ACEH: Reconstruction in a Conflict Environment
Views from civil society, donors and NGOs

Adam Burke and Afnan
Indonesian Social Development Papers

Since 1998, Indonesia has been undergoing a momentous political and economic transition. The fall of the New Order, the economic crisis (*krismon*), and radical decentralization have changed the political, economic and social context. Within this new context, power relations are in flux, identities are being renegotiated, and institutions are changing. Changes in incentives, and in the role of formal and informal institutions at various levels, have altered the ways in which individuals and groups relate to each other and the state. Understanding this new context, and the ways in which various actors (national and international) can promote progressive social change is important.

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The papers in the series are works in progress. The emphasis is on generating discussion amongst different stakeholders—including government, civil society, and international institutions—rather than offering absolute conclusions. It is hoped that they will stimulate further discussions of the questions they seek to answer, the hypotheses they test, and the recommendations they prescribe.

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Aceh: Reconstruction in a Conflict Environment

Views From Civil Society, Donors And NGOs

Adam Burke and Afnan

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Design by kaptenadole
Photographs by Adam Burke
Camp for internally displaced people, Tapaktuan, Aceh Selatan

The camp was set up in July 2003 when a military offensive was launched in the nearby mountains. Villages became unsafe and residents moved down to the town of Tapaktuan. The villages are still unsafe, and around 500 people remain in the camp although others have moved on to live with relatives or start a life elsewhere. Those that remain get a little support, infrequently, from government rice provision; an NGO doctor visits monthly and schooling is available. Adults work as casual employees in construction and fishing, but since the tsunami in December 2004 there is less to do. The living barracks are long, dark, dilapidated, with a single entrance at either end. They house about five families each.
Key interviews

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**Acehnese civil bodies:** Firmandes, Head of Aceh Chamber of Commerce; Akhiruddin, Gerak (anti-corruption NGO); Ali Basyah Amin, Former Rector, Syiah Kuala University; Adli, Head, Panglima Laot (fishing cooperative union); Professor Daniel Juned, Dean of Ushuluddin Department at IAIN Arraniry (Islamic Studies Institution); Naimah Hasan, women’s activist and politician; Taqwadin, Youth Muhammadiyah (national religious non-governmental network).

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This paper is based on interviews with representatives of local civil society, international NGOs and donor agencies in Aceh, Indonesia, in 2005. It looks at how the tsunami and the subsequent reconstruction effort relate to a long-running conflict in the province. Findings should be of interest to a range of people working on reconstruction or conflict in Aceh, and to those looking at aid provision in conflict-affected environments elsewhere. The aim of producing this paper is to provide useful information for agencies active in Aceh, supporting a tsunami reconstruction effort that not only repairs physical damage but also helps build a more peaceful future.

Generally, interviewees felt that the aid effort has had a positive, but not decisive, impact on the dynamics of the conflict. International agencies in Aceh have inadvertently, by their presence alone, created an environment more conducive to peace. Some potential pitfalls of international involvement include the risk that large inflows of funding can fuel corruption and lead to increased tension if distributed unevenly. International NGOs are the main funders in Aceh. This is a new dynamic and it places a responsibility on NGOs to be strategic.

Most international organisations intend to provide support to Aceh for several years. Rather than simply being involved in rapid reconstruction, this timeframe means engaging in longer-term sustainable development. It also provides scope to look at underlying issues – community relationships, supporting civil society, etc. Agencies involved in longer-term planning will need a strong understanding of Acehnese politics and society if they are to use their presence most effectively. If they are to play a valuable role, they need to understand the dynamics of Aceh’s conflict, and consider how they can play a role in supporting long-term peace.

Although some international agencies have taken a range of steps to ensure that conflict issues do not hinder their work in the short run, only a few have fundamentally adapted their work to the local environment or concertedly taken conflict into account when planning interventions. However, those agencies that have taken steps to consider how they can respond to peace-building opportunities or tackle deep-seated causes of tension demonstrate that there is scope for engagement within an existing humanitarian mandate.

As the international aid response completes a transition from emergency assistance to longer-term support for reconstruction, general understanding of Aceh’s underlying problems is rising. This coincides with a peace process that creates new opportunities and hope.

Whereas most international actors are in Aceh for tsunami reconstruction, and tend to discuss conflict as an after-thought, most local civil society figures place conflict at the centre of their concerns and priorities. There is scope for more engagement between local and international actors in order to close this gap.
Testimonies from a range of villagers show how people’s livelihoods are intrinsically linked to peace and conflict. Without security, farmers cannot access their fields. With rampant corruption and extortion by parties to the conflict, investment is stymied. With continued conflict, government health and education services are unlikely to improve sustainably.

International agencies have massive budgets, with an over-riding need to disburse funds for much-needed reconstruction. When coupled with a desire to maintain good relations with government, and with accountability lines back to the public in wealthy donor countries, this creates a strong culture of risk avoidance that reduces interest in engaging with conflict. It means that uncontentious peace-building opportunities that fully support government policy are often missed.

Generally, coordination between aid agencies has been mixed. In places, tactical coordination in the field has been fair, but more strategic coordination on policy has been weak.

Conflict-related incidents have affected aid agency staff, including corruption, intimidation, theft, denial of access, and attacks on vehicles. These are significant but relatively minor, and fears that international actors would come under attack have not yet been meaningfully realised. Blanket security regulations governing movement and access across Aceh could perhaps be improved by allowing for interpretation depending on accurate information concerning conditions.

Public lack of confidence in government is massive in Aceh. This needs to be addressed over time, wherever possible. Interviewees gave the impression that donors need to ensure they address local governance in Aceh appropriately. An accountable and representative provincial body, with capacity to counter the dominance of the national government in Jakarta, is essential to long-term peace in Aceh. Programmes that concentrate on the kabupaten (district) level or below, and miss out the provincial administration, may be appropriate in other areas of Indonesia but risk compounding problems in Aceh.

Donors and NGOs can increase their knowledge and capacity to consider peace-related issues in Aceh. One step that may help is to listen to civil society representatives more. Whereas donors may need more knowledge on governance challenges in Aceh, NGOs may need to understand how to support civil bodies in the province, an equally challenging yet important undertaking.

Where aid agencies are not able to engage directly in conflict-related work, they can still aim to ‘mainstream’ peace-building awareness into their policies and across their staff through accessing the right skills, training and induction, engaging local civil society, employing aware Acehnese staff in senior positions, etc. Larger organisations can afford the time and resources to look into Aceh’s local context more deeply, and share findings with smaller agencies. Key issues include: reducing corruption; extending support to those who need assistance across all of the province; building the role of democratic
government and civil bodies; strengthening partnerships with local bodies; supporting Acehnese capacity at a technical level and amongst the wider population in villages or towns; and operating openly and accountably.
GLOSSARY

Indonesian/Acehnese terms

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Definition</th>
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<tr>
<td>Adat</td>
<td>Local or customary law or institutions</td>
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<tr>
<td>Becak</td>
<td>Motorised rickshaw</td>
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<tr>
<td>Brimob</td>
<td><em>Brigade Mobil</em>, the Indonesian paramilitary police</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Camat</td>
<td>Head of <em>kecamatan</em> (sub-district)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Darul Islam</td>
<td>Abode of Islam movement (from the 1950s)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kabupaten</td>
<td>District</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kecamatan</td>
<td>Sub-District</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ulama</td>
<td>Muslim scholars trained in Islam and Islamic law</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pilkada</td>
<td>Local election</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pondok pesantren</td>
<td>Religious boarding school</td>
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<tr>
<td>Puskesmas</td>
<td>Government health clinic</td>
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Acronyms and abbreviations

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tr>
<td>BAKORNAS</td>
<td>National Coordinating Agency for Disaster and Refugee Management</td>
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<tr>
<td>BAPPEDA</td>
<td>Provincial/District Planning Agency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BAPPENAS</td>
<td>National Planning Agency</td>
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<tr>
<td>BDAM</td>
<td>Water Board</td>
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<tr>
<td>BRR</td>
<td>Tsunami Reconstruction and Rehabilitation Agency</td>
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<tr>
<td>CIDA</td>
<td>Canadian International Development Agency</td>
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<tr>
<td>DFID</td>
<td>Department for International Development (UK)</td>
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<tr>
<td>GAM</td>
<td><em>Gerakan Aceh Merdeka</em> - Free Aceh Movement</td>
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<tr>
<td>ICRC</td>
<td>International Committee of the Red Cross</td>
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<td>IDP</td>
<td>Internally Displaced People</td>
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<tr>
<td>INGO</td>
<td>International Non-governmental Organisation</td>
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<td>IOM</td>
<td>International Organisation of Migration</td>
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<td>IRD</td>
<td>International Relief and Development</td>
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<tr>
<td>JICA</td>
<td>Japan International Cooperation Agency</td>
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<tr>
<td>KDP</td>
<td><em>Kecamatan</em> Development Project</td>
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<tr>
<td>NGO</td>
<td>Non-Governmental Organisation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SATKORLAK</td>
<td>Provincial Coordinating Agency for Disaster and Refugee Management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TLC</td>
<td>Temporary Living Centre (temporary shelter or ‘barracks’)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TNI</td>
<td><em>Tentara Nasional Indonesia</em> (the armed forces)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNDP</td>
<td>United Nations Development Programme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNICEF</td>
<td>United Nations Children’s Fund</td>
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<td>USAID</td>
<td>United States Agency for International Development</td>
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1. INTRODUCTION

Conflict and the tsunami
The terrible impact of the 26th December 2004 Indian Ocean earthquake and tsunami is well known around the world. The tsunami devastated coastal regions of several countries, and it was Aceh, the northernmost part of Sumatra situated at one extreme of Indonesia, that took the brunt of the force. Somewhere around 180,000 people died in the province, buildings along hundreds of kilometres of coastline were destroyed, and half a million people made homeless.

Fewer people know of Aceh’s longer, troubled history. The natural disaster hit a region already suffering from a man-made tragedy. Conflict between government forces and separatist rebels has for years affected most of the province, both along the tsunami-affected coast and inland.

Conflict in Aceh is the result of complex political breakdown. Peace agreements in the past, most recently late in 2002, have failed to hold. When the tsunami struck, very few foreigners had been allowed to remain in Aceh. Of those organisations that did maintain a presence, most were aiming to work on conflict-related problems. The few studies that were conducted in the years before the tsunami demonstrate the damaging impact of conflict on people's lives: a government report estimates that 48,262 people were displaced as a result of armed conflict in Aceh as of June 2003. In most of the villages from which people had been displaced, health posts and schools were damaged.1

More broadly, conflict has affected the development of Aceh as a whole. The province, by no means the poorest part of Indonesia, has high levels of corruption and low levels of service provision. Investment is stymied, and general public confidence in government is low.

Rebuilding in a conflict environment
The international response to the tsunami promised billions of dollars of aid to Aceh. Most of the promises look like being realised. Successful fundraising on an unprecedented scale has led to a reversal of established roles, with official donor agencies and the UN poorer than international NGOs who raised their funds from the public.

For international aid workers used to humanitarian operations in Sudan, Afghanistan or Iraq, Aceh may seem relatively calm. Issues of security and negotiating access are pressing, but so far have hardly hindered the provision of billions of dollars of support. Transport, supplies, and electricity are available for most of the province. Away from the coast, forest-covered hills lie behind peaceful-looking green paddy fields. In the capital, Banda Aceh, coffee shops, internet cafes and markets work as normal. Yet at the same time, near-daily clashes between government forces and rebels cost lives, often of civilians. Whilst the pressing concern is to help people get jobs and homes back,

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1 The key source for this and related information is the Humanitarian Protection Needs Analysis of BAKORNAS - PBP, SATKORLAK - PBP, and the International Organization for Migration, September 2004.
with massive support needed, the longer-term success of reconstruction depends largely
on finding a resolution to conflict. Without security and peace, it will be hard to rebuild
trust in government, improve services, or revitalise the economy.

Experience of providing aid or promoting development in a conflict environment tends to
show that, as would be expected, the most effective responses are the ones most
appropriate to the context. Conflict, especially protracted conflict, is at root a
complicated social and political problem. If development assistance is to help build
background conditions conducive to finding peace, then it is important that those working
for donors, the UN and NGOs understand the situation that they are working in. This
study is an effort to help build knowledge of how to recover from natural disaster in a
way that does not just rebuild homes, but helps to reconstruct Aceh.

**Background to the Aceh conflict**

Aceh is the site of one of Asia's longest-running internal conflicts. Since 1976,
Indonesian sovereignty over the territory has been contested by an armed insurgency led
by the Free Aceh Movement (GAM). Fractious local politics, long-standing experience
of armed rebellion, and a range of grievances, especially about allocation of natural
resource revenues and human rights abuses, have contributed to the conflict.

Aceh, with an estimated population of about 4.2 million, is Indonesia's westernmost
province. Almost all Acehnese are Muslims, and they have a reputation for Islamic piety.
Much of the population is employed in agriculture and fishing, though Aceh is also rich
in natural resources, especially natural gas and oil. Exxon Mobil Indonesia, which
operates in the Arun gas fields, has been a major contributor to national revenues.

Aceh was part of the Dutch East Indies prior to World War II. It became part of the
Dutch colonial empire relatively late, however. For centuries, the Acehnese sultanate had
been a powerful Islamic state, reaching its apogee during the seventeenth century. The
Dutch launched an assault in 1873, but only managed to subdue the territory (arguably
never completely) after three decades of bitter warfare.

Aceh’s leaders, including *ulama* (religious scholars), were key figures in the struggle for
Indonesian independence in 1945-49. Many, however, soon became disillusioned with a
lack of influence vis-à-vis the central government. In 1953, they launched a revolt as part
of the *Darul Islam* (Abode of Islam) movement, which joined several regional rebellions
in a struggle to form an Indonesian Islamic state. The rebellion in Aceh was eventually
resolved by negotiations leading to the province's nominal recognition as a special
territory. Many Acehnese feel that the special terms were never properly implemented.

The current separatist conflict began in 1976 when Hasan di Tiro, a supporter of *Darul
Islam* living in the United States, returned to Aceh to form GAM and made a self-styled
redeclaration of Acehnese independence. Initially the movement was small and
Indonesian security forces soon defeated it. In 1989, a more serious outbreak of rebellion
by GAM resulted in a counterinsurgency operation claiming several thousand lives.
In late 1998, following the resignation of President Suharto and the collapse of his authoritarian regime, conflict erupted on an even greater scale. Key local figures and a large protest movement called for a referendum on independence similar to that granted in 1999 for East Timor. The GAM insurgency re-emerged - greatly expanding the range of its operations and attacking security forces and other targets. By mid-1999, large parts of the territory were under the movement’s control.

The Indonesian government responded with a mix of concessions and military action. Protracted negotiations between the government and GAM produced two cease-fires, in June 2000 and December 2002, although neither held. In 2001, the national parliament passed a Special Autonomy Law giving Aceh considerable authority to manage its own affairs and a greater share of its natural resource revenues. Security operations continued, with a considerable death toll amongst combatants and civilians.

The efforts made towards peace between 2000 and 2003 were supported by many national and international actors. In addition to support for the main negotiating process, a range of bodies backed efforts to increase civil dialogue, promote independent media coverage and information availability, and monitor events or incidents; there were also efforts to step up development, with projects to improve services and infrastructure. A Cessation of Hostilities Agreement was successfully brokered between GAM and the Government of Indonesia. But as the peace process collapsed in 2003, most international parties involved were forced to leave. Agencies including NGOs found it impossible to remain in Aceh as government made it increasingly difficult for them to operate, and almost all of the remaining foreigners departed. Eventually, in May 2003, the peace process broke down, martial law was declared, and security forces launched a large-scale offensive.

The military operations pushed GAM back into smaller areas of Aceh, reducing their ability to raise local ‘taxes’ and inflicting major casualties. It also caused widespread resentment at further extortion and abuse of civilians by the military. By mid-2004, the crisis was eased to a state of ‘civil emergency’, although restrictions on civil society action and a key role for the military continued.

When the tsunami struck, Aceh was thus in the middle of a long-running, complex political and military emergency. A mutual amnesty was declared by both the military and GAM, and President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono seized the opportunity to kick-start a new round of peace talks. Although there were more small clashes in the subsequent months, with near-daily incidents between GAM and the military across the province, peace talks continued.

**Peace Agreement – August 2005**

On 15th August 2005, the Indonesian Government and GAM signed a peace agreement that offers the best hope yet of ending the long-running conflict. Even before signing the agreement, successive rounds of talks had begun to reduce tension in Aceh, although clashes, kidnappings and other incidents continued in several districts on an occasional basis.
The new environment affects agencies working on tsunami reconstruction issues in Aceh in various ways. There may be scope to support an unfolding peace process. This includes the possibility of working outside tsunami-affected areas. Fears of a military or political backlash against international actors are receding, and more engagement may be viable.

Aceh has a long, difficult history. There have been pauses in the current conflict between the government and GAM in the past, most recently around 2001-2003, only for peace talks to break down. There is always a risk that conflict can return, however binding any peace agreement may appear. Now that there is an agreement, aid agencies may be able to support it in a range of ways. The proposed steps discussed by interviewees in this report are still more valid in an environment of fragile peace than one of drawn-out conflict.

About this study
This study aims to explore the links between the reconstruction effort and the wider context in Aceh. It aims to help agencies engaged in Aceh consider how they can respond to conflict and peace-building as well as reconstruction after the tsunami.

Findings are based on a range of interviews in June, July and August 2005 to find out how different agencies were working in Aceh. Interviewees came from three groups: donor and UN agencies; International NGOs; and figures from Acehnese civil society. Most of the interviews were conducted in Aceh, although some donors were visited in Jakarta. In addition to these key interviews, a wide range of other discussions was used as a basis to form views on international and civil society approaches to conflict in Aceh.

The interviews did not give a statistically significant sample of views, but rather a general perspective on where, roughly six months on from the tsunami, different organisations stand. Interviews followed a semi-structured format, consisting of a list of generic questions with additional space to allow people to express their own thoughts. Responses were then categorised by question and type of respondent, and compiled. These were analysed, noting common patterns or trends. In addition to the interviews, research drew information from a wide range of published and unpublished sources, as well as discussions with many different actors in Jakarta and Aceh during 2005.

Findings are presented here under separate questions, grouped into themes. After this introductory section, Part Two looks at how aid agencies work in Aceh, asking how long international agencies plan to stay, how they have adapted their work to consider conflict, what contingency plans they have devised, and what influence they have on the peace process. Part Three, called Reconstruction in a Conflict Environment, looks at access problems, networking and coordination, and reported incidents. Part Four covers background issues including views on decentralisation and autonomy, and a wide body of responses on corruption. Part Five looks at civil engagement and women’s voices in peace-building, and also presents Acehnese respondents’ perspectives on how
international agencies should operate. The final two short sections summarise findings and make recommendations. Lastly, an Annex lists some websites for further research.
2. HOW ARE AID AGENCIES WORKING IN ACEH?

In this section and the three sections that follow it, the report summarises responses to questions posed to interviewees. This format is designed to present the perspectives of those interviewed as directly as possible, whilst still highlighting key issues and common themes so that the reader can find key points easily.

Four questions are asked in this section: how long international actors have worked in Aceh; how they have adapted their work to take conflict considerations into account; whether they have contingency plans in case of changing conditions; and how interviewees feel about the impact of international aid agencies on the peace process.

2.1 How long have international aid agencies been in Aceh, and how long will they stay there?

Previous presence
Many of the international agencies interviewed had not been in the province before 2005. Of those that had, some were forced to leave in the years of intensified conflict prior to the tsunami. So when the tsunami struck, there were very few international organisations operating in Aceh. A combination of danger and restrictive legislation resulting from the conflict kept them out. Of those that were there, ICRC maintained a small presence (maximum two foreigners at any one time), and had little access across the province. Oxfam closed their operations in 2003. Save the Children departed in 1996, returned in 2000, and since then maintained a fairly continuous presence in Aceh by avoiding the use of expatriate staff.

Multilateral agencies had some limited reach and access to Aceh before the tsunami. The World Bank, for example, was active in Aceh through loan programmes such as its nation-wide KDP community-driven development programme. Other national programmes were not operating in Aceh, but since the tsunami they have been extended to include the province in addition to other parts of Indonesia.

Future plans
Most international organisations now plan to stay in Aceh for several years. Of the NGOs interviewed, the majority intended to stay for at least two further years, with some already hoping to be in Aceh for 4-5 years. The others either had not yet made long-term plans, or had not yet secured adequate funds to continue beyond the short term. Donor agencies also seem to be prepared to establish programmes that will last a similar length of time.

Most agencies state that their presence depends on government permission to remain. By way of contrast, civil organisations have had a more continuous presence in Aceh, but many are fairly new. Many civil bodies emerged after the fall of Suharto in 1998. Other Jakarta-based organisations had limited engagement in Aceh, especially since the high levels of tension in 2003-4, when many Acehnese or Indonesia-wide groups were no longer active.
Comments
Rather than simply being involved in rapid reconstruction, international agencies are already engaged in longer-term sustainable development. This provides scope to look at underlying issues – community relationships, supporting civil society etc. – as well as providing more straightforward assistance. Agencies involved in longer-term planning will need a strong understanding of Acehnese politics and society if they are to use their presence most effectively. If they are to play a valuable role, they need to understand the dynamics of conflict and to consider how they can play a role in supporting long-term peace.

Acehnese civil society builds on old traditions. Ulama and other religious leaders, as well as secular bodies like panglima laot (the fishermen’s cooperative), have existed for hundreds of years. But for decades, until the fall of Suharto, Indonesian civil bodies had very limited scope. In Aceh, conflict and the resulting military response further limited their role. Some civil leaders were exiled or imprisoned. For some organisations, the tsunami itself caused massive damage, killing leaders and destroying facilities.

A few agencies (ICRC, Save the Children) managed to work in Aceh when conflict was persistent. They generally did so by developing good local contacts and keeping to a narrow mandate that did not threaten government security forces.

BRR, the government post-tsunami reconstruction agency, may need to record the INGOs’ proposed timeframes for working in Aceh, so that the continuity of programmes left by some INGOs can be maintained.

Restoring and strengthening previously strong civil bodies may help community development programmes.

2.2 Do agencies adapt their work to consider conflict in Aceh?

Of the donor agencies asked, none felt that their work had been significantly adapted from national or international models in order to take into account the conflict in Aceh. Responses varied, split fairly equally between three positions:
- agencies that avoid conflict issues
- agencies that consider them in theory or at a policy level, but not in practice
- agencies that consider them in some cases, but not across the board

For international NGOs, the most common response was straightforward: we do not consider conflict issues in the reconstruction effort, except perhaps regarding security of staff.
For Acehnese civil society, the situation is very different. Conflict is an intrinsic part of most of their perspectives. In this respect, there is a great contrast between responses from Acehnese and international actors. This is a critical point to emerge from the study.

For Indonesia-wide organisations working in Aceh as well as other parts of the country, the situation may be more complex. Many approach reconstruction work in a manner more similar to international colleagues than to Acehnese perspectives which tend to place the conflict at the centre.

Avoiding conflict
The responses on conflict issues reflect a range of factors. Most agencies, donors and NGOs operate under agreements with government both on the ground and from the provincial or national capital. They also have to ensure that access to project sites is possible. In much of Aceh, including tsunami-affected areas, the military needs to provide effective permission in order for aid agencies to operate on the ground. Most agencies tend to gravitate towards geographic areas where access will be easiest, or sectors where work can continue without controversy. Many of the most conflict-affected areas away from the coast are difficult to access, and UN security guidelines forbid travel. Even in coastal areas damaged by the tsunami, some areas are under heavy military control and access is harder to negotiate.

Changes over time
Some respondents felt that as agencies become more engaged with longer-term issues, so they became more sensitive to the background environment, including conflict:

“At the start, people did not bother about other issues – like equity between inland areas and the coast.”

UN agency representative

But as reconstruction takes over from emergency work, the need to consider conflict becomes more obvious.

“Then, you see conflict in front of your nose. We speak more and more of conflict, now we are moving to reconstruction [from initial emergency support]. Before it was more an issue of TNI and access, now it is conflict awareness.”

UN agency representative

One donor (JICA) provided an example of adapting its work in Aceh. They responded to requests from local NGOs to disclose all local budgets, which they are not doing in other areas. This in turn created problems: openness led to rivalry as villages questioned any differences in allocations between project sites. Consequently, this has led to changes in allocations so that amounts are uniform, even where the needs are different.

As coordination has improved, thanks in part to an international NGO security working group initiated by the agency CARE, awareness has grown. Two separate incidents during June 2005, in which aid workers were shot during night-time attacks on vehicles in rural areas of Aceh, also raised awareness of security risks. Since the signing of the peace agreement between GAM and the Government of Indonesia on 15th August 2005,
awareness of conflict has risen rapidly and an increasing number of NGOs as well as donors or UN agencies are looking to see how they can play a supportive role in promoting peace.

So in the early stages of the tsunami response, the only conflict-related issues of concern for many actors were access and military permission. Since then, people’s awareness of wider issues has been growing. This is partly a result of staff rotation as well as political changes. Emergency staff deployed to respond rapidly to a natural disaster were not generally sensitive to wider social or political considerations. At that time, senior management was consumed by the need to manage huge programmes, and the importance of disbursing the vast sums that the public or governments provided. And compared with operations in Sudan, Afghanistan or Iraq, conflict and security problems in Aceh seem to present little barrier to implementation.

Continued lack of engagement on conflict
However, for many agencies interviewed, awareness of Aceh’s political context is only increasing slowly, if at all. Some agencies that have experience of approaching conflict issues elsewhere have not prioritised the issue in Aceh. The need to disburse funds fast, the overwhelming challenge of supporting victims of a disaster that has nothing to do with conflict, and the sensitivity of the issue, all led many donors and INGOs to avoid conflict issues almost entirely.

“For reconstruction work, we are not taking conflict into consideration in any concerted way. Longer-term support integrates a background study of conflict.”

Donor representative

For INGOs, the challenge of scaling-up to operate on a massive scale has been paramount. This has consumed much of their efforts. As reconstruction continues, however, the scope for taking a closer look at how work takes the environment of conflict into account increases.

The lack of international engagement in Aceh prior to the tsunami is an additional factor. Most people in overseas headquarters of international agencies had, and perhaps still have, very little knowledge or understanding of the conflict. The same is the case for most international staff, and many staff from elsewhere in Indonesia, recruited after the tsunami or re-deployed to Aceh.

“95% of people from my country working here in Aceh have no idea about Indonesia”

International aid worker, Banda Aceh
Box 1: Everyday events in a tsunami-affected coastal village, Pidie district, July 2005

East of Sigli town is a low-lying shrimp farming area, heavily damaged by the tsunami. Income from shrimp is supplemented by small home businesses (cakes, sewing), a little farming, also some sea fishing. A quiet place, yet conflict incidents have been commonplace for decades. Despite this, the area has been declared completely safe for all aid operations, and aid staff are allowed to travel and operate freely. However, the local military does want to know who goes where, and prefers to escort NGO workers if possible.

Recently, the military requisitioned a boat from fishermen in the village, and there followed a shoot-out between soldiers in that boat and another one only just offshore. Villagers were scared and did not leave the TLC (barracks for tsunami-affected families without homes) for several days after the incident.

Sales of fish and shrimp go through a small number of local middlemen. Prices are low. The perception is that a near-monopoly is maintained by key business interests who pay the military to keep the system running and ensure that any other operators are not allowed. Larger-scale ‘businessmen’ in Medan are also involved. It is hard to get information on the process.

Nearby, one NGO delivering water to barracks regularly has its vehicles taken over by the military who requisition the water.

Dealing with conflict

“We always have a tendency to cut and paste. Let’s try to understand what are different ways of doing it.”

UN agency representative

Some donor agencies take a more fundamental approach to governance-related challenges in Aceh, clearly linking them with conflict. The main bilateral donors – Japan, USA, Australia – as well as others including Canada – use aid as part of wider policy objectives, including conflict reduction in Aceh. Conflict has been an important issue across Indonesia in recent years, and this is reflected in approaches to Aceh. For example, Japanese donor JICA has an internal Aceh working group in its Jakarta office which was formed to gather ideas on Aceh through discussion with BAPPENAS (the national planning agency) and provincial authorities. The ideas in turn are used to formulate further plans for Aceh.

However, for many agencies, whilst conflict prevention is an important issue for foreign policy as well as development assistance, tsunami reconstruction aid is kept separate. Even bodies that prioritise conflict reduction in Aceh have rarely considered the opportunities for promoting peace-building that the billions of dollars flowing to help reconstruct damaged coastal regions may present.

“It is formally part of our policy, those planning projects have been asked to take it into account. But I wonder if it has really been taken into account in the de facto planning process”

Donor representative
Box 2: How agencies have engaged with conflict issues – examples

Two donor agencies have commissioned conflict assessments to look into how their work can deal with conflict-related issues and play a positive long-term role in building a basis for sustainable peace.

One INGO is considering how it can include conflict awareness and sensitivity in induction for new staff.

At least two NGOs have looked at relations within the office between Acehnese staff and those from elsewhere in Indonesia, following complaints that the best-paid jobs were going to non-Acehnese.

Most agencies have considered staff security issues, and larger organisations have dedicated security staff.

2.3 Contingency plans – has your organisation considered how it will respond if the conflict deteriorates, or if there is a ceasefire?

Most organisations interviewed did not have contingency plans, despite working in an area where conflict is in a state of flux given high-level negotiations and a shifting scenario on the ground.

For many NGOs, the response to an escalation in conflict would be to reduce the number of expatriates. Most agencies, whether they have contingency plans or not, provided similar responses on how they would act if conflict escalates in future. Donors and NGOs stated that they would reduce the number of staff, especially expatriates in Aceh, while at the same time trying to continue programmes.

There was less detail on how agencies would respond to a peace process. Various donors state that they are prepared to assist in supporting a peace process should the government ask them to do so. At the time of writing, few had actually considered what this might mean in practice.
Box 3: Contingency plans

Donor responses
a) No plan, but if the situation deteriorates considerably, would avoid risky areas or even review the viability of remaining in Aceh. Apart from this, would support any kind of effort to back a peace process.
b) A consultant is shortly to devise a plan.
c) Rough ideas only on what might be possible if there is a peace settlement.
d) Staff security plans exist, and projects are meant to have contingencies. Longer-term projects working in Aceh have already adapted to difficult, shifting circumstances. Have had very informal discussions about what to do if peace talks in Helsinki proceed well.

International NGO responses
a) No concrete plan, but would like to find out more.
b) Have not thought this through, but will work with local partners whatever happens.
c) No contingency plan. Response to escalation in conflict would be to reduce the expatriate presence, and try to continue in the safest areas. A cease fire would make little difference. No plans to extend work to conflict-related issues, but "things have a way of developing organically if the opportunities arise and it is safe."
d) The worst case scenario is to scale back to a programme with very few expatriates, but no programmes will be stopped and some presence will be maintained under any conditions.
e) No contingency plan, with no expectation of deterioration in peace process. Partnerships with local partners will remain the same regardless of the peace process.

One NGO had more concerted plans. If there is meaningful peace, they will try to expand, look towards locations where they have not had access, and focus on livelihoods as well as capacity building for local government and communities. If conditions deteriorate, they will stay neutral. They have made contingencies for forced withdrawal of international staff, including building capacity and a management role for national or local staff. International staff have ‘shadow’ colleagues who gain experience, and could take over in future, with some management withdrawing to Jakarta if necessary. If there is increased conflict, they may also consider supporting conflict-affected IDP populations.

Box 4: Conflict on the west coast

Government worker, Aceh Barat Daya, August 2005: "I normally supplement my income with some farming. I own a few oil palm trees on a small plot. But I cannot go there now. It became dangerous because of GAM attacks around 2000. Then, the army protected us - it was better, and we could farm. Now they don't protect us any more, and if we go there we may be accused of providing supplies to GAM."

Village leader, south of Meulaboh, August 2005: "In this district and the neighbouring one, six village leaders have been killed in the past six months. A group of us, leaders of different villages, went to the Camat (Sub-district Head) to resign. But we were told that to do so would be unpatriotic, and could lead to repercussions. We also have to pay GAM. Sometimes they come in person demanding money, we do not know who they are, they cover their faces. Other times they leave a letter demanding money which we must pay. I hope that the Helsinki process brings peace, but I worry what will happen after. If there is no peace I will leave, maybe go to Malaysia. Many people have already gone."
Comments
International actors want to continue programmes in Aceh. This shows their strong commitment to support the reconstruction Aceh, and the pressure to disburse billions of dollars. But there is generally little planning around how to respond to changing conflict conditions. Considering that some agencies had to leave Aceh when conflict intensified in the past, stronger contingency plans seem to be needed. Those plans that do exist are mostly ‘passive’: NGOs are concerned with protecting staff if the situation deteriorates. Donors are willing to respond to a request for support from government to be involved in peace-building but will take no proactive measures.

Many agencies do not take political issues into consideration in running their Aceh programmes. Reasons include the prioritization of a humanitarian response to a natural disaster, and the need for government support to continue working in Aceh. With some agencies, lack of knowledge of political context is striking, even amongst senior staff.

2.4 Aid and peace-building – what impact do aid agencies have on the peace process?

Responses and political awareness
Donor agencies and local civil voices generally responded in full to this question. In contrast, international NGOs gave little response, and are apparently less engaged in the wider context. Given that INGOs are responsible for the bulk of reconstruction assistance to Aceh, this is a significant issue.

One respondent felt that donors in Aceh can contribute to a historic opportunity for peace, but that a huge body of existing Acehnese knowledge is not being absorbed by international actors: internationals should have more concern for wider issues, especially conflict. Another stated that many international NGOs do not really know about special autonomy, feeling that NGOs should be calling for proper implementation of autonomy.

Engagement in peace-building
Typically, aid agencies are not directly involved in peace processes. However, they do support related work. Such efforts can aim to build background conditions more conducive to peace through a variety of interventions. In other circumstances, agencies can also be involved in demobilization, demining, reintegration of armed combatants, and a range of more direct measures to support political processes.

Some donor efforts tackle background conditions, although most are fairly small-scale. Many donors see greater opportunity to do more such work in the future. Fields include:

- Promotion of local civil society and local civil engagement, as well as community strengthening.
- Economic assistance and broader improvements to secure peace ‘through development’.
- Efforts to improve governance in various ways: promoting accountability, building more robust systems, improving efficiency, etc.
• Support for justice systems, and local dispute resolution bodies.

**NGO views on community involvement**

Some NGOs felt that community-based approaches are the best way for them to promote peace-building. One respondent commented that empowerment-based programmes, that give people or communities the abilities to take action themselves, can be valuable in reducing people’s feelings of tension, frustration, etc. British Red Cross is piloting such approaches, working with people to find out and support their own efforts to secure documentation for houses, set up bank accounts, and so on. It is a very labour- and time-intensive approach but it seems to work and the resources exist to do it.

Another NGO promotes grassroots involvement using various approaches – e.g. a community development approach, a participatory approach, sub-district geographic approaches – to give the community options to decide on what they need. This process may take longer, but it is considered important as a basis for the future development of Aceh.

With regard to cash for work programmes, one respondent felt that NGOs could give people a say in choosing what kind of labour they want to do. This could bring the community together. Feedback suggests that communities feel this is beneficial.

**Positive side-effects of a presence**

Civil figures were more positive than international actors, expressing support for international engagement. This fits with a commonly expressed Acehnese perspective that international involvement in Aceh’s political problems will help resolve tensions between the region and the Jakarta-based Government. The following positive impacts were mentioned:

• An economic boost which, if it continues, could become a ‘peace dividend’.
• An international presence, which limits TNI abuses in particular.
• Greater accountability and reduced levels of corruption.
• More openness and increased confidence in government.
• Promotion of international experience, and encouragement of all parties towards peace.
• The international presence means domestic civil society can do more.

**Less positive points**

There were also references to negative impact, or areas where progress was slight. Several respondents felt that that unequal resource distribution could raise tensions. They found that the most inaccessible parts of Aceh suffer from the most unrest and often demonstrate the strongest current or potential future support for GAM. Unless aid reaches such areas, people there will feel still more marginalised in the face of massive aid elsewhere. For example, whilst support for medical attention is flowing to areas directly affected by the tsunami, other areas get very little. This is a problem as there are displaced people there too (displaced by conflict not natural disaster) and facilities are very poor. This is critical if confidence is ever to be rebuilt. In general, aid must flow across all of Aceh.
Very localised inequalities in resource provision between villages are also likely to cause some tension. This is a problem on the ground as there is little uniform provision of support, and common guidelines or standards are not really established. Some civil society respondents felt that progress was good, but that pressure to monitor corruption must be maintained or it will slip, and aid funds could end up fuelling bad practice.

The large sums of money provided by the international community have other unintended social and economic impacts. People tend to work with international agencies that offer high salaries. Some civil servants have left their duties to take on contracts with international agencies. From one point of view, this means that capable local human resources are utilized, but on the other hand, government responsibilities may be overlooked.

**Box 5: Conflict in coastal Aceh Besar – testimony from a village leader**

The village, near Banda Aceh, was almost totally destroyed by the tsunami. Many agencies have been involved in reconstruction here. The quotations below are from the village leader, a young man. Most of the older men lost their lives in the tsunami.

“Before the tsunami, the economy in the village would have been fine if it were not for the conflict. Villagers used to grow small, hot chilli peppers on plots in the hills behind the village, which raised a good price as the chillis were especially long-lasting once picked. They could be planted a couple of months before the rice planting time, which meant that people got sufficient income. But it had become unsafe to do that in recent years. The army looked in the hills for separatist fighters, and it was not safe.

If conflict ends, this can be a prosperous village again. But I do not think there is much chance of it ending – there are too many interests in maintaining the conflict. I do not mind the army being around to root out separatists, if only they leave us alone.

On one occasion recently, Brimob (paramilitary police forces) came to the village accusing us of supplying separatists in the hills with rice. They had found empty rice sacks up in the hills and said the food must have come from the village. Actually we had sold rice to other villages, so it was not us who supported them. It was very tense.

Recently (in April/May 2005) a European technician working for an aid agency was looking at the area near the village. He was looking to build a gravity-fed water supply to replace what the tsunami damaged. Brimob told us to ask the technician to design a water supply for their nearby base when he next returned. He refused, and Brimob were very angry. They told him to leave, and he did.”
3. RECONSTRUCTION IN A CONFLICT ENVIRONMENT

This section focuses on the details of working in a conflict environment. It contains responses to three questions: what access issues have arisen; networking and coordination; and reported incidents.

3.1 What access issues have arisen?

Very few international bodies were allowed into Aceh before the tsunami. This has changed completely. Organisations with a continual presence (ICRC for example) stress how remarkable the change is. All current access issues are insignificant when compared with problems in the past.

In the first few months following the tsunami, many international agencies feared a backlash against them, either in the form of government restrictions or by renegade groups on the ground. In reality this has not taken place, although there is no guarantee that the situation will not change.

Respondents described fairly free access to affected areas, especially since the end of civil emergency status for Aceh in May 2005. Most organisations are operating in coastal areas affected by the tsunami, and have managed to operate fairly effectively.

Areas off-bounds
The interior of Aceh has been off-bounds to many development actors. But even there, by working with government institutions, or at times with local or national NGOs, access is possible. In tsunami-affected areas, there has been a shifting patchwork of access challenges as military operations or control moved from place to place. NGOs working in the health sector in Aceh Jaya, for example, report that they are at times denied access to health posts by TNI – even in tsunami-affected areas. Military operations have affected areas around the capital as well as more distant districts. Finally, there are some areas – GAM strongholds in inland areas of Aceh Utara or Pidie, for example – where access would be very difficult at any time.
Box 6: Access to health posts: testimony from an aid worker in Aceh Jaya district, April 2005

“We are trying to re-equip government health clinics (Puskesmas). In this area, you have to report all your movements to the army command post. That is no problem, I get on well with the local army office. We are allowed to travel in much of the sub-district, but some areas are still out of bounds given combat with GAM. There have been several skirmishes with gunshots in the area. There are also some places nearby where no one has been able to enter, originally because of transport problems but also on account of the military refusing access. We still do not know what the health status is of people in these places, which were affected by the tsunami.

Recently, in one of the health clinics that we are rehabilitating, one man from the village came seeking treatment for burns on his shoulders. I have worked in conflict areas before, and I could tell that the marks were made by pressing the hot end of a gun barrel that had recently been fired into his skin. On another occasion, a man came seeking treatment after having been beaten up by some soldiers. He had an argument with a soldier over a woman, maybe his wife I can’t remember, and the soldier came back with a group of other soldiers to teach him a lesson.”

Brokering access locally

It is important to build local relationships to broker access on the ground. In some areas with low levels of tension, this is not so necessary. However, elsewhere, it is vital to retain good relationships with local military commanders, and to ensure clear permission has been granted from local authorities.

“A lot of people do have problems with access. You have to have an office in the district, you have to build contacts, have good national staff who are valuable sources of information. We always ask in advance, and do not go if we don’t get permission.”

NGO respondent

A small number of NGOs have been denied access to certain areas – including in tsunami-affected districts. Yet even when working inland, access is usually possible if paperwork is correct first. This also applies in difficult areas like Calang on the coast of Aceh Jaya. You need permission. One INGO was asked to leave Calang.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Box 7: Access – what has worked</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>METHOD</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maintain good relationship with TNI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work with local NGO(s)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negotiation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work through government</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Well networked into the local community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Avoid working in conflict areas</td>
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</tbody>
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Access guidelines and local knowledge

UN security guidelines are strict. Most other agencies follow them to some extent, but also interpret aspects of them fairly liberally. One agency applies stricter restrictions than the guidelines.

By working with local organisations and government, and by assessing local conditions, many areas can be accessed, including areas to which UN security guidelines do not recommend entry. Access and conflict-related problems in Aceh change over small distances and over short periods of time. Local knowledge is important.

One donor respondent described the UN security guidelines as “stupid”, stating that you need a more nuanced reading before deciding on action, and that work – on public health for example – could go ahead without problems across all of Aceh if allowed. The respondent also recognised that the current fairly relaxed situation could get worse and aid agencies could be targeted in future.

Civil society views on access – links to corruption

Interestingly, civil society figures who discussed access regarded it as an issue linked to corruption and accountability. From this perspective, access is denied to the international community in order to enable corrupt practices to continue away from the spotlight.

One civil society respondent felt that access to isolated areas can be hard as TNI want to protect or secure their businesses, e.g. illegal logging. Another respondent stated that conflict was usually used as a scapegoat to enable corruption. For example, development in isolated areas was considered fictitious. When the authority wants to inspect and see the result of development, conflict was created to stop them visiting the areas.

Another interviewee felt that international bodies can help surmount these difficulties. Regarding prohibited access to isolated areas, international actors should have a mechanism to retrieve accurate data from the field by maintaining good relationships with the government. In this way, even if not physically able to visit, they could still obtain accurate monitoring information. Should they suspect poor project implementation, it would be better to stop work than continue regardless.

Given these views, and the perspective that opportunities do exist for working in a range of areas if local access is assured, international and local agencies may be able to help encourage accountability as well as provide development assistance by working widely across Aceh.

Working in areas not affected by the tsunami

A majority of interviewees encourage work outside areas directly affected by the tsunami. Some bodies – especially those working with government delivery mechanisms – already do this. Others plan to do so, or are willing to consider it. Common comments included the need to see Aceh as a whole, and to avoid disparities between areas that receive aid and those that do not.
Sustainable recovery from the tsunami is seen to require improved governance and
greater accountability, which in turn depends on peace across the province. More
directly, the tsunami and the subsequent international presence affect the economy and
politics of the whole of Aceh, including areas not directly damaged.

**Ensuring comprehensive coverage**
Various interviewees commented that coverage was not uniform: areas with easier
access, especially those near Banda Aceh, had too many agencies, whereas those further
away (like Singkil or Simeulue) had too few. A reason for this given by one INGO is
that they felt that they could have a bigger impact there and could implement more
effectively in these areas given easier logistics. Nevertheless, there may be a need to take
a more comprehensive approach to mapping who is working where.

### 3.2 Networking and coordination – what is being done?

A mixed picture emerges. In the health sector, for example, it seems that agencies
coordinate between each other and with government fairly effectively. With a
functioning government system to act as a central point, aid agencies have a focus for
their efforts. Those working in this sector are already used to coordinating through such
mechanisms and felt fairly satisfied with progress

Elsewhere it is much more piecemeal. Most organizations do link with local and
international NGOs or donors, as well as government. However, gaps, duplications and
problems abound. Some comments on coordination from INGOs and civil society
respondents along with some coordination problems are provided in the following table.
Box 8: Coordination issues

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>COMMENT</th>
<th>PROBLEM</th>
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<tr>
<td>Responses from international NGOs</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Poor spread of NGOs across the province means that poor coordination/information is an issue.</td>
<td>A programme was set by an INGO in a village, but before implementation, another INGO implemented the same programme in the village.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It’s a big issue, agencies need to work with the community to coordinate, as well as at the kecamatan level. There is a lot of duplication, especially near Banda Aceh.</td>
<td>An INGO set a plan but did not implement it even after six weeks.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coordination is not as one would like, with a lot of territorial behaviour.</td>
<td>Community avoids projects in which they are not paid.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Responses from Acehnese civil society</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INGOs operating before the tsunami have better coordination and networks than the INGOs that arrived more recently.</td>
<td>In Meulaboh, an INGO provided becaks (motorized rickshaws) to a village. The number of becaks given was actually more than the number of households.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some INGOs have large egos, which limits their ability to coordinate.</td>
<td>All 20 fishermen in a village in North Aceh were given one fishing boat each. Fishing is a communal activity, so this is inappropriate.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International NGOs overlap. It is hard for Indonesian NGOs to work with them.</td>
<td>In some villages, INGOs have gathered data and determined plans for physical development such as building schools. However, nothing has happened and the people keep on waiting.</td>
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Strategies and tactics

Some commented that in places there is reasonable discussion over issues on the ground (tactics), but very little policy engagement (strategy). One INGO respondent said that there is a lack of discussion on issues of substance, and most engagement between agencies is mundane in nature.

There are some reasons for this. Massive availability of funding and a need to provide rapid assistance discourages strategy discussion. It also reduces the need to develop common plans. The UN has a secondary role rather than being the key focal point. Above all, the most obvious focus for efforts – government – is fairly weak. The emergence of BRR may help change this over time. For donors, many originally put faith in the Multi-Donor Trust Fund, which failed to build up momentum. A beefed up UN presence at a more senior level may also help.

Aceh is also a remote province, and for most agencies it is a field site: strategic thinkers and policy planners are back in Jakarta, or overseas. Key staff in Aceh are employed as managers of large projects rather than as policy directors, and organisation rather than strategy dominates their approach.

Coordination on conflict issues

There is no organised dialogue among international aid organisations on conflict, although individuals do exchange information informally. Dialogue may be useful across
donors and INGOs. With the signing of a peace agreement on 15th August 2005, open discussion of the links between conflict and reconstruction has become fairly uncontroversial. Agencies working on reconstruction should find ways to discuss the implications of conflict and the peace process for their work. This includes opportunities to support peace-related work in a way acceptable to government, and less direct efforts to ensure that tsunami reconstruction work underpins a peace process.

Security coordination is also an issue. Most respondents feel that the UN does not do enough. Some felt that BRR (the government coordinating tsunami response body) could do more in this field.

**International / Acehnese civil society links**

Many civil society groups receive support from international bodies, and did so before the tsunami. Some international agencies are already interested in supporting civil groups. One NGO has provided support to over fifty civil society bodies working on Aceh, largely for advocacy and rights-based work. Most are based in Aceh, but some are in Medan or Jakarta. One donor has been supporting local bodies for many years in Aceh, and others aim to work through community-driven processes that build up local level support. Two parallel groups exist on security and conflict-related issues, one led by local groups, and the other for international bodies.

More negative views include a perspective that many local groups struggle to access funding. The challenges of presenting formatted proposals, sometimes in English, are too great for many groups. One donor stated that in the immediate stages following the tsunami they did not work with local NGOs simply because none was quick enough in drawing up a proposal. Other local civil society bodies find that international agencies are too distant and difficult to engage. Interestingly, this was said about INGOs more often than about donors or the UN.

### 3.3 Have you encountered any conflict-related incidents?

Agencies were asked whether they had encountered conflict incidents in their work that they wanted to report. Donor interviewees stated that they had not experienced any serious incidents relating to TNI or GAM. It appears that both GAM and TNI have aimed to ensure that the tsunami reconstruction effort is not disrupted by conflict.

However, some incidents have still occurred. International agencies seem to have an interest in playing these down. Whereas the directors of agencies often give the impression of trouble-free operations, field staff tend to present a different picture. In reality, a wide range of low-level incidents has affected aid operations, and elsewhere aid actors have been refused access to tsunami-affected areas where fighting was taking place.
There was also experience of attempted corruption by conflict actors and of some threats to staff. Corruption is an important issue involving parties involved in conflict which affects the international reconstruction effort (see section on corruption). Some respondents felt that such incidents should be recorded and compiled in order to build up a more comprehensive picture.

In addition to this, one donor stated that inadvertent tension may be created over land rights and property ownership, as well through building houses to different standards. Transparency and negotiation appear to be crucial in ensuring that local level tensions are minimized.
### Incidents reported by international NGOs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Incident</th>
<th>Comment from Respondent</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Project car was searched by TNI. Just one small incident (no other incidents).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Staff intimidated and asked for money. This did not impede programmes. It was handled with dialogue, discussion, risk avoidance, and good relationships with police and military.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Low level incidents: various groups have asked for money, military have asked for transport, and one minor dispute involving Brimob. Have been able to deal with these because of good relationships with the police. It took proactive dialogue with government, whilst retaining independence, to solve the issue.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Health post staff had to treat conflict victims. Carefully negotiated relations with TNI.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>When the INGO placed a tender for timber supply contracts, a TNI ‘front’ company applied but was not selected. TNI were angry, and put pressure on two suppliers to withdraw from the bid, as well as on INGO staff. TNI sees the tsunami as an opportunity to make big money. They take advantage of lots of money flowing around, directing assistance to where they want.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>NGO near Lamno was asked to come to the aid of someone shot in the hills behind the coast, probably a GAM cadre shot in an incident. The NGO considered the options, then decided to send small amounts of relevant medical supplies rather than personnel.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>NGO on the west coast asked by the army to help carry injured soldiers in March to hospital in a helicopter. Eight soldiers had been shot. The NGO was willing to provide neutral assistance to injured parties if no weapons were carried. Eventual agreement was reached on this.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Assault of a local staff member by off-duty soldiers in Simeulue island. Unclear how this happened and why. It may have been corruption-related.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>An allegation of attempted sexual assault by a policeman in Pidie district against an Indonesian female staff member. A complaint was made, and it is not known if any subsequent action was taken.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>A TNI checkpoint was positioned near an INGO office. TNI was persuaded to move it because the INGO did not want to have a problem with GAM reprisals. We try to have a balanced relationship with both sides, and have never experienced being forced by TNI to do projects.</td>
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</table>

### Incidents reported by Acehnese civil society

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Incident</th>
<th>Comment from Respondent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Some members of a civil society group were intimidated by TNI after the first peace process several years ago. Soon after, they were arrested. The organisation’s head had to use his influence, and talked to some people in Jakarta in order for them to be released. Since the incident, we do not want to be involved in the peace process because we do not want to be victims.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>One civil leader was visited by GAM at home, and asked to stop expressing neutral opinions regarding the peace process. They also asked for money. None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>In one location, GAM asked for money from villagers on a cash for work scheme. This happened to two different local NGO partners: one in Pidie, one in Aceh Besar. Once the local NGOs explained to GAM what the project was about, GAM agreed not to demand any more money. None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>GAM stopped a car belonging to a national NGO on its way to a village. But GAM released it after realizing that it was from the neutral civil group. We do not have any serious conflict with GAM and TNI. But if there is any in the future, we could solve it easily through channels with both organizations.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Comments
For many bodies conducting reconstruction work, direct incidents are rare or even unheard of. Both sides in the conflict have generally kept away from direct involvement in, or harassment of, aid programmes. Yet incidents have still occurred very close to their operations.

Generally, the fears of aid workers that military actors (both rebel and government) would systematically disrupt the aid effort – by plundering resources, extorting funds, denying access, or threatening staff – have not been realised. Although there have been problems, no sides have blocked the provision of aid except in some relatively minor cases. This positive situation is a credit to all concerned. Yet conflict is a constant issue in the lives of many Acehnese, affecting aid delivery as well as other aspects of people’s lives.

However, two incidents in June 2005, when international aid workers were fired on whilst driving at night in rural areas, have brought home concerns for safety. Similar concerns also exist over corruption and accountability, as well as continued harassment that occurs around aid delivery. For example, a civil legal rights body in Banda Aceh reports that they receive daily incident reports and complaints over kidnapping, missing people, excessive use of force, intimidation, extortion, and so on.

Reported incidents from international actors mainly related to TNI rather than GAM while those reported by civil society mainly related to GAM. This may reflect both the reality on the ground and the willingness of people to speak about different incidents.
4. SUPPORTING PEACE IN ACEH

This section looks at broader peace-related issues, with two question areas covered: views on decentralisation and autonomy, and perspectives on corruption. They are both critical issues in Acehnese politics.

4.1 Views on decentralisation and autonomy

The root of the conflict in Aceh, and the likely solution, lies in what kind of autonomy the province enjoys. All main parties now recognise the impossibility of full independence in the current context, and also agree that particular autonomous powers for Aceh are necessary within the domain of the nation of Indonesia. These powers have been at the centre of agreements in the past, but such special autonomy has never been finalised or implemented properly.

Indonesia is in the process of building a new, decentralised structure that strengthens in particular the role of the district (kabupaten) level of government. Greater autonomy or self-government, by contrast, would probably strengthen the role of provincial bodies covering the whole of Aceh. With all levels of government in flux and roles unclear, this creates added governance challenges for Aceh that make a difference to the effectiveness and sustainability of the reconstruction effort, as well as prospects for sustained peace and development. From the perspective of some Acehnese who support greater autonomy or self-government, stronger kabupaten may be resisted as possibly leading to weaker provincial level bodies – and hence less freedom for Aceh. Decentralisation, as well as support to underpin it, is a contested political process.

Forthcoming local elections (pilkada), which reflect the spirit of decentralisation, are greatly welcomed by Acehnese interviewees. This is mainly due to the participation of independent local candidates. But the process is still unclear and many points remain to be resolved.

Weak institutions

Government in Aceh is regarded by many as weak and self-serving. Several interviewees commented on people’s lack of confidence in government, one saying that it was even worse than elsewhere in Indonesia. In addition to Indonesia-wide issues (including institutional weaknesses stemming from long-term failure to build accountable bodies, and the more recent near-collapse of many government structures following the end of Suharto’s tenure in 1998), on-running conflict has reduced the strength and accountability of state bodies in Aceh. The tsunami also had a damaging effect, with facilities destroyed and staff among the victims.

A more positive comment came from a health care NGO which felt that the health ministry has managed to promote good working practices, despite a small budget for Aceh. Nevertheless, they still face problems where districts within Aceh have embraced decentralisation at differing speeds.
Decentralisation and autonomy – no brake on corruption or easy answer to capacity constraints

Local government at the district level has little capacity to implement decentralisation, and limited capacity to spend money accountably. Similarly, provincial government is also weak, and has a strong track record of corrupt practices. Donors are reluctant to channel funds through the provincial level. These traits are not unique to Aceh, but common across Indonesia. However, in Aceh the situation is especially pronounced.

“We should not be naïve. With more decentralisation, we should expect it [corruption] to get worse.”

INGO respondent

Some interviewees felt that decentralisation will lead to more corruption. One respondent felt that decentralisation is generally not working with money not reaching the district (kabupaten) level.

For some Acehnese respondents, further moves to greater provincial autonomy or self-government are seen as simply another opportunity for corruption or (at best) power-seeking by local politicians. Some Acehnese interviewees see support for greater autonomy amongst Acehnese politicians or other well-connected figures as simply a self-interested ploy.

Good local governance is still seen as essential

Despite these massive challenges, improved governance is widely regarded as critical, both for development and for lasting peace. Key elements that were mentioned include accountability and democracy, in common with broad prescriptions for improved local governance in Indonesia and indeed globally.

“Tsunami funds can help build and restore capacity and increase confidence in government”

Donor respondent

Some stressed the value of more traditional structures that could be restored in the current context, stressing the need for local government involvement in re-establishing valuable and respected structures (ulama and adat leaders) that have been largely destroyed over recent decades.

Some felt that NGOs are not sufficiently policy-aware, especially over how to support the lowest levels of government. International NGOs, one interviewee felt, should work at the sub-district (kecamatan) level and coordinate support. This approach was effective during the period after the tsunami when provincial government was not functioning.

Bypassing the province?

Some respondents worry that the international relief effort is bypassing provincial structures. One donor explained that they wanted to ensure that funding reached down to more local levels, but that in doing so there was a risk that the provincial government would not receive needed capacity development support.
One international NGO felt that BRR, the government coordinating body for the reconstruction effort, was bypassing provincial bodies. They thought that BAPPEDA, the provincial planning body, should replace or reinforce BRR’s position in the Aceh rehabilitation and reconstruction process, since the establishment of BRR only reflects the interests of central government. In addition, it is also seen as a Javanese entity that could create problems with local government. Another more positive view was that BRR is a chance to show a better face of government. This is considered to be part of the intention of setting up BRR as a national body rather than a provincial one – to show that national government can be good.

Some interviewees also felt that many international NGOs do not really know about special autonomy, or the difference between special and regional autonomy. It was suggested that whilst INGOs are not the appropriate bodies to work at a provincial level, they should be encouraging donors (UN agencies, World Bank, etc.) who do work on policy matters to look more carefully at this level.

One UN agency respondent felt that their organisation’s involvement in governance was inadequately specific to Aceh. Broad models from all of Indonesia were applied, with the result that the provincial level was not prioritised. One major donor felt that there is a need for more ongoing work to better clarify the role of the province against the district, and to find the boundaries of parliamentary versus administrative arms of government. The respondent felt that attention remains too strongly focused at the district level (as is the case with nation-wide decentralisation), and that in the future the province should have a stronger role in projects than is the case elsewhere in Indonesia.

**What development bodies can do about this – interviewees’ responses**

A range of suggestions emerged for international agencies to consider, beginning with a proposal that they integrate perspectives on autonomy into projects and policy. The current lack of donor attention to an issue so critical to Aceh’s future is surprising.

It was also suggested that agencies build a basis for greater local autonomy through capacity support, consultation, and through including provincial bodies in programmes as appropriate. A connected proposal involves helping to define special autonomy or self-governance if a peace process unfolds. Given that the degree of Aceh’s autonomy is effectively both the cause of the conflict and the key to its solution, this is critical.

Other respondents stressed the need to help define the relationship between province and district, and to look at what specifically ‘Acehnese’ local structures may be viable, down to the village level. Support for local elections was also proposed.

These issues are fundamental to Acehnese politics. So it is not surprising that respondents recommended further civil engagement, discussion, and provision of information.
4.2 Perspectives on corruption

**Links between corruption and conflict**

Generally, Aceh is regarded as one of Indonesia’s most corrupt provinces. All interviewees were aware of corruption problems in Aceh and some had direct related experiences. A history of conflict compounds other governance problems; some respondents felt that conflict was used as an excuse to get away with corrupt practices, or was even perpetuated in order to maintain revenue-raising opportunities.

Many examples emerged of corrupt practices, extortion, and rent-seeking on the part of actors in the conflict. Both government security forces and GAM use force to raise money. Most interviewees mentioned TNI and GAM involvement in corruption-related activities. One respondent commented that the military is involved in almost every reconstruction effort – in building barracks, supplying timber, etc. – including work funded by local and international NGOs. Evidence exists of examples such as informal ‘tolls’ at checkpoints on roads, enforcement of monopolistic business practices, extortion of businesses, theft from villages, involvement in corruption or mis-procurement of utilities such as water, etc. Another respondent highlighted the community involvement in providing illegal timber, whilst another revealed that the mark-up on the cost of building barracks for displaced people (which could be up to Rupiah 80 million per barrack) is not only carried out by TNI, but also by local contractors and government departments. International experience of civil conflict suggests that corrupt financial motivations can be a major reason why warring parties fail to agree on or uphold a peace agreement. Popular frustration at corruption also contributes to very low levels of confidence in government.

A need to spend rapidly also creates tensions between disbursement pressure and the length of time that careful checks and balances take. Pressure from donors, and competition between agencies, can lead to a failure to address fundamental issues.

“Large funding can aggravate conflict. You need to be accountable and responsible, not only to donors but also to the people of Aceh.”

*Donor Respondent*
Box 10: Fuelling extortion? Problems in cash for work and construction

Cash for work incident 1: NGO organisers of a cash for work scheme were asked for money by a soldier. The request was denied, and for safety reasons the local office was then closed for one week. During the week, the soldier returned with colleagues and they fired several rounds of bullets into coconut trees next to the office.

Cash for work incident 2: In one location, GAM asked for money from villagers that came from a cash for work scheme. This happened to two different local NGOs who were working with the support of INGOs: one in Pidie, one in Aceh Besar. Once the local NGOs explained to GAM what the project was about, GAM agreed not to demand any more money.

Cash for work incident 3: Employees were asked to go to work on a scheme for the military. The international NGO running the cash for work scheme had to negotiate an end to the problem.

Construction incident: A large international NGO has been providing support to enable people to rebuild houses in Aceh Besar. A building firm was contracted, who started work with an initial payment from the NGO. However, the construction was halted. The contractor complained that GAM demanded too much money from him, so it was not possible to continue.

Accountability

Generally, the international relief effort was welcomed rather than criticized by Acehnese respondents. Some respondents commented that the relief effort should be accountable more to the public in Aceh, rather than to funders overseas. One suggestion was to encourage longer-term staff appointments and other steps to help develop good local relationships.

Transparent budgets promote accountability but can also lead to problems. Knowledge of who has received support means that agencies have to provide funds equally in order not to generate resentment. Knowledge of resource flows can also lead to extortion or theft. It was felt by some respondents that whilst this is a risk, it can be mitigated by building good relations with key local actors.

Other comments covered donor accountability more widely. Donors should publicise their accounts and expenditure properly, using the media. Local figures were largely in the dark over who was spending what, and where. This leaves international funders (including NGOs) open to charges of hypocrisy if they are promoting accountability locally.
Box 11: Corruption and water supply in Aceh – sample testimonies

a) In Lokseumahwe and in Banda Aceh, international funds helped restore the town water supply after the tsunami. Like many other agencies, the armed forces are entitled to take some of the purified water – one or two tankers – to serve barracks for displaced people. However, in reality it is likely that they take more than this, up to eight tankers. This water is probably then sold on, or may be used for military needs.

b) The newspaper Serambi Indonesia covers the story of the new head of BDAM (Water Board) for Banda Aceh, put into post by the new Mayor. He is a lieutenant colonel. The explanation is that the new head has the power to force people – including the military – to pay, unlike in the past when powerful bodies did not pay their bills. Others feel it is in reality linked with new corruption efforts. There is unrest within BDAM over the new boss.

c) Simeulue island, Aceh: military have taken water from purified supplies funded by a donor agency and intended for displaced people. This is despite the fact that the military have their own supply. It is not clear why they need more water. Rumours have spread suggesting that the water is sold on at a profit.

d) International NGO on Aceh’s west coast: a water truck driver was asked by TNI to deliver water to military facilities. He followed his agency’s guidelines by saying that such a step requires permission from his seniors. On a later occasion, a soldier followed the driver on a motorbike and repeated the earlier request. The same reply was given. Shortly afterwards, the soldier along with colleagues went to a place in the nearby town where the driver is often found. They then beat the man they believed to be the driver, although in fact they mistakenly attacked a different driver from another NGO. After this incident, the drivers feel that they have no choice but to provide water to the military if ordered to do so.

Measures taken by international actors to avoid corruption

While almost all respondents are aware of corruption problems, several stated that they were taking no specific steps beyond what they normally envisaged. Some donors considered it on a strategic level; for some bilaterals, government corruption was given as one reason why funds should not be given to the Multi-Donor Trust Fund. Steps commonly taken, in Aceh and elsewhere, include:

- Careful selection of NGO partners with established records.
- Routine monitoring and accountability controls.
- Strict guidelines for recruitment.
- Testing for conflicts of interest.
- Clear disciplinary and investigation procedures.

Some agencies did mention specific steps taken in Aceh.

- One donor employs stricter monitoring procedures than elsewhere. For example, the normal level of ensuring sample auditing of 2% of flows in Indonesia is to be increased to 5% for the reconstruction effort.
- Two international NGOs recognized corruption problems in procurement, a field in which military involvement is regarded as especially problematic. The NGOs have taken on more tasks than would otherwise be the case, finding and procuring supplies of timber and other materials themselves.

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2 Testimonies from interviews. Where possible, comments were cross-checked and tested with other actors for accuracy.
• Use of external independent consultants to advise and monitor.
• Hiring engineers to audit projects.
• Special procedures for tendering contracts.
• Use of own staff to monitor physical development (to see whether it meets standards).
• Working with other NGOs to source sustainable timber.

Long-term changes – corruption and governance
In addition to monitoring expenditures, some agencies take a more strategic approach to improving corruption problems in Aceh. Donors, especially multilaterals, do more of this than NGOs. Examples include major World Bank projects that integrate the promotion of transparency into funding of infrastructure development at the kecamatan and village levels, and in the future at the kabupaten level. UNDP is channelling support to BRR, including assistance to help devise anti-corruption measures as part of the reconstruction effort across the board. Some bilateral agencies support civil society involvement designed to encourage openness and transparency.

One respondent felt that international actors should train local government in anti-corruption issues. National procurement systems do exist, but are simply not followed. Further steps including integrity pacts, external monitoring, and civil society involvement were proposed.

The role of BRR
BRR is the Indonesian Government agency set up to oversee and coordinate tsunami reconstruction. It is aiming to tackle corruption. Starting by creating a clean organization itself, it then aims to promote transparent practices in all government agencies involved in reconstruction in Aceh.

The Oversight Committee of BRR was quoted by respondents as being a specific body that should be empowered to cement the positive steps taken by BRR itself. It was also stated that BRR, especially the Oversight Committee, should be more aware of military involvement in corrupt practices, and play a more positive role in tackling it. It was suggested that BRR should promote transparent recruitment of staff across key bodies of local government, since they will deal with procurement of services and physical materials.

Some proposed actions
It was suggested that there should be an independent body (consisting of international and national representatives) to monitor the use of funding. This should ensure that the government formulate procedures such as clean tenders in order to avoid corruption. Also, government needs to provide certainty of law: policies made during military rule in Aceh should not be used in future.

Further proposals for international actors included more active involvement in the development process so they know whether funding is used appropriately. One
respondent suggested using more foreign contractors to avoid corruption as it has become a normal aspect of life in Indonesia.

International actors should be aware, one respondent stated, that everybody wants to take part in Aceh’s redevelopment, even bodies at the local level without adequate competence.

Agencies should be aware that management fees for project delivery can be one way to channel corruption. It was also suggested that agencies should make more efforts to avoid overlaps and duplication, since this facilitates corruption. The desire of agencies to promote their names loudly and visibly does not help.
5. ENGAGING WITH THE PEACE PROCESS

This section covers questions on civil and parliamentary engagement, and women’s involvement in peace and conflict. It also presents Acehnese views on what international actors should do.

5.1 How should civil society and parliament be involved in the peace process?

Unsurprisingly, Acehnese civil voices contributed far more in this area than international organizations.

**Shape of civil society**

Respondents felt that civil society in Aceh is generally weak:

“...it was badly damaged by the tsunami, many organisations took 3-4 months to get back on their feet. It still is weak – as it was even before the tsunami.”

“Acehnese NGOs are inexperienced and can at times be bought off by financial interests.”

“With civil engagement generally, everyone has their own interests.”

*Quotations from different donor and INGO responses*

Others felt one problem was that there is little common understanding about what civil society is. It was reported that some in government refer to armed groups that aim to counter GAM as civil society, and this prevents them seeing a role for peaceful groups who are not related to government. One interviewee stated that risk of conflict is an excuse for repression of civil voices, restriction of freedom of movement, public meetings, etc.

Generally, it was felt that civil society groups do not have enough opportunity to be involved in the peace process. Despite weaknesses, civil society involvement is considered beneficial to the peace process: in 2001-2, civil society involvement managed to extend periods of relative calm. But after that, the peace process was handled by armed forces from both sides and it was not successful.

During talks in Helsinki between the Government of Indonesia and GAM, civil society groups wanted involvement. Civil society meetings that were held in Stockholm were valued, and groups do not want to be seen as an instrument of GAM. Some respondents felt that this caused problems in the past, especially when a local NGO (SIRA) was very critical of government, supporting Acehnese claims for a referendum, and was thought to have exploited the idea extensively. The NGO was suspected as being a GAM-affiliated organization.

It was commented that the Suharto government destroyed previously valuable and respected local religious and customary structures. Restoring this is a long term aim.
The role of parliament
Respondents were asked what role they felt local parliamentary structures could play. General confidence in local politicians was extremely low. At the provincial level, common perceptions were that government is not interested in the peace process. They are only interested in short-term projects, chiefly for financial gain. Local politicians, at provincial or district level, are regarded cynically, seen as only wanting salaries and funding, often being corrupt and self-serving. It was also commented by some that they are poorly educated.

Parliamentarians were viewed by one respondent as only listening to the people when they need votes. After they are elected, they are out of reach. It was commented that during the push for a referendum (2000/2001) Abu Yus (the former head of the Provincial Legislative Assembly) supported a referendum when he should have known that this was a source of conflict. At the national level, the Indonesian legislative assembly is viewed by some as disrupting the peace process, along with the military.

The role of religious leaders
Respondents stated that *ulama* (religious scholars) can be good representatives of civil society groups, and have more public confidence than elected bodies. They are generally listened to by TNI and GAM. In particular, GAM listen to local *pondok pesantren* leaders. These leaders can hold meetings, mediate local peace processes, and help educate the population.

It was felt that by some that religious figures are ignored if they have different opinions from the majority of those in the legislative assembly. Although *ulama* could actually play an important role, they are powerless, and government is reluctant to change this. A different reading of the same situation suggests that *ulama* should remain neutral, and it is the government who should seek advice from them, not the other way round.

*Ulama* received criticism themselves, with remarks that they have been silent on peace issues, and that they had also failed to support post-tsunami emergency work through either practical actions or religious activity. Other responses explained that intellectuals and traditional leaders such as *ulama* are concerned about peace but this is difficult to express: in 2000-2003, there was a group of *ulama* who supported GAM and lost their neutrality.

How independent civil society voices should support peace
It was widely felt that peace process stakeholders should not only include TNI and GAM but civil society and the wider population. Respondents wished to broaden and deepen discussions on peace-building. There was pessimism over the likelihood that high-level peace negotiations would have any practical impact at lower levels.

Many public figures apparently now refuse to speak about the peace process for fear of arrest by government forces or assassination by GAM. Some are living outside Aceh, or just keep silent. This was seen by respondents as a problem.
One interviewee stated that civil society’s problems relate to the basics of their task, rather than to politics, and that civil society groups need a secure environment in order to operate. Another similar comment was that people are not interested in politics, but they just want their civil rights fulfilled.

Suggestions provided on how civil society should act included the following:
- Neutral civil society facilitation of negotiation between TNI and GAM.
- Use civil society figures as mediators for lower-level meetings between GAM and TNI in Aceh, since agreements made in higher-level meetings are rarely implemented in the field.
- Press international bodies to encourage GAM and TNI to the negotiating table, and to ensure that a peace agreement is followed by genuine implementation.
- Reduce public resentment at military abuses and excesses dating back to Suharto’s rule through religious ceremonies or other conciliatory measures.
- Bring discussion and education to grassroots communities.
- One respondent felt a need for a powerful and charismatic person who could bring together local people and conflict actors to work on the peace process together.

The following comments related to how both international bodies and the Indonesian Government can support civil society groups:
- Enable broader civil engagement and discussion on the tsunami reconstruction blueprint and other plans or challenges facing society.
- Build a legal umbrella with international support to protect their members should the peace process collapse. (It was suggested that if this did not happen, then many people would be arrested. Others pointed out that Indonesian law should provide this umbrella without any need for extra measures.)
- Protect civil society groups from being financially exploited by both TNI and GAM.
- Donors and INGOs should keep civil society groups informed so that they can participate.
- If the sovereignty of Indonesia is to be fully accepted, then the Indonesian government has to investigate prior and current human rights cases.
- Donors need to build consensus rather than polarisation within civil society. Financial support can divide instead of building common ground.

5.2 Women’s roles in the peace process

Respondents gave a range of answers to this question. Many stressed the importance of working with women, but only a smaller number – all of whom were Acehnese civil society figures rather than international groups – could define what steps to take. International respondents were generally well versed in gender issues, but not sufficiently
knowledgeable to respond specifically with ideas about the role that women could play in the peace process.

One male local civil society leader felt that women could play a very important role, even though until now relatively few have been involved in the peace process. Another male leader felt that women can be effective mediators, thereby helping to reduce tensions. Another felt that Islam in Aceh is fairly liberal, with men and women historically being able to both play a useful role. Aceh even has women ulama.

Two respondents felt that individual capacities should be stressed, rather than gender-based approaches. By contrast, the one female activist interviewed felt that women’s broader perspectives added real value to peace processes. In the past, GAM rebels have exploited women as shields, hiding behind them. The interviewee had organised a dialogue for Acehnese women – the Aceh Women’s Conference. This aimed to create a non-partisan pro-peace forum, to encourage any stakeholder to conduct their own dialogue. This eventually led to a wider Acehnese Conference. But, over time, it failed to remain neutral, becoming GAM-affiliated through linking to demands for a referendum in 2001.

Comments

Inevitably, women suffer acutely from conflict. Whilst most active participants in conflict are men, women may suffer from abuse, displacement, restrictions on economic activity or freedom of movement, etc. There is scope to work more closely on gender and peace issues. This could include working with women as well as men to introduce peace-building issues at the grassroots level, as well as higher-level activism or networking.

International actors can benefit from looking more closely at gender dynamics in Aceh, as well as specific issues of relevance to women including female reproductive and sexual health, gender-based violence, workplace discrimination, and so on. Further gender-specific research is needed; although some gender issues can be built into other work like this study, most require dedicated attention and focus.

### 5.3 What international organisations can do – Acehnese voices

This section compiles responses provided by Acehnese civil society figures to a question asking how international actors involved in reconstruction can also promote peace. Responses are summarised and sorted into seven categories below.

**i) Build Acehnese communities, long-term**

International agencies should not just give money, since charity breeds dependency. They should run programmes that secure long-term benefits and improve people’s capacity. Activities that could “turn Aceh into a begging society”, like providing free bread, should be avoided.
Currently most programmes carried out by international bodies focus on fulfilling short-term livelihoods (like cash for work). It would be better if donors and international agencies could support long-term activities, restoring livelihoods, jobs and businesses on a sustainable basis.

ii) Involve civil society and create space for them to operate
To avoid resistance from government, international NGOs should work together with local partners. Benefits include capacity building for local partners who can work on peace process-related issues. Currently this has not been done optimally, and international NGOs generally recruit locals who do not have a strong vision regarding the peace process.

Agencies should also encourage the government, especially BRR, to provide a space for public participation for Acehnese, other Indonesians, and international bodies in revising the Aceh reconstruction blueprint of April 2005. They should propose an appropriate mechanism to allow for public participation.

iii) Build sustainable Acehnese businesses and institutions
Local capacity and traditional institutions need to be supported. Redeveloping Aceh is not only related to physical development, but also involves empowering people, including local business: not just giving fishermen boats, but looking at marketing and other aspects of enterprise too.

International agencies should provide more opportunities for local people to take part in reconstruction. There are not enough qualified human resources in Aceh, but donors should not simply employ those from outside Aceh or the problem will never be solved. Donors should involve as many locals as possible, perhaps in simpler work, whilst continuously upgrading competency. Support to upgrade local competencies could be in the form of providing experts to give training in various fields.

Donors and NGOs should use local businesses. UN World Food Programme (WFP), for example, did not utilize local transportation companies. This was seen as a big loss for local businessmen.

iv) Promote transparency, improve security
International bodies should ensure that there is a mechanism to provide public transparency, so that financial information on aid flows is accessible. This will help create more accountable implementation. They should also present such data to the media to enhance accountability.

Donors should also look at improving the security situation, and at reducing corruption. They need to do this or they will not make any long-term difference.

v) Encourage GAM and TNI to change
Since an international presence may influence GAM actions, this should be exploited through bringing international pressure to bear on GAM. The restraining impact that international actors bring to bear on TNI is not felt by GAM, who are acting as before.

The international community should be aware that horizontal conflicts are chronic. They are between GAM and militia, and between GAM and other public figures and bodies. The international community should apply pressure to minimize such conflicts, as well as persuading GAM not to make irrational claims, and TNI not to stir up unrest. Acehnese need peace, which is also important for successful reconstruction.

International donor nations can put pressure on GAM and TNI to work hard on the peace process. Both parties enter dialogue only because of international pressure. They were also forced by the tsunami disaster. The international community needs to try to force both GAM and TNI to implement in the field what may be agreed in dialogue.

International monitoring is very important for developing trust between GAM and TNI. The international community should force the government to allow international monitors in Aceh.

vi) Make sure aid is appropriate
Agencies should carry out work to find out know what people need and want, and design programmes accordingly. Assessments should not just look at immediate needs, but at livelihoods more widely. Feasibility studies should be comprehensive: mistakes were understandable if carried out during the emergency period immediately after the tsunami, but they should not happen now.

Agencies should also coordinate work with BRR to help all organizations build the same knowledge of people’s needs.

vii) Build peace, not just infrastructure, and support civilian over military rule
International agencies should support government to take the conflict out of the hands of TNI. If security or other related incidents arise, agencies should refer to civilian channels, not TNI. The international community should also find ways to support BRR to wrest power away from the military.

"Reconstruction should be about peace, not just physical rebuilding. The Government here sees physical reconstruction only."

Civil society respondent, Banda Aceh
6. KEY ISSUES

Impact of the tsunami on peace
Whilst not changing the fundamental political and social context of Aceh, the tsunami and subsequent relief efforts have had a major impact. The tsunami itself was of such a scale that it suspended preceding norms and expectations. More directly, both GAM and TNI are thought to have suffered losses to their own cadres, to family members, and to income generating opportunities. TNI and other government bodies, as well as Indonesian organisations and volunteers from across the country, have been involved in the relief effort.

Since the tsunami, a major international presence in Aceh has shifted the dynamic of the conflict. It makes more overt infringements and abuses by all parties harder, and brings international attention to peace measures as well as to reconstruction. Although it is thought that both the government and GAM were prepared to meet to talk about peace before the tsunami happened, the tsunami created a humanitarian window that silenced many hard-line voices on both sides.

Other positive factors mentioned by interviewees included: potential for an economic ‘peace dividend’; reduced corruption and increased accountability; increased confidence in government; more willingness to improve by using international good practice; and more scope for civil society involvement.

Negative factors were also mentioned: risk of raised tension through unequal resource distribution, especially since the poorest areas actually lie outside the tsunami-affected regions; local tension exacerbated by unequal aid provision between neighbouring villages; drift of good staff from local to international agencies; and, potential for increased corruption given major aid inflows.

Huge budgets put NGOs in new territory
The massive global public fundraising that followed the tsunami means that many international NGOs have unprecedented budgets. Some NGOs such as CARE, Save the Children, and various national Red Cross and Red Crescent societies each have over US$100 million to spend. This makes them larger than some donors or UN agencies. In this context, it is fair to see all large international agencies as donors of one kind or another.

Generally, interviews confirm this perspective. All bodies, when faced with huge budgets to spend, massive challenges to confront, and a myriad of operational obstacles, adopt similar lines in the field. In most cases, the priority is a fairly narrow concern with effective and accountable spending. This is understandable, and at the field level justifiable. However, the risk is that such approaches lead to narrow objectives, lack of coordination or cross-learning, lack of flexibility to adapt to changing circumstances, and a non-strategic perspective.
Furthermore, the huge amount of international aid flowing into Aceh does not ensure equal resource distribution, especially in areas with high levels of instability and in which access is limited. This in turn may create tension, and may eventually have a negative impact on the peace process in the field unless care is taken.

**Institutional imperatives encourage conflict blindness**

Like all groups, aid agency agendas are set by internal and external incentives. External incentives are often shaped by constituencies outside the area of operations. Bilateral donors are part of developed country government machinery, essentially answerable to parliaments and voters thousands of miles away from the site of operation. NGOs are often more accountable to their funders than any local actors. Funders are in many other cases the bilateral donors, but in Aceh they are mostly the public in wealthy countries who contributed generously following the tsunami.

Internal incentives of agencies and individual staff within agencies vary, but are little different from those in other walks of life. Generally, they have similar preoccupations with promotion, minimising workload, getting good references, reporting upwards rather than downwards, and so on. Ensuring that these interests fit contextual requirements is possible, but this needs very good management and overall institutional motivations that have enough common ground with local needs and concerns to enable functional operation. In practice, this is usually the case only part of the time. In Aceh, agencies have had to build up huge operations in a very short space of time, usually from scratch. This management challenge has tended to consume the time of agency managers, who may, as a result, be unwilling to take on any new problems like thinking about conflict.

It is important to note that for international agencies Aceh is a field site. Donors and NGOs have very few, if any, policy level staff in the province. Policy decisions are mostly made in offices elsewhere. When viewed from head offices elsewhere, aid to Aceh is about repairing the damage caused by natural disaster.

Conflict is not a critical factor for much of the international community who respond to the interests of funders and politicians at home. They know about the huge human suffering caused by the tsunami, but are less responsive to the specific and more complex issues of conflict in Aceh. However, as the sections below show, there are many exceptions to this.

**Bilateral donors and political involvement**

Most bilateral donors work within the broader foreign policy objectives of donor governments. This means that they often take wider political issues including conflict into account, even at the cost of more technical aid objectives. Various bilateral agencies are already engaged in supporting peace-building in Aceh, and others may follow if there is a political incentive to support a peace process. Some specific examples follow.

**Japan:** For Japan, peace-building is a part of aid provision and wider foreign policy for Indonesia, covering Aceh and elsewhere. JICA, the Japanese government technical assistance agency, has a peace-building specialist in Jakarta, and a background strategy
on how to ensure peace-building is considered in programming. Possible fields include civic engagement, local economic revitalisation, and supporting an effective provincial body that can act as a more autonomous unit in future. In other fields of operation, peace-building concerns are built into plans: civil society support aims to build Acehnese leaders; more links are made with local government than elsewhere; and some national support programmes have been redesigned for application in Aceh.

**USA:** Through USAID and some other bodies, the USA is engaged in support to a range of civil society organisations in Aceh. Other areas of engagement or possible engagement include public information and training to help reform security services.

**Canada:** CIDA, the Canadian aid agency, has long supported a range of NGOs, civic groups, and academic institutes in Aceh. Like many donors, they are prepared to support any peace process that is agreed upon by GAM and the government.

**UK:** DFID, the UK donor agency, has provided technical expertise on conflict sensitivity as part of reconstruction in Aceh as a common resource for all agencies involved.

Many bilateral donors ‘stand by ready to assist’ any Government of Indonesia requests for assistance on peace-building issues.

**Multilaterals and potential for engagement**

The World Bank and UNDP have both built up staff capacity and experience on peace-building in Indonesia.

UNDP’s Peace through Development programme has conducted local level confidence-building activities, often through implementing partners, in eastern Indonesia. However, UNDP is not active in Aceh on any peace-related work, and does not integrate such approaches into its mainstream work on livelihoods or other fields. UN agencies feel they have to approach conflict issues carefully, given a fear that their involvement may provoke a negative backlash on the part of some who feel such involvement represents a threat to Indonesian sovereignty.

The World Bank has a conflict research unit currently active in Aceh, looking especially at local level factors in the conflict. It forms part of efforts to build conflict-related issues into some major World Bank programmes, including two large loans: KDP (Kecamatan Development Programme), a major community-driven investment initiative; and SPADA (Support for Poor And Disadvantaged Areas project), which looks at district-level capacity building and integrates such issues as access to justice into its aims. These programmes reach across the interior as well as the coastal areas of Aceh.

ADB is looking to provide assistance that covers the whole province, including areas not affected by the tsunami, through programmes such as support in the water and sanitation field.
Some UN specialised agencies, such as UNICEF, may be able to act likewise or pick up on specific issues such as children affected by armed conflict.

**International NGOs – already involved, scope to do more**

Some international NGOs look at conflict as part of their work, but in general there is less engagement than would be expected. Most international NGO interviewees had little knowledge of politics, society or conflict in Aceh. Some of the reasons for this are explained above; others include a fear of expulsion from Indonesia if engaging in ‘political’ areas of activity, but these explanations do not justify lack of knowledge or grounding in the local environment.

The main sections of this report demonstrate some of the ways in which international NGOs engage in conflict-related factors:

- **Community and livelihoods support**: some NGOs felt that community based approaches and local livelihood programmes are the best way to approach peace-building. Other comments suggested that these entry points can be used to look more closely at local dispute resolution mechanisms and local justice systems.
- **Corruption**: some NGOs – not many – have developed extra checks for Aceh, partly as a result of armed parties’ involvement in such practices.
- **Security**: this is simply an essential measure to ensure safety of staff and ability to carry out operations.
- **Civil society support**: Oxfam have a specific programme looking at supporting civil society advocacy and other engagement.
- **Access**: some NGOs, especially in the health sector (Merlin, International Medical Corps), aim to gain access to areas that otherwise are off-limits. This is achieved through developing local contacts, or through supporting government delivery mechanisms.
- **Equality**: some NGOs are concerned about limiting tensions caused by unequal aid provision.
- **Scenario planning**: some NGOs have thought through how they may be able to respond if a peace process makes headway (or if conflict gets worse).
- **Staffing**: equal treatment, pay, etc. of Acehnese and non-Acehnese staff; supporting training and mentoring of Acehnese staff to build capacity and employ locals, rather than importing skills.

**A track record of work on conflict: in Aceh, elsewhere in Indonesia**

Some agencies are used to working in conflict-affected environments. This does not necessarily mean that the conflict is taken into account except as a risk to staff security and successful project implementation; many NGOs have experience of minimising risk, but not of thinking about how to build peace-building concerns into work.

However, a range of agencies have also built up experience of working on local level conflict issues in Indonesia since the end of Suharto’s New Order in 1998. Agencies of all kinds – UNDP, the World Bank, IOM, IRD, CARDI and others – operate conflict-related programmes in areas such as Sulawesi or Maluku. This often provides access to staff experienced in conflict-related issues in Indonesia.
A few bodies were engaged in providing assistance to Aceh before the tsunami, including IOM and Save the Children. Others had been present in the past, including Oxfam. However, most agencies that were able to retain a presence kept clear of any directly conflict-related issues. One exception is IOM, who worked with government to look at issues of internal displacement.

‘Mainstreaming’ conflict

For many agencies, conflict does not come into the picture except as a background issue, or perhaps as a threat to staff security and successful project implementation. This perspective is shared by media agencies: international coverage of Aceh was intense in late June 2005, marking six months after the tsunami. Yet in most reports, even relatively in-depth articles or reportage, the ongoing civil conflict and a possible peace process was not even mentioned despite the direct impact on people’s lives and the region’s future.

It is noticeable that many agencies struggle to make the connections between conflict and their fields of engagement. This is not unique to Aceh – similar issues are found in other conflict-affected environments. The fact that many agencies have not thought through the implications of changes in the conflict environment, despite a high-profile peace process that is underway, demonstrates the gap between their projects and the wider political environment.

Typically, donor organisations are reluctant to engage in conflict issues. There are various reasons for this:

- For many organisations, conflict does not fit into a technical field of expertise, and is hard to link with concrete projects.
- As chiefly technical organisations, political issues are often outside donors’ domains and mandates.
- Working on conflict is hard, and for risk-averse organisations it is a lot easier to avoid the issue. Many donors are disbursement-driven: they are motivated by a need to spend money efficiently, and this is difficult in conflict-affected environments.

Some organisations that do engage in conflict-related activities simultaneously fail to look at other activities from the perspective of conflict. So, whilst Oxfam engaged in some valuable small-scale work to support civil society advocacy around conflict issues after the tsunami, it did less to consider the links between conflict and the rest of its multi-million dollar programme. Likewise, despite having in-house capacity to analyse conflict issues, UNDP does not use it to consider how its post-tsunami support can be made conflict-sensitive.

For donor agencies, governance issues are perhaps most prominent. A weak provincial administration is both a cause and an effect of conflict in Aceh, and unless a viable provincial entity can in the future form the basis of some greater degree of self-government, it is hard to see how commitment to greater autonomy within the state of
Indonesia will be translated into reality. In the past, such commitments have floundered as centre-periphery politics denied the implementation of proposed regional power. With decentralisation and other changes over the past decade presenting new opportunities, donors can help build capacity at local levels – including the provincial level. However, with real weaknesses in local government including a very poor track record for corruption, this is not an easy undertaking. The most straightforward entry points may be in technical or service-based line ministries, where donors are often active. This stresses further the potential value of mainstreaming conflict sensitivity into reconstruction and other development programming.

Box 12: Arising gender issues

Gender issues were mentioned only rarely in the course of this research and need more attention. Awareness of women’s roles in Acehnese society generally, and peace-building in particular, could be improved. Local, national and international aid agency staff would benefit from training and familiarisation on gender issues. Acehnese culture and local tradition offers examples of strong female role models and leaders, and the scope to confront a range of challenges that many women face. The scope to build women’s voices around peace, and look at other links between conflict and gender, also exists.

**Staffing – starting at home**

Some tension has arisen over recruitment of non-Acehnese staff to better-paid posts, and of unequal wages. There is a history of resentment at non-Acehnese taking good jobs within Aceh. Agencies could tackle this by further prioritising local recruitment and training, and by engaging in team-building or other staff relationship building efforts.

Accusations have been made of inappropriate behaviour by international and non-Acehnese Indonesian staff. Whilst it appears that many accusations have little basis, and accusers may not in any case speak for a majority of Acehnese, care needs to be taken to ensure that staff do act appropriately.

In order to engage in conflict, some steps could include designating a focal point on conflict-related issues, and ensuring that awareness of the context of Aceh is comprehensively covered in induction for new staff.

Larger organisations could employ dedicated staff to work with Acehnese bodies on peace-building issues, and to ensure that the local political context, especially relating to conflict, is mainstreamed into programmes on the ground and fed into policy decisions.

**Better relations with local civil society**

Perhaps the most striking result of the interviews was the gulf between international and local perspectives on conflict. For local figures, conflict issues overshadowed almost all aspects of work (and life). By contrast, it was a far more marginal factor for international actors.

The gulf suggests that more dialogue is needed between civil society and international development actors. A range of local NGOs stated how difficult they found it to work
with international agencies. Complaints included lack of consultation, aloof attitudes, slow disbursement, unfulfilled promises, and lack of funding support. International NGOs do not manage relations with domestic civil society more effectively than donor agencies: many of the complaints heard about international bodies were directed at international NGOs.

Civil society interviewees tended to refer to GAM more often than the military or police as the cause of immediate problems or the key contributor to specific incidents. By contrast, international actors tend to refer to the military more than GAM. There may be various reasons for this, including different experiences of conflict and concerns over confidentiality on the part of some respondents. In any case, it demonstrates potential gaps in understanding between local and international actors.

Some civil society actors felt that international NGOs and donors do not use available experience, failing to absorb a huge body of Acehnese knowledge into planning or implementing programmes. Other comments included the view that international NGOs are self-interested, and do not coordinate with each other or with local bodies. More common still was a perspective that international bodies do not conduct good community level work; in places, they assess needs wrongly, make unfulfilled promises, or provide inappropriate support.

International actors can also benefit from more knowledge and understanding of how civil society and politics in Aceh work. This is a complex environment. Whilst civil society bodies have a valuable role to play and need more support, providing such support is not straightforward, and there are many potential pitfalls. This means that international agencies may need to understand better how Acehnese society works.

**Corruption**

Corruption in a conflict environment often gives armed actors an incentive to carry on fighting. It is imperative that agencies strive even harder than usual to reduce levels of corruption. Some extra measures that agencies have adopted include:

- One donor employs stricter monitoring procedures than elsewhere. For example, the normal level of sample auditing is doubled for the tsunami reconstruction effort.
- Two international NGOs recognize corruption problems in procurement, a field in which military involvement is regarded as especially problematic. The NGOs have taken on more tasks themselves, such as finding and procuring supplies of timber.
- Use of external independent consultants to advise and monitor.
- Hiring engineers to audit projects.
- Special procedures for tendering contracts.
- Employing dedicated in-house monitoring staff.
- Working with other NGOs to source sustainable timber collectively.
7. SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

On August 15th 2005, the Government of Indonesia and GAM (Free Aceh Movement) signed a peace agreement. This shifted the environment for agencies working in Aceh, and may create new scope for engagement. Issues and areas of possible involvement for aid agencies:

- **Reintegration**: Former combatants, returnees and released prisoners may benefit from programmes. This depends on political negotiations. With so many development actors on the ground, it may in due course be possible to link with a range of initiatives in fields such as livelihoods support, vocational training, house construction, land mapping, medical support, and cash for work.

- **Expanding community based support**: In addition to supporting former combatants, it is often important to assist affected communities. The most conflict-affected areas of Aceh include non-coastal parts of districts such as Pidie, Bireun, Aceh Timur and Aceh Utara. Whilst not directly tsunami-affected, they are the poorest parts of the province and the core areas of support for GAM. Some districts of Aceh without a coastline are also critical spots. Agencies may consider new programmes or extending existing work.

- **An obvious peace dividend**: Rapid and visible or tangible programmes to generate confidence in a peace process may help cement support. A range of bodies might be engaged, if the Government of Indonesia (and GAM) desire such measures.

- **Technical assistance**: There will be a need for support to enable Indonesian bodies to take forward developmental elements of a peace process. This includes government structures, civil society bodies, and possibly others.

- **Governance**: As stated elsewhere in this report, local government structures are weak. Support to enable a degree of self-government for Aceh within the nation of Indonesia will be essential for long-term prospects for peace.

- **Development planning**: The reconstruction of Aceh as a province will involve economic and social planning. Acehnese voices need to lead such processes.

- **A knowledge base**: Lack of information, quantitative and qualitative, will lead to inappropriate interventions, or unwillingness to engage. This can be tackled through measures to gather and share information.

- **Information and media**: Understanding the peace process will be important. Information can also help dispel rumours, reducing frustration or unrealistic expectations.
- **Popular engagement:** A process will be more likely to succeed if it engages civil actors, provides platforms for involvement and consultation, and begins to build a more representative and accountable system of governance.

- **Gender issues:** Investigate how the conflict has affected women, and at gender-related aspects of support for peace-building.

**Preparing for engagement**

- **Policy:** Agencies in Aceh working on tsunami reconstruction should consider how, within their mandates, they can respond to conflict and peace-building issues in Aceh.

- **Mainstreaming:** For many agencies, it may not be appropriate to work on peace issues directly. But they can still consider what it means for their work, and consider how they can ensure that issues like corruption and lack of confidence in government are tackled through their programmes.

- **Staffing:** In order to develop more informed policy directions, agencies can draw from expertise on Aceh’s conflict, and on Indonesia’s politics more widely. Many Acehnese, Indonesian and international figures can give such inputs. Larger organisations could employ dedicated staff for this task. More generally, agencies can also aim to employ Acehnese staff where possible.

- **Training and induction:** Agencies can ensure that new staff are provided with information about conflict and related issues in Aceh as part of their initial briefings.

- **Sharing information:** Many agencies have managed to engage in peace-related work in a manner that is acceptable to authorities and that supports government policy, as is shown in this document. Informal discussions, perhaps within existing working group structures, could help spread awareness.

- **Linking with Acehnese civil society and government:** Agencies can ensure that they develop meaningful partnerships with local bodies, in both policy formulation and implementation.

- **Adapting existing conflict experience:** Some agencies have worked on conflict issues elsewhere in Indonesia, or internationally. These experiences can be valuable as a basis, if plans are adapted to Aceh’s specific context.
ANNEX: Some Websites for More Information

International Crisis Group: www.crisisgroup.org
Useful and well-respected reports on Aceh from the last few years including recent updates. In English and some Indonesian.

East-West Center Washington: www.eastwestcenterwashington.org
Longer papers on conflict in Aceh and other issues. In English.

Acehkita: www.acehkita.com
Daily news on Aceh from non-governmental group. In Indonesian, and some English at www.acehkita.com/en

E-Aceh: www.e-aceh.org
Government of Indonesia and donor agency web-site. In Indonesian and English.

Humanitarian Information Center for Sumatra: www.humanitarianinfo.org/sumatra
Reports on the tsunami response, links to government and international agency web-sites, details of agencies and events in Aceh, etc., managed by the UN’s Office for theCoordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UN OCHA). In English.

The Jakarta Post: www.thejakartapost.com
English language Indonesian daily.

Serambi Indonesia: www.serambinews.com
Local daily newspaper, in Indonesian.
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<td>The Dynamics of District Governance: Forums, Budget Processes and Transparency</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>Luthfi Ashari</td>
<td>May 2004</td>
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<td><em>Dynamika Pemerintahan Kabupaten: Forum, Perencanaan Anggaran dan Transparansi</em></td>
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<td>Violence and Conflict Resolution in Non-Conflict Regions: The Case of Lampung, Indonesia</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>Patrick Barron, David Madden</td>
<td>Aug 2004</td>
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<td>Mobilizing for Violence: The Escalation and Limitation of Identity Conflicts</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>Yuhki Tajima</td>
<td>Aug 2004</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>More Than Just Ownership: Ten Land and Natural Resource Conflict Case Studies from East Java and Flores</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>Samuel Clark (ed.)</td>
<td>Dec 2004</td>
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<td></td>
<td><em>Bukan Sekedar Persoalan Kepemilikan: Sepuluh Studi Kasus Konflik Tanah dan Sumber Daya Alam dari Jawa Timur dan Flores</em></td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>Crisis, Social Ties, and Household Welfare: Testing Social Capital Theory with Evidence From Indonesia</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>Anna Wetterberg</td>
<td>Apr 2005</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>Village Corruption in Indonesia: Fighting Corruption in Indonesia's Kecamatan Development Program</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>Andrea Woodhouse</td>
<td>Apr 2005</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>Counting Conflicts: Using Newspaper Reports to Understand Violence in Indonesia</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>Patrick Barron, Joanne Sharpe</td>
<td>May 2005</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>Aceh: Reconstruction in a Conflict Environment</td>
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<td>Adam Burke, Afnan</td>
<td>Oct 2005</td>
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