

Issue 6,

7/21/98



Welcome to the sixth issue of the Civic Update! This edition focuses on the challenges faced when running programs in post-conflict and/or ethnically divided societies and the corresponding program strategies.

This issue highlights the strategies used by NDI programs to achieve their objectives in areas that require a unique and specific response. This edition will focus on programs in Angola, Eastern Slavonia, Guyana and Liberia to share with NDI staff the particular challenges faced in post-conflict societies and the successful strategies used for each context. Our feature article on the Northern Ireland Peace Process was written by Director for Political Party Programs Ivan Doherty.

If you have comments, desire additional information, or have an experience to share, please contact Keith Jennings (keith@ndi.org), Aaron Azelton (aaron@ndi.org), Sylvia Panfil (sylviap@ndi.org) or Elsa Ramirez (elsar@ndi.org).

NORTHERN IRELAND: FUTURE PROSPECTS

The Belfast Agreement is an acknowledgment by both communities in Northern Ireland that there is no way around one another — Unionists can't be driven into



the sea, Nationalists can't be cowed into silence. Great political tests of strength lie ahead — the shooting may be over but the shouting has just begun.

While the Agreement sets out specific measures for the establishment of a new administrative system, intended to address the concerns of both communities, the essential element in the entire equation is that of *trust*. The coming together of declared enemies to carry out the business of government is a scenario that many in Northern Ireland and beyond could never have envisaged. Undoubtedly, there remain significant obstacles that will take time, patience and a willingness to compromise, to successfully overcome. In a community where accommodation and mutual respect were hitherto unknown, it will require strong leadership and a commitment by all to a peaceful resolution of their differences, if the full potential of this Agreement is to be reached.

Divisive issues, such as decommissioning, loom large — participants in the Agreement have promised to use any influence they may have to achieve total decommissioning of paramilitary arms within two years. Even if procedures can be agreed upon and put in place to allow for the destruction of paramilitary weapons, suspicion will undoubtedly abound on each side of the community about the commitment of the other to adhere to the scheme.

With both communities drawing on the Agreement from different perspectives, each has its own agenda. For Nationalists, the release of political prisoners is vitally important, to Unionists the release of what they perceive as convicted murderers is anathema. The presence of a police force that has lost the confidence of the Nationalist community is conversely a welcome symbol of the rule of British law for the Unionist population. The highly contentious marches believed by the Unionists to be expressions of their heritage are seen by Nationalists as triumphalist and militant.

There is room for optimism, however, when one considers the giant leap of faith that the participants have already taken, to not only come to the negotiating table to seek a resolution with those they considered to be oppressors or terrorists, but also the acceptance of *dialogue* as a better means of persuasion than violence. The challenge that now lies ahead is not one of accommodation and cooperation between governmental bodies alone — it is about fostering trust at the very basic levels. Cross-border groups, civic organizations, business and voluntary organizations, as well as the political and legislative bodies, must now try to recognize and respect the diversity of their community — it is time to seek benefits from their diversity rather than lose all through division.

How Are Civic Programs in Post-Conflict or Ethnically Divided Societies Doing?

Angola: Voices of Reconciliation

Devastated by a thirty-year



civil war, disputed 1992 elections, and numerous failed peace accords, Angola now finds itself struggling to rebuild economically, socially and politically. NDI's Voices of Reconciliation (VOR) radio journalism project is a unique example of how to educate listeners about the country's peace process and, at the same time, promote reconciliation through radio stations representing Angola's rival political factions. VOR has brought journalists from the Angolan government's Radio Nacional de Angola, the rebel movement UNITA's Radio Vorgan, and an independent commercial radio station, Radio Morena de Benguela, together to report objectively on the peace process.

Given that millions of Angolans are illiterate, and that travel in rural areas is often dangerous and difficult because of lingering land mines and bandits, radio is the most effective and efficient way to communicate with people outside the capital, Luanda. The goal of the VOR project has been to encourage journalists and their audiences to debate issues constructively, based on accurate information, rather than on conflicting versions of events. Through VOR, reporters from different sides of the political spectrum have learned how to work together and *trust* one another. As a result, these reporters demonstrate to their audiences that despite differences of opinion, all the parties involved are supportive of the peace process.

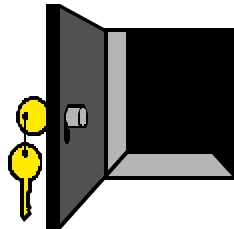
The VOR program was constructed in three phases. Phase one dealt with developing a successful pilot program. The second phase involved increasing the bimonthly broadcasts to biweekly broadcasts. Consequently, the increase in broadcast frequency helped VOR to become recognized as an impartial observer and a reporter on the goings-on in government and politics. Representatives from political parties and government began appearing to debate issues, which tied in with the third

phase of the program. The goal of phase three was to improve the quality and quantity of debate among journalists by attracting higher profile guests from government and political parties. Recently, the program entered a fourth phase, which is geared toward making VOR more sustainable by strengthening the commitment of the radio stations to the program's structure and contents.

In addition to the radio program, NDI also conducted three months of focus group research to study the public's attitudes and knowledge of basic democratic principles and processes. The project focused on Angolans' understanding of democracy, the functions of local government, human rights, the Government of Unity and Reconciliation (GURN), the extension and normalization of state administration, and the broader process of national and community-level reconciliation. A total of thirty-one focus groups of eight to ten people were held in the provinces of Luanda, Huambo, Bie and Uige. The liberties that participants frequently identified as most important were freedom of expression and free circulation of people and goods. Overall, free circulation of people and goods was recognized as the main indicator that the war would be over. The survey results are being used to conduct civic education programs at the grassroots level and to develop VOR programming.

If you have any questions about the VOR program, please contact Ryan McCannell (ryan@ndi.org) or Lhatoya Reed (latoyar@ndi.org).

**Eastern Slavonia:
Unlocking
Communication**



The greatest challenge faced in Eastern

Slavonia was to successfully run a program in an area torn apart by ethnic conflict. On January 15, 1998, the Croatian government assumed control of eastern Slavonia and is now working to resettle refugees and to protect the rights of ethnic minorities. Remaining Serbs, however, are skeptical of the Croatian government's commitment to respect their rights as Croatian citizens. Both Serbs and Croats feel victimized by the economic, social and political upheaval caused by the war. This, in combination with a traditional lack of political activism and the refugee situation, has slowed the development of a local civil society.

Due to the ethnic divisions in the region and the specific program objectives, NDI decided to create a Civic Forum team comprising both ethnic groups. The program has provided Croatian citizens with an understanding of democracy and how their government functions so that they may exercise their rights as citizens and assert themselves in the democratic development of their society.

The Civic Forum team members hold monthly community discussions to develop interaction and dialogue between members of the community, and they also distribute printed materials regularly. These discussions have provided an outlet for people to voice their concerns and have led people to consider their role in the community. In addition, the Civic Forum program combines discussion with action by encouraging members to engage in political processes. Thus far, the Eastern Slavonia Civic Forum program has successfully completed its first year, and currently operates in Osijek, Baranja and Vukovar.

Working in this area required building up trust with both Serbs and Croats. Initially, the Serbs saw the program as tied to the Croatian government, while the Croatian officials felt

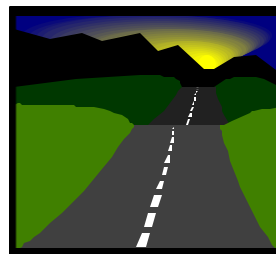
the program would undermine their power. With time and numerous consultations, however, the Serbs came to trust NDI's neutrality. Presently, the local Serbian party has several elected officials involved in NDI's discussion groups. For its part, the Croatian government has seen that NDI is working in a *nonpartisan* manner to further democracy, as opposed to trying to dismantle their government.

Using a multiethnic team is one of the aspects that makes the program unique, because NDI is one of the few organizations in the region with an ethnically diverse staff. The multiethnic team approach has allowed NDI to reach a larger audience, maintain its nonpartisan status and build the trust of citizens. In order to be able to assist Croatian citizens — resident Serbs and returning Croats — in the process of peaceful coexistence, team members also had to learn to get along. During the initial stages, team building was crucial to developing a successful program. Informal meetings, such as coffees and lunches, were held to build trust and confidence among the staff.

Another functional challenge of the program was to maintain participants' interest and their regular attendance at civic education discussions. For instance, several people came to the initial meetings hoping for money and supplies. Therefore, the team designed the first session to sell the program and inform attendees why they should participate in the Civic Forum. As noted by field representative Greg Starosky, this is the hardest part of the educational round because people don't know you or what you do. To overcome the lack of knowledge about Civic Forum and to reach a wider audience, the team stepped up its media presence. As a result, there have been media reports on the discussion groups and their organizing efforts. In addition, Greg Starosky has done several interviews with local radio

stations to let people know about Civic Forum's activities and how they can get involved.

Despite the challenges caused by working in an ethnically divided region, NDI has been successful in fostering dialogue that brings people together as a community — and not as members of different ethnic groups — to solve local problems and, consequently, empowers citizens to take part in their community.



For additional information on NDI's Civic Forum program in Eastern Slavonia please contact Gina Vetere (gina@ndi.org).

Guyana: Seeing the Light?

Since 1992, NDI has conducted programs in Guyana. Its most current program from 1996 was designed with the intention to strengthen local government, institutionalize election processes, support the constitutional reform process, establish a parliamentary research and information library, and strengthen civil society. Though Guyana has made progress in its transition toward democracy, poor economic conditions and racial polarization continue to be the main stumbling blocks to peaceful development.

Guyana's population is divided mainly among two ethnic groups, with Indo-Guyanese comprising 48 percent of the population and Afro-Guyanese 33 percent. The country's main political parties reflect to some degree these two major ethnic groups, characterizing them as racially-based democratic institutions.

Since the country's independence from Great Britain in 1966, Guyana's elections have been marked by widespread allegations of fraud. Though elections held in 1992 spurred on a

movement toward a more democratic system, specifically in the area of electoral reform, the contested victory of the People's Progressive Party/Civic (PPP/C) in 1997 left Guyana at a political impasse requiring the intervention of the regional organization the Caribbean Community (CARICOM). This resulted in a brokered agreement between the two parties, known as the Herdmanston Accord.

In an effort to open the way for reconciliation, the Accord called for an international audit of the elections. On June 2, CARICOM released the audit results of the Guyanese December 1997 elections. The release of the report was followed by speculations that riots would occur. This prompted NDI to try and preempt any violent reactions by creating a neutral environment where frank discussions about the democratic process in Guyana could occur. Three roundtable discussions were conducted by NDI with political party representatives, civic leaders and other NDI friends. Attending staff were Director for Political Party Programs Ivan Doherty, NDI Director for Civic Programs Keith Jennings, incoming NDI/Guyana Program Director Jean Freedberg, Program Coordinator Winston Cramer and Program Officer Makram Ouais. The purpose of the roundtables was to discuss the state of democracy in Guyana with political, government and civic leaders. The aim was to discuss the prospects for continuing inter-party dialogue and constitutional reform in Guyana.

The release of the audit brings Guyana one step closer to acting on constitutional reform issues, in accordance with the CARICOM Herdmanston Accord for peace. During the release period, NDI worked with civil society groups to call for political party dialogue on the constitutional reform process. Additionally, Executive members of the Private Sector Commission (PSC) and the

Trade Union Congress (TUC) issued a joint press release calling for parties to adhere to the Herdmanston Accord by moving on constitutional reform issues.

These roundtable discussions, in addition to developing frank discourse, allowed civic group representatives to think about their role in bringing peace to Guyana. They agreed on the need to strengthen civil society organizations institutionally and to become more assertive in participating in the peace process. By identifying what needs to be done by civil society organizations, these civic group representatives can go on to bring about a more enduring peace to Guyana.

Most recently, NDI organized a delegation of Guyanese government officials, political party members and civic group representatives to go to Northern Ireland so that they may learn more about reconciliation through the example of the Northern Ireland peace process.

For more information regarding the Guyana program, please contact Makram Ouais

(makram@ndi.org) or

Nicole Mlade

(nicolem@ndi.org).



Liberia: Making Steady Progress

After seven years of civil war, and a peaceful transition election in July 1997 that resulted in the election of Charles Taylor (former chief warlord) as president, Liberia is making its first tentative steps toward reestablishing the state and rebuilding democratic institutions. As Liberia treads through the transformation from a fractionalized war-torn society toward a unified democratic society, NDI has developed a Civic Forum program to enhance

efforts by Liberians to build their country's nascent democracy.

Civic Forum is a network of community discussion groups designed to raise the political awareness of Liberian citizens and to promote their participation in the political process. As of March 31, the Civic Forum program had reached more than 500 participants. One participant stated, "because our people did not know the constitution, no one held the government responsible . . . This [NDI] Forum should be extended . . . then the time will come when we will all know the constitution and act on our rights." NDI has also provided subgrants to four Liberian NGOs that are currently implementing civic education activities aimed at traditionally under-represented sectors of Liberian society, including women and youth.

Celena Slade, NDI Program Officer for West Africa, tells us in the following paragraphs about the challenges the program faced and how the team members worked to overcome them.

The main obstacle we ran into initially was a fear among the citizenry to participate in Civic Forum's because they thought that the meetings could be viewed as politically subversive by the government. There was also an initial view that learning about constitutional rights was not a priority in a country that was trying to emerge from the devastation of war. The view was that people would be more concerned about rebuilding their homes and farms and not as concerned about learning an "intangible concept" such as individual rights and responsibilities. Another major obstacle was logistical. Determining where Civic Forums would occur was largely based on what

was accessible by road. The large degree of rains in Liberia has left many roads and entire counties unreachable unless helicopters or boats are used. Therefore, a significant population of the people cannot be reached to participate in Civic Forums. Another obstacle was finding a county for Civic Forum in which the host citizens of that county actually resided and would remain stable to participate in the Civic Forums. Many counties were populated by refugees from neighboring Sierra Leone or were internally displaced within one county awaiting the opportunity to return home.

To overcome these obstacles, we had a series of meetings with local officials, Chiefs, business leaders and the legislature to help assure the citizens that this was not a secret political activity but was rather very open and transparent. To accomplish this we sent information letters about Civic Forum and developed press releases and conducted radio interviews to help "advertise" the forums. To help demonstrate the relevance of Civic Forums to the "redevelopment" and "reconstruction" of the country we utilized the skills of our moderators who were familiar with the trials and who were well qualified to use "realistic" examples of how knowing your rights protects you from future instability, etc. To overcome the logistical difficulties we chose counties that were easily accessible and then created the Civic Forum Watch to be distributed by participants in areas in which the forums had not occurred. To ensure that we had residents rather than refugees we organized the forums in schools and churches and other

groups that have more stable memberships. We also chose counties that statistically had fewer refugees than other counties.

In short, the Liberia Civic Forum program experience can prove beneficial to others who are working to overcome similar obstacles.

If you'd like more information on Liberia's Civic Forum please contact Celeste Slade at n



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Civic Group Meets Monthly for Topical Discussions

During the Civic Group meeting in April 1998, Kirk Gregersen and Rachel Quick co-facilitated a discussion on the topic of exit strategies. Group participants examined what an exit strategy is, when/why it's important to have one, and identified examples of how exit strategies could be incorporated into NDI programming.

In the May Civic Group meeting group, members produced a checklist of issues to consider when engaging with NGOs. Led by David Kovick and Sharon White, participants listed the types of problems encountered when

working with NGOs and then discussed and listed possible solutions to improve NDI's work with NGOs. Currently a work in progress, the Civic Group hopes this checklist will be helpful in the future when assessing relationships between NDI and NGOs.

June's Civic Group meeting focused on advocacy training. Sarah Copley facilitated the discussion, while Kate Head, former West Bank & Gaza field rep, described exercises that could be used to accomplish group goals. The purpose of this session was also to identify strategies for planning from the bottom up.

Interested in learning more about the Civic Group meetings? Information can be found at k:users/public/teams/civpol/civcmtg.

Kate Head Speaks on Advocacy Training in the West Bank & Gaza

Former field representative for the West Bank & Gaza Civic Activities Project (CAP) Kate Head spoke about her experiences with civic advocacy training out in the field at a MENA hosted brown bag in July. In particular, Kate spoke of a pilot program she conducted with youth groups and village counsels. The program consisted of training and mentoring youth groups to identify their goals, establish a strategic plan, and convert their plans into projects within their communities. Additionally, Kate coordinated meetings so both youth groups and the village counsel could work together on issues.

Part of Kate's training also guided these groups to effectively lobby the Palestinian Legislative Council (PLC) on specific issues. These and other examples can be found in an advocacy manual, which Kate wrote, entitled "Getting Things Done in the West Bank & Gaza: A Guide for NGOs," a compilation of

advocacy strategies specific to the West Bank & Gaza. Distributed in Arabic throughout the West Bank & Gaza, the manual is scheduled to be released in English this August. In addition, the manual will be distributed on diskette for those interested in tailoring it to another country program.

Please contact Sarah Copley (sarahc@ndi.org) for any further questions you may have.

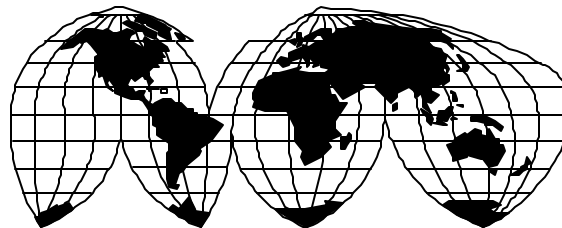
NDI Hosts Reception for Volunteers

On July 3, NDI held its first-ever Reception in honor of volunteers in the DC area whose expertise and experiences have been fundamental to NDI's work. Nearly 100 volunteers attended the Reception. As one of the highlights of the event, speaker and former volunteer Ambassador Franklin Sonn lauded the work of volunteers and the role of NDI in strengthening and expanding democracy worldwide. NDI President Ken Wollack also praised and thanked volunteers for helping NDI's work in democracy development. With the assistance of fellow NDI staffers in planning and organizing the Reception, the event culminated in a success. Stay on the lookout for another Volunteer Reception in 1999!

S&E's Civic Participation Team & Program Coordination Host In-House Workshops

During the month of July, the Civic Participation Team in conjunction with Program Coordination coordinated in-house training sessions on proposal writing. The purpose of the sessions was to refine staff's proposal writing skills. Skills, such as reviewing guidelines, structuring an accurate budget, timing in advance, and communicating with pertinent teams (e.g., S&E Team,

Accounting), were all emphasized as important



practices. In addition, NDI President Ken Wollack underscored the importance of these in-house workshops because they allow proposals to be written more concisely and to be edited more conscientiously. Given the good turnout and staff's request for more training, keep an eye out for follow-up sessions in the near future.

New & Departing Civic Field Staff

Ghana

Cara Hesse has returned to DC from the field, where as former Field Director she conducted the NDI-Ghana program to build the capacity of parliament and increase citizen involvement in the legislative process. Among many other things, Cara's past experiences include working as Executive Director for Common Cause/DC, and Commissioner for the DC Government Advisory Neighborhood Commission.

Guyana

Jean Freedberg joins the NDI family as Field Director for the Guyana program, where she will work to promote stable, inclusive governance. Jean comes with extensive experience in NGO development, strategic communications, and budget management. Her vast experience also includes having worked as the National Communications Director for the Sierra Club, as well as for Amnesty International.

Former NDI-Guyana Director Deborah Ullmer

now joins us in the DC office, where she will continue to work with the LAC team on various programs. While in Guyana, Deborah coordinated the development of a legislative library, in addition to promoting dialogue among political parties. Before coming to NDI, Deborah worked on legislative matters and served as an OAS monitor for the 1995 Peru elections.

Romania

Michelle Ryzd departs from the Institute after more than three years as field rep for NDI-Romania, where she trained indigenous NGOs to launch advocacy campaigns, and to increase their organizational capacity. A native of Chicago, Michelle came to NDI with a plethora of experience in community organizing, having been the lead organizer for the Anti-Gang Task Force and other community organizations.

Slovakia

Let's welcome back former NDIer Lisa McLean, who returned as the new field rep for NDI-Slovakia, where she will conduct an election monitoring program in Bratislava during the final months leading up to the September elections. In the past, Lisa conducted election monitoring and civic organizing programs as field rep for NDI-Bulgaria, along with other work in Hungary, Peru, FYRM, and the West Bank & Gaza.

Robert Norris also joins the Institute as a member of the NDI-Slovakia team. While in Slovakia, Robert will be located in Bratislava to work with Slovak NGOs on election monitoring and voter education projects. The founder and president of Commonwealth Consulting, Inc., Robert also brings with him 25 years in Democratic and progressive politics, in addition to experience in all aspects of modern campaigns and elections.

West Bank & Gaza

Field rep Kate Head leaves NDI after having worked on the Civic Activities Project (CAP) in the West Bank & Gaza, where she trained civil society organizations in advocacy, institutional development and capacity building, and produced an advocacy manual that was distributed broadly throughout the West Bank & Gaza. Before working on this program, Kate represented NDI in the countries of Cambodia, Malawi and Russia. Prior to her return to DC, Kate will conduct some work for NDI in Egypt.

As a new member of the Civic Participation Team, please welcome . . .

Elsa Ramirez, a current student at George Washington University majoring in Political Science, who previously worked as a White House Communications Research intern, and as an assistant to the Vice President of Smith Company, a fundraising group for liberal organizations.



Materials: What's New in the S&E Team Library?

In case you were searching for materials on institution building, here are a few readings we recommend:

- [Strategic Planning for Nonprofit Organizations: A Practical Guide and Workbook](#) by Michael Allison & Jude Kaye
- [How Organisations Measure Success: The Use of Performance Indicators in Government](#) by Neil Carter, Rudolf Klein & Patricia Day

- Non-Governments: NGOs and the Political Development of the Third World by Julie Fisher
- The Worldwide Fundraiser's Handbook: A Guide to Fundraising for Southern NGOs and Voluntary Organisations by Michael Norton
- Governance, Administration & Development: Making the State Work by Mark Turner & David Hulme

Did you know we also have thousands of materials available on civic advocacy, education, institution building and many, many more civic-related topics? We encourage you to use the civic materials as a reference while developing and working on your programs and to give us materials to add to the files.

To see a catalog of available civic materials look under k:users/public/teams/civpol/resources/civic or refer to the S&E Team's Red Book for a complete listing of all available resources.

We've also attached some materials that could prove useful for NDI programs. We encourage you to:

- *use the Pocket Guide for Training for a quick and easy-to-follow reading of how to effectively train adults.*

The Pocket Guide to Training was produced by the S&E team to highlight some important issues to consider when organizing training programs.

- *refer to the Exit Memo for NDI-*

Liberia as an example for writing exit memos.

This document was initially meant for the use of exiting NDI-Liberia field reps to assist the Institute with future planning in Liberia. The questions posed in the memo, however, are applicable to any NDI program and could prove worthwhile to give to other field reps exiting NDI programs.

- *peruse the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for the West Bank & Gaza Civic Forum program for ideas on how to design these types of agreements.*

This MOU is an example of how to set forth terms and conditions under which NDI will agree to cooperate with a civic group, and can be useful when structuring working relationships with other civic organizations.

- *get in contact with fellow NDI civic program staff with the Chart of NDI Civic Programs and Contact Info.*

This chart lists all the current civic programs according to their civic focus and

For additional information on Civic Participation, contact the S & E Team:

**NDI
Massachusetts Ave.
Washington, D.C. 20036
202-328-3136 (tel.)
202-939-3166 (fax)**

includes DC and field program contacts, and respective contact information. The chart will help you reach other staff members working on similar programs.

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