Activities of the Centre for Nonviolent Action (Sarajevo)

Conflict Transformation by

in the Balkan Region

Training in Nonviolent Action

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Summary

The *Centre for Non-violent Action* (Centar za nenasilnu akciju – CNA) was set up in autumn 1997 as the Sarajevo project office of the North German *Bildungs- und Begegnungsstätte – KURVE Wustrow* (Centre for Education and Networking in Non-violent Action – KURVE Wustrow). Since then, CNA has conducted more than 30 training sessions, bringing together young people from different parts of the former Yugoslavia to study practical approaches to non-violent conflict transformation. CNA also aims to support local NGOs' networking activities and advise them on general issues concerning NGO development.

From the beginning the *Berghof Research Center for Constructive Conflict Management* has supported CNA's work with supervision and advice. In January 1999, the CNA team also asked for Berghof's support with the self-evaluation of its work. The purpose of this study is to take stock and clarify CNA's approach. Within this framework, the obstacles and unresolved issues confronting peace work in Bosnia-Herzegovina – and, indeed, the Balkans in general – will be also outlined. The study is based on two sources: firstly on oral and written questions addressed to the CNA staff members and an evaluation of its Annual and Quarterly Reports; and secondly, structured interviews, carried out with graduates of the training programmes.

Individual learning outcomes, multiplication and networking

The graduates stated that from the CNA workshops they gained important insights about themselves, and their approach to other people and conflict situations. They learned to assess their opportunities and limits, strengths and weaknesses more realistically and enhanced their self-esteem, empathy and social skills. They also learned to understand conflicts better and place them inside their social and political context. Most of the graduates felt that these learning processes had a positive impact on their lives, which is reflected in their changed behaviour. The majority of respondents say that they apply the knowledge, skills and abilities acquired during the training programme in their lives and at work. Many of them regularly use the content and methods of the training (especially team work and non-violent

communication) in their daily lives and family settings, as well as in their work with NGOs or with children and young people.

Moreover, by the end of 2000, CNA's training approach had encouraged around 30 young people from different regions of the former Yugoslavia to train as trainers in non-violent conflict transformation, or had reinforced their decision to take this step. In an international comparison with similar programmes, this is an extraordinarily high result. The extent to which they will carry forward CNA's work and teach its ideas, content and methods over the long-term cannot be assessed conclusively for some years. Nonetheless, it may be assumed that CNA's training work generally meets its own learning objectives, and that CNA's overall goal – i.e. multiplication – has also been reached on the whole.

The learning outcomes are further enhanced by the fact that the training sessions are tailored to the needs and realities of participants. This has been greatly facilitated by CNA's practice of distributing a needs assessment questionnaire prior to training in order to identify the needs, knowledge and context of participants more effectively. Furthermore, there has been a high degree of flexibility on the part of the trainer team. Their interactive working methods and intensive support for participants have enabled the training methods to be frequently modified and adapted to the group's needs.

The widespread acceptance of CNA's work is due, among other things, to the fact that the majority of team members come from the region of the former Yugoslavia, and most of them have already lived and worked in crisis regions (this also applies to the international volunteer who has experience of the Northern Ireland conflict in Western Europe). The special feature of this project is that although it was developed with support from foreign donors and organisations, it was set up by an activist with a 'bi-cultural' background (both in Yugoslavia and Germany) and includes local activists on an equal basis. CNA was launched by a volunteer of Serbian origin, who brought with him the contacts, skills and knowledge which he had acquired at a German NGO. From these beginnings, CNA has developed into a 'ground level' organisation whose goal is to transfer full responsibility to local experts. Staff members have equal responsibilities and working relations are not based on hierarchy.

Recommendation: The CNA-Team should continue to uphold these principles in its internal organisation and composition. It has repeatedly documented its intention to do so.

The trainer team's approach – not to steer as many people as possible through the training programmes in a short time, but to focus particularly on a smaller group, to work with them continuously, and to give graduates ongoing support up to their work context–has proved very successful. It has enabled participants to make lasting personal contacts, both within the group and with the CNA team. CNA's claim that it contributes to networking among people within the region of the former Yugoslavia has thus been fulfilled: the training sessions have brought together many people who would otherwise have had no opportunity to meet and share experiences with persons from other parts of this war-torn region. This has boosted confidence and established new contacts / networks which serve as a good basis for further activities. Some of the graduates from the "Training for Trainers" programme have participated in joint cooperation projects after training (e.g. some organised a work camp with a German students' group; others formed a working group to campaign for the rights of conscientious objectors and to establish common legal standards.) Nonetheless, working relations and joint projects which extend beyond the level of friendship still tend to be the exception.

To what extent does CNA's work help to promote peace constituencies? This question can only be answered with the benefit of hindsight in a few years' time. Consequently it is important for the team to clarify precisely – for its own sake – which groups and / or individuals should be networked and for what purpose. There are indications that lasting cooperation between groups and individuals is most likely to develop when the graduates have the opportunity to work together after training.

Recommendation: To have a greater impact, a training strategy which offers a practical opportunity for graduates to join and organise training sessions after completion of the "Training for Trainers" programme could be successful. The CNA team is already thinking and planning along these lines. Here, the challenge is to secure funding for such a demanding project. Furthermore, restricting the target groups, or targeting training on persons who work in similar fields, could also facilitate the networking process.

Challenges for future organisational development

A number of issues relating to organisational development must also be clarified, i.e. a) CNA's future legal status (transition from a registered international NGO to a local NGO), and b) 'diversification of dependence' through fund-raising with a wide range of sponsors. To secure a consensus on these issues, further discussions about CNA's role will be required.

Recommendation: In this context, the team should try to ensure that CNA's legal status, team composition and financial dependence – issues which in reality are interlinked – are nonetheless discussed separately, as far as possible.

The CNA team faces new challenges following the decision to set up a second office in Belgrade. The purpose is to coordinate training work in the Serbia-Kosovo-Macedonia triangle more effectively and expand the scope of activities. New challenges and issues will also arise with the relocation of some staff members from Sarajevo to Belgrade. Firstly, new divisions of work must be agreed, and extra staff members integrated, which will change the roles within the team. Secondly, there must be regular meetings and liaison in order to maintain close links between the two offices.

Recommendation: For CNA's further development, it would be of assistance if the two offices could undertake joint programme planning, and also cooperate closely on fund-raising in the future.

1 Introduction: Social and Political Context

1.1 Conflict dimensions in Bosnia-Herzegovina and post-Yugoslav neighbour regions

More than five years after the Dayton Agreement, there is still little prospect of a stable peace in Bosnia-Herzegovina. Bosnian society is still divided by countless lines of conflict: some are historical in origin; some have been (re-)ignited by war and its effects. Despite many hopes that the changes in the neighbour countries of Croatia and Serbia would have a positive impact on the situation in Bosnia-Herzegovina, the elections in November 2000 (*see* JURCIC 2000) showed that there is still a high level of fear and anxiety among the Bosnian population, which is expressed in the form of support for radical nationalists. Bosnia-Herzegovina still faces major unresolved challenges: the issues of refugee return, settlement of property claims, and economic consolidation are particularly pressing.

The often intersecting lines of conflict within Bosnian society – in the Muslim-Croat Federation and the Serb Republika Srpska alike – include tensions:

- between Serbs, Croats and Bosniaks;
- between Catholics, Orthodox and Muslims (and, in some areas, other religious minorities as well);
- between refugees / displaced persons and the local population;
- between refugees returning from abroad and the local communities;
- between urban and rural populations;
- between the sexes;
- between the employed and the jobless;
- between the war profiteurs and those who lost the basis of livelihood during the war.

Many of these conflicts also affect neighbour regions within the territory of the former Yugoslavia.

In Macedonia, ethnic tensions between Macedonians and Macedonian Albanians have become more acute in recent years. The increase in the ethnic Albanian population as a result of refugee flows during the 1999 Kosovo / Yugoslav war has further exacerbated the situation. The rivalries between the two political factions (Macedonians and Albanians) are accompanied by extreme violence. The scope for dialogue, development of a democratic culture, and civil society has therefore greatly diminished.

In Croatia, the political climate has improved since the democratic movements' electoral victory in 2000. However, the return of the Croatian Serbs is still an unresolved issue, as is the investigation of the war crimes committed by the Croat paramilitary forces. Relations with Serbia, Montenegro and Bosnia-Herzegovina have still not returned to normal. In all these areas, the Croatian Government faces powerful resistance from the right-wing opposition. The previous governments' isolationist policy towards Croatia's Southeast neighbours is a legacy which will take considerable time to dismantle. The involvement of Croatian civil society organisations in cross-border peacebuilding initiatives is therefore extremely important.

In Kosovo, Albanian political forces are pushing for independence as a sovereign state. Minority oppression and high levels of violence are part of everyday life. Investigation of the crimes committed against Kosovo Albanians and non-Albanians can help to improve the general atmosphere. Ethnic divisions are most deeply entrenched in Kosovo. Initiatives which promote dialogue between Kosovo Albanians and Serbia / Serbs face major resistance, but are urgently needed.

In Serbia, the ousting of the Milosevic regime in late 2000 has created a new situation which offers the country the chance to play a key role in stabilising the region as a whole. However, there is still a strong *culture of violence* within Serbian society. Furthermore, there is still no prospect of a dialogue with the democratic forces within the Kosovo Albanian community, which could help to stabilise the situation in Kosovo. Creating a *culture of dialogue and tolerance* is a prerequisite for a constructive approach at political level to the issue of Kosovo's future political status, as well as for society's acceptance of possible solutions.

Peacebuilding and anti-violence initiatives must take account of all the existing conflict dimensions and focus on their transformation. To this end, both process- and structure-oriented measures are required; this means supporting the creation of

economic development opportunities, fostering social justice, and promoting the development of civil society structures. It also means providing support for institution-building as a way to achieve structural stability (i.e. legal certainty through a functioning judicial system and a state monopoly on the use of force, and the establishment of institutions to foster dialogue and a balance of interests). But people's individual peace skills must also be enhanced. Peace education, and especially youth work, play a key role in this context.

1.2   Peace education and youth work: a main task for peacebuilding

Young people offer tremendous potential for social innovation and are a very promising target group for reconciliation work. This is especially important in war-torn societies. Compared with the victims' / perpetrators' generations, younger age groups are generally more open to dialogue and more willing to set aside their stereotyped ways of thinking. At the same time, however, young people have a highly destructive potential which can be sparked off by society's neglect of this group. Young people who have no education or employment opportunities may resort to crime. Experience in many post-war societies has shown that if no social integration initiatives are available, male youths, in particular, form a willing pool of recruits for political leaders with a vested interest in perpetuating violent conflict. A further outcome is the migration of qualified young people to countries which they believe will offer them better opportunities; this results in a brain-drain and the loss of the most vital resources for social development.

Systematic support for initiatives which work to improve opportunities for development and social participation and give young people training in peace skills is crucial in post-war regions. In order to harness young people's creativity and minimise their destructive potential, special priority must be given to this group when devising measures to support civil society.

In terms of the development of civil society in pre-war Yugoslavia[1], it is striking that there were no structures for self-organisation – e.g. youth associations or youth work run by social institutions (the churches, political parties, professional

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[1]   On this point, see Fischer / Tumler 2000, p. 8 ff.

associations, etc.), such as those in existence in Western European countries – in and Yugoslavia before the war. In Croatia and Serbia (especially in urban centres), there was at least an embryonic NGO scene which emerged during the 1980s and 1990s and campaigned on social issues, finally crystallising into a peace movement during the war; yet even this development was virtually unknown in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Despite these adverse starting conditions, a wide range of activities by and for youth/ young adults has developed in both entities in Bosnia-Herzegovina in recent years which can make a lasting contribution to peacebuilding. They include initiatives aimed at empowerment, enhancing life chances and training in peace skills, as well as self-organisation projects for young people, and youth networks. Almost all of them work under very difficult conditions. In general, independent youth projects receive no support from the state's official youth, cultural or education policy.[2]

Youth work must be recognised as a key element of reconstruction and rehabilitation, of dealing with the past and promoting understanding between formerly hostile groups (with the long-term goal of reconciliation) in post-war regions. Potential areas of activity, which must be seen as complementary, range from trauma work to supporting young people's self-organisation, providing rooms for encounter, promoting transnational exchange in education, sport, the arts and culture, giving support to training programmes in conflict transformation, intercultural communication, training young people in media work, offering better training opportunities in the trades, combined with targeted employment initiatives (employment- and community-oriented youth work), and providing resources for further training for teachers and educationists in interactive / participatory teaching methodologies.

If young people in Bosnia-Herzegovina continue to be left to their own devices, this will have two negative outcomes which may seriously impede the peace process. Firstly, their lack of prospects is likely to make young people an easy target for any political movement which has a vested interest in perpetuating the logic of war and

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[2] In regions which can be described politically as 'majority communities', civil society initiatives are generally accepted and tolerated by the authorities. However, in regions with a high level of political tension, and in 'divided' communities, these initiatives often encounter open hostility and face many obstacles to their work. Other factors impeding youth work relate to foreign donors' funding practice. Many donors support short-term projects and do not cover the ongoing infrastructural costs which have to be paid if the project is to be implemented. Furthermore, many foreign donors are now gradually withdrawing from the country altogether.

terrorist violence. Secondly, this risk of instrumentalisation, there is also the danger that qualified young people will leave the country. To counteract these trends and improve the chances of young people being taken seriously as a force for social innovation and reconciliation, it is important to develop extra activities in these post-war regions. Support from external sources can be useful in this context as long as it is based on a long-term, process-oriented approach rather than on short-term results and performance criteria. The same applies to the other regions of the former Yugoslavia affected by refugee flows or economic decline as a result of war, dictatorship or sanctions.

1.3   Establishing Peace Constituencies

The development of peacebuilding approaches has proved crucial for reconstruction and rehabilitation, dialogue and reconciliation in post-war societies. Civil conflict transformation / crisis prevention initiatives should focus primarily on creating and supporting peace constituencies (*see* LEDERACH 1997) within the conflict regions. *Peace constituencies* involve many different actors who work at 'ground level', 'middle level' and 'top level' against cultures of violence and help to establish mechanisms for peaceful conflict transformation. They also include networks of individuals who have a personal interest in achieving a lasting solution to ethnopolitical conflicts and have the skills and influence to translate this interest into action. In addition to local NGOs, key actors may include representatives of the political parties, associations, churches, media, and arts / education institutions who work actively to create a 'culture of peace' and initiate transnational exchanges or encounters which transcend the hostility between groups.

The task of establishing local peace constituencies is very difficult in countries with a low level of organised civil society. Often, it is important to develop some degree of individual initiative, in order to prepare the ground for further networking. In some circumstances, this process can be supported and underpinned by external foreign professionals who can offer: local peace actors opportunities for internal exchange and networking, create scope for reflection on the work undertaken, help to identify

resources, identify opportunities for additional training, and advise on conflict transformation techniques from other crisis regions.[3]

Through its training in civil conflict transformation and its networking initiatives, the Sarajevo *Centre for Non-violent Action* (Centar za nenasilnu akciju – CNA) has made a significant contribution to enhancing individual skills and creating peace constituencies since 1997. The Centre focuses particularly on the lines of conflict identified above. It also supports networking between a range of actors from different areas of society.

The work of the CNA will be outlined below.

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[3] In order to establish and safeguard peace constituencies on a long-term basis, a broad spectrum of networking and support measures, as well as institutionalisation, is required. Based on the international NGOs' experience in setting up peace constituencies and on studies which examine the effectiveness of non-traditional forms of peace work in internal conflicts; e.g. Sorbo et al 1997 and CDR Associates / Berghof Research Center for Constructive Conflict Management 1999, and on programmatic discussions in development cooperation, Norbert Ropers (1999) has compiled the following frame of reference: 1) Promoting models of constructive conflict management; 2) Establishing a dynamic network of non-government, non-party-political actors; 3) Supporting multiethnic and multireligious interest groups as a priority; 4) Creating spaces for peace work; 5) Mobilising education, media and culture for peace work; 6) Rehabilitation and reconciliation in post-war regions; 7) Promoting needs-oriented civil infrastructures; 8) Reconciliation through joint reconstruction projects involving conflict parties; 9) Peace constituencies as learning fields.

2 'Multiplying' and 'Networking' by Training: The Approach of the Centre for Non-violent Action (Sarajevo)

2.1 Project background and objectives

The *Centre for Non-violent Action* (Centar za nenasilnu akciju – CNA) was set up in September 1997 as the Sarajevo project office of the North German *Bildungs- und Begegnungsstätte – KURVE Wustrow* (Centre for Education and Networking in Non-violent Action – KURVE Wustrow)[4]. From the outset, CNA's goal was to participate actively in creating a civil society and promote awareness of non-violent conflict transformation in a region which has witnessed a high level of violence in inter-group conflict in recent years. Since 1997, CNA has run training sessions to foster this awareness, enabling people from many different parts of the country – including both entities of Bosnia-Herzegovina, as well as neighbour regions – to undergo practical training in non-violent conflict transformation. CNA also aims to support local NGOs' networking activities and advise them on fund-raising with international organisations.

During the training, participants are shown ways of taking non-violent action against injustice and inequality. A key task is to expose – and challenge – the entrenched power structures which pose an ongoing threat to human rights. The training further aims to confront the prejudices which are deep-rooted in all sections of society. CNA wants to help people overcome their fears and sense of powerlessness, boost their self-esteem, develop an awareness of their own and others' rights, and acquire the necessary skills to contribute actively to conflict transformation. The training sessions are also intended to be a forum for critical examination of the conflict's history and encourage an exchange of participants' very

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4 The organisation, whose full title is *Bildungs- und Begegnungsstätte für gewaltfreie Aktion, Kurve Wustrow e.V.*, is based in Wendland in the North of Germany. It has organised seminars and training on the theory and practice of non-violence, non-violent action, civil courage, action against racism, and mediation since 1980.

diverse viewpoints as a basis for reconciliation processes; this also includes identifying people's common interests which transcend the newly established borders.

CNA's main priority is to train multipliers, i.e. to equip local people with skills which they can use within their own social / work context and carry out their own training sessions. Most of the people who complete the training are involved in youth and community work, or are employed in schools or adult education. However, enquiries are also received from youth associations linked to the political parties, as well as from trade unions, student organisations and journalists. Over the last two years, CNA has broadened its scope to include cross-border training work with people from other areas of the former Yugoslavia, such as Kosovo, Croatia, Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia, Sandzak and Vojvodina. Structures for cooperation with groups from these regions, i.e. outside Bosnia-Herzegovina, have also been established.

CNA's objectives could be summed up as *multiplying* and *networking*. By networking, the team means supporting a loose network of individuals and groups who are interested in promoting concepts of non-violent conflict transformation and civil courage, and who are working to overcome existing ideological and political borders.

CNA's training sessions thus aim to enhance participants' social and conflict transformation skills, focussing on *awareness raising* and *empowerment*. They are designed to encourage people to accept responsibility for their own actions, play a constructive role in creating fair and democratic structures, and challenge traditional power relations. In a society where people have been deprived of their rights by a socialist totalitarian regime, where politicians have often shown themselves to be corrupt or warmongers, this is no easy task. At the same time, CNA wants to help overcome the widespread resignation and apathy evident throughout Bosnia-Herzegovina – and, indeed, in some sections of society in the other post-Yugoslav successor states as well – which are caused by the traumas of war, refugee experience and expulsion, as well as the loss of an ideological frame of reference.

A 1997 report summarises CNA's objectives as follows:

1) The aim is to enable people to use the skills learned at the training at their work in NGOs and their everyday environment and enable them to perceive the conflict situations differently. The idea is that taking responsibility for themselves and granting importance and power to themselves will lead to projection of the same to the groups they work with and the society they live in.

2) Opportunities of the trainings are to:

   - improve understanding of democratic rules;

   - raise capacities of participants for better understanding of political processes and the definition of their own space to act within it;

   - empower individuals to step out in protection of their own and the rights of their fellow citizens;

   - produce multiplying effect;

   - initiate small scale reconciliation process / inter ethnic dialogue;

   - initiate concrete cooperation across the border lines.

3) Multiplication:

   - enabling local people to work independently and share this knowledge in their organisation and the NGO sector is the envisioned goal,

   - identifying capable locals willing to receive further education as trainers in non-violent conflict transformation and including them in the training team. Supporting their independent work through advice and empowerment,

   - including qualified local trainers in the training team and/or recommending them elsewhere. Exchanging opinions and experiences on concepts. Identifying their needs in further education and eventually inviting them through KURVE to such seminars outside the country. Offering them a chance of gathering international experience and contacts (within our possibilities), through invitations to trainings outside the country as participants and/or trainers,

   - identifying capable locals who wish to join the CNA team, with long-term commitment and prospective,

4) Exploring possibilities of individual support and advice, as a long-term commitment, on various issues.

2.2   The CNA team and its supporters

The CNA team is committed to equality as the basis for its decision-making structures and responsibilities:

> *"[The] Non-hierarchical structure of CNA suggested joint responsibility for the work in all of its aspects. [...] Internal training was focussed onto sharing and developing skills that some of the staff have. This included training work itself, but also fund-raising, book-keeping and other issues related to work."*
> *(Annual Report 1999-2000:24)*

CNA also attaches importance to ensuring that it acts independently of international or national political interests and that most of the trainer team members – with the exception of occasional volunteers – come from the former Yugoslavia.

Until autumn 2000, the CNA team consisted of five trainers: two local workers from Sarajevo, two from Belgrade (Serbia) and one from Belfast (Northern Ireland):

- A young man of Serbian origin who was forced to leave his home city of Belgrade in 1987 following his refusal to perform compulsory military service, and lived for a time in Great Britain and Hamburg. In 1997, he set up the Sarajevo Centre on behalf of the *Centre for Education and Networking in Non-violent Action – KURVE Wustrow*. Having acquired a knowledge of training techniques at *KURVE Wustrow*, through preparatory work with the Balkan Peace Team and at the Conflict Management Training Course sponsored by the Land of North Rhine-Westphalia in Germany, he was ideally placed to introduce these techniques in Bosnia-Herzegovina as he was familiar with the country and people, speaks their language, and understands the local culture / codes of behaviour.

- Another staff member spent the war as a soldier in Sarajevo and was then involved in various peace initiatives. He worked as a trainer at CNA. In winter 1998-99, he also completed North Rhine-Westphalia's Conflict Management Training Course in Germany.

- Another young man of Bosnian origin who was a soldier in Sarajevo became involved in the *NGO Support and Information Centre* before starting his training with CNA in October 1999.

- An experienced peace activist from Northern Ireland who first worked with the Balkan Peace Team in Croatia joined CNA in 1998 / 1999.

- A young woman who led student protests at the University of Belgrade became one of the core member at CNA in 1999.

In mid 2000 one of the Bosnian men left CNA to work for the *International Confederation of Free Trade Unions* (ICFTU), where he is now involved in setting up and networking trade unions in Bosnia-Herzegovina. He admits that the offer from the ICFTU took him by surprise and that leaving CNA was a difficult decision as he had come to value the atmosphere and work within the CNA team. He feels that the work at the Centre has equipped him with many skills which will be invaluable in his new career.

In October 2000, after many years as a volunteer in the Balkans, the volunteer from Northern Ireland decided to return back and – as she says – "work on her own conflict". She now coordinates a VSO-sponsored programme for international exchange and intercultural learning in the Portadown area, where there is a great deal of tension between the Protestant and Catholic communities. She feels that the training and experience gained during her work with the CNA team are extremely helpful in her new role. She admits that she will greatly miss the non-directive, creative approach to work, and commitment to equality, which she encountered at CNA.

Following the departure of these team members, new staff members have been recruited to the Sarajevo office after participating in CNA training:

- A young woman from Pula, Croatia, graduate in education and sociology. In recent years, she has worked with young people in summer camps, and from 1997, she was a volunteer at the *Centre for Peace Studies*, Zagreb, focussing on the theory and practice of non-violence, social change, training, research and activism.

- A young man from Babusnica, Serbia, who trained as a programmer and now studies ecology at the University of Nis. He was a eco-team volunteer at the CAN and an activist in the anti-war movement in Nis. He was the representative of the local students' association and coordinated the *Ecologica Nyssana* ecology group. In 1999, he became chairperson of the Centre for Development of Civic Awareness and coordinator of two information projects in Babusnica.

- A young man from Doboj, Bosnia, who is graduate of the College of Electro-Technology in Subotica, where he lived as a refugee between 1992 and 1998. He also studied mathematics and information technology at the University of Sarajevo. From 1998, he lived in Zavidovici in the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, as it was not possible for him to return to Doboj which is now part of *Republika Srpska*. He worked as a coordinator at the local youth centre in Zavidovici (BiH) as part of the *Council of Europe's Local Embassy for Democracy* project. He also gained experience at CNA training sessions, at workshops run by the *United Methodist Committee of Relief* (UMCOR) in Gornji Vakuf, and in Sarajevo, Zenica and East Bosnia.

- A woman from Novi Sad, Yugoslavia, who is a graduate of the Faculty of Geography and Tourism in Belgrade and has experience of both adult education and youth work. Since 1997, she has worked as a coordinator at the *Centre for Achievement of Cultural and Humanitarian Goals* in Sombor, running summer camps for children and young people, and has also been active in the Multiple Sclerosis Association. She acquired training experience with various organisations, including the *Most* ("Bridge") – Group from Belgrade and CNA.

In recent years, CNA has operated as the Sarajevo branch / project office of the *Centre for Education and Networking in Non-violent Action – KURVE Wustrow*. CNA was set up as the external branch of *KURVE Wustrow* (a small German NGO run by a handful of staff) so that it could register as an 'international' NGO with the Bosnian authorities. *KURVE Wustrow* has also assisted the CNA team, as far as possible, with publicity, fund-raising, and the self-evaluation of the work. However, the two organisations have operated independently of each other and agreed that neither should speak, or make any political statements, on the other's behalf. This reflects the very different political realities and challenges facing the two offices.

CNA has also received regular conceptual and some limited financial support from a group in Hamburg, which mainly consists of private contacts and friends; the group also worked hard to collect donations to set up CNA.

However, the CNA team certainly did not see itself as the German organisation's executive office or dependent agency. On the contrary, it has successfully developed its own separate activities in all the various fields of work in order to identify cooperation partners for advice and funding not only within the Balkan region, but

also in Germany and at the international level. The wealth of contacts established by the Sarajevo team in recent years has created the financial and personnel framework necessary to carry out a wide range of training sessions and encounter projects.

CNA has received financial support from various international organisations (e.g. the OSCE *Democratisation Office* in Sarajevo, the *Know How Fund*, the *Westminster Foundation for Democracy*, and *the Norwegian Embassy* in Sarajevo) as well as from German institutions (including the *Friedrich Ebert Foundation*, the *Berghof Research Center for Constructive Conflict Management*, the Human Rights Section of the *Diakonisches Werk*, IPPNW, and most recently from the *German Federal Foreign Office*). The *Berghof Center* has also been involved in fund-raising for CNA over the past two years; the funding from the *Federal Foreign Office* was arranged through the *Berghof Center*.

3   CNA's Training Concept and Current Activities

3.1   Target groups

In its training work, CNA has targeted on youth groups. The reasons are outlined in its Annual Report (1999-2000:26):

> *"Opinion polls among youth in BiH, indicate that the vast majority of youth sees no future in this country and plans to leave the country and live somewhere else. Resignation and lack of motivation are wide spread among those that should represent the future of this society. Most of the people still feel as victims of the war and post war time, blame the others for that and expect help because they feel to deserve it."*

CNA felt that its task was to help overcome this apathy, hopelessness and feelings of no future. Furthermore, targeting this age group guarantees the most effective multiplication of CNA's training content, as young people are responsive to the learning process and can also play an educational / value-forming role among their peers.

Around 160 persons have been trained by CNA since 1997 (this figure relates to participants in 10-day workshops).[5] At least 500 persons have attended other shorter training sessions: around 40 of these introductory workshops have been conducted by CNA staff members.

Participants have included a wide range of people from: both entities of Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia, the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia, Montenegro, Kosovo) and Macedonia (and, in the case of a Balkan-wide training seminar in 2000, from other Southeast European states as well). So far, CNA has targeted potential multipliers, i.e. persons who are involved in information/ education work, primarily in NGOs, and who play an active role in creating a civil society. They have included youth centre coordinators, staff from social/ psychology institutes, community workers, schoolchildren's/ students' organisations, arts centres, women's groups, peace NGOs and NGO network coordinators. A few participants worked for international

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[5]   130 persons have attended the "Basic Trainings". 34 participated in the programme "Training for Trainers"; 9 jumped off during the programmme for either personal reasons or reasons connected with the political context (one young man had to join the army, others could not cross the border).

organisations such as the OSCE and *World Bank*. Some were qualified or trainee educationists or psychologists, and others worked in journalism. The majority worked with young people. Almost all of them were connected through employment or voluntary work with organisations which aimed to establish civil society at 'ground level' (LEDERACH 1994; 1997). The participants themselves were between 18 and 35 years of age, i.e. mainly young people.

CNA did not advertise the trainings on a large scale. Sometimes staff members made presentations about their approach in a local NGO context and asked the coordinators of these organisations to pass on the information to people who might fit into the target group; persons who were considered to be potential multipliers were invited directly by the staff. Everyone who was interested in participating was asked to fill out a questionnaire in order to give CNA the basic information about their background, motives and experience so far. Participants were selected carefully in order to avoid major gaps in knowledge and experience and to guarantee a creative working atmosphere.

3.2   Types of training

After a local needs analysis, conducted at the outset of its work in Bosnia-Herzegovina, CNA developed various types of regionally focused at actors from:

a)   the two entities of Bosnia-Herzegovina;

b)   different regions of the former Yugoslavia;

c)   the former Yugoslavia and other Southeast European states
     ("Balkan-wide training").

CNA also offers different levels of training:

- *"Basics in Non-violent Conflict Transformation",* and

- *"Training for Trainers"*, consisting of several elements
  (two 10-day training sessions and various "Follow-Ups").

In 1998 and 1999, CNA ran five 10- or 12 day "Basics in Non-violent Conflict Transformation" training sessions, as well as one 6-month "Training for Trainers"

programme, with participants and qualified trainers from Bosnia-Herzegovina, Kosovo, Croatia, Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia. In this way, CNA has been able to bring together many activists from the region. The training has equipped many peace and human rights activists, journalists and teachers with basic skills in non-violent conflict transformation, which has heightened their motivation to play an active role in developing a democratic, tolerant and civil society.

The first 6-month "Training for Trainers" programme was conducted in 1998-1999, the second in 2000. Some of the newly trained trainers were later invited to work as co-trainers; several have now joined the CNA team.

A two-year work cycle was devised in early 2000. It aims to teach the basics of non-violent conflict transformation to multipliers and also offer training for new trainers. It includes:

- three 10-day "Basic Training" programmes, which are intended to identify future trainers;

- one "Training for Trainers" programme, which follows on from the three "Basic Training" sessions. This programme is accompanied by ongoing, long-term support (i.e. advice and further training) for prospective trainers, who are integrated into CNA's training work through practical placements and co-training opportunities.

The programme was carried out in cooperation with trainers from the *Centre for Peace Studies* and the *Most-Group* which is connected with the *Centre for Anti-War Action* in Belgrade (Yugoslavia).

The specific goals of the "Training for Trainers" programme were:

- to enhance trainees' new conflict transformation skills;

- to empower participants to carry out conflict transformation training in teams;

- to initiate cooperation between participants as a basis for future training work.

The programme was devised by the entire CNA team and included three training seminars (10+10+3 days), as well as support meetings with all participants between the seminars. The "Training for Trainers programme" includes "Follow-Ups" and three-day final seminars, in which the participants work together to prepare a training strategy on their own.

The programme was partially funded by the OSCE and CARE International (Civil Society Department). Further funding was provided by the German Federal Foreign Office.

In April 2000, CNA also organised a training seminar on "*Basics in Non-violent Conflict Transformation*" conducted in English, with participants from Albania, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Greece, Croatia, Kosovo, Macedonia, Montenegro, Romania, Serbia and Turkey. This was the first "Balkan-wide Basic Training" event to involve participants from outside the former Yugoslavia, which is why the working language was English. The seminar aimed to assess the opportunities for training and networking on a Balkan-wide level. The programme content was the same as previous "Basic Training" sessions.

Each CNA-training event was led by a 3-4 person trainer team, and occasionally included co-trainers from linked organisations, such as the Centre for Peace Studies in Zagreb. As a rule, gender parity was maintained not only in the trainer team, but also among the participants.

Most of the participants in the "Training for Trainers" programme had already completed the CNA "Basic Training". They were now interested in acquiring the skills to carry out their own training sessions in their social / work context.

Another important activity of CNA is the regular *documentation on the training sessions* and providing a *Training Manual*. Documentation on all the training sessions is produced in the local language and made available to the participants after training. The documentation on the Balkan-wide seminar held in April 2000 is also available in English.[6]

The Training Manual[7] is based on its training experience and produced in cooperation with the *Berghof Research Center for Constructive Conflict Management.* The Manual was published in autumn 2000 in an edition of 800 copies in Bosnian/ Croatian/ Serbian. It contains advice on setting up training programmes, possible applications in NGO work, further training for teachers and youth leaders, and adult education.

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[6] Centar za nenasilnu akciju: Report: Plink! Training in Non-violent Conflict Transformation, Sarajevo 2000.

[7] Nenad Vukosavljevic / Centar za nenasilnu akciju: Nenasilje? Prirucnik za treninge iz nenasilne razrade konflikata – za rad sa odraslima, Sarajevo 2000.
The document is available on the Internet (http://www.soros.org.ba / ~cna).

The Manual is divided into four chapters: 1) *Non-violent Conflict Transformation and Peacebuilding; 2) Training Methods; 3) Workshops and Themes;* and *4) Practical Difficulties.*

Examples of exercises and workshops from the CNA training sessions are intended to illustrate "how an exercise may 'live', how a group may react on it. Comments, suggestions and notes on what may be difficulties while implementing an exercise, how CNA experienced some of the exercises, and what should be taken care about, are also included."[8]

The main obstacles – and resistance – sometimes encountered by CNA in its training work are listed in the final chapter, "for example: passivity, participants' lack of motivation, overtaking moderation by a participant, 'we'-speech, lack of mutual listening in a plenary, domination of individuals in a group, trainer's fear of too much responsibility, trainer's fear of mistakes, extreme emotional reactions, unarticulated needs, coordination of a training team, lack of support in a training team".[9] The Manual offers constructive approaches to these problems, drawing on the CNA team's real-life experiences.

It is intended to support the "Training for Trainers" programme and also serves as a tool for groups and institutions involved in education work. Due to the general lack of training material, there is a great deal of demand for the Manual, not only in Bosnia-Herzegovina, but also in neighbour regions.[10] As a result of the demand from Macedonia and Kosovo, in particular, CNA has made the translation of the Manual into Albanian and Macedonian a priority task for 2001. However, funding has still to be secured for this project. The Manual could help to speed up the introduction of separate training measures in this region.

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[8] Centar za nenasilnu akciju / CNA (2000): 3 _Month Report, Sept.-Nov 2000, Sarajevo. S.4

[9] Ibd.

[10] This was noted very recently by two CNA team members on an exploratory trip to Macedonia. Due to the lack of available material, educationists / trainers there have already started to translate CNA documentation into the local language.

3.3   Themes and methods of training

As mentioned above, CNA's training activities are intended to promote social and conflict management skills, focussing on *awareness raising* and *empowerment*. They aim to promote the following knowledge, skills and abilities: [11]

a)   theoretical knowledge of conflict transformation, historical development of concepts, and practical approaches to non-violence;

b)   empathy, tolerance of frustration, tolerance, ability for self-reflection, ability to assess one's own opportunities and limits, ability to work in a team, self-confidence, and the willingness to accept responsibility for one's own actions within a group or society;

c)   techniques for team work and work organisation, conflict analysis and communication.

The training content / modules include:

- Non-violent communication
- Team work and decision-making
- Violence / nonviolence
- Perception
- Understanding of conflict
- Dealing with differences
- Gender issues
- Dealing with prejudices
- Identity and 'national identity'
- Leadership

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[11] Goldstein (1994:531) distinguishes between a) knowledge, b) skills and c) abilities: *Knowledge* is the foundation upon which skills and abilities are built. Knowledge refers to an organised body of knowledge, usually of a factual or procedural nature which if applied makes adequate task performance possible (possession of knowledge does not ensure that it will be used). *Skill* refers to the capability to perform task operations with ease and precision (one not only knows what to do but also how to do it); the specification of a skill usually implies a performance standard required for effective job operations. *Ability* refers to cognitive capabilities necessary to perform a certain task. Abilities usually require the application of some knowledge base.

- Creative conflict transformation

- Power and action

CNA training sessions focus very strongly on participatory working methods. The team proceeds on the basis that in general, the participants should learn from each other and develop their skills together within the group. The trainer's role is therefore limited to providing inputs which facilitate this process.

Formal lectures and seminars therefore rarely feature in CNA's work. In general, the training takes place in small groups, or with the whole group, and focuses primarily on practical exercises: forum theatre methods, either with drama or group poses to simulate conflict situations, and role-play, planning and simulation games, with occasional written and oral group work. Reports by persons with practical work experience, and the use of a variety of media for visualisation purposes, are also key elements of the training process. The principle which also applies is that the trainers should learn as well.

The role-plays are intended to facilitate the learning experience within the group. Attitudes and behaviour are challenged and modified if necessary. The play simulates reality, which participants can act out and 'test' in a safe environment, without any impact on real events. The role-play is designed to help foster the ability to recognise one's own and others' behaviour, present and analyse conflicts within the group and from other areas of life, and to raise awareness of the social and political context of the problems experienced.

The planning, decision-making and simulation games address conflicts and problems through play and, through a sharing of roles, identify possible solutions and illustrate the complexity of decisions and alternatives. As with role-play, the participants learn from their conflict with others, how processes of social and political interaction operate; they also identify the information they need for action and the conditions which facilitate or impede solutions.

3.4 Self-reflection and a critical view from outside as a prerequisite for effective NGO work

From the outset, CNA's work has been accompanied by a process of self-reflection. Feedback sessions with the participants have regularly taken place at the end of the training sessions. However, after three years of practical work, the team recognised that there was a need for a more far-reaching and systematic evaluation of its experiences. The CNA staff therefore agreed to undertake a (self-)evaluation of their work to date, in order to draw conclusions about the direction to be taken in future training work.

Part of the evaluation was undertaken by the team itself. This included drafting and sending out questionnaires to people who had completed training. However, it also involved intensive discussions about organisational development.

One issue under discussion for about a year is how the CNA's transformation from a German NGO's project office to a local Bosnian NGO with a regional approach can be achieved. The evaluation process is also intended to clarify the advantages and disadvantages of this move in terms of project development, and establish how it could be completed as smoothly as possible in all its organisational, team-related and legal aspects. This raises issues such as the division of work within the team, and the need to embed the organisation in the social / political environment.

CNA has received support from the *Berghof Research Center* in different forms: the Center took on the *facilitation* of the teams' discussion about the development as an organisation and gave recommendations for the drafting of the participants' questionnaire. Moreover, the team agreed that – beneath self-evaluation – there is a need for further external evaluation of the training work (a "critical view from outside") in order to identify possible effects or deficits. This involves carrying out interviews with selected participants, and CNA asked the *Berghof Research Center* for further support in this area.

4 Evaluation and Results

A number of surveys carried out by the CNA teams (based on written questionnaires and feedback events directly after the training) revealed that out of the total number of graduates of the training programmes, around 30 are still active as multipliers in the sense that they regularly apply the practical approaches and methods learned during training, and impart the training content by training other persons. Some do so in contexts which result from contacts made at the training sessions. It has to be stated that in an international comparison with similar programmes, this is an extraordinarily high result.

In addition to this, in order to support the self-evaluation process, the Berghof Research Center carried out interviews with graduates of the training programmes. The purpose was not only to gain insights into the training validity, but also to acquire some indication of transfer validity.[12] To ensure that the findings are objective, this step in the evaluation process had to be carried out by an independent person or academic institution – at the specific request of the CNA team. (Additionally, there were also semi-structured interviews with CNA staff in order to get a clear picture of motives, purposes and labour division within the team).

In summer and autumn 2000, structured interviews were therefore carried out with a total of 14 participants: nine were from Bosnia-Herzegovina (seven lived in the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, two in the *Republika Srpska*), one participant came from Macedonia, another from Croatia, and three came from Belgrade. They had participated in different types of training, i.e. both the "Basic Training", the "Training for Trainers" programme, and the Balkan-wide seminar.

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[12] Goldstein (1994) distinguishes between "training validity", defined as learning outcomes resulting from training, and "transfer validity" (application or transmission of what has been learned in training within the graduates' everyday life and work contexts). Whereas "training validity" can be assessed on the basis of a questionnaire at the end of the training event, "transfer validity" can only be determined at some future time (i.e. several months after training).

Each participant was asked:

- How did you find out about CNA's training programme, and how did you come into contact with CNA?

- What were your expectations of the training event? Were these expectations met?

- What is your assessment of the trainers' approach?

- What is your assessment of the training methods used?

- How have you benefited from the training? What have you learned, and has it changed your life in any way?

- To what extent do you apply what you learned at the training session in your own life / work context? Do you pass your knowledge on to other people?

- To what extent has your participation in the training event fostered or facilitated cross-border cooperation partnerships?

- What is your assessment of CNA as an organisation? What are your expectations of the CNA team in future?

The most important results are presented in the following sections.[13] They were referred back to the team during extensive evaluation sessions, and will play a key role in shaping CNA's future work. However, they also contain important findings about the wider opportunities to support peace constituencies through training work in post-war regions.

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[13] This evaluation does not claim to be representative. The respondents were selected from a broad cross-section of participants in terms of gender balance and origin. As in the survey, an above-average number of graduates came from the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and from Serbia; most participants – like the majority of respondents – work in peace and human rights NGOs, youth work and culture, in youth centres or education institutions. However, only limited conclusions can be drawn with regard to transfer validity. For valid statements on this issue, it would be necessary to survey not only the participants themselves, but also persons from their life / work context, to establish whether their attitudes, behaviour and working methods have changed since the training. Due to lack of time and financial resources, it was impossible to carry out such a comprehensive evaluation, and there are currently no plans to do so.

4.1 How did the participants find out about the training offered by CNA? What expectations did they have? Were these expectations fulfilled?

The team has never advertised its training programmes; as a rule, it has responded to enquiries from institutions / organisations which heard about CNA from other sources; as one staff member put it: "*The training activities promote themselves through practice*".

Some of the respondents heard about the training programmes from a member of the CNA team whom they knew personally; others were recommended to participate in CNA training by other members of their organisation (the majority of respondents work in peace or human rights NGOs, youth work, the arts, in youth centres or education institutions). Some were invited to participate by CNA directly, or had heard CNA members speak about the training programmes at other events.

Participants with specific expectations of the training found that these expectations were met. Some had rather vague expectations, or none at all. (Three of them had been sent on the programme by their organisation as a form of staff training. They had no idea what to expect.) One person started the training with a mixture of curiosity and prejudice.[14] All the respondents said that they had been very pleasantly surprised. None of the respondents claimed that they had been unpleasantly surprised.

Other respondents had different expectations and motives for participating in the training sessions. Some hoped that the training would equip them with techniques/methods for teamwork, moderation, facilitation or communication which they needed in their work.[15] Two persons stated that they had joined the programme because of their interest in spirituality.

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[14] "I joined the seminar with negative prejudices. I thought, now the war is over and a bunch of foreigners turn up and tell us that we should all love each other. But that was just one side of it. The other side was that I said to myself, come on, let's see what it's about."

[15] My main motive for joining the training programme was to learn more about "non-violent communication". It involves methods and skills which I believe are necessary in my job. The work within my organisation requires me to set up contacts with various groups. I have to chair meetings, and it is important to know how one should facilitate or moderate this. All the work on NGO support requires these skills. In essence, what my organisation does is to bring different ethnic groups together, and to promote reconciliation as far as possible. And this has been a very sensitive process. For that reason, an awareness of non-violent conflict transformation is really important for me personally, but also for my work.

13 out of 14 participants stated that their main motive for participating in a CNA training event was to meet and set up contacts with people from other parts of Bosnia-Herzegovina or the former Yugoslavia. One person from Bosnia-Herzegovina admitted: "*I was pleased to have the chance to get to know people from other states in the Balkan region, after the war. It was the first time in my life that I had an opportunity to meet people from very different countries.*" Another participant from Croatia said that she had many transnational contacts before attending the training event, but they tended to be "*with people in other parts of the world, and not with people from other regions of the former Yugoslavia*".

4.1.1 How do participants evaluate the trainers' approach?

The respondents generally viewed the trainers' approach very positively. One graduate said that he had enjoyed the (Balkan-wide) training seminar,

> "*primarily because I thought the trainers [...] were excellent. They carried out their task [...] to a remarkable standard [...] the participants who had attended other training sessions in the past also said that compared with other seminars, they were surprised how professional and competent this team was.*"

Another praised

> "*the relationship they built up with the group. The trainers didn't stand apart, but were an integral part of the group. They were with us all the time. In the evening, you could carry on discussing with them what you had learned during the day, and if anything wasn't clear, you could go over it again. And at the workshops and lectures, everything was informal, so you could always ask questions. The trainers were there for the group the whole time.*"

In general, the "Basic training" and the "Training for Trainers" were evaluated along similar lines: "The atmosphere was good, and so was the way the trainers worked."

The fact that the trainers worked together and with the group as equal members of a team and no one claimed a leadership role was a new experience for some people. The participatory approach was valued enormously. In addition to the overall organisation of the training sessions, the selection and composition of the participants' group by CNA was also viewed very positively.

Some graduates believed that the good atmosphere was due to the positive working relations between the trainers ("They have a very good relationship",

"Perhaps the fact that they all apply the methods within their own lives and relationships plays a part. I think this is why they all get on so well together.")

Others felt that the trainers were very familiar with the problems in the region, while the presence of an international volunteer on the trainer team was welcomed: they felt that "someone who is completely neutral in their view of this whole Balkan situation" is able to "act as a corrective", "look at things more objectively", and contribute a great many ideas and associations.

4.1.2 How do participants evaluate the training methods and content?

Most of the respondents felt that the choice of themes was useful, although their comments varied depending on the amount of time spent on their particular interests. Special emphasis was placed – by male and female respondents alike – on the importance of gender issues as a theme, apparently because it was new to most of the participants. Overall, there was a general feeling that more time could have been spent on some of the individual themes[16], but when graduates were asked about the length of the training, almost all of them agreed that there was a good balance between the time available and the themes discussed. They felt that there had been enough time and space to allow everyone to make a contribution whenever they wanted:

> "Overall, there was a good balance of themes. The amount of information provided and the length of time spent on the issues was good, too. This was also due to the trainers; they were always in contact with the group, so they could always sense how the group was coping, and cut down or extend the session as necessary. They handled the group and managed the time very well."

Another respondent stressed that not only had there been a good choice of themes;

> "above all, they were right for the people who have lived through this time of war. All the themes were important, and everyone felt a need to talk about everything."

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[16] One participant would have liked to discuss "gender-issues" in more detail; another wanted to spend more time on 'leadership'.

Not only much of the content, but also the group-centred approach and working methods were new to many of the participants, especially on the "Basic Training" programmes:

> *"It was a completely new experience. I think it was the trainers' skills and sensitivity in presenting the issues and then leading the group which encouraged the participants to open up so much. There were many things I had never really thought about, and I was suddenly guided towards them in a way which clarified a lot of issues for me. They were quite simple everyday situations."*

The *methods used by the trainers* – teamwork, exercises and role-play – were praised in glowing terms by some participants: "The way we worked, the learning through play – I thought it was fantastic. It released an enormous amount of energy." Some exercises "brought out feelings which I had never experienced in my life before. That's the good thing about these training programmes: they really do bring out something which is part of the person's experience, but which they had previously been unaware of". Another observed: "These methods are also one way – the way – to gain new understanding."

The respondents also appreciated the fact that there was "*scope to deal with controversial issues*", and the way this was handled. There were tensions between the participants from Croatia, Yugoslavia and Bosnia

> *"in that they had completely different views of how they had experienced the war, and that the war was experienced differently in every country. They also had very different experiences of violence. Some people had experienced collective violence, while others had just endured personal violence committed against their person. This caused conflict […]. Talking about these themes revived memories of events from the war. This gave rise to moments of insecurity, when people felt very uncomfortable. But it also helped people to recognise that in reality, they have all endured bad experiences in their lives."*

Several graduates felt that the training content and methods were successful in another sense as well. They highlighted the fact that the atmosphere was not burdened by nationality issues:

> *"When I think of my own environment, I realise that nationality is a very stressful issue. It's something that everyone seems to worry about. But in this space, over the 10 days, national differences have been irrelevant. Any national differences which emerged were dealt with on the same level as gender differences or other social factors. They were not something separate or on a different level; national differences were treated in the same way as all the other differences."*

When asked about methods which particularly impressed them, most participants repeatedly mentioned the exercises on *team work* and *non-violent communication*, especially 'I-speech' and 'active listening' as "a good method to avoid conflicts between people" – techniques which they constantly drew on in their daily lives.

With one exception[17], the graduates all felt that the games and exercises had been explained well. Some participants who had previously attended trainings run by other organisations said that compared with these seminars, CNA's training focussed far more strongly on the (group) process than on results.[18]

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[17] During a "Basic Training" session, one participant felt that a trainer had not explained the purpose of two exercises properly and thus irritated the group. It was claimed that when the group resisted and asked questions, the trainer argued that the exercises could not be explained in more detail due to pressure of time.

[18] "I had some prior knowledge as I had attended a two-day training course on 'non-violent communication'. However, the CNA training looked at the issues in more detail due to its length (10 days) and intensity. This allowed situations to be set up and participants' experiences to be included. It was more process-oriented: I realised that it is more important to focus on the process than the outcome."

4.2   Training validity:

How have the participants benefited from the training?

What did they learn, and what impact has it had on their lives?

All the respondents said that they had learned a great deal from the training.

* *"The training enhanced my understanding of the social context in which I move."*

* *"The training helped the group participants recognise that in reality, they have all had bad experiences in their lives."*

* *"We found out that there are conflicts, that we have different opinions – and can have different opinions, and this is normal. And we also discovered which positions we can support, and which we cannot."*

* *"I learnt to be far more attentive than in previous group activities, and to reflect this in my perceptions and behaviour."*

* *"The seminar showed me that you can achieve a great deal, and avert negative influences, through dialogue. And it was helpful to see that we can organise our lives better."*

* *"I learned a great deal about myself. For example, I always thought I had no prejudices. I thought it was enough to want to have no prejudices. But then I experienced myself as a person who does have prejudices after all. And this seminar helped me broaden my horizons. It showed me that I can choose to deal with people in a different way, that I can talk to them, that I have different options regarding my behaviour in certain situations, and that I can break out of my usual patterns of behaviour."*

* *"I learned a great deal about tolerance, that you really have to be very tolerant when dealing with other people in a discussion, but also that you can demand tolerance from others in a discussion, and that tolerance must be mutual."*

* *"I learned that we are also responsible for the conflicts, the situation, in which we find ourselves."*

* *"I feel as if I have expanded, and that I give far more thought to communication, violence, nonviolence. And I have discovered that there are many aspects of myself that I have to work on. I learned a great deal about my own strengths and weaknesses, opportunities and limits."*

* *"This seminar helped me to learn more about myself and boosted my self-esteem. I now give more thought to the way I deal with people, and think through my approach to them more often."*

* *"I learned that it is very important to voice my own opinion, and that I have to express it to the others, but that it is important to listen to the other person's viewpoint, too. The most important lesson I learned from the seminar was that I have kept my opinions to myself too often. This seminar gave me the courage to*

express my views, even if they are different from other people's, and contribute my ideas, even if people don't think they are any good."

- *"I have noticed that in my relations with friends or family, I have started to show far more initiative, put forward my own ideas, and even make decisions. This could be a direct result of the training."*

- *"I have seen that violence is essentially very complex [...] The differences between individuals can be conflict-forming mechanisms [...] But the solutions lie in these differences, too. By looking at and dealing with these differences in another way, we can find solutions to the conflicts. We simply have to use these differences properly so that they help to promote a constructive approach to living together."*

Thus, the learning outcomes include greater self-esteem and confidence, better communication, empathy and conflict management skills, but also the ability to recognise and analyse conflicts. (To what extent these learning outcomes are reflected in respondents' real changes of behaviour is beyond the scope of this evaluation, which focuses solely on a subjective assessment of the personal benefits to the training graduates.)

The majority of respondents also said that the training had had a significant impact on their lives. Their evaluations vary and range from:

- *"The [basic) training in Kiseljak completely changed my life. I realised that I had previously lived in a kind of blockade. You live in your own environment, you don't meet anyone from other parts of Yugoslavia. And then after ten years you meet them again. And suddenly you turn to each other [...] and start to work together perfectly as a team. This has resulted in incredibly close friendships. These are things which suddenly change your life. If you live in this kind of blockade, you have no idea what is happening on the other side. And I don't just mean the war or the information blockade. I felt as if invisible barriers had been put up, and you had absolutely no contact with the rest of the world. But then you suddenly start working with these people. And you get on really well and work well together, as if you had been working together for years."*

- *"The training changed my life. In the small town where I live, I have very few opportunities for the kind of encounters I experienced at the seminar."*

- *"There has been a change in my daily life. Suddenly, very different issues have become important, and my perspective has changed. Suddenly, you discover that you can solve issues in different ways – not by screaming and yelling, but in a peaceful way. I feel as if someone has taken my soul, washed it and put it back inside me again".*

- *"The training has had a major influence on me, and I have changed a great deal in myself. The way we thought about and discussed – and argued about – nonviolence was a completely new experience for me. I learned a great deal – for example, to look at things differently, whereas in the past I would have thought that they were simply the cause of war or conflict, and can't be changed [...]. But also that the solution to the conflict may lie in these causes."*

- *"I think I gained a great deal from the training, and that it has empowered me in some ways. This applies primarily to the way I think about issues, but my approach to other people, my communication with others, has also changed for the better."*

- *"The seminar helped me to deal with the war."*

- *"The seminar gave me the strength to say what I think and to be what I am."*

- *"It would perhaps be an exaggeration to say that the training has changed my life. But it has had an impact on my life and the way I deal with other people and cope with situations. It showed me that you don't have to take everything too seriously; you can wait and deal with things in a more relaxed way, and see how things develop. I learned that I should not react over-hastily, and should reflect on things more."*

- *"What I learned in the training merely confirmed what I was doing before. But I became far more aware of it, and was able to look at things from a different perspective."*

4.3   Transfer validity:

Do the participants apply what they have learned to their own context, and do they pass it on to others ('multiplying effects')?

The majority of respondents said that they used their newly acquired knowledge, skills and abilities in their life / work context – with family and friends,

> *"I apply the methods in my daily life. The seminar taught me that you can approach problems in a different way. Even before, if my friends had an argument, I would always try to intervene and persuade them to listen to each other and put themselves in the other person's place. But now, since the seminar, I realise that there are techniques to deal with these situations, such as 'I-speech'".*

and in their professional / political activities,

- *"What I learned from CNA and the Centre for Peace Studies in Zagreb is a kind of basic material, and I still apply the methods today. I have incorporated all of it into the work within my organisation, and use it in my contacts with other project partners as well."*

- *"CNA's methods have been very helpful in my psycho-social work. They give you a lot of tips on how to deal with resistance from others, by getting people to come and open up."*

- *"I work with adolescents between 15 and 18, which is a difficult age group. The training has helped me to get closer to them as a friend, not as a teacher who lays*

down the law. And by encouraging a sense of group identity, you can help them to learn."

- *"I use the methods every day. In the ecology project, I worked with children from Republika Srpska, and with Bosniaks and Croats. So it was important to maintain a balance and make sure that they didn't start arguing straight away and coming back to the same issues again and again. Of course, you can't simply erase all that's happened, the whole history, from their minds. But you need to give them a sense that somehow, they can come together again. And the pictures from the seminar are very helpful here. I haven't said to myself, right, now I'll use 'I-speech'. But there are many situations when these exercises come back to me and then I try to copy them and moderate / facilitate. If I see that they are not listening to each other, I use the 'active listening' method. This has become as much a part of me as my hands and arms, it just flows out of you [...] I haven't encountered any problems or resistance when using these methods. And the "active listening" method has really helped me in my work too, because you can follow what is happening in the group very closely and maintain control of the situation."*

- *"I can directly apply these exercises and play activities, when you evaluate what has happened within the group process at the end, in my work with children".*

  "In my professional life, too, I work with children and young people at school. I can use what I learned in the training event in my work as well."

However, not all the teachers have found this quite so straightforward. One trainee teacher concluded:

> *"I can't directly transfer the exercises and games, or the themes addressed in the seminar, to my work with the children at school. But they have helped me to become freer in my approach to the children and improve communication with them and I think that my opportunity is to free the children for communication with other people [...] encourage them to participate, and show them how important team work and cooperation are. And it is important to make clear to the children that everyone is equal, regardless of intellect or abilities. In training, the trainer was part of the group and everyone worked together, and this is something which I can use in teaching as well. It is important to show that the teacher values the children's opinions, that she / he incorporates the children's ideas, and that the roles can change – not only do the children learn from the teacher, the teacher learns from the pupils as well."*

Another respondent said that the content and methods learned in training were central to his work in a Bosnian youth centre, but he had encountered unexpected difficulties when he tried to transfer them to his own context:

> *"After the training, we tried to do something with it in our youth centre. We organised a series of debates and tried to incorporate themes from the training and apply some of the methods. We started with the theme of 'communication' and based our approach on the training workshop [...] We introduced 'I-speech' as well, and tried to apply it in the same way as the training. We also dealt with the issues of gender roles and team building. I*

*must admit that I was not as successful as the CNA team, but I do think it had
an impact and that we were able to pass on to others at least some of what we
had learned [...] It was probably because I was doing this for the first time, and
was working alone. And at a training session lasting 10 days, like the CNA
event, you can create a different atmosphere than I could. At CNA, the group
was isolated and had the peace and quiet to concentrate fully on the task in
hand. We were together all day. You can't achieve as much with a two-hour
debate once a month. It is much more difficult to create the same atmosphere
[...] But I think we achieved some very positive results. We made the young
people think about certain themes. We noticed that afterwards, they started
to change their attitudes and behaviour."*

Other participants with more experience of training work said that they incorporated
the useful elements of CNA's training into their own work and combined them with
material from other training sessions:

*"My colleagues and I have drawn on the methods promoted by CNA, the
Centre for Peace Studies in Zagreb, and ICA [an American organisation which
focuses on how people can be motivated within a group process] and
developed our own 'model' of interactive methodologies. We felt we had to
devise a workable mix for ourselves. We have our own trainer team, and we
don't see ourselves as an organisation whose mission is to promote non-
violent communication and non-violent action. CNA's work focuses on
individuals, whereas our organisation works with NGOs. For this reason, we
can't adopt CNA's concepts wholesale. We select particular elements and
adapt them for use in our own work, in line with our training needs. And in
doing so, our main priority is to promote awareness of management,
democracy, civil society, human rights, and refugee return. Refugee return is
something we are working on very intensively at present."*

All but one of the respondents said that they had studied the *training
documentation* in great detail. Some of them had also referred to it for guidance
when carrying out various exercises or preparing their own workshops. Everyone
found it "useful" and "helpful". Most were very enthusiastic:

- *"We found CNA's training documentation helpful. We show it to everyone,
  because we feel that the graphics and the concept as a whole are extremely good.
  It is ideally structured and [...] includes everything that was covered at the
  seminar. It is a good example which everyone can follow."*

- *"The documentation is very helpful in every respect. The ideas put forward by all
  20 participants are included and set in context. And it is very good that everything
  is so well documented."*

- *"The documentation also helped me to put myself into the role of leader of this
  kind of discussion [...] When I read it through again afterwards, I could recreate the
  atmosphere during the training and prepare myself mentally for what I did at the
  Centre."*

- *"The training documentation is very useful. It is put together beautifully. It gives an overview of all the methods and techniques, and also covers evaluation methods."*

Most of the respondents felt that the documentation was perfect in its current form. A few people suggested possible improvements, although they felt that the documentation was already very good:

- *"Perhaps it could describe the purpose of the individual workshops in more detail and explain what they are supposed to achieve. And a more detailed description of how this kind of workshop runs would also be helpful."*

- *"The documentation could include more advice and tips on how a trainer should behave in certain situations."*

Some of the "Basic Training" graduates were interested, in principle, in going on to qualify as trainers. Several had already decided to join the "Training for Trainers" programme, although they had understandable concerns, mainly about the financial/ career implications of this move. This applied particularly to people who are currently in a transitional phase between education and employment and therefore have no regular source of income. Several persons said that they could only commit themselves fully to training work if they were able to earn their living from it. "My main priority now is to finish my studies and improve my foreign languages. I would only train as a trainer if there were a prospect of paid training work." One person said that she would like to qualify as a trainer, but that "training as a trainer and working for CNA for no pay would only [...] be a possibility if I had a secure income from paid work elsewhere.")

Another respondent said: "I've decided to do the training as a trainer. But I don't know if I should take further qualifications in this field, or whether I want to work as a trainer … I just don't know, that's my dilemma." She valued CNA's work very highly, and thought it was important to continue to address these fundamental problems, but concluded:

> *"CNA has a different approach to the problems from mine. I feel there's something lacking. I would like to include other themes in addition to those selected by CNA. Of course, what CNA is working for is what I am working for, too, but my way is different. I think they work in a very intellectual way, somehow. And that is not enough for me. I would like to bring in more spiritual elements and be able to set it in the context of my faith in God."*

Graduates of the "Training for Trainers" programme, on the other hand, all expressed great interest in continuing to work with the CNA team, either as co-trainers or in joint workshops.

4.4 Has the CNA training created 'networking effects'?

All the respondents stressed that they had made new friends as a result of the training programme. Some of them kept in contact with a large part of the group by telephone or e-mail.

* *"There are still contacts with some of the participants, on a friendship level. A lot of the participants in the seminars were NGO activists, so information and invitations to seminars are regularly circulated to everyone. This takes place by phone, or we meet up sometimes. I sometimes meet up with some of the people from Bihac and Serbia. I've kept in close contact with a few people, but I've never heard from some of the others at all. But I know that if I rang them or drove up to see them, the contact would be revived."*

* *"There are people who I still work with today. I'm in contact with everyone except for two people who don't have e-mail."*

* *"I am still in contact with about eight people from the basic training programme. They all work in different fields. They are friendly contacts, and we have had some ideas for joint projects. But we haven't taken it any further due to lack of time."*

However, the graduates of the "Basic Training" sessions and the Balkan-wide seminar found that these initially regular contacts gradually decreased over time, or simply fizzled out:

> *"After the Balkan-wide seminar, CNA distributed the address list and someone set up a mailing list. We used it to stay in regular contact at first, but that tailed off after a while. This is probably because most of them are students and have other commitments, so they don't have a lot of time. The participants were all students or had already graduated [most of them were law students or solicitors). There was only one who had not been to university. Most of them worked in NGO projects dealing with social problems."*

Some graduates of the "Training for Trainers" programme have made close friendships and think that they might develop joint projects – e.g. networking on women's issues – in future, or work together as trainers. Several were able to report on joint projects already in progress:

Participants in the "Training for Trainers" programme indicated that good networking was taking place through ongoing work with the CNA team and graduates from other training programmes. Graduates from this programme had also cooperated with members of the *Schüler Helfen Leben* NGO to organise a workcamp with a German students' group. Two men who participated in a CNA "Basic Training" event (one of them also participated in the "Training for Trainers" programme), from Pancevo (FRY) and Banja Luka (BiH) in cooperation with *Women in Black*, developed a project which deals with conscientious objection and nonviolence. It includes informing the public about alternative (civil) service, affirmation of the idea of conscientious objection, workshops with young people on conscientious objection and nonviolence. They set up a working group to campaign for the rights of conscientious objectors and exchange information about the legal situation in their countries. A similar initiative was set up by two participants of the "Basic Trainings" from Belgrade.

Two persons from Belgrade, graduates of the "Training for Trainers" programme, with a few other interested individuals, founded the organisation *Hajde da ...* . Their first initiative was a project with children in shelters during the war in Yugoslavia. Now they work in one of the biggest refugee camps in Yugoslavia, in Kraljevo, where refugees from Kosovo are settled. Two women from Macedonia founded an organisation which will carry out inter-ethnic work with schoolchildren in 'divided' secondary schools.

Some more examples of cross-border initiatives have been summarized by the CNA-team:

- Graduates of the second CNA "Training for Trainers" programme and one participant from the first programme developed and implemented a series of workshops on non-violent communication and teamwork for youth centres in Bosnia. These events were organised by UMCOR.

- Two women, from Croatia and Yugoslavia, organised and implemented a training seminar in Vojvodina for the activists of the organisation where one of them is active.

- Two graduates of the CNA "Training for Trainers" programme, together with two trainers from the Centre for Peace Studies in Zagreb, developed and implemented training for teachers in BiH, which was organised by *Pax Christi* in Banja Luka.

- A woman from Gorazde who was active in a women's group, *Anima*, organised a gathering of young women from Gorazde and Visegrad, two neighbouring towns

which are in different entities with almost no communication between them. A series of weekend workshops on non-violent conflict transformation was held. [19]

Respondents who had undertaken "Basic Training" were not aware of any ongoing cooperation projects beyond this level. The following statements are typical:

"Unfortunately, not all the contacts were maintained with everyone in the group. With some of them, the link broke off immediately. With others, there are intensive contacts and ideas for possible projects. But there are no firm plans as yet. This may be because we live on different sides of the border. The contacts which still exist are between people who work in similar fields, but personal sympathies undoubtedly play a part as well".

One person said that they had cooperated on an informal basis with others working in the same field:

"I can't say that we are likely to work on joint projects. But I have included people in the project that I coordinate. It's an eco-exhibition featuring work by children. I invited other people who work with children to take part, and they sent me work by children from Serbia and from the Serb part of Sarajevo so that I could include them into the exhibition. At the training event, there were three people from organisations which worked with children. And whenever I find out that one of them is planning some kind of activity, I put them in touch with people in my organisation [...]"

Most of the respondents were sorry that no more far-reaching joint projects had taken place, and attributed this to a "lack of time". One person also mentioned the political context as a contributing factor:

„Someone came up with the idea that the participants themselves should arrange a training event on non-violent conflict transformation. But this didn't happen because of the NATO air strikes and the war in Kosovo / Yugoslavia. The borders were closed and there was no longer any freedom of movement. In any case, the people in Yugoslavia had more important things to think about."

However, not everyone was interested in more far-reaching joint projects. One respondent pointed out: "In terms of my work with kids in children's homes, I don't think that Yugoslavia-wide networking would be useful, and anyway it would be too problematic [...]." And another participant said: "[...] my needs are really centred on Bosnia and Herzegovina. There is really no need to go any further. I already have

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[19] The workshops were held in Gorazde, and the first was attended by mothers of the young women from Visegrad who were invited to see where their children were supposed to come and what the project was about. So they participated in the first workshop, and as they were delighted with the idea and the process, they promised that they would encourage their children to participate in all of the planned workshops.

enough to do here. If you know that there is enough work for years to come, you don't see any need to get involved in other activities."

Some respondents' expectations had focussed more on networking for the purposes of information exchange:

> "[...] when I came home from the workshop, I had a lot of information about other training sessions. I wish that everyone would make use of this opportunity in the future, and tell each other about training workshops and invite them to attend."

However, the fundamental importance of networking was explained by a graduate who himself works in NGO networking:

> "Perhaps we should give some thought to possible methods or principles of NGO networking. NGOs set up networks, just as people do, if they want to work on a project together. The term "networking" should mean that NGOs can network quite freely and develop something together. It shouldn't be limited quite so strictly to NGOs who practise non-violent communication or concentrate on a particular issue; it should be interdisciplinary. As Erich Fromm said, no one exists for himself alone, and this applies to NGOs as well. NGOs can only achieve results through contacts and joint work."

This person also highlighted the difficulty of measuring the results of networking (which is often required by donors and funding agencies):

> "You can't quantify it in that way. After all, you don't have any real proof that a contact has been established and communication is taking place [...] Sometimes there are no tangible results. But the important thing is that communication and exchange of information have started up between individuals and NGOs."

4.5 How is CNA perceived as an organisation, and what do participants expect from CNA in future?

Almost all the respondents said that they expected CNA to give them ongoing support and advice about their own projects, e.g. how to set up projects for children in children's homes, prepare funding applications, or develop new training methodologies. One person who is employed in the secretariat of a NGO network in Bosnia-Herzegovina emphasised that her office is always available as an advisory agency for CNA, and that it would recommend CNA's training to local NGOs and international organisations.

Most of the graduates felt that CNA should continue its work as before and focus especially on training for people from different parts of the former Yugoslavia. One person stated explicitly that CNA's work should concentrate primarily on Bosnia-Herzegovina, where this type of educational work is not very widespread: every effort should be made to establish it in schools. In mononational towns and cities, in particular, this person sees still resistance on the part of the authorities "to the idea of bringing together people from different regions" as well as to participatory learning methods and measures which aimed at involving schoolchildren. The respondents felt that much more time and effort were required until "these methods become established and are part of normal practice".

Some graduates made specific recommendations regarding the basic concept and development of the training programmes:

> *"Overall, I felt that the training should have lasted even longer. Perhaps you could occasionally offer longer training programmes in the vacations, when people can take leave. If you want to include employed people as well, you'd have to offer shorter seminars too. For example, in my present post, I would only be able to take part in training over a long weekend. In that case, you might have to limit it to a single theme."*

> *"It's very important to work with people on an ongoing basis and also offer 'Follow-Ups' to the 'Basic Training' sessions."*

> *"CNA should review its target groups. After all, at present, the people who come to the training sessions are already interested in nonviolence. The others – who might have doubts, or are prepared to use violence – are left out. It's important to think how these people could be involved too."*

However, some respondents said that overall, the work should continue to focus on the current target group:

> *"CNA is making enormous efforts which are incredibly important for the country as a whole. They are teaching young people to behave nicely. You can call it non-violent communication if you want, but that's what it is to me. And I think it is really important that someone is concentrating on young people."*

> *"Training organisations like CNA are needed in Bosnia-Herzegovina and in the other areas as well. They are particularly important for young people. CNA should concentrate on people under 40. I don't think there is any real possibility of changing anything in the older generation."*

> *"CNA should continue to focus on the target group "youth" in future. I know from my own experience, and my own work, that there is really no point in concentrating on older people, they are simply not willing to change. They always have baggage left over from the old regime. They can't change; [they cling to] their old ways."*

All the graduates liked the composition of the CNA team, most of whom come from the former Yugoslavia, and felt that this played a key role in ensuring that CNA's work gained acceptance. At the same time, almost all the respondents said that CNA should definitely involve some foreign volunteers in its future training work, too:

> *"People who come from outside are a breath of fresh air; they contribute new ideas and offer a different perspective, drawn from their own traditions and environment. Sometimes this is useful to gain a better understanding of the situation here, and if it's integrated properly, they can tell us a great deal that is new."*

> *"Basically, I think it is very good to have volunteers from other countries involved as well. First of all, you can exchange experiences [...] and then you compare, and you learn about a different mentality, and you realise that different people view the situation in different ways and see it through different eyes. This is a good example for us in order to understand that the people around us are not all the same."*

> *"The people from outside can observe and evaluate better because they are entirely neutral."*

There was a feeling that in other respects, too, volunteers can offer a great deal of support: "with fundraising, with self-reflection, [they can] prepare reports, and help to find solutions to the problems". However, as one Bosnian person pointed out," problems might arise, too, as foreign volunteers often stay for a far shorter time than they are needed."

Most of the respondents said that they regarded CNA as a local organisation. Two reasons were given: a) "because they speak our language" and b) because there are no foreigners in senior positions.[20]

Some people viewed CNA as a *local organisation* which worked on an "interregional basis". Others saw it as a local organisation "supported by a foreign NGO, like many others in this country." Some defined CNA – in a positive sense – as an *international NGO* because the team works "on a transnational basis". Others said that they did not regard CNA as a local or an international organisation, but one that "brings together people from all over the former Yugoslavia".

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[20] "At first, I thought that CNA was an international organisation. But once I got to know it better, I regarded it as a local organisation because there were no foreigners in the group, for example, as project managers. And then I realised that you can organise something like this even without project managers from abroad. And that shows the value of what they do."

Most of the Bosnian participants felt that it made no difference whether CNA was registered as a local or an international NGO. One person specifically warned against localisation:

> *"I think that the decision to localise would be a disaster. It would lead to far more restrictions and string-pulling. In Mostar, almost all the organisations are local, and they spend a lot of time trying to overcome all sorts of obstacles."*

Another person took a very different view:

> *"I regarded CNA as an international organisation, of course, as a branch of an international organisation. But as a local patriot, I would naturally like CNA to be a local organisation and represent local interests, so to speak".*

This person felt that 'localisation' was simply a legal formality, as the people who work for CNA are "from here and speak the language; to all intents and purposes, they are local people". This graduate could see the advantages and disadvantages of 'localisation', and described them as follows:

> *"If you say, we are linked to Kurve Wustrow, we have contacts in Germany, and some of us trained there, the people here will treat you with far more respect. Our people suffer from this international influence. Many of them consider what comes from abroad as a form of authority, and they are very respectful of authority. If you present yourselves as a local NGO [...] your competence will be called into question at first. But other people in Bosnia-Herzegovina who are working in the social and political field prefer it if a local organisation does this type of work. Because then they can say, 'Look, we have people who know what they are talking about, and they are from here.' And it also sends out a signal that you don't always need someone from outside to tell you what to do. And it would also have a direct impact on young people in this country."*

4.6   Conclusions

To sum up, all the graduates say that they gained important insights about themselves, and their approach to other people and conflict situations from the CNA workshops. Some learned to: assess their opportunities and limits, strengths and weaknesses more realistically, reflect more on their behaviour and think through their behavioural options, recognise and deal with their own prejudices, and accept other points of view and put themselves in other people's position (empathy skills). They also learned to understand conflicts better and place them in their social and political context. Most of the graduates say that these learning processes have had a positive impact on their lives, which is reflected in their changed behaviour (an assessment

which could not be verified empirically during this study). In terms of *training validity*, it may be assumed that CNA's training work generally fulfils its own requirements and learning objectives.

The majority of graduates also say that they apply the knowledge, skills and abilities acquired during the training programme in their lives and at work, and use the content and methods in these contexts as well. Some apply techniques such as controlled dialogue (active listening) or 'I-speech' in their daily lives, in their family, but also in their work with NGOs or with children and young people. However not all of the respondents necessarily see it as their task to promote CNA's principles of nonviolence in their own environment. Most of them use these methods to some extent as techniques to improve communication, to promote a constructive conflict culture, in order to motivate people to participate in group processes or simply to educate them to be self-confident and thoughtful people. Some combine CNA's methods with techniques learned from other training sessions. However, some of the respondents (albeit a minority) believe that their immediate task is to promote CNA's views through their own educational work.

The graduates of the "Training for Trainers" programme particularly appreciated the intense work in Follow Up sessions and Final Seminars, which was supported by CNA's approach, i.e. to focus particularly on a smaller group, to work with them continuously, and to give graduates ongoing support up to their work context.

In terms of *transfer validity*, then, it appears that CNA's mission, i.e. multiplication, has generally also been fulfilled, especially as several participants in "Basic Training" have expressed an interest in going on to qualify as trainers on the "Training for Trainers" programme. However, in itself, this expression of willingness does not necessarily mean that they will genuinely commit themselves to training work in the longer term (and thus guarantee that CNA's themes and methods will be promoted to others in future). Some of the respondents are currently having difficulties in reconciling their interest in continuing CNA's work with their need for a steady income.

CNA's mission – to contribute to networking among people within the region of the former Yugoslavia – has been fulfilled to the extent that the training sessions have brought together a wide range of people from different areas of the former Yugoslavia. Many of them would otherwise have had little opportunity to meet and

share experiences with persons from other parts of the region. This has boosted confidence and established new contacts / networks which serve as a good basis for further activities. Nonetheless, working relations and joint projects which extend beyond the level of friendship still tend to be the exception. However, it is assumed that lasting networking effects are most likely to develop when people have the opportunity to work together after training. To achieve a greater impact in this respect, a training strategy which offers a practical opportunity to organise one's own training event after completion of the "Training for Trainers" programme could be successful. The CNA team is already thinking along these lines. Here, the challenge will be to secure funding for this comprehensive approach.

To what extent does CNA's work help to promote peace constituencies? This question can only be answered with the benefit of hindsight. It is likely to depend to a large extent on which target groups are selected for future work.

5   The CNA Team's Work To-date:
Summary and Conclusions

As part of their self-evaluation, the CNA team members have attempted to identify the strengths and weaknesses of their work to-date (*see* Annual Report 1999-2000:26).

The *strengths* are:

* Gathering and development of training and organisational experience

* Strong organisational identity (common values, goals, commitment, team work solidarity, flexibility, etc)

* Cooperations and contacts in the region of former Yugoslavia and wider

* Motivated staff

* Independence towards single donors or organisations

* Regional character of the organisation and activities (non-national and non-international)

The *weaknesses* are:

* An outreach limited only to a specific group

* Limited capacities to respond to all requests we would like to

* Regional character of the organisation and activities, which limits more focussed activities in BiH itself

* Uncertain financial base

* Lack of public presence, due to our character as a single organisation and not as a movement.

Some of the difficulties encountered in CNA's work in Bosnia-Herzegovina are outlined below.

5.1 Working in a problematic context: the NGO sector in Bosnia-Herzegovina

Although seated in Bosnia-Herzegovina and thus being in contact with many BiH groups and individuals, CNA had difficulties "in identifying many groups and individuals in BiH, who would share our values of nonviolence, solidarity and regional approach" (ANNUAL REPORT 1999-2000:26). The team identified the problematic NGO structure in Bosnia-Herzegovina as one of the main difficulties faced by CNA. In the pre-conflict situation in Croatia and Serbia, there were NGOs and citizens' groups campaigning actively on a range of political issues, but this had no counterpart in Bosnia-Herzegovina. It was only after the war that a somewhat artificial NGO sector developed as part of the reconstruction effort. As in other post-conflict regions, it is funded by the international aid industry:

> "The NGO scene in BiH developed abruptly after the war as many international NGOs streamed into the country and bags of money were brought in to support reconstruction work, humanitarian aid and the development of civil society." (Annual Report 1999-2000:26)

Work in international NGOs meant an opportunity to secure means for living. Many well educated people started to work as employees of international NGOs "where salaries were much higher, but the responsibilities within organisational hierarchies also lower". CNA argues that due to this development agreat part of the NGO scene in BiH "*had no background of activism*", and

> "very few local NGOs have a backup of their local communities or even some support and understanding for their work. CNA is no exception to this, our regional approach has also limited our ability to focus on local community[ies) in Sarajevo and BiH. Most people connect NGOs with internationals, money, humanitarian aid and reconstruction." (Annual Report 1999-2000:26)

The Bosnian example demonstrates convincingly that the mere presence of a large number of NGOs (365 local and 173 international NGOs were registered in 2000[21]) does not equal a flourishing civil society, i.e. awareness of individual responsibility, active citizenship, and durable structures for public participation. On the contrary, it may even lead to an entrenched dependency culture and a lack of political

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[21] Statistics provided by the International Council of Voluntary Agencies (ICVA), ICVA Directory (2000: Introduction).

involvement.[22] Against this background, the CNA ethos appears absolutely crucial. The team is therefore determined to maintain its commitment to promoting independent civil society structures in future:

> "CNA' s mission was and still is to support establishment and development of local training structures that would work in the field of non-violent conflict transformation and pursue this work on a regional level of countries of former Yugoslavia. [...] Our role as an organisation that aims to support (the) establishment of training structures in the region, in order to enhance (the) development of civil society and (the) building of (a) true and durable peace, (lies) in (the) support (of those) individuals and groups who (ought) to be the pillars of this process. Awareness rising on issues of violence and injustice in the society and development of special skills like non-violent communication and teamwork, goes along the way of empowering people for action and change. (The) opening up of perspectives for social and political action, pursued in a strategic manner, is one of the goals of our work." (Annual Report 1999-2000:26f)

5.2   Fund-raising problems and donors' policies

Over the past few years, CNA has received far more enquiries and invitations from groups and institutions all over Bosnia-Herzegovina and neighbour regions than it can handle with its existing resources. What CNA lacks is not initiative and creativity, but ways of covering its running costs, as well as the resources to pay its staff reasonable salaries and carry out evaluations of its work. The team has generally managed to secure funding for its training activities (travel costs, accommodation and conference facilities), as many donor agencies give financial support on a project-specific basis. However, finding the resources to cover the team's salaries, ongoing costs of communications, office infrastructure and rent has always been a difficult task, because donors are generally very reluctant to provide 'institutional' support or to enter into any kind of longer-term financial commitment. Most funding bodies fund short-term projects but do not cover the ongoing infrastructural costs of project implementation. Although CNA's good contacts in Germany and the creativity and initiative of its staff have meant that it has always been able to secure the necessary funding for its training work, the trainers themselves have often had to accept

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[22] On this point, see also Deacon / Stubbs (1998) and Stubbs (1999).

massive underpayments (of salary) with all its entailing problems. Even in its 1997-1998 Annual Report, CNA noted:

"The specific situation of insecurity that concerns many people in the country and their concern for their future (ability to secure a minimum for living) is very present. For this reason, it may also prove to be difficult to engage people with a long term commitment in this work, which offers hardly any security concerning the future. The question 'Will there be money for NGO work in two years in BiH?' scares many people to commit themselves on a long term [basis] for this work."

The team members had a particularly difficult time in spring 2000, when they worked for more than three months without being paid. It was mainly due to this experience that one staff member, with a heavy heart, decided to accept more secure employment with the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions in autumn 2000.[23] However, these recent experiences have not stopped the team as a whole from planning many new activities for the future.

5.3 The impact of the Kosovo / Yugoslav war on CNA's activities

CNA will also uphold its original commitment to promoting peace constituencies throughout the former Yugoslavia and supporting cross-border learning processes. Until now, most of the participants have come from Bosnia-Herzegovina and Serbia, although in the last two years, the contacts with groups in Croatia, Macedonia and Kosovo have also become more well-established. The team feels that these contacts should be intensified in future.

In the last few years, CNA's cross-border approach – i.e. to bring people from the various crisis regions of the former Yugoslavia together under one roof for a

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[23] He describes the dilemma he faced at that time as follows: "At the beginning of July I was asked to work for International Confederation of Free Trade Unions, from August 2000 onwards. This offer took me by surprise, at (that) moment I felt unable to meet a decision. Considering (the) fact that I was offered more security and much better wages, which me and my wife with our newborn child, badly need, I accepted the offer. I wish to stress that the reason (for) my departure from CNA is of financial nature. I also wish to stress the value and the need for (the) work of both CNA and ICFTU. [...] I will further remain in contact with CNA and with KURVE Wustrow as our umbrella office and support them as much I can." (Farewell letter of Jasmin Redzepovic, in CNA- Annual report III, September 1999 – Ausgust 2000, p. 21)

process of exchange – has faced frequent logistical problems. It was often difficult to make sure that everyone was able to travel freely from one region to another. These logistical problems greatly impeded the communication process as a whole, and have sometimes affected the training. Some participants had to drop out because borders were closed or they were unable to obtain visas; finally, the onset of the war in Yugoslavia in 1999 meant that the last module of the "Training for Trainers" programme – a 3-day evaluation seminar – could not take place, as the participants from Serbia, Kosovo and Macedonia were unable to travel to Sarajevo.

The task of organising an ongoing work programme with people in Kosovo and Macedonia from an office in Sarajevo has been particularly difficult. CNA received a number of requests from Macedonia and Kosovo to intensify its training activities in these areas. Two staff members travelled to Macedonia on an exploratory trip in autumn 2000. Their task was to find out which organisations and groups were already working on non-violent conflict transformation, what training opportunities exist and who uses them, and whether there is a need for peace education work.

The meetings and discussions revealed that there are a number of local groups in Macedonia that would like to develop and implement their own training programmes in non-violent conflict transformation but lack the necessary practical knowledge. There are no training manuals available in either of the local languages (i.e. Macedonian and Albanian). One local organisation has therefore undertaken its own translation of the training documentation from a CNA training event. Many of the local NGO activists highlight the great demand for information and source materials for use in training. CNA now plans to have its manual, "*Nenasilje*" – currently available only in Serbian / Croatian – translated firstly into Macedonian and later into Albania.

The CNA-members also examined whether setting up a CNA office in Macedonia could help to ensure a more effective response to requests from Kosovo, Serbia and Macedonia. During their visit, they also organised a training session for volunteers from the *First Children's Embassy* in Skopje as a 'test run' in response to a request from this organisation, and stepped up the cooperation with NGOs and citizens' groups which had previously sent participants to CNA training sessions. By using

these organisations to facilitate links with other NGOs working in Macedonia[24], they were able to draw up a comprehensive needs assessment and strategy proposal.

The CNA staff concluded that Macedonia would be suitable as a neutral meeting place, particularly for people from Serbia and Kosovo. Macedonia itself faces the constant threat of civil war between its different ethnic groups. Tensions between Macedonians and Albanians in particular are increasing, so that civil peacebuilding measures are urgently required here, too.

The conclusions drawn by CNA as a result of their experiences during the exploratory mission are as follows:

- Initiatives which focus on the region as a whole are almost non-existent in Macedonia, and the current capacities for training in civil conflict management appear to be completely inadequate. Some new initiatives which have sprung up in the last 1-2 years offer the potential for capacity-building.[25] First of all, however, these groups have to be given training and structural support. Training for multipliers is especially important in this context.

- The need for inter-ethnic encounter work in Macedonia is very great. Training in non-violent conflict transformation, and especially the incorporation of the themes of 'non-violent and intercultural communication', 'teamwork', 'dealing with national identity', 'prejudices', and 'gender issues' into training work are urgently required in order to be able to initiate and support the processes of encounter and dialogue at many different levels in Macedonia.

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[24] Medjasi – First Children's Embassy in the World (Skopje, Ohrid), Balkan Peace Centre – Skopje, Centre for Ethnic Relations (Skopje), Centre for Civic Initiatives – (Prilep), Union of Women's Organisations in Macedonia (several offices), Civil Society Resource Centre (Skopje), Committee for Peace and Civil Initiatives / Youth for Peace (Skopje), Ecologists' Movement of Macedonia (Skopje), Embassy for Peace Macedonia (Skopje), Ethnic Conflict Resolution Project (Skopje), Helsinki Citizens' Assembly (Skopje), Helsinki Committee for Human Rights (Skopje), Interculture Organisation for Cultural Collaboration (Skopje), Macedonian Youth Council (Skopje), Association of Women "MENADA" (Tetovo), Transeuropeen – Tetovo, Cerenja – Association of Romas (Shtip), Mesecina – Humanitarian and Charitable Ass. of Romas (Gostivar).

[25] Close cooperation was agreed for the future with the multiethnic group *Ethnic Conflict Resolution Project* – ECRP, which also carries out training in conflict transformation. CNA training programmes will be used by ECRP staff, who will also be invited to participate as guest trainers in CNA training events.

- Support is also needed to strengthen NGO structures, especially NGO management; several foreign agencies currently focus on this issue. Some local groups already offer training in this area and are focussing on networking and information exchange.

- Macedonia is also a possible neutral meeting-place for training sessions involving participants from Serbia and Kosovo. Encounter and training work in conflict transformation can focus on these three regions / countries and include the minorities concerned. This would enhance the quality of exchange and defuse the tensions between Albanians, on the one hand, and Macedonians / Serbs on the other, especially if persons from Croatia, Bosnia-Herzegovina and Montenegro are also involved.

- Contacts with organisations with Macedonian Albanian staff / volunteers also facilitate access to Albanian organisations in Kosovo. These contacts were intensified during the mission.

An important insight gained during the visit was that *in Macedonia itself, for reasons of acceptance, only groups based in Macedonia* can currently make a meaningful contribution to promoting peace; this can be achieved, if:

- Macedonians and Albanians make conflict transformation their common theme;

- Macedonians work with the Macedonian community to dismantle prejudices and create the conditions for inter-ethnic work;

- Albanians work with the Albanian community to dismantle prejudices and create the conditions for inter-ethnic work;

The immediate goal in Macedonia should therefore be to train trainers of Albanian and Macedonian origin. CNA can – and would like to – support the training as an external agency. One option is for trainers from the two largest communities in Macedonia to participate more frequently in CNA's training sessions. CNA staff's contacts and knowledge of the Macedonian NGO structure, gained during the exploratory mission, will facilitate the effective selection of partner organisations to support the development of training personnel in this area.

In Serbia, a completely new situation has emerged in the wake of the political changes and the ousting of the Milosevic regime in late 2000. There is now new scope

for action, and the issue of a new CNA branch office to deal with the work in the Kosovo-Yugoslavia-Macedonia triangle has arisen yet again. The CNA team therefore agreed to set up an office in Belgrade with the purpose of developing training activities in the Macedonia-Kosovo-Serbia triangle.

6 Project Perspectives and Challenges for the Future Work of CNA

6.1 Building up an additional CNA office in Belgrade

From its planned new base in Belgrade, CNA would like to help build a culture of dialogue and tolerance and thus create the preconditions for a constructive approach to the Kosovo issue. Two staff members will start to set up a second Centre in Belgrade in spring 2001. They want to expand the scope for action and carry out training and networking in Serbia and Kosovo as well, supported by local groups and individuals who are prepared to work on this process over the long term. As these two team members are of Serbian origin, and as a result of the networks which have developed from the training sessions – members of the *Most* ('Bridge') Group in Belgrade had previously acted as co-trainers – a wealth of contacts already exists. In order to gain a better overview of the current needs of local NGOs, to initiate cooperation, and target potential participants as effectively as possible, the two team members' first task is to undertake an exploratory trip around Serbia and study the situation in Kosovo more closely (provided that the security situation allows such a mission to take place).

CNA has also set itself more far-reaching objectives for its work with Serbia:

Firstly, through its training work, it would like to contribute to a constructive dialogue with the past. There should be no denial of the crimes committed under the previous regime or the war mongering policy for which it has been largely responsible. Instead, CNA would like to initiate a constructive debate about these issues.

Secondly, through its peace education work, CNA would like to contribute to the demilitarisation of society, i.e. dismantling the culture of war which is deeply entrenched after years of propaganda by the regime, and which has taken root in people's minds in the form of stereotypes and militaristic masculine roles.

Thirdly, the training work should also give critical support to the democratisation process which has now begun. It should foster the development of political awareness and critical dialogue with government policies. For the CNA team, a key issue in this context is to monitor the process of political democratisation from

the viewpoint of gender-mainstreaming, to challenge patriarchal structures, and to encourage women in particular to get involved in politics, a traditionally male-dominated area.

The political and social context for NGO work in Serbia has some parallels with the situation in Bosnia (Serbia also faces serious problems as a result of economic decline, poverty, refugees, etc.) but there are some differences, too:

> *"The isolation that Yugoslavia has been put into throughout the past eight years, left people without false expectations that someone else is going to help them. Every four years a new young generation of mainly students initiated large protest against the regime, it happened in 1992-93, 1996-97 and now there is another huge movement that mobilised thousands of young people in non-violent actions and campaigns against the regime, most of them gathered around the movement OTPOR (Resistance). The experience of bombing from 1999, by the NATO alliance, left them without an idealistic picture of Western democracy and civil society. In all the misery and terror those people grew up and live in, there is a healthy side to the story, that they had to learn to rely on their own strength."* (Annual Report 1999-2000:27)

In this context, the future members of CNA Belgrade would like to develop a far stronger public presence; this means not only focussing on educational work but also adopting a position on current political issues and preparing discussion inputs – aspects which have been less of a priority for the team in Sarajevo.

6.2   Definition of target groups and development of training strategy

Until now, CNA's training activities have focussed largely on people who already have an affinity to the principles of nonviolence and/or a willingness to work for personal and social change. They are usually younger people with a certain level of education, and the majority are students and/or persons working in social occupations or organisations. Put simply, the work could be said to target representatives of the 'urban elites'. In light of this observation, one member of the CNA team suggested that CNA should focus more on sections of the Bosnian population which tend to reject these principles and play an active role in maintaining existing lines of conflict and confrontation. This discussion is still ongoing among the CNA staff.

Looking at participants' regional origins, the team admits that persons from the Federation held the clear majority in the Bosnia-wide trainings. Only a minority from the Serb Republic of Bosnia joined them. This is due to the fact that the office is based in Sarajevo and none of the local team members was from the Serb region or had roots in this part of Bosnia. Contacts had to be set up from zero and this developed much more slowly than in the Federation, where many contacts existed from the very beginning. The CNA staff want to change this situation and provide training with a balanced number of participants from both entities in the future. It would be convenient to include one more activist from the *Republika Srpska,* whose contacts could help to attract more interested persons from the *Republika Srpska.*

Within the team, there are very different views on whether the work should continue to focus on the current target group or whether it should broaden its scope to encompass quite different or new groups. The majority of the CNA staff felt that the same groups should be addressed as before; however, they also expressed interest in including additional groups as well (*see* autumn 2000 questionnaire). One staff member would like CNA to provide training for specific occupational groups, such as teachers, police officers, trade unionists etc. in the medium term in addition to its current target group, i.e. NGO activists. Another team member felt that CNA should focus more on party activists, but also on religious organisations and that it should include spiritual themes to a greater extent in the training work. A third CNA member wanted to see a stronger focus on political parties, community leaders, party activists and the media. One member pointed out that people with physical disabilities as a result of the war are largely invisible in Bosnia (i.e. they remain hidden in their private sphere) and – with one exception – had not attended any of the training sessions. He felt that CNA should focus more on this group, which is often marginalised by society and needs to be encouraged to stand up for its interests.

Given their sometimes conflicting views on the further development of the training strategy, the CNA team will need to clarify whether in the future it should focus on educational work with people at 'ground level' as it did before, or whether it should also address people at 'middle level'. A consensus must also be reached on whether and in what way the target groups should be expanded, or restricted more precisely.

This issue could be relevant in terms of CNA's mission to achieve networking as well as multiplying effects. In this sense, expanding the target groups could be

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counterproductive; bringing together people from very different target groups in the training sessions might make the learning experience more enriching, but it does not necessarily lead to long-term cooperation partnerships. There are clear indications that lasting cooperation partnerships are most likely to develop between people working in similar occupations or contexts.

For its further work, the team must clarify and reach a consensus on what it defines as the *purposes of networking*:

  a)   promoting personal friendships between people from different regions

  b)   fostering new and lasting working relations between people in similar fields of work

  c)   exchanging information between NGOs from different regions and / or similar fields of work

  d)   establishing networks between organisations with a shared social policy agenda in order to cooperate and initiate campaigns on these issues.

Within the "Training for Trainers" programme the "Follow-Ups" and three-day final seminars, where the participants work together to prepare a training strategy, have proved to be extremely effective in promoting joint projects and longer-term cooperation between training graduates. To increase the impact of networking, a training strategy which offers a further practical placement with the team and an opportunity to organise one's own training event after completion of the "Training for Trainers" programme could be successful. This approach would also have multiplier effects. The CNA team is already thinking along these lines (*see* Annex). Here, the challenge is to secure funding for this more comprehensive approach.

A trainer network meeting which CNA plans for 2001 might be a good opportunity to deepen and clarify some of these questions. CNA is going to hold a five-day network meeting in Sarajevo for trainers from the entire region of the former Yugoslavia in order to promote an exchange of experience and foster cooperation across existing borders. This will include activists from human rights, peace and women's groups, political parties and movements, educationists involved in youth and community work, teachers, journalists, and staff from international organisations involved in training. The meeting is intended to bring together active participants with some experience of conflict transformation work in the Balkans and give them an

opportunity to discuss working methods and strategies, problems and possible solutions.[26]

6.3   Staff and working relations

In autumn 2000, all team members, without exception, stated that they greatly appreciated the creative atmosphere in the team, especially its commitment to equality and non-hierarchy. They all said that it had given them very positive learning experiences. They had to develop their empathy skills and willingness to engage in critical dialogue within the team – skills which are also taught in CNA's training sessions. There were points of friction in the team, but there were also opportunities to develop intercultural skills, as the team members came from very different political, national and regional backgrounds: the initial group was formed by two men who had fought in the Bosnian army against the siege of Sarajevo and had been educated in Muslim religion, a Serbian conscientious objector with no religious faith, a female volunteer from East Belfast (i.e. with an Irish Protestant community background) and, moreover, a woman from Serbia with a clear political background in the students' movement. Despite the different backgrounds their ethical convictions were broadly similar, but they had different motives for working with CNA (political and spiritual motives played an equal role in this context[27]). Very different experiences had prompted them to take up the issue of nonviolence. Their individual attitudes were still very diverse. These differences were most apparent in the discussion about the legitimacy of the NATO air strikes against Yugoslavia in spring 1999. Their views on this issue initially varied. Finally, after countless discussions, the team reached a

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[26] The results of the working groups and the information about the organisations will be published in order to provide an overview of the many different initiatives in the region. This document will be available on the Internet in the local languages (Serbian / Croatian / Bosnian) and English.

[27] The team members' statements on their personal motives for working with CNA overlap on the following points: a) exchange experience with people from different regions of the former Yugoslavia, b) join with others to understand the conflicts in the region better, c) identify opportunities for non-violent conflict transformation, and d) help building civil society. The individual staff members also gave different reasons: "Fight injustice", "I need to be politically active, as situations in these countries really annoy me", "search and compare links between nonviolence and religion (Islam)".

common position against the war, albeit with different standpoints. Overall, the composition of the team appears to have worked well so far, in that all the members of the team testify independently to the others' conflict skills, willingness to learn, and team spirit.

At the same time, there are also explicit or implicit roles within the team, which result in different opportunities to raise public profiles, and divisions of work which must constantly be re-assessed or challenged. These include gender-related aspects. For example, one of the female team members noticed that questions from journalists interested in CNA's work still tend to be directed to the male members of the team, and that the women staff rarely feature in the coverage. This issue needs further investigation. The team members also have very different experience in the Centre's core areas of work (development of training concepts, networking, language skills, communications / PR, use of IT to produce training documentation, book-keeping / accounting, etc.). It has always been part of the Centre's ethos that every team member should develop knowledge, skills and abilities in all of these areas. However, a division of roles has emerged within the team's daily routine, so that the person with particular skills in one area has ended up with de facto responsibility for it. Sometimes this has been a voluntary process, but it has also been non-voluntary to the extent that individual team members have bowed to pressure from the team without approving this role-allocation in the long term.

The setting up of an office in Belgrade and the move of some staff members from Sarajevo will create new challenges and issues for CNA. New divisions of work must be agreed, which will change the roles within the team. It also raises the issue of the long-term development of links with international funding bodies and support agencies. The founder of CNA (Nenad Vukosavljevic) and longest-serving member of the team, has inevitably built up a wider network of contacts than the newer members. After his departure, will the Sarajevo team be able to take over and develop these links in the long term, or will they gravitate towards Belgrade? Does the Sarajevo team face the same threat as many other NGOs in the youth, educational and cultural fields in Bosnia-Herzegovina, whose survival is at risk because more and more funding agencies (UNHCR, OSCE and even private foundations) are now withdrawing in order to focus on other regions? And how can this development be halted?

One option is for the two offices to undertake joint programme planning and to cooperate closely on fund-raising in future. A further challenge is to ensure that regular exchange takes place between the offices in Sarajevo and Belgrade so that they are kept informed about the realities of each other's work. Regular meetings and liaison are therefore required to maintain close links between the two offices.

6.4 The difficult issues of 'localisation' and 'self-sustainability'

Four team members[28] will continue CNA's work from Sarajevo and take over the local project office. In time, they will be joined by other local or international professionals (or volunteers). The staff members – who will be responsible for setting up the office in Belgrade – intend to include further local peace / human rights actors in the training work.

In recent years, one of the key issues for the CNA staff – and for many other NGOs in Bosnia – has been *localisation*. This term defines the change of status from an international NGO, i.e. one which operates as a branch of an external sponsor organisation, to an agency which is registered and accepted at local level. The team would like CNA to abandon its 'identity as an international NGO' as soon as possible,

"having now more of a regional (Balkan) character. That is the reason why CNA as the project office of KURVE Wustrow will not have permanent presence in BiH, but an independent CNA organisation run by locals will continue the work. International volunteers (outside of countries of former Yugoslavia) are further welcome, should they bring in the skills that are needed for work of a local CNA" (Annual Report 1999-2000:24).

There are several strands to this debate, and although the issues tend to overlap, they are not necessarily identical: 1) *the composition and origin of the staff*; 2) *the legal status of the organisation;* and 3) *the financial dependence.*

There were widely divergent views within the team as early as 1999 on the need for localisation, the advantages and disadvantages, and the timetable for this process. Two team members felt that localisation was necessary / beneficial if CNA wanted to broaden its remit and not only focus on educational work but also to get

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[28] The Sarajevo team will consist of two men with Bosniak background (Adnan Hasanbegovic and Nedzad Horodzovic), one woman from Croatia (Iva Zenzerovic) and one activist from Serbia (Milan Colic).

involved in the current political debate in NGO platforms at local or regional level (CNA gained its first experience in this respect with its critical position on the NATO air strikes in Kosovo; however, there seems to be a need for further discussions in the team on whether, and in what way, CNA should highlight this political intervention role in future). They argued that public statements and opinions from the team would carry more weight, if CNA operated as a local organisation, as there would probably be greater acceptance of CNA as a value-forming body.

However, the localisation process would take up considerable time and energy, and may involve substantial financial risks. Anyone wishing to register as a local NGO in Bosnia-Herzegovina must set up an association with 30 founding members and an executive board, and then has to pay taxes as if it were a profit-making company. There is a lengthy and extremely bureaucratic registration process which requires specialist knowledge of the highly complex legal situation. NGOs who have taken this step and switched from being an international to a local organisation report that the process has taken up to a year, and that during this period they employed one staff member solely to clarify the sensitive legal and financial issues involved.

The legal framework was established in the old socialist Yugoslavia. It was designed to ensure that citizen's movements and independent initiatives could be controlled as effectively as possible. Associations and interest groups are treated in exactly the same way as peace organisations. Because the situation precisely reflects the working conditions faced by many peace and human rights NGOs in other countries of Southeast Europe (*see* FISCHER / SCOTTO 2000:18), these problems which CNA points out in its 3 Month Report (Sept.-Nov. 2000:2f) are summarised below:

- *"Besides regulation which demand clear hierarchical structure of NGOs, financial regulations are suffocating attempts to work within reality in BiH. [...] The law foresees that all financial transfers must be pursued through a bank (until recently it was a State Book-keeping Service, where all local NGOs had to have an account – one office in whole Sarajevo). In reality, bank transfers between two Bosnian entities do not function, so it must be paid in cash. The regulations allow cash withdrawal from the bank only for travel (special travel planning document must be sent beforehand by the director of the organisation) – the government has a list of travel allowances for each country. Should an organisation wish to withdraw money for anything else beside travel, a 30% income tax had to be paid. NGOs are not allowed to keep amounts higher than 1000 DM in cash in their offices. So, if an organisation organises a seminar and has to do travel refund to the participants, unsolvable problems appear."*

- *"With (the) dissolvement of State Book-keeping Service, the duty of financial control is transferred to commercial banks, which charge 10-20 DM for any single*

transfer they make. So buying paper material for 50 DM, means losing 10-20 DM for a bank transfer. Or you may withdraw cash, but pay 30% of the 50 DM – whatever comes cheaper."

- *"The practice of local NGO functioning has more to do with swindling the regulations and spending days writing and inventing 'travel planning documents' in order to function. Two systems (at least) of book-keeping are being led, one for the authorities and one for the actual spending for the organisation."*

In the light of the last-named problem, in particular, the CNA team is also worried about its political independence:

"Certainly the government knows how the system functions, but they restrain from aggressive financial control campaigns, which seems to remain reserved for those NGOs which challenge their work. In other words, if you stay away from criticising the government, nothing will happen. Self-censorship makes state pressure unnecessary." (3 Month Report Sept.-Nov.2000:3)

Moreover, the NGO law offers no opportunity for those NGOs that are registered in Bosnia to work outside the country's borders. Their activities are restricted to the territory of Bosnia-Herzegovina. Transregional and cross-border initiatives are therefore ruled out.

NGOs – such as CNA – which are registered as foreign agencies in Bosnia-Herzegovina are not subject to any financial[29] or other restrictions, and therefore have greater scope for action. CNA will thus postpone the decision on localisation for the time being, as the team explains in its 3 Month Report (September-December 2000).[30]

The *Office of the High Representative* (OHR), which has legislative competencies that has repeatedly been used when the Bosnian leadership failed to reach an agreement, is working for the reform of the NGO law. With its support, a draft law was prepared in conjunction with experts from local and international NGOs, and

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[29] They may have *unresidential accounts* in banks, which means that they may freely dispose with money they receive or transfer. One may withdraw unlimited amounts of money without any tax. International NGOs are not obliged to lay open their book-keeping, but inform the ministry every three months on the amount they plan to be spent and the sum of actually spent means. These sums need not to be split into a proper budget. A mere number without any proof is sufficient.

[30] "The process of localisation has been prolonged because of remaining unfavourable legal framework for local NGOs in Bosnia-Herzegovina. Registering as a local NGO now, would mean being forced into complicated administration rules and tax evasion (or closing down due to unbearably high tax rates and limitations for disposal with granted financial means). In practice this would mean depending on [the] mercy of local government which tolerates tax evasion of NGOs, but may turn different in case NGO activity would counter their interest." (CNA-*3 Month Report Sept.-Nov. 2000: 1*)

submitted to the ministries. It is uncertain, however, how much more time will elapse before its implementation. At present, it is simply a matter of awaiting political developments. It is to be hoped that the law will be amended in a way which improves the status of peace and human rights organisations vis-à-vis interest groups and associations, or at least guarantees that their work will not be impeded.

In the view of legal experts, however, the new draft law merely facilitates the registration process. It is unlikely to reduce the tax burdens on NGOs in Bosnia-Herzegovina. In this case, the Sarajevo team should look again at the advantages and disadvantages of localisation. If it concludes that local NGO status should be a medium-term goal after all, at least one part of its work ethos – that is, that every team member should develop knowledge, skills and abilities in all the core areas of work – will have to be abandoned. A specialist staff member would certainly have to be included in the project to handle book-keeping and accounts. However, localisation means financial risk and time absorbing procedures. The Sarajevo staff should not go for this option while staff members leave and new persons have to become familiar with management of the office.

As for the team which will work in Belgrade in the future, the issue of localisation / registration and legal status is rather different. It is already apparent that the development opportunities and legal framework for local NGOs in Serbia will be far more favourable than in many other East European countries. The local opposition succeeded at least in integrating key demands into the draft of the new NGO law. The type of regulations in place in Bosnia, outlined above, will be avoided. This could encourage people to get involved in citizens' groups, associations and NGOs and give a great deal of impetus to the development of civil society.

The localisation option raises a second important issue for the CNA staff, which they describe as *self-sustainability*. At the start of the discussion process, some staff felt that as a local organisation, CNA should also strive to move away from financial dependence on donations from abroad and fund itself through revenue in the long term. A more realistic view now prevails; it is recognised that training work cannot necessarily be developed as an 'income generating project' and will always remain dependent on sponsors. It makes no difference whether these resources are provided from public funds or international donations. What is important is to diversify this dependence, i.e. to ensure that CNA does not rely solely on one long-term sponsor, as

an NGO's survival may be at risk if funding priorities change. CNA has already gained practical experience of diversification:

> *"CNA-activities are being funded through private donations and through a dozen of funders and other friendly organisations. So far, we have managed to keep ourselves independent and to resist the temptation of relying upon only one or two single sponsors. This was a difficult task concerning the amount of work that needed to be put into fund-raising, but the one we are proud of. The largest funder of CNA currently covers one third of total annual project costs.*
>
> *We consider established trustful cooperation, not only in a financial sense, as one of the important pillars of CNA self-sustainability. Gathered experience and results of our work so far make up good fundaments upon which CNA can grow and develop in the future." (Annual report 1999-2000:24)*

Recommendation: In this context, the team should try to ensure that CNA's legal status, team composition and financial dependence – issues which in reality are interlinked – are nonetheless discussed separately, as far as possible.

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2	*Golitsino Workshop for Peace Builders. 25. – 29. September 1995*	Anja Weiss / Aleksej Nazarenko	*August 1996*
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