include the repairs of roads, bridges, ports, airstrips and the reinstallation of power. In many instances, this will be driven by the arrival of peacekeeping forces, who require reconstruction to access more remote regions, and accomplish other logistical and military operations. Kumar suggests that while these improvements have major positive consequences for the economy, access to the benefits is likely to be urban-centric and the continuance of services following the withdrawal of the UN problematic. In part, this will be due to the difficulties of cost-recovery from people who are unused to paying for services (Kumar 1997:30).

In the early 1990s, the UNHCR developed a project methodology that aimed to "bridge the gap between relief and development". 'Quick Impact Projects' (QIPs) were claimed by the UNHCR (1995:177) to be "pro-people, pro-jobs, pro-nature and pro-women". Simple, small scale, low cost and highly labour intensive, the projects were designed to bring tangible, visible and immediate benefits to areas where significant numbers of returnees and displaced people had settled. Furthermore, through the employment of both returnees and stayees, they were attributed with the ability to improve relations between the two often estranged groups. Projects often included a diverse number of activities, such as the repair of schools, irrigations systems, vocational training or the purchase of assets for income generation (Kumar 1997:29, UNHCR 1995:177).

People who provided labour for the programmes were compensated in a variety of manners, including in kind (eg food), with cash payments and later, following criticism of dependency, with the feeling of ownership and camaraderie said to have been inspired through their participation in these projects. Initially heralded as a breakthrough in reintegration programming (see for example UNHCR 1995:178), they became subject to increasing criticism for their limited long-term effects, their poor cost-effectiveness and their lack of long-term

sustainability (UNHCR 1997:173).

More recently, institutions such as the World Bank have adopted some of the principles of QIPs in their post-conflict community driven reconstruction programmes (see eg Cliffe et al 2003, World Bank 2004b). These programmes have been particularly popular because they meld a desire to achieve cost effective development with an increase in local level community empowerment. The approach is based on the assumption that communities are best acquainted with their own reconstruction needs. With external support, the approach regards communities as having the skills and capacities to cost effectively implement reconstruction programmes. These programmes feed into a good governance agenda, which will be discussed in Section 3.2.

Macro-Economic Impacts on Reintegration

The ability of grassroots projects to create sustainable reintegration is often diminished by the effect of factors beyond the influence of development organisations including interest rates and commodity prices (Stein 1994:45). The dominant doctrine of the day holds that macroeconomic policy reform is a necessary condition of peace building. Efforts to stimulate economic growth at the micro-level need to be complemented with macroeconomic strategies that stimulate nationwide growth and employment (Ahmed et al 2002:115). As post-conflict governments are usually dependent on foreign aid and loans for operational expenses, they may be required to balance fiscal budgets through reducing the size of the government, reducing the number of services provided, devaluing the currency and privatising state owned assets and services. Ballard (2002:65) argues that in Laos, Cambodia and Vietnam, growth due to macro-economic reform was particularly important in enabling returnees to economically re-establish themselves.

The sequencing and speed of macro economic change has been debated more widely. In the early 1990s, the so-called 'Washington Consensus' between the major IFIs dictated a neoliberal approach to development policy regardless of the social or political issues confronting a country. The rubble of post-conflict societies was said to provide a ground ripe for economic liberalisation, where the absence of domestic coalitions meant there was no one to block change. This consensus eventually fell apart as players such as the World Bank began to temper this overriding goal with social and governance issues[7]. Nonetheless, its basic premises

[7] These will be discussed in Section 3.2.

remain extremely influential. Writers such as Haughton (2002:249) and Moore (2000:12) argue that there should be no delay in implementing economic reform in post-conflict societies as it will reduce economic uncertainty and will also attract investors whose finance is crucial for economic growth.

Other academics contend that rapid economic change is liable to destabilise peace-building efforts and there exists a need for transitory lenience (eg Harris & Lewis 1999:62, Stevenson 2000:60). There is some circumstantial evidence to back up the latter claims. In Rwanda, it is hypothesised that economic hardship caused by structural adjustment policies contributed to ethnic polarization and the consequent bloodshed (Coletta & Cullen 2003:109). Furthermore structural adjustment policies in post-conflict Mozambique, Uganda, Nicaragua, and El Salvador were argued to diminish the ability of returnees to reintegrate (Kumar 1997:32, Stevenson 2000:53). Addison argues that that aid should be focusing on decreasing inequality as well as poverty (2000:404).

3.2 Political Reintegration

The methods adopted to facilitate the political reintegration of returnees reflect organisations' reading of the causes of the initial violence and exodus. Adherents to the philosophy of liberal peace contend that dissatisfaction caused by non-participatory political processes and economic inequality creates the conditions for civil conflict. This given, it follows that the development of some form of pluralistic representative governance, the rule of law and an active civil society is a necessary condition for peace and therefore sustainable reintegration (eg UNDP 1995). Kumar (1997:4) contends that social and economic rehabilitation are dependent on the development of an 'effective and legitimate political authority', which will serve to avert further conflict and disintegration. Maynard, a proponent of the stripped-down neoliberal governance framework, argues that the loss of traditional leaders and institutions, may provide the opportunity for the emergence of 'other decision-making strategies' (Maynard 1999:122) and Mani (2000:103) suggest that traditional governance ought not be romanticised as it is not timeless or static and may also not be 'accurate, benign or just'.

Governance

The Washington Consensus of the 1980s and early 1990s was challenged and eventually abandoned following a number of events across the developing world. By the early 1990s, the

structural adjustment policies imposed by the IFIs on many debt-ridden Third World countries were subjected to increasing criticism. The minimalist framework of state they promoted was viewed against the successes of the statist Asian Tigers. Further scrutiny of the model was triggered by the economic crises of the mid to late 1990s across Latin America and Asia and the poor performance of the recently liberalised former communist states. Both multi-lateral and bi-lateral donors began to pay closer attention to the political framework within which economic development occurred. Governance became the new buzz- word and both within the literature and development policy, greater emphasis was placed on the need to complement strategies for economic growth with the development of accountable, transparent and participatory systems of governance.

In this sense governance encompassed traditional state structures, the private sector and civil society. It referred not only to the institutions themselves, but also to the relationships between them, which define how citizens and groups 'articulate their interests, mediate their differences and exercise their legal rights and obligations' (UNDP 1999:15).

Although 'good governance' is claimed to reflect local cultures and realities (eg Maynard 1999:141, UNDP 1999:26, Wood 2001:46), there exists an underlying assumption that it can only it occur within a framework of liberal democracy with representative leadership, a decentralised state structure, a transparent justice system and an active (yet benign) civil society (Barakat & Chard 2002:821). Good governance is claimed to be a prerequisite for sustainable development and a key component of sustainable peace (Call & Cook 2003a:135, Santiso 2003:3, Simpson 1998:107). This was articulated by Sen, one of the foremost economists of the 1990s, and winner of the Nobel Prize for economics:

> A country does not have to be deemed fit *for* democracy; rather, it has to become fit *through* democracy (Sen 1999:3).

Democracy is said to provide a mechanism for solving problems in a consensual and non-violent manner (UNDP 1999:36). While scholars for many years have been making claims regarding the improbability that democratic nations will go to war with each other (see for example Brown, Lynn-Jones & Miller 1997, Russet & Oneal 2001, Weart 1998), there are now also claims being made that that democratic nations are less likely to succumb to civil war[8]

[8] These claims are also contested; see Brown, Lynn-Jones & Miller (1997) for further debate on the relationship between inter-state war and democratic peace.

(Maynard 1999:141, Russet & Oneal 2001:70, UNDP 2002a:85).

That being said, a lack of democracy does not in itself cause war, and not all non-democratic states have experienced civil war. Accordingly, it would it be inaccurate to suggest that reintegration can not succeed in non-democratic states. Ballard's (2000) assessment of the reintegration of refugees from Cambodia, Vietnam and Laos suggests that the state, alongside civil society and aid organisations, shaped refugees experience of return; he did not however suggest that the Vietnamese and Laotian's experience of reintegration was any less successful for the lack of a democratic state apparatus. Call and Cook (2003b:236) have also criticised democratisation discourse for ignoring alternative models of governance, instead offering Western experience as a 'normative yardstick and empirical model'. Nonetheless the voices of dissent are far outnumbered by adherents to the ideology of liberal democracy. Accordingly, the international community have assisted with elections and attempted to strengthen state institutions, processes and civil society organisations (Coletta & Cullen 2000:113, Wood 2001:46).

National Elections

The convening of general elections is often a key goal in post-conflict peace plans. In order for the elected government to achieve broad based legitimacy, it is important that refugees and IDPs are able to participate. For this reason, several large-scale repatriations in the 1990s were spurred by imminent elections in the homeland (Helton 2002:82). Whereas elections may have marked the exit point for many aid organisations in the early 1990s, there is now recognition that they are usually not enough in themselves to lead to the formation of a democratic and responsive government. Premature elections have even been accused of causing further outbreaks of instability and new flights of refugees (Kumar 1997:8, Maynard 1999:141, UNDP 1999:37).

Decentralisation of Government Structures

> Integration after return is a multifaceted process, that must take into account the roles of actors on many levels, including the local, national and international. In particular local political and social structures in areas of return are a crucial but often neglected aspect in the planning and implementation of reintegration assistance. (Eastmond & Ojendal 1999:52)

As evinced in the previous quote, increasing the capacity of local administrative and civil

society organizations is claimed to support both the short- and long-term reintegration of returnees. Although interventions do not directly address returnees, they are claimed to enhance reintegration through advancing local participatory and democratic development, a precondition for positive peace. The interest in governance complements and is informed by neo-liberal ideology. It encourages governments to decentralise their operations and rationalise the size and functions of their institutions. Decentralisation is claimed to enable a more efficient, responsive and accountable form of democracy at the local level while downsizing of government services is seen to make fiscal sense in cash strapped post-conflict governments (Coletta & Cullen 2000:114, Kumar 1997:6).

In response to this, external aid organisations have attempted to build and strengthen local governance structures and other grassroots organisations. Groups comprising a cross section of the community, including women and other marginalized sub-sectors of the population are trained to use participatory action techniques and other similar methodologies to identify and then address local development needs. Local level governance structures are said to enhance democratic practice and concurrently instigate local level development. In response to one of the identified deficiencies in the relief-development continuum, the strengthening of local level governance and civil society is said to engender local level development in instances that the state apparatus lacks the capacity and strength to operate. (UNDP 1999:16)

Efforts to develop local level governance structures have achieved a mixed degree of success. Where externally supported organisations have lacked an official mandate, it has been rare for them to be integrated into government structures and they have lacked any long-term influence (UNDP 2000:23). Rather than representing all members of society, structures, which achieve any longevity, are more likely to further entrench the power of existing elites (UNDP 2000:23). An observer of the drive to decentralisation in Indonesia commented that efforts to transfer power to the local level have corresponded with the localisation of corruption, collusion and nepotism (Hadiz 2004:712). Unvin, writing in 2001, described the lack of success that external organisations had in attempting to influence the functioning of local organisations and governance structures in Rwanda, claiming that infrastructure, training and even operating costs would not be enough to ensure adoption of new methods. Instead these changes could only come about through "deep and locally owned social and political dynamics" (p186).

Civil Society and Social Capital Theory

Civil society is a particularly broad concept within development discourse. As 'NGO' describes any organisation that is not operated by the government, 'civil society' describes any formal or informal associational organisation that is a creation of neither government nor kin groups. As such, civil society includes grass roots and community based organisations, local NGOs[9], unions, social change agencies and foreign non-governmental agencies (Harvey 1997:8, McIlwaine 1998:652, van Rooy 1998:15). Social capital fits within the paradigm of liberal peace and has been described as 'the glue that holds societies together' (Serageldin 1996:196 in Serageldin & Grootaert 2000:44). Some theorists of social capital use horizontal and vertical linkages to measure the degree of social cohesion in a society. Vertical linkages refer to a person's degree of participation and access to markets and institutions of governance, the legal environment and social norms. Horizontal linkages refer to the links individuals have to networks and groups within their communities (often referred to as civil society) and the existence of social norms and trust (Serageldin & Grootaert 2000:45) which impact the relationship of citizen to the state.

Ballard (2002:65) claims that civil society organisations make up the third component of the institutional framework[10] within which repatriation and reintegration occur. He suggests that the state and civil society organisations both enjoy comparative advantages in their support of returnee integration. Whereas the state is able to mobilize a "broad spectrum of resources over a wide geographical area", civil society organisations are better suited to meeting the social, economic and political needs of specific groups and individuals. Other authors have attributed further positive roles to civil society and concomitant social capital. They are said to provide a mechanism for the efficient and effective provision of social services to the needy (Green & Ahmed 1999:195, McIlwaine 1998:654) and create conducive conditions for economic growth (Narayan & Pritchett 1999, Putnam in Fine 2003:7). The redevelopment of civil society is said to give a voice to the marginalized providing a means by which societies can mediate and manage conflict (Coletta & Cullen 2003:12, Green & Ahmed 1999:195, Maynard 1999:142, van Rooy & Robinson 1998:32). In this capacity it is then able to contribute to a healthy and robust democracy (Crawford 2001:234, Harvey 1997:9, McIlwaine 1998:653,

[9] A basic rule of thumb is that community based organisations (CBO) emanates from within a community and local non-governmental organisation LNGO, although country based, are external to the community they attempt to assist.

[10] the other two being the state and the UNHCR

Maynard 1999:142).

A further string to social capital's bow is its ascribed influence on the restoration of sustainable peace. Countries emerging from violent civil conflict are said to have a weakened social fabric with a divided population and negligible levels of personal or communal trust. It is argued that through the redevelopment of civil society and hence social capital, countries can re-establish the norms and values that engender cooperation and collective action for the common good (Coletta & Cullen 2000:3). The rational is based on the assumption that association between people builds trust, which not only reduces transaction costs but also increases the ability to solve problems in a peaceful manner (Barr 2004:1754).

Based around the assumption that the reestablishment of peace is an internal, indigenous process, development writers and agencies are utilising the logic of social capital as a guide to intervention in post-conflict societies. Although the original authors of the concept of social capital argued that social capital could not be created, but was the outcome of an historical process (Putnam, Leonardi & Nanetti 1993 in Krishna 2000:72), development actors believe that supporting the development of civil society will contribute to strengthening of peace and democracy. In addition to contributing to post-conflict societies' reconstruction and development, they see it creating a space for the development of trust, reconciliation and long-term peace (Coletta & Cullen 2003:121, Green & Ahmed 1999:196, Mani 2002:14). This belief has been evidenced in many aid projects which have attempted to create spaces that allow people to re-establish bridging linkages between returnees and the receiving population. An increase in communication between formerly hostile parties is hoped to lead to less objectification of the other, growth of interdependence and eventually increased insight and trust (Montville 1993 in Maynard 1999:138).

Despite the all encompassing definition of civil society (described by van Rooy 1998 as an 'analytical hatstand'), much literature still treats civil society as a homogenous unit and lacks an understanding of the complex diversity and dynamics that exist between the multitudes of informal grassroots organisations, more formalised NGOs, INGOs and industry groups (Harvey 1997:10, McIlwaine 1998:655). Critics of the approach suggests that civil society organisations are not necessarily any more transparent or democratic than state organisations (Crawford 2001:234, McIlwaine 1998:656) and although they may be present in democracies, it does not necessarily follow that their presence will assist in the formation of democracy. They

are as capable of contributing to democracy as they are to creating factionalism; they may either circumvent or work alongside the state (Goodhand & Hulme 1999:22, van Rooy 1998:45). Neither can a strong or deep level of social capital alter the underlying cause of the conflict (Moore 2000:21).

The ability of civil society to provide consistent and widespread social services coverage is also contested. Robinson and White suggest that the voluntary sector is likely to provide an unsustainable amateurish service, often with a high level of duplication and incomplete coverage (in Van Rooy 1998:43). In some instances, CBOs may be disadvantaged by members' low level of formal education or organisational experience. This hampers their ability to access resources available from state or external agencies (Ballard 2002:74). Furthermore, the development of civil society at the expense of existing local and national government may contribute to an erosion of governmental legitimacy and a reduction in its capacity to operate effectively (Kumar 1997:6).

A critique exists that 'self help' capacity building is purely a cost cutting exercise enabling the north to disengage from the south. As such the tenets of empowerment and ownership are little more than cosmetic illusions (Pugh 2000:117). Local NGOs, based in urban areas with close contact to the international aid community may be little more than creations of their donor organisations; staffed by members of the elite and educated classes and representing the ideologies of their donor organisations (Maynard 1999:193, Pearce 1999:63).

In terms of reintegration, there is evidence that international actors have increased the spaces within which returnees reintegrate. Stein pointed to the positive impact that the UN agencies had in Central America, where their emphasis on the role of civil society and support of institutions which promoted consensus building and political participation created a greater humanitarian and political space in which displaced persons were able to reintegrate (Stein 1997:167). Other projects have had less success. The UNHCR's QIPs programme has been claimed to play a role in the re-establishment of social capital, (in addition to contributing to the reconstruction of physical capital) (UNHCR 1994 in Stein 1997:170). Despite worthy intentions, QIPs have had variable levels of success and often in their attempts to target localities, and avoid division and animosity, have inadvertently excluded returnees from participating or benefiting from the projects (Law 1996:64, Eastmond & Ojendal 1999:55).

Physical Security and The Restoration of Justice

The UNHCR suggest that post-conflict environments are often typified by a high degree of insecurity, including a weak rule of law, banditry and a prevalence of light weapons. The repatriation of refugees can further exacerbate unstable conditions. There exist numerous instances where returning refugees have been attacked and killed by members of other ethnic groups, have been singled out for theft and extortion or have been prevented from accessing land (UNHCR 1997:154). The UNHCR claims that the establishment of returnees' safety is one the most fundamental requirements for reintegration to occur. Maynard argues that without a sense of protection including the freedom of movement, an absence of threats or attacks, the security of property and access to community resources, reintegration and psychosocial recovery cannot occur (Maynard 1997:211).

One of the UNHCR's more traditional tasks has been to monitor the security of returnees. It contends that monitoring will provide returnees with a sense of confidence and safety (UNHCR 1993:110). Nonetheless, the agency has noted that monitoring is not always sufficient to prevent discrimination or abuses from occurring. In the instance of Royhinga returnees to Burma, for example, the UNHCR noted that human rights abuses by the state against this ethnic minority did not cease despite their presence and consequently the refugees have ricocheted between Burma and Bangladesh a number of times (UNHCR 1997:169).

For this reason, the restoration of a fair and equitable justice system is essential to the development of the long-term peace and security of returnees. This includes the establishment of an accessible and independent justice system, a professional civilian police force and the legal entrenchment of human rights (Coletta & Cullen 122, UNHCR 1995, cited in UNHCR 1997:169, Wood 2001:46).

Returning refugees must enjoy the full rights of citizenship including the freedom to travel, to buy and sell property and other fundamental rights. In addition, returnees must be able to access the justice and legal system (UNHCR 1997:156). The reestablishment of a justice system is claimed to indicate a return to security, order and stability. Moreover it can build confidence in governmental structures by demonstrating that the state, like all other citizens and organisations, is not above the law, but is subject to its jurisdiction (Lederach 2001:851, Mani 2002:6, Maynard 1999:172).

The establishment of a justice system in post-conflict states is often fraught with difficulty. Due to death or out-migration, countries often lack the professional classes necessary to operate security and justice systems. Furthermore, a lack of financial resources limits the extent to which countries can adequately fund the creation and reform of necessary infrastructure, let alone deal with the backlog caused by judgements on previous war crimes. The balance between calls for justice and the need for reconciliation is particularly problematic in post-conflict situations where violence is often characterised by widespread civilian involvement (Pankhurst 1999:239). Efforts to prosecute all offenders is both costly and time consuming, putting severe pressure on a newly established judiciary[11] (Crocker 2003:50, Pankhurst 1999:242, Uvin 2001:182). To complicate matters further, where violence has been endemic, the distinction between perpetrator and victim may be unclear (Uvin 2001:183). Should one party have won an outright victory, there exists the possibility that a 'victor's justice' may be imposed and choices of whom and what to prosecute are politically motivated (Crocker 2003:50, Pankhurst 1999:242). As peace may well be the outcome of a delicate political compromise, taking crimes to a court of justice may open old wounds and ignite further hatred and instability (Pankhurst 1999:242). Notwithstanding, the failure to deliver justice is also dangerous, creating disillusionment with the state and reinforcing a culture of impunity (Crocker 2003:50, Pankhurst 1999:242).

There are a number of mechanisms that have been developed in an attempt to meet the occasionally contradictory calls for justice and reconciliation. These include war crimes tribunals, institutions of transitional justice and truth commissions. The choice of which mechanism is used will depend on the circumstances of the peace settlement and the dynamics between internal and external political forces (Sieff & Wright 1999:760). With increasing emphasis on security in the post 9-11 world, the international community has become increasingly involved in developing judicial services including training judges and lawyers, developing legal infrastructure, formulating laws, training a civilian police force and constructing prisons (Mani 2002:56, UNHCR 1997:169, Uvin 2001:182).

[11] It has been suggested that the war crimes tribunal in Rwanda will take over a century to process the huge number of defendants who are currently languishing in prisons awaiting trial (Unvin 2001:182).

3.3 Social Reintegration

The ease with which returnees are able to socially reintegrate is largely dependent on the relationship returnees and stayees had during the conflict. It will be further impacted by changes that have occurred both within the community and to returnees during their time of exile and the economic and political environment that exists during and following repatriation. Social reintegration affects the personal relationships that exist between individuals and within their communities.

It is in the arena of social rehabilitation that Kumar contends the international community has experienced its greatest successes in post-conflict societies (1997:15). He sees social rehabilitation primarily in terms of the role of relief organisations in re-establishing social services in a post-conflict environment. Social reintegration is however a catchall term, and this section covers a diverse range of topics. It will address returnees' initial repatriation experience, the situation of women and other more vulnerable returnees, the need for social services and social support for returnees and receiving communities, and it will briefly touch on the complex issue of reconciliation.

Repatriation

The process of refugee repatriation, although a logistical exercise, can profoundly influence the ease with which returnees are socially reintegrated and establish linkages with family, community and government (Ballard 2002:69, Maynard 1999:106). Initial attitudes to return will depend to an extent on information received on the situation at home. Refugee camps are particularly vulnerable to the spread of rumours and hearsay so the aid community often place great importance on providing accurate information regarding the homeland. This may include printed matter, broadcasts, 'come and see' and 'go and see' visits and assistance to exchange letters between people inside and outside the country (Ballard 2002:70).

Refugee agencies often provide transportation and support to returnees during the repatriation, however Stein acknowledges that in many instances returnees will repatriate independently of aid agencies, and often prior to the conclusion of the conflict (Stein 1994:n26). This makes it difficult to identify them following return or assist with their reintegration needs.

Repatriation assistance such as food rations and assistance with livelihood may enable people

to cover their basis needs until they are able to re-establish themselves. Ballard described the situation of returnees having to cannibalise their asset base in order to survive in the short-term, which negatively affected their ability to earn income in the longer term. The type and site of repatriation assistance will also affect the ease with which people reintegrate. In Laos and Vietnam, people received aid such as agricultural inputs or vocational training at their destination. This assisted in the process of settling and re-establishing roots. In Cambodia however, many of the refugees received cash grants in lieu of land. This facilitated secondary migration once back in the homeland, where many of the returnees ended up in Phonm Phen where they settled in slums on the city edge (Ballard 2002:70).

Social Linkages

Empirical evidence has pointed to the importance of social linkages between families, kin and neighbours as an enabling factor to reintegration and peace building (Black & Koser 1999:11, Goodhand & Hulme 1999:21). In Eritrea, returnees lacked economic or financial capital, but their social and human capital enabled them to rebuild their lives (Sorensen 2000:200). In Cambodia this was also noted; whereas returnees who had family support were able to reintegrate with a minimal amount of difficulty, those who did not have connections were often subject to suspicion, intimidation or rejection (Adelman n.d.:37). Ballard's (2002:63) assessment of reintegration programmes in South East Asia, suggested that the ability of returnees to reintegrate is dependant on 'the scope, scale and nature of the integrative linkages that enable them to connect with family, community, government, social service providers and employers'. He noted also that returnees with strong social linkages were able to achieve sustainable livelihoods despite a lack of support from aid or governmental providers (Ballard 2002:83). Eastmond and Öjendal (1999:53) however warn that at least in the case of Cambodia, where social structures are weak and poverty endemic, 'the economy of affection should not be overemphasised, and kinship should not necessarily be expected to compensate for deficiencies in reintegration support'.

Women

Women are increasing being recognised as actors in their own rights during conflicts. Rather than only being recognised as victims, women may equally have been combatants or otherwise have participated in the conflict (Kamam 2000). Eade (2003:147) reminds readers of the social, economic and political diversity that exists between all women which contributes to

their differing attitudes and responses to conflict and reintegration.

Notwithstanding, there do exist some commonalities in the lives of returnee women that differ from those experienced by returnee men. The conflict may have left broken families, war-widows, solo mothers, and sexually abused and traumatised women in its wake. Refugee women may have taken on roles outside their traditional domains in order to provide for themselves and their dependents. While this may be empowering, it can also lead to emotional and psychological strain (Rogge 1994:43). Women returning from exile may suffer from reverse culture shock, particularly if they are forced back into traditional roles and dependent relationships following return (Bannon 2004:20). The stress of displacement and return may increase the levels of domestic violence in homes and may contribute to broken families. Women will tend to be responsible for ensuring that their dependents have adequate shelter, food and that essential services are paid for (UNHCR 1997:160).

In some societies, traditional inequalities may prevent single women from claiming land or holding legal title to it. This reduces their ability to undertake agricultural activities or use it as equity to borrow money. In instances that they are able to reclaim it, they may lack the time to work it in addition to their other responsibilities. Widows, single heads of households and the sexually abused are often the most economically and physically vulnerable people in their communities (Kumar 1997:23).

Alongside the growing interest in gender issues in development, there has been a correspondent recognition of the role women can play in post-conflict development and peace building. On occasions this may veer from the romanticism of Radha Kumar (2001:68) where women are essentialised as nurturers and peace-makers, to the pragmatic readings of the World Bank and the UN, which recognise the utility of women in peace building efforts and economic, social and political rehabilitation (eg Kreimer et al 1998:30).

As a consequence of this fairly new trend, aid agencies have begun to target women and women's groups in communities. The involvement of women is claimed by some authors to be fundamental to the development of grass roots peace and reconciliation (e.g. Karam 2000, Sorensen 1999, Zuckerman & Greenberg 2004). In addition to their role as peacemakers, they are also seen to provide an efficient mechanism through which aid can be targeted in order to maximise benefits. Assistance is based on the double assumption that women are more vulnerable but secondly they are also more resourceful and will manage assistance in a way that

will benefit a wider group of people. As a consequence, a substantial proportion of aid is now channelled through them and there is effort to include them in community level decision-making bodies. There exists a critique however, that projects continue to be operated using a blueprint approach, with a western liberal model providing the framework for norms and values. This may is not be culturally relevant to women recipients, and interventions could inadvertently disempower women (Kandiyoti 2004:134).

Social Infrastructure/Services

Under the current neoliberal, neo-institutionalist framework, the provision of social infrastructure and services are said to be most efficiently and effectively provided through community, rather than state operated systems. As mentioned in Section 3.2, the model of community driven development claims that with support, communities have a greater capacity than state institutions or other external actors to identify their own needs and implement cost-effective strategies to address them (Bannon 2004:30, World Bank 2004a). Other actors continue to argue that only a state centred approach can ensure sustainability and that decentralisation can only provide short-term relief (Salomons 2002:7). Macrae (2001:49) contends that the provision of services is an important aspect of what people consider statehood to entail.

Kumar (1997:19) suggests that in a number of conflict-affected countries, the international community have played an integral role in reviving basic services, such as education and primary health care. The ability to provide services will be affected by the country's level of development, the infrastructure available and the degree of physical security. As the level of conflict (or interest) in post-conflict societies declines, there is often a concurrent move from relief to development programming, which entails the withdrawal of the more relief oriented agencies. This may reduce the availability of health and education support that communities receive as state institutions lack the capacity to continue to provide the same quality and availability of service (Kumar 1997:21). Macrae (2001:149) contends that often aid agencies are at fault of developing support services which are financially unsustainable, and although in a number of instances the state has been excluded from determining the direction that these services take, they are held responsible by the international community for the failure to achieve sustainable outcomes.

There exists little sense in the literature that the provision of social services is integral to the

reintegration of returnees. In 1995 the UNHCR made reference to returnees to Mozambique, claiming that a lack of social support may cause a ricochet back to the country of asylum (p174). Of greater concern may be secondary migration and a drift toward the cities caused by an absence of services in rural areas (Rogge 1994:40). Arowolo (2000:72), a lone voice, argues that returnees must have access to education, vocational training, health and welfare support.

Returnees are a diverse group and within their number may be former combatants. They currently receive greater attention than other returnees. This is due to the threat to stability, their non-integration may entail. A number of institutions including the World Bank and the UNDP have become involved in operating programmes to affect their peaceful reintegration (UNDP n.d., World Bank 2004a). It is claimed that former combatants including both government and rebel forces must be provided with the ability to take up new productive roles in life, however in the case of those accused of perpetrating abuses, this should be based on a community-based rather than targeted approach. The ability of each ex-combatant to peacefully reintegrate will depend to an extent on family support, age, gender, length of service, access to assets and resources and their personal conduct during the conflict. Assistance will be more important for some groups than for others. In Uganda it was noted that without assistance, landless combatants were 100 times more likely than other people to become involved in crime (Collier et al 2003:161).

Other vulnerable people, such as orphans, the disabled and the elderly may be exposed to greater physical and material insecurity than that in the camp environment. While they may have enjoyed basic levels of assistance in the refugee camps, it is likely that they will receive minimal and perhaps only sporadic assistance once they have returned to their homes.

Reconciliation

Reconciliation is often missing from remedies within the liberal peace framework. Lipschutz argues that while precedence is given to economic and political change, little recognition is given to the deeper causes and consequences of the violence (Lipschutz 1998:6). Reconciliation is a dynamic process, occurring within and across all parts of society; affecting and being affected by the action and attitudes of individuals, communities and political figures. It is shaped by the political, economic and social climate and by poverty, power, faith, exclusion and inequity. Reconciliation is a process and an outcome. On an internal level, reconciliation can allow people to find ways to explain and make sense of their experiences in

order to live with them (Dywer 2003:106); on an interpersonal level, it can enable former enemies to find a way to build positive and interdependent relationships (Lederach 2001:842). Reconciliation allows people to come to terms with their past and re-evaluate their understanding of themselves, their community and their enemy (Lederach 2001:842). The end product of reconciliation is the elimination of historical falsification, stereotyping, dehumanisation and distrust of former adversaries (Lerche & Jeong 2002:105).

There are various theories regarding the process necessary to promote reconciliation. Coletta & Cullen (2002:121) equate reconciliation with the redevelopment of social capital. They argue that it is through the establishment of good governance, markets and the reestablishment of civil society that people can best leave the past behind. This view is also upheld by groups including economists in the World Bank and many development practitioners, who see projects such as the UNHCR's QIPs and community driven development projects as providing the means to recreate bonds between formerly antagonistic individuals and groups (World Bank 2004b). Maynard (1999:135), argues that it is necessary for victims to recount painful violations in order to relieve their pain and suffering. Chayes and Minow (2003:xx) suggest that the ability to coexist without recourse to violence and to maintain some degree of interaction and cooperation is the most realistic goal that can be hoped for. Reconciliation feeds directly into other aspects of communities' experiences of reintegration and will be impacted by people's satisfaction with the justice system, their economic and social well-being, their relationship to other community members during the period of violence and often their faith.

Since the development of a truth and reconciliation commission in post-apartheid South Africa, a number of countries emerging from conflict have adopted this mechanism to process trauma and obtain a sense of closure (Braithwaite 2003:37). Based on the concept of restorative justice, truth commissions do not attempt to equate injustice with retribution, but attempt to initiate a dialogue with all affected parties to find a way to remedy past wrongs (Niebur Eisnaugle 2003:214) and thus restore relationships between perpetrator, victim(s) and the community (Niebur Eisnaugle 2003:212). Although restorative justice systems are criticised for enabling people to avoid being punished for their crimes (Dwyer 2003:92), in countries emerging from intrastate conflict, it can provide a viable alternative to the overloaded formal justice system.

There has been criticism made of the causal relationship said to exist between truth telling, reconciliation and psychological healing (Chirwa 1998:109, Hamber 2003:160, Mani 2002:7). Claims are often made of the cathartic nature of providing testimony, and its ability to heal those who have suffered (eg Lira 1998:57, Niebur Eisnaugle 2003). Summerfield notes that talking through trauma is not a universal remedy and may on occasions be inappropriate (1998:63). Hamber (2003:161) and Lerche & Jeong (2002:108) argue that public revelation of truth will not in itself guarantee immediate psychological restoration and healing on a personal level. There also exists a danger that public exposure of human rights violations such as rape or torture may create further psychological damage to the survivors. This can be particularly dangerous when there is an absence of support systems to provide long-term culturally suitable support (Landgren 1998:3, Swartz & Drennan 2000:7). Furthermore, the uncovering of truth can also lead to the reopening old wounds and jeopardise the future relations between parties (Chicuecue 1998:113, Crocker 2003:46).

Niebur Eisnaugle (2003:237) contends that truth commissions create a forum for repentance however Hamber (2003:164) challenges this reading. Using the South African police force as an example, he argues that publication of their wrongdoing during the apartheid era in the South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission has not motivated any significant change in current organisation practices in regards to human rights. He thus contends that truth telling will not necessarily lead to repentance and a change in behaviour.

Truth commissions have also had little effect on bridging mistrust and violence between citizens in communities that have been wracked by violence. Hamber (2003:167) contends that while truth commissions may assist with reconciliation between the citizen and the state, they are considerably more limited in their ability to repair social division and mistrust within communities.

3.4 SUMMARY

This chapter has examined the economic, political and social dimensions of reintegration, in terms of theory and practice. The reintegration of returnees is said in part, to rest on efforts by the international community to assist in reconstruction and rehabilitation. Rather than focusing specifically on returnees, most agencies adopt an area based approach which targets localities rather than individuals or particular sectors of society.

The theory and practice of reintegration and peace-building has been subject to a certain degree of change. In the early days of the Washington Consensus, it was commonly alleged that economic growth was the precursor to development. Short-term pain was argued to pay dividends in terms of longer-term social and political stability. In the present day, the importance of the economy has been subsumed into a concurrent interest in community empowerment and good governance. There continues to be a wide consensus that activities should not only reduce people's immediate and longer term vulnerabilities, but must simultaneously work towards establishing the conditions of liberal peace. This entails the establishment of commercial markets, the development of civil society and a transparent, representative and just form of governance. In general, agencies implement their programmes at a micro-level, with the assumption that these efforts will dovetail into wider development efforts.

PART TWO: REINTEGRATION IN TIMOR LESTE

CHAPTER 4 – TIMOR LESTE: BACKGROUND

The Democratic Republic of Timor Leste became an independent and sovereign nation in May 2002 (UNDP 2003:5). Known also as Timor Lorosae and East Timor, the territory is located on the Eastern half of Timor Island and also includes the enclave Oecussi, on the northern coast of West Timor (See Figure 2, p13). The land can be divided into three topographic zones; the cold windswept central uplands, the drier semi-arid north, and the more tropical south. Much of the country consists of rugged mountainous slopes, which, in combination with heavy rainfall, makes it particularly vulnerable to erosion (UNDP 2002:vii).

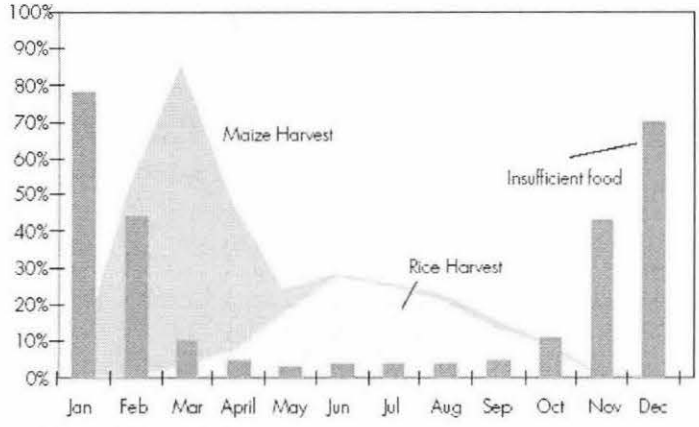
The government operates under a unicameral legislature and is presided over by an elected president. For administrative purposes, the country is divided into 13 districts, and 67 sub-districts. These are further divided into *sucos* and *aldeias* (UNDP 2002:12). While the translation of *suco* is 'village', and aldeia 'hamlet' they do not necessarily indicate a discrete bounded settlement of housing. Administrative divisions do not always coincide with geographical division, and groups of houses that are located together may be split between different *sucos* or *aldeihas*.

The population in the 2004 census was recorded as being 924,642 (Alkatiri 2004:20). There are a large number of ethnic groups and although the official languages are Tetum and Portuguese, a total of thirty languages and dialects are spoken (UNDP 2002b:3). The country ranks amongst the poorest in Asia, on par with Cambodia and Myanmar (UNDP 2003:6) and external aid accounts for approximately 67% of GDP (UNDP 2003:5). It is estimated that 40% of the population are unable to adequately feed, clothe, educate or house themselves (UNDP 2003:6). Average life expectancy is 57 years, 44% of children are underweight and only 43% of the adult population are literate (UNDP 2002:77). Demographically, the country is very young, with approximately 44% of the population under the age of 15 (UNDP 2002:76).

Three quarters of the population are subsistence farmers who grow maize, root vegetables and for those with access to suitable land, rice. Low-grade coffee is the largest cash crop and people also raise livestock. (UNDP 2002:6). It is estimated that only fifty percent of arable land is ever in production at any one time and farmers have traditionally adopted risk

minimising, low input, low output strategies, to try and guarantee their subsistence needs (UNDP 2002b:16). Nonetheless, is estimated that ninety percent of *sucos* across the country experience food shortages where their rice and maize crops are insufficient to cover the year's nutritional needs (see Figure 8).

Figure 8: Harvests and Patterns of Food Insecurity, Timor Leste



Source: UNDP 2002b:16

4.1 Brief History

Timor Leste's current situation cannot be delinked from its past. It was under colonial rule that the ideal of nationhood emerged in the territory and it was through occupation that political divisions were exacerbated. What occurs today is as much a product of the country's earlier history as it is a product of the violence of 1999 or the intervention of the international community. Throughout the various occupations, the Timorese have not stood idly by, but using those means available to them, have struggled for independence and self-determination. As the UN and international aid community withdraws, the Timorese people will continue to deal with the ongoing consequences of this and previous foreign regimes.

Portuguese Timor

The island of Timor was home to a large number of ethnic groups and clans, each ruled over by chiefs and kings (*liurai*). Although Portugal laid claim to the island in the 1600s, it controlled little of the interior, basing its rule around alliances with the *liurai* (Traube 1995:45). In 1850, rivalry over the territory between Portugal and the Netherlands, resulted in the island being divided into two; Portugal retaining the eastern half and the enclave of Oecussi, the Netherlands laying claim to the West.

The period of Portuguese rule had little impact on the majority of the East Timorese although the ruling classes were educated by the Catholic Church and the population became nominally Catholic (Carey 1995:10). The territory was exploited it for its valuable sandalwood and coffee resources, however the Portuguese invested little in the development of Timorese people, or the country's infrastructure and resources.

Independence and The Indonesian Occupation

The overthrow of the Portugal's Fascist Caetano regime in April 1974, led to the dissolution of Portugal's colonial empire. The new Portuguese leadership began to prepare the territory for independence (Dunn 1995:60). The Timorese hastily formed a number of political parties: the Timorese Democratic Union (UDT); the more radical left leaning Fretilin which had broken away from the UDT; and the Timorese Popular Democratic Association (Apodeti), a much smaller party which called for integration with Indonesia. Indonesia surreptitiously began to assist in the formation and arming of a number of paramilitary groups. This was not a new strategy to the territory, but one, which had also been used by the Portuguese to consolidate their power.

In August 1975 the UDT staged a coup and seized control from Portugal. Fierce fighting broke out between UDT and Fretilin, resulting in between two and three thousand casualties and the displacement of thousands of people (Alkatiri in CAVR 2003:43, Ramos-Horta 1987:55). Within three weeks Fretilin had gained control of the country and on November 28, 1975, it declared the country to be independent under the presidency of Francisco Xavier do Amaral. Nine days later after the proclamation, Indonesia invaded. It claimed support for its intervention from Apodeti and the UDT, and received military assistance from the militia groups that had been formed under the direction of the Indonesian Special Forces *Kopassus*, the previous year (Dunn 2002:66). The invasion received covert support from Australia and the USA who, in the aftermath of Vietnam, were concerned about Frelitin's leftist leanings and wanted to prevent any further expansion of communism in the region (Dunn 1995:66, Ramos-Horta 1987:88, Wanandi in CAVR 2003:17). Internationally, the invasion was condemned and the United Nations Security Council adopted Resolution 384/1975 calling for Indonesia to withdraw.

Falintil, the armed wing of Fretilin, retreated to the hills and for the first two years of the Indonesian occupation maintained control of the country's interior (Cristalis 2002:112).

Infighting between its Marxist and non-Marxist elements resulted in weakening its dominance. The Marxists eventually gained control of the party and purged many of the non-Marxists from the organisation (Cristalis 2002:113). Francisco Xavier do Amaral broke away from the party during this period, surrendering to the Indonesian forces. He later claimed that the power struggle resulted in the deaths of 50,000 East Timorese people (Cristalis 2002:113).

Indonesia formally annexed East Timor on July 17, 1976, declaring it to be the twenty-seventh province of Indonesia. The annexation was rejected by the United Nations under Resolution 31/53, which called for the people of East Timor to be able to exercise their right to self–determination. The resolution was ignored by Indonesia, which continued to consolidate its control of the territory with the support of a number of Timorese militia forces (Candio & Bleiker 2001:68, Dunn 2002:68, KPP-HAM 2002:23).

From 1975 until 1978, the territory continued to be the subject of a huge military offensive. The TNI engaged in intense aerial bombing and the reported use of napalm (Ramos Horta 1987:195). The resistance and thousands of civilians were pushed further into the hills. Eventually however, the military pressure and the continued infighting within the Falintil led to the eventual loss of all of their strongholds and in 1978 the remaining survivors surrendered and were allowed (by both the Indonesians and the Falintil) to come down. Bombing, starvation, displacement and disease in this period were estimated to result in between 200,000-300,000 fatalities (Cristalis 2002:116, Dunn 1995:67, Martin 2001:17).

The Indonesian authorities directed the population to resettlement villages where they were kept under close surveillance (Martin 2001:17). The sites were reported to be rife with famine and disease (Dunn 1995:65). Residents were subjected to gross human rights violations, summary executions, torture and rape, which continued throughout the Indonesian occupation (Dunn 2002:65). Catholic Relief Services and the International Committee of the Red Cross were eventually given access to the territory to provide emergency food aid but there are claims that much of this aid was appropriated by the Indonesian forces. Fearing that they would be ejected from the territory if they openly raised the issues of human rights and corruption of aid, the organisations left Indonesian atrocities unchallenged (Cristalis 2002:116, Ramos-Horta 1987:197).

In early 1980 Fretilin regrouped and with the support of the rural population, intensified its guerrilla warfare against Indonesian rule. The effectiveness of the organisation continued to be

hindered by its internal rifts, and there was little cooperation between it and other opposition groups. In 1988, Xanana Gusmao[12] separated Falintil from Fretilin and attempted to bring all the opposition groups including the UDT and Fretilin together under the single umbrella of the CNRT[13] (Cristalis 2002:120). He criticised the organisation's former *modus operandi*, claiming it had:

> ... allowed no margin of disagreement but rather has exhibited all the political extremism which would be, from time on, our very death sentence. We have committed crimes against our own brothers and, during this difficult war, we have spent more time in arresting and assassinating compatriots than in thinking effectively about capable defence of the homeland (Xanana Gusmao in Cristalis 2002:120).

This renewed opposition by independence supporters was countered by a new approach by the Indonesian leadership. Rather than sustaining their power through repression and subjugation, the government attempted to "win over the hearts and minds" of the Timorese (Cristalis 2002:119). Hiring local labour, the government constructed schools, hospitals and other public amenities across the country (KPP-HAM 2002:16, Smith 2003:37). Economic conditions improved, but the major beneficiaries continued to be Indonesian elites who embezzled much of the money earmarked for the region (Dunn 1995:68) and consequently, East Timor remained Indonesia's poorest province. In 1996 the average per capita income sat at US$431 compared to the Indonesian average of US$1,153 (ADB 2004:3).

The new approach did not extend to the treatment of dissenters, and the United Nations Commission on Human Rights and other human rights organisations continued to raise concerns related to serious human rights violations including extra judicial killings, torture, "disappearances" and acts of sexual violence carried out by members of the Indonesian Military (TNI) and pro-government militia. (KPP-HAM 2002:16, UNHCHR 2000:n8).

The Movement to Independence

The Asian Economic Crisis was the first in a chain of events leading to the eventual independence of East Timor. The Indonesian economy was badly hit by the crisis and with

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[12] The first president to head the state of Timor Leste following independence in 2002.

[13] The political organisation was initially called the CNRM but in 1998 changed its name to the National Council of Timorese Resistance (CNRT).

the country dependent on the international community for further financing; President Suharto was forced to resign. This brought about a period of greater political tolerance and freedom throughout the country (KPP-HAM 2002:16) and Timorese people in Timor and throughout Indonesia renewed their demands for independence (Smith 2001:20).

To counter the increasingly forceful calls for sovereignty, the TNI supported and funded the formation of new militia groups and the reformation of older groups (van Klinken et al 2002:105). The groups were intended to serve a two-fold service: they would intimidate the local population into accepting continued Indonesian rule and through the instability they generated, would demonstrate to the international community the unfeasibility of independence (McDonald 2002:10, UNHCHR 2000:137, van Klinken et al 2002:106).

Recruits to the militia were sourced from the civil service and traditional allies of the Indonesian leadership (van Klinken 2002:104). As the atmosphere in the territory being increasingly volatile, further recruits were forcibly conscripted, receiving threats against themselves and their families if they refused to cooperate (Dunn 2002:70, Human Rights Watch 1999).

In January 1999, Indonesia's President Habibie took the world by surprise, offering the Timorese the chance to choose a greater level of autonomy within the Indonesian state or independence (Smith 2003:42). Convinced by their own propaganda, both military and Indonesian government leaders felt that the pro-autonomy element would easily win (van Klinken et al 2002:104). Habibie's proposal quickly receiving backing from the UN and the Security Council established the United Nations Mission in East Timor (UNAMET) to organize and conduct the consultation.

Despite the Government of Indonesia taking responsibility for ensuring security, as it became clear that the population would vote against continued Indonesian occupation, the militia groups and TNI increased the levels of violence and terror. People known to support independence were targeted, their homes burnt, and they were beaten, tortured and in a number of cases killed (Martin 2001:25). The period saw two massacres of civilians and four local UNAMET staff were murdered (Martin 2001:12). It is estimated that more than 60,000 people were internally displaced prior to the election (2001:57). Despite the ongoing violence 446,666 people registered to vote (UNHCHR 2000:n12).

On September 4, 1999 the results of the vote were announced. Seventy eight percent of voters had chosen independence (McDonald 2002:6). The levels of violence immediately escalated with evidence suggesting that the TNI implemented a pre-planned scorched earth policy (Dunn 2002:66, Jones 2002:2, KPP-HAM 2002:33, Martin 2001:81). Across the state militia looted and torched buildings. Seventy five percent of the country's physical infrastructure and seventy percent of all housing was damaged or destroyed (Atkinson 2001:10, Jones 2002:2). Rape and other forms of sexual violence were perpetrated against women (KPP_HAM 2002:48) and there are unverified estimates that over one thousand people were killed by marauding militia, TNI and police (Dunn 2002:71).

Over 200,000 people retreated into East Timor's mountainous interior, however another 250,000 were forcibly shipped, flown or trucked out to West Timor and other parts of Indonesia in an attempt by the TNI to convince the world community that the Timorese did not support the ballot outcome (KPP-HAM 2002:36, MacDonald 2002:11, UNTAET 2001:17). Government services ceased their operation as the Indonesians who staffed them fled from the country. Falintil fighters, who were outnumbered by the greater Indonesian military and militia presence, remained in cantonment during violence and the UN evacuated its local and international staff to Darwin (Smith 2003:44).

On September 15, the United Nations Security Council mandated an International Force in East Timor (Interfet) to restore and maintain security using all "necessary and legitimate force" (Smith 2003:45). Initially led by Australia, the force progressively took control over the territory. The militia groups were pushed into West Timor where they lived alongside refugees in 175 camps scattered through West Timor. On October 25, Indonesia formally handed authority for the territory over to the United Nations Transitional Authority for East Timor (UNTAET).

Fretilin and other members of the clandestine movement returned from the hills and began to finish off the work the militias had begun, becoming locally known as the second militia. Homes belonging to people who had been involved in the militia were destroyed and any remaining livestock or food (regardless of the political sympathies of the owner) was requisitioned. In the heated atmosphere, anyone found returning who was thought to have been guilty of crimes was beaten or killed.

Alongside UNTAET, an estimated two hundred humanitarian actors including UN agencies,

NGOs and INGOs flooded into the territory, assisting with the provision of humanitarian service (Secretary General 2000:2). International donors pledged US$520 million in funding to support immediate humanitarian assistance and longer term development needs (ADB 2004a:4).

Return from West Timor

There existed a conundrum in East Timor between those who wished the returnees to come back as quickly as possible, and those who felt that the justice system and mechanisms for reconciliation needed to be in place before people returned. Both UNTAET and the CNRT argued that nation-building could not begin until the majority of the refugees had returned, and repatriation was not seen as a humanitarian intervention and also a political objective, with peace building and reconciliation an outcome of its success (Dolan 2004: 25, Jones 2001:18).

While it was recognised that the majority of refugees were not militia, it was felt in some quarters that the longer they remained in West Timor, the more difficult their eventual reintegration would be. Not only would they be increasingly vulnerable to militia manipulation, additionally there was a feeling among the people in Timor Leste that the longer people remained away, the greater was their guilt. Furthermore, the existence of the camps remained a source of instability and the threat of incursions by militia groups remained high (Hoskings & van Schoor 2000, Jones 2001:18).

Other groups however, argued that justice was a prerequisite of peace and needed to be in place before people could return to their homes. This disparity of opinion was demonstrated when the UNHCR, in their attempts to facilitate the return of refugees apparently wined and dined militia leaders in Dili while the UN's Peace Keeping Force (PKF), the Human Rights Unit and the Special Crimes Unit (SCU) attempted to bring about justice for the crimes committed (anon, pers. comm., 16/7/04, Dolan 2004:80).

In the first six months following the return of the UN to Timor Leste, 120,000 refugees returned from West Timor (ADB 2004a:4). The number of returnees then slowed rapidly as the militia cemented their control of the camps and the Indonesian military continued to turn a blind eye to their activities (UNTAET 2001:18). Despite attempts by the UNHCR and other agencies to induce people to return, only 48,539 out of the remaining 130,000 refugees returned in 2000 (La'o Hamutuk 2003:10).

Refugees who attempted to return were threatened and intimidated. The camps were used to enlist new recruits and there were reports of military training taking place in the vicinity of the camps (UNTAET 2001:20). Militia also harassed and threatened UN and INGO staff who were working with the refugees or assisting with their return. On September 6, 2000, militia murdered three UNHCR staff in the West Timorese town of Atambua, leading to the withdrawal of all UN and most INGO staff from the West Timor camps and the suspension of all activities in the province (Report of the Secretary-General 2000:6, UNHCR 2001:180).

Without any outside support, the camps became squalid and disease ridden. Refugees suffered from malnutrition and there was a high incidence of infant mortality (UNTAET 2001:67). Extortion, abduction, sexual violence and murder were rife (RNIS 2001) and tensions also increased between the refugees and the West Timorese communities (Jones 2002:17, Oxfam 2001, UNTAET 2001:69).

Although some civil servants and people who had committed crimes were unwilling to risk returning, NGOs still working in the camps claimed that the majority of refugees wished to return home. Factors preventing their return were said to include intimidation and misinformation by the militia and the Indonesian press, fears of retaliatory violence, a loss of salaries for civil servants and fears for their physical, economic and political security (Report of the Secretary-General 2000:n7, La'o Hamutuk 2003:12, Oxfam 2001).

UNIMET, aid agencies, the church and the CNRT continued to assist people to return from the border with East Timor. The UNHCR and partner organisations facilitated family reunification meetings, 'come and see' and 'go and see visits' which assisted in countering the misinformation spread by the militia groups. Returnees utilised UNHCR/IOM transport from the border and received repatriation packages. Some also received a cash grant from the Indonesian government to assist with resettlement (World Refugee Survey 2003).

Clarification of the justice system also encouraged lower level militia that it would be safe to return. Returnees were screened by the PKF and CNRT at the border to separate militia from non-militia. Those who had not committed any crimes were transported back to their homes. The UN Special Crimes Unit and the CAVR[14] facilitated the return of people who had been

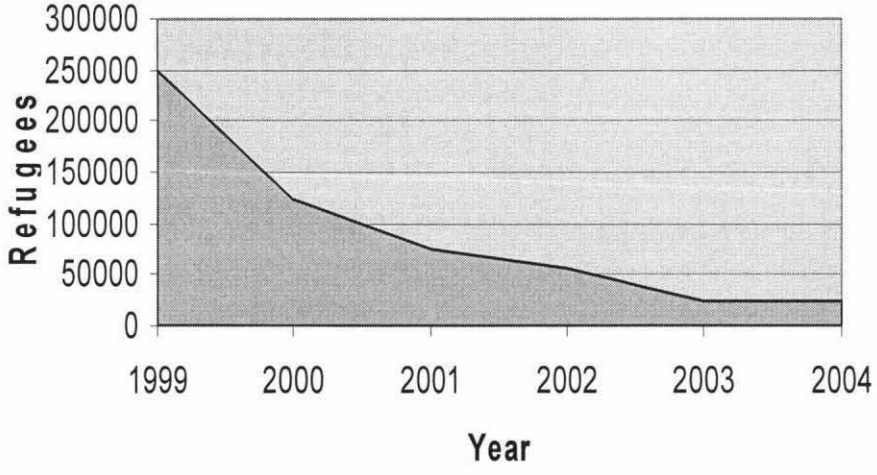
[14] Comissão de Acolhimento, Verdate e Reconciliação de Timor Leste (lit. The Commission on Reception, Truth, and Reconciliation)

involved in lesser crimes and those accused of committing serious crimes were arrested[15] (UNTAET 2002).

In 2000 the Government of Indonesia stopped providing financial assistance to refugees (US$0.14/person/day) and began to offer refugees the opportunity to resettle elsewhere in Indonesia (RNIS 2001, La'o Hamutuk 2003:11). The UNHCR discontinued people's refugee status in 2002 and all support to the camps was ceased. Refugees could choose whether to remain unsupported in the camps, resettle elsewhere in Indonesia, or return to Timor Leste.

In 2002, Timor Leste held its first election for an interim government. The successful outcome of the election saw the return of a large number of the refugees. In 2003 the remaining refugees were given an ultimatum by the Indonesian government forcing them to choose between Timorese or Indonesian citizenship (La'o Hamutuk 2003:12). A trickle of refugees returned but it is expected that the majority will now remain in Indonesia, either because they fear retribution or because they wish to continue employment within the Indonesian civil service (World Refugee Survey 2003).

Figure 9: Refugees in West Timor, Oct 99-2004



Sources: La'o Hamutuk 2003:10, Agence France Presse 2004

[15] A lesser crime includes "isolated incidents of looting, house-burning or minor assault". A serious crime includes acts such as murder, torture, sexual offences and large-scale crimes (eg organised destruction of property) as well as other crimes against humanity (UNTAET 2002).

4.2 TIMOR TODAY

Fretilin, the largest pro-independence force during the Indonesian occupation, currently governs the country. Most of the party's local leaders died during the struggle and it is headed by returned exiles to whom the population feel a lesser degree of allegiance (Cristalis 2002:277). Rifts between the returned diaspora and other Timorese also been exacerbated by the issue of language, as the Portuguese speaking elite, by adopting Portuguese as the language of the state have thus excluded the majority of younger Indonesian speaking Timorese from participating in the government sector (da Costa 2004:351).

Efforts by the international community in the emergency period have not been able to lift the high levels of poverty that are endemic throughout the country. Even prior to the destruction and violence of 1999, the state was desperately poor, with thirty percent of households living below the poverty line (World Bank 1999:n8).

Although the country received an influx of aid money, much of it did not arrive into the country, and was spent on the salaries of foreign consultants, or attached to boomerang aid (Moxham 2005). One commentator estimated that less than forty percent of the UNDP's funding for Timor was spent in-country (VJ Naidu, pers. comm. 4/5/04). The high expenditure in the emergency period (1999-2001) initially created an economic growth rate of 15%, but this fell to 2.8% by 2002 and in 2003 the economy contracted by 2-3% (Economics Intelligence Unit 2004).

The government is only able to generate US$36 million of its budgeted expenditure in taxation revenue, so it remains highly dependant of ODA to overcome the budget deficit (Nation Master 2004). This budget shortfall has forced the government to operate a much smaller bureaucracy than that of the Indonesian period. State expenditure on other services has also been vastly curtailed. With a drop in the number of people employed in the civil service, and few other opportunities for employment, people have resorted once again to subsistence agriculture to ensure their day-to-day survival.

In 2002 it was estimated that more than two fifths of the population survive on less than US$0.55 per day (UNDP 2002b:iii). The country has experienced several consecutive years of storms, droughts and locust plagues, which have increased people's levels of food insecurity. As the economy contracts with the pull-out of the UN machinery, the failure to meet people's

expectations of the fruits of independence have created increasing levels of discontent. This has resulted in the formation of an opposition group, the CPD-RDTL, who challenge the legality of the UN sponsored election and the current government. The last few years have seen a number of protests and incidences of violence by this group and other discontents against the new regime (da Costa 2004:351, Economist 2003:39).

CHAPTER 5 – THE CASE STUDIES

As is evident in Chapters Two and Three, both academics and development practitioners see an important role for the international community in providing aid interventions that encourage the successful reintegration of refugees through relief and development programmes. Based within the paradigm of liberal peace, interventions are based on the assumption that programming which stimulates economic growth, security, political representation and a strong civil society will engender the reintegration of refugees through the development of a stable liberal peace. Despite these assertions, little effort has been made to follow up the longer-term impacts of their efforts. Most aid organizations conduct some form of evaluation as they exit from their programmes, but often this only measures the achievement of concrete indicators and ignores the social, political or economic impacts the programme has had on the beneficiary population[16]. Little effort has been put into trying to understand the impact of aid programming on the reintegration of returnees and very often it is the voices of beneficiaries and other affected stakeholders who are excluded from these evaluations (Black & Koser 1999:10, Chimni 2002:164, Maynard 1999:87).

This chapter intends to play a role in remedying this deficit of information. Rather than looking at reintegration and aid programming from the perspective of aid providers, the case studies gathered the perspectives of returnees, stayees and local leaders. It explored their perspectives on the process of reintegration; the impact of aid interventions and the issues which they felt were of most concern to them in the development of peace and security in their communities. The chapter presents the findings of fieldwork carried out in June and July 2004 in four rural areas in the Western Provinces of Timor Leste (see figure 2, p13). Sites were chosen which had a high percentage of their population flee and then return from West Timor. In addition each site displays different physical, social and historical characteristics, which enables comparisons to be made within and between sites.

The chapter is divided into five sections. The first four sections each present the results of a single case study area. Section One discusses the findings from Sub-district Lequidoe, Section Two Sub-districts Cailaco and Atabae, Section Three, Bobonaro and Section Four Maubara.

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[16] Pugh (2000: 116) notes that most donor funding favours 'hard' visible reconstruction projects over 'soft' social projects. Nonetheless as noted by Mary Anderson (1999), even hard projects will affect community dynamics.

Each section follows a similar format with an initial outline summarising the area's significant physical, social and economic characteristics. This is followed by an outline of the research methodology, the area's history as it relates to the events of 1999, and the flight and return of refugees. It then explores the dominant themes that emerged during the course of the interviews and discusses them in relation to people's experience of reintegration and the operation of aid organisations in their *sucos*. The case studies are followed by a short conclusion, which summarises the main findings.

5.1 Case Study One: Sub-district Lequidoe

Background

Lequidoe sits high on a cold and exposed mountain ridge in the district Alieu. The area has low agricultural fertility and is not irrigated. People in the area belong to the Mambae ethnic group. They are agriculturalists, primarily dependent on the production of coffee and oranges in addition to their subsistence crops of cassava and corn. They also raise livestock including horses, goats and pigs. The population is divided between the Protestant and Catholic faiths. *Suco* A was an Indonesian transmigration site. Approximately half the homes belong to Protestants who originally lived on Atauro Island off the coast of Dili. The other residents are Catholics who had been relocated from villages deeper in the hills (ACDS).

Methodological Notes

The area was visited from June 8-12, 2004. Three *sucos* were visited in the course of the fieldwork. They will be referred to as *Sucos* A, C and D (see Table 10 below). Twenty-two interviews were carried out with a mixture of local leaders, returnees and stayees. Respondents included the *Chefe de Posto* (Sub-district leader), the *Chefe de Suco* from *Suco* A, the leader of the local women's organisation Organizasao Mulheres de Timor (OMT), the local pastor, two former TNI soldiers, a former policeman, a widow and a number of former militia.

Figure 10: Table of Interviews, Sub-district Lequidoe

	Total Interviews	*Suco* A	*Suco* C	*Suco* D
Chefe de Posto	**1**	n/a	n/a	n/a
Chefe de Suco	**1**	1	-	-
Stayees	**8**	4	3	1
Returned 2000	**4**	3	1	-
Returned 2001	**4**	2	-	2
Returned 2002	**4**	1	3	-
Totals	**22**	11	7	3

The Violence

There were three major militia groups active in the area. The Raja Wali were trained by Kopassus, Aileu Hamelin Integrasi (AHI) was commanded by the *Chefe de Suco* and Pam Suahara was affiliated with the community arm of the TNI and the police. AHI and Pam Suahara both had large numbers of members from the area, many of whom have not yet returned from West Timor. As the levels of violence increased, militia groups enlisted non-regular members who were said to be rewarded financially for each building or house they

burnt (CS1). It would appear that the Protestants in the area shared closer ties to the Indonesian leaders than the Catholics and consequently their youth included a larger number in the militia forces.

It is unclear how much violence occurred in the area prior to the referendum however immediately following the vote the Indonesian Mobile Police (BRIMOB) entered the area. Working in conjunction with the local militia, they rounded up everyone from the area and ordered them to leave for West Timor. Residents were told there was housing prepared for them in West Timor (CDP) and that if they stayed in Timor, they would die (Amnesty International 1999). The militia then began to burn people's homes, government buildings and crops. Over this period three people were murdered, one person had his tongue severed and several women were raped (CDP). The *Chefe de Posto* estimated that approximately 3000 people, including 1000 pro-autonomy militia, civil servants and Indonesian settlers went to West Timor. The rest of the population fled into the hills.

Repatriation

There have been several waves of returns to the area. Unlike districts closer to the West Timorese border, returnees didn't begin to arrive until May 2000. Afraid of being beaten or killed, most families sent a representative to assess the situation before deciding to return. The *Chefe de Posto*, with the assistance of several aid organisations and the church, also tried to entice refugees to come home. They sent a delegation of community leaders to West Timor, messages were broadcast over the radio and organisations facilitated the passing of letters between the sub-district and camps. Where these entreaties failed, the loss of refugee status in 2002, with the consequent loss of rations motivated a number of refugees to return (AR00/2). Most returnees commented that at the end of the day Lequidoe remained their home, as it was where they had land and family.

> We got information that East Timor is a new country but it needs people, so now we need to come back and develop our own country so finally we decided to return. (AR01/1)

> We decided to come back because our land and farms is here. It is better to return even if people did want to kill us. (CR02/3)

Between 2001 and 2004 the area experienced a forty two percent increase in the size of its

population – the greatest proportion of which was the influx of returning refugees (UNFPA 2004). Nonetheless, the *Chefe de Posto* estimated that at the time of my visit, one thousand refugees from Lequidoe sub-district still remained in West Timor. One member of the delegation to visit West Timor said that he felt most refugees would eventually return as their homes, land and family were here, however many continued to harbour concerns regarding justice, housing and the availability of employment (CS1).

All returnees spoken to had repatriated with the assistance of UNHCR. While some mentioned that the registration process had been dangerous due to militia intimidation in the camps, the return was run smoothly. Returnees said that the process had been clearly explained and they had each received a basic kit, which included a tarpaulin, pots, tools, blankets and food rations.

Housing

By the time most returnees arrived back to the sub-district, the majority of emergency relief programmes had been phased out. Those back at the time each received a UNHCR shelter kit, which included concrete for the floor and a corrugated iron roof. Most returnees arrived back too late to be included in the distribution, and while former civil servants and ex-TNI often had a concrete house to return to, the majority of militia members had to construct a traditional style home with a dirt floor and thatch roof.

The construction of traditional homes required materials that were only available seasonally, and not all were locally available. Several returnees reported living under UNHCR supplied tarpaulin for over a year (AR01/1, CR02/2). One respondent claimed that he had to pay US$300 to purchase thatch for his roof (CR02/1). Although most people had lived in traditional style houses throughout the Indonesian administration, the widespread appearance of shelter kits and the rise in consumer prices led several returnees to claim that their biggest problem after food security was the condition of their housing.

Community-Driven Development

Many aid organisations in the emergency period attempted to 'empower' communities to lead their own development. Success however, was limited hampered by poor planning, low levels of on-going support by the implementing organisation and little sense of community ownership. Instead development agencies appeared to operate on the principle that communities could be empowered simply through the organisation of a number of meetings,

the election of a committee and a large injection of cash or materials.

The attempt of the Asian Development Bank (ADB) to implement a sustainable electrification programme in the sub-district is illustrative of the way several agencies operated. As part of the reconstruction efforts implemented throughout the country, the ADB, following 'a detailed assessment of the communities' needs' (ADB 2004a:31) decided to support the rehabilitation of the area's electricity. In addition to providing a safe and healthy standard of living, the provision of power for three hours per night was said to facilitate economic activities and provide security (ADB 2004a:31).

Based on the philosophy that communities are in the best position to effectively manage their own affairs, a village-based management committee independent of the CNRT or the *suco* leadership was elected and a cost recovery mechanism instigated. A generator and diesel were purchased, power lines were rehabilitated and each house was wired up with one fluorescent light. All households paid a couple of dollars each to cover fuel costs. For approximately six weeks, each household received three hours of electric lighting in the evening.

Following a short period of training, the implementing NGO departed, leaving the committee of illiterate local volunteers to operate the generator and ensure the recovery of costs from end users. As soon as the trainers departed, the project collapsed. With inadequate socialisation, people were unaware that the charges for the electricity were to be ongoing and they refused to make further payments. Rumours also circulated that the committee members, who it was said included a number of alcoholics, had sold off the remaining diesel for personal gain.

How the provision of three hour's electric lighting per night was to enhance security was not discussed in the ADB's report. It is doubtful that the provision of lighting for three hours per night in people's homes significantly altered the degree of security in the area or prevented the occurrence of violence. In an area without industry, it was also unlikely to stimulate economic growth. Perhaps this is why the ADB made no effort to follow it up or evaluate the project. Indicating lax evaluation standards, a current ADB report (ADB 2004a:33) describes the project as "operating fully" indicating that there have been no further visits to the area since its implementation two years ago.

There were a number of other similar failures throughout the sub-district where projects fizzled out due to comparable problems with the initial needs assessment, implementation or

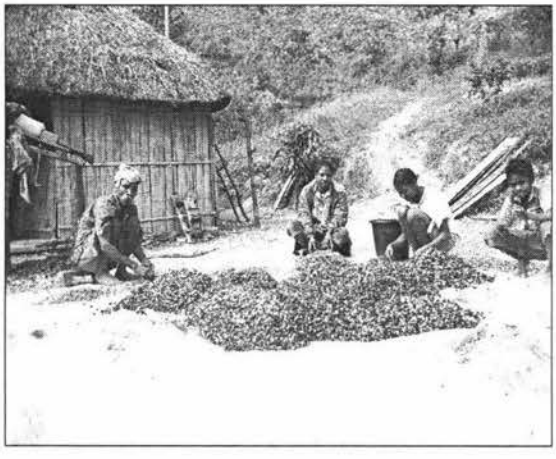
support. These included a carpentry workshop, a bakery, a micro-finance project and the development of terraces and pineapple plantations. As a consequence of these failures, neither project participants, nor later returnees benefited from their existence.

Agriculture and Food Security

Most people have returned to their traditional farming activities as employment generation and training programmes were withdrawn from the area. Although a large proportion of people's orange and coffee trees were destroyed in the violence of 1999, people are harvesting their remaining crops (see figure 11) and are replanting trees to ensure future production. Returnees have not yet been able to re-establish their farms or livestock to the same extent as stayees and they estimate that it will take several more years before their newly planted coffee trees will be ready to fruit.

The price of coffee is seen as a major determinant of economic well-being and everyone expressed concern at what prices they would receive this year. On occasions the low prices have caused farmers to bring their crops back from market, rather than sell them at a price they felt was unreasonable (ACDS).

Figure 11: Returnees drying coffee outside traditional style home



All families indicated that food security was a primary concern. Small harvests were further decimated by a storm earlier in the year (AS/1, AR00/1, AR00/3). Returnees who had arrived more recently were particularly at risk of food shortages, as they had not yet re-established their subsistence crops or cash crops (AR00/2, AR00/3). Although all households in the sub-district received supplementary rice from the World Food Programme, some respondents claimed they only received enough assistance to cover a week's food. The failure of the harvest also affected people's ability to raise livestock. One returnee complained that she was unable to grow enough cassava to feed her own family, let alone her pig and two goats (CR02/3).

There were economic differences evident between both stayees and returnees and also between returnees. Former civil servants and TNI had been paid while in West Timor and so were often able to purchase livestock when they returned (AR02/1). The families of former militia were less financially secure, having lost most of their possessions and lacking the financial means to replace lost stock or afford other inputs (AR01/2, CR02/1). They were particularly vulnerable to food shortages.

The low level of production and cash flow in the local economy also affected the development of secondary industries. Several people had attempted to operate kiosks, often with small loans from CEP. Few of these were successful due to the low level of local demand for the goods they offered. A number of people also sold *tuamutin*, the local alcoholic beverage. At the time of my visit, the local bi-weekly market managed to host only seven small stalls.

Several organisations became involved in agricultural support projects in the area. As discussed previously, programmes which were implemented as part of the emergency relief effort were marred by their poor planning, socialisation and support. Speaking of his involvement in a food-for-work project, one respondent commented:

> ... the terraces we constructed were never used because the organisation didn't come back; the pineapples we planted didn't fruit because we'd been told to plant them in the wrong season but because we received rice in exchange for our labour, nobody minded too much. (DS1)

Most agricultural support programmes targeted groups and offered training, equipment and occasionally livestock. Where projects assembled people who had a history of working cooperatively to undertake activities similar to those they had undertaken in the past, they seemed to achieve more positive outcomes. One participant said that the agriculture training he had participated in enabled him to improve his vegetable cultivation techniques and sell his produce more profitably (DR01/1).

Where support was based on groups performing non-traditional tasks, they were less successful. An attempt to assist the local women's group to operate an agriculture programme failed because women preferred to work on their family plot (CS4). It was also rare for groups to bridge either the religious or political divisions in society. As such, aid tended not to have contributed either positively or negatively to the process of reconciliation.

Agricultural support was available to both returnees and stayees. Unlike sub-districts visited later, inclusion was more a factor of the engagement of the *suco* leader than the political or religious affiliations a group may have had. In instances that the *suco* leader was proactive and managed to develop good relations with aid organisations, higher levels of assistance were attracted.

Property Rights

The issue of property rights has not been a major issue. Although some returnees came back to find their land had been appropriated by stayees, local authorities mediated on behalf of the returnees and returnees said that their housing sites and farm land were returned fairly quickly (CDP, AS3). Often relatives also looked after people's property while they were away (CR001).

There were unconfirmed reports circulating in Dili that some people who had been allocated land in Lequidoe during the Indonesian occupation have been unable to return as the properties have been reclaimed by the original owner. These people have been said to have received no compensation from government to cover any improvements they made to the land during the period they owned it. Currently living in Dili, the cases are still apparently being negotiated by the UNHCR and the government of Timor Leste.

Governance and Reconciliation

Local leaders played an active role in the reintegration of returnees, welcoming them back and outlining how they were to contribute and behave in the new Timor Leste. Often this included a reference to their role in contributing to the country's development.

> When we returned, our *Chefe de Posto* explained everything about the process of development. He suggested that we didn't create violence in the area, but worked with the government to develop the country. ... I am sure that there will be no problems because the government came to teach us how we can love and respect each other. (AR00/3)

The involvement of *suco* leaders also made a considerable impact on the degree to which returnees and stayees were able to rebuild their relationship. This was demonstrated by the palpable difference in the quality of leadership provided by the *suco* leaders from *Suco* A and C. The *Chefe* of *Suco* A lived in the *Suco* and despite having suffered at the hands of the militia in 1999 she ensured that aid was distributed evenly and seemed to reach out to all members of

the community encouraging reconciliation. One former militia member commented:

> When we arrived, those people who had stayed let us forget everything we had done so we can build and develop the country together. People didn't fight us but they sounded angry. The village leaders kept the peace. (AR01/1)

On occasions this included bringing the two groups into contact with each other on *suco* development projects, which were attributed with the ability to develop people's willingness to coexist alongside each other.

> We work together with the returnees, for example on Independence Day or to repair the school. This helps to improve understanding. We don't grow to like each other, but we find a way to work together. We won't get anything from hatred. (CS2)

In *Suco* C however, the *Chefe* lived outside the *suco* and paid it infrequent visits. Many villagers complained that they were not included in local decision-making and that many aid projects and other activities consequently passed them by.

> We want to join groups but leaders never come and contact us and let us participate. Maybe there is no programme at all, but usually when there is a party or official ceremony they ask us to come and clean the road. (CR02/2)

> During the Indonesian period I belonged to the women's group. Now neither of us [herself or husband] belongs to any group. The problem is the *Chefe de Suco*. (CS2)

His lack of leadership contributed to the ongoing nature of conflict. A small enclave of homes belonging to militia associates in *Suco* C had the pipes to their water tank cut soon after their return from West Timor in 2002. Despite frequent petitions to the *suco* leader to resolve the situation, nothing had been done, and depending on the degree to which residents feared stayees, they walked between half and hour and an hour away to get water (CR02/2, CR02/3).

Governance and Aid

The distribution of aid and the existence of development projects provided government with a greater degree of legitimacy among both the returnee and stayee populations. Rather than attributing the provision of food aid and other assistance to the international aid community,

respondents held the government and local leaders responsible for the arrival or non-arrival of assistance.

> We received sardines and 2kg of rice last year from the government. This year they give us some rice – but it was only enough to last a week. (AR01/2)

In this role, central government was taking over the role of the Indonesian leadership, which had provided subsidised rice in times of food shortages (DuRette & Slocum 2001:14). One returnee said, "We don't know which aid organisations are around, we just depend on government." He then added, "As an older man, I don't know too much but I depend on government for everything" (AR00/3).

NGOs were generally guided in the identification of project beneficiaries and the selection of sites by *suco* leaders. In *Suco* A, this led to a fairly equitable distribution where most people had access to facilities such as toilets and potable water. The same was not true for *Suco* C, where several groups of returnees, including those living in the enclave, were not provided with any facilities. Although most NGOs said they consulted both *suco* leaders and community members before proceeding with any intervention, none of the interviewees other than people already involved in community management organisations claimed to have ever had any contact with any foreign or local staff from aid organizations. This was true for both returnees and stayees. It is possible that the *suco* leaders had a key network of people who were called upon to join participatory projects and these people did not fall within the sample group.

Social Reintegration

A paradoxical situation exists in Timor Leste where almost every family was split between either the pro-independence or pro-autonomy camp. While victims of the violence continue to harbour anger towards the former militia, there concurrently existed a realisation that for development to occur, it is necessary to find a way to move on and leave the past behind. In Lequidoe most refugees had family members who had remained in East Timor and they often depended on them for information regarding the situation while in West Timor, and for shelter and support upon return. Some families provided livestock to help the returnees, others seed stock and food.

> We received refugees when they arrived in 2002. We congratulated them for coming back - even if they were TNI we have forgiven them for what they

did. They are still our relatives and neighbours. (AS4)

One elderly respondent from *Suco* D, which continued to have a large number of empty homes, indicative of the large number of residents still in West Timor commented:

> I feel sad when I look at the empty village. I will never be angry when they return. They weren't militia, but they were afraid that if they returned, they would be killed. Before there were more than ninety-nine families here, but there are only seventy-six families here now. (DS1)

Nonetheless, there continued to exist a degree of fear on the part of returning militia who all spoke of being scared of retaliatory attacks when they returned. The high degree of tension was revealed in 2001, soon after the return of the first group of refugees. A slight made by a Protestant youth culminated in the beating of the Pastor and the burning of his church. Since this incident, there were more no reports of beating (or they were not alluded to in interviews), but several returnees who had committed crimes mentioned that when they first arrived people yelled and swore at them. While people often professed to having been reconciled to each other, when questioned further about the last time they spent time with a returnee (or stayee), contact remained fairly infrequent and was often still bitter.

> When we came back I felt a bit afraid when we met people. Sometimes they would say, "Why did you come back?" "Why did you eat Indonesian food?" and they would also say rude words to us. Now people aren't open about it but they still think things. (CR02/3)

People did not go out of their way to increase the level of contact they had with former foes. One former militia member joked, "For us Timorese, it is difficult to help each other" (CR02/2).

Justice and Reconciliation

There was recognition by both returnees and stayees that reconciliation was important for the future of the country. Several people discussed the need for everybody to work together if development was to occur. Several reconciliation processes took place in the sub-district including a number of locally run processes following the communal violence of 2001 and then later with the CAVR. Most people were very positive about both processes. Perpetrators of low-level violence said that it enabled them to acknowledge their crime and offer apologies

and through participation in some form of restitutive act.

> Through the nahe biti boot[17] we were able to confess everything that we had done; fighting, burning houses – including that of the *Chefe de Suco.* We apologised and the victims forgave us. Then we fixed the roof, not as a punishment, but as a sign of reconciliation. (AR01/1)

Those people who took part in the process said that it had enabled them to feel free and to move beyond the divisions of pro-autonomy or pro-independence. Stayees were less satisfied with the process, claiming that they felt disempowered. Often they did not feel that an invitation had been extended to them to take part in the process, despite having their homes and crops destroyed (CS2). Stayees also commented that many returnees had either not confessed or not confessed in full, leading to their ongoing social isolation (AS2, CS3).

The church was a point of division in the community, but paradoxically, provided an impetus for people to reconcile themselves to their shared past.

> Our religion teaches us not to be angry, hate or to kill. We must love each other and be patient. (CS2)

These processes were not enough in themselves to prevent violence and the presence of the UN and then local police was seen by many to act as a strong deterrent to retaliatory violence (AR01/2).

> Even though we feel angry, we have regulations that stop us from fighting or hurting anyone. So we just try to forgive each other. (CS2)

The sub-district administrator reiterated this. He argued that the most important requirement for long-term peace in Timor Leste was to have strong policing and the protection of the military and the United Nation's Peace Keeping Force (PKF).

There remained a feeling among victims of crime that perpetrators of serious crimes had to be formally tried. People indicated that they wanted perpetrators of serious crimes who were from the village to return and to face charges. This was seen as a necessary component of the reconciliation process. People felt that while the perpetrators of crime remained away and did

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[17] The Nahe Bitti Boot is a Timorese process of conflict resolution. Literally, it stands for rolling the big mat. It provides a forum mediated by village elders and leaders to enable opposed parties to find consensus for righting wrongs and re-establishing social stability (Pigou 2004:26).

not face up their crimes, families would remain split and the wound could not heal.

> We have done reconciliation many times, but the most important is justice and to have regulations. (AS1)

> Reconciliation is very important for people to come together, but those who committed serious crimes must be held to justice. (AR00/1)

Summary

Lequidoe received the majority of returnees back following the end of the emergency period and consequently they missed out on much of the relief support. This did not significantly affect their degree of well-being, as the lack of rigorous planning, implementation or support given to the programmes resulted in their failure to achieve any sustainable impacts for anyone. The key organisations, which encouraged reintegration, were the local *suco* and sub-district leaders. On occasion their legitimacy was enhanced by the arrival of aid, which residents attributed to their good management. There were some differences between the well-being of different groups of returnees. Former civil servants including the police and TNI had continued to earn an income while in West Timor, so were able to afford to purchase stock and housing materials upon their return, whereas the lower level militia were more vulnerable. The storms of 2004 exposed this vulnerability as lower level militia had little to fall back on when their crops were destroyed. Social relations remained uneasy. While people made surface level attempts to coexist, the pain and anger from 1999 had not dissipated and relationships remained tense.

5.2 Case Study Two: Sub-districts Cailaco & Atabae, Bobonaro

Background

Cailaco and Atabae lie on the edge of a large river plain, less than 100m metres above sea level. A half hour's drive from the district capital Maliana, they sit within East Timor's major rice growing region, and are consequently among the more prosperous sub-districts of Timor Leste. In a good season farmers can harvest two rice crops per year in addition to the propagation of traditional subsistence crops (FAO 2003:8). In addition, most people own a number of goats, cows or buffaloes, pigs and chickens and grow maize and other subsistence crops. Cailaco is composed of eight *sucos*, which include both the original sites of villages up in the mountains and the sites of relocation villages that were developed in the Indonesian era. While the road is in fairly good repair, some of the villages did not have road access and could only be reached on foot. Atabae's *Suco* G, is located across the river from *Suco* E. Most people are Kemak and they adhere to a fusion of Catholic and animist traditions.

Methodological Notes

The area was visited from June 22-29, 2004. We stayed with Cailaco's Chef de *Posto* who provided some background information about the area and the names of several initial contacts. We visited two *sucos* in Cailaco and crossed the river boundary to interview people in the neighbouring sub-district Atabae, which was where one of the most feared militia groups Halilintar, had been based. This visit was planned following discussions with Cailaco's Chef de *Posto* who felt that it was safe to visit. While I initially anticipated spending two days there, my translator remained uneasy so I reduced the visit to a single day.

A total of thirty-one interviews with local people from the district were conducted (see figure 12) including the *Chefe de Posto*, *Suco* E's *Chefe de Suco*, several former TNI soldiers, two women who headed their households and a number of former militia. I also interviewed an UNPOL translator, a local staff member from World Vision and a nun who worked in the nearby town of Maliana (these people are not included in the table below).

Figure 12: Table of Interviews: Sub-districts Cailaco & Atabae

	Total Interviews	*Suco* E	*Suco* H	*Suco* G
Chefe de Posto	**1**	n/a	n/a	n/a
Chefe de Suco	**1**	1	-	
Stayees	**13**	8	1	4
Returned 1999	**10**	9	1	-
Returned 2000	**3**	-	2	1
Returned 2001	**-**	-	-	-
Returned 2002	**3**	2	-	1
Totals	**31**	**20**	**4**	**6**

The Violence

Violence broke out in the Cailaco and Atabae area in November 1998 and continued throughout the following year. *Suco* G was the home of Joao Tavares, the head of the Halilintar militia group, and of Pasukan Pejuang Integrasi, the umbrella body charged with controlling all militia groups (Bartu 2001:76). As a result of this connection, *Suco* G was not damaged by the militia. Residents of *Suco* E and H, however, suffered heavily in a series of tit-for-tat attacks between militia groups, the TNI and Fretilin forces. A number of the homes of suspected pro-independence supporters were burnt, people were arbitrarily arrested, there were reports of torture, beatings and the murder of local residents (ETHRIC 1999, KPP-HAM 2002:39). Following the upsurge of violence in early 1999, 4300 people from villages around *Suco* E were forcibly moved closer to camps near the TNI base and were coerced into joining the local militia forces (Bartu 2001:83, E99/8).

> Everybody supported Falintil but ... they had to join the militia to save their children and wives (brother of a militia member E99/7).

During the course of the interviews, several returnees and stayees spoke of 'good militia'. These were individuals who had been forced to join the militia, but had used their influence to protect people and their property from the destruction of other groups (E99/4).

Following the announcement of the vote, Halilintar forced all residents of *Suco* E and H who had not fled to the hills to leave for West Timor. Poorer families were able to take only what they could carry, but those who were better off rented trucks to cart out their housing materials, personal belongings, stock and rice. In several instances, fleeing refugees looted their neighbours' properties, selling the goods on arrival in West Timor (CDP). Local militia

and Halilintar then rampaged through the district burning homes, murdering people who had been left behind, looting and killing livestock. The *Chefe de Posto* estimated that over 100 people were murdered in the period.

With the arrival of the United Nations Peace Keeping Force (PKF), Halilintar retreated to *Suco* G, where a forty minute gun battle between the militia and PKF took place (UNTAET 1999). The militia members eventually fled across the border, leaving their wives and children behind. Respondents claimed that at this stage Fretilin[18] came down from the hills. Referred to by several interviewees as 'the second militia' they killed and ate any remaining stock (whether of not it belonged to pro-integration or pro-autonomy supporters) and completed the burning of the village by burning the houses that belonged to refugees and militia (ES1, ER99/4). One woman from *Suco* G, the former Halilintar stronghold, reported women in her village being attacked, beaten and raped by youth from other villages before the PKF re-established security.

Repatriation

Refugees started to return in 1999, some repatriating even before the internally displaced had come down from the hills. They arrived back to a fraught environment, in *Suco* E and H, controlled by local youth. Returnees known to have been involved in the militia were kept in the burnt out school and were subject to frequent beatings and torture regardless of whether they had committed crimes.

Returnees who arrived in 1999 generally come back unassisted and were often unable to bring back many of their possessions. Those who came back later with UNHCR were provided with transport and repatriation food and equipment (ER02/1).

> When we left we took our pigs, cows and goats with us, but when we came back, we just had a trolley with food, rice and other basic needs. (ER99/7)

The return of men from *Suco* G has been much slower and there are still few men in the village other then the elderly and very young. Those militia who returned to the *suco* were processed by the Special Crimes Unit in Dili before being allowed to return home. Some however have chosen to remain in Dili fearing repercussions for their violence and many others have remarried and settled in West Timor.

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[18] Several foreign observers who had been in the country at the time, questioned whether this could have been Fretilin, as they were supposedly all in cantonment. They suggested that people used the term Fretilin somewhat indiscriminately for anyone who was pro-independence and that these 'second militia' were more likely to have been angry youth.

Economic Reintegration

The production of rice has enabled people to re-establish themselves much more easily that communities in other areas. Most people felt that people's financial well-being was directly attributable to their level of industry (E99/4) and in terms of economic well-being, there was little to distinguish returnees from stayees. Most people were able to re-establish their crops and had rebuilt their stock numbers through the sale of vegetables and rice. Not all had managed to obtain cattle yet, which are essential to farmers for tilling the soil on their farms (ER99/1, ES7, ES1, ER99/8).

The higher level of economic activity affected the ability of people to operate small businesses. Among the returnees, one man was a builder and his neighbour wove *tais* (strips of woven cloth) and baskets, which she sold in the market (ER99/2). Several people operated small kiosks selling basic goods such as oil and coffee, seeded with loans from CEP and Moris Rasik (ER99/1, ES1). None of the borrowers had taken a second loan as they claimed that the strict loan repayment schedule was too difficult to meet. Unlike the ETTADEP interest-free agricultural loans (Santos, ETADEP, pers. comm., 28/7/04), micro-finance loans were to be repaid over a limited time and interest was charged in order to cover the cost of finance.

Several of the more educated returnees were able to obtain employment; a former TNI soldier became a teacher (HR00/1) and a former militia member joined the Timorese police force (HR00/2). A number of people obtained short-term work as census enumerators and were working while I was in the sub-district (ER99/3). Several food-for-work and other emergency employment programmes operated in the emergency period, which gave some people a small amount of short-term employment clearing roads and rebuilding water channels. Eventually, however, aid agencies stopped paying people to participate, instead demanding a show of commitment to the project from the community in the form of free labour. In the case of an IOM sanitation project this caused a backlash and when residents found out that they were not be compensated for their labour they refused to participation in the construction. The materials apparently still lie at the house of the *Chefe de Suco* (HR99/2).

Aid as a cause of conflict

All aid organisations said they consulted fully with people before starting projects, however perhaps they did not consider that the community leaders often only invited their own in-group network to meetings.

> All aid organisations go straight to the leaders and talk to the leaders. We would also like them to spend time with us, but they never do that. (E99/5)

A result of this poor communication aid was often erroneously targeted to people who were not in need of assistance. Few people in Cailaco or Atabae, other than a widow, reported being food insecure, although there had been a period at the beginning of the year where people were reliant on traditional crops to overcome a seasonal shortage of rice and corn. Notwithstanding, food aid was still distributed in the area. The targeting was extremely uneven and caused high levels of conflict.

Several respondents reported that the *Chefe de Suco* had drawn up lists of names, but then had lost the one with their names on it. There seemed to be a very high correlation between the number of former militia in an area and the propensity for the names of people in their *aldeiha* to be 'lost' (E99/1, E99/2, ER02/2). In some cases salaried teachers received rice while separated women missed out. Several recipients remarked that they weren't sure why they had received food aid, as they had grown enough for their households (ES6, ES8). The disparity in distribution resulted in those *aldeihas* that missed out, taking action against those that had received rice.

> We didn't get any rice this year. When we went to get rice we waited and waited and then were told our names weren't on the list. The *Chefe de Suco* collected people's names but this *aldeiha*'s name wasn't given. Now we have enough rice to eat, but when they distributed it, we didn't have enough – so we went to the forest and cut sago to survive. When the *Chefe de Suco* announced that everyone had to go to clean the market, the people from this village didn't go because we didn't receive any help. (ER99/9)

There were also threats made and possibly carried out, to cut off the water to the *Chefe de Suco*'s *aldeiha*. In *Suco* G the problems were even greater with those who were excluded from the distribution threatening to kill those who had received it.

> When the rice trucks arrived to distribute rice, everyone from within the *aldeiha* went to get rice. When they realised that not everyone was going to receive it, those who missed out threatened to kill those who received it will pieces of wood so all the rice was taken back to Maliana. Some people who

had been entitled to rice and got a sticker threw it away because they were afraid of being beaten. (GS1)

The distribution of shelter units also caused dissatisfaction. There was a significant disparity between Cailaco and Atabae in terms of the allocation of shelter kits. The two sub-districts had different NGOs contracted to distribute the kits and they used a different formula to determine eligibility. Despite the fact that very few houses in Atabae had been damaged, almost every household received a new housing unit which was assembled behind or in front of the original house. These homes were often used as a sun shelter with no walls to let the breeze through. At least twenty homes were also built for former residents who evidently not yet returned from West Timor and these fully built units with corrugated iron roofs lay empty and unused[19].

In *Suco* E and H however, despite the absolute destruction of homes, *aldeihas* only received five units each. There was confusion about eligibility, with several people including the *Chefe de Suco* saying the units had been earmarked for people whose concrete houses had been damaged (ECDS, E99/4). In actual fact however, they seemed to have been targeted to the elderly. Age was also not necessarily a useful measure of vulnerability as many elderly people lived with their families and so were not without the means to construct shelter (ES7). This caused further disgruntlement within the community.

There was some divergence regarding people's attitudes towards the relationship of conflict and poverty. A former TNI soldier argued that traditional mechanisms such as *nahe biti boot* were able to solve conflict satisfactorily. He attributed the violence of 1999 to outside forces and argued (somewhat romantically) that people have always been poor but in the past there was no conflict. Other people argued that poverty was a major cause of conflict, and the formation of groups such as the CPD-RDTL[20], was directly attributable to the low levels of economic growth. One respondent argued that as a consequence, agricultural support programmes would indirectly contributed to the reduction of conflict in the community.

To achieve sustainable peace and well-being we need to have animals such as cows, goats and pigs. When we have animals we can sell them and send our

[19] Apparently the units were not stolen because a mythical crocodile eats thieves who crossed the river.
[20] An illegal political party, responsible for much unrest throughout the country who challenge the legality of the current government.

children to school. If many people are educated we can develop this country. (ES6)

Political Reintegration

The ability of residents to participate in community affairs was dependent on an invitation by community leaders. In Cailaco, a number of former TNI members were invited to join these forums (HR00/1, HR00/2) but people from the two *aldeihas* which had produced most of the area's militia were generally not informed about meetings or invited to participate. Where they did attend, they sat at the back and did not participate, fearing confrontation with other villagers (E99/2). Some elderly returnees belonged to the council of elders who played a role in mediation and traditional animist ceremonies (HR99/1).

Most people blamed the inequitable distribution of aid on *suco* leaders. The omission of some *aldeihas* from distribution contributed to ongoing divisions in the community and often resulted in acts of sabotage such as the previously mentioned cutting of water pipes. There were further claims that leaders only looked after their own and did not contribute towards strengthening of community bonds.

> Local leaders don't bring people together. Local leaders don't really look at the needs of people – they don't come and see what life is really like for people. We want to be involved in village level decision-making, but we never have any meetings. (ER99/5)

Notwithstanding there was some credit given to the leaders for curtailing the level of violence towards former militia. One group of returnees and former militia attributed the cessation of beatings to the intervention of local leaders and the Falintil. (ER99/8)

Unity

A reoccurring comment was the necessity to achieve political unity. Some people argued that it needed to exist at all levels, for others, it was most important that it occurred at the top.

> For the future of the country we need unity from the top to the bottom. If the top doesn't have unity, how can we have unity at the bottom? (ES5)
>
> The leaders at the top have to work together and appreciate and respect each other because when they have different views they can fight and have war – as a community we don't want to suffer again because of the political leaders

at the top. (E99/5)

One respondent from *Suco* G commented that it was very important for East Timor to maintain a good relationship with Indonesia as with militia forces still on the border, a souring of relations could cause problems to flare again (GS3).

Security

As mentioned earlier, the presence of the PKF provided some security for the women of *Suco* G in Atabae in the days following Halilintar's withdrawal. In *Suco* E and H, the arrival of PKF enabled some returnees to start to feel safer, however it was not until the PNTL (the Timorese Police Force) posted police to the sub-district that people stopped taking justice into their own hands. Prior to its establishment, anyone who had been militia, whether or not they were personally involved in crimes, was subject to beatings, especially by angry youth.

> When I got back I was treated badly. I stayed in the school in *Suco* E for one week with other families. I was treated badly - even in front of Interfet, but they didn't beat us in front of them. They beat us away from the school. (E99/2)

> All the people were beaten. Those militia who went to the hills and those who came back from West Timor and stayed at the school. But if they had really been militia, they would have been killed. They were beaten because they were involved. (E99/7)

The formation of the PNTL increased the degree of security felt by returnees and they reported a fall in the incidents of beatings. This was corroborated by several stayees, who commented that the existence of regulations inhibited them from beating returnees and former militia.

> The first time I saw returnees I was very very angry because they had burnt our houses and destroyed everything. I was captured three times and beaten by them because they said I supported Falintil. It was just because of the power of God that they didn't kill me. Even now I still feel angry but we have regulations and are under the law. (ES4)

> When the returnees came back we felt really angry with the people who had burnt houses and stolen animals, but we had to have self-discipline. We have

> to obey regulations so we can't hit anyone. We used to stay together before but people were forced to go to Indonesia. Now we treat them as we did before because we are a part of them. (ES5)
>
> Militia action is the consequence of war. Now we have reconciliation. We have to obey the regulations, so we can't beat or fight each other. When everything calmed down and all people have returned – we have regulations and law. (ES7)

Civil Society

Most people in *Suco* E and H belonged to one of a number of agriculture collectives. These had been formed with the support of ETADEP in the mid-1980s and had been resurrected as people returned to their homes. The groups worked together to plant and harvest rice and banded together to purchase pieces of machinery such as rice mills and hand-tractors. Groups operated on an *aldeiha* basis and while they included militia and non-militia, members were usually neighbours or family who shared a high degree of trust. The groups did not cross the divisions of 1999.

> Our agriculture group includes returnees and others – apart from those who committed crimes. Sorry for those who committed crimes. (ES7)

There were a number of other grassroots organisations that operated in the area including a women's organization, a football club and in *Suco* G, a martial arts groups. Again these groupings reflected the divisions of society following the violence of 1999.

Women headed households

The period of violence in 1999 split a number of families of militia and Indonesian civil servants between East and West Timor. Often the men of the family would remain in West Timor, fearing retributory violence, while the women and children would return to their homes and farms in Cailaco and Atabae. A nun spoken to in Maliana said that it was not uncommon for men who remained in West Timor to remarry and abandon any responsibilities towards their families (pers. comm., 23/7/04).

Several separated women were visited in the course of the interviews. In one instance the husband continued to send money to support his family from West Timor. His wife was only able manage half of their land, producing five sacks of rice per harvest. She claimed not to

have received any food assistance this year, did not own any livestock, and was selling off her gold in order to purchase enough rice to feed her three sons. She did not belong to an agriculture group saying that she did not have the time to spare (ER02/2). The second woman's extended family managed her land while she ran a kiosk. Her husband had not sent her any money, but she reported receiving food aid this year. (ER02/1).

In another incident, a woman had been widowed when her Halilintar husband was killed by Fretilin forces. She had received a housing kit from UNHCR but it was incomplete and did not include the concrete floor that other homes had. She owned paddy and worked with an agriculture group, paying members in-kind for the time they spent on her property and receiving rice in exchange for her labour. Due to the violence at the time rice was to be distributed, she did not receive any food aid this year (GS3).

Reconciliation

Most people who had committed serious crimes remained in West Timor. There was a degree of understanding from people that low level militia were victims of their circumstances. A number of people claimed that the destruction was the price of independence (ES1, ES4, ES5, E99/4, E99/4). That being said, anger towards them had not completely abated.

The police played an important role in reducing the level of violence, however so too did the CAVR's reconciliation process. Several people claimed that the most influential aid intervention was the CAVR. The acknowledgement of crimes by the former militia partially met victims' needs to be heard and have their pain and anger validated. It also enabled people accused of being militia to explain their stories. The chaos of the period had produced massive amounts of rumour and speculation so in a number of cases people also used the forum to profess their innocence. A village elder and shaman explained how he had used the forum:

> I was forced by the newly formed militia to cast a spell which would assist them in killing Falintil soldiers. Because I really supported independence I didn't use the correct words so it wouldn't work. In 1999 I fled to the hills with other IDPs and while up there I gave the real blessing to the Falintil soldiers. I came back down from the hills too early and was forced to go to West Timor. When I came back people accused me of supporting the militia. I joined the CAVR process to explain to the community what I had done so

that they would not accuse me any more. (HR99/1)

Approximately fifty people stood before the tribunal in *Suco* E and participated in rebuilding the priest's house as a means of restitution.

> After nahe biti boot process we felt free again – we could go anywhere. Before we didn't feel free. When we met young people we had to greet them politely and greet them first. After one day they would beat us. After the process they listened to what we confessed and felt satisfied. Now I feel free to go anywhere. Before when for instance there was a party, they would take the opportunity to beat us – especially when many people were around. Now things are free and normal. For three years I felt like a baby – I felt powerless. Even when people were angry or shouting I couldn't do anything. (E99/9)

Due to problems with the socialisation of the process, a number of militia members didn't attend, claiming they had been waiting for an invitation (E99/2). Few victims took part in the process either despite almost everybody in Cailaco having lost their homes, livestock and possessions in the militia violence. One man who had been beaten by the militias said this may have actually been for the best as giving victims a voice may have contributed to reopening issues. Although he found the CAVR process good, he claimed that his pain had not disappeared (ES4).

The *Chefe* from *Suco* E however said that reintegration was dependent on people's individual attitudes:

> If it comes from others, it is just a temporary symbol, but if it comes from yourself it is genuine. Based on what I saw, reconciliation occurred within the community. People based on what came from their hearts – it was genuine and we received each other.

Summary

The majority of returnees came back to Cailaco at the same time as the internally displaced came down from the hills. The area is one of the rice-bowls of Timor Leste and both returnees and stayees were able to quickly re-establish themselves and enjoy higher levels of food security than people in other parts of the country. The higher level of economic activity

in the area also enabled people to profitably develop secondary industries.

The greatest problems in the area have related to reconciliation. Until the deployment of the PNTL, returnees and people linked to former militia in both areas were subject to beatings and intimidation by youth and other people who had been victims of their violence. Although the number of beatings has diminished considerably since the CAVR hearings, the uneven distribution of aid, often due to the direction of community leaders, and the non-engagement of the aid organisations, continues to act as a trigger leading to violence and other forms of subversive behaviour. In many cases, aid has been provided to people who were not in need of assistance and its net effect has been to create greater conflict than good.

5.3 Case Study Three: Sub-district Bobonaro, Bobonaro

Background

Bobonaro sub-district is located in the highlands of district Bobonaro in the West of Timor Leste. It is a fairly rugged, windswept region with wide grasslands on high mountain plains. Comprised of nineteen *suco,* the research was primarily conducted in *Sucos* B and K which are located near the main road between Maliana and Suai. People in *Suco* B belong to the Bunak ethnic group and the people of *Suco* K and Kemak. People's ethnicity influences their traditional form of livelihood and alliances with other villages, with the Bunak predominantly pastoralists and the Kemak traders. Both groups are largely Catholic.

Methodology

The area was visited between June 30 and July 6, 2004. *Suco* B and K had both been strongly linked to the militia and over eighty percent of both *suco*'s residents had fled to West Timor. A total of twenty-three interviews were conducted in the sub-district (see figure 13). Respondents included the sub-district *Chefe de Posto* and his vice, the *suco* leaders of *Suco* B and *Suco* K and the headmaster of *Suco* B. The Bobonaro priest was also interviewed.

Figure 13: Table of Interviews: Sub-district Bobonaro

	Total Interviews	*Suco* B	*Suco* K
Chefe de Posto	**2**	n/a	n/a
Chefe de Suco	**2**	1	1
Stayees	**4**	4	-
Returned 1999	**2**	1	1
Returned 2000	**4**	2	2
Returned 2001	**2**	2	-
Returned 2002	**2**	1	1
Totals	**18**	**11**	**5**

The Violence

Militia and TNI intimidation began in Bobonaro district in early 1999. By June, Kodim and Dadurus Merah Putih, two of the more brutal militia groups from the district had made visits to *Suco* B, and using a combination of force and coercion[21] enlisted most local youth into their militia groups (KR00/2, Yayasan Hak 1999).

Local villagers from *Suco* K, led by a TNI soldier, formed their own militia force. Respondents

[21] Militia were promised to be paid for their work (BR01/2).

claimed that this enabled them to demonstrate allegiance to Jakarta whilst preventing other militia groups from entering the area, thus limiting the degree of destruction. Armed with traditional weapons, the militia murdered two local men, burnt the houses of known independence supporters and terrorised people from surrounding areas.

Approximately 80% of the residents of *Suco* B and 99% *Suco* K's residents fled to West Timor following the announcement of the vote (*Chefe de Posto*, pers. comm. 1/7/04). As occurred elsewhere, with the retreat of the militia and villagers to West Timor, all empty homes and buildings were burnt down or otherwise damaged in reprisal attacks.

There was a commonly voiced assumption from aid workers and stayees that refugees had been able to take a lot of things with them – including stolen goods. Nonetheless, the majority of respondents claimed to have walked to Maliana – and often on to the border – a walk of at least a day's duration. This precluded them from taking much more than their clothes, money and children.

> The whole family went to West Timor when the militia and TNI forced us to go. Only richer households could afford a car. We had to walk one day from here to Maliana and then across the border so we weren't able to take anything with us. We stayed for a year and then were informed that if we hadn't been involved in crimes it would be safe to return. (KR00/2)

Repatriation

The first people to return came back came independently of aid agencies. Return was particularly dangerous in this period as the militia still controlled the camps. The level of intimidation, violence and hardship in West Timor was as much of a driver to return as was any information regarding the situation in East Timor. Several groups which left in late 1999 and early 2000 claimed to have been assaulted by the militia when they attempted to return (BR99/1, BR00/1).

As occurred in other districts, by 2001 Timorese leadership, the UN agencies and local level leaders actively tried to entice people to come home and the Government of Indonesia also supported their return. Several local reconciliation groups went to the border to try and negotiate the return of the refugees. In addition to getting news on the radio, TV and through the church, refugees also often sent out forward parties to check out the situation before the

rest of the family followed. In *Suco* B, these reconnaissance parties were primarily composed of women who, due to their lesser involvement in the violence, were thought to be safer from assault or attack than men (B01/01, BR02/1). By 2004, sixty percent of the refugees had returned to *Suco* B (BCDS, pers. comm. 1/7/04) and forty percent to *Suco* K (KCDS, pers. comm. 6/7/04).

Relief Aid and Economic Reintegration

Relief aid, the emergency food assistance and UNHCR's[22] returnee packages were all appreciated by the returnees. The UNHCR transportation enabled repatriates to bring back possessions such as corrugated iron sheets (which were apparently cheaper to purchase in West Timor than in East Timor), livestock and crops harvested from land they had leased in West Timor (BR00/2, BR02/1). This eased the process of rebuilding and enabled people to feed themselves in the initial period following their return.

> When we arrived back we just had old cassava left on the farm. If we hadn't received food aid, we wouldn't have survived. (KR00/1)

The residents of *Suco* K re-established themselves fairly quickly, with older household members engaging in subsistence farm work while the younger generation restarted traditional trading activities. Most returnees were quickly able to generate enough income to repair their homes and purchase livestock (KR99/1) although none had managed to build up their herds to pre-1999 levels (KCDS).

> We have a farm and a small business, selling beans and peanuts at the markets. The family have always been traders. We also have a couple of cows, pigs and ducks. We bought the cows with business profits. We also brought materials to fix our roof. (KR02/1)

> We (grandparents) work the family farm, and our children have a small trading business – selling animals and tais (woven cloth) between here and Dili. Money has been most important in restarting our lives. (KR00/1)

In *Suco* B people had not been able re-establish an economic base as easily. The villagers had traditionally been cattle traders but had lost their herds in the upheaval of 1999 and few people had managed to afford to purchase new stock (BR01/2, BR00/2, BCDS). Cattle had been the

[22] The contents of the package varied across the period and in 2002 included a cash grant.

mainstay of people's income, providing a ready source of cash, a bartering chip with which to lease rice paddy in Maliana valley and the means to perform traditional ceremonies (BR01/1). Their absence severely diminished people's ability to cope in periods of hardship.

> Before we could buy everything, but how can we buy things if we don't have money? I expect the government to help us to get the things we need. It isn't the same as when we had cows. Then it was easy to sell them and get whatever we wanted. (BR02/1)

Aid organisations operated a number of schemes in both districts to re-establish damaged and destroyed infrastructure including schools, village halls, roads, and water supplies. *Suco* B was inundated with NGOs assisting with the reconstruction of sanitation and water supplies. In some instances water stations built by the different NGOs were located less than 200 metres from each other. *Suco* B's *Chefe de Suco* commented somewhat cynically:

> Water programmes were supported because the NGOs want to make something easy that can be seen. For example, CEP made a water tap even though there was already one. They didn't ask us what we need and didn't look at any other needs. The first time they came we had a meeting. People asked for something else but the NGO said "No, we've only got water". Aid has been helpful – in the dry season people need water. In the Indonesian period there was water – so the aid organizations just rehabilitated the existing system.

Despite his cynicism, the employment these projects offered was appreciated and enabled some respondents to purchase stock and repair their homes (BS3, BR00/2). Aside from trading cattle, during the Indonesian period, the people of *Suco* B had traditionally depended on employment in government works projects from which they had derived their second largest source of income (BS1). With the pull-back of many relief organisations, the reconstruction work has dried up. People are without work and do not have the herds of cattle to supplement their income, so the majority of villages subsist on their crops of maize, cassava, sweet potato and beans (BR01/2).

Almost all of the respondents from *Suco* B talked of how they were 'waiting for a project' which would enable them to earn an income (BCDS, BR01/2, BR02/1). However, they also

talked about the importance of all community members being able to participate and benefit equally, acknowledging the negative and positive impacts that it could have on their community.

> The most important thing is that we need projects so we can work. It needs to involve many people so we can get money to buy basic needs. If it only involves a few people, it can create problems between people – even between father and son. (BR02/1)

The high levels of jealousy in the communities, was evident in the way everybody closely monitored the assistance others had received and nobody felt that assistance had been in their own favour. One stayee commented:

> The difference is that those who fled received aid when the crossed the border and when they arrived. Between 2001-02 those who returned received $100 per household from IOM and when they arrived they received more assistance. Those of us who stayed however only got corn. So they were lucky. Aid created unity, because when everyone got assistance equally, they didn't hit each other anymore. (BS1)

Returnees, however, felt that participation in the early relief programmes had assisted beneficiaries to re-establish themselves. They contended that the programmes' closure, prior to their own arrival, had restricted the ease with which they could integrate.

> Those who stayed got aid assistance, but those who came late didn't get anything. Aid didn't create problems, but the problem is those who came late. The people who received aid have a better life now than those who didn't. People who came back later have more problems than those who came back earlier. (BR01/2)

> The situation of stayees and returnees is not the same because stayees received housing materials and other assistance. (BR00/2)

Development Projects

A number of organisation attempted to initiate development projects in *Suco* K, however they roused little interest with the villagers who felt that they were able to manage alone. People chose not to form agriculture groups, preferring to work in family units rather than in the form

promoted by aid organisations (KR99/1). Hasty planning also diminished project success. As occurred in Lequidoe, unsuited strains of chickens were distributed in the area which soon died in the harsh upland environment (KCDS).

Efforts to bring micro-finance to the area were also unsuccessful. CEP was the first agency to operate a scheme, but with a reputation for not enforcing repayments many borrowers decided not to repay the loan and the scheme was discontinued. The scheme cannot be regarded as a complete failure however, as the businesses set up with the CEP seed money still exist. Moris Rasik also tried to pilot a programme, but people felt unable to meet its weekly repayment schedule. (KCDS, KR00/2). Most respondents claimed that there was little difference economically between themselves and villagers from surrounding *sucos* who had not fled to West Timor (KCDS, KR00/1).

The people of *Suco* B were more vulnerable than those from *Suco* K. Without any alternative forms of income generation people were eager to participate in the programmes being offered by aid organisations. In conjunction with the church, World Vision implemented a number of agricultural support projects. Intended to develop the agricultural skills of local people and lift their level of food security, a number of schemes including a nursery group and a goat bank were initiated (BR01/1, BR02/1, BR99/1). The organisation also provided fish stock for three fish ponds, however these were less successful, with only one family still successfully rearing fish.

> We have our own fish pond for family consumption. We received fifteen fish in 2001 from an aid organisation. Now we have a lot. Three groups received fish, but the other group's fish all died. (BS3)

Overall however, few people in the village claimed to have any livestock at all, and this was corroborated by the evident absence of livestock when walking through the village. The schemes were also accused not being participatory, with the aid organisation selecting participants and determining who the group leader would be (BS1).

Assistance from aid was often provided to groups, in an attempt to engender closer relationships between people. In fact, it was social relationships between *sucos* rather than within *sucos* that were tense, so efforts bore little fruit. While attempts to improve people's well-being were welcomed, there was also a sense that badly managed aid could inflame

relationships, as evidenced by the distribution of rice and the selection of participants to work on income generation projects. Exclusion or inclusion from assistance could serve to further isolate already vulnerable people.

Despite the jealousy that aid projects created, most people felt that aid actually had little impact on people's ability to reintegrate, providing only sporadic assistance. Most people held a similar opinion to the following respondent, who claimed:

> The most important thing for our reintegration was our own effort. Nobody could help us. We just looked after ourselves. (BR00/2)

Food Security

Following the storms of 2004, *Sucos* B and K were registered by the *Chefe de Posto* as two of the three most food insecure *sucos* in the sub-district. Food aid was distributed according to perceived need, with *Suco* K receiving the second largest quantity of food followed by *Suco* B (pers. comm. 5/7/04). Visits to the three villages quickly established that estimates of need were incorrect. The village listed as the most food insecure[23], was actually the most food secure of the three, as the residents had not been displaced in 1999 and had managed to protect their herds of cattle. In addition they grew rice in the lowland areas that had not been affected by the storm. The residents of Suco K were also able to overcome food shortages because of their diversified economic base. In addition, their village had been sheltered from the brunt of the storm.

The absence of economic safety nets in *Suco* B however, had catastrophe consequences for many of the villagers. Many households, particularly those who had returned in 2002 and 2003 had not yet been able to establish crops or food stores and so were not able to cover their basic nutritional requirements. Some households were not able to eat every day and many families were forced to forage for wild foods in order to survive (BCDS).

> The biggest difficulty when we returned was getting food. This remains the biggest problem. We try to work hard but when we plant, the seeds always die. (BR00/2)

> When people came back in Feb 2001 there was no food and it was cold. We could not establish crops. (BR01/1)

[23] This information was gathered from the school headmaster and a catechist during a visit to the village.

> Young people try to find jobs and raise animals and sell them to get money – but not all can find work. The elderly and women can't get work. They just stay and do farm work, but there isn't enough to feed the children. We always run out of food. (BR01/2)

Even those who were better off suffered and without family, from whom they could ask for assistance, were dependent on their traditional crops of sweet potato and taro.

> This year our crop failed so we borrowed money from family in Dili. We also tried to grow wet paddy in Maliana, but locusts ate it, so by the time we had shared it with the landlord, we didn't have enough to sell – just enough for 2-3 months. We don't have any animals. We had many before but now can't afford to buy and there is no project to help. We also have coffee, but not enough to sell. This year we produced four sacks. (BR02/1)

The World Food Programme provided food aid to all the *sucos*. In *Suco* K the *chefe* ignored the directives from the *Chefe de Posto* and World Vision, distributing the food in equal quantities between households. In *Suco* B, the *chefe* exclusively targeted widows, orphans and other vulnerable people who had been recorded as being vulnerable. This list was argued to be out of date by several respondents, who claimed that many vulnerable people had been omitted (BR02/1, TS1). The first targeted distribution in *Suco* B caused such anger and violence in the community, that the *Chefe de Suco* decided to divide the second instalment equally between all households who had protested.

> I didn't receive food assistance this year, but many did – especially widows. Some people cried and beat each other when the food was distributed because we all face the same problems. Why did only the widows get it? Based on the problems, the *Chefe de Suco* decided to distribute the rice to everyone – which meant that the widows got a little less. (BS1)

Nonetheless, despite the expanded distribution, the food aid still did not reach everyone and nor was it adequate to cover people's basic calorific needs. There were reports of between fifteen and thirty deaths of young children and elderly people in January and February 2004. These deaths were reported to be mainly from among families who had returned in the past two years (BCDS, BR01/2, BR01/1). The economic hardship eventually caused three families

of returnees to pack their bags and return to Indonesia again (BCDS, BS1).

Physical Security

Residents of *Suco* O and *Suco* B had both been predominately linked with the pro-autonomy movement. Physically isolated from pro-independence *sucos*, relationships within the villages remained cordial, and most people were sympathetic to returnees and low-level militia. Stayees expressed a feeling of relief when the returnees came back as they felt exposed and vulnerable to security risks without the presence of other villagers.

> I was very happy when refugees returned because we were very few without them. (BS1)

Outside the villages, the security situation mirrored that in other areas. The period immediately following the violence was commonly referred to as 'hot'. With a huge amount of anger following the widespread destruction and terror, returnees were particularly vulnerable to verbal and physical attacks by pro-independence supporters and Falintil.

> When I returned in 1999, I was beaten for going to West Timor – even though I had been working for Falintil. Most of the other returnees were elderly and so weren't beaten. There were fewer problems for people who returned later because government and regulations were established – stopping people from shouting or beating. When I returned only Falintil had power and dominated the area. At that time people still carried weapons when they walked outside. (KR99/1)

Just being from a village which had produced a large number of militia was enough to bear the brunt of people's anger (BCDS). Several residents of *Suco* B, who had fled to the hills rather than to West Timor spoke of being singled out and intimidated by residents of other *sucos*:

> When we first came back from the hills, people from neighbouring villages came and shouted at us because our families were in West Timor. We just listened. We couldn't do anything. (BS3)

Although people felt safe in their own villages, they felt extremely vulnerable on occasions that they left the village to attend church or visit the market in Bobonaro or Maliana. While the church was seen by many people to have been instrumental in encouraging an atmosphere of forgiveness (BS1, BS3), the *Chefe de Suco* commented that it was the reestablishment of law and

order that was most important in enforcing peace.

> The most important requirement for peace is strong law and justice. In the past neighbouring villages felt dissatisfied with this village because people from here had burnt and killed. Without strong law, people will still fight. (BCDS)

This was reiterated by local priest, Father Cyrus, who claimed that the presence of the PKF had helped people including low level militia to feel safe. The threat of arrest compelled people to solve problems peacefully and with its establishment in the area, the number of beatings fell significantly. The formation of the Timorese police force has been instrumental in maintaining this environment, as people who engaged in violence knew they would face arrest.

Governance

Most respondents did not raise participation in governance as an issue of concern. In instances that I asked about it, people would say that they participated in *suco* level meetings and local level decision making, however it was governance in Dili that was of greater concern, and as farmers it lay beyond their influence.

> Peace depends on leaders at the top. If they create a good situation we can farm peacefully in a good situation. (BR00/2)

> Long-term peace depends on the leaders – we're just a simple community – we work on our farms. (KR00/1)

Nonetheless, frustration with the current regime and rate of progress has led to a growing degree of dissatisfaction.

> In the clandestine period, Falintil said life would be much better. They said if you contribute $2 now, in the future you will receive $200, but now this is our life. (KR00/2)

Most returnees are trying to keep their heads down for fear of further reprisals (Fr. Cyrus, pers. comm. 2/7/04), however on occasion, they have been (rightly or wrongly) linked to the CPD-RDTL's attempts to overthrow the government (*Chefe de Posto*, pers. comm., 2/7/04).

Reconciliation

Timorese leaders were promoting reconciliation at a number of levels. Reconciliation was more often an issue between *sucos* rather than within them. In Bobonaro, the church played an important role in attempting to bridge divides and enabling people to coexist.

> As a Christian, we went to church every week and the priest always reminded us that we shouldn't fight or beat each other because of the past situation. We must be patient and apologise to each other. Only the church can enable people to reintegrate. The leaders also listened to the priest and reminded us of his words. (BS3)

The local priest, who was present during the violence commented that it remains far too early to talk in terms of reconciliation and argued that the level of peace in the area is reflective of people's tolerance rather than forgiveness or unity. He felt that economic growth was the greatest contributor to reconciliation and said that those who are poorer continue to be angry and dwell on the past. Nonetheless, he felt that aid, no matter how small and insignificant, could still assist in the development of peace:

> Aid makes people feel cared for. It helps in the healing process, so that people don't feel alone. The provision of housing and other assistance has been of fundamental importance to the reintegration of returnees as it had restored victim's dignity and thereby partially eliminated a source of anger.

This was reiterated by the *Chefe de Posto* who added half jokingly:

> Those who didn't receive housing might be jealous, but whose fault was it? Who made them go and stopped them from coming back?

The CAVR was not attributed much importance in people's reintegration. This was probably due to the fact that it only operated within *sucos*, and most violence had been perpetrated towards people from other *sucos*. It is also possible that the most serious crimes had been committed by people who remained in West Timor. Several respondents claimed that there were no social problems as nobody had committed a crime.

> There are no social problems. People who have done something wrong have difficulties, but I never did anything wrong so I don't have any problems. (BR02/1)

Nobody took part in the CAVR process because no one committed a crime. (KR99/1)

Summary

The well-being of returnees in Bobonaro was primarily dependent on their economic activity. The residents from *Suco* K were traders. Working in family groups, they quickly re-established their economic base, with older family members engaged in subsistence farming activities while the younger family members traded goods in the surrounding markets. People were generally disinterested in participating in aid instigated development activities unless there was an immediate benefit.

The residents of *Suco* B were much less well off. No longer able to depend on their traditional occupations of cattle trading and labouring, they were dependent on their subsistence crops for survival. Several consecutive years of storms had destroyed their crops and stores of food or assets. People were left severely food insecure and there were claims that up to thirty residents of the *Suco* had died.

There was little conflict within the communities as both communities had been ostensibly pro-autonomy and had produced their own militia forces. Instead the major cause of disharmony was the uneven targeting of aid, which within particularly food insecure *Suco* B, caused conflict and fighting.

5.4 Case Study Four: Sub-district Maubara, Liquicia

Background

Maubara is situated on the main road west of Dili. The sub-district rises from the sea up to steep mountain ranges and includes coastal fishing villages and highland coffee farms. The sub-district is comprised of seven *sucos*, of which two were visited. As one of the *sucos* is particularly large, it will be referred to as two separate areas. The population adhere to a mixture of Catholicism and animism.

Methodology

The area was visited between July 12 and July 17, 2004. A short visit was made to the *Chefe de* Post. As indicated in the table below, interviews were held with the *Chefe de Suco* of both *sucos* in addition to interviews with five stayees and fifteen returnees. This number included three women headed house-holds.

Figure 14: Table of Interviews: Sub-district Maubara

	Total Interviews	*Suco* N	*Suco* O	*Suco* M
Chefe de Posto	1	n/a	n/a	n/a
Chefe de Suco	2	n/a	1	1
Stayees	5	1	1	3
Returned 1999	5	1	2	2
Returned 2000	6	2	2	2
Returned 2001	-	-	-	-
Returned 2002	3	1	2	-
Returned 2003	1	-	-	1
Total	**23**	**5**	**8**	**9**

The Violence

Maubara experienced some of the worst militia intimidation and violence of 1999. Several groups, including the Besi Merah Putih (BMP), Gada Paksi, RATIH and Somalia were active in the area, often working in conjunction with the TNI. By early 1999 militia groups had started recruiting members in several of the *aldeihas* in *Suco* O. They then began to fan out across other parts of the *suco* and sub-district, using financial incentives, intimidation and death threats to coerce people to enlist (Stein 1999).

To escape the escalating levels of violence, over three thousand people fled into the mountains, where they were contained in a camp controlled by BMP. Reports of the camps by humanitarian workers in July 1999 indicate that people lacked access to potable water and

experienced high levels of malnutrition and disease, which lead to high levels of mortality (ETAN 1999).

The violence in Maubara worsened in April with the murder of two members of a pro-independence group (Dunn 2002:77). One thousand people from surrounding districts, including many from Maubara, took refuge in Liquicia's church compound. Several days later, the police, TNI and BMP attacked them, shooting or hacking to death fifty people (Dunn 2002:77, Stein 1999). The slaughter continued on April 17 in Dili, where BMP attacked and killed twelve people in the compound of independence supporter Manuela Carrascalao following a militia rally outside the governor of Dili's house (Stein 1999).

Flight and Repatriation

Following the August ballot, the militia forces rounded up any residents remaining in the sub-district. Threatened with death, people hired cars to travel to West Timor or were taken to the beach where, for two weeks, ships carried them to West Timor (MCDS, van Klinken & Bourchier 2002:126). Those who lived close to the sea or had access to transport were able to take many of their possession with them including their beds, corrugated iron, wood and such like. Other people were forced to leave everything behind.

> My husband was a civil servant at the district level. He forced the family to leave. We hired a car and took our furniture, cows, two pigs, four goats and twelve people. (MR00/1)

The last to leave the district were the army and police, who burnt anything that remained standing. In more remote parts of *Suco* O, many of the youth escaped into the forest and were able to protect their homes from the militia and TNI (MCDS, OR99/2)

The first returnees came back in October to an area that had been totally devastated. *Suco* M's *Chefe* claimed that the site where the village had stood looked like a field with only a road crisscrossing through it. The majority of the refugees had returned by 2002 however the low level militia trickled back more slowly, afraid of retaliatory violence.

Emergency Aid

There was a clear differentiation in people's minds between the amount and helpfulness of support provided in the emergency period – up until independence in 2002 and thereafter. Generally people who returned in the late 1999 early 2000 period found it invaluable to their

survival.

> In the emergency period even the trees didn't have leaves – there were no crops on farms, no houses and no food. Aid assistance was very important at the time. It provided food and enabled people to grow crops. Now people are mixed. They feel free to make money and form their own business. (MR99/1)

As with other districts a number of reconstruction projects were carried out in the emergency period. These included rehabilitating water channels and roads, building a traditional community hall and a number of other activities. People who participated in the reconstruction programmes were not particularly attached to the importance of the project to community well-being, but rather were grateful for the opportunity to earn some cash. One participant in a 'road-cleaning' project commented:

> Cleaning roads was an UNTAET programme – even if we didn't think it was a good use of labour UNTAET said it was a cleaning programme. If they had had a rebuilding burnt houses programme – that would also have been good. The cleaning roads project was good for workers – they are better off than now. UNTAET asked who wanted to work – gave them a list and paid they every week. Now there are no projects like that. (MS01)

Even during this period work was sporadic: some people received only one or two day's employment and at most people reported receiving two to three week's work (MR99/2, NR00/2). In the other *sucos* no one received work at all, despite being back during the period within which it occurred. This may be attributable to location, as these *aldeihas* were more remote areas, however there was also an underlying feeling that people may not have been eligible as these were areas that had produced large numbers of militia (OR99/1, OR00/1).

A number of agriculture and income generation support programmes were also established during the period. Some projects offered food for work while others paid participants $3/day to plant seeds. In general however, the emergency period programmes were short lived and had little long-term impact. Without ongoing support most of the projects collapsed soon after the departure of project staff or funding. The women's groups, fishing groups, corn banks and agriculture groups that were formed during the UNTAET period had all stopped

functioning by the time of my visit (NR00/2).

> There are women's groups and farmers groups in the *suco*, but I haven't seen anyone working in a group any more. Only the fishing group occasionally works together, but they don't have enough equipment such as boats or nets to work properly. (OCDS)

The cash payments made to participants on reconstruction schemes increased the difficulties of leaders in later periods. One *suco* leader complained that often international organisations would promise to pay participants for their labour on activities and then later refuse, leading to accusations of corruption against community leaders (OCDS). The early payments made also led to an expectation that all labour ought to be financially compensated, regardless of whether the improvements were of benefit to local residents. Unable to finance continued payment of community improvement payments, residents often refused to participate in locally instigated projects.

The provision of emergency relief was also problematic because most people felt aid was an entitlement which all should equally receive. Those in more remote areas, whose homes had not been destroyed, felt that they should also have received a new home, particularly as the housing kits were of a superior quality to the traditional palm leaf homes. (OR99/2)

More recent efforts to support agriculture have also had difficulties. A promising project by CARE, in early 2004 where farmers could choose from among a number of vegetable seeds was unsuccessful because the seeds were distributed too late in the season to plant[24]. As people were suffering from a food shortage at the time, many of the respondents said that they chose potato, corn and bean seeds which they ate rather than saving them to plant in the next agricultural cycle[25] (MR00/1, MR00/2, MR03/1, MS02, OCDS, OR02/1).

Whereas all respondents in *Suco* M said they had received seeds, the distribution in *Sucos* N and O was less even. Despite contentions from the *Chefe* that all households received seeds, several households claimed not to have received any (OR00/1, OR00/2, OR02/1). Those people who missed out were from an *aldeiha* which had been home to one of the militia groups and included a widow with four dependent children.

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[24] According to the Suco O's *Chefe*, corn and peanuts needed to be planted in November, beans over December/January and potatoes could not be grown in the area at all so the distribution in February.
[25] I was unable to identify whether the seeds were safe for human consumption. There was a case several years earlier, where people had apparently died from eating treated seeds (anon, pers. comm. 16/7/04).

Suco M was the only site visited which had successfully had its electricity rehabilitated. It sat on the Dili grid. The mechanism to ensure cost recovery however put the price of the electricity out of reach of most households, and the majority of residents continued to use candle light or kerosene to light their homes at night.

Aid as a Source of Power and Punishment

Maubara, alongside Cailaco exhibited the greatest amount of systemic discrimination against people associated with militia groups. Whereas in Bobonaro, whole *sucos* had been either pro-autonomy or pro-independence, in Maubara, *sucos* were mixed. The local leaders however had all been supporters of independence. Several of the leaders had been victims of militia violence and their personal inclination was at best, disinterest in the well-being of former militia associates. As their domain of power lay predominantly in the distribution of aid, it was here that they were able to display their continued anger. Those areas which had initially produced militia groups were often excluded from the receipt of aid particularly in instances that aid agencies had not independently verified information, but relied only on information from *suco* leaders. One respondent from *Suco* M remarked during an interview:

> Aid organization didn't create any problems but when local authorities give lists of data, the majority of people are happy to receive the same. But in other villages the local authority has prevented many from receiving aid because they were the first group to form militia. Aid organizations don't discriminate in their assistance but local authorities did because before they destroyed people's houses and stole from them. It is easy to talk about rights when there is no history. Aid organizations don't work alone. They work with local people - all the information they know is from local people – so they only know what people tell them. (MR99/1)

The inequity became quickly obvious as people discussed their allocation of food entitlements. Although there was no evidence of people dying due to food insecurity in the sub-district, a survey by CARE estimated that the district has the highest level of child malnourishment of all districts in Timor Leste (Helen Todd, Moris Rasik, pers. comm. 25/7/04). In *Suco* M, every household except those who had regular employment received rice and beans twice in the early part of the year. In *Suco* O however, the distribution of rice depended on which *aldeiha* a household belonged to. Whereas some households received 25kg each, one claimed to have

received 16kg (NR00/2), another 2kg and another claimed to have received nothing at all (OR00/2).

> There is no balance in the distribution of rice between *aldeihas*. In this *aldeiha* six families share one sack of rice, in other *aldeihas*, each family gets one sack, and in others they share a sack between two people. I don't know why. We received 2kg of rice and a cup of beans. We were asked to walk down to the river to pick up 2 kg, which, including the waiting time took 12 hours to collect. (OR00/1)

The distribution of housing materials was also a political decision. In *Suco* M, which had been predominately pro-independence, eighty-five percent of returnees received housing and it was prioritised according to homelessness, and then the degree of damage (MCDS). Distribution was much less equitable in *Suco* O. Very few people from *aldeihas* which had first formed militia groups received housing at all.

> Our houses were destroyed – there was nothing left – even our crops were destroyed. Nobody received housing material. The *suco* came and registered our names for housing but only twelve families received materials. We were told we would be in the next group – but we are still waiting. It is strange, because in the other *aldeihas* everyone received housing. I think it is because this *aldeiha* was the centre of militia activity – but not everyone became militia. (OR99/1)

In all instances bar one, returnees were able to reclaim their land without difficulty. This case was apparently being processed by the land court and the returnee, a former militia member expressed optimism that in due course it would be returned to him (OR02/2).

Waiting for a project: Expectations of State-Led Economic Development

People's circumstances in Maubara were said to have changed considerably. Former civil servants now workd as fishermen and farmers and there were a large number of widows or women who had been abandoned by their husbands during the period of violence and displacement. Poverty and unemployment were big problems that many people mentioned and many respondents said that they earned less than $1/day. This made providing for daily needs, in addition to expenses such as school fees and repairing homes very problematic

(MR99/1, MR00/1, MR03/1).

There is still an expectation that the government needs to implement income generation projects (OR02/1, MCDS). Many of the respondents mentioned that while aid organisations had provided assistance with work in the emergency period – in their minds taking over the role of the Indonesian government, their own government had failed to perform this task. The comment made by MS01 is reflective of a greater problem that is facing the country. There are rising levels of discontent that independence has not created the peace and prosperity that people expected. When people have protested about these problems, there have been minor cases of government violence to quell the unrest.

> The biggest problem is that there isn't any work. For example I don't have a job. We need projects to get money. At the moment people just work on their farms but it isn't good to sustain a living, we just manage to get by at a subsistence level. In the resistance period I worked hard, but now the government needs people with capacity. We got what we wanted - independence, but now those with the capacity to work just wait. Life is more difficult than expected. For me this is no problem, but I don't know about others. (MS01)

The Development of Small Business

People have been proactive in trying to improve their financial situation and several respondents from *Sucos* M and N operated small businesses (MR00/2, MR99/2, OR02/2, OR99/2). Women wove cane baskets to earn a some cash income, however this usually earned little more than $2/week. Several of the interviewees, also predominately women, were also small traders and operated kiosks in the marketplace or outside their homes (MR00/1, MS/1, NR00/2, NS/1). Those close to the sea occasionally supplemented their diet by fishing, however without nets or markets, they were unable to turn this into a profitable venture (MR99/2). The residents of *Suco* M, also included a proportionately high number of educated people, and among the interviewees was a pharmacist, a nurse and a policewoman. As none were refugees and they have all been employed throughout the four year period, they are slightly better off than other people, with one owning a motorbike and a television (MS2, MS3, MR99/1).

As emergency aid programmes have been pulling out of the area, two micro-finance

organisations have entered the area. Moris Rasik has started to operate in *Sucos* N and M, and Oportunidarde Timor Leste recently began operations in the area although none of the respondents spoken to had joined the programme. Moris Rasik had a poor reputation with the *Chefe de Suco* of *Suco* O, who claimed:

> Only *Suco* N has received money from Moris Rasik – and they are already bankrupt. They are not Moris Rasik (independent life) but Mate Rasik (natural death/suicide), because the benefit doesn't go back to the community but to the owner of Moris Rasik. People have to repay every week and sometime people don't have enough money, so they have to sell their animals to pay back their loan (OCDS)

Further investigation in *Suco* N however revealed that while some borrowers of Moris Rasik had not been able to repay their loans, this was often because they had not used the money for business but had spent it on household expenses or other personal needs. Two respondents were spoken to who belonged to the programme. While one had stopped borrowing from them, and claimed that the repayments had often been difficult to meet, she nevertheless intended to take a further loan once her baby was old enough for her to operate her stall again. Both respondents said they were very appreciative of the presence of Moris Rasik, which served as a bank, enabling them to save and borrow money. While it was sometimes difficult to make the weekly repayments, both women spoken to said they would continue to use the service.

> I save with Moris Rasik and also borrow from it. At the moment Moris Rasik is better than a bank. It is more convenient because the staff come to us. The bank is a long way away. (NR00/2)

> Moris Rasik is a credit organisation that has helps those who have businesses. Most people who borrow money don't run their business well – including myself. I borrowed money for a stall but didn't have time to spend in the stall. I managed to pay back the loan. When we didn't have enough money to make the weekly payments, I had to sell chickens and corn to pay back the loan. This happened to many people. Now I've stopped because of the baby but I will start a stall again later and borrow money from Moris Rasik again. In long-term it is beneficial even if it causes short-term hardship. (NS/1)

The *Suco* was particularly well located for trading which enabled the small businesses to make a relatively good turnover. Situated close to the major stop on the road west from Dili, it boasted a large number of roadside eateries, kiosks and vegetable stalls. As there are virtually no other eateries on the trip most traffic stops here on its way through.

Civil Society and Social Capital

Several aid agencies provided agricultural support to farmers and a number of these had recently provided seeds, equipment and training to local agriculture groups. Unlike programmes operated in the emergency period, these development oriented organisations have developed relationships directly with the communities, often collaboring with internally-formed community based organisations. Respondents claimed that the formation of groups was something that was very new for them, but saw it as a way to enhance their own interests. Operating outside the *Chefe de Suco*'s control, the groups have been able to access support which might not otherwise have been available to them.

> A teacher from Maubara suggested that we formed an agriculture group because otherwise we wouldn't get any assistance from aid organisations. In 2001 we formed a group and then Caritas provided water. We built terraces after Caritas had come and surveyed the area. They provided trees that can be used for fertilise and animal feed. They also provided training and then they wrote a proposal for water. They have given us training many times and shown us how to make compost and pesticides using traditional materials. The pesticides require many materials but they can all be found locally and it is cheap and effective. I think our farming techniques are better than before. We used to grown green beans, which were successful until the weather changed. We are more food secure than in the past. The problem is money circulation. It is difficult to sell things and the prices are very low. We are thinking about starting a cooperative to sell things. (OR99/1)

The spokesperson for the group had internalised much of the rhetoric of aid organisations, and explained that while aid was very helpful, it was also thinly spread so they couldn't just sit back and wait to be helped.

> It is easier and faster to work in groups – and we can help others more so than if we work alone. Also, when we write proposals NGOs are more likely

to support groups that projects which only assist individuals. (OS/1)

The difficulties with the formation of grassroots organisations is not to be underestimated though, and even the best intentions were not always enough to create success. A young man who had recently completed a horticulture course with the Japanese NGO OISCA, was trying to mobilise the youth in his area to pass on his new knowledge. His efforts were hampered by the low levels of trust between people in his neighbourhood.

> After completing the training, I felt it was important to share the skills with other young people in area – I wanted to show them a good way to change their lives. My objective wasn't to get them to work for me or to get money, but to enable them to learn for themselves. I'm not really satisfied with my group though. I'm the leader but we don't really trust each other. I have a plan but people don't want to follow it – they have their own ideas. (NR99/1)

The degree to social reintegration was facilitated was partially a result of the history estranged parties shared. One former militia member, who had received a beating soon after his arrival in *Suco* O, said he was hesitant to join any community based organisations as he feared that people might still get angry with him (OR02/2). A stayee claimed that working on community projects across political divides promoted better intercommunity relationships, however despite recognising this, he preferred to work alone.

> Organisations tried to promote groups to teach us how to work together and unity. When we worked in groups achieved unity. This still affects our relationships today. Groups were composed of returnees and stayees – they mixed everyone together. Almost all assistance was given to groups. I'm not involved in any groups – I just work alone. (MS/02)

The formation of groups also had the potential to cause friction within communities, as they caused a heightened sense of exclusion among people who were very sensitive to inequality. The *Chefe* from *Suco* O discussed the reoccurring problem which occurred when only widows were targeted for the receipt of assistance.

> On one hand, aid has brought people together, but it only ever helps small groups. Because the number of groups is limited, the benefits are also

> limited to a small number of people. This causes social problems within the community. When, for example, only widows are targeted, when we have to do something at village level like cleaning the road, the villagers say, "ask the widows to do it". The government asks for lists of widow and other people feel dissatisfied. Also NGOs just look after widows – it creates discrimination between people. (OCDS)

Social Reintegration and Community Support

The degree to which social linkages assisted people to reintegrate varied. Many families had been split by the violence, with some members supporting independence, and others integration. There were instances where family members committed abuses against each other. Even in instances that families were not politically divided, they were not in a strong enough financial position to be able to support each other and returnees often were hesitant to ask for help (MR99/2, MR03/1). There were also instances where families may conceivably have been able to support returnees but people chose not to ask for assistance (MR00/1). In other instances however, extended families lived and worked together, banding together to support each other (MR00/1, NR02/1, OR02/1).

Social linkages beyond the family unit seemed much weaker. While people were happy to work together if all participants gained equally from the relationship, there was unwillingness to help those who could not make a contribution in kind.

> We restarted our lives by ourselves. Our relatives have only helped a little. Everything has been done on our own (MR03/1)

> At time of return all families faced same problems – no-one helped – we did it on own (MR99/2)

> When we returned, we had to start from zero. No group or organisation has been extremely helpful in this process. (OR00/1)

In *Suco* N, there were a number of half assembled homes which were obviously empty. While groups had worked together to assemble the presupplied roofs, concrete floors and metal supports, they did not have walls. The wife of the *Chefe de Aldeiha* claimed that this was because the houses belonged to elderly people who did not have the family to help them construct any walls. She continued that as the area has four harvests each year, people did not

have the time to assist with building these houses (NS/1).

A number of the female respondents had separated or become widowed in West Timor. They found it particularly difficult to manage alone. While married, their household income had included a civil servant's salary and income from their farm. Now, single, their labour was insufficient to farm alone and they were dependent on petty trading to earn an income (MR00/1, MR002, OR002).

> I have a farm but there is no man to work, so I just have a small garden. Because it isn't fenced animals walk over it. Nobody from the family uses the land and it isn't rented. The *Chefe de Posto* used the land for one year, but we struggled over it in 1975 so I only allowed him to use it for one year. In the past we grew corn and cucumbers. (MR00/1)

Both MR00/2 and MR00/1 had developed strategies to survive independently, with one operating a number of trading activities and the other selling woven baskets at a roadside stall.

> Other people's lives are better because other people have a man to support them. When my husband was with me I wasn't afraid of running out of money. With one child at university and another in senior high school, I don't have enough money to pay for school fees, but we always have enough food to eat. (MR00/1)

MR001 had recently joined Moris Rasik to fund an expansion of her business interests, but neither MR002 nor OR002 belonged to any projects or community based organisations. All three women said that they had never been short of food, however it was stressful trying to cope alone, and OR00/2 looked tearful at the end of the interview.

Reconciliation

Despite attempts to engender reconciliation, Maubara sub-district seemed to have been least successful of all the sub-districts in meeting the needs of victims. This unmet need contributed to an undercurrent of violence in the area. During the emergency period the CNRT had tried to create an environment of forgiveness, where youth and the community were encouraged to hug each other rather than fight (MS01, MS02). The threat of arrest by the UN police also helped to curtail the levels of violence (MS03) however several respondents suggested that they felt the local authorities had not been proactive enough in encouraging

reconciliation (MS01, MS02).

As law and order became more entrenched, overt levels of violence abated, however the feelings of anger did not recede. People were angry that former civil servants had on occasion been reinstated in their former positions, despite their associations with the violence, whereas people who had been involved in the clandestine movement remained unemployed (MR99/1).

Of greater concern, was the lack of justice. Respondents who had been victims of militia violence were unhappy that many former militia members had not been punished and people felt that the government was not fulfilling its responsibility to prosecute all perpetrators of serious crime. One respondent claimed that some people had confessed that they had killed people yet had still not been captured or taken to court (MR99/1). As a consequence, even at the time of my visit, there were cases of former militia being attacked at parties or other social events.

> When people were massacred in Liquica church the militia came and killed many people. I've seen some of those people here and we have already had reconciliation. But we can't hide our feelings – what is in our heart. It isn't easy for the young to forget, so when there is a party, young people try to drink a lot and use the opportunity to beat them. Two days ago there was a cockfight. Two people were beaten by the youth because they had been involved in the militia in 1999. It isn't easy for people to forget. (MR99/1)

> The most important process to make people satisfied is justice. If people aren't satisfied they will want to beat perpetrators, but because we have regulations, they remain dissatisfied. Instead they get beaten at parties. We can see at the CAVR process the victims were asked to shake hands and they refused. (OCDS)

CAVR was also widely criticised by stayees and victims of the violence. The organisation's tight time frame prevented the community reconciliation process from being adequately socialised. Although it only had a mandate to deal with low-level crimes, there was an expectation that all perpetrators should have stood before the forum. In some cases the issue was complicated further because there was not enough evidence to convict people of high level crimes but they also did not confess in front of the CAVR, thus slipping between the

gaps of the formal and restorative justice systems (Larke, CAVR, pers. comm. 2/6/04). Despite the huge number of people who had been murdered, beaten or otherwise victimised in the sub-district, only five deponents stood at the hearing.

> CAVR is this area was not useful. It didn't make people feel happy. In East Timor the local militia groups were infamous throughout East Timor, but when we had the CAVR process only five people were involved and no victims. It looks wonderful at national level but people here weren't happy – many militia members were here but they didn't take part. This is a big question for us. There was a meeting at the *suco* hall with an audience and also many international journalists, but only five deponents who explained. Victims weren't called to take part and only five people who were involved in the Carrascalao murder. Those who killed and live in the area were not called before CAVR. There are also some people who beat others. (MS02)

> People weren't really satisfied with the CAVR process – especially victims – including myself. The victims participated in the process but many perpetrators of crime didn't confess or attend proceedings. Even those who confessed tried to hide something and the victims felt dissatisfied with the *Chefe de Suco* because they thought I was trying to protect them. They weren't obligated to confess. Perpetrators burnt houses, beat people, killed, stole animals – not only here, but also in other villages. Hearings weren't held between villages; if the perpetrator committed a crime in another village he is not held to account there. Even now people's attitudes are like militia and people still call you militia if you didn't attend the process. We can have reconciliation in Maubara because we know each other here, but how about activities in Dili? Reconciliation activities are finished, but only here. People don't know you in Dili and what you did there – people you killed there. (OCDS)

Both victims of the violence and perpetrators indicated that without acknowledgement of the crimes, the feelings of animosity would not die down. Despite government regulations to protect people from attack, former militia associates continued to be unable to move around freely and lived in an environment of fear (MS02, OR02/2).

> Before nahe biti boot there was still intimidation and terror, but afterwards there haven't been any problems. But to minimise any problems I don't go anywhere alone or far away. (OR02/2)

Catholic Relief Services have been involved in programmes in the area to promote reconciliation. The same respondent who attended the OISCA training had been selected by the local priest to attend the reconciliation training and was now attempting to implement the programme. When there were issues between local youth and returnees, he was often called in to try and settle disputes before the local authority stepped in (NR99/1). While the rhetoric goes that everyone has moved on, there was a strong sense that many of these issues remain unresolved and will continue to impede reintegration for some time yet.

> Now there is no discrimination between people. The government did civic education and the CAVR programme. They all talked about reconciliation and taught people how to receive each other. We must realise the things that happened in the past are a consequence of war. (OR99/1)

The need for unity between the various political players continues to be seen as being of fundamental significance to the development of ongoing peace. Factionalism has caused much violence in the past, and people continue to fear its existence.

> The most important thing for peace is unity. Without unity we will never have peace. If we stay in groups we will destroy unity – if we have unity, we can develop the country freely. (OR02/2)

A teacher in *Suco* O however, reflected that it was at the local level that reconciliation had to evolve. Citing political infighting in Dili, he claimed that people had to start their own processes rather than waiting for external assistance.

> Only the community itself can create harmony. We can see that at the national level – they can't solve their own problems. We must solve the problems ourselves rather than hold on to anger in our hearts. (OS/1)

Summary

People clearly differentiated between the usefulness of aid in the early days following the departure of the Indonesians and later periods. The provision of aid was seen to mirror one of the chief functions carried out by the Indonesian government, providing people with

temporary work that contributed to their economic well-being. Despite attempts by a number of people to start up small businesses, the low levels of liquidity prevented people from achieving a significant degree of profitability. Other than former militia, a large number of people rejoined or formed civil society groups. In some cases these groups enabled people to become more food secure. The most successful were those which were inspired by local effort.

Maubara experienced one of the worst levels of violence in 1999 and there existed a high level of unresolved anger within the community. Attempts by the CAVR were generally seen by locals to be unsatisfactory. Former militia continued to receive beatings and leaders used aid to punish perpetrators of crimes and those who lived in militia strongholds. Most returnees claimed that they had been unable to depend on family, leaders or aid to assist with their reintegration. Instead they contended that their current situation was primarily due to their own efforts.

5.5 SUMMARY

The situation of returnees in each of the sites differed according to the physical environment, the proximity of their homes to stayees, the skills and resources they were able to draw upon and the political strength that they enjoyed. For some returnees the major problems confronting them were economic and were primarily related to food security. For other returnees a much greater issue was the ongoing nature of reconciliation, where the emotional scars of 1999 remained unresolved. Aid contributed to reintegration in some cases, however on occasions it also aggravated divisions within communities. The following table provides a thumbnail representation comparing the situation of returnees to that of other members of their surrounding community and indicates the variation that exists between the experiences of returnees in each case study area.

Figure 15: Summary of Case-Studies

Key: ✓ Present/Common ✓✗ Present on occasions ✗ Not present/Rare	Lequidoe	Cailaco & Atabae	Bobonaro	Maubara
Violence against returnees	✓✗	✓	✓✗	✓
Returnees property rights recognised	✓✗	✓	✓	✓
Returnees assisted by emergency relief programming	✗	✓✗	✓✗	✗
Returnees receive long-term benefit from emergency relief (infrastructure)	✓✗	✓✗	✓✗	✓✗
Returnees receive long-term benefit from emergency relief (livelihood support)	✗	✓✗	✗	✓✗
Returnee participation in local level decision making	✓✗	✗	✓	✗
Returnee participation in civil society	✓✗	✓✗	✓✗	✓✗
Aid assists in formation/support of civil society	✗	✓✗	✓✗	✓✗
Returnees achieve secure livelihood	✗	✓✗	✗	✓✗
Returnees food secure	✓✗	✓	✗	✓✗
Returnees receive equitable distribution of emergency relief aid eg food	✓✗	✗	✗	✗
Violence/Jealousy due to inequitable distribution of aid	✗	✓	✓	✓
Returnees treated equally by local leaders	✓✗	✗	✓✗	✗
Satisfaction with reconciliation/justice (within community)	✓✗	✓✗	✓✗	✗

CHAPTER 6 – DISCUSSION

This chapter examines the contribution of aid interventions in creating conditions conducive to the reintegration of returnees in Timor Leste. It explores the major themes which emerged in Chapter Five, examining them against the perspectives of aid workers, the literature produced by their organisations and the academic literature, which address post-conflict peace building and reintegration.

It finds that although aid organisations attempted to follow best practice, they were often limited in their effectiveness by institutional, environmental and social constraints. Organisations made efforts to harmonise their activities with each other, but put less effort into keeping open communication channels between themselves and the affected stakeholders in the communities where they operated. This often prevented them from identifying people's needs, or designing and implementing appropriate programmes.

Some projects also displayed unrealistic expectations regarding the social change aid could stimulate, particularly considering the minimal levels of ongoing support that projects and programmes in rural areas received. For these reasons aid agencies remained better at implementing short-term tangible projects than instigating deeper level social, political or social change.

A number of projects assisted with the reintegration of returnees, through lessening people's economic vulnerability and supporting the authority of local leaders. In many instances however, local leaders, acting independently of the aid organisations, excluded returnees associated with militia groups from directly benefiting from assistance. This served to increase levels of conflict and tension within communities.

6.1 Infrastructure Reconstruction & Development

Emergency period reconstruction programmes were intended to rehabilitate damaged infrastructure and inject some liquidity into the local economy (Clark 2003:22). Over their duration, they created short-term employment for locals, enabling participants to earn a small amount of income that many used to purchase replacement stock or rebuild their homes. The cash injection had little multiplier effect however, providing a short-term boost and little longer-term impact on people's economic well-being.

Agencies also claimed that reconstruction was an important to the achievement of societal reconciliation. This was evident from the earliest days of the crisis, when The World Bank's Joint Assessment Mission concluded in Darwin:

> The greatest contribution to reconciliation is likely to be the rapid involvement of the population in positive activities to reconstruct their communities (World Bank 1999:n20).

This view was echoed by a number of respondents in the sub-districts. They claimed that the employment of youth and other members of the community on rehabilitation projects provided a constructive focus to people's day. It was emotionally healing to see buildings and facilities being repaired, demonstrating that the destruction was reversible and inciting a sense of optimism about the future of the country.

The repairs also enabled people to begin their economic activities again, enabling some to begin earning an income and contributing towards a sense of normality. Rui Hanjam, of the World Bank's Community Empowerment Programme, suggested that the speedy reconstruction of infrastructure and utilities was where the CEP programme achieved its greatest successes (pers. comm., 27/7/04).

Obtaining employment on the projects was usually determined by being present and unemployed at the time of the project's operation. While many returnees obtained some work, the number of former militia who took part was much lower. In some cases this was because they had not yet returned, in other cases local leaders excluded them or the former militia chose to isolate themselves, fearing retaliatory violence.

The shelter kits, distributed in the aftermath of the violence were highly sought after items. Most recipients said that they provided housing of a better quality than that they had lived in

during the Indonesian period. While the receipt of housing kits assuaged the anger of recipients against former militia, the inequity of distribution also contributed to increased levels of jealously within communities. Everybody felt entitled to a kit, whether or not their homes had been destroyed, and this contributed towards tension and feelings of discontent between recipients, the excluded and community leaders.

6.2 Income Generation

There is a great deal of debate in the literature regarding the importance of employment and a viable livelihood to the achievement of returnee reintegration following conflict. In Timor Leste, the international community identified economic revitalisation as a key priority to the achievement of sustainable peace. This was demonstrated in the following quote from a USAID report:

> While people were not starving due to international relief operations - and to their own underestimated resilience - the situation was clearly desperate. There was obviously little prospect for a successful political transition without the beginnings of economic recovery. The danger of communal instability was sharp and immediate, as, at first, hundreds and then thousands of young men with no employment, few assets, lots of frustration and not much to do - returned from the bush to Dili and to other urban centers. (Clarke 2003:20)

In line with current best practice, aid was not targeted specifically to returnees, but instead to localities, which had been identified as requiring assistance. As with the reconstruction programmes, many of the income generation projects initiated in the emergency period were intended to provide stability to people's days as much as to provide a means to earn an income. A consequence of targeting localities was that occasionally returnees and other individuals who were out of favour with local leaders were excluded from assistance. The timing of most of the emergency period projects also resulted in many returnees missing out on any benefits, as in many cases, the agency had exited before the returnees arrived back.

Dolan's (2004:33) critique of the UNHCR's QIPs programme can equally be related to programmes offered by other agencies. The majority of programmes launched between 1999

and 2002 had been hurriedly instigated without a thorough needs assessment or an appraisal of the potential market for the goods or services produced. Furthermore, participants did not receive adequate support to operate the project. The result of these failures in planning and implementation resulted in the majority of projects and their impacts being short-lived. Few were scaled up or created any significant economic trickle-up. Following their closure, there was little to distinguish participants from non-participants and rarely did they acknowledge their involvement positively affecting their economic well-being. Most people did not utilise the skills they had been trained in and the greatest beneficiaries were those who managed to acquire the carpentry or sewing machines when the programme folded.

The most successful of all income generation projects, were the micro-finance banks. While they did not create wealth, they were able to redistribute existing wealth in an area. Operating independently of *suco* structures, the staff members from the organisations directly contacted potential borrowers. This enabled them to reach more widely into the *sucos,* contacting more than just the *chefe's* in-group. Bank members thus included a diverse mixture of stayees, returnees, separated women and the some wives of former militia members.

The success of micro-finance programmes can be measured according to the rate of repayment or the longevity of the businesses seeded. In terms of the sustainability of the micro-finance bank, the rate of repayment is vital. CEP quickly developed a reputation for not enforcing loan repayments, which other micro finance banks later had to battle to remedy. In terms of the sustainability of the businesses seeded, CEP held a better record. Many of the businesses people started, with what effectively had been a grant two years previously, continued to operate at the time of my visit. Other organisations, had a much higher rate of repayment due to their strict enforcement policies, however a large number of potential borrowers were put off or did not take a second loan because of the difficulty they had with making loan repayments. In a number of cases, this required borrowers to cannibalise other assets such as livestock or food.

The business adage 'location, location, location' applied as much to Timorese businesses as to those anywhere else in the world. The most successful traders were those started in areas with high levels of through-traffic or profitable cash crops. The most successful of the entrepreneurs were those who had previous business experience and used the bank to capitalise their projects. Businesses in more remote or infertile regions were less likely to be

profitable. Borrowers were often women who struggled to balance their business with subsistence farming activities. They often complained that the loan repayments were difficult to afford, and the effort required surpassed the profit they could make.

6.3 Agriculture and Food Security

It is estimated that ninety percent of *sucos* in Timor Leste experience food shortages at some time during each year (UNDP 2002b:16). The subsidised rice of the Indonesian period is no longer available so reintegration in independent Timor Leste has required that people increase their agricultural output. This has become a major concern for many LNGOs, INGOs and the Timorese government, who have implemented a number of programmes which attempt to lift people's farm gate income and contribute to their nutritional well-being.

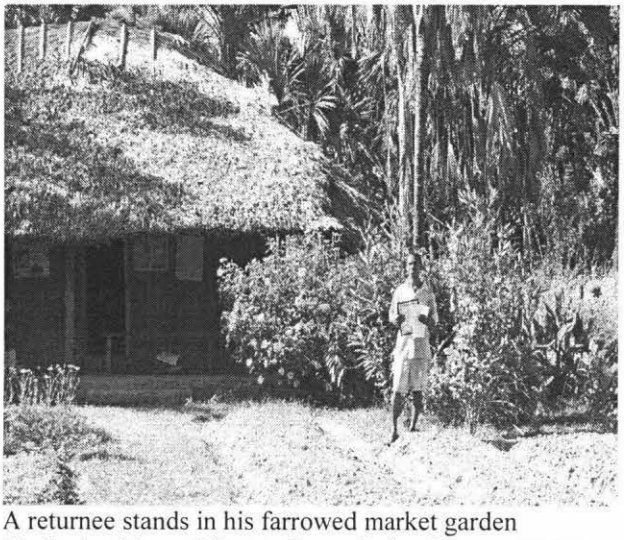
Programmes experienced variable levels of success. Several aid agencies had given sets of agricultural tools to the community-based organisations they instigated. In most instances the organisations did not survive the departure of the aid organisation, but the highly valued tools were divided among groups members. Several respondents continued to use the tools they had received in the emergency period on their farms.

The distribution of seeds was less helpful to people's long-term re-establishment. This was largely a consequence of inadequate planning and a lack of local knowledge. On a number of occasions (including just prior to my visit), seeds were distributed in the wrong season. Due to a concurrent food shortage, people chose to eat them rather than retaining them for the next planting season. At other times (and occasionally at the same time), aid agencies distributed inappropriate seeds strains for the climatic conditions. A similar problem occurred with the distribution of chickens, where the breeds purchased were not hardy enough to survive in the harsh upland climate.

Projects to improve people's agricultural skills were varied in their effectiveness. As demonstrated by the terracing programmes in Lequidoe, one-off projects initiated in the emergency period appeared not to have altered people's farming techniques. There is a possibility however, that further training by government and NGO extension workers, will cumulatively contribute to the later adoption of new techniques. Several longer-term programmes have enjoyed a greater level of success. These included programmes by the local

NGO ETADEP, Japanese OISCA (see figure 16) and also CARITAS Australia. These organisations supported farming groups and provided equipment, seeds and training. Both returnees and stayees participated in the agriculture groups, although, it was less common for former militia to participate unless they came from a militia stronghold. This may have been due to ongoing fears of social sanction.

Figure 16: Agricultural Training



A returnee stands in his farrowed market garden displaying his certificate of completion from an INGO operated agriculture course.

The profitability of cash crops continued to be limited by an absence of markets, poor transportation and a lack of storage facilities. Several farmers claimed that they were unable to find a market for their beans or other vegetables, and often brought them home rather than selling them below cost. It is assumed however, that the crop would then have been eaten, contributing to the nutritional well-being of household members. Low world prices and non-competitive pricing also affected the profitability of cash crops. Timorese coffee is generally of a low quality and in a period where there is a worldwide surplus, growers receive a very low price for it. Locally grown rice is also non-competitive, with a higher farm gate price than rice imported from Thailand or Vietnam.

As with many other programmes operated by aid organisations, registration to receive benefits was often dependent on the largess of *suco* leaders. While some areas had fairly equitable distribution, in both Cailaco and Maubara, the families of former militia were omitted from distribution lists. In other instances returnees missed out because the programmes had been withdrawn before their repatriation from West Timor.

6.4 Reintegration and Economic Growth

If reintegration is dependent on a growing economy, then it is questionable whether anyone in Timor Leste can be said to have reintegrated. Since independence and particularly following the downsizing of the UN operation, economic activity has dwindled and fewer people are able to take part in the cash economy. The widespread poverty has not prevented the majority of returnees from reintegrating into the subsistence economy of Timor Leste because most were able to regain access to their land, however it has been more difficult to obtain any degree of income security. Without a significant cash economy, and with a minimal domestic market for goods and services, most people are unable to diversify their income beyond subsistence levels.

The absence of economic opportunity is affecting overall levels of positive peace in the country. Of particular concern is the issue of dispossessed former Falintil, who are engaged in low-level rebellion against the present government. One of their major grievances is that the country's civil service has employed many former TNI and militia but due to their lack of appropriate skills, those Timorese who fought for independence remain unemployed (see for example Bowling 2004).

Overall, schemes to improve people's economic well-being had little enduring benefit. Projects tended to be short-term and ad hoc, a band-aid approach, which despite providing some stability in a time that could easily have reverted to violence, did not significantly alter people's standard of living. There was little discernable difference between the standard of living or asset base of those who had participated in these programmes, and those who had not. Rather than being a product of inclusion in aid programming, as concluded by Ballard in his study of returnees in South East Asia (2000), the economic well-being of returnees was related to the length of time they had had to re-establish crops and businesses, the location of their homes and farms, their personal skills and their resource base.

The least well off among the returnees were women-headed households, the elderly whose families remained in exile and the families of low-level militia. Women headed households and the elderly who lived alone, were limited by their smaller labour force and were often unable to survive through subsistence farming activities. Many of these women had husbands who were still in West Timor, so they often faced a degree of social sanction from other community members and were excluded by local leaders from aid or other support that might otherwise

have been made available to them. While in some instances single women were able to depend on the support of extended family and neighbours to survive, in other instances, this was not forthcoming due to high levels of poverty or other social problems.

The households of low-level militia also tended to be less well off than other groups of returnees. Returning militia had generally lost most of their possessions. They were excluded from much of the aid, which entered the suco, continued to suffer social sanction, and their poverty and low level of education limited their ability to manage in the difficult post-independence environment. Whereas returnees who had previously worked for the police or TNI, and had not been convicted of serious crimes were often able to obtain work in the government sector, low-level militia usually returned to their subsistence farming activities.

Claims that the provision of aid through the Indonesian occupation and through the relief period created dependency remains a moot point. It was common for aid workers to voice opinions such as this statement from Peter Njorje of the INGO Concern:

> ... people's mentality has had to change. They are now beginning to lose the dependency culture that the Indonesians promoted for a generation. They have political independence, but they still have mental dependence on others (Vidal 2004)

Other aid workers argued that aid was still creating dependency, ignoring the multiple survival strategies people utilised during the Indonesian occupation or later through the period of aid interventions. Rather than being dependent on aid, people have used the opportunities they see emanating from aid interventions towards their own ends. Even during the emergency period, emergency aid was only ever considered by recipients to sporadically supplement their own efforts. While relief aid was gratefully received (or its distribution jealously observed), it was never enough to sustain people or households. In the development phase, the receipt of aid or opportunity to participate in aid programming became even more limited. Rather than aid providing a pathway from relief to development, most returnees and stayees have experienced a pathway leading from subsistence to conflict to relief to subsistence.

6.5 HARMONISATION WITH WHOM? THE IMPACT OF AID IN THE *SUCOS*

Perhaps taking heed of Mary Anderson's assertion that the distribution of aid can cause resentment (1999:46), organisations generally attempted to target their programmes to localities rather than targeting returnees or stayees. In general, the only divisions that aid organisations acknowledged were economic distinctions and in a number of cases it was claimed that the reintegration of returnees was a dead issue (Boulri, IOM, pers. comm., 2/6/04; Hamilton, World Vision, pers. comm, 15/6/04). Any targeting was towards people who were identified as 'vulnerable': generally widows, orphans and the elderly.

International staff (and often local staff from international organisations) spent small amounts of time in any one site, preventing the development of trust or any depth of understanding between foreign staff and rural communities. Whereas some foreign aid workers contended that Timorese society was very close and cohesive, others admitted that they found it difficult to know what was really going on. Several national and international staff from INGOs expressed difficulty with understanding the dynamics of Timorese communities; and poor communications also extended to internal organisational dynamics. Attitudes towards the violence of 1999 also affected the way in which international organisations operated. Most international staff attributed the violence entirely to Indonesian manipulation. While this may have been the case, the Indonesians have since departed, but the scars are not completely healed and rifts and anger are still present in the communities. Low-level militia continue to be held locally accountable for the violence.

This superficial understanding of Timorese communities caused a number of problems within them. The targeting of the vulnerable often led to social jealously and further social discrimination against the very people the assistance was supposed to help. Furthermore, because aid providers did not recognise the political differences that lay within communities, they did not find out when local leaders excluded some segments of communities from assistance, because they had not been identified in the first place. Exclusion or inequity of distribution, especially when it was seen to affect politically identifiable groups within the community, led to further discontent and occasionally sabotage or violence. Perhaps in part due to the negligible presence of foreign aid agencies, community members tended to place the blame for inequitable distribution on *suco* leaders.

The distribution of food aid clearly illustrated this problem. Due to several consecutive years

of storms, floods and drought and the high levels of malnutrition endemic in the country, the World Food Programme (WFP) has continued to operate beyond the initial emergency period (World Food Programme 2003:9). All four *sucos* visited received food aid in 2003 and 2004. The WFP procured the food, a number of NGOs were contracted to deliver it and the *Chefe de Posto* and the *Chefe de Sucos* were responsible for its distribution on site.

Although the WFP intended for the aid to be distributed evenly across all food insecure *sucos* (Ramirez, WFP, pers. comm., 26/7/04), the actual distribution varied considerably. A combination of pressures, including political manipulation and outdated statistics, led to poor quality information regarding food needs. Each area visited received varying quantities of food aid that was distributed differently among people. In some areas it was targeted to people who were identified as extremely vulnerable, in others it was distributed across all households. In both Maubara and Cailaco there were instances where people in paid employment received food rations, while in others, even woman headed households did not receive assistance.

As reported in the case studies, distribution caused major unrest in several of the sites. In some areas *suco* leaders diverted the food aid from areas which had produced large numbers of militia and their families. On a number of occasions this led to violence and further friction between the pro-independence and pro-autonomy factions of communities. Where only widows and other vulnerable people were targeted, it also contributed to rising levels of social discrimination against these already vulnerable people.

To complicate matters further, the most food insecure tended to be the people who received least. Those who were particularly vulnerable were returnees and the elderly, and those who had recently come back to highland areas and had been unable to re-establish livestock or engage in other forms of income generation. In the case of *Suco* B, food insecurity was claimed to cause the deaths of between fifteen and thirty people, and the ricochet of a number of recent returnees back to Indonesian territory. In other areas however, where people received greater quantities of food aid, recipients insinuated that the assistance had not been necessary as they had still had enough traditional food crops such as tubers to survive.

Aid agencies were aware that some difficulties existed, but were not familiar with the differing problems in each area. The head of the World Food Programme's Dili office used international experiences as his base line, commenting, "well, we do have problems here, but in comparison to North Korea or Saddam Hussein's Iraq, the level of monitoring we are able to

do is very good" (Ramirez, WFP, pers. comm., 26/7/04).

The situation exhibits an interesting dilemma. Aid organisations have been censured in countries such as Cambodia and also Timor Leste for overriding local authorities, and thereby disempowering them. This has been said to reduce their ability to develop the capacity to rule effectively (eg Macrae 2001:163). In this case however, local leaders managed the distribution of food. Under their direction, the delivery was marred by high levels of corruption and inequity, largely due to the simmering anger and resentment held against former militia members. In some cases, the inequity of food distribution led the families and associates of former militia to suffer from higher levels of food insecurity and mortality than other groups of people. Had aid organisations provided a more thorough needs assessments with effective monitoring and evaluation, they could perhaps have averted these problems. This neglect in planning or monitoring distribution however may have increased the authority of local leaders. Despite causing discontent, paradoxically, it may also have increased people's acceptance (if not the legitimacy) of the new governing structures leading to a greater degree of security and stability.

6.6 The Role of Aid in the Establishment of State Legitimacy

Despite the criticism directed towards the international community regarding the non-participation of Timorese in the peace building process (see for example Chopra 2000, Yayasan HAK 2000), the international aid community has contributed towards the authority of the Timorese governmental structures. Many of the critiques come from academics and educated activists in Dili, and while not without substance, do not necessarily represent the views of their less educated, poorer, rural counterparts. Although urban youth and Timorese NGOs complained that they were being excluded from the process of nation building by both the CNRT and UNTAET, in rural areas, people expected a highly interventionist and not necessarily democratic government structure. Civil society organisations, such as local NGOs, were generally not seen to play an important role in regulating the power of government and if anything, people feared the factionalism of the past. To establish credibility, the government needed to be seen leading, and much of the foreign intervention assisted in providing support to this end.

Stayees and returnees often associated the assistance of foreign relief aid with the Timorese

government and local leaders, rather than with foreign aid organisations. Although people were aware that foreign organisations had provided assistance, and despite the efforts by aid agencies to develop a high profile through investment in signage and other promotional mechanisms, few respondents knew which organisation had done what, instead putting greater store on the involvement of Timorese leaders.

This association started with the first attempts to bring back refugees from the border camps. The support of the aid industry, including the UNHCR, the UN bodies, the church and NGOs, was vital to the return of most returnees from 2000 onwards. The receipt of letters, family reunions, 'come and see', 'go and see' visits, were all claimed by returnees to have been very important in influencing people's decision to return. Despite the high levels of involvement by the international community, in general, returnees and stayees placed greater weight on the involvement of their leaders and family members, rather than on the coordination efforts by the aid community, which had enabled these events to occur.

The provision of work schemes in the emergency period may have also contributed to building faith in the new regime. While they were conducted under UNTAET auspices, they mirrored projects which had previously been organised by the Indonesian regime, thereby supplanting the previous leaders in the minds of the public and contributing to a sense of order and trust in the new administration[26].

Projects that were implemented at the community level were also perceived to be controlled by *suco* leadership, and the success or failure of the project was often attested to good or bad local leadership, rather than the quality of planning, implementation or monitoring by the aid organisation. As such, the equity of distribution of relief aid, such as housing and food aid, were attributed to the competence and even-handedness of local leaders. Aid organizations can thus be seen to have assisted in the empowerment of local organizations and leadership, assisting them to gain greater legitimacy among returnees and stayees that may be seen to have contributed to the degree of political stability that is evident in the country.

[26] This may now become a problem however, for as the funding has dried up, so have the public works programmes and the employment upon which so many people depended. This is impacting the level of legitimacy the government holds as people continue to see the implementation of public works schemes as a primary role of government.

6.7 Civil Society and Participatory Development: A Counter to the State?

Interestingly, efforts by various aid actors to support the development of civil society organisations also ended up contributing to the legitimacy of the state apparatus. Organisations set up as parallel structures to traditional state operated spheres were all marked by their high levels of failure. Most projects received large start-up funds but participants received little ongoing support and agencies expected participants to work voluntarily for the benefit of their community. With little comprehension of the complexity of ensuring community 'buy-in', most attempts were extremely problematic.

The most expensive of these forays was the World Bank's Community Empowerment Programme (CEP). With funding of US$21.5 million over 2.5 years, the programme aimed to set up a scheme where communities would democratically elect representatives responsible for identifying and implementing development projects (World Bank 2000). Demonstrating principles of "empowerment, transparency, inclusiveness, open choice, accountability, and sustainability" (World Bank 2001:3), the scheme attempted to replace the "top-down and highly centralised" system of governance that had operated in the Indonesian era (World Bank 2002:1). CEP was envisioned to rebuild necessary infrastructure and also to develop and strengthen civil society organisations, enhance social reconciliation and generate a sense of community ownership over locally identified development projects. Furthermore, the CEP was to be a cost effective and efficient alternative to the unwieldy and unaffordable sub-district and *suco* level structures which had operated in the Indonesian period (World Bank 2002:2).

As it turned out, the project hit a number of problems, including dissatisfaction with the voluntarism expected of committee members, patronage by the committees towards family and friends and the continuation of a top-down nature, where the need to have money spent within a particular time frame dictated project selection and funding[27]. In several instances the committee worked at odds with traditional and CNRT appointed *suco* leaders. None of the committees in the sites visited gained legitimacy with their constituents, and *suco* leaders complained that often they were left to fire fight. An unforeseen effect of the failure of the CEP programmes may have been that they strengthened the legitimacy of local level

[27] One former facilitator commented, "It wasn't really participation – we had to dance to the music – follow the money. We had to follow the banks priorities rather than the people's" (anon, 10/6/04)

governmental structures, as it was to these organisations that people and other aid organisations turned when they worked in the localities.

The World Bank's CEP experiment was not the sole failure in the period. A number of projects that attempted to operate through community management structures failed. In Lequidoe, the collapse of the Asian Development Bank's electricity project, discussed in Chapter 5.1, must be seen to some degree to be a consequence of poor planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation.

Needs prioritisations by communities seemed to be an ineffective way to identify projects, however further investigation revealed that much of the participation was little more than lip service to the tenets of participatory planning. While some residents were ostensibly involved in planning, more often, organisations would come to a site with a pre-packaged programme and participation was confined to allowing people to say "yes we want it" or "no, we don't". Most people interviewed said that they had never been involved in community consultations, nor had they taken any part in the planning or formal evaluation of projects. Their participation was usually in the form of labour, either paid or voluntary. Respondents felt that management decisions were made in consultation with *suco* and sub-district leaders, and therefore, attributed the quality of implementation to this structure.

The high number of failures from so-called participatory planning must be seen in the light of the poverty endemic to the area. People who were trying to pull their lives together and get ends to meet were hardly likely to refuse the opportunity to obtain anything that could be seen to contribute to their short-term welfare. It did not necessarily follow however, that they were committed to the programme's long-term functioning or had internalised the fact that, unlike in the Indonesian period, it would require either cash payments or the contribution of free labour for its ongoing existence. Rather than interpreting this in terms of dependency, as many of the aid organisations were wont to do, this response must be interpreted as resourceful people who were trying to use all available means to the best ends possible.

Despite claims that projects were accountable to their beneficiaries, as in the Indonesian period, accountability moved upwards; this time to foreign aid donors rather than the state. Most aid organisations did not follow up projects and were unaware of the programmes' long-term impact or the beneficiaries' perceptions of the programmes' successes or failures. Where project evaluations were undertaken, consultants often did not meet with beneficiaries at all, or

made hasty visits out of Dili, to conduct rapid rural appraisals (Clark 2003:6, Dolan 2004:105). On the occasions that organisations recognised this as an issue of concern, it was attributed to a shortage of time or language difficulties (La'o Hamutuk 2000:3). Success therefore, continued to be measured according to the concrete goals of objects built or trainings completed, rather than more valuable measures, such as the continued use of the object or the utilisation of the skills developed during the training.

Interestingly, the lack of truly participatory programming may have contributed to strengthening the role of the state in the eyes of returnees and stayees. Under Indonesian leadership, the Timorese had grown used to a highly interventionist state, which had a controlling interest in most aspects of people's lives. The failure of these attempts to develop civil society organisations only contributed to people's belief that these activities could not successfully be performed outside state structures.

The preceding discussion ought not lead the reader to the conclusion that people are satisfied with the current government and functioning of state structures. Both local and central government are accused of, not consulting with people in rural areas, nepotism, being too distant, corruption and collusion (Economist Intelligence Unit 2004). Nevertheless, in rural areas, civil society organisations are not perceived to hold a place in the democracy equation. Rather than depending on alternative structures to represent their needs and operate services, people intend to voice their discontent through exercising their right to vote in the upcoming *suco* elections.

6.8 The Role of Civil Society in Peace Building

It seems somewhat ironic that a major criticism of the previous Indonesian administration had been that civil society organisations had often only been formed in order to implement donor-funded projects (see World Bank 2001:2). Many civil society organisations formed in the Timor Leste were a response to the flood of donor dollars washing the country, rather than locally owned and carefully planned efforts to create long-term change. Many of the groups that received funding had little previous track record or legitimacy and collapsed as soon as donor funds were withdrawn (Clark 2003:23, Dolan 2004:45).

Local grass roots organisations did not seem to have the political strength, nor perhaps the will

to challenge leadership. Neither did they bridge horizontal gaps between groups. Instead, grass roots organisations such as the agriculture groups, tended to be based on previously existing organisations. As society prior to 1999 was already divided to some degree, the groups already represented political factions and hence have not bridged them. Furthermore, although many groups contained returnees and stayees, militia accused of lower level crimes were usually not involved unless they come from a militia stronghold.

Those grass roots organisations that experienced some longevity were those where people received benefits beyond the initial provision of aid and where the benefits clearly outweighed the inconvenience. There was little sense of volunteerism and organisations were not based around trust. Instead, these groups operated in a manner that reduced the risk of a core group of members carrying others. In weaving collectives, women sold and profited from the sale of their own goods only; in agriculture groups, to obtain the labour of others, it was necessary to work for others or pay them for their labour. CBOs, that did not achieve reciprocal personal benefit for effort, failed to take hold.

Grass roots organisations did not always contribute positively to community peace building efforts. While the church provided a support towards efforts for reconciliation, in other locations it was a source of division between people and a rallying point. Equally some of the civil society groups seemed particularly questionable. One former militia leader from Halilintar was apparently being sponsored by the church to teach local youth martial arts. It is conceivable that this activity was not particularly different from his former occupation.

Attempts to engender civil society and democratic decision making models were implemented haphazardly, and the success of grass roots organisations seemed to depend more on pre-existing groups than on the effort of the implementing organisation. Putnam's (in Krishna 2000:72) original assertion that social capital cannot be created holds some truth in the Timorese context, particularly in the period of an emergency relief programme, where few CBOs received consistent support for longer than a year or two.

6.9 The Paradox of Reconciliation & Justice

UNTAET's mandate stresses the importance of reconciliation. The East Timorese people also seek reconciliation between all sections of their society - but bringing the key perpetrators of war crimes to justice is an essential

element of reconciliation. (NGO Forum 2000)

As demonstrated in the quote above, there was a degree of dissatisfaction with the emphasis put on ensuring the return of refugees and reconciliation at the expense of justice. The divisions between international actors mirrored a division that existed between Timorese people and organisations where government, and perhaps many in rural communities, felt obliged to forgo justice for the achievement of reconciliation. This issue was evident from the top echelons of government, where in the world of realpolitik, reconciliation was seen as more important than justice in dealing with neighbour and former coloniser Indonesia, down to relationships between villagers in the *sucos* and *aldeihas* of Timor's rural areas. The fine balance between reconciliation, restorative justice and formal justice remained an issue of dissatisfaction with many people, as the leadership struggled to find a balance between people's desire for retribution and the social and political and economic need to put things behind them and face the country's pressing social and economic needs.

In 2001, Xanana Gusmao commented in an interview with the ABC:

> But if we talk about law only, justice only there is social justice to be considered also and what the priority? Bring people to the prison, feeding them, when our people are demanding for health assistance, health care, for education for their children. The problem is what is more heavy for the East Timorese leaders? (Gusmao 2001)

This issue was particularly relevant as the CNRT leadership, UNTAET and the UNHCR grappled with the difficult task of luring back the thousands of refugees from the camps in West Timor. Efforts to engage militia leaders, in the hope that they would bring back their followers, included on occasion, wining and dining them in Dili's finer restaurants, and treating them with a respect many local activists and international aid workers found particularly abhorrent (Larkin, CAVR, pers. comm, 2/6/04). The issue of justice and reconciliation was complicated further by the fact that the lower level militia have returned and face censure for their crimes, either through the CAVR or the court system, whereas the worst of the serious offenders remain protected inside Indonesia, in many cases holding elevated positions of power.

While most people desired to see perpetrators of serious crimes punished, there was also a

sense, particularly among rural populations, that passing up justice was a necessary price of peace. During the period of study, in a demonstration of reconciliation, President Xanana Gusmao met and hugged General Wiranto (see figure 17).

Figure 17: Reconciliation

Gusmao embraces Wiranto despite massacre claims
Source: Moore 2004

Wiranto has been indicted by the UN for crimes against humanity for his role in the 1997 violence and was standing at the time as a candidate in the Indonesian presidential election. The gesture created enormous discontent within the international and local activist community in Dili, and Gusmao was met at the airport by protesters on his return to Dili. Interestingly however, outside the capital there was greater acceptance of the gesture. There was a sense in the rural areas that reconciliation; at least at the shallower level of coexistence, was the price of independence: a bitter pill to be swallowed for peace and freedom. Rather than justice, people saw unity as the most essential element for ongoing peace and stability in the community. In Timor Leste, it is the least powerful who have been the victims of struggles by the more powerful. For these people perhaps compromise is an option they are well acquainted with.

The traditional conflict resolution mechanism of *nahe biti boot* has played an extremely important role in minimising the degree of post-conflict violence against returnees who were associated with militia. Prior to the establishment of the CAVR, many communities operated *nahe biti boot.* Staff members from UNPOL, the UNHCR and the SCU were often invited to attend the meetings alongside community and CNRT leaders, enhancing the legitimacy of the process and contributing to the authority of local leaders.

The biggest factor affecting the levels of violence against returnees however has been the process of the CAVR. Based on the *nahe biti boot* system, the work of the commission in community reconciliation has provided both returnees and stayees with a sense of closure to the period. The commission is probably one of the few examples of a genuine partnership between the Timorese and the international community. Mandated by the Timorese government, and with many respected Timorese working as commissioners, the CAVR has

received significant levels of funding and support from the international community, and many of its international advisors are old Timor hands who have come to the organisation through the Human Rights Unit or other INGOs. The commission's work has been widely accepted by the Timorese, with perhaps the greatest complaint against it, that its mandate has not been wide enough. Former militia reported that the number of attacks against them decreased substantially following the hearings.

It would be foolish to suggest, however, that the hearings created reconciliation in a deeper sense. The anger of stayees and victims of violence lingers on. There is continued resentment that many perpetrators did not take part in the process, that many people accused of serious crimes have not been charged, and that the majority of victims have not had a voice in the process. If anything, the CAVR has allowed victims and perpetrators to reconcile themselves to their shared future. There is no question that the past will be forgiven or forgotten.

Coexistence and the outward appearance of forgiveness is the necessary price of peace. Reconciliation is a big word and rifts were not only from 1999, but often represent old issues which have existed since the 1975 invasion, and perhaps in some cases still earlier (Gusmao 2001). Former militia have not been entirely forgiven, and on occasions will still be punished, either through acts of violence or through more subtle measures, such as exclusion from the receipt of aid. Nonetheless, people's emotions have subsided and they have become preoccupied with day-to-day existence. There is a sense that people are glad the anarchy of the late 1999/2000 has been replaced by the security of law and a police force that regulates their behaviour.

6.10 Summary

The major themes developed in this chapter highlight the impact of contacts between the programmes of aid agencies and communities in Timor Leste. It discusses the major themes that emerged from the case studies and looks at their value in light of theory on post-conflict peace building and reintegration. The fieldwork found that interventions had varying effects on the ability of returnees to reintegrate. Although often returnees, and particularly former militia were excluded from the benefits of aid programmes, by lessening the degree of economic and vulnerability communities were exposed to, aid may have played a role in reducing the extent of overt resentment against militia associated returnees.

Aid interventions also increased the acceptance of local governing structures and institutions, as they were perceived to take a leading role in the organisation, and distribution of aid and assistance in the *sucos*. In other instances however, badly targeted aid was the catalyst for further anger in communities and it led to additional incidences of violence. The greatest mechanism for a reduction in violence against returnees however, was the process of the CAVR.

CHAPTER 7 – CONCLUSIONS: AID, REINTEGRATION AND LIBERAL PEACE IN TIMOR LESTE

This study has examined the hypothesis that the reintegration of returnees into post-conflict communities is dependent on the development of aid-assisted liberal peace. Its analysis is primarily based upon the opinions and experiences of returnees, stayees and community leaders from four sub-districts of Timor Leste. The study appraised the perceived position of returnees relative to other members of their communities, the contribution of aid organisations to the construction of the norms, conditions and institutions of liberal peace at a local level and the extent to which these interventions facilitated the reintegration of returnees into their communities.

Part One of the thesis examined the intellectual background and theoretical relationship said to exist between reintegration and liberal peace. Current interest in this topic has arisen primarily as a result of the Post-Cold World Order, where the impacts of intra-state conflict on the developing and developed world have prompted a renewed interest in peace building as an aspect of regional and global security. As a result, the benefits of aid interventions in post-conflict peace building have received heightened attention.

Conflict has been linked to structural inequality and peace is claimed to be a function of individuals' personal security, their economic well-being and their participation in the social and political spheres of state and society. The reintegration of returnees is claimed to be an essential component of the development of peace in post-conflict communities. It has been widely argued by institutions such as the UNHCR, the UNDP and the World Bank, that until refugees are repatriated and reintegrated, durable peace cannot occur. The requirements for successful reintegration are posited to mirror those of liberal peace; namely personal security, economic growth and political representation. Essentially, both reintegration and durable peace are thus regarded as functions of a liberal market democracy.

Current theory and practice hold that in a post-conflict environment, the foundations for development and peace must be implemented as early as possible. These can be instigated even prior to the reconstruction of the state apparatus, through the development of economic activity, democratic and participatory decision-making models and an active civil society. All

relief efforts are to feed into longer-term development, reducing people's vulnerabilities and supporting the development of a robust liberal democracy. International agencies and national and international non-governmental organisations claim for themselves, a key role in the construction of these systems and institutions, thus creating the conditions of liberal peace and enabling the successful reintegration of returnees.

Part Two of the study examined the reintegration of returnees in four sub-districts of Western Timor Leste. It found that the situation of returnees varied within and across each of the sites. Where whole *sucos* had been involved in perpetrating militia violence, there was little social discrimination within *sucos*. Nonetheless, both returnees and stayees from these areas continued to be subject to social sanction and occasional bouts of violence when they ventured further afield. Relations in politically divided communities, where returnees were known or assumed to be pro-autonomy lived alongside or in areas neighbouring pro-independence supporters were much more fraught. There were higher levels of violence and more evidence of social sanction.

Aid played an important role in shaping the environment within which reintegration occurred, however the outcomes of assistance occasionally differed from those intended by the implementing body. In some instances outcomes were positive for community members, enabling people to restart productive activities and thus removing a source of ongoing tension among mixed communities. When returnees were a less powerful group within the suco, or leadership had been able to capture aid, they were more likely to be excluded from assistance, particularly when it involved receipt of a private rather than a public good. In a number of instances, the inequitable distribution of aid was the catalyst for unrest and violence. Especially on occasions that *aldeihas* were excluded from assistance, they would occasionally resort to sabotage or uncooperative behaviour to express their dissatisfaction.

In addition to their previous association with militia or pro-integrationists, the ability with which returnees were able to politically, economically and socially reintegrate was dependent on the skills and resources that individuals had access to, the physical environment, their vocation and the length of time they had been back. Furthermore, the leadership and respect held by local leaders affected the willingness of the receiving community to allow returnees to peacefully coexist.

The study found that a number of the core assertions regarding the role of aid agencies in the

creation of the conditions of liberal peace and their role in the reintegration of returnees are open to challenge. This chapter will draw out key conclusions regarding the effectiveness of this paradigm in guiding reintegration and peace-building efforts, through referring back to reintegration and peace building literature and examining it in light of the experiences of communities in Timor Leste.

7.1 Relief, Rehabilitation and The Relief-Development Continuum

Aid agencies and literature both place a high level of importance on the speedy rehabilitation of infrastructure and utilities. This is posited as being essential to both emergency and longer-term developmental needs. The actions of organisations in Timor were in line with this practice and a high priority was placed on the reconstruction and rehabilitation of facilities, homes and utilities across the country.

The reconstruction of facilities enabled people to restart their productive activities and normalise their existence. These actions reinforced the legitimacy of the new government in the eyes of the populace. Some reconstruction projects, such as the reconnection of power lines and the construction of community halls and notice boards may have been beyond people's immediate emergency needs and there existed a high degree of duplication between some agencies, however many others projects were essential to people's ability to participate in the social and economic fabric of life.

In the period that employment programmes operated, they enhanced people's confidence in the new administration and thus increased people's willingness to cooperate with its rule. The programmes were seen to be replacing schemes previously carried out by the Indonesian administration, fulfilling people's expectations of one of the functions of the state and contributing to their trust in the new state apparatus.

In a number of instances returnees and former militia returned too late to participate or benefit from these schemes. It is argued here however, that the implementation of the reconstruction activities such as the rehabilitation of homes contributed to defusing some tension between returnees who had been involved in the militia and other members of the communities. Their reconstruction assisted in appeasing the overt degree of anger held against returnees as it removed a more tangible reminder of the period of violence. There was a flip side however,

and when groups of former militia were obviously excluded from assistance, despite being present at the time of its distribution, it played a role in continuing dissatisfaction and jealousy.

The head of a large international organisation, asked rhetorically where all the money had gone (anon, 3/6/04). Although relief and development aid to post-conflict Timor Leste provided some temporary respite to people, its long-term benefits are more difficult to pinpoint. The relief development continuum, in each of its forms, provides a particularly aid-centric analysis of the role of aid in post-conflict societies, which is not immediately applicable to post-conflict Timor Leste. Although relief aid did assist people in reconfiguring their lives and may have assisted in contributing towards a positive sense of forward movement, most respondents, returnees and stayees, contended that it was only through their own effort that they were able to re-establish themselves.

Perhaps however, the difficulty with the continuum idea is that the term development has been equated with a measurable progression towards economic well-being on par with the so-called, 'developed' West. Duffield's 1997 critique of the continuum provides a less ambitious but perhaps more realistic sense of what the term in the late nineties and early millennium might really entail. He claims that the new multicultural enterprise of development signifies no more than what private aid agencies can actually do. As such, efforts to create development are really an extension of traditional relief programming, through the provision of capacity building, enabling the vulnerable and dispossessed to continue to survive in today's unequal world (Duffield 1997:529).

7.2 Economic Growth

This thesis challenges the assertion that economic growth is a necessary condition for refugees to successfully reintegrate but may impact long-term security and stability. As discussed by Stein in his criticism of the Returnee Aid and Development Approach (Stein 1994:45), repatriation into poverty and devastation can be a 'durable solution'. It is not disputed that economic growth may contribute to the development of longer term, sustainable peace[28] but in terms of the economic reintegration of returnees, in environments of widespread poverty such as that of Timor Leste, immediate macro-level economic growth is unrealisable goal. Instead fundamentally, a returnees' economic reintegration is determined by whether they are able to

[28] Although unless it is seen to be equitable, it could conceivably also contribute to ongoing jealousy and violence

survive at a level not dissimilar to other members of the surrounding communities.

It has been recognised by a number of players within the aid industry that micro-level aid initiatives do not have the ability to bridge the gap between the local and the national. Interventions that attempted to support and develop the ability of people to generate income were constrained by the skills, resources and personality of each returnee. Furthermore attempts were also limited by the macro-economic, social, political, and environmental conditions.

While not managing to provoke macro-level growth or any significant level of trickle in communities, some projects did marginally increase people's economic productivity. In these instances aid may have enabled families to better survive the hungry season or afford the basic items necessary for survival or to support their families. Whether or not returnees and former militia directly benefited from these projects, the outcome of the projects may still have contributed to their social reintegration because projects which enabled stayees to better meet their subsistence needs may also have played a role in lessening the overt feelings of anger held against former militia and pro-integrationists.

In a number of cases returnees were more food insecure than stayees. It could thus be argued that according to UNHCR's (1997:159) definition of reintegration they have not been totally reintegrated. Although relief and development aid could have assisted these people to overcome these vulnerabilities, the combination of local leaders diverting assistance from these people, alongside aid organisation's ignorance of local level politics, prevented their need from either being identified or addressed.

There is an argument voiced by some returnees, local leaders and the occasional foreign aid worker who experienced the violence or aftermath of the violence and destruction of 1999, that those responsible for its perpetration do not deserve assistance. Nonetheless, it is necessary to also consider that those who suffered most from their exclusion not the militia themselves, but their children, the elderly and women who had been associated with them[29]. Furthermore, ongoing inequality of treatment is likely to create further grounds for jealousy, violence and instability.

As discussed by Duffield (1997), rather than creating conditions for development, aid

[29] The impact of food insecurity on women is exacerbated by social norms that favour men over women in the division of food (FAO 2003:13).

initiatives are likely to only reduce people's level of vulnerability, and the extent to which they need to depend on external relief to meet their needs for survival. Rather than the early lofty ideas of development, in reality, the interventions of aid organisations are not able to span a continuum from relief to development. Instead all they appear to do is perhaps enable people to span a continuum from relief to subsistence.

7.3 Poverty and Inequality

A related issue is the impact that the introduction of resources into a resource poor environment can have (Anderson 1999:46). Poverty did not cause flare-ups of violence, but rather, violence appeared as a rebellion against perceived inequality. Rather than economic growth, the ability to subsist in a manner not dissimilar to other members of the surrounding communities is a necessary condition for reintegration.

Aid organisations were generally based in Dili and their interventions were stretched thinly over a wide area. Many organisations had a superficial level of understanding of the dynamics of the communities within which they worked. While working with community leaders, aid organisations often failed to recognise the partiality which local leaders held. Most leaders were chosen by the CNRT in the emergency period because of their involvement in the independence struggle. Many had personally suffered from militia violence and so they were not sympathetic to the needs of returnees, particularly those associated with the militia. The level of familiarity aid organisations held to communities was also limited by their perceived need for haste, poor inter-organisational communications between local and international staff, and also between head office and field staff.

Aid workers were aware that the inequitable distribution of resources into a resource poor environment could be a catalyst for unrest but constrained by distance, communication difficulties and short infrequent visits to project sites, they were unable to identify when, why and to whom it occurred. Occasionally claims that targeting was likely to create unrest would be used as an excuse for not identifying vulnerable groups within communities. Their failure to familiarise themselves with local level dynamics led to organisations being unable to position their assistance in a manner which minimised jealousy or violence or addressed real needs of the most vulnerable. In terms of refugee reintegration, this situation often led to worsened relationships between pro-independence supporters and people who had previously been

associated with militia forces or were otherwise ostracised from the communities' decision makers.

7.4 Governance: Legitimacy and Representation

The thesis also tests the hypothesis that democracy is a necessary component for refugee reintegration. There existed a difference between rural Timorese communities and foreign donor organisations regarding how they saw democracy function, particularly in terms of legitimacy and representation. The forms of democracy encouraged by donor organisations and NGOs were not necessarily meaningful for rural Timorese, whose experience of leadership was a combination of centralised state structures, traditional councils of elders and the resistance movement. Attempts by donor organisations to instigate democratic reform, which operated differently to their former experiences of leadership suffered from a lack of credibility within Timorese society and consequently failed to take root.

Rather than democratic representation, the most important factor for security and stability in communities was the legitimacy leaders were perceived to hold. As was discussed in the section on civil society, alien structures and forms of decision making imposed by foreign organisations were not adopted and achieved little longevity, regardless of whether the groups had been formed according to democratic principles. Instead legitimacy was granted based on the kudos leaders held, the leadership skills they displayed, their affiliation with other respected organisations and individuals, and the extent to which people were familiar with the operation and purpose of similar structures.

Where the international community put their support behind existing organisations or structures that operated in a customary manner, they were able to enhance their local legitimacy. Institutions that benefited from this support included the CNRT, the CAVR and the local and national government leaders. In these instances, international support contributed to stability and the ability of communities to build a more secure future. They were particularly valuable in reducing the level of physical violence towards former militia.

As was evidenced by the distribution problems around food support, aid organisations often found themselves in a bind, where governing structures operated in a manner antithetical to the values they attempted to promote. Aid was often 'captured' by local leaders and used to

reward or punish community members, particularly those who had been associated with militia forces. Caught between the need to empower Timorese organisations and the desire to support social change leading to equitable governance, the concept of ownership and legitimacy was often difficult to clarify and best practise difficult to determine. To the credit of the aid organisations, where they were aware of difficulties, measures were taken to contain them. On occasions this involved the removal of the contested support. At other times however, their lack of local level knowledge prevented any recognition of problems and their consequent inability to address them.

At present, although people are familiar with the term democracy, associating it with prosperity and free choice, there remains unease with its perceived confrontational nature, which people fear can easily escalate into violence. Democracy is not innate or instinctive. The adoption of essentially foreign democratic structures at the community level will not occur through short-term interventions, as they do not sit within traditional leadership structures and lack local credibility. The existence of democratic institutions have not provided the grounds through which returnees have been able to reintegrate, but rather it has been the respect and direction of paternalistic leaders such as Xanana Gusmao who have created a shared vision of a unified, peaceful and developed Timor Leste. Democracy in Timor Leste is still developing as both politicians and people adjust and adapt to a new form of governance. It may provide long-term representation and stability, or it may be the cause of further conflict. The future remains to be seen.

7.5 Civil Society

The development of civil society is posited to have a number of beneficial effects in post-conflict societies. The bridging of horizontal and vertical capital is claimed to provide a mechanism for increasing communication and understanding between formerly opposed parties. It is said to provide a balance to the power of the state and create a more robust and inclusive form of democracy. Furthermore it is attributed with the ability to replace some services, which may originally have been the domain of the state; providing a responsive and economical service that the state cannot fiscally or managerially achieve. Under the ideology of liberal peace, each of these mechanisms is said to create a more conducive environment for refugee reintegration, both in terms of social reintegration and reconciliation, access to

services, representation and also physical well-being.

An early lesson to be reinforced was that civil society organisations are not innately good and neither will they necessarily contribute to reconciliation or even improved communications between previously antagonistic groups. Several incidents highlighted in the case studies illustrated examples of civil society organisations providing the impetus for further conflict and providing pivots around which identity groups could differentiate between themselves and 'the other'. While some groups gave returnees a support group to which they could turn, as often, rather than contributing to the development of closer ties between different segments of society, the groups contributed to the continuation of these rifts.

Support of grass roots organisations by external agencies achieved mixed successes. Although in some instances aid strengthened existing civil society, it was less successful at creating organisations from scratch. In general, those grass roots organisations, which achieved some form of longevity, were based around previously existing groups and alliances. Groups formed simply for the purpose of a project were unlikely to survive the exit of the aid programme as in the aftermath of a complex political emergency people had low levels of trust and their first priorities lay in assuring the short-term well-being of the people closest to them. Furthermore, most groups still only mixed people who had previously had positive relations with each other. As such they were not able to bridge gaps between divided groups within society or directly contribute towards community level reconciliation.

There was a stronger argument that the support of grassroots organisations, which reduced people's vulnerabilities, could indirectly impact the willingness of people to coexist with former adversaries. Through increasing people's agricultural productivity and boosting people's ability to access assistance and resources, assistance may have played a role in reducing tensions, particularly where the aid assisted people who had been victims of the destruction and violence of the militia forces. This may have decreased the level of physical violence and social ostracism to which returning militia associates were subject.

Rhetoric by aid organisations often includes references to aid having the ability to 'empower' and 'mobilise' communities, enabling them to 'lead their own development'. Sitting within the good governance framework, community-based management has become a new darling within the aid sector. The majority of efforts however, failed to create the momentum towards development that had been envisioned.

Despite agencies proclaiming their participatory style of operation, most support of community-based development was implemented using a blueprint approach with only token gestures made towards local level consultation. This was true for both their operational structures adopted and the choice of projects that they instigated. Many of the community based organisations promoted by aid agencies were far removed from any form of organisation that people had previously experienced. Aid agencies were aware of the high levels of illiteracy and the lack of formal organisational experience of most Timorese, but seemed to expect that the adoption of the pseudo-Frierian participatory rural appraisal techniques and a large cash input would replace the need for long-term support or genuine partnership. Following a minimal amount of 'capacity building' of the local management committees, the aid organisations would usually depart as quickly as they had appeared.

The reliance of many externally instigated CBOs on volunteerism did not take into account the cultural norm of reciprocity. Generally CBO members were unwilling to put any continuous effort into projects that enabled some members to freeload off the efforts of others. Most communities did not feel any sense of ownership over the externally instigated CBOs and neither did they believe that their ongoing effort would result in a greater amount of personal benefit. As such, participants held little concern regarding the long-term outcomes of the projects. Interestingly, the lack of concern over outcomes was also mirrored by the disinterest of aid organisations, which rarely made any follow-up evaluations other than to ascertain that the physical construction of the project was complete.

The philosophy of community management is also attributed with the ability to develop community-level conflict resolution mechanisms. While this potentially could have developed over the long-term, it was an unrealistic expectation in the short-term, where most communities still experience significant degrees of division. People remain physically and economically insecure and communities are beds of distrust and jealousy. As a result, people tend to be more concerned with meeting the immediate needs of their own households and families rather than contributing to their communities' longer term 'common good'. In a number of instances, this concern, coupled with the volunteerism required of committee members, resulted in projects being stripped of their useful assets and abandoned soon after the departure of the implementing organisation.

The design of aid interventions often ignored the experience and expectations of the Timorese

people. Coupled with a superficial understanding of the effort necessary to instigate social change, aid organisations achieved little success in their efforts to develop democratic civil society organisations. Communities did not generally develop the skills and capacity to operate local level initiatives and neither did the concept of 'local ownership' or unified community empowerment take hold. Non-indigenous forms of community-based organisations were generally ineffective and consequently did not serve the needs of either stayees or returnees. Rather than providing massive short-term funding boosts, working with communities more slowly and intimately may have increased the degree to which individuals were able to develop capacity, and may also have led to genuine sustainable improvement.

7.6 JUSTICE AND RECONCILIATION

Justice remains a fraught issue in Timor Leste. As previously mentioned, the support of international actors in the development of Timorese system of justice has assisted in legitimising the process of justice[30]. The establishment of the courts and the socialisation of procedures for people accused of crimes who resided in West Timor provided an incentive for refugees to return.

The CAVR provided an imperfect but valuable mechanism in rural areas for addressing the past and allowing people to move onwards. It has been less successful however, in localities that experienced greater levels of violence. Nonetheless, the country remains in a bind, as the likelihood of justice being served, for the crimes perpetrated in 1999 or previously are looking increasingly remote. The impunity of criminals taking refuge in Indonesia and the need felt by Timorese policy makers and many Timorese themselves, to make peace with Jakarta and move towards a more mutually beneficial relationship makes the possibility of achieving justice in Timor Leste for lower level criminals more difficult.

Furthermore, as pointed out by Gusmao in the previous chapter, the issue of structural justice is also a dominating issue. The Timorese government is grappling with a tight budget and vast social needs. With rising levels of discontent among groups of marginalized people occasionally flaring into violence, the need to meet people' immediate physical needs are arguably of greater importance than righting the wrongs of the past. Accordingly, this

[30] That is not to imply that the justice system is not without problems. A number of papers and articles, such as Clausen (2005) have addressed the issues, where tight budgets and inexperienced staff are hindering the operation of the courts.

interpretation might suggest that aid interventions, which lessen people's physical and economic vulnerabilities, are likely to contribute most to the ability of communities to coexist.

7.7 Aid, Reintegration and Liberal Peace

This study finds that aid interventions in Timor Leste were able to enhance people's ability to subsist, but they were more limited in their ability to contribute to reintegration through the development of liberal peace. Despite the enormous financial outlay of the international community, a number of obstacles prevented aid agencies from playing a significant role in the construction of the norms, conditions or institutions of liberal peace. While some problems could have been overcome through altering organisational practice, other difficulties related more to the limited degree of authority that aid agencies actually wielded.

The greatest impediment to aid organisations related to the limited extent of aid agencies' influence. Although returnees trickled back over a number of years, none arrived prior to the achievement of any fundamental changes to the structure of the economic, political or social environment. Aid activities did not exist in a vacuum, but were conducted in a dynamic environment where all stakeholders were affected by macro-economic, political, cultural and social pressures, people's personal histories and environmental and climatic conditions. The interventions of aid agencies were not without impact, but neither were they enough to exclusively determine the context of return. While in many instances aid organisations were in a position to be able to reduce peoples' most immediate vulnerabilities, it was not within their sphere of influence to create change beyond the micro-level.

The second major obstacle to aid agencies' attempts to build a durable peace related to their operational style. In many instances, they had low levels of engagement with the wider communities and they lacked a deep understanding of the local context. This prevented them from recognising or effectively addressing problems relating to reintegration. Most agencies did not acknowledge the internal rifts that existed within the *sucos*. Communities were treated as though they were homogeneous groups and returnees were assumed to be completely reintegrated. *Suco* and sub-district leaders were treated as though they were apolitical. The cooperation of aid agencies with community leaders lifted the authority of these individuals and their organisations, but it did not necessarily contribute to the adoption of participatory or representative democratic practice.

Problems caused by their low levels of engagement also prevented agencies from understanding the nature of Timorese civil society. Timorese communities had community-based organisations which operated effectively, but differently from those imported by the external aid agencies. Issues such as equity held greater importance to the Timorese than participatory decision-making and transparency. While expatriates viewed community self-help in terms of volunteerism, the Timorese were more concerned with the reciprocity of effort and benefits. This was particularly the case in conflict-affected communities, where there were low levels of trust and people's first concern was to ensure the survival of themselves and their dependents. The differences in expectation and priorities contributed to the failure of the imported models to achieve legitimacy or longevity with the Timorese.

There is a sense in the peace building literature that community development is easy if one gets the recipe right. This confidence was mirrored in the operational procedures undertaken by aid organisations who expected communities to take over the operation of projects following a minimal amount of consultation, a small number of training sessions and the contribution of resources or cash. In the rush to meet emergency needs and to spend budgets within the allocated time frame, aid agencies often were forced to sacrifice partnership and a relationship of mutual learning for short-term expediency. This manner of operation continued even beyond the period of the emergency, affecting their ability to develop functional and sustainable programmes.

Repatriation however, was not and could not be delayed until the development of the ideals liberal peace could be attained. The failure of the international community to significantly influence social change did not prevent the majority of returnees and militia from repatriating or reintegrating. The vision of liberal peace, with a democratic government structure, a strong civil society and a vibrant market economy cannot be created instantly, but is more likely to be the consequence of years of locally owned political, institutional and social change.

The support provided by aid agencies did nonetheless positively affect the ability of communities to reintegrate. Reconstruction, emergency food, tools and loans all assisted people to re-establish themselves. The acknowledgement of the authority of local leaders enhanced their local legitimacy and contributed to an environment of stability and security. In many instances former-militia and those who repatriated after the emergency period were excluded from the benefits of direct assistance, but aid provided to victims a sense of

recompense and perhaps increased their willingness to move beyond the past. Although badly targeted aid was a catalyst for further instability and violence, where it contributed to a sense of physical, emotional and material security, it increased the ability of the population to imagine a shared future together. In instances that it assisted communities to reduce their vulnerabilities in an equitable manner, it contributed to enabling returnees and communities to reintegrate.

Despite the huge damage that militia and the TNI inflicted on the country in 1999, there have only been three reported murders of returning militia (pers. comm. Barnes, S. 31/5/04) and most Timorese grudgingly tolerate their presence. Most people have returned to subsistence activities and eke out a living on their farms. In many cases, returnees are less economically secure than other community members but they are entitled to the same political rights as other Timorese. Social rifts will not be healed overnight, but may resume over time.

7.8 Lessons

Lessons to be taken from this study include the fact that economic growth must go hand in hand with a sense of equality. Assuming that democracy provides a more representative and peaceful form of governance, it must still be developed in a manner that is locally meaningful and which engenders cooperation rather than division. Civil society cannot be created, but may form in times where people see that it will provide personal benefits, which are greater than the inconvenience of participation and are representative of the effort involved. Furthermore, civil society cannot be treated simply as a mechanism to cut costs, as the development of local capacity, particularly when people are expected to operate in unfamiliar roles, is a long-term process, which requires ongoing support.

In order to increase their effectiveness, aid organisations must reach across the wider community rather than simply approaching obvious leaders. Only then will they be able to recognise political and social dynamics in communities enabling them to develop more sensitive and appropriate programmes. For agencies to build capacity, they must work slowly and intimately with communities. Only then will they be able facilitate the achievement of locally owned community development.

It is vital that aid interventions are seen to equitably assist community members. The few occasions where targeting was accepted by communities were when the purpose of the

assistance was clear and people agreed with the selection criteria. Targeting however was often used as an expression of the power of local leaders, and was used to punish or reward. On occasions targeting created further conflict and violence among community members.

Reintegration is an internal process that occurs on many levels and in a number of ways. The resourcefulness and attitudes of returnees, coupled with the willingness of stayees to find a way to deal with the past, are of primary importance to its success. The interventions of aid organisations can either help or hinder this process.

Rather than providing aid according to a blueprint prescription for peace and development, organisations must develop close relationship with the communities with whom they work; they must recognise the pain and anger that have gone before and the consequences this has on current community dynamics. Furthermore, they must work in a manner than builds people's faith, across the lines of division, in a shared future. The lessons this study draws are by no means new. Sensitivity, open communication with all stakeholders and the willingness to take time, have been identified on numerous occasions to enable more effective and sustainable development programming. These principles apply equally to post-conflict communities where formerly opposed individuals must attempt to live together once again.

There remains a need for further research. This study provides an overview of the effects that the agglomeration of aid organisations had on the reintegration of returnees in four Timorese communities. Notwithstanding their diverse mandates and varying operational and personal styles, all organisations adhered to an ideal inculcated with the principles of liberal peace. Practice however, did not often reflect rhetoric as environmental, social, political and institutional pressures affected the operation of the agencies. Should instances be identified where aid agencies operating programmes in divided communities are able to adopt a participatory and intimate approach to their practice, it will provide an interesting case study, which can play an important role in informing future practice. In Timor Leste, an opportunity exists to follow up the results of this study, particularly in relation to community based organisations, assessing whether their contact with the international aid community has affected organisational structures and whether it has acted as an impetus to motivate locally instigated community-wide development.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: INTERVIEWS WITH AID ORGANISATIONS, TIMOR LESTE

Local Non Governmental Organisations (LNGOs)

Anon, Yayasan Hak

Albina Freitas, Alola Foundation

Anon, Fokupus, Maliana

Gilman Santos, Ema Mata Dalan Ba (ETADEP)

Jacinta and Cassia. Lao Hamutuk[31]

Helen Todd, Moris Rasik[32]

CAVR

Ben Larke, CAVR

Jaivito, CAVR

Susanna Barnes, Former JRS, CAVR

Julio, CAVR

International Non Governmental Organisations (INGOs)

Fiona Hamilton, World Vision

Anon, Maliana Office, World Vision

Adriano do Nascimento, Catholic Relief Service

Jill Umbach, Care Canada

Bi-lateral Donors

Nicole Sybel, USAID

UN Agencies and International Finance Institutions

Lucielo Ramirez, World Food Programme

Kai Neilsen, United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

Zahra Bolouri, International Organisation for Migration

Rui Gomes, United Nations Development Programme

Rui Manuel Hanjam, Community Empowerment Programme, World Bank

UNPOL translator, Maliana

Academic Institution

Rebecca Engel, Columbia University

Religious Staff

Father Cyrus, Bobonaro

Sister, Maliana

Pastor, Lequidoe

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[31] This organisation is based in Timor but with a strong component of international staff could arguably be classified as either an INGO or LNGO.

[32] See note 27

APPENDIX B: GLOSSARY AND ACRONYMS

aldeia	hamlet, *suco* subsection
Apodeti	Associação Popular Democratica Timorense, Timorese Popular Democratic Association
BMP	Besi Merah Putih, lit. Red and White Iron, militia group based in Liquiça
CAVR	Comissão de Acolhimento, Verdate e Reconciliação de Timor Leste (lit. The Commission on Reception, Truth, and Reconciliation)
Chefe	Leader eg *Chefe de Posto*, sub-district leader
CNRT	Conselho National da Resistência Timorense, National Council of Timorese Resistance
CPD-RDTL	Conselho Popular Pela Defesa da Republica Democratica de Timor Leste, Popular Council for the Defence of the Democratic Republic of East Timor
ETTA	East Timorese Transitional Authority (under UNTAET)
ETADEP	Ema maTA Dalan ba Progressu, A local NGO which is involved in agricultural support
EVI	Extremely Vulnerable Person
Falintil	Força Armadas de Libertação Nacional de Timor Leste, Armed forces for the national Liberation of East Timor
FDTL	Força Defensa Timor Leste, East Timor Defence Force (successor to Falintil)
Fretilin	Frente de Politica Interna, Internal Political Front
GoI	Government of Indonesia
GoTL	Government of Timor Leste
GRO	Grass roots organisation, community based organisation
Halilintar	Thunderbolt militia, Bobonaro
IDP	Internally Displaced Person
IFI	International Finance Institution
INGO	International non-governmental organisation
INTERFET	International Force in East Timor
IOM	International Organisation for Migration
Kopassus	TNI's elite special forces, covert and overt operations
liurai	King or chief of a kingdom or village
LNGO	Local non-governmental organisation
Malai	Foreigner – white person
Nahe biti boot	Traditional Medaiation and Reconciliation Process (lit. big mat)
NGO	Non-governmental Organisation
OAU	Organisation for African Unity
ODA	Overseas Development Assistance
OISCA	Organisation for Industrial Spiritual and Cultural Advancement, Japanese NGO
OPMT	Organização Popular da Mulher Timorense, Timorese women's organization (Fretlini)
PKF	Peace Keeping Force
PNTL	Policia National Timor Leste, Police Force of Timor Leste
Posto	Sub-district

QuIP	Quick Impact Project
Somalia	Sona Male La Iha Hai – lit. 'No problem if stab someone', Liquicia militia group
suco	Village, sub-district subsection composed of a number of *aldeihas*
Tetum	East Timorese national language
TNI	Tentara Nasional Indonesia, Indonesian National Military (called ABRI prior to April 1999)
UDT	Uniao Democrática Timorense, Timorese Democratic Union
UNAMET	United Nation's Mission in East Timor
UNDP	United Nation's Development Programme
UNHCR	United Nation's High Commissioner for Refugees
UNPOL	United Nation's Police
UNTAET	United Nation's Transitional Administration in East Timor
WFP	World Food Programme

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