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Civil Society Capacity Building in Post-Conflict Societies: The Experience of Bosnia and Herzegovina and Kosovo

By Bill Sterland

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Key words: capacity building, civil society, NGO, post-conflict, transition, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo

Executive Summary

This paper investigates the approaches and methods applied to NGO capacity building in Bosnia and Herzegovina (B&H) and Kosovo during parallel and ongoing experiences of internationally determined post-conflict social, political and economic rehabilitation and transition. Capacity building in both settings is a new term, having arrived with equally novel concepts such as the 'NGO', 'civil society', 'democracy; and 'good governance' as part of a broader development discourse driving efforts to re-establish social cohesion and fashion new states according to Western-style liberal democracy.

Early on, NGO capacity building became equated with training to build the individual skills deemed necessary for instilling professionalism in B&H and Kosovo's civil societies, whose emergence was artificially stimulated by easy access to foreign funds for the delivery of humanitarian aid and the provision of essential services. Capacity building was established as an essential tool for the creation of a de-politicised, externally oriented NGO-based civil society that retained little continuity with previous forms of civic representation and community solidarity. By linking capacity building to funding requirements and the achievement of project results, efforts to strengthen NGOs have often ignored issues of organisational coherence, long-term sustainability and community solidarity and support.

A key area for capacity building in post-conflict societies, overlooked in many cases in both B&H and Kosovo, is initial confidence building with groups and communities to re-establish trust, cooperation and solidarity as the basis for collective action. In multi-ethnic localities or areas of minority return, confidence building takes on the appearance of conflict resolution, an activity which may require patient, longer-term mediation facilitated by external actors.

B&H and Kosovo have progressed from the immediate chaos of a post-conflict environment along the road to long-term institutional strengthening and economic development, local NGO capacity building priorities have changed. In Kosovo, many

NGOs are still taxed with defining a social mission for themselves that goes beyond the supply of services independently of local authorities which are increasingly showing their readiness to provide for the needs of their local communities. In B&H, NGOs are challenged with strengthening a range of capacities, such as gaining theoretical understanding of social and economic development, increasing specialist knowledge within the organisation, adopting rights-based approaches, strengthening advocacy and campaigning skills, improving analytical reflection, developing social research capabilities, and providing inputs into public policy, all of which will assist them to impact positively on nationally-led development policies. In both contexts, NGO performance and relevance will also be dependent on the civil society sector's ability to improve internal cohesion, and also cross-sector dialogue, cooperation and coordination.

Introduction

This paper contributes to INTRAC's Praxis series of contextual studies into the conceptualisation and practice of capacity building of CSOs. The study focuses on emergent civil societies in two post-conflict and transitional Balkan environments, Bosnia and Herzegovina (B&H), and Kosovo.¹ Similar recent histories of bloody nationalistic conflict arising within the wider context of the complex unravelling of former Yugoslavia, and subsequent parallel and ongoing experiences of an internationally determined process of social, political and economic rehabilitation and transition, makes the comparison of Kosovo and B&H both pertinent and informative. In both cases the International Community² purposely promoted the hitherto unfamiliar idea of the NGO and stimulated the development of an NGO-based civil society intended to provide a vehicle for restoring social cohesion, and instilling a culture of participatory democracy.

Throughout the paper, an NGO is taken to mean a non-profit making organisation independent of the Market or the State, possessing the potential to operate professionally owing to rights and obligations gained through its formal registration as a legal entity. This definition covers a wide range of organisational types and purposes, including professional development agencies and research houses, special interest groups and community associations, as well as market-related organisations

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such as trades unions or employers associations, and ideologically founded organisations representing philosophical, religious and political views.

The paper seeks to highlight the particular issues that affect capacity building in post-conflict and transitional settings, and examine them in relation to wider policies of rehabilitation and development, the donor environment and the post-conflict socio-political structure. Having outlined various local understandings of capacity building,

the paper proceeds to explore how those understandings have been applied in practice, taking into consideration social and financial constraints in the local and external environments. To what extent do social dislocations and the erosion of trust and confidence that arise from war experiences determine the practice of NGO capacity building? What is the relationship between a post-conflict economy and organisational and civil strengthening? Special consideration is given to identifying examples of successful capacity building approaches and those conditions that have enhanced or enabled this work.

¹ Normal English spelling is adhered to in the text for Kosovan place names, rather than give both Albanian and Serbian spellings. In some cases, names will appear Serbian; in others, Albanian.

² The International Community comprises a variety of multi-national organisations, including the United Nations, European Union, OSCE (Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe) and NATO, as well as individual bilateral donor countries.

With the view to understanding how capacity building has developed as Kosovo and B&H move beyond immediate post-war recovery towards longer-term development, current capacity building practice is also explored. Who is providing capacity building services? What is the local demand for capacity building? What are the capacity building priorities now and for the future?

These issues are placed in the wider context of the current socio-economic and political conditions prevailing in both Kosovo and B&H. Historical perspective is provided by a brief overview of previous forms of civil society in former Yugoslavia, and a detailed account of the emergence of today's civil societies in the immediate post-war period.

1.1 Map of Bosnia and Herzegovina



Source: CIA 1997, available at http://www.lib.utexas.edu/maps/europe/bosnia_herzegovina_pol97.jpg

2. The Socio-Economic and Political Context

2.1 Kosovo today

During the writing of this report, UN-led negotiations between Albanian Kosovar political leaders and the Serbian government to resolve the political status of Kosovo finally got underway. While Kosovo officially remains a province of the state of Serbia and Montenegro, since the ending of conflict in June 1999 and the replacement of Serbian security forces by KFOR, the NATO-led peacekeepers, Kosovo has been maintained as an international protectorate in a state of political limbo by the United Nations Interim Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK). With a mission to establish democratic and multi-ethnic governance, UNMIK has endeavoured to build afresh all the institutions of government, law and order and service provision necessary for independent self-government, as well as provide a framework for economic development.

The key feature of this process has been the establishment of a democratically elected central government in 2002, the Provisional Institutions of Self-Government (PISG), accompanied by the handing over of legislative and executive powers in most areas of social policy, and the gradual decentralisation of many services to the province's 30 municipalities. UNMIK and its head, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General (SRSG), retain powers in security, external relations, budgetary and monetary policy, and most crucially exercise the right to veto any measures adopted by the Assembly.

In moving towards final status talks, UNMIK and the UN Secretary General have adjudged that the fledgling Kosovan institutions have achieved sufficient progress towards achieving key standards by which all people, "regardless of ethnic background,

The push for status talks reflects more the fear of serious civil unrest from the province's majority ethnic Albanian population.

race or religion, are free to live, work and travel without fear, hostility or danger, and where there is tolerance, justice and peace for everyone". In reality, progress in all areas is extremely limited. The push for status talks reflects more the fear of serious civil unrest from the province's majority ethnic Albanian population, if real movement towards their independence (from both the international administration and Serbia) is not forthcoming.

It also reflects the growing impatience from the International Community with the lack of progress in establishing Kosovo as a viable political and economic entity.

Most worrying is the continued standoff between the Albanian Kosovars, who account for 88% of the province's 1.9 million inhabitants, and the Serbian Kosovar minority, comprising around 7% of the total population.³ 55,000 of the Serbian Kosovar minority

³ The remaining 5% of the population is composed of Bosniak, Roma, Ashkali, Turkish, and Gorani populations.

are concentrated in and around the northern half of the town of Mitrovica, leaving approximately 75,000 scattered across the whole province in numerous isolated enclaves under the protection of KFOR troops. Security concerns and lack of freedom of movement remain the highest priorities for these ethnic Serbs. Although ethnically motivated violence is currently at a low level, major disturbances across the whole of Kosovo in March 2004, during which over 4,000 Serbian Kosovars and Roma were driven from their homes, 700 houses badly damaged and 19 lost their lives, revealed the continuing potential for ethnic violence and the lack of preparedness of both local and international security forces to intervene in a timely and even handed way. The UNDP 2004 Kosovo Human Development report drew the conclusion that "the failure to integrate Kosovo's minorities can lead to further violations of human rights and even war".

Serbian Kosovars and other ethnic minorities are more likely to be unemployed than the Albanian majority, although with official unemployment for the whole province standing at over 50%, joblessness affects nearly all households in Kosovo. Ethnic discrimination is a major limiting factor in gaining access to public services for all ethnic minorities. On the other hand, Serbian enclaves pursue a policy of non-cooperation with municipal authorities and have established parallel education and health systems, funded by Serbia. Under this parallel system, teachers, doctors and other professionals receive salaries two times those in Serbia proper.⁴

Return of property to those displaced in the war, responsibility for which falls on local authorities, has been largely unsuccessful. This is a serious impediment to the rule of law, but is also considered a major factor behind the lack of progress in returns of all

Serbian enclaves pursue a policy of non-cooperation with municipal authorities and have established parallel education and health systems, funded by Serbia.

minority populations. In the post-war period an estimated 11,000 minority returns have taken place, but there are a further 65,000 Serbian Kosovars⁵ and maybe as many as 40,000 Roma, Ashkali and Egyptians (RAE) displaced in Serbia and Montenegro, with a further 45,000 displaced inside Kosovo of all nationalities.

After years of economic mismanagement under Milošević's repressive regime in the 1990s and a longer history of economic underdevelopment, current slow economic growth has not translated into increased prosperity. In 2003, a GDP rate of 848 Euro (\$1,071) per capita was still under the figure recorded for the province in 1985, a time when Kosovo had already long been the poorest region of Yugoslavia and whose income was calculated to be a staggering one sixth of the most prosperous Yugoslav republic of Slovenia. While the 2004 UNDP Human Development Report estimates that overall poverty levels have

⁴ Since the start of status talks, the Serbian government has forced those working in the parallel system to effectively choose between Kosovan or Serbian authority by accepting only one salary. Most have chosen to continue to receive their salary from Belgrade.

⁵ This figure, representing a realistic recalculation by ESI (2004: The Lausanne Principle) is disputed. Most sources put the figure between 160,000 and 220,000.

fallen slightly, those living in extreme poverty stands at 13% of the population, and 47% of the population subsist on under \$2 a day (approx. 1.6 Euro). Poverty affects all sections of Kosovan society, but its burden falls disproportionately on the ethnic minorities, especially the RAE, the under 25s, who number 52% of the population, and women, who on average earn four times less than men and are less engaged in the workforce.

2.2 Bosnia and Herzegovina today

Ten years after the ending of the nationalist conflict (1992–95), during which an estimated 220,000 people lost their lives and 2.4 million from a total population of 4.37 million were made refugees or internally displaced, Bosnia and Herzegovina (B&H) is also still struggling to overcome the social dislocations of war, establish an effective system of governance and make the transition from socialism to a working market economy.

B&H, like Kosovo, is effectively an international protectorate, retaining an international peacekeeping force⁶ and an international administration, the Office of the High Representative, (OHR) whose role has been to act as 'grand arbiter' with binding powers between local political authorities, and an enforcer of institutional reform in all areas of civil and public administration. However, B&H is a recognised sovereign state whose constitutional structure and powers were defined in the Dayton Peace Accords (DPA), signed in December 1995. This agreement formally establishes a unified liberal democracy and guarantees the observance of all international human rights with the aim of re-establishing a multicultural and pluralist society. Most importantly it prescribes a series of obligations for all political authorities to assist and facilitate the return of all refugees and displaced persons. To protect national interests and ensure minority representation the DPA creates a high degree of decentralisation, but paradoxically this has only served to reinforce the principles of ethno-national exclusionism that were the *raison d'être* for the conflict. Effective power and administrative capacity lie with two 'Entities', the Federation of Bosniaks and Croats and the Serbian Republic (RS), whose geographical areas (51% and 49% respectively) reflect wartime gains of the respective parties and the national composition of the population after the wartime ethnic cleansing. The Federation is further divided into ten cantons possessing major powers in tax raising and social policy, which were defined in such a way as to create a balance of local powers between Croat and Bosnjak national interests. This complicated fragmentation of powers has resulted in splitting the country into three nationally determined spheres of political authority.

The state, on the other hand, whose executive consists of a presidency and council of ministers, while representative of all three national interests, has severely restricted financial strength and authority. These restrictions make it unable to fulfil its functions

⁶ In 2004 a European force (EUFOR) of 7,000 troops replaced the NATO-led SFOR which had steadily been cut overtime from its initial post-war strength of 60,000.

of ensuring universal standards, providing social protection, and ensuring integrated social policy and regulatory practices.

By means of persuasion, threat, coercion and financial incentive, the OHR, assisted by the International Community, has battled hard over the last ten years to implement the DPA and also to strengthen the powers of the state without ostensibly diminishing decentralisation. Key achievements have been a functioning formal democracy, a favourable security environment including full freedom of movement, the establishment of a state customs and border service, the creation of the necessary conditions for a single economic space through the introduction of VAT in early 2006, and unified armed forces answering to a state minister of defence.

While return of property to those displaced has been achieved in all but a handful of cases, real return has been harder to achieve. It is estimated that around 1 million people have returned, leaving up to a total of 1.2 million internally displaced (300,000–400,000) or permanently exiled in foreign countries. While return and reconstruction efforts continue, the country has turned its attention to reforming outdated, inefficient and often corrupt institutions that have largely been inherited from the former Yugoslavia, and also to stimulating economic development.

Although there is economic stability and some growth, the country has not reached pre-war levels of output, and poverty and social hardship are widespread. An underlying problem is the failure so far to reform the base of economic activity from its socialist mix of state-run industry and small-scale peasant farming. Real unemployment is around 16%⁷ and while the number of people living in extreme poverty is small, 19.5% live below the official income poverty line. Those suffering poverty are most likely to be victims of discrimination on grounds of nationality, political affiliation or age. In particular, discrimination against returnees belonging to ethnic minorities in more rural areas is a major reason for inequitable provision of social welfare and social services. The unemployment rate is highest in the 21–25 age group and a 2003 UN study⁸ states that “young people with low educational skills are frequently facing low income levels and fewer job opportunities, and as a consequence are in danger of living in poverty”.

Governance is weak, and government structures are cumbersome, accounting for 54% of GDP, which stood at only \$1,362 per capita in 2003.⁹ Access to local government is difficult, there are low levels of participation by citizens in decision making, and a common belief that corruption is rife throughout government institutions.

⁷ Based on ILO definitions that include the grey economy. Official unemployment is calculated to be as high as 40%.

⁸ UN in B&H (2003), Youth in Bosnia and Herzegovina 2003: Are you part of the problem or part of the solution. According to this report unemployment among 19-24 year olds is 2.6 times higher than among 29-49 year olds and 3.6 times higher than among 50-60 year olds.

⁹ When adjusted to reflect PPP (Purchasing Power Parity), GDP per capita in 2003 was \$5,970. Despite growth in adjusted GDP of over 50% since 2000, GDP in B&H was lower than all other *states* in Eastern Europe except Albania. PPP adjusted GDP in Kosovo was a mere \$2,660 in 2003, below Albania and less than half than in B&H.

3. Traditions of Civil Society in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Kosovo

3.1 The roots of civil society in former Yugoslavia

In all regions of the former Yugoslavia, including B&H and Kosovo, there has been a history of religious, educational, humanitarian and cultural organisations stretching back to the 19th century. While these organisations reflected concerns for community solidarity and individual advancement through literary campaigns and education, in many cases they came to be associated with movements of national awakening, and political aspirations for greater freedoms and self-expression, both under Ottoman rule in the 19th century, and later within the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes.¹⁰ After the establishment of communist rule under Tito from 1945, the freedom of these nationally-oriented and religion-centred groups was curtailed by the Party, the League of Communists. In their place, a rich array of mainly amateur social associations and special interest groups grew up in close cooperation with local governments that were ultimately linked to, and under the control of the Party. These included youth groups, sports and cultural clubs, societies for those with disabilities and professional associations.

At the same time, the Yugoslav system of self-management, that linked workers committees, local government and the Party in a complicated system of one-party quasi-democratic representation, included elected community committees that represented the lowest level of political administration, the commune or *mjesna zajednica*. These formed an important focus for local planning and community participation.

While the structures of socialist self-management prevented the emergence of a free civil society independent of the State, they were undeniably the basis for voluntarism and community giving, both of which were important features of community life in former Yugoslavia.

3.2 Pre-war civil society in Bosnia and Herzegovina

In the late 1980s, economic crisis throughout Yugoslavia and in B&H in particular, a series of political scandals and the increasing public debate in Yugoslavia about the future of the federation, created a space for greater open political discussion. In this environment, and heavily influenced by already well advanced forms of dissent in the neighbouring republics of Slovenia and Croatia, students in Sarajevo, the capital of B&H, began to organise and demonstrate, initially for better conditions at the university, but very soon for the right for greater freedom of expression and the right

¹⁰ Created in the aftermath of the First World War and renamed as Yugoslavia in 1929 after the imposition of authoritarian rule by the King of Serbia, Aleksandar.

to criticise the system and the Party. The students' union, UKSSO, quickly became an important platform for liberal ideas and by 1989 the two most popular political magazines in B&H, *Valter* and *Naši Dani*,¹¹ were those published by students.

The students, together with a number of committees defending human rights or promoting the environment that soon formed in Sarajevo and the main industrial towns of Tuzla and Zenica, challenged the regime with daring ideas of democracy and liberalism. This embryonic civil society had some success in influencing the #Bosnian political elite to introduce elements of real competition into the political process in the period immediately before the Party gave up its monopoly on power, by being ever present in the Media and in public life. It remained, however, an intellectual movement appealing to an educated elite based in the capital Sarajevo, and its impact within the wider Bosnian society, particularly the rural majority, was negligible. When the Yugoslav crisis impinged fully on Bosnia with the threatened secession of Croatia and Slovenia from the federal state, this civil society was unable to compete in the battle for hearts and minds with the aggressive populist nationalisms that overran the republic and propelled it towards civil conflict in the early 1990s.¹²

3.3 Pre-war civil society in Kosovo

The illegal imposition by Slobodan Milošević of direct rule of the province of Kosovo by the Republic of Serbia in 1989 was followed by the introduction of a violent and repressive regime that systematically denied the Albanian Kosovar majority of their fundamental human rights. The local security forces were purged of Albanians.

This situation created the conditions for the development of a unique experiment in social organisation and civic resistance that came to be known as the 'parallel structures'.

Thousands of workers in public companies, especially those with authority were forced to resign, as were Albanian doctors and nurses in the health system. By denying financial assistance to Albanian schools, where 21,000 teachers worked, and by refusing access to secondary schools and universities for the majority of students, all vestiges of Albanian culture and language were removed from the education system. This situation created the conditions for the development of a unique experiment in social organisation and civic

resistance that came to be known as the 'parallel structures'.

Faced with almost total exclusion from political, social, cultural and economic life, and under the constant threat of state violence, the Albanian Kosovars withdrew and developed a parallel and clandestine socio-economic system embracing private schools and university education, a health service, and even mechanisms for administering

¹¹ *Valter*: The legendary fictional resistance fighter who freed Sarajevo from Nazi occupation in World War II; *Naši Dani*: Our Days.

¹² Deacon and Stubbs (1998) remark that while civil society and social movements prospered during the 1980s in Croatia and Slovenia, they had little impact in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

local justice. While this system was coordinated by a government in exile, and funded by a 3% income tax at home in Kosovo with contributions from the diaspora, its organisation was carried out by a small number of civil society organisations, making use of volunteer labour available through community structures, family networks and clan relations.

The Mother Teresa Society (MTS), officially registered as a humanitarian NGO in Belgrade in 1990, was the centrepiece of the parallel structures. By 1998, it was running 91 health clinics, employing some 7,000 volunteers and providing health care and humanitarian aid to 350,000 people. In 1996, with aid from the World Health Organisation¹³ it immunized 300,000 children for polio.

While most of the Albanian civil organisations were service providers, they were strongly politicised and nationally oriented as they embodied the goals of the Albanian Kosovar nationalist struggle and were the means of peaceful resistance to the Serbian regime. Others pursued this goal through advocacy on the world stage. The Council for the Defence of Human Rights and Freedoms (CDHRF), whose staff of 15 was assisted by a network of 2,000 local volunteers, reported daily on human rights abuses

Early on, these and many other CSOs had the broader goals of advancing democratic society and social development. As time went by, these goals tended to be overshadowed by the need to promote both national resistance and the nationalistic struggle.

by the Serbian authorities, such as arbitrary detention, beatings, torture and even murder. Supported by the International NGO Mercy Corps within Kosovo, CDHRF drew the attention of the world to the plight of Albanian Kosovars by coordinating with international NGOs such as Amnesty International and the International Crisis Group, and prominent human rights groups in Belgrade.

At the local level, a small number of other organisations representing other interests emerged in this period, including youth (Post Pessimists, Pjetër Bogdani Club, Alternativa), students (UPSUP), the disabled (Handikos), and those engaged in radio and the print Media. Of special note was the relatively large number of women's associations (Motrat Qiriazi, Elena, Norma, Aureola, Legjenda, Centre for the Protection of Women and Children, being the most prominent), whose primary concerns were raising gender awareness, promoting women's rights, and educating women in a traditional and patriarchal society in which women were often poorly educated and seen as second class citizens. Early on, these and many other CSOs had the broader goals of advancing democratic society and social development. As time went by, these goals tended to be overshadowed by the need to promote both national resistance and the nationalistic struggle, and for some women's groups this meant a tension between pressures to consign women to caring

¹³ A small number of humanitarian agencies and international NGOs were working in Kosovo from around 1993, mainly delivering humanitarian aid. These included Médecins sans Frontières, Oxfam, Mercy Corps, CRS, and the World Health Organisation. Some, such as Equilibre in 1993, were blocked from working.

and service-provision roles and the desire to explore and promote new gender models (Clark2000: 146). It is this tension that perhaps provided the impetus for the forming of the Pristina Women's Network and the Rural Women's Network, which were both major centres of innovation in civil society in the immediate pre-war years.

On the other side of the national divide in Kosovo, Serbian civil society was relatively inactive and represented by small numbers of traditional government-sponsored community and special interest groups similar to those found throughout Yugoslavia in the previous communist period. The other ethnic minorities appear not to have been organised, pursuing their own marginalised battle for survival.

4. Post-Conflict NGO Colonization

The conclusion of violent conflict, in both B&H (1995) and Kosovo (1999), heralded the onset of internationally-led and funded post-war rehabilitation efforts unprecedented in their scale and financial magnitude. The immediate chaos of severe humanitarian crisis and the subsequent response of international aid agencies to renovate shattered infrastructure and stimulate social reconstruction provided a climate for the early burgeoning of civil society sectors which, consisting of numerous, donor-dependent, Western-style NGOs, were weak, fragmented and largely unrepresentative of the societies in which they operated.

4.1 Bosnia: NGOs as service providers

In Bosnia, an end to hostilities was finally made possible by international intervention in the form of the aerial bombing of Bosnian Serb positions by NATO forces in September 1995. The signing of the DPA and the arrival of a 60,000 strong international peacekeeping force created the conditions for the arrival *en masse* of a wide variety of International NGOs (INGOs), competing for newly available funds from Western donors supporting objectives of reconciliation, civil society building and economic reconstruction. By the end of 1996, there were 223 INGOs (IBHI 1998) operating in B&H,¹⁴ implementing a disparate set of loosely coordinated projects in the fields of infrastructure repair, democracy building, encouraging refugee return and the promotion of multi-culturalism.

INGOs actively promoted the emergence and development of a civil society based on a new breed of local NGOs, rather than seeking to identify and bolster pre-war forms of citizens' action and organisation. Although a small number of mainly women-oriented voluntary groups, which were dedicated to mutual self-help under war conditions, had emerged during the war, INGO preference for support to nascent NGOs was both inevitable and necessary. The wartime politics of ethnic cleansing and the mass displacement of people had to a large extent destroyed the foundations necessary for organisation at the community level, both in terms of social capital and the ability of people to develop social visions beyond that of the ethno-nation. There were in most localities the vestiges of pre-war membership organisations dedicated to the needs of small groups with specific social or economic interests, such as the blind, disabled, farmers or various professions. These were largely eschewed by INGOs as targets of support other than the ad hoc distribution of humanitarian assistance to their members, owing to concerns as to their suitability for advancing the growth of democratic culture and assisting in efforts towards return and reconstruction. Not only did they represent conceptual continuity with the state-controlled communist past,

¹⁴ IBHI records that by the end of 1997 this figure had grown to 332.

which the International Community was determined to overcome; in the immediate ethnically cleansed post-war landscape, they were also perceived to be either active devotees or passive supporters of the efforts of local nationalist leaders to obstruct ethno-national and social reintegration of B&H.

The primary vehicles for INGO support to this new civil society were humanitarian aid and grants for the provision of a variety of medical, psycho-social, and legal services, as well as democracy and human rights awareness trainings. Although support for civil society was overwhelmingly of a short-term nature, disbursed for limited and discrete projects, initial plentiful supply encouraged a 'mushrooming' of local organisations, so that by 1997 it was estimated that there were as many as 1,500 local NGOs (LNGOs) in existence in B&H (IBHI 1998). Many organisations were formed in order to address a local problem, but very few represented an identifiable local constituency, or operated according to the organisational principles and rules expected by Western donors. Even

The early concentration on service delivery militated against the development of NGOs with a social vision and the capacity to campaign and advocate.

fewer, apart from a small number of human rights organisations, could claim to understand civil society and appreciate a role for themselves beyond service delivery (Smillie and Todorović 2001). At the same time, high NGO registration also reflected a high degree of opportunism from those seeking an income rather than a vehicle to pursue a social mission. To what extent the number of registered NGOs represented real activity is not certain, but it is clear that a large proportion of LNGOs only ever existed on paper (Duffield 1996). In

many other cases, INGOs, 'wishing to leave something behind', converted their own projects into local organisations or localised its branch offices. In others, local INGO staff gathered together to pursue their own interests independently.

Given the fragmented and divisive social and political landscape of B&H in the immediate post-war period, the above model of support to social reconstruction is seen by a number of commentators as having at best held back, and at worst weakened, the development of an independent and sustainable civil society with the potential to influence positively the country's socio-economic progress (see Duffield 1996, Deacon and Stubbs 1998, Stubbs 1999, Smillie and Todorović 2001). The early concentration on service delivery militated against the development of NGOs with a social vision and the capacity to campaign and advocate. At the same time, NGO service provision in effect established a cheap, but non-sustainable and uncoordinated parallel system of social services, which weakened government's ability and will to re-establish effective state-run social institutions (Deacon and Stubbs 1998). In many government circles, entity, canton or municipality, open hostility to civil society developed because of perceived NGO incursion into government's areas of responsibility and the competition it presented for donor funds (Smillie and Todorović 2001).

NGO presence was markedly unrepresentative of the country as a whole, and was concentrated in the major towns of Sarajevo, Zenica, Tuzla and Banja Luka, where both INGOs and donors tended to have their offices. This coincided with the main concentrations of the educated middle classes, which were the primary creators of the new LNGOs. This uneven civil society development had the effect of further marginalising already neglected rural communities and the strengthening of local nationalist autocracies that were exempt from central control (Stubbs 1997). The urban bias was reinforced by the International Community's early tactic to attempt to isolate Serbian and Croatian nationalist political forces. By 1997, the RS had received only 2% of all foreign aid to B&H (Sterland 2000), and the 'extremist' Eastern RS was virtually ignored by INGOs until 1998–99. Consequently, few NGOs or other civic initiatives took root until this time.

A major problem facing Bosnian organisations from the signing of the DPA up until the present time, has been continually changing donor priorities and the apparent lack of coordination between international aid agencies. A great many of the earliest LNGOs formed around missions to provide psychosocial assistance to both domiciled and displaced persons in their communities, particularly the traumatised, children and the elderly. The onset of reconstruction of housing and infrastructure created a donor demand to provide new services, such as activities to young people in youth centres and schools, economic incentives, micro-credit and legal advice to returnees, and practical measures to assist reintegration and achieve conflict resolution. While reconstruction and return remained the major strategic goal of the International Community for a number of years, support to LNGOs came to be dominated by efforts to promote first human rights and democracy, and then good governance and the rule of law. Around 2001–02, donors turned their attention to long-term economic and social development combined with institutional capacity building, including reform of government policy and administration.

The changing donor environment presented opportunities for new entrepreneurial LNGOs, while it forced many existing organisations to adapt their programming to areas in which they had little expertise. The result was a constant withering and replenishment of local organisations and the growth of a large non-specialised, short-term oriented and financially insecure sector.

4.2 Kosovo: Western NGOs for local structures

The emergence and pattern of development of the civil society sector in Kosovo bears remarkable similarities to the Bosnian experience. The immediate aftermath of the end of hostilities demanded a huge international relief effort to address a situation of barely imaginable chaos. The withdrawal of Serbian forces and authority left the province without administrative structures or capacity, essential infrastructure was in ruins, 130,000 houses were uninhabitable and the economy in ruins. During the next twelve months, over 880,000 Albanian Kosovars returned home from refuge in other

countries, while up to 200,000 members of ethnic minorities are thought to have fled Kosovo in fear of reprisals from the Albanian Kosovar majority.

While UNMIK took control of establishing public administration, relief, under the loose coordination of UNHCR, was undertaken by the arrival of the largest contingent of INGOs in the shortest time ever seen in a post-war setting.¹⁵ The immediate priority was the implementation of a wide variety of humanitarian assistance projects, followed soon after by a focus on restoring infrastructure and essential services.

Eager to gain access to local communities and find vehicles for the distribution of aid, but also to fulfil a remit to strengthen civil society, INGOs made large amounts of donor cash available to local organisations for undertaking short-term, localised projects. As in B&H, this approach stimulated a 'boom' in newly formed LNGOs, with the number of locally registered organisations rising from 45 to 400 in the first twelve months alone after the end of hostilities (On The Record, 2000, Kosovo 2, Vol. 10,

The trend towards INGOs artificially establishing local partners by localising branch offices or converting projects appears more marked than in B&H.

Issue 12/2). Many of these registrations represented opportunistic responses to available cash and there was a growth of small leader-dominated organisations lacking social mission, professional skills and organisational capacities. The trend towards INGOs artificially establishing local partners by localising branch offices or converting projects appears more marked than in B&H. In many cases these hybrid LNGOs were totally dependent on single donors and lacking competent local

staff, as parent INGOs maintained foreign workers in key management roles. Consequently, when the immediate abundance of post-conflict aid came to an end, forcing the exit of many INGOs, large numbers of these new LNGOs were unable to adjust their ways of working and ceased operating (B&H 2004). On the other hand, a majority of active Kosovan NGOs today trace their origins to direct INGO intervention, indicating that this kind of artificial insemination of civil society can produce viable progeny.

As in B&H, the growth of the local NGO sector was initially uneven and owed much to a lack of planning and coordination in relief efforts and a bias on the part of INGOs to work with the educated elite in urban environments. An early civil society mapping (KCSF/Dialogue Development) undertaken in 2000 notes that two thirds of all registered LNGOs were situated in the provincial capital Pristina. Smaller concentrations of activity were appearing in other main towns, such as Prizren or Peja,¹⁶ working in close association with larger numbers of INGOs, while in many rural areas and small towns there was a complete absence of NGO activity.

¹⁵ By the end of 1999, just six months after the ending of armed conflict, there were 285 INGOs registered with the UN in Kosovo (On The Record, Kosovo 2, Vol. 10, Issue 1), compared with around a dozen two years previously and possibly 50 or so immediately prior to the NATO bombings of 1999 (Scott-Flynn 2000).

¹⁶ In 2000, 40 INGOs are recorded as working in Prizren and 10 LNGOs were registered. In Peja, 50 INGOs were active alongside 15 LNGOs.

Overcrowding of INGOs and their uneven presence led to many instances of duplication which created an unhealthy competition for local stakeholders among LINGOs partners and also between INGOs and LINGOs that seriously undermined the legitimacy and long-term sustainability of many locally-led initiatives. An illustrative example is provided by the squabble over a women's centre in the ethnically divided town of Mitrovica during the first months after the war. The ethnic tensions and periodic violence between Serbian and Albanian communities, as well as the high number of displaced of all ethnicities in the town, made Mitrovica an attractive location for many foreign organisations. In September 1999, a local women's organisation, Motrat Qiriaz, opened a counselling centre near the town centre aimed at local traumatised women and their children. Two months later, an Italian NGO (ADAB – Associazione Per le Donne Dell'area Dei Balkani), opened an almost identical centre next door without notice, and started to solicit clients from the same community of women that were already being assisted by Motrat Qiriaz. Earlier in the summer, the Danish Refugee Council had established an NGO support centre in the same street, but by end of the year it became clear to Motrat Qiriaz that the centre was evolving into something different and was now offering the same activities to women as the other centres. At the same time, CARE International announced plans to open yet another trauma counselling centre for women to be located in, yet again, the very same street (On The Record, 2000, Kosovo 2, Vol. 10, Issue 4).

In contrast to B&H, Albanian Kosovar society had developed capacities for civic organisation and community mobilisation through the parallel structures and the variety of solidarity-based civil society organisations assisting civil resistance during the Milošević era. While the armed conflict smashed the ostensible structures of this system, many organisations regrouped during this time to provide aid and support in the refugee camps of Macedonia and Albania. MTS, despite the killing of a number of its workers, remained in Kosovo and carried on with its activities throughout this period. In the post-conflict period, limited international support was extended to those elements of the parallel system that showed that they could adapt to donor demands for professionalized operations and short-term project cycles. CDHRF continued to attract support, as too did a large number of the already established women's associations. Women were generally perceived by donors as a priority, particularly as targets of trauma counselling for rape, bereavement and displacement. MTS was singled out by the UNHCR for special assistance in restructuring so that it could establish management free from political interference from other elements of the parallel structures.

By and large, however, existing systems of community and national mobilisation were bypassed by the INGO-delivered aid.

By and large, however, existing systems of community and national mobilisation were bypassed by the INGO-delivered aid, and some commentators claim that, in certain

cases, existing civil society organisations were deliberately weakened through the policy of providing large numbers of small grants to new LNGOs, which in effect diluted or dissipated existing solidarities. In a situation in which the withdrawal of Serbian authority had left a political and social *tabula rasa*, the International Community was in a position to engineer, in effect, a civil society that it hoped would be a key mechanism for establishing democracy and social cohesion, contributing to the ultimate goal of a viable multi-ethnic society. Established CSOs were generally deemed to be unsuitable means for achieving this goal owing to their association with nationalistic struggle, their possible links to the Kosovan Liberation Army, their tendency to secrecy, and doubts concerning the proper use of the funds raised on their behalf during the years leading up to the war.

In encouraging an NGO-led civil society, donors and INGOs were active in building non-political political opposition, or rather a non-nationalist voice, that might create tendencies in society that would counter the divisively nationalist politics of Albanian and Serbian Kosovan parties alike. It is noteworthy that Serb community groups and existing associations mainly active in the north side of Mitrovica failed to attract the support of international organisations for similar fears about their connections to the Serbian regime in Belgrade.

The intent to induce a de-politicised civil society is clear.

The intent to induce a de-politicised civil society is clear from the early presence of a number of high profile initiatives aimed specifically at encouraging the growth of a formal NGO sector in preference to other forms of civil organisation. The OSCE, charged with promoting democracy in the province, actively encouraged the registration of new LNGOs from the outset, offering start-up kits containing legal templates and guidelines for accessing donor funds. It also established its own brand of NGO resource centres in nine towns, ahead of any perceivable need or demand from LNGOs for information and coordination at the local level.

The Kosovo Foundation for Open Society (KFOS) and the Kosovo Civil Society Foundation (KCSF), financed by the EU, ran early capacity building programmes centring on technical skills training, and buttressed by the delivery of small grants to a range of new LNGOs working in the fields of human rights, gender relations, activities for youth and economic research.¹⁷

¹⁷ The KCSF final programme report (KCSF & Dialogue Development: 2001) records 86 LNGO projects supported between March 2000 and March 2001: Human Rights: 17 grants; Improvement of status and value of women in society: 18 grants; Development of NGO activities, trades and student unions, youth and sport initiatives: 20 grants; Development of economic research: 7 grants.

5. The Current Civil Society Landscape

5.1 Bosnia and Herzegovina

5.1.1 NGOs and CBOs in Bosnia and Herzegovina

There are currently over 8,000 NGOs and non-profit organisations registered in B&H, but the number of active organisations is generally estimated to lie between 500 and 1,500 (Barnes et al. 2004). These organisations represent a wide array of interests and undertake a variety of activities including service provision, distribution of humanitarian assistance, provision of mutual support and solidarity, human rights and government monitoring, research and policy development, and public advocacy and lobbying. In addition, there is a growing but uncertain number of informal community-based groups (CBOs), including parent–teacher associations and conservation groups, as well as community councils that are based upon a revival of the idea of community representation that was embodied in the pre-war communes or *mjesne zajednice*.

Bosnian NGOs display a wide range of capacities and ways of working, but a relatively small elite of fully professionalised and highly capable NGOs has emerged, centred in the larger urban centres. In the main, these are among Bosnia’s more mature organisations, tracing their origins to the immediate post-war environment and many

The greater majority of NGOs is comprised of small, more or less voluntary community-oriented associations working at the municipal or cantonal level, dependent on a handful of dedicated semi-professional enthusiasts.

among them were also initially INGO creations. These organisations have benefited from sustained financial support from faithful foreign donors, but they have also become adept at diversifying their donor base over time, thus reducing their vulnerability to changing donor policy. Those that truly operate across the country, or can claim to represent the interests of their stakeholders at the state level, include, but are not confined to, the Centre for the Promotion of Civil Society (developing civil society influence on public policy), *Žene ženama (Women to Women*, gender

issues), *Mozaik* (community development), *OIA (Youth Information Agency)*, *CCI (Centre for Civic Initiatives*, citizens participation and democratic involvement), *Helsinški Parlament Građana (Helsinki Citizens Assembly*, advocacy on gender and youth issues) and *IBHI (Independent Bureau for Humanitarian Issues*, social policy and protection).

The greater majority of NGOs is comprised of small, more or less voluntary community-oriented associations working at the municipal or cantonal level, dependent on a handful of dedicated semi-professional enthusiasts. Women’s organisations and youth groups and centres are the leaders of this more locally based segment, perhaps reflecting earlier donor preferences for these interest groups. An interesting development in many places has been the revival of many of those pre-war CSOs that

provided services in the community to groups such as the disabled, the blind or those suffering debilitating diseases. Only a small number of these have received international project funding or benefited from inclusion in NGO capacity building programmes. By and large, those that have re-emerged have done so by successfully mobilising modest financial support (including securing premises or concessions on payments for amenities) from municipal and cantonal governments in a way that appeals to pre-war Yugoslav traditions of political patronage of social causes. As in Yugoslav times, these membership organisations are loosely affiliated into larger 'unions' whose aim is to coordinate the work of local associations, especially with regard to lobbying for greater support from central (entity and state) government and for the adoption of international standards governing social protection. Organisational and financial capacities of these umbrella groups remain poorly developed.¹⁸

NGOs engaged in service provision continue to dominate Bosnian civil society, and a major weakness of the sector is the generally low level and poor quality of public advocacy. The majority of effective advocacy efforts are carried out at the municipal level and are directed at strengthening participatory decision making (e.g. citizens' participation in budgeting) or improving services provided by the municipality, often within the framework of community mobilisation programmes. Few organisations are carrying out regular and effective work aimed at influencing government policy or amending legislation, and there is little public advocacy being undertaken at the higher levels of government. This is despite a recent emphasis among foreign donors, particularly USAID, to support NGO-led public advocacy as a means of strengthening legislative, policy and institutional reform demanded by the ongoing process of European integration in B&H.

5.1.2 Government–NGO relations in Bosnia and Herzegovina

There is no country strategy for government–civil society cooperation at either the state or entity level and no institutional mechanism charged with mediating relations with civil society, defining respective roles and responsibilities and providing transparency and accountability. NGOs report that relations with municipal authorities are the most productive and that the municipality is the most relevant level of government for their work. On the other hand, relations with the state government are generally considered to be poor and the state is often regarded as not being a relevant target for cooperation, owing to its limited powers, a perceived lack of political interest in civil society, and the fact that the OHR in many cases usurps the role of the state (Barnes et al. 2004).

A number of advances have been made in recent times to formalise government–NGO cooperation in particular sectors. While these may be considered as important to

¹⁸ These membership groups are mainly organised within unions at the entity level (and at the cantonal level in the Federation), reflecting the nationally determined nature of post-war politics and the weakness of the state. The Union of the Blind is the only such organisation with state wide representation. See TEA Cegos Consortium (2005) for a review of the capacities and activities of these various umbrella groups, as well the institutional environment in which they operate.

raising the confidence of NGOs to advocate and engage in public policy, it is noteworthy that, in all cases, the process has been driven by foreign actors. Civil society was first included in policy making at the state level through its inclusion, at the insistence of the World Bank, in the consultation process for the drafting of the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP), which is the first country development strategy document drafted and adopted by local institutions. Over 18 months, starting in mid-2002, a working group of five Bosnian NGOs (with two INGO advisors) organised citizens and civil society consultations around the country, drew up recommendations, and commented on the draft documents as they appeared. Limited civil society participation in the institutional monitoring of the strategy has been provided for by NGO representation on just four of 21 thematic working groups that advise on adaptations to the strategy.

More importantly, ICVA (Initiatives and Civic Action), with funding from SDC and the EU, is coordinating independent monitoring of the PRSP implementation in the areas of the environment, social protection and education. This is being undertaken by three coalitions of around twelve specialist NGOs. A reading of the project outlines (www.icva-bh.org) suggests that this initiative's primary objective is building NGO capacity for advocacy and engaging the government in dialogue.

Formal mechanisms to enhance civil society involvement in social policy are being developed in two key sectors: gender and youth. In both cases, action has been stimulated by legal and policy standards required by the Council of Europe and the EU for B&H to be considered for membership.¹⁹ As a result of a four-year programme implemented by IBHI, with funding from the Finnish government, an institutional framework for creating and coordinating gender policy throughout the country and implementing the Law of Gender Equality was finally established in 2005. This includes a state level Agency for Gender Equality, Gender Centres in the two entities and gender commissions within the cantons and municipalities. NGO participation in policy making and monitoring is included at all levels.

Formal mechanisms to enhance civil society involvement in social policy are being developed in two key sectors: gender and youth.

A similar mechanism for creating youth policy is being developed with assistance from GTZ and UNV. A State Commission for Youth, consisting of ten youth NGO representatives and eight political appointees, has just been established, and a state-level department for youth, charged with implementing policy, should be created during 2006. A recent law in the RS provides for multi-stakeholder municipal youth commissions, and a number of municipalities in the Federation are creating similar bodies independently.

¹⁹ B&H was accepted as a member of the Council of Europe on 24 April 2002. Negotiations between the EU and B&H towards signing a Stabilisation and Association Agreement, the first step towards eventual EU membership started on 25 January 2006.

5.1.3 Bosnian NGO networks and NGO coordination

There are many formal and informal NGO networks in B&H, organised on the basis of sub-sector interest (e.g. environment, youth, women) or geographical location. Many of these have been in existence for a number of years. Research has shown that a large majority of Bosnian NGOs are members of one or more networks and that this experience is seen by NGOs to be beneficial (Barnes et al. 2004). Despite this, the sector is poorly coordinated; there are many instances of duplication of activities, or of organisations struggling in isolation. Exchange of information between NGOs is regarded as being poor, and there is a high level mutual mistrust among NGOs surrounding competition for resources.

An important initiative, underway since 2001, under the leadership of the Centre for the Promotion of Civil Society, is the building of a grand coalition (KRUZ – ‘To Work and Succeed Together’) of over 300 NGOs, organised into 15 regional networks or ‘reference groups’, whose aim is to develop a strategy for the long-term development of civil society in B&H and to increase domestic leadership and ownership of Bosnian civil society. To date, it has developed a formal agreement on cooperation between the state government and the NGO sector, a set of standards for the provision of services between the government and NGOs, and a domestic NGO code of conduct (CPCD 2004), all of which are now awaiting formal acceptance by the Council of Ministers.

Fourteen of the reference groups have been modelled on the successful example of a long-lasting local network in the town of Tuzla that was established by local NGOs as far back as 1996. This network, which is now a registered organisation in its own right, and boasts 69 members, has long been a celebrated example of rare NGO coordination in B&H. Today it is organised into six thematic working groups whose members meet regularly to discuss social policy, organise campaigns, provide training and exchange information on funding opportunities. It has achieved notable successes in contributing to the development strategies of the Tuzla canton government and the local regional development agency (TEA Cegos Consortium 2005; see also www.linkngo.org/rgtuzla). The network is currently funded by the EU and, along with KRUZ and all other networks in B&H, it remains totally dependent on foreign donor contributions.

5.1.4 NGO funding in Bosnia and Herzegovina

Despite the steady year on year fall in international funds available to civil society in B&H that has been taking place since around 1999,²⁰ the sector remains highly dependent on international donors, with NGOs likely to be receiving between 70% and

²⁰ The year 1999-2000 saw a sudden drop in foreign aid to civil society estimated to be in the region of 50% (Sterland 2000). Total amounts available have decreased at a steadier rate since then.

100% of all revenues from foreign sources (Barnes et al. 2004). Fully professional NGOs generally have a number of foreign supporters at any one time, allowing them a degree of immediate financial security that was not possible only a few years ago. Smaller and newer NGOs are not so fortunate, but there is evidence that there are increasing opportunities for small scale funding in the community, whether from municipal or cantonal governments, fees for services, membership subscriptions and charitable giving in the community (Sterland 2003).

All levels of government except the state are now active in supporting NGOs through grant giving or the provision of premises. This assistance, however, is rarely planned and the criteria and mechanisms by which it is distributed vary from case to case, creating confusion and inequality across the country. In a few rare cases, governments are committing significant resources to CSOs, but very often this is disbursed according to more or less political criteria which often exclude the professional NGO.²¹ There is a further problem for those organisations that are oriented towards advocacy and policy development. Governments and the public alike tend to understand and value NGOs as providers of services to the community. This raises serious doubts over the long-term sustainability of civil society advocacy and the survival of many of professional issue-based NGOs in B&H.

5.2 Kosovo

5.2.1 NGOs in Kosovo

A recent mapping of civil society in Kosovo (KCSF 2005) paints a depressing picture of a sector that has yet to find a common purpose. Operating in a society that is demoralised by continuing economic hardship, political uncertainty and ethnic division, and with a near total dependence on increasingly scarce short-term funding, the sector is struggling to establish a role for itself that commands the respect and support of ordinary citizens. Among its conclusions, this report points to serious shortfalls in basic NGO capacities, including lack of social vision, ill-defined organisational identity, poor cooperation with and understanding of primary stakeholders, and low levels of key administrative and management skills.²²

Registered NGOs in Kosovo number over 3,000, but a realistic estimate of active organisations would put the figure no higher than 500. These are predominantly small, single-donor and single-project organisations, with an average staff size of around five. The greater majority of these are located in the five or six main urban

²¹ For example, Canton Sarajevo allocated over 1.5 million KM (approx 750,000 Euro) in 2005 to non-profit organisations, but the overwhelming bulk of this money went to religious organisations (building projects), veterans associations and sporting organisations that have survived from the previous socialist period.

²² Many of those interviewed for this study concur with this broad assessment, but an assessment of civil society carried out for USAID by MSI (Blair, Donaghey and Velija 2004), compares civil society in Kosovo favourably with the situation in neighbouring countries, describing it as 'relatively sophisticated', having made 'good progress in building capacity, mobilizing and energizing constituencies [and] establishing agendas...'

centres, including possibly upwards of 25% in the provincial capital Pristina. Youth and women's groups comprise between 40% and 50% of all NGOs (KSCF 2004, OSCE municipal profiles), reflecting the young age of the population on the one hand, and the challenges faced by women in achieving equality in this highly patriarchal society, on the other. Activities carried out by these and other interest groups include education and skills training courses, community building that may include interethnic dialogue and reconciliation, and public advocacy. The distribution of humanitarian aid and providing for basic needs remains, however, a major component of civil society activity. In the more rural municipalities this is often the most obvious civil society activity, mainly carried out by the Pristina-based organisations MTS and Handikos, both of which have branch offices in most of Kosovo's 30 municipalities.

Reflecting the social and spatial division of Kosovo society along ethnic lines, Kosovan NGOs are predominantly ethnically exclusive. Those representing the various ethnic minorities are smaller in number, less developed, and, owing mainly to restricted access to donors and government, they wield less influence with central and municipal authorities.

As in B&H, there is now an identifiable elite of compact, but highly sophisticated professional NGOs, which are based almost exclusively in Pristina. Central to this elite are a number of research and advocacy organisations that are oriented towards influencing both the local central government (PISG) and UNMIK and the wider international community. Broadly, these think tanks contribute to dialogue over development policy and the agenda for creating a democratic and market-oriented legislative framework. They are the creations of international organisations or those who have international experience, and they enjoy the strong support of a number of international donors. In many cases, they are establishing the foundations for longer-term financial sustainability by providing training and consultation services to ministries and other institutions of the PISG, or by offering research by contract to international development agencies. Most notable is Riinvest (founded prior to the armed conflict), which is an institute for development research contracted by UNDP to write the Kosovo Early Warning Reports.²³

A second, larger group of more conventional user-oriented NGOs carry out advocacy in conjunction with project activities and are closely connected with their target groups throughout Kosovo. These too have access to central government and are also routinely funded by international donors. Some have branch offices around the province and most have a staff of over ten employees (Nietsch 2004), which makes them large organisations within Kosovo more generally. They represent a range of interests and activities, including, among others, gender issues (Kosovo Women's Network), human rights (CDHRF), education (KEC – Kosovo Education Centre), ICT in

²³ Other such organisations include: KIPRED, the Kosovo Institute for Policy Research and Development; KODI, the Kosovan Institute for Research and Documentation; and KACI, the Kosovo Action for Civic Initiatives.

business and business development (IPKO Institute), and multi-ethnic dialogue (KND – Kosovan Nansen Dialogue).

5.2.2 Government–NGO relations in Kosovo

Since 2002, when the PISG was established, international assistance to NGOs has dropped greatly as donor governments have reduced funds for relief and infrastructure reconstruction in favour of support to longer-term development and the building of independent local administration. LINGOs have been increasingly encouraged to undertake advocacy for change and develop forms of effective cooperation with the Kosovan authorities.

Collaboration between the PISG and civil society remains the exception rather than the rule. Under international pressure, some of the PISG have consulted NGOs on the drafting of new laws and creating policy in specific fields, but very often this help is sought too late in the day to allow for a meaningful contribution from civil society. A notable exception is the drafting of a National Action Plan for Gender Equality, carried out over ten months by a multi-ethnic group of women’s NGOs and politicians in 2003 (Nietsch 2004).

In the absence of institutional mechanisms, government–NGO communication tends to be mediated by personal contacts and is highly dependent on the disposition of individual politicians. To a large extent, the PISG continues to associate NGOs with the service provision role civil society carried out during the period of the parallel structures, and it is also mistrustful of NGOs, considering them competitors for the decreasing pot of international funds. NGOs, on the other hand, are reluctant to engage the local governments, reflecting a traditional Kosovan suspicion of state structures.

Civil society advocacy at the local level is particularly weak, owing to key NGO weaknesses in needs identification, community mobilisation and long-term planning. Advocacy at the central level is complicated by the fact that *de facto* and *de jure* power ultimately rests with UNMIK, and this is proving to be a powerful disincentive to civil society to advocate. It is not always clear to NGOs that the PSIG is the appropriate focus of attention, but UNMIK has shown itself to be unresponsive to local civil society and in some cases dismissive. In the last three years there have been three high profile and professionally conducted advocacy campaigns that have commanded significant support from civil society and the general public.²⁴ All three campaigns were

²⁴ The ‘We Are All Missing Them’ campaign, led by the Kosova Action Network, gathered 230,000 signatures in support of its call for action in investigating the fates of 3,500 missing people from the war. KAN took the campaign to the UN Secretary General and US Secretary of State among others, but finally neither the SRSG nor UNMIK took any action in favour of the campaign, especially with respect to the Serbian government. The Reforma 2004 Campaign, led by four leading NGOs mobilised a further 150 in their campaign to have the closed list electoral system replaced by open lists, in order to increase accountability in government. This was ignored by UNMIK.

seen to fail owing to inaction on the part of UNMIK or vetoing of the PISG by the SRSG.

5.2.3 NGO coordination in Kosovo

Regardless of the success that the campaigns over missing persons and electoral lists achieved in temporarily uniting civil society behind specific issues of common interest, Kosovan civil society is fragmented, uncoordinated, and lacking in leadership. This applies at both at the centre and at the community or municipal level. There is also scant cooperation between the majority of ethnically exclusive NGOs. With the exception of the Kosovo Women's Network (KWN), a vehicle for women's advocacy founded in 2000 and now numbering over 80 organisations from the whole province, there are very few effective forms of wider NGO coordination. In most cases, networks, formal and informal, have been established by international organisations. The often cited Kosovo Youth Network, founded by IRC and UNDP in 2001, while boasting over 100 members, is less a means of NGO coordination than a central level representative of youth interests. GTZ and OSCE respectively have formed youth councils and NGO forums in many municipalities. As with the greater majority of other networks in Kosovo, they are more or less inactive.

5.2.4 Financial sustainability of civil society in Kosovo

A precipitous fall in foreign aid to Kosovo in 2002, when the phase of reconstruction officially drew to close, has been followed by a steady reduction in the overall amount of foreign assistance available to civil society. The relative shortfall in finance has not been compensated for by local sources. The majority of NGOs are dependent on short-term funding from one donor, and many smaller NGOs are without any significant financial support. Two of the NGOs interviewed for this study face possible closure after the ending of large internationally funded projects, and a third, the well established human rights veteran, CDHRF, said that it was considering downsizing in the not too near future, with the closure of its regional offices, in order to maintain core costs to a minimum.

The provisional Kosovan government is at present unable to make significant contributions to local NGOs. Municipalities are willing in some cases to provide premises, while the central PISG have started only recently to distribute small grants of between 1,000 and 3,000 Euro on an ad hoc basis. Although MTS is reported to receive 1 Euro per month from its over 4,000 members (Nietsch 2004), there is an almost universal conceptual denial among NGOs of the possibility of developing local funding sources, such as membership subscriptions, charitable giving, fees for services or business contributions. Informants pointed to the impossibility of mobilising financial

In 2003 a coalition of 27 NGOs (Avoko Network) mobilised to promote a law on freedom of information. After persistence finally paid off with the adoption of the draft law by the Kosovo assembly, the SRSG vetoed the law, presumably to protect confidentiality of information concerning UNMIK.

support from a society in which the majority cannot or will not pay for public amenities, such as water and electricity.

6. Capacity Building

6.1 Understanding capacity building in B&H and Kosovo today

6.1.1 Understandings of capacity building

The term capacity building is new to both Kosovo and B&H, dating to the immediate post-war period, and is viewed as part of an internationally determined development discourse revolving around equally novel concepts, such as civil society, NGOs, democracy and good governance. Literal translations of the term into the local languages (Serbian²⁵ – *izgradnja kapaciteta*; Albanian – *ngritja e kapaciteteve*) have entered into the technical lexicon, but many still hold to the original English as if to emphasise the concept's esoteric character. While all those interviewed recognised the term capacity building, many struggled to provide it with a coherent definition. It was widely felt that the term was overly abstract, and that its value has been diminished by its overuse and application in too many settings. Informants also commented that the term was not understood by many in wider civil society.²⁶

Most informants regard capacity building as a general process involving the development of competencies, which may take place in a number of contexts or at a variety of levels, including the individual, the NGO, civil society, government and business. When applied to civil society, there was agreement that the appropriate focus for capacity building was the organisation.

During interviews, informants developed a wide range of often highly nuanced understandings of capacity building. A majority emphasised the building of technical competencies and specialist expertise of an organisation's staff, with the aim of achieving professional standards, efficiency and the ability to work towards organisational goals. This understanding includes an initial 'transfer of knowledge' to individuals, by means of training and complementary opportunities for 'learning by doing', followed by the configuring of skills and human resources within the organisation, by establishing structures for management and governance, and setting out of procedures to ensure a balanced division of labour. Provision of equipment and basic infrastructure to create adequate working conditions, is considered important to this process.

In contrast to this, a smaller number of those interviewed regarded capacity building more in terms of facilitation of organisations and groups, in order to stimulate creativity, establish common understandings and agreed-on agendas for action, and to

²⁵ In B&H capacity building receives the same translation into the three recognised language variants, Bosnian, Croatian and Serbian.

²⁶ In interviews with staff of different organisations (LNGOs, INGOs and donor organisations; see Appendix 4), it was notable that the different views on capacity building and what it means were represented across the board.

engender solidarity. This understanding emphasises the importance of communication, raising consciousness of existing abilities and the generation of new ideas within the organisation. Particular stress is given to the value of generating a sense of ownership by participants in a capacity building process.

A third, but noticeably less represented understanding of capacity building, locates the key processes of NGO strengthening within the relationships NGOs form with other organisations. NGO networks, cross-sector partnerships, multi-stakeholder coalitions, as well as participation in formal arenas for public policy and planning, are all seen as potential means for an NGO to broaden its scope, raise its skills base, develop its popular support and increase its access to resources.

6.1.2 Capacity building as an end: decoupling from project goals

Informants of all types had considerable difficulty in identifying examples of successful past capacity building schemes. Not surprisingly, there was a tendency among all organisations, local providers, INGOs and donors to see their own activities in supporting capacity building in a favourable light. In B&H, one notable exception was USAID's DemNet programme, which was singled out by a number of local informants²⁷ as having assisted a significant number of LNGOs develop beyond mere technical proficiency. This programme, which ran for five years between 1999 and 2004, was managed successively by the American NGOs, ORT and ADF. Originally it was conceived as a vehicle for the systematic delivery of generic technical trainings over an extended period, backed up by relatively small project grants, to a select group of 28 established NGOs. Over time, new NGOs were admitted to the programme until by the time of its closure, 190 LNGOs had 'graduated' after having received between two and three years' assistance. Three features set the programme apart from the majority of other capacity building programmes carried out in B&H.

Informants of all types had considerable difficulty in identifying examples of successful past capacity building schemes.

First, the programme's focus was on NGO capacity building alone, and while it was assumed that strengthening the sector would contribute to the spread of democracy in B&H, application for inclusion onto the programme was in principle open to all NGOs regardless of their field of operation. The condition for acceptance was proof, through the submission of a variety of documents and reports, of an established organisation with both the potential and ambition to achieve sustainability.

Second, the programme was able to offer regular in-house consultancy to each organisation over an extended period, allowing for in-depth tailored assistance that reached the whole team. Trainings, which formed an important programme component

²⁷ These included one DemNet participant (Prijateljice), informants that had been involved in the programme as trainers (Izbor Plus and the representative of the Bosnian Trainers Network), as well as those that had no direct connection to DemNet.

throughout the whole of DemNet's lifetime, were originally conducted according to a rigid predetermined plan, and it was expected that members attend all sessions. Over time, greater flexibility and responsiveness was introduced, with NGOs playing a role in defining training content and having greater freedom in choosing what to attend. Particularly popular was the use of local trainer-consultants who, being assigned sole responsibility for a limited number of client NGOs, were able to maximise understanding and create continuity in the delivery of support.

Third, the grants that DemNet members were able to apply for, were designed in such a way as to provide for a significant proportion of core costs over a period of up to a year. As members were almost guaranteed at least one further grant, this was an important contribution to ensuring immediate financial stability and allowing organisations to undertake longer-term planning with a view to achieving sustainability.

Of the original DemNet intake of 28 NGOs in 1999, 26 are still operating. While conceding that attributing cause and effect in capacity building programmes is extremely problematic,²⁸ USAID considers that this outcome is a reliable indicator of the success of the DemNet approach to promoting NGO resilience and sustainability.

6.1.3 Sustainability: capacity building as a long-term commitment

In the war-damaged economies of both B&H and Kosovo, there was little realistic likelihood of NGOs gaining significant financial support from local sources, either in the short or medium term. In such an environment, institutional funding from foreign sources should be regarded as a powerful tool to assist in organisational capacity building, providing the continuity needed for skills development through practice, building community support, networking and longer-term planning. Smillie and Todorović (2001) observe that examples of donors or INGOs providing for core costs over a longer period were extremely rare in B&H. Those interviewed for this study confirm that institutional support has been the exception rather than the rule, but do identify two models of longer-term financial and capacity-building support that are seen as assisting the development of sustainable LNGOs.

1. The Swedish NGO, Kvinna till Kvinna, has been active in both B&H (1994) and Kosovo (1998) from before the ending of hostilities, supporting women's centres and NGOs. Support consists of a mixture of institutional funding, project grants, organisational trainings, informal networking services and provision of information and research on gender issues. Women's organisations report that the structuring of steadily decreasing long-term support, usually over five years or more, with no strings attached in terms of programming, has contributed greatly to their capacity to plan independently and achieve permanence in civil society.

²⁸ See section 6.3.4 below for an overview of monitoring and evaluation of NGO capacity building in B&H and Kosovo.

CBM (Community Building Mitrovica), a multi-ethnic NGO working to stimulate dialogue between Albanian and Serbian communities in the divided town of Mitrovica in northern Kosovo, has made a successful transition from an internationally-run project to an independent and locally owned organisation. It represents a rare example in Kosovo of INGO commitment to provide appropriate, long-term support to build local organisational capacity, combined with a responsible approach to ensuring financial sustainability.

2. In 1999, Dutch NGO IKV opened a project and in 2001 registered the local team as a Kosovan NGO. At this stage IKV retained control of strategy and the daily agenda through the services of a Dutch manager, and continued to finance all of CBM's activities. IKV initiated a process of gradually increasing the participation of the local staff in planning and decision making, while offering a programme of targeted trainings and increasing delegation of practical duties to provide opportunities for learning by practical experience. In 2003, having first established effective joint local-international management of the programme, the Dutch manager withdrew in favour of a local Kosovan Albanian director, conferring full formal independence to CBM.

Since that time, IKV have supported the full-time engagement of a Dutch advisor, whose role initially was to provide direct input into strategy and programming. Today he is charged with designing and organising capacity building events, according to the needs identified by the local management. To do this, he researches locally available resources, but is also able call upon the assistance of expertise of IKV partners in the Netherlands and in neighbouring Balkan countries.

IKV has sought to stimulate fundraising capacities while supporting local programming by withdrawing financial support for both core costs and project activities in a measured way over time. IKV support today accounts for roughly 50% of CBM's annual budget, the remainder being provided by a variety of other international donors, with the addition of occasional small grants from local government.

6.1.4 Current capacity building needs in B&H and Kosovo

NGOs in B&H and Kosovo are rarely aware of their capacity building needs and there are few organisations that actively seek external assistance. To some extent this is dictated by LNGOs' inability to pay for these services, but it is also due to the fact that many, if not most regard capacity building as training, which they have become accustomed to receive passively as part of a funding package.

In both settings, NGOs' typical concerns are with fundraising techniques; first to ensure survival and, second, to achieve financial sustainability. For many in Kosovo there is also an interest in securing premises and basic office equipment. Concern for obtaining resources in Kosovo is shaped by a conceptual dependence on foreign donors; the younger, less established organisation may often be preoccupied with how

to make contact with an INGO or donor organisation, while the more mature outfit is distracted by the seeming impossibility of undertaking long-term planning when subjected to incessant rounds of proposal writing for short-term project funds. In B&H, on the other hand, NGO interest in improving fundraising performance is increasingly expressed in terms of finding strategies and discovering ideas for mobilising local support, whether this is from the community, government or business.

There is general agreement amongst the informants from Kosovo that LNGOs often lack the most basic of capacities, including a clear mission and an understandable social vision. This is associated with poor 'social skills' or the inability to communicate effectively with the community or target group, and to identify stakeholder interest or need. Informants stress the persistence of a general culture of donor dependency that militates against effective community support for local NGOs, and continues to define NGOs according to 'what is on offer from INGOs and donors'. Establishing a purpose that responds to identifiable need or interest, therefore, remains a fundamental capacity building requirement for many Kosovan NGOs.

In B&H informants described two broad areas of capacity building need of a higher order. First, there was agreement that the Bosnian NGO sector is largely composed of organisations that reflect legitimate interests and command constituency support. However, NGO performance is too often geared to palliating immediate need, by

Increasing NGOs' performance and relevance will also depend upon improved cross-sector dialogue, cooperation and coordination.

means of service provision and humanitarian aid, undertaken by non-specialist staff. In many cases, performance is reactive, dependent in particular from information received from donor organisations. NGOs need to acquire or strengthen a range of capacities with the overall aim of becoming development-oriented agents of social change. Capacity support providers, local and foreign, as well as donor representatives, identified a

similar list of NGO capacity building needs that includes, gaining theoretical understanding of social and economic development, increasing specialist knowledge in the organisation, adopting rights-based approaches, strengthening advocacy and campaigning skills, improving analytical reflection, developing social research capabilities, and providing inputs into public policy debates. Related to this, a number of informants noted the need in many organisations to recruit more expert staff and to establish internal systems for creating effective divisions of labour to reduce the all too common dependency on key management individuals. Strengthening, or even undertaking, strategic planning is also considered an important means of assisting the transition from project dependency to programming for development.

Second, at a time when international support has firmly shifted towards strengthening state institutions and creating domestically determined social policy, it is widely understood that increasing NGOs' performance and relevance will also depend upon improved cross-sector dialogue, cooperation and coordination. In particular,

partnerships between civil society and the social sector, which remain the exception rather than the rule, are viewed as being essential to avoid duplication on the one hand, and to create synergies and continuity on the other. Improving networking capabilities, adopting a more proactive attitude to government, raising the standard of public relations activities and acquiring creative negotiation skills are specific capacity building priorities for many NGOs as Bosnian civil society continues to reorient itself towards a locally led development agenda.

6.1.5 Provision of capacity building support in B&H and Kosovo

Capacity building in B&H and Kosovo is delivered almost entirely by local consultants and trainers, working for LNGOs, INGOs and very occasionally for profit-making management consultancies. There are very few specialist NGO capacity building providers in either B&H or Kosovo. Only Izbor Plus in B&H and ATRC in Kosovo were identified as being solely dedicated to NGO capacity building. Other key organisations offer capacity support in parallel to their own project activities, or as one component of a wider involvement in training and consultancy for business and government. In Bosnia, TALDI combines NGO support with business development, promoting cross-sector cooperation, and Bospo undertakes organisational development of CBOs within the overall framework of increasing public advocacy. In Kosovo, MDA is a profit-making business consultancy highly regarded for its ability to work with local NGOs, and KFOS includes capacity support assistance to civil society within larger projects aimed at government institutions.²⁹

Capacity support providers consulted for this study all expressed scepticism as to the appropriateness of capacity building by training alone. Consultancy, defined as longer-term mentoring, coaching, advice and facilitation, is considered the only effective way to ensure the application of knowledge gained in training, as well as to bring about changes in individual and organisational attitudes. Correspondingly, all feature consultancy services in their portfolios. Despite this, training continues to be the mainstay of the support offered to NGOs in both B&H and Kosovo and it was observed that consultancy was virtually absent in B&H. Informants were very clear that this is the direct result of continuing financial weakness of NGOs and their dependence on international donors, which on the one hand effectively prevents the growth of a local market for capacity building services, and on the other perpetuates the prevailing project culture in which capacity building is delivered instrumentally to ensure project results.

The general trend of ongoing reductions in development aid to both B&H and Kosovo has resulted in a relative shortage of support for NGO capacity building. Local capacity builders agreed that supply of capacity building support is no longer adequate to meet the specific needs of either civil society.

²⁹ Other providers identified include, in Bosnia: CCI, IBHI, the Network of Bosnian Trainers, Mozaik, and the Centre for the Promotion of Civil Society; in Kosovo: KCSF, KND, KEC.

In B&H, the failure of a sustainable market for capacity building to emerge has resulted in the dilution and dispersal of a large pool of NGO consultants and trainers throughout the sector generally, who are ordinarily employed as project managers and administrators. Over 100 of these trainers are loosely affiliated in a registered Network of Bosnian Trainers which provides a vehicle for coordinating their expertise in complicated training packages sought by certain international projects. At the same time, these trainers enable a great many ordinary NGOs to compete with the few specialist capacity support providers in offering project trainings. Specialist capacity support providers are concerned that overcrowding in the increasingly tight internationally funded project market means that they are being forced to compromise on quality, by standardising trainings, in order to win contracts to a price that is acceptable to donors. For their part, donors and INGOs expressed the opinion that Bosnian capacity builders tend to offer little more than a 'one size fits all' training agenda that is poorly adapted to individual need.

A number of informants remarked that no single organisation in B&H was able to provide a complete range of capacity building services and that a major requirement was the establishment of an NGO resource centre that could extend information, coordination, training and advisory services in a 'one-stop shop'. Donors have attempted to set up such resource centres at the local level in various ways over time in both B&H and Kosovo. Establishing quality services and achieving financial sustainability has proved beyond these centres and they have either collapsed or transformed themselves into implementing NGOs. In Kosovo, ATRC, originally a USAID creation managed by the East–West Institute, has undergone a recent recreation from an advocacy training organisation to a general NGO capacity supporter. With full financial support of American NGO IREX, it is able to provide a range of training, consultancy, information and coordination services free in principle to all Kosovan NGOs, and at a price to foreign and business organisations.

6.2 Capacity Building from a post-conflict perspective

6.2.1 Trained to death: capacity building in the post-war period

Within a short time after the influx of INGOs into both B&H and Kosovo at the end of their respective conflicts, a wide range of capacity building activities were being offered to the rapidly growing community of LNGOs. Despite the wide availability of capacity building services, the total amount of resources committed to this work was only a very small proportion of the funding going to INGOs (Smillie and Todorović 2000). With few exceptions these efforts centred on training, with the dissemination of additional technical information concerning what constitutes an NGO, NGO registration, donor contacts and financial and legal obligations to donors and international partners.

Training was offered in three ways: it was made a condition for receiving funds from an INGO, it was provided by INGOs to groups of often disparate organisations already in receipt of a grant, and it was extended unconditionally to existing, or nascent organisations on the basis of locality or common interest. These trainings concentrated on two broad areas. Many focused on what were presented as the

fundamental technical aspects of running an NGO, including project writing, budgeting, reporting, and fundraising from international donors. A second stream was concerned more with influencing the social values and attitudes of NGO workers. These included subjects such as civil society, democracy and human rights.

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Training packages often appear to have been used as a means of stimulating civil society activity, both as an end in itself, but also as a way for INGOs to gain access to local communities and locate local partners. Typically, this approach would start from an initial seminar on what is an NGO and how to go about registering. The following example is illustrative. In October 2000, the Kosovo Civil Society Foundation (KCSF) was employed by the Canadian NGO 'Alternatives' to undertake NGO capacity building in the village of Drenas. At the time, only one locally registered NGO and the branch offices of three Pristina-based organisations were working in the municipality. KSCF record that six months and 27 training sessions later, there were 19 LNGOs operating in Drenas, 11 of which were based in the village (KCSF & Dialogue Development 2001).

A further aim of early training schemes was to instil professional ways of working, particularly those that met the demands of INGOs and their donors for accountability. One donor representative in Sarajevo was clear that the capacity building provided in its early NGO support in B&H (from 1998) was geared to its own interest in receiving clear narrative and financial reports arising out of sound financial management and project monitoring systems. She went on to point out that this early support was

extended to mainly short-term activities, delivered ad hoc without strategy. CRS in Sarajevo remarked that its early capacity building was geared towards immediate demands of project implementation, rather than organisational development, and was considered a precondition for achieving project objectives.

In a supply-rich environment in which INGOs competed with each other to reach and attract local partners, delivery of trainings was unplanned and uncoordinated, leading to considerable confusion. Duplication was a common occurrence in many locations while in others, NGOs received irregular assistance on seemingly unconnected themes that were poorly matched to their specific needs.³⁰ A comment that was repeated a number of times in both settings, by both local and international informants, was that INGOs had been 'trained to death'.

Initial trainings in both Kosovo and B&H were mainly conducted by foreign experts and consultancies. Local informants concede that this was perhaps necessary in light of the lack of local NGO expertise and the novelty of civil society to both settings, at this time. However, there was a feeling among informants, especially those from Kosovo, that many international trainers were ill prepared and poorly informed about the settings in which they found themselves. There were a number of resentful remarks from Kosovan NGOs about the application of PRA (Participatory Rural Appraisal) imported without adaptation from non-literate societies, the overuse of technical models such as the planning logframe, and the frequent reference to inappropriate or irrelevant examples.

By concentrating on technical skills, capacity building assumed a focus on the individual rather than the organisation as a whole. Trainings were conducted in large groups gathering together one or two key workers from a variety of organisations. In

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order to consolidate learning, organisations tended to send the same individuals to successive training sessions. At the same time, INGOs placed considerable importance on developing a local fund of NGO management and civil society experts, by offering a variety of training of trainers schemes. These would usually be offered as advanced courses to those who had previously attended earlier more basic trainings in NGO management (KSCF & Dialogue Development 2001).

The results of this model of individual-oriented skills training are mixed. In both B&H and Kosovo there is now a pool of highly qualified and experienced NGO managers,

³⁰ One organisation from Kosovo interviewed for this research recounted how over three years its members had received a total of nine trainings from seven different organisations on subjects ranging from project writing, peace building to basic computer skills. In an earlier research (Sterland 2003), the author met a more or less inactive Bosnian NGO whose two core staff members had attended over 70 NGO capacity building trainings between them during a period of four years.

consultants and civil society specialists. Two Kosovan informants now working as capacity builders for local organisations (ATRC & KND) confirmed that they had benefited greatly from this kind of training. One of them, however, echoed the more general opinion that in too many cases this expertise has been lost to domestic civil society, particularly at the grassroots level. Many trained NGO workers, especially those with knowledge of foreign languages, have found employment with the many international development agencies and INGOs operating in the region, lured by salary levels far in excess of what they could reasonably expect in the local job market.

More obviously, early NGO capacity building has contributed to the growth of a sector dominated by small, organisationally weak NGOs that are highly dependent on the skills and experience of one or two leaders, and often poorly connected to the communities which they serve. For a number of informants from Kosovo this is a sad testament to a general failure of NGO capacity building activities to date. For those in B&H, while accepting the vulnerability and poorly developed organisational structure of many NGOs, training based capacity building has succeeded in developing professional ways of working throughout the sector.

6.2.2 Confidence building as a prerequisite for capacity building

It was strongly felt by informants from local and international organisations that establishing teamwork should lie at the centre of capacity building. This poses particular challenges for societies in the early stages of recovery from violent conflict, as war-related trauma, the rending of social ties, the destruction of livelihoods all leave individuals and communities in general demoralised and disempowered. Establishing the basis for organisation demands a set of measures that are broadly referred to as *confidence building*. This is described as a kind of social work carried out through listening and the facilitation of dialogue that aims firstly to *awaken* individuals and groups to the possibility of doing something and secondly, to re-establish trust, cooperation and solidarity as the basis for collective action.

The concept of confidence building is imbued by both local and foreign commentators with the rhetoric of local ownership and sustainability. It was argued on a number of occasions that dialogue is essential for stimulating a civil society founded in the grassroots and that CSOs and projects reflecting the specific interests of the community, by commanding credence locally, would lay the foundations for sustainability. Most were quick to point out the irony that under pressure to gain access to and spend donor funds, local and foreign actors had in effect colluded in disregarding this accepted wisdom. Local CSOs were accused of having asked of INGOs 'what do you want us to do', while INGOs were berated for a corresponding attitude of 'we know what you want'.

Confidence building was also conceived as a process that seeks to replace a set of cultural dispositions, learned behaviours and values inherited from over 40 years of

communist rule in the former Yugoslavia with those that are more appropriate to the development of a pluralist democracy and a liberal economy. From this perspective the challenge to capacity building in B&H and Kosovo is concerned less with dealing with the psychological effects of war than addressing the effects of economic and political transition. Those ascribing to this view can be divided into two camps, depending of whether they emphasise the need to develop new ways of thinking or shape the values that inform that thinking.

A significant number of informants supported listening, dialogue and joint problem solving as a means to stimulate structured thought, reflective analysis, critical thinking with the aim of developing greater independence from authority, a willingness to take responsibility and a readiness to participate. On the other hand, there was a smaller number, mainly those from Kosovan NGOs, that considered the inculcation of democratic values, knowledge of human rights, and an understanding of civil society, via trainings and workshops, as the starting point for a capacity building agenda. Two donor representatives, foreigners, who were able to take a more detached, political and even self-critical stance, went as far as to suggest that NGO and civil society capacity building in post-conflict and transitional societies should be viewed as just one element in the social engineering of new states according to an ideal Western model.

6.2.3 Conflict resolution as an aspect of confidence building

In a situation where communities are divided along ethno-national lines, and where, as in B&H, society is characterised by a continual uneven process of return to multi-ethnic localities, confidence building takes on the appearance of *conflict resolution*. This not only involves facilitation of communication and cooperation between members of a group, but also dialogue within and between communities to gain acceptance, or least tolerance, of the multi-ethnic group, as well as (re)establishing contacts and understandings between nationalities across geographical and political space.

In B&H, restoring communication between the three constituent nations has been a secondary aim of many NGO capacity building activities. Local and countrywide divides have been bridged through hundreds, possibly thousands, of seminar trainings, workshops, round tables and conferences. Many NGOs, and civil society more generally, represent positive models of ethnic cooperation and social cohesion that are in stark contrast to the continuing divisive emphasis that Bosnia's political leadership and public administration place on the 'national interest'.

In Kosovo, the history of almost total non-communication between Albanian and Serbian populations during the 1990s and the reconfiguration of isolated and embattled Serbian settlements in the aftermath of war has limited the extent to which a conflict resolution approach to confidence building can take root. The language barrier between Serbs and Albanians, and the inability of communities (both Serbian

and Albanian) to accept the right to freedom of movement, precluded early attempts at confidence building between ethnicities and with multi-ethnic groups.

CBM identifies a vital role for outsiders in conducting early conflict resolution. On the one hand, peace activists from countries with experience of violent conflict may offer solidarity and share firsthand knowledge of approaches to rapprochement that can be empowering. On the other, INGOs and foreign mentors can act as mediators within multi-ethnic groups and between communities until a time when confidence is gained to allow independent existence. A positive side effect of the careful mentoring CBM received from IKV before the appointment of an Albanian Kosovar as director, was its establishment in the eyes of the community as a multi-ethnic organisation. The early appointment of a local director would have branded CBM with an ethnic identity that would have alienated half of its target group.

6.3 Future trends

6.3.1 Community development as capacity building

Many capacity building activities are targeted at newer, immature NGOs whose emergence in smaller communities and rural areas is encouraged in B&H and Kosovo by donor policy to continue to assist both the return process and the strengthening of local governance. The difficulty these types of community-oriented NGO face in establishing financial sustainability, and doubts as to whether the professional NGO is a suitable vehicle for either representing or activating the community in favour of local development, have led to a growing inclination among local capacity builders and INGOs to work more directly with citizens in order to form more informal and participatory bodies that are focused on marshalling community resources and influencing local centres of power.

An important feature of all this work is the limited financial support offered to community projects, which is intended as an incentive for the mobilisation of resources, human and financial, from within the community.

In B&H, INGOs (for example, World Vision, CRS, Swiss Red Cross, CISP, ICRC), have carried out a raft of community development projects, assisting local people to form a variety of CBOs, such as parent teacher associations, community development boards, and health committees. While technical trainings have formed a part of these projects, capacity building has centred on process facilitation using participatory approaches such as PRA and PLA (Participatory Learning and Action), dialogue and patient consultation.

An important feature of all this work is the limited financial support offered to community projects, which is intended as an incentive for the mobilisation of resources, human and financial, from within the community.

A number of Bosnian NGOs are also active in community development, with Mozaik, which classes itself as a community capacity builder, leading the field. By working through a network of locally-based NGOs which provide a variety of local knowledge and facilitation and consulting techniques and experience, Mozaik is also a forum for NGO learning and capacity building.

In Kosovo, community development has yet to establish itself as a distinct segment in civil society capacity building. Both local actors, such as CBM, or INGOs, such as Mercy Corps and World Vision, undertake community capacity building as a means of peace building or a way of establishing the conditions for minority return. This is in contrast to B&H, where community development's immediate objectives are oriented more around increasing citizen participation in the decision-making process.

6.3.2 Partnership: patronage or instrumentalism?

The INGOs interviewed for this study all laid emphasis on partnership as the principal means of fulfilling a commitment to strengthen civil society. For these INGOs, partnership provides both the context and the means for undertaking organisational capacity building. Individual INGO understandings of partnership bear remarkable similarities to one another, despite the fact that some informants believed that their organisation's conception of partnership and its application in practice was in some way superior to the others.

Common to all was that partnership requires a long-term commitment from both international and local parties to a mutually controlled process of shared learning entered into on the basis of a shared social vision or common development objectives. Central to this idea are values such as trust, reciprocity and mutual accountability, and while working jointly is prescribed in all areas, including planning, implementation and

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monitoring and evaluation, final ownership should lie with the local partner, which should take the lead in determining programme or project direction. Through the application and exchange of complementary knowledge, the benefits in terms of organisational strengthening should accrue to both sides.

In practice, however, the weakness and immaturity of most local partners in B&H and Kosovo has transformed the rhetoric of partnership into the language and exercise of patronage. Informants talked of partnership as 'knowledge transfer', 'creation of capacity', and even as the 'creation of partners'. In many cases, partnership is a means of providing tailored one-to-one capacity building over a longer period than is on offer elsewhere, by means of selected trainings, coaching, facilitation, contacts with donors and provision of information and specialist knowledge. This is supplemented by institutional funding or the purchase of essential equipment.

INGOs insist that as they are not 'buying a service' with their support, but are entering into a mutually agreed process in pursuit of joint goals, whereby autonomy in terms of determining both an LNGO's programme design and also the content of capacity building it receives, remains with the local partner. Enabling local ownership and developing a sense of responsibility and a proactive attitude are considered as the advantages of partnership over other means of capacity building.

While many local informants drew attention to the value of partnerships between domestic actors, very few mentioned INGO-local partnerships. INGOs continue to be regarded by some solely as ready sources of cash and material support, and by others as competitors for donor funds. This being said, there were some extremely sceptical voices among local informants as to the merits of INGO-local partnerships. For them, partnership is a concept that was 'peddled' by INGOs in the immediate post-war period as a way of justifying the creation of new NGOs, but now that basic capacities have been built in civil society, it is used as a means of cheap project implementation. However, attention should be drawn to Bospo, a mature Bosnian NGO, which reported that a number of partnership agreements it had entered into with CRS for advocacy projects had entailed joint execution and decision-making at all stages from planning to evaluation, and that the partnership had been essential for increasing project scope and effectiveness.

6.3.3 Coordination of capacity building and information sharing

Despite much talk of the desirability of improved networking and information sharing between NGOs generally, especially from informants in Kosovo, there are few mechanisms for coordinating capacity building activities or for sharing information between capacity builders on professional practice. There also appeared to be little demand for greater coordination from providers and there is a sense that the capacity building sub-sector is as fragmented as wider civil society in both Kosovo and B&H.

Mozaik's network of community development specialists provides a practical means of exchanging capacity building experience through joint practice. Apart from this, the Network of Bosnian Trainers includes the development of capacity building methodologies and techniques in its mission statement. However, its coordinator reports that its members, who are all attached to other organisations, show little interest in setting aside time to participate voluntarily in events for exchanging information. Consequently, the Network has so far failed to organise events for advancing practice amongst Bosnian capacity builders.

Within the various issue-based networks of ordinary NGOs, the issues of individual organisational learning or the capacity building of the network itself are rarely raised. This is because, in the main, networks are conceived of as vehicles for enhancing programming by means of developing joint activities or exchanging specialist thematic

information. A notable exception is the Kosovan Women's Network, which has stressed the importance of a number of capacity building measures in recent strategic planning (available at www.womensnetwork.org). These include the implementation of a code of conduct setting out standards for full transparency and accountability, for itself and all its members that aims to increase the network's legitimacy and support within local communities and amongst donors, as well as an analysis of members' interests and capacity building needs by means of field trips to all its 81 member organisations.

Within the wider capacity building delivery system, which involves donors, INGOs, as well as local actors, regular and structured communication is poorly developed. While there appears broad agreement as to the priorities for capacity building in B&H and Kosovo respectively, duplication of assistance remains a problem. A recent example from B&H is the overlap in some locations of a youth NGO training scheme run by

A number of informants in B&H remarked that there was a lack of publications and printed material, particularly in the local languages.

CARE International with an already existing long-term programme being run by UNV³¹. Trainings in team building, fundraising, advocacy, volunteer development and strategic planning all duplicated previous trainings supplied by UNV. UNV for its part repeated a number of trainings in other locations that their client NGOs had received under previous INGO projects.

A number of informants in B&H remarked that there was a lack of publications and printed material, particularly in the local languages, available to capacity builders to assist them to identify new methodologies and learn from the experiences of others. In reality this problem is more acute in Kosovo, where ATRC appears to be the only organisation that actively disseminates information on capacity building. In B&H, a large number of organisations have published handbooks for training and facilitation, and organisational processes such as strategic planning, participatory needs analysis, and issue-based advocacy, based on their own project experience. Most of these resources are published on paper in limited numbers and tend to reach only a local audience. However, there are a few important Bosnian websites providing capacity building materials. Mozaik have started to publish case studies in community capacity building, alongside practice-based handbooks for Community Driven Development and social research (www.mozaik.ba). The Centre for the Promotion of Civil Society has recently launched a web-based resource centre which provides a large number of NGO technical training manuals, as well as policy and advisory documents for increasing cross-sector cooperation (www.civilnodrustvo.ba/).

³¹ UNV's Youth Integration Programme ran from mid 2002 to September 2005 and included capacity building of 13 youth NGOs.

6.3.4 Monitoring and evaluation of capacity building

Poor dissemination of capacity building information is partly the result of budget limitations. It is at the same time intimately linked to lack of available information resulting from difficulties all capacity builders, local and international, face in monitoring and evaluating (M & E).

INGOs and local providers expressed considerable frustration with the fact that because they are forced to deliver capacity building within a project framework, they rarely have either the time or the funds to carry out meaningful M & E. This is as true for those INGOs that profess to work through long-term partnerships, as it is for local providers delivering more restricted training courses. In many cases M & E amounts solely to reaction evaluations by participants to workshops and training.

In light of what are considered donor-determined financial restrictions, it is interesting that there is no evidence that M & E of capacity building in B&H and Kosovo is being conducted according to formal means, such as the logframe analysis, which donors tend to favour (Watson 2005). Lack of formality, however, sheds light on the conceptual limitations in which M & E is being conducted. Many informants openly admitted that they did not monitor capacity building, as they found it challenging to identify what exactly they were monitoring. Within a broad understanding that capacity building involves process and change, informants were unsure as to which

Many informants openly admitted that they did not monitor capacity building, as they found it challenging to identify what exactly they were monitoring.

level they should be conducting M & E (individual, organisational, institutional), and were also concerned that it is too difficult to develop indicators that could 'capture' that change and process over time. Most commonly, M & E is reduced to two or three key indicators that seek to combine a rough description of overall organisational engagement with a measure of improvement in key technical skills. For example, one INGO monitors overall increases in an NGO partner's activity with its target group, while tracing improvements

in the number of project proposals being written. Another tracks the success of its partner's fundraising activities with donors, while checking for increases in the NGO's activity in the community and also its participation in NGO meetings and conferences. Both the above examples illustrate a conflation of a results-based, measurement approach to individual skills, with a systems-based approach that underlines aspects of organisational learning that may not be quantified, such as, shared meanings and values, teamwork, commitment to primary stakeholders and responsiveness to changing circumstances.

Two organisations interviewed, reflecting a more pessimistic or realistic mindset, depending on one's understanding of the NGO environment in Kosovo and B&H, set survival of their partners over time as the indicator of successful capacity building.

Although informants stressed that it is important to measure NGO participation and self-initiative, interviews suggested that participatory M & E methods, such as guided self-assessment, outcome mappings, and the various forms of internal and external dialogue are not being used. ATRC in Kosovo are experimenting with a questionnaire self-assessment that NGO leaders fill out when registering for workshop trainings. This provides baseline information for the participating NGO to track changes in performance and internal organisation over time. Izbor Plus in B&H, has a more complete and participatory method for needs assessment by workshop and participatory triangulated evaluation using interviews, workshops and questionnaires. However, their current project contracts do not allow them the luxury of working in this inclusive and client-oriented way.

7. Conclusions

7.1 Stages of capacity building in post-conflict settings

NGO and civil society capacity building in post-conflict and transitional environments is a complicated and confusing field. As the purpose of all capacity building, at the most fundamental level, is to stimulate change in attitudes and behaviour, one would expect a certain degree of complexity in its delivery, as approaches continually adapt and

A close reading of the remarkable similarities in capacity building efforts undertaken in B&H and Kosovo suggests six clearly identifiable 'moments' of capacity building in post-conflict and transitional environments.

respond to this change. However, the experience of B&H and Kosovo points to a lack of coherence in capacity building over time regarding its subjects (who is receiving capacity building?), the capacities to be strengthened, and its ultimate aims (capacity building for what?). A close reading of the remarkable similarities in capacity building efforts undertaken in B&H and Kosovo suggests six clearly identifiable 'moments' of capacity building in post-conflict and transitional environments. Although

these 'moments' appear to form a temporal progression starting from around the end of hostilities up to the present day,³² their differing targets and ultimate objectives point up the lack of overall consistency of capacity building efforts in B&H and Kosovo to date.

1. Commencing during war and covering the immediate post-conflict period, under conditions of institutional collapse and humanitarian crisis, support is provided to LNGOs and INGO field offices in order to build logistical and project management capacities for the delivery of humanitarian aid, the provision of essential services and psychosocial assistance. While existing CSOs may sometimes be supported, emphasis is placed on stimulating the formation of new professional NGOs through short-term grants and technical trainings.
2. The second 'moment' arrives soon after the conclusion of hostilities (maybe within 12 months), as international authorities have re-established basic public administration and are preparing the introduction of Western-style democracy via early post-war elections. Short-term project support is made available to new LNGOs and INGO branches for a variety of educational activities aimed at promoting democracy, citizenship and human rights. International consultants supplement technical trainings for NGO professionalism with theoretical education on civil society, the NGO and the above subjects. Women and youth are prioritised as they are expected to be the most fertile ground for implanting unfamiliar Western ideologies. This approach enjoys great

³² The following is summarised in the table in Appendix 3,

popularity in an early phase of maybe two years, but continues with less intensity over a longer period.

3. The related practices of confidence building and conflict resolution rarely get underway until after the first humanitarian phase is all but over. This, again, is carried out by foreigners, but usually by individuals and INGOs that are specialists in peace building or mediation and are not involved in humanitarian aid or reconstruction activities. The target groups are more likely to be informal community groups, youth centres and women's self-help groups than professional NGOs. This approach is widespread and intensively practiced for a short two or three year period, while it enjoys popularity with foreign donors.
4. Capacity building as an end itself appears toward the end of the immediate post-conflict period. A range of actors, including emergent local NGO support organisations, INGOs and international consultancies focus on the organisational development of LNGOs that have developed in the preceding period, as well as INGO branch offices intended for 'localisation' as the INGO prepares to leave. This 'moment' is characterised by increasing political and institutional stability and the reduction of international support, especially to NGO activities. Depending on available resources, capacity building measures are delivered over a longer period, and there is greater emphasis placed on facilitated processes such as, organisational assessments, strategic planning, and in-house consultancy.
5. Within a wider framework of international support for longer-term development, national/local governments begin to achieve greater coordination and assume responsibility for development strategy and economic planning. NGO capacity building, now almost solely delivered by local experts and NGO support organisations, is directed towards advancing capacities for influencing government and public administration, in areas such as advocacy, research, and policy dialogue. At the same time, a focus on building institutional relationships – NGO networks, cross-sector partnerships, multi-stakeholder coalitions – is introduced.
6. Concomitant with 'moment' 5, capacity building is reconceived as community development and directed towards stimulating the formation of CBOs in order to increase citizens' participation in decision making at the local level, mobilise local resources for development and promote local development planning. This approach is dependent on functioning local government, and the re-establishment of a stable community population, as well as local acceptance of minority rights.

Particularly noteworthy in the above scheme is the manner by which capacity building has been applied instrumentally in pursuit of short-term objectives that are defined by

external actors, and also the way the objectives themselves have changed with startling rapidity over short periods of time. This approach has determined that capacity building has concentrated upon the rapid strengthening of technical skills and the performance of individuals in managing resources and administering tasks within short timeframes, at the expense of longer-term support to create organisational coherence and resilience. The project funding plus training model of capacity building has flown in the face of good practice identified by this study, which includes continuity of support, team building and the strengthening of organisationally oriented processes, assistance with embedding the organisation in the community or building an identifiable constituency, and institutional funding free from project limitations, structured in such a way as to provide time and space for learning, but also to stimulate greater independence and responsibility.

Civil society in B&H and Kosovo remains fragile, although a critical mass of capacitated professional NGOs has emerged in B&H alongside many smaller more or less voluntary CSOs that can claim to command constituency support. Those that have survived have learnt to dance the dance of repeatedly repositioning and reorienting their mission and skills base according to changing funding and capacity building priorities. In this light, present civil society is seen as having progressed despite, rather than because of internationally determined capacity building efforts. The cost of developing civil society in both B&H and Kosovo, in terms of resources expended, false starts, failed NGOs, and unfulfilled expectations has been great, but no more so than in fuelling conceptual and economic dependency on international actors, as well as encouraging financial self-interest among NGOs and the wider society.

7.2 Challenges for capacity building in post-conflict settings

The lessons that can be learnt from B&H and Kosovo for future capacity building activities in post-conflict environments where the International Community assumes responsibility for state building and social reconstruction are best expressed as a set of challenges or key questions.

1. Is the immediate post-conflict period conducive to building civil society? Experience from other 'more normal' settings shows that civil society development takes place in relation to the development of the State and the Market, and that it also reflects currents in the political and social culture.³³ The conclusion of violent conflict in B&H and Kosovo was succeeded by an institutional and economic void, the continuation of conflict by non-violent means under the direction of local nationalist elites, as well as the persistence of authoritarian political behaviour inherited from communist Yugoslav times. Immediate interim responsibility for re-establishing state administration and

³³ This does not imply that civil society necessarily has harmonious relations with either the State or the Market, nor does it imply that civil society does not promote ideas and ideologies that run counter to prevailing culture.

providing the security necessary for economic activity was filled by international authority, aided by the temporary deployment of foreign administrators and humanitarian agencies. The early attempts to foster an independent Western-style civil society under these conditions were premature. International expectations that civil society would provide an effective mechanism in creating a democratic culture were unrealistic, on the one hand, while on the other, international control of both the political and economic spheres inevitably determined that civil society adopted the International Community as its constituency.

2. How does one evaluate the relative merits of inducing civil society and lending support to traditional forms of social organisation; that is, can we choose between *creating capacity* and *building on existing capacity*? Reason suggests that traditional forms of civil society retain legitimacy and popular support in the community, and already possess the vital qualities of internal coherence and resilience. However, in the aftermath of ethno-national conflict there is a real risk that traditional civil society may become a serious obstacle to peace building efforts by becoming the focus of continued contestation between national political and social interests. In B&H and Kosovo reasonable fears concerning possible political manipulation and the corrupt use of resources by local nationalist elites determined the International Community's preference for stimulating the growth of an NGO-based civil society sector as part of the wider political project to engineer new states founded upon pluralist democracy and a liberal economy. Modest results in terms of NGO performance, responsiveness and sustainability, and the cost of achieving these results need to be weighed carefully against the organisational advantages of traditional forms of civil society and the political hazards of attempting to exploit these advantages.
3. In post-conflict environments, can one apply a technical approach to NGO capacity building without first addressing issues of social trust? This study suggests that the immediate challenge for undertaking capacity building is first to establish the conditions for organising and taking collective action. War-related trauma, the rending of social ties, displacement and the destruction of livelihoods all leave communities demoralised and disempowered. Under such conditions capacity building should concentrate initially on confidence building; that is, the rebuilding of social trust and understanding between individuals through listening and the facilitation of dialogue, with the aim of establishing teamwork and collective social vision.

In communities that have been divided along ethno-national lines, confidence building is transformed into conflict resolution. The persistence of nationally motivated antagonisms and the low levels of ethnic reintegration in Kosovo (and to a lesser extent in B&H) are powerful indicators of the need for more concerted and lasting efforts in conflict resolution as a capacity building

approach, on the one hand, and of the limitations of civil society as a mechanism for re-establishing social cohesion, on the other hand.

4. Lack of continuity and strategic direction in capacity building is a major hindrance to the development of an effective and sustainable civil society. Given the complexity of the post-conflict environment and its social and political instabilities, is it possible to identify a broader purpose for civil society that may be supported in a more coherent manner within a longer timeframe? The challenge here for capacity builders and those that fund capacity building is to look beyond the particular post-conflict 'moment' that demands progress in terms of immediate results – whether this be the distribution of humanitarian aid, the education of citizens in hitherto unfamiliar political and economic ideologies, or the temporary bridging of ethno-political divides – to the as yet unknown territory of a stable independent socio-political entity and ask what kind of civil society, fulfilling what kind of role, one might expect to find. In contrast to the overall thrust of international efforts at post-conflict reconstruction and development in B&H and Kosovo, this implies dedication to process rather than results, a commitment to organisational development, support to evolving locally generated social visions, and structures of long-term financial support that increase NGO independence and decrease donor control.

Appendix 1: Research methodology

The research proceeded from a comprehensive review of a variety of civil society mappings that have been carried out in both B&H and Kosovo during their respective post-war periods, and an examination of the evolving socio-political situation and development environment in which civil society operates, by reference to a number of key analytical texts.

Primary data was provided by semi-structured interviews with small, but illustrative samples of capacity building providers, LNGOs, INGOs and donor organisations in both settings. In light of the lack of written material directly concerned with capacity building theory and practice in the region, interviews were considered the most direct means of gaining access to reliable information on past and current practice. They also provided a means for individual reflection and the development of personal critiques of capacity building needs and practice through discussion.

In Bosnia and Herzegovina interviews were mainly conducted in the local language. English was used in five cases according to the wish of local NGO informants (2 cases) or where foreign representatives participated (3 cases). In Kosovo, English was used in all but two interviews, where Serbian was used as a common second language for Albanian speakers and the author.

While efforts were made to elicit the views of local actors, especially local providers of capacity building, the author also attempted to maintain a balance with data provided by international organisations and donors in order to reflect the heavily internationalised context in which civil society continues to operate in B&H and Kosovo. Local NGOs tended to offer executive directors or training programme managers for interview, while INGOs and donors were represented mainly by local civil society programme managers. In many cases (about 50%) INGO and donor country managers and heads of office, of whom all but one were foreign, participated in interviews alongside their programme managers. Only those interviewed from local NGO support organisations had direct involvement in providing capacity building services.

In B&H interviews were conducted in Sarajevo over one week in October 2005, followed up by a three-day visit to Tuzla in December. Organisations were selected randomly according to the author's deep knowledge of the country, where he had been working up until October 2005 for over five years. Final selection was limited by time and the availability of those interviewed. In Kosovo, interviews were carried out over three weeks in January 2006, in the capital Pristina, and two regional centres, Mitrovica and Gjakova. Civil society mappings suggested the first contacts for these interviews, and new subjects were identified by informants during the field research. The higher number of ordinary NGOs interviewed relative to capacity building

providers, in comparison to B&H, is a reflection of lower numbers of capacity support providers in Kosovo outside the provincial capital.

Data from interviews was supplemented by a small number of capacity building and project evaluations made available to the author by those interviewed, as well as information on a wide range of own websites. While many of these websites are in the local languages, almost all sources referenced in the final text are in English, reflecting the general international orientation of NGO activity in the region. In the case of B&H, the author also cross-checked data with his own experiences in capacity building, evaluation and programme delivery in the country.

Appendix 2: Abbreviations and acronyms used in the text

ADF	America's Development Foundation
ATRC	Advocacy and Training Resource Centre
B&H	Bosnia and Herzegovina
CBM	Community Building Mitrovica
CBO	Community-based organisation
CCI	Centre for Civic Initiatives
CDHRF	Council for the Defence of Human Rights and Freedom
CISP	Comitato internazionale per lo sviluppo dei popoli
CPCD	Centre for the Promotion of Civil Society, B&H
CRS	Catholic Relief Services
CSO	Civil society organisation
DPA	Dayton Peace Accords
ESI	European Stability Initiative
EUFOR	European Peacekeeping Force in B&H
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GTZ	Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit
IBHI	Independent Bureau for Humanitarian Issues (formerly International Bureau for HI)
ICRC	International Committee of the Red Cross
ICVA	Initiatives and Civic Action (formerly International Council of Voluntary Associations in BiH)
INGO	International NGO
IRC	International Rescue Committee
IREX	International Research and Exchanges Board
KACI	Kosovo Action for Civic Initiatives
KCSF	Kosovo Civil Society Foundation
KEC	Kosovo Education Centre
KFOR	NATO-led Kosovo Stabilisation Force
KFOS	Kosovo Foundation for Open Society
KIPRED	Kosovo Institute for Policy Research and Development
KND	Kosovan Nansen Dialogue
KODI	Kosovan Institute for Research and Documentation
LNGO	Local (national) NGO
MDA	Management and Development Associates
MTS	Mother Theresa Society
NGO	Non-governmental Organisation
OHR	Office of the High Representative, Bosnia and Herzegovina
ORT	Obshество Remeslenofo zemledelcheskofo Truda
OSCE	Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe
PISG	Provisional Institutions of Self Government in Kosovo
PLA	Participatory Learning and Action

PRA	Participatory Rural Appraisal
PRSP	Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper
RAE	Roma, Ashkali and Egyptians
RS	Republika Srpska (B&H Entity)
SDC	Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation
SRSR	Special Representative in Kosovo of the UN Secretary General
TALDI	Tuzla Association for Local Development Initiatives
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNHCR	United Nations High Commission for Refugees
UNMIK	United Nations Interim Mission in Kosovo
UNV	United Nations Volunteers
USAID	United States Agency for International Development

Appendix 3: Summary of capacity building approaches adopted in post-conflict and transitional societies, based on the experience of B&H and Kosovo

The table proposes a temporal progression from top to bottom, summarising the key 'moments' of capacity building in post-conflict and transitional environments. More than one approach may be present at any one time, dependent on the local context, overall international policy vis-à-vis the specific post-conflict region, and variations in policy, strategy and approach of individual actors (donor, INGO, LNGO, national/local government) present in the specific context.

When? Socio-political context	Core problem	Capacity building for what?	Main providers of CB	Target of CB	CB focus/means
1. During war and immediate post conflict period: institutional collapse, economy not functioning, poor security, population movements, loss of livelihoods	Lack of shelter, livelihoods, essential medical care and social support	Humanitarian relief; provision of essential services; psychosocial support	INGOs and donors, foreign trainers	Existing CBOs, INGO field missions, new LNGOs	Finance, trainings for reporting, financial control and proposal writing, assistance with registering an NGO
2. Immediate post-conflict period: minimum security established, internationally led introduction of democracy	No tradition/poor understanding of democracy, continued political dominance and control of resources by local nationalist elites, widespread human rights abuses	Democratisation; education for human rights and citizenship; resource centres – women, youth and other special interests	INGOs and foreign trainers	New LNGOs, INGO projects and spin offs	Finance, trainings to individuals on civil society and democracy + for professional skills. Support for establishing buildings-based NGO centres

3. Post-conflict period: demoralised and traumatised communities, economic insecurity, populations remain in flux	Lack of social trust, social capital eroded, ethnic intolerance	Confidence building and conflict resolution	Local INGO field offices, foreign peace workers, foreign facilitators	Individuals and informal groups in community	Dialogue, listening, and process facilitation
4. Later post-conflict period, continuing on: NGOs gaining acceptance in community, increasing political stability, capacity building of local governments and institutions	Poor sustainability of NGOs, NGO failure, need to adapt to changing national priorities, foreign donors reducing support, INGO partners withdrawing	Organisational development	International consultancies, local NGO support organisations, INGOs in partnership with LNGOs	Established LNGOs and INGO spin offs (to be localised)	In-house consultancy, organisational assessments, strategic planning (including reassessment of mission, stakeholder need), trainings in development theory, facilitation of networks
5. End of post-conflict conditions: local political and institutional stability established, partial withdrawal of international control, nationally determined development policy	National and local governments lacking capacity and poorly connected to citizenry, poor coordination between different sectors, underperforming economy	Longer-term national development: advocacy, policy dialogue, institutional cooperation, poverty reduction	Local NGO support organisations, INGOs in partnership with LNGOs	National NGOs and professional NGOs in the community	In house consultancy, facilitation of networks and cross-sector partnerships, trainings for advocacy, policy dialogue, development theory and monitoring of government development interventions. Advanced trainings for fundraising
6. End of post-conflict conditions: significant return or stabilisation of population, functioning local government, acceptance/ tolerance of minority populations	Low levels of community participation in decision making, lack of responsiveness of local governments, shortage of resources in the community	Community development: local development planning, local initiatives, mobilisation of local resources, strengthening local governance	Remaining INGOs, national and local development NGOs, local NGO support organisations	CBOs and informal groups in community, local government	Process facilitation, consultancy, trainings for strategic planning, public advocacy, communication and negotiation. Small financial incentives for mobilising community resources

Appendix 4: Checklist of questions/topics for semi-structured interviews

These questions are author's notes to stimulate and steer discussions during semi-structured interviews with representatives of organisations.

[Varies depending of type of organisation]

1. Capacity building:
 - a. What is it? Definition.
 - b. Meaning in local context /language? Understanding in wider civil society/society?
 - c. Level: individual, organisation, sector, institutional

? From above: discuss civil society: what is it? role? composition?
State of civil society. How changed over time?
2. What has your organisation done to support capacity building?
 - a. Previous intervention: means and methods, theory
 - b. Who carried out?
 - c. Needs?
 - d. Who designed/supported?
 - e. Changes over time?
3. [if not provider/supporter] What CB have you received?
 - a. How received/how initiated?
 - b. Usefulness/effectiveness?
4. What CB carrying out now/supporting?
 - a. Specific areas of CB: e.g. identity, management, stakeholder relations...etc
 - b. Needs
 - c. Changes over time? [link to 1. on civil society, or bring in civil society now?]
 - d. Who provide to?
 - e. Control/design/funding
5. How have you/do you do M & E?
6. What CB have you/do you carry out in own organisation?
 - a. How do M & E? Results?
 - b. Comparisons [if applicable] with what you provide
 - c. Own CB needs now

7. Assessment of CB generally to date
 - a. Impact
 - b. Good practice. What not worked?
8. What are CB needs in country now more general?
9. Who / what organisations are carrying out CB?

Appendix 5: List of organisations interviewed

Bosnia

Bosnian capacity builders

Bospo

Petra Kočića 8

75000 Tuzla

Tel./fax. + 387 35 264 257

E-mail. bospo@bospo.ba

Web. www.bospo.ba

CCI

Trg Slobode bb

Tel: + 387 (0) 35 275 366

Fax: + 387 (0) 35 270 538

E-mail. cci@ccibh.org

Web. www.ccibh.org

Izbor Plus

Kolodvorska 11

71000 Sarajevo

Tel. + 387 33 711 000

E-mail. izborplus@izborplus.ba

Web. www.izborplus.ba

Mozaik

Soukbunar 42

71000 Sarajevo

Tel. + 387 33 265 290 / 266 480

Fax. + 387 33 266 482

E-mail. aida@mozaik.ba (Aida Feraget, Public relations)

Web. www.mozaik.ba

TALDI

Stupine B13, lamela B

75000 Tuzla

Tel. + 387 35 250 045

Fax. + 387 35 275 418

E-mail. talditz@bih.net.ba

Web. www.taldi.ba

Tihomir Kneziček

(Consultant & Network of Bosnian Trainers)
E-mail. knezicek@bih.net.ba

Bosnian NGOs

Prijateljice

Slavka Mičića br. 19/I
75000 Tuzla
Tel./fax. + 387 33 245 210
Tel./fax. + 387 33 245 211
E-mail. hdprituz@bih.net.ba
Web. www.prijateljice.net

Žene ženama (Women to Women)

Ante Fijamenga 14b
Kuća Ljudskih Prava
71000 Sarajevo
Tel./fax. + 387 33 645 234
Tel. + 387 33 613 589
E-mail. Zene2000@megatel.ba
Web. www.zenezenama.com.ba

INGOs

Catholic Relief Services

Zagrebačka 18
71000 Sarajevo
Tel. + 387 33 717 960
Fax. + 387 33 617 597
E-mail. lsherriff@eme.crs.org (Leslie Sherriff, Country Representative)
Web. www.crs.org

Save the Children Norway

Kemala Kapetanovića 17
71000 Sarajevo
Tel. + 387 33 659 822 / 646 601
Fax. + 387 33 659 915
E-mail. st.scn@smartnet.ba (Senija Tahirović, Programme Director)

World Vision B&H

Zvornička 9
71000 Sarajevo
Tel. + 387 33 660 426
Fax. + 387 33 652 403
E-mail. claudia_bade@wvi.org (Claudia Bade, Country Programmes Coordinator)

Donors

European Commission, B&H

Union Bank Building

Dubrovačka 6

71000 Sarajevo

Tel. + 387 33 254 700

Fax. + 387 33 666 037

E-mail. gordana.suvalija@cec.eu.int (Gordana Šuvalija, Project officer)

Web. www.delbih.cec.eu.int

Swiss Cooperation Office B&H

Piruša 1

71000 Sarajevo

Tel. + 387 33 25 4 040

Fax. + 387 33 271 500

E-mail. sarajevo.sdc.net

Web. www.sdc-seco.ba

USAID B&H

Hamdije Čemerlića 39

71000 Sarajevo

Tel. + 387 33 702 300

Fax. + 387 33 611 973

Web. www.usaid.ba

Kosovo

Kosovan capacity builders

ATRC (Advocacy Training and Resource Centre)

Rr. Agim Ramadani nr.15

Pristina

Tel./fax. + 381 38 244 810

www.advocacy-center.org

training@advocacy-center.org

KFOS (Kosovo Foundation for Open Society)

Uliana-Imzot Nike Prelaj, Villa nr.13

Pristina

Tel./ fax. + 381 38 542 157 / 158 / 159 / 160

E-mail. info@kfos.org

Web. www.kfos.org

Kosovan Nansen Dialogue

Rr. Sylejman Vokshi nr. 2/2

Pristina

Tel./fax + 381 38 224 650

E-mail. knd@kndialogue.org

Web. www.kndialogue.org / www.nansen-dialogue.net

MDA (Management & Development Associates)

Eqrem Qabej St., B 3/2

10060 Pristina

Tel. + 381 38 247 147

E-mail. ldalipi@seemda.com (Luam Dalipi, Managing partner)

Web. www.seemda.com

Kosovan NGOs and Networks**CBM (Community Building Mitrovica)**

Rr. Mbretresha Teuta

Confidence Area

Mitrovica

Tel. + 381 28 30 335

E-mail. cbmmitrovica@hotmail.com

CDHRF (Council for the Defence of Human Rights and Freedoms)

Rr. Z. Drini, p.n

Pristina

Tel. + 381 38 249 006 / 244 029

E-mail. office@cdhrf.org

Gjakova Youth Network

E-mail. berat71@yahoo.com

Web. www.gjyn.net

Kosovo Women's Network

info@womensnetwork.org

www.womensnetwork.org

Me Dore Ne Zemer (With Hand in Heart)

Mob. + 381 63 706 0791

E-mail. Medorenezemer@yahoo.com

E-mail. Medorenezemer@gmail.com

MINGOS (Mitrovica Initiative for NGO support)

Mob.1 + 377 44 355 478

Mob.2. + 381 63 8 740 293
E-mail. lulzimhoti@idrc-ks.org (Lulzim Hoti, Assistant)
Web. www.idrc-ks.org

NGO Forum Gjakovë

Rr. UQK-se p.n
Gjakovë
Tel. / fax. + 381 390 30 053
E-mail. ngogjakove@yahoo.com

Promocom

Xhelal Hajda – Toni Street
Gjakova
Tel. + 381 390 76 574
E-mail. ngo_promocom@yahoo.com

INGOs

Mercy Corps

Bedri Shala 38/C
Bregu i Diellit
Pristina
Tel.fax. + 381 38 549 704
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Civil Society Capacity Building in Post-Conflict Societies: The Experience of Bosnia and Herzegovina and Kosovo

By Bill Sterland

This paper investigates the approaches and methods applied to NGO capacity building in Bosnia and Herzegovina (B&H) and Kosovo during parallel and ongoing experiences of internationally determined post-conflict social, political and economic rehabilitation and transition. Capacity building in both settings is a new term, having arrived with equally novel concepts such as the 'NGO', 'civil society', 'democracy'; and 'good governance' as part of a broader development discourse driving efforts to re-establish social cohesion and fashion new states according to Western-style liberal democracy.

B&H and Kosovo have progressed from the immediate chaos of a post-conflict environment along the road to long-term institutional strengthening and economic development, local NGO capacity building priorities have changed. In Kosovo, many NGOs are still taxed with defining a social mission for themselves that goes beyond the supply of services independently of local authorities which are increasingly showing their readiness to provide for the needs of their local communities. In B&H, NGOs are challenged with strengthening a range of capacities, such as gaining theoretical understanding of social and economic development, increasing specialist knowledge within the organisation, adopting rights-based approaches, strengthening advocacy and campaigning skills, improving analytical reflection, developing social research capabilities, and providing inputs into public policy, all of which will assist them to impact positively on nationally-led development policies. In both contexts, NGO performance and relevance will also be dependent on the civil society sector's ability to improve internal cohesion, and also on cross-sector dialogue, cooperation and coordination.

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