



Centre for Nonviolent Action

South Asia – Western Balkan
Peacebuilding Exchange

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Introduction

The encounter within the project “South Asia – Western Balkan Peacebuilding Exchange” took place in Bosnia and Herzegovina from 26 March to 2 April 2022. The exchange included two parts: optional study trip (attended by all, but one participant) and the workshop.

The idea of an exchange between peacebuilding activists from these two far away regions came up due to the previous cooperation between United NGOs Mission Manipur (UNMM), Bread for the World and the Centre for Nonviolent Action Sarajevo-Belgrade (CNA). The original project idea that was developed included peace and human rights activists from South Asia (India, Bangladesh, Pakistan, Nepal, Sri Lanka) and Western Balkans (Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia, Serbia, Kosovo, North Macedonia, Montenegro). It was planned to last longer, and besides exchange workshop it meant to include different field visits where participants could visit each other, depending on their interests and possible cooperation ideas. Unfortunately, the pandemic of Covid 19 has spoiled the plans and dreams and the project needed to be readjusted and shortened, and even then, it was postponed a few times. Due to high motivation of many involved, mainly participants from South Asia, partners in Bread for the World and CNA, and additional (even huge) efforts made, the exchange was made possible.

The need for exchange between peace workers and activists we consider obvious: peacebuilding work is hard and complex, involved issues of collective identities and conflicts arising around it are present in both regions, organisations usually do not have enough capacities to cover all complexities, there is never enough support, there is usually no support by the states where they are active, even when they do not have hostile attitude, the work often relays on enthusiasm of individuals, who are thus in high risk of burn-out, etc. The need for reflection and empowerment is crucial, but it is often considered as luxury and skipped easily. It is hard enough to find support for peacebuilding work, it is even harder to find support for reflection to take place. Rare are those who are aware of this.

At the end, with quite some efforts made and being lucky to have individuals from Bread for the World committed, the shortened exchange programme could start. It consisted of a three-day study trip to Mostar, Herzegovina, and five-day exchange workshop in Sarajevo.

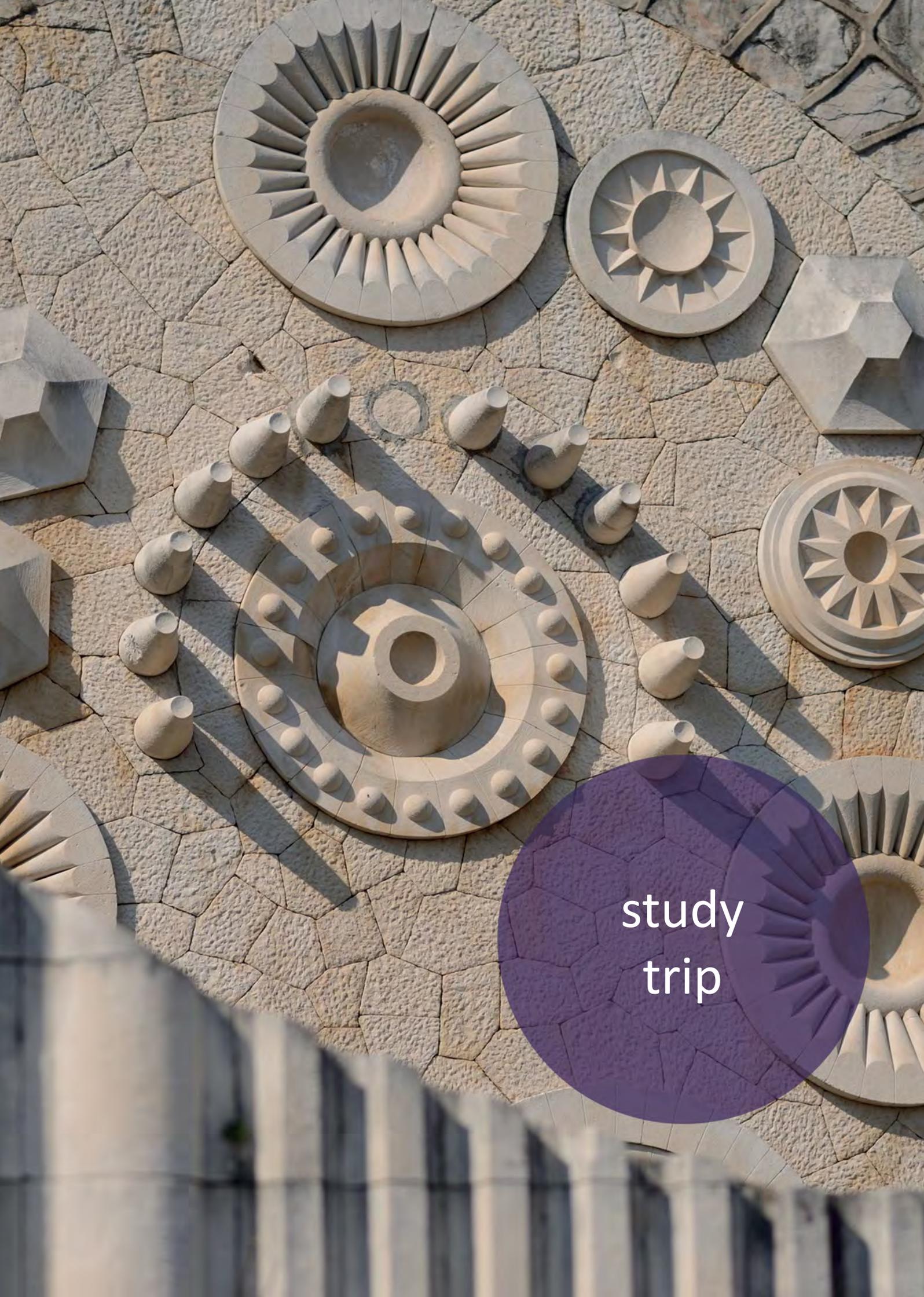
The participants of this exchange programme came from India (Institute for Social Democracy), Manipur/India (UNMM and the Centre for Women and Girls), Bangladesh (Maleya Foundation), Germany (Bread for the World), North Macedonia (Peace Action and the Centre for Human Rights and Conflict Resolution), Croatia (Serb National Council), Serbia (Helsinki Committee for Human Rights in Serbia and part of CNA) and Bosnia-Herzegovina (CNA). The event was planned, organised and facilitated by CNA whose staff is from various Balkan countries. All together there were 17 participants (including the organising team): 6 from South Asia, 2 from Germany and 9 from the Balkans. Gender balance was 10:7 for women. Participants from South Asia were invited by Bread for the World representatives, which was original plan, since Bread for the World cooperates closely to these organisations for decades already. Participants from the Balkans were invited by CNA.

Study trip included visit to Museum Battle for the Wounded at Neretva in Jablanica, tours through Mostar (Old bridge, Cathedral, Boulevard, monuments) as an introduction to its history and more recent past, Partisan cemetery in Mostar, visit to Tekija in Blagaj and meetings with activists, representatives of religious communities and former camp prisoners. Intention of this study trip was to try to show how a “great past” of a political community and its national heritage define the canon that binds all citizens, and a prism through which events from the present of Bosnia-Herzegovina are assessed. The plan was to look into the wider social context of historical events, through visits to memorials and places of suffering, meetings and testimonies of those who experienced the war, in order to show how burdened past is used in legitimacy production and maintaining the atmosphere of mistrust, fear and violence as the foundations of national identity.

The exchange workshop was held in Sarajevo, and it consisted of ten blocks, one in the morning and one in the afternoon for five working days. These blocks consisted of: introduction and getting to know each other; survey of needs; optional presentation of CNA work with war veterans; getting to know bits from the contexts people are working at and searching for common ground; getting to know about work of organisations and exchange on theories of change; having a look at organisational structures and strategies through the lenses of minorities, gender and enemies; discussing the role of external actors; exchange on burn-out; city excursion in Sarajevo related to Sarajevo siege; lessons learned; and closing session and evaluation.

In front of you is a detailed documentation related to this extraordinary exchange. Please excuse the quality of our English.

We appreciate financial support received by Bread for the World.



study
trip

Historical background

Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) is a country in South-eastern Europe located on the western Balkan Peninsula, with a population of 3.3 million. It borders Croatia, Serbia and Montenegro.

After medieval power struggles and constant threats of varying opposing kingdoms and empires, the country was a part of the Ottoman empire for four centuries. In the last 100 years it went through major political shifts: annexation by Austria-Hungary; after WWI it became part of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia; and after WWII it became a republic within federative socialist Yugoslavia. Following the dissolution of SFR Yugoslavia and BiH's declaration of independence in March 1992, the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina lasted from 1992 till 1995.

It was an armed conflict between three major ethnic groups that reside on the territory of this ex-Yugoslav republic. The main belligerents were the forces of the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina (Army of Republic of BiH - ARBiH, largely composed of Bosniaks) and Bosnian Serbs and Bosnian Croats entities within Bosnia and Herzegovina – Republic of Srpska (Army of RS - VRS) and Herzeg-Bosnia (Croatian Defence Council – HVO).

While HVO was supported by neighbouring Croatia and its Croatian Army (HV), the Army of Republika Srpska (VRS) was supported by Serbia and the Yugoslav People's Army (JNA) which, until the breakout of conflicts in Yugoslavia, functioned as "the common armed force of all peoples and minorities of Yugoslavia and of all working people and citizens." VRS retained the command structure of the JNA and its manpower and took possession of its weaponry, which gave the newly established army of Bosnian Serbs a head start over all other armed formations in BH.

The three-and-a-half-year conflict has resulted in killings, torture, and disappearances due to military operations, but also as a result of ethnic cleansing and other human rights violations and crimes against humanity often committed against civilians. Over 100,000 people lost their lives. Of this number, approximately 31,500 were missing. Despite the administrative constraints of a complex government structure and the systematic efforts of certain parties to prevent the finding and identification of bodies, about 75% of those reported missing as a result of the war, have been found. The war was brought to an end after the signing of the General Framework Agreement for Peace in BH in Paris in December 1995. Peace negotiations were held and finalized in Dayton, Ohio, in November 1995. The accords are known as Dayton Peace Agreement. The peace agreement was signed by the presidents of Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia and Serbia.

The numbers of killed and missing persons, as well as their ethnicity are still the subject of controversy and dispute between former warring sides. The International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY), established by the UN Security Council in May 1993, has contributed to historical records, but we are still combating denial of committed atrocities, as well as their scale and proportions in the whole region of ex-Yugoslavia. Among the most important verdicts are those defining genocide in the Eastern Bosnian town of Srebrenica. Furthermore, as the consequence (probably also goals) of war, large shifts of population have happened where most have grouped in areas where their ethnical group presents majority.

The consequences are, almost 30 years later, still very visible. Or invisible to the naked eye, but deeply present in everyday life, in ethnically divided cities and schools, in lack of communication across the ethnic division lines, in ethnically based hatred and rise of the tensions and violence that surpasses all divisions.

Ethnic groups, Language, Religion

There are three major religions in Bosnia and Herzegovina: Islam, and Orthodox and Catholic Christianity. By the Dayton Peace Agreement Bosnia and Herzegovina is officially a country of three constitutive peoples: Bosniaks, Croats and Serbs (in community with others).

This means that there are three official languages: Bosnian, Croatian and Serbian. Although they are politically different languages, semantically there is almost no difference between them, all local people can understand one another without barriers.



Saturday, 26 March 2022

Visit to Museum Battle for the Wounded at Neretva, in Jablanica

The Battle for the Wounded, known in Yugoslav literature as the Fourth Enemy Offensive, began in January and lasted until April 1943. It was a German strategic plan for a joint attack of the Axis Powers against partisans in the Independent State of Croatia, today BiH, during the Second World War. It included about 100,000 Axis forces and 40,000 partisan forces. In addition, partisans were forced to evacuate the wounded, about 4,000 of them. The offensive began with a general attack on partisan-held areas in Western Bosnia and parts of central Croatia. By the end of March, the Axis Powers had killed about 8,000 partisans, capturing another 2,000, and the partisans began retreating to south-eastern BiH. Having managed to break through the enemy's circle, the partisan units reached the Neretva River near Jablanica. There, they tore down the bridge and built an improvised wooden structure using the branches that protruded from the river and transferred the wounded and the rest of the forces over it.

Museum Battle for the Wounded¹ at Neretva in Jablanica is a part of the memorial complex dedicated to the Battle of the Neretva. The complex consists of a museum in Jablanica and monument on Makljen (destroyed, not yet restored).

It is a National Monument of Bosnia-Herzegovina. It was opened on 12 November 1978, to mark a 35th anniversary of the Battle on Neretva. Following the practice of building memorial museums on authentic historical sites, the complex in Jablanica was built on the site of a key moment of the

1 [Link to the official website of the Memorial complex.](#)





operation, the fated crossing of the Neretva River and the rescue of the wounded and sick. The most important exhibit at the memorial complex is the destroyed bridge over the Neretva River, a symbol of the Battle for the Wounded. One of the most famous Yugoslav war movies was made about this battle in 1969, in international co-production and with a number of international movie stars. In 1970 it was nominated for an Oscar for the Best Foreign Language Movie.² The author of the posters for the film was Pablo Picasso.

1992 – 1995 period

In the period from April 1993 to March 1994, the Museum „Battle for the Wounded at Neretva“ in Jablanica served as a detention facility, under the authority of Army of BiH, for civilians and soldiers of Croatian nationality. Abuses, sexual violence, and murders were carried out in the camp. On October 16, 2007, the ICTY Appeals Chamber upheld the Trial Chamber’s acquittal of Sefer Halilović, a former ARBiH commander. The court sentenced Nihad Bojadžić to 1 year in prison for crimes against the prisoners of war committed in the Jablanica area in the second half of 1993.

Guided tour in Mostar (Old bridge, Cathedral)

Stari Most (Old Bridge)

Suleiman the Magnificent, the ruler of Ottoman Empire, ordered to build a solid stone bridge (replacing the wooden structure on the same site) and the construction was entrusted to Hajrudin, a famous Istanbul builder. Its construction is wrapped in myth and legend, but it became the symbol of the city of Mostar, which got its name from it (Mostar means bridge-keeper).

Construction of the bridge lasted from 1557 to 1566. The bridge was built of 456 heavy stone blocks and its arch is unique and widely regarded as a masterpiece of engineering. It survived over 400 years before it was destroyed. In the night between November 8 and 9, 1993, over 60 projectiles were fired at the bridge from HVO positions before the Old Bridge collapsed. The destruction was ordered by Slobodan Praljak, a former commander of Bosnian Croat forces, who was found guilty of the crime in 2013 by the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY). The bridge was restored and reopened to the public in July 2004.

Another similar bridge is Kriva ćuprija (Crooked Bridge), which was constructed earlier as a trail for Stari Most. Since 2006 both bridges are part of the UNESCO World Heritage list, which comprises Stari Most and Old Town.

Stari Most Diving

It is traditional for the young men of the town to leap from the bridge into Neretva. As Neretva is not so deep and is very cold, only the most skilled and best trained divers will attempt it. The first recorded instance of someone diving off the bridge is from 1664. In 1968 a formal diving competition was inaugurated and held every July.

2 [Link to the movie The Battle of Neretva](#) (English subtitles) on Youtube.



Sunday, 27 March 2022

Guided tour in Mostar (Boulevard, Partisan cemetery, war in Mostar)

Boulevard

Once called a Boulevard of People's Revolution, Mostar's central street was a frontline during the war, and nowadays represents a kind of imaginary line that divides Mostar in two parts: the western and eastern, or Croat and Bosniak part.

Partisan cemetery

The monument was built in memory of the fallen Mostar's partisans, anti-fascist, members of all ethnic groups in the city of Mostar and Bosnia-Herzegovina, and in honour of all those who opposed fascism throughout the Europe and the world in WWII.

It is a National Monument of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

It was built during the period of renovation and reconstruction that took place after the end of the WWII. The project was entrusted to Bogdan Bogdanović, a well-known Yugoslav architect. Preparatory work began in October 1960.

The monument was inaugurated on September 25, 1965, by Josip Broz Tito. The construction was financed by the Municipal Assembly with numerous donations from Mostar's labour organisations. Voluntary work actions of the youth afforested the wider area of the monument.

Stone slabs removed from the old and devastated stone houses of the old town were used to build the monument. The plaques have a symbolic meaning, as does the entire monument. The shapes of the tombstones marking the fallen fighters are reminiscent of felled trees, a symbol of broken youth.





About 87,000 pebbles extracted from the Neretva were installed in its paths.

Due to severe neglect, vandalism and devastation¹, the renovation of the Partisan Cemetery began in 2008. Regardless, the monument has been vandalised on every possible occasion to this day.

Mostar 1992 – 1995 period

In 1991, the municipality of Mostar had 126,067 inhabitants, and the city itself 83,686. In the city, Bosniaks made up 34 %, Croats 29 %, Serbs 19 %, and Yugoslavs 15 %.

Mostar suffered great destruction during the war. With the start of the war in BiH, from April to June 1992, the Army of Republic of BiH (Army of BiH) and the Croatian Defence Council (HVO) defended the city from attacks by the Yugoslav People's Army (JNA). The Serbian side never really tried to cross Neretva, the plan was to occupy the eastern part of Mostar. After the failure of the offensive, the JNA withdrew in June 1992.

After the withdrawal of the JNA, relations between HVO and Army of BiH began to deteriorate. The second phase of war followed in May 1993, when the HVO began a siege of the eastern part of the city to declare Mostar the new capital of temporary Croatian quasi-national entity – the Republic of Herceg-Bosna (HRHB). The siege lasted for almost nine months and led to the vast destruction of the city, including the destruction of the Old Bridge on November 9, 1993. About 30,000 of Bosniaks were expelled from the western part of the city under HVO control.

The humanitarian situation in the eastern part of the city (under the control of Army of BiH) was extremely bad, with no drinking water, food, or electricity.

Estimated 2,000 Bosniak civilians from the western part of the city were taken to the HVO-controlled Heliodrom camp.

The destruction of the city attracted the attention of the world media, which led to condemnation of the Croatian side. The siege of the city was lifted in early 1994. The Croat-Bosniak conflict was ended with the signing of the Washington Agreement, which also abolished the HRHB.

Mostar has long been known as a „problem city“ – namely, as domestic politicians could not agree in the administrative arrangement of the city, the High Representative of the International Community in BiH Paddy Ashdown issued a decision declaring the Statute of Mostar, which since 2004 defines Mostar as a single city unit, and which established the city areas that represent the constituencies in the City of Mostar. However, the election of the city councillors in this way, at the request of the Croatian representatives in the House of Peoples of Parliamentary Assembly, was declared unconstitutional. The Constitutional Court ruling was not enforced, and the city was blocked for 12 years, with no possibility of holding elections for city council members. Irma Baralija, a young politician from Mostar, sued BiH at the European Court of Human Rights, saying she was denied the right to vote by not holding local elections. She won the lawsuit, and after 12 years, the first local elections were held in Mostar in 2020.

Session with Štefica Galić and Azem Feriz

Moderator: Nedžad Novalić

It was planned to have a meeting with religious leaders and local activists in order to talk about coexistence in a divided city, what challenges they face in everyday life and work, whether reconciliation is possible at all and what it takes to get closer to it. Unfortunately, religious leaders have cancelled. The meeting was held with a journalist and activist Štefica Galić and representative of Islamic community Azem Feriz.

Q: Štefica, you sacrificed a lot. Was it worth?

Štefica: I have to say that it was worth. Me, my children, and my husband carried that burden. All that we worked for, we stand for. I will never agree with that what the worst of us do.

¹ [Link to YouTube video.](#)



Q: Your struggle lasts for ages, as a journalist as a portal editor. At the end, the results are not so visible. How do you find motivation then? How do you cope with that?

Štefica: In this case I am angry. I am angry because I am terrified with lies and injustice. It was not easy. I had to leave my home, they were spitting at me, called me names. The most difficult was disapproval by my surrounding, my neighbours who greeted me before, also by my family who were disgraced by me. But I could not keep silent, although I have lost some of my friends and part of my family. Today, when I walk through the city, people hug me, they thank me for everything I have done. I was not able to keep silent because I watched my neighbours Bosniaks being loaded into trucks and driven to camp Heliodrom.

I did receive some rewards, a reward in Germany, for example. And I am under protection of Bundestag. It is interesting that I was not awarded by anyone in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

We have published 21 books that deal with the truth about the past, we hold a school of critical thinking for youth, and every year we have around 15 students attending it.

Q: Tacno.net at certain stage published a series of articles about crimes based on sentences of the Tribunal in Hague. What were the reactions by those who perceived you as a heroine up that moment, when you started to write about crimes committed by the Army of the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina?

Štefica: There were some sporadic negative reactions. It is a crime to forget a crime. We should condemn our war criminals. Here, all three sides celebrate their criminals as heroes, and it is quite hard to deal with it. A nation cannot be criminal, criminals have their names and surnames.

Q: While we were walking through the city we could see churches and mosques beside each other. Is there any cooperation between religious leaders?

Azem: I am sorry, I will not give a convenient answer to that. I am not an imam, I am just an employee in Islamic community. It is improving. Still, a lot of time has passed. I think there is a cooperation. I can

understand that it goes slowly, but it is improving. There is a joint iftar, Orthodox church also organised something.

Štefica: That what we have between religious communities is a form. But what is going on between people... There is the abuse of symbols – church tower, cross... On every little hill you will see a cross, as if the Roman legions passed through yesterday.

There is a Cemetery of Peace, and there are names of collaborationists, ustashas who committed crimes during the World War II and who killed so many youth. Building of this cemetery was supported by EU.

Q: What is needed to be done in order to improve the lives of people and relationships between communities, and who should do it?

Štefica: We ourselves are those who could contribute to that, in elections. They (political elites) fill the public space with rhetoric of fear, and this is good only for their interests. We need new, younger authorities. I think that elections are important for new young forces to appear, non-nationalistic forces.

Azem: The situation is a complex one, really, politics, the surroundings of Croatia and Serbia... Many people, much more educated and informed than myself, constantly speak on these topics and how can the situation be improved. It is ungrateful to give any response to that what should be repaired and improved.

Štefica: For me, everything is clear and simple. There was an aggression on Bosnia and Herzegovina by Serbia and Croatia, and today it is diplomatic aggression. Ordinary people are not quarrelled, politics are feuded, and they transfer all that on people, and people is in fear. We are wasting time on unconstructive things, I do not want to be a privileged Croat, I want everyone to have the equal rights.

Questions from our group:

Štefica talked about what needs to be done. We are (including myself) saturated by dealing with the past because we are facing regression. A few of high representatives of Serbia recently invoked a new war in Kosovo. I wonder what we can do, we activists, should we continue in this way and manner before we get a chance to have normal elections?

What people from Mostar have learnt from that experience and what were the economic reasons for war for different sides?

Do you have any political party able to fulfil the expectations you named?

How does the youth accept the school of critical thinking?

Is there a joint history that is not a history of hatred?

If I understand well, there are still some mixed marriages. Where these children go to school?

Štefica: I think that NGOs should do what they have done ever since. All the rest is on prosecutor' office. If we had at least a dozen honest judges, we would not need anyone outside to tell us what to do.

Here, we have political parties of left orientation, but unfortunately, they are nothing. They only respond to nationalistic statements.

As long as there is curiosity among young people, we have a future. However, while this is the educational system, these children only learn how to separate.

The youth attending the school of critical thinking is already different. While youth have some curiosity still, there is hope. Young people have to get educated.

The reason for war was to rob all public property. They robbed everything, they created nothing except their own villas. Before the war there were 50 factories in Mostar, employing about 50,000 workers.

Today we have very few mixed marriages. My kids did not attend religious classes, and it was marked as unjustified absence. Religious classes cannot be compulsory.

Q: What would you like people from different parts of the world to bring with themselves from Mostar or what would you like them to learn from Mostar experience?

Štefica: It is important to take care of your civic states, that the power is not overtaken by right

wing forces, keep on living together with other citizens, as we lived together. Yugoslavia was dreamed of and created by the best and destroyed by the worst.

Azem: I suppose you saw many nice things. Mostar is beautiful city, despite all the problems and its history. I am glad that you visited Mostar and I hope you like it. You came from great civilizations with rich past.

Visit to Blagaj

Blagaj is located 12,5 km southeast of the Mostar, at the source of the river Buna.

Blagaj is known for its elements of Ottoman architecture and belongs to the Mediterranean group of Ottoman types of small settlements. It is a National Monument of Bosnia-Herzegovina and is also on the list of possible candidates for the protection of UNESCO World Heritage Sites.

The settlement is located at the foot of the fortress (Old Town from 15th century), with residential and educational infrastructure of the oriental type (mosque, two stone bridges on the Buna and tekke). Sultan Suleiman's Mosque was built in 1519/20.

By 1835, the population of the Islamic faith was the majority, and already during the Austro-Hungarian period there were twice as many Christians (Catholic and Orthodox). At that time, the orthodox church (1893) and catholic church (1893) were built.

Tekija (Tekke)

The Tekija complex was built after the establishment of Ottoman rule in Herzegovina, and no later than around 1520. The Tekke in Blagaj was built for dervishes (dervish - Muslim "mystic," i.e. supporters of tasawwuf, the mystical teachings of Islam). The learned name for the dervish is sufi.

The tekke is located at the source of the river Buna. It is valuable sacral-residential building of Islamic architecture in BiH, with pronounced features that stemmed from the influence of the Baroque on Ottoman architecture.

Sufism has its roots in the life of Prophet Muhammad, who used to be alone in prayers. When Sufism took institutional forms of expression in 12th century and the first tariqats (Sufi fraternities) emerged, this phenomenon was reflected in the emergence of an architectural form, under various names: hanikah, tekke, zawiya, ribat etc. Sufism occurs in all parts of Ottoman Empire. It left traces in literature, philosophy as well as in the very life of the Muslim population.

The tekke in Blagaj was active until 1925, when her last sheikh Sejdo Šehović died. Since WWII, the work of the dervishes and tekkes had been officially banned in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Until the early 1970s, the tekke was managed by the National Museum of Bosnia and Herzegovina. In 1974 Islamic Community took it over again and began to use and protect it from further decay.



Monday, 28 March 2022

Session with Stanislav Krezić and Emir Hajdarović

Moderator: Nedžad Novalić

Stana and Emir survived the experience of the Mostar camps on two sides of the line during the war and are now working to support the surviving camp inmates and to preserve the memory of them. They are the ones who took a brave first step and went to the places of suffering on both sides, together.

Q: How your path looked like from the moment you have been released from the detention in the camp until today? There is still a small number of people who are ready to speak publicly and do what you do.

Emir: Stana and myself, we understand each other very well. These people over here need peace, a kind of stability, not to have events like those from 1992 to 1995. Those are miseries of „small“ people. I was 21 when I got imprisoned. In 1994 I was released from the camp kept by HVO (Croatian Defence Council). I had spent 309 days being imprisoned. That experience leaves big consequences that could be felt even today. I am involved in the work of association of camp prisoners for some years already.

We live 30 years after the war and the war lives in us still. I would like my children to live here and not to experience one part of that I went through. The main impulse is to stop being afraid of another war. I cannot get rid of that fear. Why it is so, I do not know, but it is not like that only here, as we can see, but in the world as well. Now we see that it is not only us in Bosnia and Herzegovina being afraid of war, Europe is afraid of war also.

Individuals who speak about coexistence and peace are not popular either among politicians, nor in their communities.

We do not have to love each other, but we can live a normal life and talk towards understanding, because we have all gone through suffering.

Stana: I hope you had an enjoyable time here in our city. When a man speaks about these issues, he does not even know why he speaks. And when someone invites him to speak, then he sees how much sense it has.

As you can see, we speak the same language and we do not need a translator. In evil times we needed a translator, and it was disastrous for all of us.

I spent 156 days in a concentration camp. I have experienced a lot, I witnessed many things, I was tortured, but I do not want to bother you with that. When I was released from the camp, I wanted a revenge, I was insulting all non-Croats, thinking that only my people suffered like this. I was a different man then and I am not happy about that, but I am proud that I can talk about that today. Once my daughter asked me if she was allowed to invite her friend, a Muslim, to come to our home, because she was afraid that I could be angry. That is the moment when I realised that it cannot be that way, that I must change something. And through these stories, listening to others, I began to empathize with them, I realized that this was the way to a better tomorrow. In such a situation these associations help a lot, as well as psychologist who have worked with me. I know that I cannot change a lot, but I can change myself. I am deeply convinced that justice must win.

Q: What were the reactions by your environment, how the others reacted, how do they react today?

Emir: To be honest, I always tried to do what I thought was right. I am lucky that I never hated. For everything I do, I have support in my family, and that is the most important. You sometimes feel something in your surroundings, but no one will tell you directly that they do not like what we do, but I consider it a moral obligation, if you open eyes of one human being, you made an immense success.

Q: What are the objections?

Emir: No one would object directly. Or they would say: „Why do you sit with the other one, when we were not like them?“ All three communities had certain traumas from this war. And we try to show people how ruinous is that. Many people suffered much more than myself, from all three communities. War begins and ends at the table, but what stays after the war is our honour.

Stana: My family was supporting me, and they were very happy about my transformation. In regard to my environment, there it could be seen who a real friend was. Some of them asked: „What has happened to you?“ A criminal who built a weekend house illegally talked badly about this what I do. I told him: „I received from the army all same as you received, but you did not receive from peacebuilders what I have received. And I am declared a hero of peace by peacebuilders.“ There is some grumble, there will be always, but usually those are individuals who have scratched quite something from the state.

Questions from our group:

What is Mostar like today? What are the relationships between people?

Is there a strong movement in civil society and religious or other communities who do this?

We are from Bangladesh and we are struggling for the right of self-determination in the state of Bangladesh. Are there groups not being happy how they are politically represented?

What is the role of youth in conflict prevention?

What is the role of women during and after the war in regard to commitment for war and against war?

Stana: Today's Mostar has lost a lot of population, a lot of people has left. My brother married a Bosniak woman, and they moved to USA. Vukovar and Mostar were the most mixed cities. Today Mostar stagnate because we have the same people on power as we had during the war. I am a returnee who came back to own house and I live among Bosniaks. If ordinary people would be in charge, it would be solved quickly.

Emir: Education does not work on promotion of peace and reconciliation.



Reflection on the study trip in Mostar

At the end of the study trip in Mostar, this was the space to reflect. Here are some of the statements:

- First of all I want to thank you in CNA. Very interesting programme, and very interesting people we had opportunity to listen to and meet. And I am sorry we could not meet religious leaders, and I would like, if it is possible, to give us idea what is going on with these communities.
- This is my first trip out of the country after the pandemic. I was touched with what our guests today were talking about.
- The guide was more entertainment than history.
- I was amazed when Galić was presenting her work and what happened during the war and after. How can we continue to question peace and justice when family members are attacked? How we are going to monitor that? Do we need to build capacity of civil society?
- Whenever I hear Emir's and Stana's story, that is a highlight of my day and month.
- This visit was very special and listening to people who were in war on different sides, and listening about change... That sense of helplessness is a dominant feeling among peace activists. There are people around who are sharing same or similar troubles, but also convictions.
- I see lots of opportunities. In my country we do not even have two schools under the same roof. In my country they are in different parts of the city. At least, students here have some contact.



workshops

B1. Introduction. Getting to know each other

Tuesday, 29 March 2022, morning session

Welcome. Short introduction of participants

Presenting the programme and work plan

Introduction to the exchange programme, presenting the work plan, methodology and technical details.

Name game: My name means

Each person in the circle says their name and what it means.

Expectations

Distribute the post-its. Give the participants a few minutes to write down their expectations from this exchange. Place a flipchart paper on the wall or the floor. The participants approach the flipchart one by one, each read out loud their answers and stick their post-its to the flipchart paper.

- New friendships
- Role of the peace practice across the world
- To laugh together from time to time
- To be empowered: to raise my motivation to continue on with my work
- Learn new tricks and tips
- Constructive atmosphere and enough trust to ask each other whatever we would like to know about
- Strengthening each other
- Inspiration and encouragement
- Inspiration: how to develop realistic purposes and expectations
- Listen to each other
- Learn new words and new things about other cultures
- New friends
- Take good photos
- Feed you all well
- Widening horizons and perspectives
- Listening and learning
- Self-Reflection of success and failed strategies
- Motivation
- Keen to learn more about all of our contents and practises
- Possibly the new ideas dealing with the issues we all share
- Understanding, trust and empathy
- Collecting experiences, harvesting learnings and producing knowledge collectively
- A poem memorable details of other people's lives (struggles)
- Share experiences
- Resilient practices
- Warm memories
- A touch of inspiration, much needed. I will enjoy your staying here
- Learning experiences from others about peace work
- Tools and technique strategies that helped across and to understand conflict situation
- New friends with whom i will stay in contact
- A lot of laughing
- Learn we are the most complicated country in the world
- To learn a little bit a more about South Asia
- Learn how to deal with our high expectations and reality on the ground
- Rethinking of peace protection in changing context in the world
- Getting to know context better (learn about ways people cope with issues they have)
- Inspiration
- Learning and listening
- New perspectives and new questions to explore
- Situations of peace protectors, what are the protection mechanisms?
- Challenges encountered by the peace and human right practisers
- New energy: motivation to continue engaging in peacebuilding
- Some thoughts on a collective trauma and how to deal with it
- To learn the best practices from different regions
- To hear about the shared culture of other region
- Trigger point of latest violence in BiH
- Context
- To feel empowered
- To see others empowered
- To hear criticism of my work
- Conflict dynamics of this region
- To develop/generate get idea to address the structural things (violence) mechanisms systems for changes



Exercise: My Path Up to Here

On a blank sheet of paper, everyone draws an arrow that illustrates the course of their life, “my path up to here”, and marks important events on this timeline. Time for drawing is up to five minutes. Then, in the plenary session, each person presents their “arrow”, not in any particular order, but as people feel ready.

B2. Survey of needs

Tuesday, 29 March 2022, afternoon session

Cooperation agreement

How we like to work together in the group.

- Respect the time schedule
- Switch off our phones/make silent
- Active participation
- Voluntary participation
- Listen when others are speaking
- No permission needed for
- Mingle
- Disturbances have priorities
- Remember your choices to drink and food

Questions, difficulties, dilemmas

Hand out the different coloured post-its. Give the participants a few minutes to write down their answers to the following questions:

- Questions I have and search for answers?
- Difficulties and dilemmas in my work
- What I would like to know from the others in this group?

Place three flipchart papers on the wall or the floor. The participants approach the sheets of paper one by one, each read out loud their answers and stick their post-its to the appropriate flipchart paper.

Questions I have and search for answers?

- How people dealing with traumatic experiences and what kind of challenges and strategies are being copied?
- Actors mapping
- Enjoy the moment of „luxury“ to reflect without the accessibility to results
- To respond adequately to needs of the group – meaningful programme
- Citizen vs ethnicity when people will treated us become human not ethnicity
- Network for peace
- Staying and keeping the team motivated
- The best ways to engage political elites to bring changes in context?
- What would be the substitute for nationalism?
- How to bring to the end a hero-traitor matrix?
- How to promote peacebuilding to the key actors who make profits from conflicts?
- How could we effectively support better CSO’s in strengthening spaces and difficult contexts?
- Who is profiting from absence of peace?
- How can we improve out organisational structure so that we prevent being overloaded?
- How do people cope with main difficulties in their work?
- How much weight of DwP issues to put on shoulders of younger generations in a situations in which the conflict is further developing?
- What are the best approaches to deal with nationalist ideas and issues identity?
- How to develop feminist approaches to peacebuilding’s?
- How to make Vučić lose elections?
- Relationship between psychological stability and intrinsic motivation for change
- How to become more effective in my work?

- Reach more people and empower them
- Where to find time for doing everything we want to do?
- Why was war so violent in some areas and not so violent in the other one?
- How to empower young women to be more they settle for?
- Capitalism and conflict

- Connecting academic research with practice
- Are we able to reach a new generation?
- Are we too comfortable?
- Institutionalising peacebuilding
- Micro level approach in peacebuilding
- Balance between idealism and realism?
- How to address abusing the political power from your own value group?

Difficulties and dilemmas in my work

- EU
- Organisational challenges (capacities transformation modernisation)
- Working with the military
- Role of movements in peace world
- How to deal with Russian influence in Serbs' work who are living in BiH?
- How to handle social regression?
- The EU accession process became an endless process of re-examination of mAc. National identity and it fosters nationalism
- Working with military and civil bureaucracy and non state representatives
- Competition behaviour and working with away CS actors
- Transfer voices and experience of parties to be head on political level without doing harm
- Strong prejudice against rolling party
- Is an action we plan going to have counterproductive effects?
- Women become so easily carried away by political issues
- People losing faith in social change
- Hard to encourage other organisation to pick up the issue
- Financial instability
- Sometimes I fear as chasing windmills
- People often dismiss our work as idealist

- Things that need to be address from the state level without the infrastructure and resources of the state
- State of the affairs while seeing and perceived as foreign element
- To build up resilience in this regard
- Name and blame wrong state politics
- Are the strategies enough for sustainable constructive change?
- Making donors understand process orientation
- Individual rights collective balance
- Protective mechanisms
- Who will protect us?
- Work hard to reach the people
- Countering the narrative and culture exclusion
- Challenging the big actors in conflict
- Fragmentation, alienation, lack of trust patriarchy
- The government have responsibility to protect its citizens
- Can we do much if the global system is designed wrong play?
- Revolution at home: Is it possible?
- Contaminated work environment
- How to approach others when they see you as their enemy?
- Non responsible work Institutional of memory
- Ignorance discrimination
- Automatization of work – usual approach
- Involving women victims of crimes as peace agent

What I would like to know from the others in this group?

- Documentations of work, people's experiences
- What can we do to be heard while the whole world is preparing and already prepared for the world war?
- How do you define/identify and assess success and failure?
- What is the main motivation to continue working on... Are we alone?
- Talking to so called terrorists and any experience?
- How to work on changing mindsets?
- To know from others
- Any insight on the questions and difficulties
- Non violent programmes, strength dealing working on conflict/violent conflicts
- Working with the grassroot level people to promote the peace

- Best practices on building community nonviolence.
- More about conflicts in their countries/ communities.
- Social memory practices or initiatives
- Independent movements vs human rights movements
- Experience in dealing with nationalistic ideas and engaging with perspectives
- How do you balance between short term "fire fighting" and long term peace building
- Your stories, instructive successes and failures your strategies
- Uprisings against injustice
- How do guides injustice/gender constructions impact on your work?



- How do you analyse?
- Are you transparent with your failures?
- How do you support your team members in the cases of PTSP or burnout?
- More about stories creatively dealing with the key actors
- Best practices of peace work in your region
- What are similarities between Balkan and Asia regarding the current political situation?
- How do you motivate young people to join peace activities?
- Anecdotes
- Names of important people
- Personal stories
- To know more about women movements in India and Bangladesh?
- Did you manage to establish peace alliances across different levels of society?

Preparing presentations: Theory of change

People working in the same organisation form a group. If there is only one person from an organisation, he/she does individual work. Task is to prepare a presentation not longer than 10 minutes. Theme is: the intervention in our context and chosen strategy/theory of change. These presentations are scheduled for the next day during afternoon session.

Presentation of CNA work with war veterans

This was an optional session, offered to those who were interested to learn about CNA work with war veterans. Almost entire group joined, except of few who needed much more time for their presentations on theory of change and strategies. Participants were introduced to brief history of development and a short TV report was shown (prepared by and broadcasted on RTL, Croatian TV network). [Link to RTL report.](#)

Questions to CNA team and discussion followed.

Statements, from the transcript:

- My impression, not from today, but since I know CNA, that this is really precious and highly needed especially because nobody else is doing that. I found that some work with veterans needs to be done and they need to be involved. But I struggle, because to accept them as victims is hard. I do accept that some of them were victims but not all so I'm still trying to digest the point of view. Did you try to involve fighters from Serbia and Kosovo?
- Those people who were sent to battlefields against their will are also for me victims but there were a lot of volunteers going to Bosnia, Croatia and especially to Kosovo fighting against the population there. They did the most hideous crimes during the war. I really struggle with considering all of these people as victims.
- We don't cooperate with war criminals, but we cooperate with volunteers who joined the war. They have a very valuable perspective. If one loose his arm or leg, he could have huge psychological problems. Those who went through the process of self reflection, they now make a distinction, what brought them to war, was it worth and what is a lesson for generations to come. So, it is a valuable resource.
- If we would know some war crime/criminals we would report it, we do not grant safe space to war criminals. If we hear about it, we will pass it to law prosecution offices. There were some people that we worked with accused of war crimes and none of them was convicted so far. I would like to distinct that being a war criminal or a war victim isn't an identity. That is role that people have slip into, and they can have both these roles. We also have to leave space for people who committed injustice to change. It doesn't release them from responsibility, but they could change.
- One part of my job is to organise commemoration for Serb civilians in Croatia in hopefully the last war. I've been doing it for ten or more years and it's repeating practice no matter how you try to bring something different, something new, it's all the same. Actually, the first commemoration that truly meant something and was different was the one when the war veterans came with you in a little village in Dalmacija (Varivode). It meant a lot to me, and change was immediate effect. You could see it on the face of local people. That was a unique occasion to see immediate change. Even today, if you ask local people what was the most memorable from them it was your visit. What I cherish about your approach, beside the fact that I was in tears, I really respect anti-elitist approach.
- During my last visit I was introduced to this, and I appreciate the CNA's work with war veterans. Three of my colleagues are ex-fighters, for a long time. What I saw in this film is common guilt with collective responsibility for committing such atrocities. So, that needs to be dealt with, and without dealing with the past it is difficult

to move to the future. I found this film very good and it's eye opening. In my region they are neglected, stigmatised or segregated from society without their fault. We have to learn a lot from them.

- I appreciate how you managed to get this documentary. If I imagine in my place someone come up with something like this, I was already in process, I would say I can't do it. So, one thing is how to motivate people to speak. It must be really challenging. Even when some people are ready to speak out, I always think there will be consequences, I always think they will need my protection, in terms of threats. It's really special to have video documentation, it's so explanatory and I really appreciate it. I'm thinking to start a small video documentation. Do you have any experience in terms of security for people who speak out?

- At the beginning we thought about every step in the process with our veteran mixed group. Because, you know, the backlash from the society can be really harsh. In the beginning we didn't invite the media, and as the time passed by ex-combatants felt empowered by their work within the group. At one point they asked us if we should invite the media, to make these actions more visible to society. It was basically their initiative.

- We did not produce this video. It was just the TV crew who made it themselves.

- We did not expect anything from this video, but I was amazed when I saw it. The journalist was there with us, she spent quite some time with these people, and she really understood what it was all about. What you see now is the cake after everything. It was 2019 and we started work with veterans in 2002. So, it was a lot of work, and travels, and meeting people, asking them to join, being rejected, and starting from the beginning. So, it's a lot of patience and not giving up. At the end of the day, we can't really offer real protection and security, so we try to involve their veteran organisations or at least some people from their surrounding, so that veterans are not alone. We had people who really got threats.

- Actually, we at CNA have a lot of dilemmas regarding our work with war veterans and we're trying to discuss them, I see it is the most challenging part of our work. You need to consider a lot of factors in this work. It's a clear situation with people who have been drafted to the military, especially those who were drafted against their will. But people who volunteered are interesting, in their example you can see how a war is starting. If you read some textbooks, you'll get the political level how a war is starting, but from their stories you can track how war is starting on the grassroots level. There is no shooting at the beginning, but you need to dehumanise one group, you need to use some symbols, some songs, structural violence... It is a sort of a path to the war. At the beginning, there were just a few of them who would voluntarily engage in violence and war. As you climb, step by step, more people will engage because they will be exposed to injustice, maybe some of their friends were exposed to injustice, some relatives may be killed... and slowly you are going into war. For this kind of work, you need some preconditions. If the war is still ongoing it's difficult to do this work. And also, one precondition is that people stay together, at least that they live side by side. It's the reason why it is so difficult to work in Croatia because you have no Serbs there anymore."

- Approach is very important when dealing with so sensitive issues. Very often, in my country, if someone says that planet earth is like a square there will be someone to say that it is flat, and then journalists will give 5 minutes to one to explain that planet is square and also 5 minutes to the other to explain why it is flat. Even journalists are not aware of this trick that you need to have all the sides. But in this video, you see all the sides, but they are not arguing who is right and who was victim, they are connecting and saying that every life matters. You need to have a huge amount of training in order to understand that. If this was made by Macedonian or Albanian journalists, it would be a completely different message. I want to stress that approach is really important. Conflict in Macedonia was very often described as a conflict between Macedonians and Albanians in media.

B3. Where is our common ground?

Wednesday, 30 March 2022, morning session

Good morning

Large Barometer

Statements:

1. European human-rights do not match Asian circumstances
2. Human-rights and peace NGOs should be judged by their achievements solely.
3. You cannot do wrong if you combat injustice.
4. Foreign financial aid that we are recipients of, strengthens our voices for peace and human-rights.
5. Voices of victims of violence must be supported.
6. Digging past wounds re-traumatizes our society.
7. Strategy of Human-rights and peace NGOs are determined by donor policies.
8. Donors and recipients can have equal stand partnership.
9. We do this work for 20 years but nothing changes, this society is beyond repair.
10. Minorities are often the troublemakers.
11. Competition between NGOs enhances peace and human-rights work.
12. Strong leaders pave the way to justice.
13. I still have the same vision of my work as 15 years ago.
14. Internal NGO organisational style should not be a matter of public scrutiny.
15. Status quo suits the needs of NGOs.
16. NGOs should strive to become institutions.
17. Burnout of staff affects productivity, therefore NGOs should take it seriously.
18. Successful are the ones which can secure greatest amount of financial support for their work.
19. US government supports democracy and human-rights.
20. Russian state funding is OK, if they do not interfere with organisational matters or project goals.
21. Every people has the right to secede.
22. Feminism harms the family.
23. Establishing democracy with military force is sometimes unavoidable.
24. The German people started the Second World War.
25. Laundry is women's work, but men should help.
26. Those who came first have the right to the land.
27. Sexual orientation is a private matter to be kept within your own four walls.
28. Manipur is a country of Meitei people and all citizens that live in it.
29. We should help the West to become civilised.
30. The victim also bears responsibility for the conflict.
31. There is no such thing as collective responsibility.
32. International war crime tribunals have nothing to do with peacebuilding.
33. Nation building is part of the reconciliation process.
34. Peace activism is pointless with powerful non-democratic geopolitical players.
35. Fundamentally, Islam is peacebuilding.
36. It is human obligation to support Ukrainian just, defensive war.
37. No justice, no reconciliation.

Method:

The Large Barometer uses a larger number of statements (20–40) – at least as many as there are participants and up to twice as many. It is important that the prepared statements are relevant to the

group and that they cover key controversial issues. The statements should be printed on individual pieces of paper, in larger letters to aid easy reading.

Pieces of paper with the statements should be arranged so that everyone can come up and see them, for example in a line on the floor or along a larger conference table. Each participant picks up at least one statement (or at most two if you have twice as many statements as participants) and places it on the barometer between the opposite poles of, for example, *I agree* and *I don't agree*, based on his or her understanding of the statement. After the statements have been arranged along the barometer, participants are invited to look them over and make a note of those with whose position they disagree.

This is followed by a discussion: Would anyone change the position of any of the statements in the barometer? Why? What do others think?

Each statement proposed for discussion is considered in turn for at least 15 minutes.

Additional discussion rules:

- You may only explain why you would change the position of a statement on the barometer, but you may not physically move the statement/paper placed by someone else.
- The aim is not to reach group agreement about what position would be ideal for a given statement, but to exchange opinions.

Discussion about the statement: "No justice, no reconciliation."

- I believe that reconciliation is possible without full justice. And also, there could be justice, but no reconciliation. That's why I don't agree with this statement.
- I feel that this statement is most often used as an excuse to those who don't want to speak with the enemy... Complete justice cannot be achieved because you cannot repair the harm done. Judiciary can only to a small extent achieve this, and the fact that this incompleteness is being used to reject reconciliation is actually very often advocating and provoking repeating of violence and continuation of discrimination, hatred. It's in a way promoting degrading of peace. They know it's irreparable damage. Because lives are lost. And whatever punishment comes is not enough.
- Justice is also perceived differently from different people. I think reconciliation is not dependent on justice.
- Justice can mean many things. I agree with what is said that justice is used as an excuse sometimes and I have a feeling that society is really obliged to provide a certain process for reconciliation. It can be strengthening voices of victims, it can be providing spaces for memorialization. That's very important. In former Yugoslavia specifically, we expected so much from the Hague Tribunal, but it didn't deliver reconciliation. That is a lesson we need to learn. But there are so many other things that can be part of justice.
- I think it was last year that finally the process of transitional justice started in a way in Spain. Spain was one of the examples that was often used to show that there can be reconciliation without justice in a sense that it is better to bury everything and forget. And it's not working. This trauma is transmitted from generation to generation. Some people in Spain have found a way to address Franco's dictatorship and they are finally digging up the graves, literally and also metaphorically.
- My justice may be not the same justice for you. Reconciliation can take place, and we can all work for reconciliation even if we may not get justice. Justice for all is not... You know, for some people, getting enough food is justice, and for some people unless conviction is there, it's not justice. The level and understanding of justice is different. We cannot wait for justice to happen in the process of reconciliation.
- I'll give one example how difficult it is to deal with this statement on the ground. We wanted to attend commemoration to Bosniak victims where hundred of civilians had been killed and families are still searching for 20-25 remains of their own family members. When we said we'd like to attend and explained why we would come, with whom, they said: "Are some Croats coming?" (because these people were killed by Croat Army members), and we confirmed. They said: "First of all they should tell us where are the remains of our family members and after that we can go further." On personal level I completely understand them, it's really important that they find remains of their family members. But on social level, you're transferring the responsibility for that crime not just to one specific group but to the whole Croat population. Few years after that we came again, and they accepted us.
- I would like to look at justice not just as legal concept. In Bible there is saying that justice and peace had kissed. And I think that we need this kissing of justice and peace. We also can't leave justice out if we understand justice as process of changing unequal relationships. Social and economic injustice produce wars and also are in the way of making peace. If we understand justice as social process of reducing inequalities to a level where community has a basis to live together, I think that justice is equally important.



- I have issues with a taboo in our society, this concept of idealising victims families in a moralistic way. Somebody can be hurt and still be wrong about the causes of his pain. And somebody could be a victim and pass on very wrong and harmful messages to the next generation. How do we respect somebody's pain and at the same time respect the need for truth, for objectiveness as much as it is possible. When you at least try to develop this kind of relationship, then manipulation with victims, with victims' associations can be lower. Political misusing of collective guilt or collective harm would be lesser.

Discussion about the statement: "Peace activism is pointless with powerful non-democratic geopolitical players."

- Peace activism doesn't need to be on a large level, you can always work with own family or small community, activism is always possible.

Discussion about the statement: "International war crime tribunals have nothing to do with peacebuilding."

- I would agree with this statement. When I came to the Balkans since the late 90's, and then International Haag Tribunal was set up, and it was so overloaded with lots of expectations: to contribute to peacebuilding, to reconciliation, to deterrence of further crimes, non-repetition and all that. It was quite obvious that the Tribunal cannot do that. It will probably do justice in the sense of focusing on perpetrator and looking for the facts and trying to find out if this person is guilty or not. And if it works in a good way there might be some space for victims to speak out, but it will never contribute to healing or to better relationships. That doesn't mean that I'm against international tribunals. In Germany we had Nuremberg trials after the WW2, and this situation was not at all contributing to peacebuilding. That process provided huge archive, which was very important for the next generation, for researchers and those who wanted to initiate the process for the German society to face the past. So, it won't necessarily lead to peacebuilding, but the facts and the archive that are produced can be used to set up a common set of facts that are not easily deniable.

- You mentioned the Nuremberg trials, and now they represent archive for researchers, journalists, family members, lawyers, anyone. But at the same time, does this now belong to the heritage of dealing with the past, like a symbolic pride? I have lots of complaints for Hague, but at the same time I am sure that we in Serbia and Croatia wouldn't be capable to process members of military and political elites. Today, Nuremberg process is not just archival potential, but also symbolic potential, in the sense "We trialed our own".

- But it was not Germans, it was international.

- At least in larger parts of German society Nuremberg process is perceived as positive event today. Limitations are not so much in the focus of discussion. After the Nurnberg trial, which came through the forces that ruled Germany at that time, there was a huge gap, and covering what has happened in the WW2, and people who were on lower level of responsibility were getting even higher. When responsibility was given to German society, there was long silence, which broke only much later. International trial is tiny, but probably necessary. It is not that you have trial, and your society is healed. In Germany, despite these facts, we still have many Nazis.

- I think it's important to say that especially in German judiciary there were strong forces that really tried everything not to go on with any judicial prosecution of perpetrators on lower level. We had the Auschwitz trial that was pushed by certain personalities who tried their best to hold these people responsible. But there was very strong reaction by the judiciary who were still full of Nazi affiliations, and these people managed to keep Germany silent. It's only in the next generation that these facts could be used again, we had to wait that all these people retire or die. Judiciary then started again with this kind of trials, and we see a strange situation, people who have been responsible persons in concentration camps still go to trial, to court, and they are very old people now. So, there is a discussion if it has sense. In the time of Nuremberg trials there were two kinds of reactions: some people would say "All this is victor's justice", which was not true, we had huge evidence that it was a fair trial, and others would say "It's over now, now we are fine with our past, there's no need to care about past anymore". That's why I say: don't expect peacebuilding from that.

- I think that this "nothing to do" in the statement is the key for understanding of it. First, we cannot compare different international tribunals and their legacies. The archive or the legacy of ICTY is still very much alive. It is not waiting for another generation to explore it, it is now used in many, many ways, not only by researchers in the academic field, but also by practitioners who rely on the facts that were established by this court in order to prepare their own actions. Exhibitions, for example. And I think that in indirect way, but also in direct way, the verdicts in this court have a lot to do with peacebuilding. Because, we have the facts about not only perpetrators, but also victims, and about policies behind the crimes. Also, courts have indirect connection because they are providing substantive amount of resources for practitioners. Also, some international criminal tribunals contribute to the well being of victims.

- I think the lack of such processes prevent the accountability and documentation of what happened. Khmer

Rouge Tribunal did at some point provide some hope that people cannot just get away, for the generations to come. The lack of it from where I come... There was this huge massacre when Pakistan as a nation was taking shape. Before that, and even after that there was this massive mass killing of people on both sides, just going crazy killing each other... But there is no such process, there is no accountability. In my generation and even beyond the narrative is saying: "they killed us, they killed us, they killed us!" and the fact is that they both killed each other. They were not put to accountability, and I think that is a problem. It is important to have that kind of process, and to have data and documentation what was done. I think that in a long run it contributes to peacebuilding.

- I completely agree with J. I'd like to stress my strong belief in strong international institutions, the idea to have those mechanisms for small people and small nations who have been suffering and they're maybe the only hope they have. They can help a lot in peacebuilding. In 2005 I was in the Hague Tribunal. I was a few metres away from Slobodan Milošević and when they brought him in handcuffs I felt I got satisfaction because I saw the person who few years before killed some of my family. I know that he died in prison without final verdict, but still... In the case of Kosovo and Serbia, I know that many people lived in fear that they are going to be brought to justice and finish in a jail. If I cannot bring them to justice, and in jail, at least they live with that fear every day.

- Pressure is also very important, local and international.

- If you ask me if war crimes tribunals are doing peacebuilding work: no they are not, peacebuilding may be a side effect. If you ask me if their work is needed: it absolutely is. What we actually need are translators, interpreters who would translate work of trials into peacebuilding. Usually tribunals are not equipped with the sensibility for peacebuilding and reconciliation, thus much more work is needed besides just to finish the trials.

- I would also like to talk about these side effects. I agree that it was wrong to expect that Hague Tribunal was going to resolve all our issues, and I agree that tribunals are needed. The situation with Bosnian court, which is also a hybrid court, established by international community, they in addition tried to block some of these side effects that could lead to peacebuilding. Even now it works, there are trials going on there, but it is so closed, there is no communication between court and broader public, they don't have any kind of PR expert who would transfer just what is happening there. What is also interesting is the fact that the very court building used to be a detention camp for Serbs and Croats during the war. And they don't know how to deal with it. If you are trying to serve justice, it is crucial that you mark that building somehow, that you acknowledge the history facts that it had been used as detention camp. They don't know how to deal with this, so they try to block any kind of talk about that.

- For me it is undeniable that undisputed facts are needed for peacebuilding. Establishing facts that are acknowledged and accepted by all sides should be one task that international war crime tribunals should have done. To an extent they have achieved this, but to an extent they have also damaged their own credibility. Even this wonderful work of establishing facts is rejected by some, based on criticism that is well deserved. For first five years Hague Tribunal didn't have public relation in Serbo-Croat, they did it all in English. And... peacebuilding cannot be brought from outside, it really has to grow from our societies. I cannot blame the international court for us being incapable to do so. They have contributed to an extent, gave us some good grounds, but they also made terrible mistakes. It given us a theory of change, of healing, that was widely accepted, particularly among NGOs, that when they complete their work reconciliation will come by itself. And it is really rubbish. It will not come by itself, and it didn't. Other models that could have contributed to reconciliation have been neglected and not looked in, because this was the only path how it should be done. When we think of South African model, it is a combination of crime court where most responsible were brought to justice. Others of lower rank were invited to give full testimony, and only if they give full testimony of the events, they would be granted amnesty. And this was laughed at as a model, but this would given us a factual history that cannot be disputed. I know that people in South Africa are not very satisfied with it. From their point of view, they missed this punishment, so I'm not idealising it, but I feel we are left now with neither of the two. I don't know if we can repair it at all.

- In Cambodia they also had tribunal for war crimes, and we have asked them what they have achieved with that. They were very critical of the tribunal, but that initiative was an opportunity for them, actually for civil society, to engage in the process. It was a conflict really hard to speak about. But with the Tribunal they got some space. In Bangladesh they are trying to follow South African model, but it's chaos now. It's more political. They are trying to say it is international, but it is not.

Discussion about the statement: "Minorities are often the troublemakers."

- I don't agree, I would put this statement in the middle. First, we need to understand what we mean by minority, is it based on religion, or on the number of population, based on power. Because, those people who want power are very few, and they may be troublemakers. Minorities are not necessarily religious minorities,



there are also other minorities. Sometimes religious minorities may be troublemakers. We cannot say that majorities are ok, they are right, and that minorities are troublemakers.

- This idea of minorities is complex. For example, Brahmins who live in Manipur are a small minority. But they behave like majority by referring to Indian mainland. One Brahmin academic stated that armed forces that are on power were brought by them, and now people don't want it, so it is to be discussed with Brahmins in Manipur, and not with international forums. Then, Bengali Muslims are majority in Bangladesh, but migrants Bengali Muslims in Manipur are minority. And they also behave in that manner. These minorities are often grounded as troublemakers from the political perspective.

- I agree that minorities are often troublemakers. I would like to thank minorities for doing so, because very often injustices in the society are uncovered by those who are the most affected, most commonly minorities. They escalate the problem and make it visible, and they open the path to transformation of the conflict that is there, but it is not visible. I don't think that any minority is making trouble just for fun, but that there is a pressing issue behind.

- This statement is very popular public expression, you can hear it and read it everywhere: "Minorities have more rights than ourselves." And we need to be careful about the language used, those who are on power are not minorities, but elite, it is an important distinction.

- I think both in this part and in South Asia a challenging issue is that minority in one country is majority in the other, and this also creates some power dynamics. That does not mean that they are not discriminated. Do you see it differently?

- I see this statement as very dangerous, especially here in Bosnian context. It is often heard, especially these days. We are Bosniaks and we are huge majority, and we have some Croats who are making troubles all the time, they are seeking for some rights, and we are giving them rights, and they are not satisfied. And we are so fed up with them, we cannot deal with them anymore. They are minority (15%). We have very complex system just because they exist and seek for something. - This situation when you have a huge majority that perceive themselves endangered by minority, is very dangerous, it could easily lead to violence.

- Thank you for making this difference (about minorities being majorities in other state). I have to say it is a burden. It is a burden for Serbs in Croatia. Neighbouring country is your homeland, and you are expected to behave like it is your homeland.

- In my context this is a very strong stereotype. And we face a lot of difficulties. Small groups, in terms of population, have no chance to go to university or college. And I think they should voice the problem constructively. If he's stealing your rights, you have to stand up.

Discussion about the statement: "There is no such thing as collective responsibility."

- My first reaction would be that there's collective responsibility, of course. If it wouldn't be there, we'll not have any processes, calling it transitional justice, dealing with the past, addressing legacy of the past. That means that the community bears the responsibility for the crimes that were done in their name. There's a distinction between collective responsibility and collective guilt which is for me obvious: there can be no collective guilt, but yes, there can be collective responsibility, especially in social or political sense. But on the other hand, that means that we should also connect or accept some identities that are somehow imposed on us. In my concrete example, I am to accept collective responsibility which partly I do, that means that I am profiling myself as a member of Serbian nation and as a Serbian ethnic group while I am trying to emancipate myself from that, I am trying not to accept that kind of imposed identity. In other words, I don't express myself as a member of Serbian nation or as a member of Serbian ethnic group, it is my choice. So in that sense, if I accept that there is collective responsibility, that would mean that I accept this collective identity that is imposed on me, which means that we're all expected to align, or to be part of some collective identity, which was created by others, which was socially constructed and imposed on us. I don't know if I was clear enough. Maybe I have this kind of ambivalence, I would put the statement somewhere in the middle.

- From my perspective, it's on the place where it should be because, unfortunately, there is no collective responsibility, people don't feel responsible for what happened, it's always someone else who is blamed to be responsible. And I think that there should be collective responsibility in the sense: I am responsible for society. If I was too young when the war started, I cannot be directly responsible for what was going on, but I am certainly responsible now for how we deal with this past.

- My Serb identity is born in and clearly it is invented, and it is imposed on me, I have nothing to do with it. At the same time, I feel collective responsibility as someone who is recognized by others as a Serb. So, perception of me by other communities due to my name, place I come from, forces me to assume this responsibility. And I understand and I acknowledge this. So, I cannot say I don't care, I am not Serb because people may feel just frightened by my name, people who experienced terrible things, committed by people who did it in my name, I cannot run away from it, and if I want to interact and if I do, than I must assume the responsibility.

- There should be a strong feeling of collective responsibility, which is distinct from guilt, of course. Being born, being raised as a member of majority community, you get a lot of opportunities which minority communities don't get. In Macedonia, there is very hard policy of decade long discrimination towards Albanians, Roma people. Although I also don't feel Macedonian, I spent my whole life like that, even opposing of the construct of the identity, but you have to take the responsibility of the opportunity given to me only by being born with certain name, with certain ethnic background, as a member, willing or not, as a member of dominant community. It was not given to my Roma neighbours for the same reason. So, in that sense, there is responsibility towards LGBT people, today, even today. There must be collective responsibility for that what society is doing. And later, in my activist life, I am accepting this Macedonian identity just for sake of being different. When I go to Albanian community, my name is the first impression – a Macedonian is coming, no matter how I feel about it. Now I accept it, why do let nationalism define what Macedonian is? No, I want to show different type of Macedonian, sometimes when I speak from my position of Macedonian, I don't feel as a strong identity, but I am embracing it in a way. In an activist sense.
- The collective responsibility also means taking care. There's what I see in many parts and many traditional practice. Collective responsibility was much stronger: providing for each other in community, and taking care and keeping certain system. It was very much part of enabling coexistence in many parts. There is collective responsibility, not just from taking the responsibility for the conflict, but taking responsibility for being there, for supporting independence between communities.
- I think this statement should be somewhere in the middle because of the responsibility when people are in conflict. Then if you identify with the ethnicity, and there is some discrimination and, of course, some communities identify this discrimination. I grew up in a society Chakma. That's basically community which is leading the movement so I didn't have the idea that I am Chakma. Within this community Chakmas are the majority and I never felt that I'm discriminating other communities. So, I didn't have that concept before. Then I started to understand that Chakmas are dominating. I am not doing that but at certain point of time I feel that, yes, there are some discriminations going on, it is based on ethnicity. So, I feel that you should recognise that. I can say to our community people: look at this that you are doing, this is actually hurting other community. And then we need certain collective responsibility in that sense. Because we are perpetrators in our society. Nationalistic idea is there. But we can change ourselves maybe, we can talk to others who are really dominating on others, it's helping to reduce discrimination or injustice against the other community. I feel that there should be collective responsibility in ethnic communities, in conflict.

Discussion about the statement: "Feminism harms the family."

- In coffee time I was discussing this statement with others. I don't agree. Feminism can't harm the family. In our context the concept of human rights, gender aspect and this kind of things come much later. Sometimes there is this understanding of feminism that male are the main cause of this discrimination, they are discriminating women, this kind of destruction is there. Easily men find that feminism is that what is creating a problem. If feminism is not understood as a concept that is actually liberating both men and women and liberating relationships between men and women, in the system oppressive as such, then it can lead to perception that feminism is harming family or is producing conflicts, rather than working for liberation for everybody. Then we will not get men as friends, which we actually want to have.
- We have the same problem here; feminism is being perceived as the enemy of the family in the first place. And it has something to do with the process that is going on for last 20 years, it moved backwards in a sense of retraditionalisation of roles of men and women and establishment of a man as provider, the one who provides in a material sense, and also in security, the one who is there to protect. This is where we are now, which is very strange and it is different from what we had during Yugoslavia. Basically, in Yugoslavia official ideology was that man and woman were equal. This was not such in real life, but still we had that notion and this is how we were brought during that childhood. Now we are fighting this very traditional views where feminism is perceived as enemy, not only of family, but also of men in general.
- I think the misunderstanding of perception we have also to some extent comes from political ideology like emancipation. And when we say feminism in Bangla we call Nari Badi and Nari Mukti. So, the woman is actually, translated. Freedom of women – Nari Mukti and Nari Badi is like woman-ism. That kind of concepts are there and that's why we understand feminism is bad and it's because they talk only about their rights. And there is also religious influence, for example. The ideology tries to promote that, we don't need feminism, we need women's emancipation. It is not time for women's rights now, later. Once we emancipate as a society, as a nation, from all these bad things, we will give rights to women. Women's rights will automatically be established, once we reach that kind of society. This kind of narratives are also there. This leads us in different direction.
- I'd put it in the middle: it may, it may not. And somehow, we tend to assume that family necessarily contains

a man and contains a woman only, that has to be like that. I am also thinking about this concept of harming family like it is something bad. If harming the family means changing the domination and abuse, then this is liberation. So, why should we protect such a family that hurts people? For me feminism is also about emancipation of men, of their roles, and women, of their roles.

- I often do something that community doesn't like, so in that way people mostly perceive me as a law breaker, but I feel that I'm jumping out of the box, not breaking or not harming the society, so in that way my perspective of breaking the law is good. So, that is really important. When people look from the perspective of patriarchy, they feel the feminism as something negative. U was saying they feel like it's men and women, it's not only about women. Through feminism, activism both men and women can equally grow. Or men and women can be equally harmful, or equally discriminating. There are a lot of women leaders who come with mindset and background of typical patriarchal background, they are equally harmful as men. There are a lot of women leaders who are not even considering the rights of women. So, in that way it's not about the feminism per se but it's more about the patriarchy.

- I'd like to take a little beyond of the families: if we look for the specific example women history in Manipur, its movement has very symbolic feminism. In fighting against the British in 1904 and 1939, it was very anticolonial movement. If we look in smaller communities, like Kashis in India, and Kashis in Bangladesh, and communities in Kerala, in India, some communities in China, which is not far away from the border. They're matrimonial societies, because a woman can have four husbands, so the husband go to their home, has to cook, clean, wash, everything. If you're a lucky man, a more attractive and loved husband, you have privileges and you don't need to work as other husbands and so on. So, these are two comparative perspectives. The civil society need to discuss the women's history, which contributed to protecting the rights, political rights of peoples, sacrificing their lives. In case of Manipur women are the key leaders of protecting their men, because the army can take a man from home and all women would come out and pull down the boy, say, no, no, you can't take the boy. They are guarding the society. Of course, the women are exploited a lot, by the society of the men who has to be reformed.

At the end of the workshop participants were invited to read out statements that they wanted to discuss, but there was not enough time. Read statements:

- Foreign financial aid that we are recipients of, strengthens our voices for peace and human-rights.
- Russian state funding is OK, if they do not interfere with organisational matters or project goals.
- Status quo suits the needs of NGOs.
- Fundamentally, Islam is peacebuilding.
- Burnout of staff affects productivity, therefore NGOs should take it seriously.
- Internal NGO organisational style should not be a matter of public scrutiny.

B4. A summary of our theories of change

Wednesday, 30 March 2022, afternoon session

Presentations per organisation

Each organisation has 10 minutes to present its work. Presentations are prepared previously. The theme is: the intervention in our context and chosen strategy/theory of change. After each presentation others have an opportunity to ask clarification or critical questions.

Since most of the presentations were complex, participants were asked to send a short text about work of their organisation that would be part of the documentation.

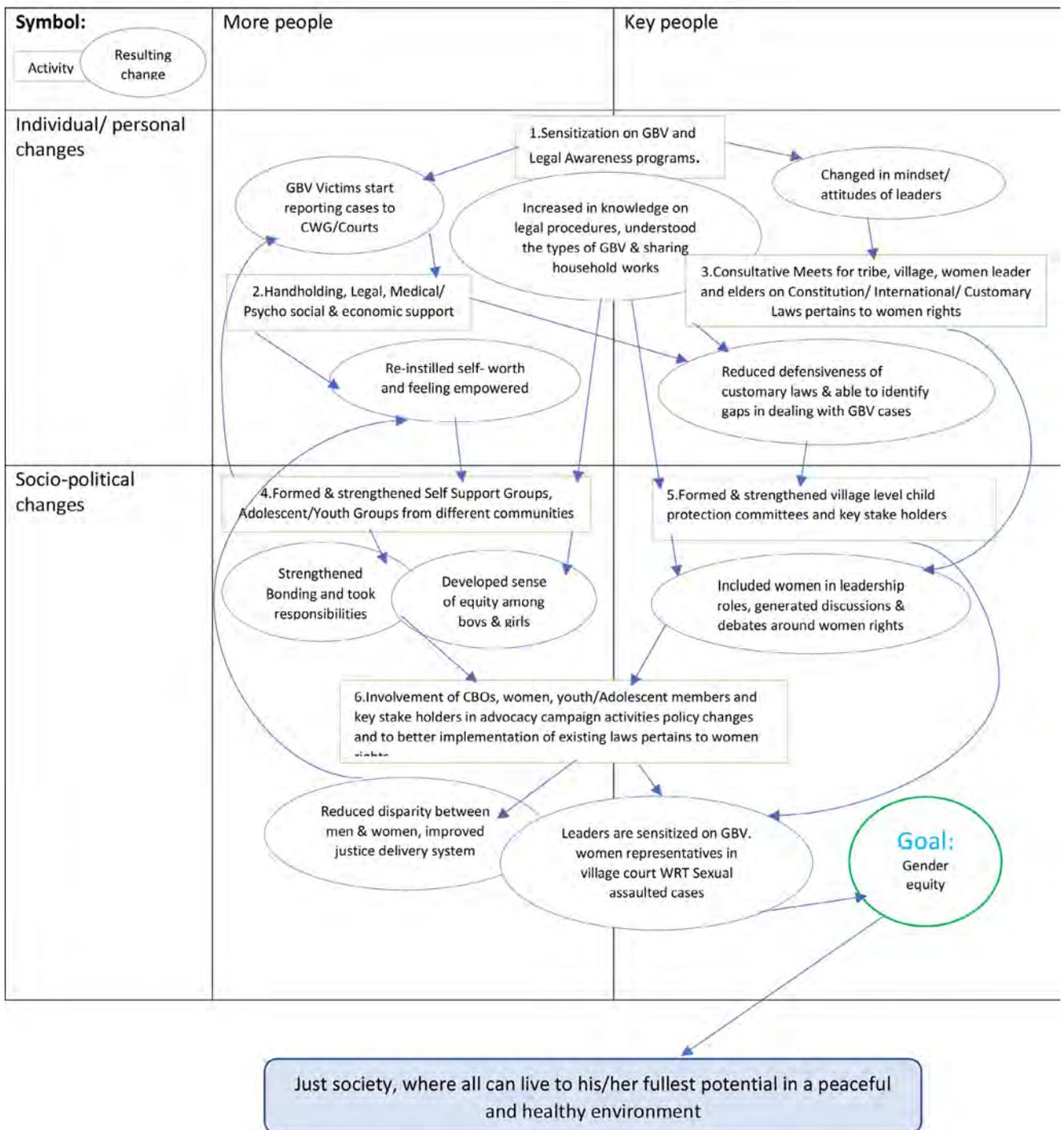
Institute for Social Democracy (India)

Institute for Social Democracy (ISD) formally came into existence in April 2004. The founder of ISD late Dr. Khurshid Anwar established this organization with a vision of peace, harmony, dignity, acceptance of differences, dialogue and reaching out to people despite their differences. Since then we have been working on Peace Building and Conflict Analysis, committed towards exploring, promoting, reviving, understanding the Composite Heritage of South Asia as a medium to bring conflicting communities together, to underline and emphasize a counter narrative to the strong overpowering narrative of hate, exclusion and distrust created by the corporate-political nexus. In our journey so far, we have gathered experiences from different regions, stories of change from people of different faiths, different genders, different regions, and different cultures. In the initial stage ISD focused on **capacity building workshops** with different organizations working on different social issues. From orientation workshops we took a step towards creating a pool of trainers on Composite Heritage through the **Training of Trainers**. We have so far trained 206 trainers - 107 at national level, 99 at South Asia level. From the very inception of ISD our focus has been to reach out to people through our popular material which includes **newsletters, booklets, videos, interviews and so on in English and Hindi mainly, and in Tamil, Urdu, Bangla languages as per requirement**. The readership of our publications at present is 3,732. This has been a powerful medium to spread our message of peace and humanity to more people in different regions of South Asia which were beyond our access through workshops for one on one discussion. As we progressed on our journey we saw the need to take the concept of Composite Heritage to common people, children, youth, teachers, students, activists, women's groups and so on. The need was to make this approach of peacebuilding simpler and understandable by people from their day to day experiences. Also we realized that certain forms of positive Composite Heritages have been lost in the changing times. These forms of positive Composite Heritages had been a significant part of people's shared traditions and celebrations where people would come together irrespective of their religion, caste, and gender and be part of the occasion. These forms of Composite Heritage need to be revived among people and for the coming generations and so we started working on **Mainstreaming Composite Heritage and Revival of positive Composite Heritage**. We have started the process of revival of 145 forms. In this process we identify festivals or occasions or healthy traditional practices that have been part of our shared, common heritage towards which different members of the society feel or historically used to feel attached and had a sense of ownership which has lost its shine over a period of time or as a result of the hate politics which attaches exclusive religious stamp to every possible thing. Through regular dialogues, trust building, sharing of experiences by those who have lived and experienced the shared celebration – contextualizing those experiences in the present times, involving youth and children in these sharing, taking their opinion and giving them space to put forward their dilemma, angst, questions we bring in the perspective of accepting each other and shared ownership towards different cultural practices. Gradually once the ice starts to melt a process of consensus building is done where members of a society agree to organize and participate in any such celebration or occasion.

Some of the questions by other participants:

- How do you pursue this work with youth, women, what kind of programmes are you developing in order to reach composite heritage, cultural diversity, strengths, acceptance and so on?
- Are they from different regions or from the same city, but different communities within the same city?
- I have two questions. One is to understand the context a bit better – how is your organisation perceived by your authorities and by ordinary people? What would they comment? And also, another question: how do you find the youth to participate in your programmes?
- What do you mean by communalised?
- I just want to clarify one term in Indian English which come up very often, you asked about it, it is communal or communalism. You may not find this in American or British dictionary but it is quite important for the context. These are negatively connotated words. So, the idea is when communities become communal, or there is communalism, it means that one community starts being mobilised against the other community.

Centre for Women and Girls (Manipur)



Some of the questions by other participants:

- I would like to hear more about customary village and customary court. Are they a kind of mediation within families of the victims and perpetrators, or they have some kind of sanctions?
- I have a question about this key people that you are trying to influence or reach, how does it work, why do they accept you, as a unique partner someone to listen to, how, why?
- How do you make them listen to you?
- Are there some rape cases that customary system do? This is a justice, rapes cannot be negotiated, it must be prosecuted.
- In these districts you are working in, do you have the cases of widows, that I learnt that there are plenty in Manipur, and if you do, do you have a kind of programme also to support them or it is done by some one else?

- I want to ask, just to clarify who the widows are, because most of the people who are in this room possibly don't know why there is a such large amount of widows in Manipur and in what situation they are, the livelihood situation, in a sense where they can live, are they completely separated from the family, where are the children, all that stuff, also why they became widows, this is the key question.
- So basically, they are not in the position to take children and leave their in-laws?
- They are not perceived as a part of a family by the in-laws?
- I just want a clarifications regarding the inheritors get a boy, is it constitutionally or customary law, or both?
- You said that your organisation is small, can you somehow describe how small it is... Somehow it is important for this theory of change how big is your organisation. I think it is not the same if you have one, two, five persons, or if you have a hundred people who is working there as a staff. The second one would be, you spoke about key people and how you are trying to reach them, do you or have you identified any key allies from that society, a key from one group, for example, religious leaders as key allies in your work, or teachers or something? And the third would be, if I understood correctly, working in, sort of how to say – environment, which is defined by traditions, some laws, but what is your base ideologically for your work? Do you somehow re-interpret that tradition in some new way, and from these positions you are working or from some human rights positions, I don't know if you understand me, but maybe this is the most stupid question, but how you base your work, on what kind of values? What is a source of these values?

Peace Action (North Macedonia)

Flipchart presented:

- Small staff, ethn. mixed, gender mixed, etc...
Two offices Prilep – Tetovo

Strategic problems 2018. – 2021.:

1. Lack of coordinated systematic, constructive and long-term activities in the field of DwP about the conflicts of the past.
2. Ethnic segregation in schools.
3. Lack of connections/dialogue/cooperation with organizations and activists from certain parts of Balkan.
4. Low visibility of peacebuilding activities.
5. Lack of capacities within the org. (human resources, knowledge, skills...)

I.

Use of life stories in process of DwP

- Collection of life stories
- Promotions in former conflict areas

Establishing safe spaces for dialogue on the issues of the violent past

- training program „10 Days of Peace Republic“
- Seminars/dialogue meetings
- Mentoring activist initiatives coming out from trainings/seminars

Some of the questions by other participants:

- Do you maybe have it or plan it to translate this collection of life stories?
- I just to know a little bit more about – how are you gathering these life stories, do you look in private diaries or something, or is it oral history, in sense you do interviews, you try to do some facilitation?

Memory of 2001

- Digitalization of newspaper articles of 2001
- Searching for inclusive models of commemorative practices for the victims/events of 2001

Difficulties/problems: limited reach of oral history for more on DwP, lack of staff, building trust takes lots of time, reaching wider audience, lack of staff and time and skills, not enough partners within CS, fear in institutions, young people leaving the country, partition of society.

II.

Support of the IIE in North Macedonia (peace education)

- Strengthening capacities of teachers for extra and curricula activities of IIE
- Educating and empowering history teachers for introducing issues of conflicts of 1991/2001 in ethnical mixes classes.

Difficulties/problems: XY situation in the region/ EU accession, slow educational reforms, partition of schools and teachers, capacities and staff, lack of lobbying skills/resources within PA.



Center for Human Rights and Conflict Resolution (North Macedonia)

Center for Human Rights and Conflict Resolution (Skopje, North Macedonia) is an NGO that was established with the overall goals of:

(1) helping citizens of the Republic of Macedonia take active role in resolving seemingly intractable conflicts rooted in ethnic and other differences; and

(2) promoting the concept of human rights and basic freedoms as essential part of global political, juridical and social transformation that is going on in the country. In order to achieve these goals, CHRRC undertakes various activities in three main areas: human rights, conflict resolution and inter-ethnic relations.

CHRRC perceives education as the only instrument that can provide systemic changes in people's attitudes towards cultural/ethnic differences.

Some of the most relevant projects and activities:

Mosaic - bilingual (Macedonian-Albanian) groups in public kindergartens is the first and so far the only real model for integrated education in the country. It was launched in 1998 in three pilot kindergartens and was later spread in many others in ethnically mixed municipalities.

Our Neighbourhood – a children TV series (21 episodes). The series addressed three primary areas of concern: (1) Active tolerance building, by stimulating children's proactive interest in the communities that surround them; (2) Inter-cultural literacy, by offering children an opportunity to learn basic phrases in a number of the country's languages; and (3) Constructive conflict-resolution techniques.

Appreciating Differences – joint extracurricular program intended for ethnically mixed groups of secondary-school students having Macedonian or Albanian as languages of instruction.

Conflict Resolution Games – a whole year extracurricular program intended for fourth grade students from schools with Macedonian, Albanian or Turkish as languages of instruction.

School of Tolerance – a five year project the Gostivar high-school aimed at developing a model for working in ethnically mixed secondary schools towards improvement of inter-ethnic relations among students and teaching staff.

Same, Alike, Different – bilingual extracurricular program (2002-2005) for ethnically mixed groups of primary school students aimed at strengthening positive self-esteem, developing contacts with children from the other ethnic group and combating negative ethnic stereotypes.

Human Right Schools – ten-day camps for ethnically mixed groups of secondary-school students

Understanding Current History gathered Albanian and Macedonian history teachers from ethnically mixed secondary schools from around the country very soon after the signing of the Ohrid Framework Agreement to discuss the different perspectives of the causes and consequences of the violent conflict of 2001.

Armed Conflict on the Territory of the Republic of Macedonia in 2001 was a continuation of the Understanding Current History project. It brought together previously trained Macedonian and Albanian secondary-school history teachers and facilitated their writing of the Albanian and Macedonian versions of the causes and consequences of the violent conflict of 2001 that were published in a joint booklet living space for students to look for similarities and differences in the two perspectives.

Narratives in Our Histories engaged a selected group of previously trained Macedonian and Albanian history teachers to work on the Macedonian and Albanian ethnic narratives about the historical events that had major influence on the development of the ethnic identity of two communities. The project developed alternative teaching materials for students and a manual for history teachers on how to use the materials with their students.

USAID Project on Interethnic Integration in Education provides expertise for building capacities of the key educational institutions to introduce interethnic integration at school level by training master trainers and mentors and developing modules and manuals for training of trainers and implementing activities.

Diversity in Early Child Development, CHRRC has proposed improvements in the official Early Child Development curriculum and raised awareness in pre-school teachers for respecting diversity and multiculturalism. CHRRC produced a manual with workshops for pre-school kids that promote respect for diversity and multiculturalism and is in charge of supporting its implementation in ten pilot kindergartens from different municipalities.

CHRRC cooperated with the Institute for Sociological, Political and Juridical Research on a UNDP funded Project on *Enhancing Inter-Ethnic Community Dialogue and Collaboration*.

Some of the questions by other participants:

- Macedonia is a multi-ethnic state, besides Macedonians and Albanians, there are plenty of other ethnic groups. I know that in your organisation as well as in B's organisation, you have stuff both Macedonian and Albanian. My questions is: how common is that for Macedonia?

- You have these workshops in schools and teach them conflict resolution and all this thing, right? So is it a part of national curriculum and if yes, then how you manage the national curriculum because of the conflict by the government? And I understood, there are major two languages, Macedonian and Albanian, and all of them are spread over the country or it is like in some specific areas?
- What the constitution says about preservation, the protection of the languages, minority languages, is there anything in the constitution?

Maleya Foundation (Bangladesh)

Maleya Foundation is an indigenous peoples organization of Bangladesh and working for the rights of the indigenous peoples of Bangladesh in general and particularly of CHT in aiming to strengthen the capacities of development and human rights actors of the CHT region and Bangladesh on conflict sensitivity, conflict transformation and peacebuilding issues.

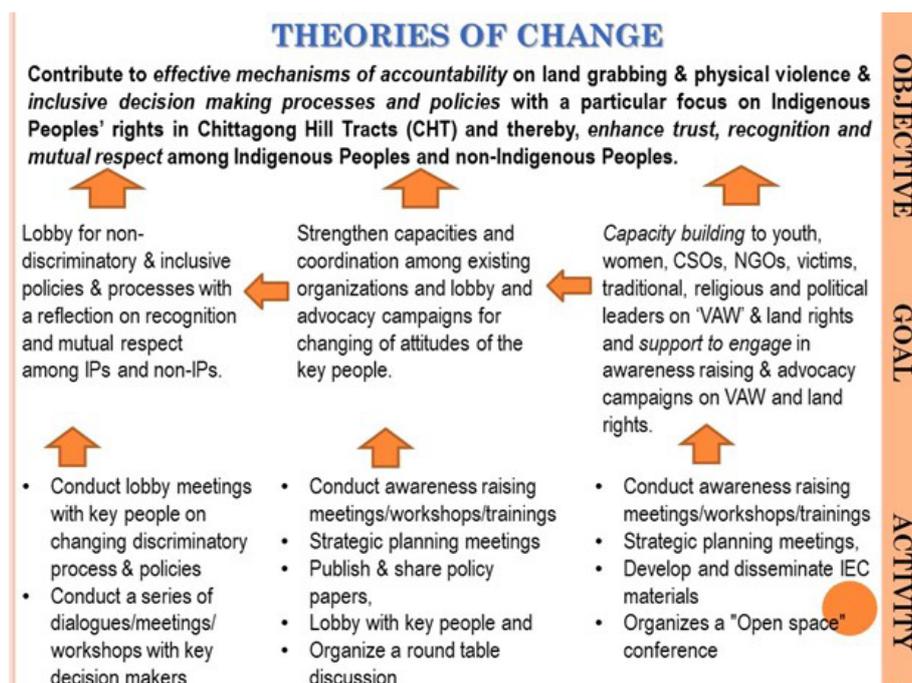
The Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT) is situated in the south-eastern part of Bangladesh, consists of three hill districts: Rangamati hill district, Khagrachari hill district and Bandarban hill district. Total area of 5,093 sq. miles (13,189 sq. km.) which is about one-tenth of the total area of Bangladesh with over 1.325 million populations (0.700 million Indigenous Peoples (IPs) + 0.625 million Bengali Muslim settlers). It shares borders with Myanmar on the south, India on the north and northeast and Chittagong district on the west.

Total thirteen indigenous ethnic groups live in CHT. They collectively identify themselves as the 'Jumma people' (High Landers). The Jumma people are distinct and different from the majority Bengali people of Bangladesh in respect of race, language, culture, heritage and religion. The Chakma are the majority indigenous group in CHT followed by the Marma, Tripura, Mro, Bwam, Tanchangya and others. The Khumi, Pankhua, Chak, Lushai are numerically smaller indigenous groups.

In 1872, the indigenous population was 98% in the CHT. At present, the population has come down around fifty percent (in 1991, 51.4%). The decline of the population is mainly due to the migration of Bengali population from the plains in mid 70s to mid 80s under a grand settlement programme.

The region was ruled by the deferent ethnic kings before the British colonization. The British era was started in 1860 with the annexation of CHT under the British Government. British rule was last till 1947. During the independence of India sub-continent, the region was annexed with Pakistan in 1947 to till 1971 before the independence of Bangladesh. Presently, the region is under the state of Bangladesh from 1971.

The rights to the self-determination of the indigenous peoples of the region was gradually violated by the than rulers. Abolishment of the special status of CHT "Scheduled District" in 1874 to "Backward Tract" (1915 and amended in 1919), "Excluded Area" (1935), "Tribal Area" (1962) and finally abolished all status in 1963-64. The construction of Kaptai Dam submerged most fertile and cultivatable land of the region and uprooted thousands of peoples from their homestead without proper compensation and rehabilitation in 1961.



In 1970s, the indigenous peoples of CHT participated in the liberation war. However, there were atrocities against them by the Freedom fighters. The CHT regional political party Parbatya Chattagram Jana Samhati Samiti (PCJSS) was formed and raised demand for autonomy of the region with the constitutional safeguard. The region went through a long period of political unrest, insurgency and counter-insurgency and organized hostilities (1973 – 1997). In 1997 an accord was signed called as “CHT Accord of 1997” has led to end the hostilities and generated hope for peace among the communities in CHT. However, non-implementation of the CHT Accord takes the peace process back steps.

Some of the questions by other participants:

- Does land grabbing come from within the community or from external factors?
- Abbreviation I.P. stands for what? Indigenous people.
- So, the main fighting you set is about power and natural resources or resources. I am just wondering... domination over resources. Which kind of recourses are we talking about?
- Would you have any allies or supporters by majority people in Bangladesh? Organisations, individuals?
- It is officially owned by military?
- Do you have any international support? Who is your ally?
- At some point you mentioned that some changes had happened since 2016. Do you have any example of these changes and how it affected your work?

Helsinki Committee for Human Rights in Serbia

NOTE: 26 y old org, changed approaches while strategy remained more or less the same

Goal:

To expose Serbia’s prevalent ideology – nationalism – and alleviate its fatal effects on the entire scope of human rights, the country’s economy, the rule of law, regional and global relations, and international standing.

Problem:

- Ethno-nationalistic point of view got the strength in 1980s, and significantly contributed to the eruption of violence in 1990s.
- It was and still is spread by politicians, formal education, media, culture
- It prevents modernisation and overcoming the legacy of the past through accepting responsibility and addressing victims’ needs
- It also prevents internal consolidation of society given that the minorities still distrust institutions and are sidelined and completely neglected
- Finally, it maintains tensions in the region, as the old concepts of territorial expansion are still on the table

Strategy:

- Research (human rights, minorities, youth, extremism and radicalisation, identities, etc): to reveal aspects that are negatively affecting reform into a modern democratic state.
- Education: to strengthen capacities for social change by increasing intercultural and democratic competencies of young people.
- Culture: to illuminate responsibility for past wrongdoings and to bridge the gap between communities and increase their mutual trust.

Actions:

- Periodicals addressing current issues
- Thematical reports
- Human rights schools
- Theatre workshops
- Workshops for historians and artists
- Video production
- Theatre plays
- Specialized schools/seminars (historians, political scientist...)
- Media internship
- Podcast

Target groups:

- High school students
- Teachers
- Students of social sciences
- Cultural workers
- Artists
- Social scientists (historians, sociologists, political scientist, etc.)

Some of the questions by other participants:

- There are plenty of reports and researches that Helsinki is publishing, and do you have data who is the audience, who is reading them more, is it internationals or local people?
- Your pronounced goal is to destroy nationalism. It is not quite clear to me how you strive to achieve this change. As far as I understood you work with minorities, you empower them, I understand this a bit. The vast majority is at least sympathetic with nationalist ideas, and there are those that are your opponents. How do you reach out to them?
- Do you care about this image your organisation have that is actually limiting you the possibility to reach out?
- I was surprised when you said about the theatre group. Maybe this is my prejudices about Helsinki Committee, I would expect that you have a kind of educational activity for young researchers, students, maybe even younger people about foreign policy, geopolitical issues. I see that as your primary field. Probably I miss something, but I don't see many NGOs in Serbia that are covering this area and I think you would be great, especially in this topic.
- In Macedonia Helsinki Committee has a very good reputation in the public, among citizens. Especially when you have a problem with government or institution, you will first go to Helsinki Committee and then you will go to ombudsperson, for example. I don't know how the situation is in Serbia, do you have, for example, LGBT population, minority groups, other people that address some problems to you and do you deal with that directly?
- From my point of view we have new states, orders and everything else, but at least Croatia, Bosnia, Montenegro and Serbia, basically are still same space, at least cultural space, language space. There are people who are expelled from Croatia, now living in Serbia. I am reading newspapers from Serbia, so it's not, how to say, so strict division between these new states. Even war how you explain, you said, first one, second one, actually, we can say one war, or Yugoslav wars, Yugoslav legacy, call it how you wish. And based on this that we are still one space, that people from Bosnia had expectations from Serbia, people from Serbia, also from Bosnia, from Croatia, how do you deal with that fact that we are still very well connected? We are still one region, understand each other and all of us have expectations from each other.
- Maybe I overheard, can you say a little bit more where your funding comes from and do you also, cooperate, for instance, with international organisations like OSCE?

Closing round

How do you feel at the end of this day? Was it useful for you?

Statements, from the transcript:

- I feel very well. Especially the second part of the day was great because it's real opportunity for us to question our work, our approach. For me that's great.
- I agree. And the session with the barometer ("I agree – I don't agree") is excellent way of exploring and getting to know other contexts. It was very good.
- It was very informative. How step by step the fighting happens, and independences...
- I find the day today productive. This with perceptions was very helpful. And knowing about initiatives of the others give some addition to my work. Still I have two questions, maybe I will come tomorrow to them, about school education, how we can teach and learn, we have some experiences.
- I think we had a lot of discussion in morning session, "I agree and disagree" session, it did well. This idea, the session is really good. It meant a lot to me. And your work that you are doing is very good.
- It was also good day for me. It is always interesting for me to work on large barometer because this is a place where you can put a light on a certain subjects from various angles, this is very valuable for our work and for our soul. But especially this other part of the day, and especially the presentations from friends from

South Asia, because the conditions of your work are much, much harder than ours. You are fighting, beside the problems that also we have, structural violence on a huge scale, unimaginable scale for us. Thank you very much for your presentations and I look forward to continue with that tomorrow.

- It is good day. With the barometer we opened some issues, as D, it puts some light on the different angles, it is not only agree or disagree, it is more complex. With some statements I agree, the others don't, the same practically statement, and it is very informative. And I am looking forward tomorrow. I am deepening knowledge and getting to know about part of the world that I knew very little about.

- My biggest impression from today was how our conversation and different perspectives and different opinions can be easy going. Because when we had this barometer, I could easily imagine some different setting when somebody is expressing his opinion and somebody would target the opinion and that you defend your opinion. Conversation would go in that kind of dynamics. Today sometimes I felt like to defend my opinion, when I saw all of you being in the zen, I said, it's okay. Really it was my biggest enjoyment from today.

- I also felt privileged to be with you and discuss some topics, in a way we discussed today. I feel good about that.

- I like the atmosphere, I think we all laughed a lot, I like sense of humour that we are obviously sharing. Again, very grateful for this South Asia complexity, experience, still not understanding very well, but much better than yesterday. I am grateful for sensibility to recognize when maybe we are struggling with some local or regional context, specific phenomena so thank you for that as well. It was very nice day.

- I am deep still in this. I want to share a bit of my thoughts with you. It goes in direction I feel that so much good work remains invisible, or easily dismissed, for various reasons and it loses its power for the way the organisations are organised, the way their internal structures are, because they are connected to name that is totally demonised, for a good reason or not. I feel we are all fighting for equality, for freedom, for democracy and there still we recognize the organisations by their directors on this chair for 25 years, I just feel, we should maybe diversify energy difference, also in different directions somehow. I feel it's such a waste, it's a pity, I mean, so much good work is done and I feel it is wasted for these reasons and it's a pity, it's not about personal things, it's not about personal sympathy, it's really a waste for our societies, it's drained this way. I am so sorry for that and it hurts me. This is where I am.

- I have a feeling that I am on the high level of training. For me the most beautiful moment was when U was saying about feminism in own language. So, thank you for that.

- I am also feeling like I am on a training. Usually I don't have opportunity, so I really enjoyed. I enjoyed this morning, with the barometer, but also your presentations and I am quite grateful for the complexity. I cannot say that I understood everything. I read the outlines that you have sent, and I had the feeling, each of these cases are so complicated. Still I understand much more, and it is really good experience now to link the faces with the whole stories. And I had a feeling when listened to B, at the end I think you said – don't think that all this has worked, there were lots of mistakes, and I thought, yes, now it starts to be interesting, starts the discussion now... but I also understand the concept that we need to have these presentation in 10 minutes, but still I hope that we can somehow continue with that. It is really interesting naming also mistakes and way how you identify success and failure. Overall I am impressed about the courage that J took for explaining us the desolation of Yugoslavia in front of historians. It was interesting to hear all your stories. Thank you.

- Now I am more curious. Thank you very much for this. It is very interesting to hear about your work and gives a window, a slight idea what it is like, very small idea, and it creates more curiosity, more questions, now I have more questions about context. I hope that I catch one of you, two or three, sit together and trouble you more with my questions.

- First I want to thank our friends from Bangladesh, India and Manipur, I learnt a lot from you today. It was really, really interesting. I actually realised how much I don't know. And I want to thank B for drawing this map, to J for trying to describe our troubles. And two things more. One is how it is interesting to me how my team behaves, it seems that they are really lacking the trainings so all of them behave like participants, the amount of time that they use... Other thing is that I realised that I am very happy with this group, that so many women or all women are present and I don't have to take role of encouraging women to speak, I can relax, and just listen. Thank you for that.

- I think the glass isn't always half empty, my glass is always half full. Probably that's just matter of position, let's to say amount of the water in the glass, but also we need air after all, so I think everybody feels good in this group and I think we are wonderful team, and mingling, as you were asking us to do, and maybe not as much still during dinners and lunches, but otherwise. Now a lot of curiosity may have been created to continue, so I really appreciate that and certainly I think bringing this people from this context together, alien context maybe, proves the right choice, because I think there are a lot of issues we can easy relate although we don't know many details, but patterns are still opportunities to relate and to learn from each other. Even the activities which I didn't know before, which I now start realising when it comes to activities base there are overlapped

and similarities and I appreciate. And I am getting a bit nervous because – oh my god, the workshop is too short. There is so much we could explore, talk about and document, so much to say. Luckily we are not the organiser. So anyway, this nervousness is also being excited about potentials of such exchange, and potentials of this wonderful group.

- It is really wonderful to be among all of you, everyone. I learnt something from everyone of you. In the first session “I agree – I don’t agree”, I was in process of thinking how I conduct the same with youth groups. It is going to be very helpful, because boys and girls from different communities, we have different perspectives, and it is going to be excellent task when I go back. Late in the evening when we did our presentation I feel that I am not able to explain good enough about my work... My husband always says that I always miss the most important part. It is very natural that I work with different communities. I was really listening to of what is presented, everyone has done a great job. I think our collective efforts will definitely enhance in different ways and I am really looking forward the strength among us.

B5. A summary of our theories of change 2 / Structures and strategy

Thursday, 31 March 2022, morning session

Presentations (continuation)

The Serbian National Council (Croatia)

The Serbian National Council is a national coordination of Serbs in Croatia, which was formed on the basis of the end of the war and the signing of a peace agreement. It is composed of councils of the Serbian national minority from the county, city and municipal levels and the central office in Zagreb. Council members are elected in minority elections for each level while the central office is staffed by professionals and professional services that seek to take care of all aspects of human rights guaranteed by minority constitutional law. It is primarily about the legal status of both returnees and those who have never left the country, but also about the status of civilian victims of war of non-Croatian nationality, and the prosecution of war crimes committed against Serb civilians in the warring territory and abroad.

The SNV’s co-operation with state institutions is further supported by the political potential that representatives of the Serb minority have three guaranteed seats in the Croatian parliament. In most cases, this meant a coalition of minority parties (not just Serbs) with right-wing parliamentary parties. Despite the value contradictions, these coalitions had Croatia’s entry into the EU for direct and strongest support. In the practical sense of the functioning of the SNV’s central office as well as coordination, this means covering a large number of topics related to the attitude towards history and peacebuilding, especially in areas that are still inhabited by Serbs.

One of the particularly important segments from the perspective of work on social change is the Independent Sprki weekly Novosti, which takes a critical perspective of investigative journalism in Croatia and beyond. The texts often deal with the political situation in the Republic of Serbia in a way that may seem contradictory, but the assumption is that Croatian society cannot progress if Serbian and Bosnian society do not stand well.

Also important is the segment of developing an inclusive and universal culture of remembrance that can include, above all, the human experience of suffering in war, either in the role of civilians or in the role of fighters. To that extent, the aim is to avoid an identity division that exclusively respects ethnicity and no other aspect of war and post-war everyday life. Therefore, councilors and representatives of the Serbian national minority seek to commemorate the innocent victims of all nations as well as to develop programs of culture of remembrance that excludes no one as in relation to the legacy of the Second World War. war and in relation to dealing with the causes and consequences of the 1991-1995 war.

One of the most important aspects of the fight for social change is certainly applied in private and intimate life as well as within social policies. It is a kind of minority pedagogy that is forced to be extra creative and open

in providing support to young members of vulnerable groups such as the Serb and Roma minorities in Croatia. Both in the private and in the public and school space, programs and strategies are needed that will protect young people from hate speech and discrimination in ethno and religiously exclusive education. Within the school system, national affiliation is treated not only as a value but as a life achievement, and all young people should be protected from nationalism and taught that pride on the one hand and shame on the other are completely unacceptable feelings about one's nationality.

Finally, the anti-fascist historical legacy is one of the most important platforms for the cooperation of those parts of society who understand social change beyond the commitment solely to statehood. The SNC not only develops its programs but often supports other actors or advocates for their interests at various institutional and political levels.

Some of the questions by other participants:

- What do you mean by critical disposition? You mean how you use this political power in this game?
- I have two questions: Who took the kids to Srebrenica, if I understood they were from Serbian Orthodox Church or Greek Orthodox Church, who sent them? You were there so is there Greek orthodox community? The other question is do you find yourself in projects also, in addition to receiving money from the state?
- I have a very short question, but intro to that question is quite long. Usually, culture is used or misused by politicians, especially in my country or countries. For example, Kosovo was autonomous territory within Yugoslavia, and then they wanted to become independent. I will ignore all other aspects and I will focus only on culture – was culture used or misused. At one time, all Albanians that live abroad were obliged to give 3% of their income for Kosovo cause, to become independent. It was going on for ten years at least. Even Albanian from Albania and Macedonia, but they didn't do this, it was on voluntary basis, but those who live abroad, they had obligation to give, before the war, during the nineties, from 1991 to 1999. So, what is my point? It became incubator for nationalism, for patriotic people, and it is still used in that way. For example, especially in Kosovo, they became a master of singing a song, singing a love song, and even today this is perceived like the most beautiful love song, but in fact it is very patriotic song about relation with Serbia. And everybody thought that it is very love song, but in fact it is about two people walking around Pristina and they dream about future, but the meaning of that is when we will be free from Serbia. And there are million of those. For example, I didn't know where are the borders of ethnic Albania, but because of a very patriotic song in Macedonia, Kosovo, Albania, I got to know that. So, sometimes culture is good, but sometimes it could be misused from others. How do you feel with these challenges? Not in the terms of peacebuilding, but in terms of having memory what have been done to us and what we need to do in future to regain power again. I don't know if it is clear, but...

Brot für die Welt (BfdW)¹

Goal: Development cooperation with church-related and other partner organisations in civil society of the Global South and engagement for just peace (also as a member of the international ecumenical network ACT Alliance)

Strategic Focus Areas:

1. New poverty and hunger crises: Fighting poverty, eradicating hunger, leaving no one behind
2. Climate change: Fostering the achievement of global climate goals, limiting the impacts of climate change, promoting climate justice
3. Violence, fragility and resource conflicts: Promoting peace efforts, mobilising civil society, remaining capable of action in fragile contexts
4. Empowerment and women's rights: Strengthening women's social position, securing women's rights and integrity, supporting international women's networks
5. Digital change: Enabling digital participation on a global scale, strengthening civil society in the digital world, enhancing digital empowerment

Principles & achievements:

- BfdW supports partner organisations mostly in DAC countries;² BfdW does not implement own projects,

1 Development Service of the Protestant Churches in Germany. Link: <https://www.brot-fuer-die-welt.de/en/bread-for-the-world/>

2 DAC= Development Assistance Countries

but responds to applications by partner organisations and maintains long-term partnerships in development, human rights and peace work.

- Strong networks for lobby initiatives and campaigns on national, EU- and international level
- Reputation and acceptance as a voice for peace building and prevention of violence and for protestant peace ethics based on “just peace”
- Theory of change: just peace: peace and civil, political, economic, social and cultural human rights complement each other

BfdW South Asia Unit

BfdW South Asia Unit supports partner organisations in South Asian countries in holistic approaches towards peace, justice and development.

- Focussed programme on strengthening local capacities for peace in South Asia since 2004, bringing peace activists from 4 countries together
- Networks and exchange programmes for promoting a learning environment
- Process orientation: cooperation goes beyond projects
- Promotion of South Asian feminist perspectives
- Long term perspective and commitment for cooperation
- Trust through longstanding personal relationships
- Using and combining different tools for support in order to increase effectiveness: Project funding; Collective international lobby and advocacy activities; Training/exposure; Consultancy support; Scholarships; Staff secondment; Networking; Accompaniment

BfdW – Policy Department

Human Rights & Peace Unit

Political analysis and lobby activities informed by regional programme officers and partner organisations; together with NGO networks, to influence discourse and policies on national, (EU-) and international level

- Rights-based approach aiming to change institutions and the international order
- Promoting „Human security“
- Priority of civilian instruments for crisis prevention and peace building
- Strengthening civil society
- Reducing arms export
- Human rights and peace work need to go together/support each other in a holistic understanding of peaceful development.

Activities: position papers, blogs & analysis, lobby papers, dialogue with politicians, NGO-campaigns emergency actions for partners in danger, for refugees and migrants

United NGOs Mission Manipur (UNMM)

Flipchart presented:

The intervention of UNMM in Manipur
„Peace, Democracy, HR and Rule of Law“

Why?

- People in Manipur / NE India are under Martial law of Armed Forces (Special Power) Act 1958. of decady for decades.
- Organising ethnic cleansing, genocides, mass atrocities, mass slaughter by Indian Army.
- Victims at the Centre.
- Racial discrimination.

Theory of change/strategies

- Managing UNMM as Network of NGOs across ethnic sub-nationalism/nationalism divide.
- Capacity Building on LCP, CT, DwP, UN mechanism.
- Alliance Building
- Lobby work at Indian, Germany, EU MPs and UN.

- Submission of Report to UN Treated Bodies and Special procedures.

- a. extra judicial/execution
- b. sexual violence
- c. land mine
- d. child soldier
- e. army in illegal trade
- f. HR defenders

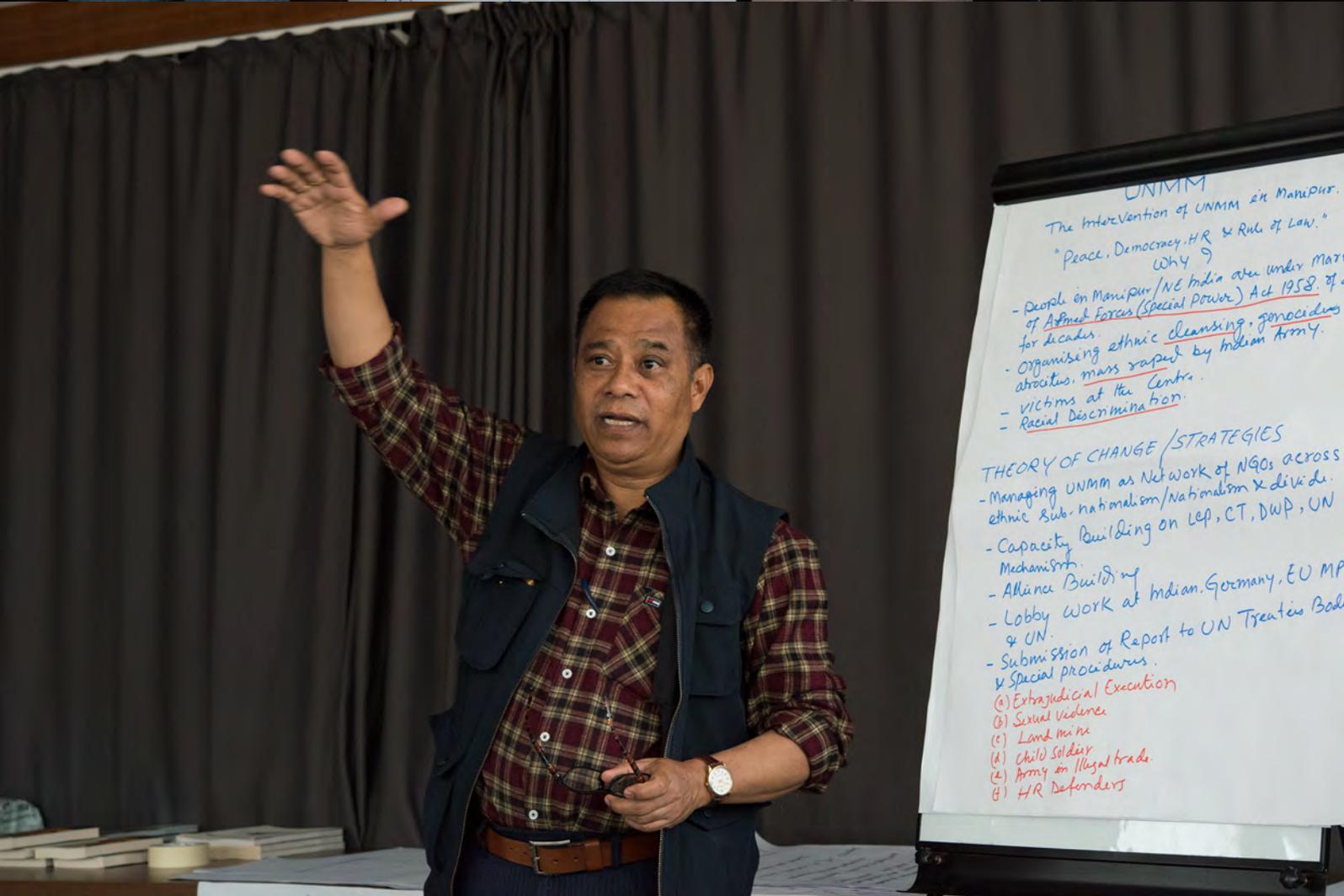
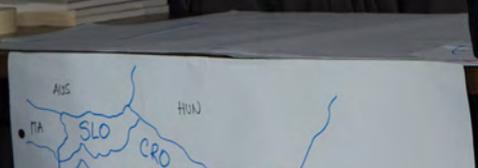
- Advocacy, nonviolent protest against mass atrocities. Sexual violence against military of state and non-state

- Legal action against Indian Army in SE
- Monitoring of peace negotiation
- Economic interest of India under in Military occupation of AGSPA



Bfdw South Asia

- Focussed programme on strengthening local capacity for peace in South Asia
- Networks and exchange learning environment
- Process oriented, not just proj
- Long term perspective and committed for cooperation
- trust and personal relationships
- Using different tools for support orders to increase effectiveness:
 - funding
 - support for lobby and advocacy
 - training / exposure
 - consultancy support
 - ...



UNMM

The Intervention of UNMM in Manipur.
 "Peace, Democracy, HR & Rule of Law."

- Why?
- People in Manipur/NE India are under Martial Law of Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act 1958 for decades.
 - Organising ethnic cleansing, genocides, atrocities, mass raped by Indian Army.
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THEORY OF CHANGE / STRATEGIES

- Managing UNMM as Network of NGOs across ethnic sub-nationalism/Nationalism & divide
- Capacity Building on Lep, CT, DWP, UN Mechanism.
- Alliance Building
- Lobby work at Indian, Germany, EU MP & UN.
- Submission of Report to UN Treaty Body & Special Procedures.
- (a) Extrajudicial Execution
- (b) Sexual Violence
- (c) Land mine
- (d) Child Soldier
- (e) Army in Illegal trade
- (f) HR Defenders

Some of the questions by other participants:

- The conflict is still ongoing? And the Marshall law is still in place? And despite of that you manage to put some soldier on trial. How come? According to which law? There is a Marshall law which grants amnesty to soldiers who killed other people, and yet you succeeded putting them to trial, so how come, which law they were trialled?
- I want to ask about children – soldiers, do you have them, and do you have some kind of programme about that issue?
- Geneva Call, maybe you shortly need to explain Geneva Call...
- This is an organisation, this is the international humanitarian law, for state actors, not for non-state actors, so Geneva Call was founded by governments, by different governments like Norway, and so on. It is founded to provide the same guidelines also for non-state actors, so they are going to meet all these rebel groups and local armies, and ask them to sign an agreement which is not official, but they say – yes we will obey by all these rules, they negotiate with them and monitor that also. Because the all non-state actors actually didn't feel obliged to follow the Geneva Convention because Geneva Convention is only for state actors. Geneva Call is trying to do parallel voluntary system, which relates to non-state. It is organisation, a kind of institution, which tries to adapt to the fact that today most of the violent actors are non-state.

Centre for Nonviolent Action (CNA)

Flipchart presented:

Goals:

- capacity building for peace
- prevention of war
- deconstruction of enemy images
- cross-border cooperation
- inclusive memory
- conflict transformation
- nonviolence
- Practice what we preach (aim to)
- We belong to everybody.

Way:

- non-hierarchical
- fostering memory that contributes to peacebuilding

- engaging hard to reach groups
- building alliances vs. Unlike minded ones
- cross-border and enemy inclusive approach
- mobilising potential multipliers for PB
- we are not neutral and objective, we are mixed locals
- bottom to top approach
- training/publication/research
- not project formatted work
- PB is not linear process
- We believe in change, reject defeat
- We treat people as equals and learn from them
- We may do harm – aware of that

Reflections to presentations

Two wallpapers:

- Most important impressions
- Open questions remaining.

Most important impressions

- Need reflection and exchange more often
- Taking away the fear of change
- Managing common ground with different context e.g. gender issue
- Tension field between local and allegedly objective international expertise
- Missing link of universities/academics and peacebuilding
- Empower, feeling the need one was not aware of „dealing past wounds“ retransmits the society

Open questions remaining

- Dealing with anticipation of accusation of corruption (+relationships)
- Taking away the fear of change
- If there are any formal peace networks?
- To learn more about divided schools and curricula, informal programme have any impact
- How to make allies in a majority group (in context of mistrust and prejudices)
- How to publicly shame academic institutions for nationalist narratives etc..?
- More on with the dealing with the past
- What international institutions are available for minority groups in situations of violence?
- When we will visit South Asia?

Barometer

Statements:

- Efficiency must be a first priority organisational guideline.
- Accountability is created by clear hierarchical structures.
- Women leaders proved to be more successful in peacebuilding.
- Organisational efficiency decreases with inclusion of enemies.

Method: Prepare statements beforehand based on the topic. Determine two “poles” (end positions) in the room: for instance, you can put up flipchart papers on opposite ends of the room with *Agree* written on one and *Disagree* on the other. Between these two poles is a progression of positions. The trainer reads the first statement and the participants arrange themselves along the barometer to reflect their attitude, i.e. degree of agreement or disagreement with the statement. A number of participants then explain why they took their particular position. The explanations are given from one end of the barometer to the other, but the direction of movement (from Agree to Disagree and the other way around) may be switched from statement to statement. Then the next statement is read out.

It is important not to comment on what others have said, but instead to try and articulate our own opinion, without expressing agreement or disagreement with other people along the barometer. The trainer leading the exercise should not ask questions or engage the participants in dialogue. The aim of the barometer method is not to find the right solution, but to exchange opinions and come to understand that seemingly proximate positions can be based on completely different considerations, just as seemingly diverse attitudes can be based on similar starting points, and that endeavouring to understand others is key to identifying similarities and differences.

Statement: “Efficiency must be a first priority organisational guideline.”

- Efficiency? What do you mean by efficiency?
- What I understood is that you are organised on time, you send a report, everything is on time, without looking at the quality. Not without looking, but compromising. For example, we are organising a programme, we want thirty people, live presentation from different critical communities. And many times they cannot come to the programme. But we have thirty participants, we have content, everything, write a report.
- It can be appreciated, but it does not reach the goal what you are. It cannot be the only criteria.
- My personal experience is that you don't have to be efficient at the very beginning. I learn by doing, and you still learn, and you become efficient with the causes. Efficiency will come as you grow.
- The way the statement is phrased, “number one priority,” I am close to one hundred percent “I don't agree.” But I don't completely disagree, because I think that efficiency is important in our work. It is important to set up milestones, to know how efficient you are. But I would never call it number one. The process, people that I work with... Sometimes I would spend lots of time with a specific person, which leads nowhere, but still, it is a good work. In some measurement it would not be efficient work, but in my measurement, it may show fruitful later. Sometimes not reaching the goal, but sometimes it is important just to be present in some process with some people.
- I would distinguish between efficiency and effectiveness. Efficiency is doing works in the most cost-effective manner, as little resources as possible. Effectiveness is reaching the goal. And sometimes reaching the goal, being effective, cannot be done in efficient way.



- I also see difference between effectiveness and efficiency. Effectiveness is also about impact, and the efficiency is how you balance your resources. For me, it is not just to do it in cost effective way, in terms of economic thinking. It is to be sure that what you are doing, is exactly what you can do the best, and that it makes sense, and you do it in a way that you don't lose your energy, and somehow try to prevent burnout. It may be also splitting up things, in a way that you put up your priorities. I think efficiency in that sense is very important, but I wouldn't put it in the first priority. It comes out of process of organisation, and people find ways to do that or not.
- I am more towards "I agree," because efficiency is in connection with time. I am writing projects for the organisation I am working for, and when I write projects it is maybe a perfect plan, in a maximised way, putting in everything valuable to do. And then fragmentation comes, we face obstacles, you cannot do everything that you wanted to do. It is in connection to planning, which was missing. Proper planning must be done, not only on project level, but on the programme level too. Not only yearly, annually, but more often to have a strategic plan, which can be revised, of course, but to have some kind of guidelines. So, effectiveness would be how well you are implementing your plan.
- I am more with this "I agree," not because I don't agree with anything you have said so far, but from another perspective of someone who is trying to do project management, and reporting, especially to the donors. Everything we do is measured by some indicators and if you don't complete or meet that, then you are not efficient, you are not doing thing what you are supposed to do. We live in a world where everything is measured by numbers, even the number of likes on your Facebook posts. So, in this world, I need to be efficient in terms of the costs. I had the situation, I dealt with some situation for quite some time, and effect was good at the end, but because of the people that are measuring what is written somewhere, it turned not to be so good. So, I give a report with numbers. The most international organisations are doing that now, so you need to have narrative report, which is explanation, etc, but you have narrative report that is basically statistical report. From that perspective, I think that is important if I need to have a lot of projects and to work.

Statement: "Accountability is created by clear hierarchical structures."

- I have a different experience. For example, within our organisation, where we are five or six people working for more then 20 years together, this is not needed. We don't need any hierarchy because we have certain responsibilities, and it somehow becomes part of us. But in some organisations, where interpersonal relationships are not on the level that probably should be, you need to have some hierarchy in order to find who is responsible for what at the time.
- I can agree that horizontal management or horizontal way of working can be more beneficial than vertical one, which in fact is hierarchy. I saw both positive and negative examples. I saw organisations which are struggling with it, they want to preserve that type of work, but really struggling. It is better way of work, but some kind of mechanism needs to be in place to ensure that everybody understands what the responsibility in their area of work is, and what is the concept of the responsibility for them.
- Peace Action tries to be horizontal organisation, and in most of the groups I have been active through my life, almost all, were horizontal. Struggle was always to deal with informal structures, like somebody is more powerful whether by being there longer, whether due to agenda, etc. It is really important to take care of this informal hierarchy being present and other challenges, but I would never say the accountability has to be result of the hierarchical structure, absolutely not. I am not standing 100% on "I don't agree" because, many times, horizontal structure means everybody is responsible and nobody is responsible. So, having clear ideas who is responsible for what is also helping to diminish burnout, but also safer environment for everybody, everybody knows who to address for issues and specific decision making. It can be challenging, but just the contrary thing: accountability comes from less hierarchical structures. Now I feel we walk the talk.
- I work in a very vertically structured organisation. The only worse thing than that would be denying it and saying „we are very horizontal“, which is happening and I don't like it. I really like very straight form, clear orientation. If you are running the organisation, and you are charismatic leader, then lets say it that way. Another thing, we have a political party in Croatia, workers' party, Workers' Front, and it is based on horizontal structure, but at the same time, they have informal charismatic leader, and it's obvious who are leaders. It should be honest. Of course, it is a political party, but I would prefer less manipulation with that. So, I am a little bit confused, I am not sure.
- I worked in a very vertical institution for twenty years and this is no guarantee of responsibility. This is usually how it plays out, this is my experience, there is hierarchy of power, so I am a leader, but I will transform my responsibility to the those less fortunate who work for me. So, this is very important to have in mind when we are speaking about hierarchy. And also, I have a fortune to have completely other experience, that responsibility is much more easily assigned when you are working in a horizontal structure. There are some mechanisms

that keep you constantly aware of your responsibility since if you don't do your part of the work, you will put your team colleagues in trouble. So, if you can live with that, okay, but you won't last for long in that kind of horizontal structures. So, for me, it is much more in line with taking responsibility than hierarchical structures.

- Most of it is said already. For me, it would be somehow a defeat to say that people cannot assume their responsibility, unless someone controls them to do so. For me, it's a thing of being with equals and working together gives me great pleasure to share this responsibility. So, it is very important to know exactly who is in charge for what, but in the same time it is important to have it incorporated that if it is too much for you, you have someone to rely, you are working with other people, you have the freedom to shout – I can't manage this, so we can reschedule our tasks what ever it is. And it is not only about work, it is how you work with one another, and this is a perspective that is very important. In a way it protects you from burn out, not necessary fully, but it is the feeling that you are not on your own.

Statement: "Women leaders proved to be more successful in peacebuilding."

- Actually, I don't want to stay at extreme „I agree“, but I agree on the statement. One of my small experiences... During this ethnic conflict, when it comes to subside violent conflict and when we come together as women, to go to different communities, even if they are not ready to accept our statement or argument, they will at least be prepared to listen, mothers are coming, women are coming, so in that way, we were able to break very strict restrictions between different communities, entering the village. I am not very religious person, but we took church as one of the excuses. I was one of the youngest, and the only young person in that group, they called it mother group. So, we invited some women, let's say elder women, Kuki women to speak in Naga's church. And Naga leaders who are women will speak in Kuki church. More than 17 different communities, only women, come together. I was one of the founding members of this organisation. It was going well, and it was one of the biggest events after all this blood shed. Also, on Mother's Day we organised an event where we invited religious leaders, and community leaders, and that day there was a lot of cries, there was a lot of laughing too. Women intervene, and not just because they forgive, or they forget, it is basically "women are coming, show some respect."
- Even though women are perceived like born peace makers, it is not always the case. Women are also within patriarchy system. They may act in very harmful ways because there are other interests they are intitled to. They are not given peace makers.
- I don't agree with this statement. I frequently hear people making this kind of statement. It depends on the perception of the society, as a whole. For example, we even have the prime minister woman, we have other women ministers in Bangladesh, but we don't see any initiatives by them, because, as U said, they are part of the system. They can not do anything, even sometimes they do more harm than men.
- If the statement would be "statistically women are..." then I would probably agree. But it sounds like it is a fact, it cannot be changed, so I totally disagree.
- It is about women as leaders. I am really convinced that there are many places where women approach is much more successful, that's the reason they must be included, and we must look at the context and where they can be more powerful. But I've done so many evaluations, especially in the Balkans, and another places, and I have met women as leaders, who were as chaotic as men, or as problematic, in their style of guiding people. Women are not automatically better than men.

Statement: "Organisational efficiency decreases with inclusion of enemies.."

- Just contrary. I am not going to be stuck with word efficiency specifically, but in broader sense, that way organisation gives more credibility to the work and specifically to internal dialogue and analysis of conflict within organisation.
- It could influence the efficiency in a sense that it could close some doors. Maybe those doors shouldn't be open, or some alliances shouldn't be made anyway, but then again, you will again knock on that door, and then it will take longer time. Regarding what we are trying to do, what change we are trying to establish in the society, I completely disagree.
- I can think of situations when it was impossible to make joint decision, on very painful events, going around us that triggered some of the memory of war, and it was hard. It was at beginning of our development. So that's why I am not there completely. I think on a long run it enriches you and makes you stronger. But it is part of development, that you can also feel less empowered, or unable to find a common ground in periods.
- In our case, we are conflicting with the government and also the majority groups who have the power. So, if you include them, you can't do anything, you must obey to what they want. You will be helpless. It's good that

we include the enemy, but it depends, we should engage with them, we should work with them, but sometimes it is really challenging. It depends on the context.

- Definitely the process will be going slower. And I agree absolutely that it will increase the general capacity of the organisation. But, in short term, it will be much harder to reach something, and especially in terms of decision making. We must make joint decision, and to agree to that decision with enemy... probably the process will go very slowly, and it will be inefficient in those terms.

Small groups: Structures & strategy

Participants are divided into four small groups: two groups consist of people from South Asia, two consist of people from Balkan. The task is to exchange and note on flipcharts the following:

What bothers you in organisational structures and organisational strategies in the field of peacebuilding in regard to issues of

- enemies,
- minorities,
- gender?

This is followed by brief presentations of prepared flipcharts with the possibility of questions for clarification.

(Presentations were completed during the afternoon workshop.)

Asian group I

Organisational structures

- Forced to employ staff from majority community
- Military, armed groups monitoring of project / activities
- Positive discrimination
- Reaching out and representation of gender minorities
- Representation of discriminated caste, ethnic minorities... non-existent or very little.

Organisational strategies

- Difficulty to come to a common ground / understanding
- Mis-use/mis-information about knowledge and trust
- Building next gen. gender sensitive leadership
- Dilemma between orgs duties and religious duties

Asian group II

Organisational structures

- Inclusion of women, other minorities in decision making processes, political parties
- Ensuring the committee to deal on gender issues
- Developing forums/groups to with state and non-state actors (creating spaces).

Organisational strategies

- Strengthening capacities to deal with govt. and non-state actors
- Engaging with govt. actors
- Inclusion of non lps + minorities – mix groups, mix activities
- Capacity building and empowerment of minority communities
- Providing spaces/supports for raising the unheard voices, concerns
- Promote gender mainstreaming within the govt. and other institutions.



Balkan group I

Organisational structures

- Played diversity („it does not matter what our identity is“)
- It is hard in an ethnic minority group to raise issue or be aware of gender
- Lack of work with our enemies: ruling authorities
- Lack of focus on minorities that do not belong to warring ethnicities (Roma, Jews, etc)
- Being annoyed with evaluators narrowed expectations that we should include more women in work with ex-combatants
- Difficult to keep accountability in processes that require discretion

Organisational strategies

- Played diversity („it doesn't matter what our identity is“)
- Absence of awareness and need to work with settlers
- Lack of focus on minorities that do not belong to warring ethnicities (Roma, Jews, etc)
- No strategy on gender (among minorities)
- Not using/exploring women's everyday life during war

Balkan group II

Organisational structures

- Proforma structures to satisfy donor propositions
- Hostile attitude towards „enemies“
- Hostile/insensitive language towards „enemies“
- Non-negotiable attitudes / political views
- Not being a model, not applying standards your organisation lobbies for
- Tolerating violence although being an advocate for human rights
- Abusing power in hierarchical setup
- Vulnerability to unreasonable demands of donors
- Only one person can speak publicly for the organisation
- Not supporting to members from minority group, calculating...
- You get pregnant, you should resign
- You get it...

Organisational strategies

- Fake/pro forma strategies for presentation purposes only
- Hostile attitude toward „enemies“ – hostile insensitive language
- Exclusion of women experience non-existence of gender-based strategies
- Selective approach to victims based on perceived collective guilt
- Doing things not directly connected to organisation mission
- Applying gender balance in veteran's work
- Donors create and prevent org. strategies
- Compromising different values with strategies of partner organisations

B6. Role of (supporting) external actors

Thursday, 31 March 2022, afternoon session

Why do they support us?

Brainstorming: Why do external actors we work with support us?

- | | | |
|---|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">- They have money and we ask for it- Common interest showed- Expertise and policy making: extend positive power, get important information, personal relationship, security and economic interest | <ul style="list-style-type: none">- We can deliver services other can not- Because we need it: we share one world, we are cheaper and faster, tax execution, belonging to the same group- Common ideology- Part of their mission | <ul style="list-style-type: none">- They partner with us for our efficiency- Political interest- Global responsibility to implement int. Charta- They're showing off, buying positive image |
|---|---|--|

- Continue support in order not to admit failure
- They believe in a need to strengthen society and social change
- Wish and belief to strengthen partners and social change
- Solidarity – global responsibility and meets mandate
- Bad conscience

Small groups: External actors

Participants are divided into three mixed groups. The task is to exchange and note on a flipchart their answers to these two questions:

- Supporting aspects of the cooperation with external actors. What do we experience as real support?
- What do we experience as troublesome practices or cooperation with external actors?

Group Mosquito

Supporting aspects

- Transparency procedures
- Asking golden questions
- Trainings, increasing capacities, sharing knowledge
- Being encouraged to develop useful policies
- Visibility
- Security
- Empowering
- Networking
- Feeling of not being alone
- Internationalization of key questions
- Long term thinking (process thinking)

Troublesome practises

- Telling us what we should do and how
- Express something creative in very generic way (depersonalised)
- Bureaucracy
- Unavailable/not easy to access
- Non transparent/hidden agenda
- Demands to display flags etc.
- Insensitiveness
- Lack of knowledge about local culture
- Hiding behind local structures
- Neoimperialism (too many middle people)
- Short term thinking
- Project thinking
- Frequent staff changes
- Too much result orientated
- Statistics instead of contents
- Quantity and not quality

Group Spider

Supporting aspects

- Gives independence of state influence
- Some donors have good understanding of conflict context
- Have more different or distant view on our context -> enhances self reflection
- External authors can make our voices to be heard in international forum and own political government forum
- Transferring knowledge
- Economic and political leaders may also help to support de-escalation interest specific circumstances
- External authors can enhance /make it easier to evolve/engage our government representatives in activities
- Global networking for peace

Troublesome practises

- Often donors have own expectations (insensitive to the conflict context/lack of analysis/local needs)
- External actors (companies/states) have own interests (resources, geopolitical economic) harm life and perspectives of indigenous people
- Donors are often focusing on short term support, but peacebuilding needs long term support
- CSOs that receives money from abroad can be perceived as prolong arms of external actors
- International/external actors accept agenda and change programs in circle to avoid conflict



Group Bees

Supporting aspects

- Producing social change
- Strengthening capacities (finances)
- Improve human rights
- Enhancing networking and lobbying
- Protection/empowering
- Promoting democracy
- Enabling go space
- Provide expertise/training

Troublesome practises

- Perceived as foreign puppets
- Dependency
- Increased surveillance by government
- Additional regulatory norm for CO
- Insensitive to local context
- Project intervention vs long term approach
- Interfering and rigid creating huge local NGO

External actors: Who should change what in supporting policies?

Plenary talk. Ideas collected on a flipchart.

- Less bureaucracy
- SOS lines to report complains; complaint mechanism, remedies
- Education of donors
- Institutional memory within donors
- Donors should rely on local resources and analysis
- Develop hand over rules, that are also personal
- Training of donors' staff (including HQ's) on do no harm, reflecting on peace practices – constant process including training in the field
- Expose & document harmful practices of external actors/donors
- Develop policy for receiving funds
- Better coordination of donors
- Include donors in field activity
- Process orientation, acknowledge difficult and contradictory steps
- Adapt proportions of given support and own PR costs
- Choose donors prepared for long term partnerships
- Break long term programmes in smaller steps
- Have an organisational strategy
- Self milestones as results
- Win donors to look into their evaluation practices, make it a joint learning process
- Develop culture of feedback to donors / 2 way
- Solidarity among NGO's, especially towards those who have no access to funds
- Develop organisational policies and analysis
- Create partnerships with donors
- Invest resources in org. development (donors should support that)
- Donors should distinguish dedicated organisations
- Code of conduct and evaluation of it
- Joint action towards local government, multi stakeholder effort

Closing round

Everybody has either three words to express themselves, or a gesture.

- Excellent.
- Must be three words or less?
- I am okay.
- Good, very good.
- Good, very good, excellent.
- Many words – fine.
- Tired.
- Excellent day.
- Very constructive day.
- Two beautiful butterflies.
- Very good pictures.
- This is mosquito language.
- Guilt, I spoke too much today.
- Enjoying my birthday.
- Excellent, well done.
- (like)
- (clap)
- :)



B7. Burnout

Friday, 1 April 2022, morning session

Good morning

Burnout: Symptoms & Causes

Brainstorming.

Burnout symptoms

- Impatience
- Fear
- Depression
- Irritation
- Frequent anger
- Trauma
- Helplessness
- Short temper
- Lack of motivation
- Tremble
- Constant self-criticism
- Moody
- Non functional behaviour
- Withdrawal
- Auto pilot
- Exhaustion
- Disgust
- Self pity
- Euphoria
- Mind fog
- Destructive behaviour (ourselves/others)
- Irrational overthinking
- Deprivation
- Isolation
- Too much pressure
- Lack of self confidence
- Perfectionism
- Addictions

Burnout causes

- Gaslighting
- Trauma
- Unreasonable expectations
- Helplessness
- Humiliation observed and experienced
- No supervision
- Overwork
- Nondemocratic organisation structure
- Authoritarian leader
- Lack of recognition
- Lack of solidarity
- Mobbing
- Lack of functional union
- Lack of security
- Uncertain context
- High commitment
- Idealism
- Too much pressure
- Culture where overworking is praised
- No safe space
- Overload
- Lack of capacities
- Competitive surrounding
- Constant multi-tasking
- No need assessment
- No psychological support
- Lack of feedback
- Explosion to the contagious burn out
- Perfectionism
- Addictions

Burnout: Lessons learnt

Work in three small groups. Exchange on burnout and it's effects on organisations. Collecting lessons learnt on flipcharts.

Group 1

- Team solidarity may help
- Clear responsibilities
- Protect other people in the organisation
- Discuss and share problems
- Sometimes you can not help
- Do not allow to slip into the role of doctors
- Set up support structure outside organisation
- Adapt and improve organisational structure
- Flexible working hours
- Feedback, SWAT analysis
- Avoid high stress exposure or limit
- Serious formats of appraisal

Group 2

- Cause: „Working against your own people“
- Internal pressures should be channelled/shared with the team, so they can offer support
- Including unforeseen and invisible tasks into the planning
- Making boundaries to unrealistic expectations
- Constantly raising the issue of burnout and training for prevention of burnout
- Personally making a boundary, taking mental brake
- Educating leaders about burnout
- Mainstreaming discussion on prevention of burnout in wider peace community
- Put a psychological support for staff in the budget
- Institutionalised survey on psychological pressures in the organisation (annual)
- Donors to openly discuss challenges of burnout with their partners

Group 3

- It is others who recognize your burnout
- Burnout can be consequence or the cause of the mobbing (power structure)
- Women are more exposed
- Possibly there will be a moment when you just give up / 1 can not save everybody
- Try to recognize early warnings
- Be aware of the possible effects of context frustrations
- Lack of support for decision making positions
- Speaking about it in a private or professional environment
- Not prevented burnout can generate conflicts or at least misunderstanding and spoil relationship
- Establishing crisis procedure → advanced protocol, culturally appropriate → educating for it
- Times for reflecting (often)
- Additional educating (never enough)
- Retreats
- Learning, listening, expressing (trainings)
- Support of the colleagues is very important in situations of mobbing and burnout
- Be nice, be gentle to yourself and others

Fishbowl

The Fishbowl is a method for discussing a topic or making a decision. The participants sit in a circle with four (to six) chairs placed in the middle of the circle to represent the “fishbowl”. During the exercise, only the people sitting in the fishbowl may speak. When someone wants to speak, they should approach the middle of the circle and touch the shoulder of the person they want to replace in the fishbowl. The person in the fishbowl may finish their sentence, but must then stand up and give their spot to the new speaker. A person who did not get a chance to speak in the “fishbowl” should not be replaced. The training team does not facilitate this process, except to warn the participants that time is running out.

For this fishbowl participants marked their priorities among different statements. Two statements were discussed:

- Digging the past wounds retraumatizes our society.
- Every people has the right to secede.

“Digging the past wounds retraumatizes our society”.

- I think that the past definitely retraumatizes our society. These graveyards here... Next generation also can see these graves, and they can learn, and it retraumatizes. I don't know how we can heal the trauma of this what society did to us... because we have also in our community this kind of sad stories, sad history, so how can we deal with this digging? Also I saw your book: the war of memories. I was thinking, memories of war or war of memories, which one? I need to read the book, but it is confusing me.
- We have named it intentionally because we feel that there is ongoing war, cold war, using memory. Remembrance of the war became in a way a tool to spread hatred and to continue the war against the others by using this memory. That is very destructive way of dealing with the past. Therefore, I think, working on the past has potential to be very destructive, to retraumatise, but it also has potential to heal, it depends on how you deal with the past.

- I agree that people can be retraumatized when we are dealing with the past, but I think it's necessary to be done and you need to do it in a proper way. Dealing with the past can be used or misused. We need to be careful. There will be much more trauma if we try to forget something, especially in our context. In fact, I believe that we are those who we are because of our past. Sometimes we are not happy with our past, but that is our past and we have to face it.
- I think that past is always an object of political fight and of establishing the key political actors. And if you say that it's too much trouble with facing the past than you're leaving this to the probably the most non-responsible ones, political actors, who will misuse it for their own purpose, which we are seeing in our context. In my work we try to develop the most responsible "do no harm" approach with dealing with the past of the 20th century, in a context of Serbo-Croatian relationship. I prefer now not to speak about my experience but to tell you short song that I wrote as a consequence of doing this for 10 years and more. It goes in English, it's really short, don't be afraid: "If you forget the past, you will remember future." I suppose I wanted to say if you don't know how to learn from the past, if you don't find it as a knowledge, you will not be able to influence the future of your generation, and the next one. There is history of social injustice and if you call it "digging", and not recognise the injustice, its victims, and the pain of these victims, then it would be denied, and people will always have something to share privately with their kids, and not publicly, and those kids will grow up with the rage, with an anger, with the pain, that could be easily misused. In the war in the nineties it was like that. So I don't want to remember the future and I want to remember the past.
- From my perspective, I know for sure that we cannot agree on the past and its consequences. Sometimes, even if we don't agree about so many things, having the different opinion or having the different perspective about some issue, about some situation, it's a step in dealing with the past. I was telling in my presentation about those history books that have two version of one event, so even if we can't agree about the past, maybe we can just hear the other versions of that event.
- Allowing multiple views of the past is already step forward. But most often this dominant approach is selective. Our side would have dominant narrative that avoids mentioning injustice committed in our name. The others will do the same. So if we just say, include this and have it inclusive, it's not sufficient for me, I would actually like to see alternative way that has not been selective, depending on who are the victims, who are the perpetrators. Stop collectivising this, these narratives in such way. If the approach is: we shouldn't talk about the past, we should look in the future, yes, we could stop doing that. But the fact is that it happens every day around us: if you read newspapers, if you look in media, in our families, it is constantly there, this interpretation of the past. It's overwhelming in a way, and it is very selective, it's a dominant narrative, usually replicated. I feel that actions arising from this non-selective are being well accepted. I think about, what L says, it's impossible to have a joint view of the past... I think it's not; I think it's very, very difficult, very far away, but don't think it's impossible.
- I just want to share that actually we had a quite opposite approach after the World War II, that communist party at one point said that we should put everything under the carpet, we will have just one narrative, victorious narrative about partisans, who fought for their homeland, and that narrative was like let's look into bright future, we should work for our future. Actually, when system collapsed, everything what was under that carpet went out. A lot of that from under the carpet has been used as a sort of gasoline for new war. Definitely we can say that this approach, where we should put everything under the carpet, is not successful.
- I don't find dealing with the past nice and easy job to do. It's hard, it hurts, it's complicated, but it might be very, very fruitful. I have two main sources of motivation to work on it. One is that I see that we cannot reach reconciliation if we at least don't have some recognition and acknowledgement of victims of all sides. And the other reason is that I am absolutely afraid how past is misused by different ideologies and political options, who mass up, raise heat, make tensions among people, and it has to be stopped. These are the two reasons why I am in it.
- It is possible to talk about passed events in a multi-perspective. Even in personal life, two of us can remember differently the same event and both views can be presented in a joint view. Digging the past retraumatizes our society. Many people here spoke about distractive ways in which it is done. We bear the responsibility to do it constructively, even on personal level. We have obligation to close that opening, in a human manner, with compassion. For example, sometimes we get a fantastic interview from a person, first time opening, and he or she tells everything. And then after that, he or she sleeps over, calls us the next day: "I don't feel okay with what we recorded yesterday. I had nightmares, I really wouldn't like to do it publicly." We always said okay, we just erase the interview and go for another one. We are not seeking for the sensation, but we want to stay with the person, and that person in some time may feel empowered to be more strong next time. Sometimes the damage is done with good intentions, as well, like, great, I have a great story, people start talking and then go to the newspapers, but the damage might have been done and people will not talk again.
- Dealing with the past is very important. There are differences in Indian context, what is happening today. The ruling regime is the political outfit that openly praised the Nazis, Mussolini's ideology of race and



superhumanity. Looking into the Moguls and time of intervening to the Hindus, converting Hindus into Muslim, chopping their heads... That's becoming very fresh, vividly coming in the mind of these Hindu leaders. Now they are preparing response from the perspective of one nation, one religion. One nation in India is Hindu nation, the religion is Hindu. Indian military is the largest trained military in the world. That force is very strongly coming with political forces in India. These forces may come back to power on elections in 2025. They may announce emergencies, and then many Muslims and other minorities, even the Hindu minorities, will have problem. So, this was a mistake, people did not deal with the past constructively, positively. And now we have to face it.

- I will talk about context of Kuki and Naga. There are some leaders who would say: you want another 1990's, you want 1990's to be back. If "digging" is in that perspective, then it becomes really a problem. But as many of us have mentioned, how do we talk about the past with constructive approach? We also suffer, but how do we deal the past in order not to happen again. So if that is the concept of digging the past, it will definitely bring more sensitivity between us, sensitivity in the sense trying to be more sensible to other parties. I think, my true and your true, my justice and your justice might be different, as we all discussed. But the fact, black is black, remembering the fact, instead of keeping under the carpet. Keeping under the carpet makes sometime burn out in a very destructive way. Talking about past, in more constructive perspective, will be helpful.

- In digging the past, the issue is whose pain, trauma and tragedy is greater. Is your tragedy and trauma greater than mine? Or my tragedy and trauma is greater than yours? There are always tendencies to say: my pain is bigger, my loss is greater. And therefore the injustice that happened to me is far bigger. It is important that we don't turn on blind eye on the past, and that we recognise what happened in the past. I think that society, in a very organic, natural way, does it on its own. Over a period of time families and community do deal with the past, not only with bitterness. I have a feeling that there is a simultaneous process of healing that happens in society, naturally. So, I think we should also recognise that society heals itself over a period of time.

- Thank you for this additional perspective. Here in the Balkans we are fighting, we are dealing with exactly what S was just saying. This is a competition of who is the greater victim which is politically misused, so now we are living in a state of hierarchy of victims in a sense that you have victims which are, I would say, accepted as such and victims which are unpopular and those are the victims of those who are being perceived as perpetrators. Somehow their victims are not equal to ours. This is political setup that we are living in, and that somehow keep us apart. This is my experience from visiting commemorations and talking to the victims' family, sometimes all it takes is just to acknowledge someone's suffering and loss. And by doing that, it immediately creates situation that suddenly heavy burden is lifted. So, now they don't have to hide their pain and they don't feel frustrated, which they were because their pain was unrecognised. Then immediately there is an opening in micro social context which leads to reconciliation. It is really important for those people to really see that there is somebody else who recognises what they suffered and how they survived. Now we have this situation in Ukraine, and the reflections of that war was somehow transferred to our war. For example, if we haven't been talking about what happened 30 years ago, if there was no international tribunal, if there were not facts established, at this point, we would have another war. Because people started to really transfer themselves in situation of war in Ukraine, and see themselves in a position of Ukrainians, or the Russians. So at least I hope for now in the Balkans, everybody realised that it's really necessary to speak about such thing.

- Digging the past wounds will traumatise the whole society. I think it's always a risk. Question is very much – how it is done, whether it is done in a way that raises a lot of conflict and potential violence. I also agree with L's statement, you said that it is necessary to do it, because it's one of basic preconditions for reconciliation. I remember N's statement that joint view is possible, and L also said something in that direction. And I don't want anyone to overload own self with trying to achieve a situation where joint view of the past is created, because I think it is impossible. There was an important statement by Alex Boraine, he was leading the South Africa's Truth and Reconciliation Commission and he was also director of important think-tank. He said that the precondition for reconciliation is that a society, which has gone through atrocities, was to set up a certain set of facts which cannot be denied. And apart from that, it is necessary to accept different views on the past and to create a sort of empathy for accepting that. So, I think that it makes sense to work for that, but not to overwhelm myself with the idea to create a joint perspective on the past.

- I want to refer to what you said M, I actually disagree. I think it is very, very easy to make a joint view on the violent past and if me and L would go at it, I am absolutely convinced about my intentions, it has to have an honest and fair view of the events, and I absolutely trust L's intention to do the same. Therefore, we'll sit together and do our best to produce it and to include other people as well. It is very simple if precondition is trust and intention. I am not speaking about social level, I just want to say it's easy, if you actually want to do it. To achieve that on the social level, it is something I don't want to... But I don't want to give up this vision, that this is maybe something worth striving towards. Depends on who is doing it, with what intentions. I mean we really shouldn't make a fuss out of it. There is a lot of selectiveness and hidden agendas, and intentions to be

selective, to make certain group look better or so, this is what makes it impossible. If you are free of that, then it's very easy.

- I would just say it's very ambitious. Of course it is possible that you get in touch with people in personal setting that you will agree on those joint views of the past, but to expect that it happens on social level... There is a variety of experiences, different experiences that people made. This is also an experience of being a victim, being a perpetrator, or both of it. The important thing is that if there is no empathy created for this, then reconciliation would not happen. There are also a lot of things, like acknowledgement of victims of all sides, and healing processes. I left it out. I am just referring to the idea of joint vision on a social level. I think this is too much for organisations to achieve, to achieve in your lifetime.

- We see in work with war veterans, being actually on the opposite side. Empathy creates this common ground, and then they feel they are reconciled. And still there are interpretations of the same facts, they can agree on the facts and their interpretations are different. And this creates retraumatisation, it's a process, but there is a strong bond, nevertheless. I mean, you are in this process somehow.

- What really impresses me with the work you are doing with war veterans is this very strong wish and will for peacebuilding that these guys have. This kind of readiness for peacebuilding is also something that helps them cope with traumatic experiences. I really think that one could learn a lot from this approach.

- I completely agree that the trust is precondition for that. If you remember just 10 years ago how many people in Serbia say publicly that Srebrenica genocide didn't happen. Then it was, okay, it happened but it was 2000 victims. Then it gradually happened that the narrative was shifting towards the facts, change of the narrative. In Macedonia many people didn't admit there was systematic state discrimination towards Albanians. Today many people say: yes, there was, they were treated as the second-class citizens, they were humiliated. So, it changes. I don't know, maybe it will never change in our lifetime, but to me, our task now, bringing more and more of this narrative, deconstructing the dominant one, is the basis for the future generation.

- Although I am not very optimistic in regard of joint view of the past, I also believe it's possible. I mean, now we are sitting in Europe, which have that experience of the World War II, with a lot of different roles, and experiences and memories. We also know that there are positive examples of countries that managed to adopt joint view of the past. Even though this process was very long and didn't include all preconditions. We are speaking whether it will be possible for us here to reflect back on 1990s, and say: okay, we all think that this is what happened. Is it possible or not? Somebody says it is, somebody it's not. We have examples of countries that prove that's possible. So, why not here?

- Some new thing came to my mind... digging the past wounds in the context of our society, there is a lot in books, in history books, in the newspapers. There's also no real history of the minorities, of the struggles, all time they are interpreted as a terrorist. When I was in the university, I was a student leader at that time, and me and my friend, we are from the minority group, we are in student political wings. Student leaders truly don't know about the history even they have read books, and they still are learning about socialism, idealism, but they don't know the neighbour's story, their struggle. We shared with them our past history. That made them to understand the context, to understand our pain. Sometimes they act as political party when incident happen between majorities and minorities, then they come with reactions, some memorandum, some statement. Otherwise there is no... nothing is about us, our struggle, our deprivation... This way, I think, digging the past sometimes helps constructively to develop political leaders.

- I have this question about victimhood. You have to open safe space for victims, you have to recognize this pain, but at the same time we should all work on process for victims to go out from that position. And I think that politically left orientated sides of our society are keeping the victims in this position especially. Like I respect your pain, let's speak about your pain, but at the same time, what am I doing, am I helping you to go out of this position and not to be forever a victim? That is bothering me. I am not sure that I said it correctly.

- Sometimes I believe that we all are sharing the space but not the time. Sometimes we're discussing about concepts that are from different ages. I am sure that even if we don't agree we will do our best to agree, so we will do our best to achieve something. Sometimes we can change opinions, but usually when we're dealing with the past, we're not talking about the needs that we have for example, we are talking about the position we have. And in this dialogue, if we are lucky to have a dialogue, we're trying to make his position to come closer to my position.

- I just want to make you aware that this issue of victimization and struggling about victimhood perceiving themselves as greatest victim is not typical just for the Balkans. Great part of German society perceived itself as a victim of WWII and the whole process of dealing with the past and the different way of looking at own responsibilities started only in the late 1970's and 1980's. I really think important lessons and interesting experiences in Germany that one can learn from, those people struggling for constructive ways of dealing with the past. But I would not overestimate in general what has been done in Europe. And I would also say, German case was so unique and so special under very certain historical conditions. So, that's one message, don't just

try to copy that, that's not possible, but still take the positive lessons and the positive experiences. When it comes to Europe, and also to Germany, looking back to the wider past, to colonialism... if you have a barometer for looking at what they did and what they achieved, they are still in the beginning. We had an interesting conference some weeks ago, looking at how German organisations, state institutions, NGOs who are active in peace work worldwide, how they are dealing with the colonialism and racism. So, this was the title of the conference, whether we are doing some peace work in colonial way or not, and how to avoid that. There were two people, two representatives of state institutions among the resource persons, and they were so frustrated about what was not achieved so far. There is no training, not sufficient preparation for people who go to another countries, which can finally do a lot of harm also. I think it's relating to the external actors discussion, and there is not any awareness of colonialism and responsibility for this wider past. How can you go then to support people in other regions in order to deal with their past or do peace building? So, don't overestimate that, but go on with pushing the so-called Europeans or EU societies, including Germany to do more proper work on that and not just to rely on nice experiences of WWII.

- When I was in Berlin, I went with a group to Topography of Terror, there was Thomas Lutz which I have known before, and I asked him how come that in Germany we don't have exhibitions about the collaborators of the Third Reich which have done harm in Croatia, Ukraine, Estonia... how come that it doesn't happen. He said – it would be treated like Germans are backing out their responsibility if they show the crimes of collaborators. I didn't know what to think about it, because for us it would be more than helpful to have an exhibition about any collaborator of Nazi regime, it could be achievement to fight against the historical revisionism and legacyism. I am not sure what to think.

- I don't know whether I have a proper answer to that. First of all, maybe other colleagues are not so familiar with Topography of the Terror. This is the place where all the crimes against people and getting opposition people into jail, and all this repression and system has been designed. So it's in the middle of Berlin near Holocaust memorial, and whenever you have possibility and opportunity to go there, I would recommend visiting this place. It has been set up by pressure of civil society organizations. It was really created by historians, not top-down. It used to be provisional for many years and now it's established institution, but supported by historians, by civil society, people. It was really a struggle to get that place. The whole history of how it was established as such is also interesting to see. Regarding your question, I am not sure if Berlin would be the perfect place for that. I would agree that it would be important to use resources that have been spent already on research of this entire repressive system that has been established in the world and in Europe. I also see the problem if you blame those from other countries who collaborated with Nazi system, I mean it's difficult, I have never thought about that. I think the priorities that civil actors and maybe also historians had in Germany was more: let's try at least to have some memory on resistance like resistance museum and also a kind of recognizing silent heroes, those people who rescued others, to express these positive stories, more than blaming others for being collaborators.

“Every people has the right to secede”.

- Maybe it's more in terms of nations or whatever, but I will try to explain in my own very selfish way of thinking. As a woman I would like to be away from the patriarchal society and I would like to live my own life instead of trying to be, in the name of community or in the name of the society. The society, or community or the culture may not allow, they may give restrictions, impose rules, but as a person, I have the right to live my own life in a way that I wish instead of being imposed.

- I maybe understood this much more in a narrow sense of people who want to secede from one country or from one nation, from a certain political context as a group. I just want to explain where I would put this in the barometer, I would put it into the middle because on the one hand I see that there might be urgent needs and good reasons for people who have been oppressed or who have made bad experience of one political context, to say: okay, we are looking for exit, we want to go out, we really want to secede from that. But if we look at many nations and many countries in the world where people who live there as minorities might have this wish, they will always create geographical units that have other minorities and people who might not agree on that. The dissolution of Yugoslavia is good example for that, but we have it in other contexts also. In ideal world, I would say, if we had international mechanism and regulation, and international system where such issues could be discussed, and some norms and standards could be established how to do such seceding from the political context, that it could be done in a peaceful manner. But we don't have that mechanism. Because we don't have it, it is highly risky, and I would not put it in the category of I agree, but I would say – be careful about it and think about box you will open and maybe you should not make use of that right to secede. It is also a discussion in international law who has that right, but it's another issue. But maybe people should think



about whether it makes sense to insist on that right to secede or whether they should find diplomatic or other possibilities to somehow arrange with more autonomy or more self-determination within one political entity. So that's how I understand this card. Is that understandable?

- I had a discussion about this with one of my former colleagues and I was saying I don't see any problem resolved by doing the secession and the actual issues most likely will remain on different scale. And finally, I would love to have internationally valid criteria that says – then you can, then you can't, because, following this, we can end up secession right within one skyscraper: I want to secede from this skyscraper, this pisses me off, the other tenants are really horrible. Also, the history of Yugoslavia doesn't really give me much argument in favour of the right for self-determination in this regard. I wouldn't like to take this right from any group, this is my internal struggle also in a way, and I'd say yes, you have the right. It doesn't make much sense to me because I don't think that it by itself you can raise some capacity to provide better living for people. I'm rather disappointed that during the struggle for secession, there were some human rights organisations which were documenting and fighting for the rights of people that were truly oppressed due to their ethnic belonging. But once the secession happened and others were subject of human rights abuse, the same organisation didn't do a thing. They cease to exist. So, sorry, I'm not for human rights of Serbs, there's no such a thing, it doesn't exist. Human rights are for humans, not for Serbs, not for Croats or anyone else. I feel this mechanism of human rights was in a way abused to produce injustice and just tipped the balance to other side. This is not what I want.

- I am not saying that I see it as a risk of being insensitive to many regions which want to secede from India or at least it has been their political motivation. What I'm trying hard to understand and make sense of is... We have example of Bangladesh, it parted way from Pakistan. And once Bangladesh was formed in the name of Bengali identity, when the nation formed... how it treated its ethnic minorities was the same as Pakistan was treating them. That's one example in front of us. Another example, the Chakma community is the dominant one and many times we have these examples where Chakma community discriminates the other ethnic minorities within that minority, the sub minorities. I think it resonates with what other friends were saying, more or less the same thing. Okay, every people have the right to secede, but once you secede, what then? How does that translate into more justice, ensuring the new identity of new nation, is it equal and just to all people there? Doesn't it replicate the system that suits the majority in that new nation? Because it is a part of the system, we start to discriminate, as a part of the system, so called lower caste will again dominate and discriminate the sub-caste within the broader so-called lower caste, and many other lower castes within it, and start to do the same thing. I think the right to secede is fine, but without the understanding, without vision of the future which they deserve for themselves, equal to others in that particular nation. It really doesn't solve the problem. The examples that are in front of me, like Pakistan came out of the subcontinent and within Pakistan, the conditions that we can see there for majority community is the same as it is in India, or in Bangladesh, or Nepal, or Sri Lanka. Maybe I need to understand this in better way. We have the right, but does making a new nation based on identity give the space for more equal and just future for everybody?

- People has the right to secede, it is okay, but I think it's not the way to solve the problems and all kinds of discriminations. If you split from the nation, from the community, nothing will happen. There is a lot of competition. Even if we become independent, the minorities feelings will remain, because there are strong feelings of discrimination, you already said that. Now people say that if we get independence, a kind of self-determination, Chakma will get most of the opportunities. Why we struggle for self-determination? These kinds of feelings have to be dealt with in a just way. I think it has to be done both externally and internally, we fight with government and some structures and even internally we have to develop the struggle, we are doing that among the communities. Otherwise, you get mistrust, war and these things.

- We need to secure a world where people's rights are being respected, human rights are being respected. We need to have mechanism to do so. That thing is one bottom line to this whole discussion. The other bottom line to my understanding is how do people understand and organise themselves in terms of identities and this is where it becomes so complicated and so complex because there are histories of our identities that are been constructed, changed and reconstructed. I think I just learnt so much from all these, India particularly. For example there is something called Naga nation and when I started understanding what Naga nation is, I found out that this Naga nation doesn't even have common language, they consist of all kinds of subcommunities. So I found out that now Naga represents themselves as people internationally, but actually they consist of many people again. For political reasons in order to have some political impact they came together and declared themselves as Nagas, as one nation. So, I am giving this example to say that people is a construct, people is not something that is essential, that you are born as that people and that you are for that. We have plenty of examples of how definition of people have changed over time. This is something that we need to understand. This construction of being a people can be extremely useful in order to ensure human rights and extremely disastrous with violation of human rights. It's probably also necessary for us to have some wide identity, we

need group identity. We may also need some identity of a people. You always have to remember that it is not the only identity we have. So, I can be German, and therefore different to you S, or to you, U, at the same time we can be women and we can have the shared identity also. And it's good to see it as a mix. But now, when it comes to politics... If this sentence said – every people has the right to self-determination, it would be already another statement, than when it says secede, because I think we have the concept of nation state, which was a concept that at the time when it was introduced was a progressive concept that helped people to get away from feudal kingdoms into a system where some kind of bourgeois or even democratic systems of people coming together and exercising their rights was established. For some strange reason this nation state concept was somehow attached to the fact that people of that nation should be from one people which is actually never the case, hardly, or maybe no nation, it's probably no nation. This is the case. So, in that sense, we work within the concept of nation state, which is ethnic conceptually, even though in practice it has never been. I don't know whether you heard of the speech by Kenyan ambassador to UN when the Ukrainian war started? He said that we look at the countries in Africa, they are drawn by the colonial powers on the map, straight lines by ruler, and they don't make sense. Our nations, our peoples are divided between countries through this. Why should we under these circumstances start claiming to secede and to form new nation states according to peoples? What was the gain? We just created a lot of wars. We live with this colonial history which is bad, and we accept them, and accept a nation state that is not attached to the notion of a certain people. That's one side. But the other side is like our friends from Bangladesh, Northeast India... They are telling us: we live in these kind of conglomerate nation states, but we are heavily discriminated against, and human rights are been violated and we find it extremely useful to international mechanisms, that there is UN convention protecting rights of indigenous peoples and we use these conventions which are based on national identity in order to increase human rights of all communities. I think there's also right to that, so there is dilemma and political situation which I think that we have to live with. We have to allow some space of ethnic national identity for those whose human rights are being violated, to be used in order to deal with and live with, but hopefully not on the cost of other people, on the human rights. We have to deconstruct nationalism and national identity, I think both at the same time. We are constantly moving between these two.

- Something from Bosnian perspective... This question cannot be discussed just as theoretical question here or political. There's always the question if there will be a new war or not. Part of peace agreement is that one community will not secede, but it will have autonomy and if you say you're to secede you can't do it without war. Also, on the other side, you can't reduce that autonomy which is granted under the peace agreement without new war. What is also important is to recognize that the biggest fear for one community is that the state will collapse and that some part of state of Bosnia will declare its independence. But also that group should understand that the other group has their own fears that they'll become minority which will not be respected. So, that is from Bosnian perspective. It is also important that in many cases when we're speaking about self determination or seceding or independence or creating new states, it's not these political leaders who are involved, you can't just say that within new country you'll have some other minorities but also some of your own people will stay in the other country, you cannot just bring all people from abroad to your new country. Actually you don't care about your own people, you're trying to create a territory where you'll be majority. It is also important for me, if you have within the state a community which wants to secede, you can't neglect the problem. You have a problem, and if you're pretending like nothing is happening because we're majority and we have army and we have political power, at some point it will escalate.

B8. Historical tour through Sarajevo

Friday, 1 April 2022, afternoon session





B9. Lessons learnt and lessons failed

Saturday, 2 April 2022, morning session

Good morning

Similarities and differences between our contexts

Work in three mixed small groups. Exchange and preparing flipcharts for presentation. The theme is: Similarities and differences between our contexts.

Group 1

Similarities

- Good food
- Kind people
- History of violence
- Complicated histories
- Wish for change
- Many ethnicities
- Many identities
- Human beings
- Bad authorities (corrupt, repressive)
- Peace practitioners
- Travellers for a cause
- Supporters in rich Europe
- Connected in solidarity
- Being close to Russia, China
- Being far away from USA
- We all have our Croats
- We all visited Imphal/Manipur and Sarajevo
- Patriarchy
- Hot chillies
- Courage

Differences

- Rude/polite
- Size
- Material, economic status
- Less memorials in Manipur
- Time differences
- No associations of war veterans (Manipur)
- Military rule
- Balkan luckier to be much closer to rich
- Europe
- Balkan more liberal in regard to religion
- Issue of safety specially for women
- Languages
- Patriarchy
- Traditional clothes
- Hot chillies

Group 2

Similarities

- Green hills
- Influence by EU
- Pushing for human rights standards
- Local economy
- Economic imbalance → division
- Political actors instrumentalize differences
- Violations of human rights
- Violation of minority rights
- Autocrats
- Impunity (experience of colonialism/imperialism)
- Impact of past violence and trauma
- Rewriting/re-interpretation of history

Differences

- EU – perspective /set-up for reforms Balkans (big brother)
- Role of military
- “Hot conflict” in Bangladesh

Group 3

Similarities

- Complexity
- Patriarchy
- Political corruption
- War experience
- Manipulation of victims and history
- Demographic engineering
- Religious diversity
- Misusing language diversity in political fight
- Language diversity
- Nationalism in education
- Discriminatory education
- Periphery of capitalism
- Non-aligned heritage
- Lack of confidence in institutions → fragile institutions
- Culturally diversities

Differences

- Caste system
- Colonial experience
- Yugoslavian experience
- Extreme poverty
- European union
- Extreme hate/misinformation
- Fake-info → within curriculum
- Heavy military influence + interference
- Insecurity: women, religious + ethnic minorities, human right defenders

Lessons learnt and my questions to take away

Participants are instructed to think about the following topics and note for themselves:

- Lessons learnt
- Their questions to take away

After 10 minutes everybody share their thoughts. Trainers make notes on wallpapers.

Lessons learnt

- Politics of hate wins everywhere
- Politics of exclusion is louder and more powerful
- Different ethics for different contexts
- People are not always rational
- We have different options for dealing with our differences
- Economic development and ideology don't help much with dealing with the identity
- It's much easier to make a state than a society
- Suffering, tears and even love doesn't have any borders
- Peace work is often invisible
- Differences can be power
- Rebuilding is a process
- We need functioning international and local institutions for human rights
- Reflection is precious, it makes waves of support, we need to maintain it
- To give indigenous people a role of a trainers for a majority group
- We have the right to be weak and in need for a moral support
- Connecting impossible – South Asia – Balkans – Trust your guts
- Violence creates a powerful bond of belonging, but nonviolence does it as well
- Not all pain is harm
- The real fighters for peace are in small numbers – we are fighting for us, we're not outsiders – take care of oneself
- The "purity" of blood is impossible – still the river of life will flow
- Healing potential of comparative approach for human rights
- We are very similar so there are many possibilities to work together/support
- Local stories/ initiatives/ changes are important, and we need to learn from it
- Resilience stories are very helpful
- Experienced groups can generate a lot of knowledge in a short period of time if given a space
- Even brainstorming sessions can generate deep knowledge if given to people who are aware
- High impact of combining exposure and working sessions is meaningful
- Importance of taking the position of learning
- Clear understanding that human rights and peacebuilding go together
- Importance of having peacebuilding approaches in your mind in your everyday encounters
- We should start with ourselves – family, community, working setting
- Hygiene of the working time – boundaries toward unreasonable expectations



- Quality thing is very difficult to achieve
- Peacebuilding is a courageous thing to do – especially for women/ insecure environments
- Effective peacebuilding is based on commitment/ courage/ creativity, humour, patience and huge amount of tolerance of frustration
- Peacebuilding activities cannot be assessed in

- a short-term perspective and indicators but still benchmarks are needed – self motivation
- It is important to discuss in order to learn new things
- Creating environments where different opinions are appreciated

Questions to take away

- Why the peace is so expensive?
- Working in comfort zones – how is it effective?
- Why is it easier to mobilise people for hate than for peace?
- Arguments depending on positions (different ethics) – why?
- What was the role of actors during the war, and what is their role now? The role of external actors?
- How can we deal with that economic development and ideology don't help (don't prevent war)? What else?
- Indigenous feminism
- How to explain the situation to an alien?
- How can people have the understanding that they give rights to someone else?
- Why do donors support us?
- How to nurture our network and alliance?
- How can we prevent the next world war?
- How can we support each other, both in the Balkans and Balkan – Asia?

- What are the possibilities of treating non-aligned movement as a base for cooperation?
- Where do we go from here and how?
- How to learn from each other keeping the resilience?
- How to continue making spaces for sharing and creating knowledge?
- Does one have a right to question victim's stands?
- Role of women during and specially after the war?
- How is the regional security affected by collective guilt and responsibility?
- How to agree on realistic benchmarks, how to assess change?
- How to make all these approaches and experiences visible?
- How to prevent another world war?
- Is it possible to document preventing the violence and not to give ideas to spoilers?
- How to create an environment where different opinions are enriching/appreciated?

What can we do one for another?

Sharing in plenary.

Statements, from the transcript:

- I have a song. What can we do one for another? Its name is Uttara's song for Dada. It's brief, don't be afraid.

*Purity was never there in the first place
There was not even a first place itself
Not all of our pain
was harm
Still the river of life
flows*

- I am aware of that we will soon be in situation that we will be overloaded with everything, maybe I have very optimistic view of the future, but at least that we can do to each other is to respond to our needs, from offering an explanation, or sending something, or connecting with something, or partnerships in projects and programmes, just respond to needs, don't ignore.
- I think what we could do, or I could do is somehow to take all these experiences, and think about how to make these voices, positions, experiences more visible, also in German political context, although I know it's sensitive. I am looking forward to the documentation also, in a sense to take some of these experiences and lessons with me, in order to make it more visible. I think this kind of cooperation will be ongoing anyway. When it comes to design of German and European policy, I think it's very important to be informed about this kind of processes, and positions. What I could also imagine... it would be useful that this group somehow work together in the future. Everybody is doing so many things, we are doing a lot of networking, but maybe we should try to stay in touch, about this very complicated issue how much the current situation affect us, that is really worrying

us, even if we are not talking about it too much, the war in Ukraine, and the upcoming new international answers. It is not just question of Russia and NATO being in a huge conflict, but it is also having an impact on other actors on international level. When you talk about China, and what might happen also, what could be the next steps of this kind of breakdown of multilateralism and breakdown of confidence in multilateral and international institutions. I will find it quite useful if we somehow try to stay in touch about this issue also, which I don't address too much, maybe in our local work, and daily work, but it will be important in the future.

- I have three points. One problem is Balkan and CNA, what we can take it is your skill of training, developing critical conscience, so that is very important how to organise this kind of conscience and statements. This can help many participants in workshop to organise this, to keep on thinking, reflecting from different perspective. It is very good. Another, I am from North-East India, Manipur... what we can offer is how to deal with Marshall laws, like arm forces and military. And collectively what we can do is, I don't know whether it is possible or not, in the context, in the new deblocking context in the world, in Ukraine and Myanmar, China. I think that German parliament and Bread for the World can be helpful to develop very specific focus policy of European Union, looking on the peacebuilding perspective in these regions. Then we can participate in all this, and with them we also can deal with Russia and China. Now I think we cannot remain silent, they are big countries, powerful, but we need to raise our voice to them.
- First thing that I put in was that I certainly would love to stay in touch with all of you, and not only because I like you, but because I have a feeling that it has to be that way. If I look at the world, it's obvious that military and different war industries are much more interconnected than peace workers, peacebuilders are. Maybe we should think about how to strengthen these connections, maybe we could be stronger. Then, I would love to learn more about conflict analysis that our friends from Bangladesh developed, so if you have anything in written that I could read, I would be grateful. I actually always think that my experiences and knowledge is so locally based, so that I don't know what I could offer. These experiences are tested on several occasions internationally, and I am still not very convinced that I have a lot to offer. But if you recognise something that could be useful for you, I and I believe my colleagues and friends also, we can sit and look at it and even search support for that. In addition, I realised that we didn't exchange anything on music! So, I lack that also. If you, because of any reason, would like to know more about Balkans, I can offer different literature.
- I think we have learnt a lot from each other and shared a lot with each other, and this is to awake communication. But from this perspective, for me it was very important to address the issues. One is protection and the other is education. Protection of the people that are in danger, it is very important, but at the same time, we need to educate the masses, to become more aware. We have an Albanian national saying: You don't need to protect your daughters from violence, you need to educate your sons. So, it is process. We need protection but at the same time we need education. I see a lot of opportunities here.
- I am thinking about security. Because of insecurity there. Maybe we can share more documents sometimes, we can even do planning, I am just thinking now. Any kind of stand together, occupying the land of the group of people... international support worked very well. Writing letters, memorandums. This type of solidarity, international solidarity was there. We can always share ideas.
- Let's take from this group some more strategies, and share experiences how you are working, peacebuilding experiences, also related to approaches that you use here in peacebuilding, what works, what doesn't work, some updates, some context sharing, much more details about Balkan literature, on how things are evolving. What I can offer from our part also are concept of heritage, I share the presentation that we have, if it makes sense, I can share more information about it.
- It is difficult for me because I can't find anything. How do we make it inclusive, how do we bring small NGOs or grassroot NGOs to the mainstream? It can be hard in terms of anything... That's what I was thinking to bring a small grassroot level experiences and stories into the mainstream, that is my question, maybe it is not even relevant in this context, but lies in context in India. There are small, very grassroot level activists and NGOs, who doesn't have a space to voice out. In my area, one of the smallest tribes even has less than 10.000 population. It is very difficult to talk about this kind of political issues in other countries. These minorities' issues are not even assumed in terms of ethnicity, in terms of minority and also women and children's issues.
- Showing solidarity, and also understanding each other contexts, how can we learn from each other. I see that CNA and what they do, that is very interesting to us. It would be good to learn more how you do, that also may give us more idea. These are different contexts, maybe they are not applicable, but it may give us some idea what we can do. I also believe in nonviolent protest, struggle against injustice, it is really powerful, against any autocrat or something. One of things that we can get from CNA, and others also, if you have any lessons for us. We don't claim that we are really good conflict lessons, but we try certain technic, we still learn how it works. Sometimes I feel it works. Because we can really see, really use certain things, like conflict analysing tools. We have certain things, materials. And we have developed conflict transformation as strategy, the part of the thing was presented, so I think we can share that. And you can have a look at it. The only thing is the security, we are really afraid of that. That's why we don't really make many things visible.

- I am really thankful to be with you. I already feel enriched in many ways. What I also find very important is that somehow, I now have a sort of personal connection with some states. India is not anymore for me just a state far away, I have a sort of personal connection, I know at least one, two, three persons from that state. Somehow that is really important. Here, we had a discussion a few years ago, about was it right decision that NATO bombed Serbia in 1999. And one of our colleagues said, if you asked me then, I would say, of course, it was right decision, because I didn't have any connection with Serbia, personal connection, I didn't have any friends there, but if you ask me now, I am much more personally involved in that. I really feel that this kind of personal connection with some states is really important. What is also important for me is that this is a sort of network for information sharing. A lot of things are happening around us, with all these medias, social networks, still you cannot get right information. It's important to have somebody at some place to ask what is happening there. Somebody which you know, you trust them. Even here in Balkan, we are quite small, but we use this kind of connections. Also, I can provide that kind of information, I could update you on this Croat issue. I used to, I still write sometimes some sort of critical articles, analysis what is happening in Bosnia, sometimes I publish that in some Bosnian newspaper, or on CNA website, and usually writing in terms that people who are not from Bosnia, from our context can understand what is happening here in Bosnia, so that is what I can offer.
- I would also like to advertise CNA's annual reports in that respect. Because there is a lot of information about all of the countries of the region, so please have a look...
- I was thinking, it's just an idea, if it sounds reasonable, doable and practical for this part, from our region what we have realised is the hate narrative is on the raise, hate narrative is violence and hate speech in collective, college, in media, cinemas. It's very easily available for younger generation, for kids, for even grown-ups, so we have conscientiously decided to create ultimate narrative of inclusion and shared things and popularise that. Because what is ultimate, on one hand it is constantly very powerful, with a lot of money invested. If we can make more and more spaces, space for this kind for sharing and to popularise that. Maybe a cinema meet, or documentary meet, or maybe small thing, a festival when you just invite everybody, that can just connect people and respect the differences. So, we use these spaces, some festivals, some occasions, they are already there, and we don't have to create a new occasion. That's how we build more and more inclusive dialogue. This is what I wanted to share.
- Sharing of resources was already mentioned. I already started doing that, thank you for that. He shared with me some important concepts they work with. So, I think it would be maybe useful for us, if we would have some form of pool of resources, from which we can visit when we are in need, you can put whatever you think is important for the others, and you can share the concepts that you are using in your work. Who ever needs it, he can visit the place.
- Yes, that would be my need also. I would very much like to read S articles, because this is very valuable view that I otherwise would never get. And also, H from the women's' perspective, that would be very important also if you can think about the ways the Balkan women can support you. Because Balkan women have a long tradition of own feminism, not imported one, they are some very strong connections, bonds and networking. So, in whatever way we can support you, please, count on us. Also, I would like to, it's somewhat very dystopian thought, but I am very much afraid of dissolution on the international order as such. It's not a perfect international order, it's not even good, but in respect of not having one, it really makes me rather anxious.
- I will be very brief. N said that India is something not so far away anymore for him. It is very important, we need to come close together, because it gives us the space for empathy. That's why I think it is really important for us to be part of that we need to do, this is priority thing. So, for that I will keep you disturbing, I will ask you many silly questions, in email, or whatever, and I will ask for more information and even help. I'll propose some help, where it is possible.
- What we can share is maybe about our blind allies. E mentioned how this gap between human rights and peacebuilding didn't turn up, and I think it's pretty much present in our context. I am looking at J because she comes from transitional justice corner, which is strictly divided from peacebuilders corner, and we don't even talk about it. Seriously, it has been a lack of exchange on this theory of change that stands behind, how we are going about, it's been my need for very long period to talk about these things because I think sometimes we hamper each other and from this history that we have it's maybe something that you can learn from our inability to resolve these obstacles, and maybe anticipate them, within your context, that maybe different line of divide where you think you have allies, and from some reason it just doesn't work.
- Generally speaking, I would say for me as a representative of Bread for the World, South Asia Unit, one is to respond to the needs that you have, express it right and see in terms of follow up, in terms of trying to be connector from my perspective. So, there are few things that come to my mind. I could explore the provision of virtual safe space that is safer than Google drives and might be hosted by BftW also. Another is, I would like to invite the BftW partner organisations who work with South Asia team to remember these follow-up ideas, when you draft your next project proposals. Because, if you want to do some follow up activities, they may



Oral evaluation

Expectations you had, whether they are met or not, to what extent? What are your main impressions? Something what you feel important to share with the group. This is basically the last round. We have come to the end of this journey, this time. Off you go, how was it for you?.

Statements, from the transcript:

- Thank you for organising it, thank you for having me. Finally, after two years I left the country, to the event where I am a participant, so I enjoyed it. We have common world, we really need to have this kind of meetings more often and it is difficult, of course. But I really, really believe in the need of people of this planet to connect to each other, specifically to connect with their important issues, political issues and issues which we work with. I strongly believe there is a huge need in this world, that healing can happen, and we can move much further if we do more often. Of course, it is difficult, travel, costs, and time and everything, but I really cherish time like this. And thank you for taking me to Sarajevo again, I haven't been for years, I really enjoyed it. I don't think we had spare time to waste, no time was waste while we were working. And when we were in Mostar, we were all the time engaged, it was mindful. Thank you. Probably I have more things to say, but this comes from my heart, and I just say how it comes.
- I have learnt a lot of things here. I didn't know what to expect, especially because when I work with you, with CNA, I always know that something good is gonna happen, and then I just relax. All the time from the beginning, I am trying to think if we should put a footnote to everything that we have learnt here, a footnote saying not to try this at home, this is done under the supervision of professionals...
- This time I will speak little English. Sometimes in the international context... there is a language barrier, but this time I feel freedom. I think I know Balkan now, from the name in textbook in school to the direct context. It is a great experience with feelings.
- I don't know much, but these slogans... people shouldn't be left behind. That was quite striking, that kind of political spirit. It was quite powerful force and coming to a workshop, it is quite reach experience, which is from Bosnia, Croatia, Serbia, Albania, Macedonia, this was very unique for us, and we hardly believed that in the place like Sarajevo, this kind of atrocities were happening. But every part of the world is having this problem. Therefore, we also have to expand peacebuilding and human rights in the future, where it will be possible.
- First, I want to thank to all people from Asia, who came all the way from the other part of the world over here, not really knowing what to expect, I believe, but having enough trust in us that we are going to do something useful at least. So, thank you for all that effort. Thank you all for your time. For me it was a privilege to reflect in this kind of group. Enormous treasure.
- Before, I didn't know much about this region, I knew about Yugoslavia. We've heard about the conflict. So, my expectation was really to learn how you are working in this situation here. This is a great opportunity. I need to read more to get to understand better. I wanted to look how it is really here, how it was going on and how the fighting has happened, and why people were fighting each other here? I also wanted to know more about approaches, how you work and what is the technique that you use while you are working, what is the strategy you have, then I think I learnt many new things from here. That will be very helpful for us. You really gave some ideas, brought something new to do something creative. Thank you for giving us opportunity.
- So much to say. I am really thankful to be with you these days, every day was learning, every day was something new. At the beginning when we started workshop, when we were told to write about expectations, it was through involving all of us. No one told me: your expectation is this, but I realised in every process that this is part of my expectation. The whole process was a learning with joy... Usually the learning is not joyful, but this time my learning was full of joy. CNA, the way how you facilitate the process, all of you fully participated in the process, I really appreciate it. This is something that I can really try, but you have done it so smoothly. Even trying to ensure that we got what food we want, explaining the food, and the drinks. These smallest concerns give us so much happiness. I really enjoyed participating, the whole process. And all of you were so experienced, and your ideas and very critical thinking, but you all make it so simple to understand, I really appreciate, and I learnt so many things, that I am not even able to explain. Every good thing or best practices I learnt, I can't go back with and talk to my colleagues and start implementing. And I am sure that we are going to make many mistakes. We will try to do these things, and I will come back to people, maybe through email or whatever and see hopeful that everybody will be there. And thank you so much.
- I am very thankful for all of you coming here. It has been two long years, since we have the chance to either to organise, or to participate in such a gathering. I am especially grateful that it is this group of our fellow practitioners. I feel very empowered. I have to say this to my friends and colleagues from South Asia, because the conditions that you have been living in, and trying to make change, is much and in a lot of different aspects

harder than ours here, it was very inspiring to hear all of you, and see how you work for it and fight for it. It is a huge inspiration for my own work. And also special thanks to E, for initial boost and also the faith that travel will be possible, and that we will manage to do it, and also M, it is also a great privilege to have you with us, and actually I am so happy to have you all in this room and in our town, that I really can't find the words to express it. So, it is very valuable, and I will cherish these few days, I guess my whole life. This really boosted me with energy, optimism and faith, that there is a future ahead of us. It is always so good to meet, the fellow practitioners. And also, special thanks to S, H and U, for this additional boost of women's strength, courage and beauty of this world. Thank you all.

- If there is a will, there is a way. I am very happy what happened, I would say it was very smoothly. And the care that we have experienced from you, the way how you are well organised to accept us, to feed us, to organise. Thank you very much for that. I would say, this is the beginning for us, because I think this is the first time that Balkan and South Asia exchange and network. I think we need to explore more how actually we can cooperate with each other. Maybe at the local level, national, international level, etc, to come together and work for each other. Thank you.

- I am also thankful to be part of this, and honestly, I feel that the huge burden has removed from my shoulders, because we are planning this for two years, and actually, this was central part of our CNA plan for two years, and we used to adjust every other our activity to do this. A lot of planning, replanning and everything and it was challenging, due to covid, and some unexpected problems, so that's one of my impressions. Why I see this as something very important, that it was not for me just sort of exchange, but also sort of self-evaluation, on personal level, on organisational level, but also evaluation with our partners. For example, we are cooperating with A for years, and we are meeting regularly, but this was for the first time that we had an opportunity to talk so deeply. And it is for me the most important lesson learnt: that we need this kind of exchange, especially with partners, but also with other people. I feel enriched by views from people from South Asia. I was worried how it will function. What will we do with for nine days? Will it be boring for them, for us? Actually, in that part, I got much more than I expected, even I couldn't imagine that I will get. Thanks a lot to my colleagues from CNA, for giving me this kind of support, and inviting me to be part of the team. Actually, this was the first time for me to be part of the team when the working language is English. Thank you for all your support and I hope that we will have opportunity to meet again.

- I have heard about reputation of CNA coming to the workshop, methods and dynamic, and it is even better. You said we didn't know what to expect, I even didn't have a need to anticipate, or to know what I am expecting because I know you for some time, and I was like: I just gonna go, whatever happens. So, I even didn't have need for projection, that is how I had this trust. It was all pre-war hospitality. Like, what you gave us, it's like even, it is like re-construction of some old patterns of hospitality which is really, really nice. You were open 24/7, thank you T for that as well. That is really beautiful. Like we had, I have tended to think like this, people are very professional, but this was more than professionalism, considering gathering people around, and being responsible for all of us. So, it was beautiful. You made English beautiful for me. The diversity of English within this circle is so beautiful. Because I didn't care much for the language as such, unfortunately. I wrote here – dignity, all you from Asia, with a such harsh conditions of living and fighting, and there is still this attitude that is open, calm, at the same time laughing, that's very nice. There are two things I want to share. There are so many important things, but building upon each other, it should be a kind of self-discipline. I didn't notice in our NGO circles in region, that people are quoting each other. I have never heard in Croatia for example, that one human rights activist is quoting another one alive human activist, dead one they do. We have this manner of always stalking again and having this attitude – my idea, this is my idea. I really despise this attitude "my idea", because 2000 written history of mankind... It's not possible, we are sharing heritage and ideas over there. And the other thing that is a kind of self-discipline and discipline is happiness. I think that it is mandatory as fight as well. I think that it is really, really important. We had happiness here, so thank you all for that.

- I knew what was coming, so I wrote what I needed to say to you, otherwise I would cry. First of all, I want to thank everyone for coming here, in Balkan, and for trust you have given us, and the space to hear each other. Thank you for sharing your struggles from your context, and your personal stories, they are very important to me. For me, this was a very unique experience, I have never experienced this level of exchange and reflection before. With you, all of you, in this room, I feel that world has no borders, and that feeling will follow me for long time, so thank you. I wrote in expectations that I wouldn't like you to be and leave hungry. And it is achieved. Thank you.

- I waited to speak after person who doesn't provoke some emotions in me, but it is not possible. But I will not cry. I don't have much to add, because you all already extracted everything from me, but maybe only two impressions. One is that I feel great privileged to be here, and very honoured that I received your invitation to join this workshop. I was wondering, why me. Serbia is the biggest country, a lot of activists there, and you chose me, so I am wondering why, still don't have the answer. Thank you for inviting me, I really enjoyed. I



participated in similar workshops that include people from around the world, it was in Berlin, but nevertheless this workshop was even better than that, because in addition to offering sight-seeing, and socialising, it also offered opportunity to reflect and to learn in a very funny and not stressful way. There was not a day that I felt exhausted. I will bring from here a model of how to work in terms of non-violence, although I am trying to be that person, but there is always more to learn. Also, how to behave, in sense to have more smiles, or to smile more often, I mean from morning until evening. I mean, it is so precious when you have such attitude. I'll do my best.

- I was thinking only South Asia is complicated. Thank you again, this was quite an exposure, true sense of learning, and I realised that there is not just one kind of complication. Conflicts are everywhere complicated, it is the nature of conflict to be complicated. I just love this group, the energy, the spirit and the casually and serious combining in very nice way. It is a very nice feeling to be here, to learn. And I hope that we will meet again. We have friends now in the Balkans.

- I was really in privileged position in a sense that I knew CNA, and I knew friends from South Asia, I didn't of course know the colleagues of CNA invited from Balkans, but I was never worried with what to expect from this workshop. I didn't worry about what will come out of it because it's great people, all of you are great people, so I was looking forward to have this wealth of great people to get together and talk to each other. I mean, I knew the treasure is there, just usually we don't take the tent to uncover it and make it visible. This is what I hoped that would happen in the workshop, and I think it has happened very beautifully. It was unusual for me not to be in facilitation team but also very comfortable once I got used to it. My big headaches were all before we came here, after M was the last to pass the immigration of all the passengers of that flight, then I thought – okay, now it's not on me anymore, now it's on you guys. Actually, I had no idea how this Covid has disrupted the whole system. So, the learning for me is that we have to, next time, really first check if system is working or not, I just took for granted some of these systems. And the last minute of excitement when Austrian Airlines was not able to tell us whether you need to test or not, telling us at one website you need one, on another website you don't, and when I called one hotline, the hotline said, you can't ask this. You can ask us any question, but no question about tests, about Covid, we will not answer those questions, please refer to our website. And U went shopping, out of telephone reach, and could not get her test... These were long stories before Balkan starts. This is a long story for CNA being first of all responding to the idea that came from us, saying yes, we could imagine doing such workshop, it makes sense to us. Your determination and our determination somehow made it possible. I really appreciate you for your flexibility. Fuelled by this experience of being locked in lockdown, this is a highlight in my work, no doubt, it is a beginning even though, you know, I will retire after some time, but still think it is a beginning, and let's explore, there is always room for exploration and more exchanges. Balkans are just wonderful thing, the hospitality, the care, the way how you kept us here, it's very special. I think you are really, really special people and special hosts. And of course, our friends from South Asia you are also extremely special and special people should meet special people. We are working on such hard and painful issues, but we can do that in time and way that is empowering and joyful. This is also response to N worries about burn out I think, to realise that it is not only getting away from our work, we can also get empowered and get new energy, by dealing with our issues, and still in a way to get more courage and more ideas for new friendships. At the end, it is always about love, isn't it?

- Talking about love, I want to specially thank to T, she was of planetary help, absolutely.

- I just want to express my feelings. Special thanks to my son, he is three years old. Thanks to Corona, Corona came and the meeting was rescheduled, so that's why I could make it to come here. Thank you all.

- Great thanks to T, seriously, you took of such a burden from us, that we could concentrate much more on the actual content, method etc, and everything was so smoothly, perfect really, such an effort, I appreciate it, it doesn't go without saying. Also, to N, to D, to I, but specially also to E for preparing this. It was at stage a nightmare, with visas, with tickets, I couldn't even get upset anymore. I enjoyed many laughs, of course, we like to do it this way, I am very happy, grateful in a way that you accepted this. It was great responsibility for me and the privilege. One of my expectations to this meeting was that I will not come out being too tired, exhausted, finished, off. And I am not, I am just physically tired a bit, but I am actually better than I was at beginning, emotionally in a way how I felt. It should be mentioned as well that this whole thing is horribly expensive, it's for my standards probably expensive. Many years ago, I heard what the costs for a military plane are, and I realised that us in CNA working for one year was the equivalent of flying military plane for two hours. I am grateful that support could be provided through Bread of the World for this. Thank you all for coming. I was doubtful how prepared will local people be to put this week aside and invest a week into something so strange as Balkans – South Asia exchange. So, I am very pleased and relieved and happy that you actually found it useful as well for yourselves. Extra thanks for L who in the last moment basically came and it wouldn't be the same without you...

- I don't know where to start. When I came here, I was terribly exhausted. I didn't sleep much, I was physically quite exhausted, and also psychological, because this whole, war and crisis in Ukraine and the whole changes



in the world and what will bring about, it was really worrying me, and in a way I was also in a mood of asking myself does this whole concept of peace work make sense at all, everything was really burdening. And when I came here, I really didn't know whether I feel the energy and the power to focus myself on completely different context and getting into all these complex conflicts. When we started to think about this project, we really felt responsible in the sense we are offering some space for people, but also it means people's commitment to spend a lot of time out of their own context where they are urgently needed. I did not have any doubt that this will be a brilliant experience, but still I was not sure does it work in such situation when the world is so changing in that way. So, I was really grateful that we managed not to talk about that whole day, but we talked about Ukraine during dinner or lunch time or in between, or when we had coffee, but it was not overwhelming us, we really could concentrate on these other issues, I am so grateful. I know a lot about Balkans, I was familiar to the map of former Yugoslavia and other struggles, but you put it so nicely, that I always had knew insights which I hadn't have before and at the same time we got much deeper in the context of the countries. I am really grateful all of you could join this workshop, and also I am grateful for all of you being so open and sharing things and that you really felt comfortable in this situation even to admit crying or something, I think it was really important learning experience also for me. I also think there was a lot of sensitivity of all of you, to really have the patience to explain all these things, which is so clear for most of you, and you are familiar to your context, but it is always a lot to explain to other people. I always think it's also worth wide to do that because it's a kind of self reflection which is very useful and when it comes to self reflection and learning processes, I really must say I am grateful, that it happened after 25 years of knowing CNA that I was able to participate in a kind of training experience, it was new. So, thank you very much for that. I really found it impressive how you swich to be a participant, being an active participant of the workshop, and at the same time facilitating all these things. You didn't let us feel like that, but I think it's a whole lot of preparation, and a lot of preparation also of organisational things which you have done, and you didn't let us feel, so we felt relaxed, but I think we didn't see all that. In order to thank you I brought some small things, which I would like to deliver to CNA team now.

Farewell



Evaluation questionnaire

Participants' written answers

1. Do you see any advantages or shortcomings of the exchange concept such as this one, which bring together very different contexts?

- I see many advantages: we all share this planet, we face similar problems and challenges, we should definitely try to connect as much as more possible.
- Advantages: it made me able to learn new context; new approaches/strategies/processes that deals with past and ongoing conflicts/violence. Shortcomings: it takes/needs time to internalise the contexts.
- These exchange visits are very important. No doubt. Brings more solidarity.
- Building solidarity, learning from each other context, tools and strategies used to address similar issues.
- The advantage is if expand our knowledge and networking. Shortcoming is not observed.
- At first, I was sceptical, but as the exchange unravelled it became clear how much one can learn even from very distant examples. It has also showed that there is a significant similarities and shared issues.
- I see a lot of advantages through this exchange because I learnt many new concepts of peace building practices. Self reflection and understanding of similarities from a very different context.
- It was a wonderful and satisfying exercise.
- Comparative approach has a very healing and resilience/hardiness potential for HRIP building activists. Sharing experiences can open the space for cooperation.
- Yes, a lot – exchanging experiences is key. Nonviolence and action.
- Very useful to bringing from different contexts, different strategies and combining the ideas is great.

2. Most relevant learning points for you:

- I re-examined some of my views, I've got reminded of some which I might slightly forgotten, or some become more visible and more important offer this workshop.
- There are many similarities in terms of structural violence.
- Meaning of ethnicity here is different from that of South Asia.
- Ideas of dealing with past, strategies to deals with burnouts, experiences of dealing with conflict context, way of dealing with ethnicity and nationalism.
- We are not part of war, but victim. But have to share responsibility for peace and human rights.
- Do not seek motivation externally, but from within what can you do to improve someone's situation/life. Always strife for discussions with other activists, exchange opinions – that builds your knowledge, sensitivity and arguments.
- The facilitation process and methods used in this event were really relevant to me. Better understanding of the geo-politics.
- Deep sharing of experiences, concepts and understanding.
- It is easier to make state than society. Nari Mukti indigenous feminism as an inspiration and knowledge. Dangers of militarized state. If you don't want to give up than take time for reflections.
- Multiperspective. Different approach.
- Reflection on my own works. Motivational moto. All strong feelings are same all over the work. To understand that is important. To explain, analyse, seeing the conflicts of Balkans through the eyes of an indigenous woman.

3. What is your most important experience during these days in Bosnia-Herzegovina?

- Being with people from Asia is a rare opportunity, and even more, spending time with them addressing important issues. I even shared personal things which I don't usually talk about in workshops.
- Human beings builds/constructs – destroys – rebuilds. Seeing/visiting so many graveyards made my heart heavy! ☹️
- Listening to the stories of war from different perspectives!
- Expose to the education system on. CNA's and experiences of other works. War memories.
- Collective guilt and collective responsibility.
- Visiting Mostar, tours through Mostar and Sarajevo. Dynamic workshops with people from different contexts.
- Sharing and taking collective responsibilities.

- The love and care of our hosts.
- Making friendships. Listening and learning. Sharing frustration. Laughing.
- Meeting Asian friends and how important is non-violent action.
- Learning through the field works and indoor programs. Exploring the historical but more painful places. Rich mix culture of the country and its power to rebuild the broken society.

4. Open questions you leave with:

- Do you see further collaboration with SA – Balkans to be taken forward?
- What are the connecting points here in Balkan region... Shared culture?! Is there any?
- Despite the economic progress and practice of ideologies, values the nationalistic ideas generated, violence in Bosnia and Herzegovina. So, what the elements were missing to overcome the violence?
- How to take forward in learning?
- I have already expressed them during the last day, but to add: how to beat bureaucratic tendencies in peace building and allow for human interaction (personal relationships). How other societies deal with „heroes.“
- How can we strengthen and nurture a network between Asia and Balkan to have more meaningful peace practitioners?
- Plenty – the deeper we go, the more questions.
- How to cooperate in the future in more sustainable way? How to use do no harm method more?
- How to implement everything we learnt.
- How to make allies in the context of mistrust, fear, suspicion?

5. Follow-up idea:

- Would like very much to read more articles to understand the situation in South Asia deeper.
- Exchange more information to learn deeper.
- Workshops? Deeper analysis?
- Sharing of resources, information analysis affects.
- Another tour of exchange in India/Bangladesh 😊
- Yes, follow up is much needed to keep the efforts continue.
- Online exchange platform. Exchange of approaches and methods. One more workshop of this kind after some time??
- Exploring potential of the heritage of non-aligned movement. Thinking about possibilities of settlers' issues that we share (Balkan/S. Asia).
- Study visit to Asia 😊
- Documents sharing. Knowledge sharing. More exchange program (Balkan + South Asia). Sending solidarity (if any violent conflict/conflict happen).

6. Any other comment/suggestion/question/dilemma:

- This was a good beginning!
- *Bahar-e-Umr Muleqat-e-Bostdaran an Aste...*¹ The spring/joy, bloom/beauty of life is meeting friends 😊
Cheers!
- Combining of study tour and workshop is good.
- How can we mainstream women peace practitioners grow the grassroots levels?
- Thanks and love!!
- Everything was perfect. I will never forget this feeling of home that I shared with so many, till now, unknown people. Thank you.
- I am in love with Balkan's people – their attitude. Sincerity, commitment is amazing.

1 Excuses if there are mistakes in reading and typing in this part.

Internal evaluation by moderating team

It is a small miracle that, after a few postponements, this event has happened, having in mind that in one moment it seemed almost impossible, due to the Covid-19 travel restrictions and the reflections of the war in Ukraine. We are sorry that our fellow activists from Pakistan, Nepal and Sri Lanka weren't able to join us on this occasion, but we are grateful that the others made the additional efforts for this small miracle to happen.

The group was really extraordinary, and not only experience-wise. It was a right ratio of closely related and unknown – some of us knew each other from before, since we come from the same region, but not necessarily from the same context, and there are rare occasions when we can exchange at this level. When, aside from this, we have the opportunity to learn something completely new, taught by examples of the struggle and actions of our friends on the other side of the planet, then it is quite clear that this was an extraordinary event.

Openness, communicativeness, commitment and motivation within the group were the main characteristics of our exchange. No less important was the realization that we are not alone or lonely in our activism and efforts toward a better and more just society. We find it particularly empowering to have a prominent role of women in our group, as this is exactly what our societies lack.

Unlike limitations of international conferences which offer exchange on an informative and very rational level, the exchange within the workshop of a smaller number of participants, gave us an opportunity to communicate deeper. Such exchange provided space to reflect personal and social constraints, our achievements and failures as activists for social change. Our knowledge, experience and commitment to peacebuilding gave us in depth material for exchange, that includes also our emotional involvement, enabling us to understand one another and troubles we face within our contexts.

The model of learning and exchange, which includes a study trip, getting to know a certain context and talking to people who live and work in it, was an appropriate model for this occasion. The inclusion of such exposure within the study trip provided not only information for local context but gave us as a group a chance to get to know one another, build trustful communication and therefore prepared us for deeper exchange that followed.

In addition to the general framework of the study trip and exchange, we all participated in creating the learning process. Since the group was very motivated, we got a lot more content than expected. It is likely that if we did the whole thing from scratch, we would have left a little more time at the beginning to get to know the other contexts (aside from BiH) more extensively. Namely, we noticed that due to the lack of dedicated time, information about contexts stretched across different topics. At least, we were able to discuss the differences (which are significant among our contexts) with concrete examples.

Emotional exchange was a very important part of our joint process, because it gave us a special quality and encouraged us to discuss issues which are sensitive, and we rarely have an opportunity to discuss them in wider groups. The flexible concept was therefore relatively easy to adapt to the expressed needs of participants, we tried to address open questions that arose during the process, and we worked on some of them in particular.

We had excellent working conditions (apart from lingering Third World War) and were committed to our exchange, understanding the uniqueness of the opportunity given to us. Fair and good working conditions are a very important part of our work, which often gets side-tracked. But for the creative process, it is of pivotal importance not to waste energy but to use it constructively. In that respect, it was important that we managed to talk about the things and relations that deplete our energy, making us prone to burnout.

We would like to have more opportunities like this, this is the conclusion we came to at the end of the exchange, not only for us, but also for our friends and fellow activists around the world. The growing number of „fires“ that need to be extinguished on this planet is fragmenting our attention and commitment, and this is why such opportunities are important, to learn from one another's successes

and failures, misconceptions and brilliant concepts, remind ourselves of the foundations of our work and empower each other to support social change at all levels of society.

In this regard, we extracted a few recommendations:

- Deep exchanges between organisations operating in different contexts as well as partner organisations are very important and they are the need of activists working in the field for a long time (question of perspective, opportunities for action and different strategies, ways and approaches to social change)
 - Possible further work: on topics such as dealing with the past
 - The participation of external actors, engaged representatives of the organisation Bread for the World which brought us together and supported us in this endeavour – our exchange has shown that this kind of exchange is desirable and necessary for all involved – can contribute to better mutual understanding, understanding of specific problems and obstacles on both sides, and finding ways to overcome them
 - Possible and desirable intersection of 3rd and 4th context – e.g., to be joined by a team from Ukraine, South Africa or Argentina, not necessarily one on one, the inclusion of 3-4 different contexts could prove particularly fruitful.

