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**EVALUATION OF PEACEBUILDING PROJECTS:
CASE STUDY OF BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA**

Master Thesis

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Olomouc, 2013

I declare in lieu of oath that I wrote this thesis myself. All information derived from the work of others has been acknowledged in the text and a list of references is given.

Olomouc, 25th April 2013

.....

Signature

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Z á s a d y p r o v y p r a c o v á n í :

The aim of the thesis is to evaluate peace building projects of a selected non-governmental organization operating in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Although the Dayton Peace Agreement, which officially ended the civil war in Bosnia and Herzegovina, was signed 16 years ago, the situation in this ethnically divided country is still very fragile. Many non-governmental organizations working in the field of peace building and conflict resolution are active in the region, however, only few of them evaluate their projects to see the real impact of their activities. In the theoretical part of the thesis, specific methods and tools for evaluation of peace building and development interventions in conflict and post-conflict zones will be discussed. In the second part, selected projects will be evaluated using different methods of both qualitative and quantitative research, mainly analysis of project documentation, interviews with the stakeholders, questionnaires, observation, etc. The evaluation findings and recommendations will be provided to the implementing organization in order to improve project effectiveness in the future.

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Abstract

The thesis seeks to outline the framework for evaluating peacebuilding projects. It identifies the distinguishing features of the evaluations of peacebuilding interventions and criteria used for such evaluations. The framework is then used to evaluate a peacebuilding project implemented in the post-conflict environment of Bosnia and Herzegovina by the local nongovernmental organization, Nansen Dialogue Centre Sarajevo. The purpose of the evaluation is to assess the impact of the project on the stakeholders involved in the process, and on the broader post-conflict situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The thesis concludes with lessons learnt, and describes the best practices that could be used in similar contexts in the future.

Keywords: peacebuilding, evaluation, dialogue, interethnic situation, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Nansen Dialogue Centre Sarajevo

Abstrakt

Diplomová práca predstavuje model hodnotenia intervencií zameraných na budovanie mieru. Práca identifikuje charakteristické znaky evaluácií projektov zameraných na budovanie mieru a kritériá používané pri takýchto evaluáciách. Tento model je následne použitý pri hodnotení konkrétneho projektu zameraného na budovanie mieru, ktorý bol implementovaný v postkonfliktnej Bosne a Hercegovine. Realizátorom evaluovaného projektu je miestna nevládna organizácia Nansen Dialogue Centre Sarajevo. Cieľom evaluácie je zhodnotiť dopad projektu na cieľovú skupinu a na celkovú postkonfliktnú situáciu v Bosne a Hercegovine. Evaluácia na záver popisuje úspešné aspekty evaluovaného projektu, ktoré by v budúcnosti mohli byť využité pri realizácii projektov v podobných podmienkach.

Kľúčové slová: budovanie mieru, evaluácia, dialóg, medzietnická situácia, Bosna a Hercegovina, Nansen Dialogue Centre Sarajevo

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List of abbreviations and acronyms

BiH	Bosnia and Herzegovina
CDA	Collaborative for Development Action
DAC	Development Assistance Committee
DC	Dialogue Centre
EU	European Union
FBiH	Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina
FDI	Foreign direct investment
LFA	Logical Framework Approach
MFA	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NCB	Nansen Coordination Board
NDC	Nansen Dialogue Centre
NDN	Nansen Dialogue Network
NFYF	Nansen Forum of Young Peacebuilders
NGO	Nongovernmental organization
ODA	Official Development Assistance
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
OHR	Office of High Representative
OSCE	Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe
PRIO	International Peace Research Institute, Oslo
RPP	Reflecting on Peace Project
RS	Republika Srpska
UN	United Nations
USAID	United States Agency for International Development

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Introduction

Peaceful coexistence and cooperation of inhabitants is considered to be one of the main prerequisites for the development of a state. Societies divided by the manifest or latent conflict, struggling with distrust, lack of communication, prejudices and opposing interests, cannot function properly. Although the Dayton Peace Agreement, which officially ended the civil war in Bosnia and Herzegovina, was signed 17 years ago, the ethnically-divided society still faces a number of challenges which prevent the country from developing into a fully functioning and prosperous state. Many nongovernmental organizations working in the field of peacebuilding and conflict resolution are active in the region. However, only a few of them evaluate their projects to see the real impact of their activities.

The main aim of the thesis is to evaluate a peacebuilding intervention implemented in the post-conflict environment of Bosnia and Herzegovina. The project “Reconciliation and Integration through Education and Dialogue” implemented by local organization, Nansen Dialogue Centre Sarajevo, has been, with their permission, chosen for the evaluation. The evaluation will seek to assess the impact of the project on the stakeholders involved in the process and on the broader post-conflict situation in BiH. It will also attempt to identify lessons learnt and describe the best practices that could be used in similar contexts in the future.

In the first part, the thesis will outline the theoretical framework for implementing the evaluation. It will discuss the concept of peacebuilding and the role nongovernmental organizations play in the process of building peace. Secondly, it will define the term evaluation as applied in the field of development cooperation and explore the distinguishing features of evaluations of peacebuilding interventions. Furthermore, the specific criteria for evaluating peacebuilding interventions will be identified.

The second part of the thesis, the case study, represents the implementation of the evaluation. It will first analyse the current situation in BiH in order to better assess the relevance of the evaluated project. History of the implementing organization and its previous projects will be presented as well. The evaluation report will seek to assess the project according to the criteria defined for evaluating peacebuilding interventions.

Finally, the thesis will summarize the main findings of the evaluation, best practices and recommendations for the future involvement of the implementing organization in BiH.

Methodology

The thesis is divided into two main parts. The first part outlines the theoretical framework for the case study presented in the second part of the thesis. It builds on the relevant publications from the field of peace and conflict studies and evaluation of development and peacebuilding interventions. The publications by Galtung (1975; 1996) together with the book by Lederach (1997) represent the key works in the field of peace and conflict research. The book edited by Paffenholz (2010) offers a comprehensive assessment of the role civil society plays in the process of building peace with the theoretical background as well as a number of case studies. Publications by Chigas (2007) and Richmond (2001) are also used in the thesis to analyse the role of nongovernmental organizations in the peacebuilding process. With regards to the evaluation criteria and methods, the widely adopted evaluation criteria developed by the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD, 2010) are presented in the thesis and compared with the criteria for the evaluations of peacebuilding interventions proposed by Paffenholz and Reychler (2007) and Anderson and Olson (2003). The books by Morra Imas and Rist (2009) and Wholey et al. (2010) are valuable resources for planning and conducting evaluations. The thesis also analyses statistics on official development assistance issued by the OECD (2012 c).

The case study, evaluation of the peacebuilding project implemented in Bosnia and Herzegovina, is based on the analysis of the project documentation, semi-structured interviews and surveys conducted during the research. The methodology of the evaluation is explained in more detail in chapter 3.

PART I: Theoretical Framework

1 Peacebuilding

1.1 Evolution of the Concept

The concept of peacebuilding as we understand it today was firstly introduced by the founder of peace and conflict studies, Johan Galtung. In his work *Three Approaches to Peace: Peacekeeping, Peacemaking, and Peacebuilding* (1975) he argues that a peacebuilding initiative should be focused on establishing the structure of peace that would address the underlying causes of war and lead to the creation of situation which he calls a positive peace. By positive peace (Galtung, 1996) he means not only the absence of war or direct violence, but also the absence of structural or indirect violence such as exploitation, marginalization or oppression, and cultural violence legitimizing direct and structural violence in the society.

The term peacebuilding begun to be used more widely after the report *Agenda for Peace* by United Nations (UN) Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali was published in 1992 (Boutros-Ghali, 1992: no page numbers). The report recognised the changes in the nature of the threats to international security that took place after the end of the Cold War, and new challenges these changes meant for the UN, particularly in the area of building and sustaining peace and stability. The UN should, according to Boutros-Ghali, concentrate on preventing conflicts from escalating through diplomacy, engaging in peacemaking with the aim of resolving the causes of the problem once the conflict became violent, monitoring peace and assisting with the implementation of the peace agreements through peacekeeping and rebuilding institutions and infrastructure as well as relationships of the parties engaged in the conflict through the process of post-conflict peacebuilding. Here, post-conflict peacebuilding represents various forms of initiatives implemented after the peace accords are signed that “can not only contribute to economic and social development but also enhance the confidence that is so fundamental to peace” (Ibid).

The same perspective, in terms of the timing of the peacebuilding interventions, is presented in the *Report of the Panel on United Nations Peace Operations*, also called the *Brahimi Report* after the chairman of the panel that produced it, Lakhdar Brahimi. According to the report (Brahimi et al., 2000: 3), peacebuilding encompasses a range of

activities aimed at establishing the foundations of peace “undertaken on the far side of conflict”.

However, in the Security Council report published in February 2001 the term peacebuilding is also used for activities with the goal of “preventing the outbreak, the recurrence or continuation of armed conflict” (United Nations Security Council, 2001: 1), thus acknowledging the fact that many of the peace agreements fail and post-war time can easily become pre-war time. Hence, the report contests the previous statements about the implementation of peacebuilding activities exclusively after the violent conflict ended with the aim of rebuilding the affected society and broadens its role to conflict prevention activities.

Another influential scholar in the field of peace and conflict studies, John Paul Lederach, further discusses this approach. In his book *Building Peace* (1997) he suggests that peacebuilding should include activities that “both precede and follow formal peace accords”. He offers the following definition of what can be understood under the term of peacebuilding: “[it is] a comprehensive concept that encompasses, generates, and sustains the full array of processes, approaches, and stages needed to transform conflict toward more sustainable, peaceful relationships” (Lederach, 1997: 20). He highlights, similarly as Boutros-Ghali, the importance of making the question of transforming relationships the central aspect of peacebuilding.

The latest definition of peacebuilding adopted by the UN in 2007 and currently guiding the UN practice in this field draws upon the experiences with peacebuilding interventions and the knowledge gained on the issue so far. According to this definition (United Nations, 2010: 5), “peacebuilding involves a range of measures targeted to reduce the risk of lapsing or relapsing into conflict by strengthening national capacities at all levels for conflict management, and to lay the foundations for sustainable peace and development. Peacebuilding strategies must be coherent and tailored to the specific needs of the country concerned, based on national ownership, and should comprise a carefully prioritized, sequenced, and therefore relatively narrow set of activities aimed at achieving the above objectives”.

1.2 Typology of Actors in the Process of Peacebuilding

There is a wide range of actors working in the process of building peace, from representatives of governments involved in the conflict, military leaders and influential intergovernmental organizations, to leaders of religious organizations, local NGOs and

clans. Two possible models of classifying actors important for the process will be described.

First, the Lederach's (1997) typology of actors involved in peacebuilding will be presented, since it was widely adopted by many other authors (e.g. Ramsbotham, Woodhouse, Miall, 2011; Paffenholz, 2010). Using a pyramid model he recognises three major categories of actors: top-level leadership, middle-range leadership and grass roots leadership.

The very top of the pyramid represents the top-level leadership. This group comprises the fewest people, the key political and military leaders. Their actions and statements concerning the peacebuilding process are very visible and get a lot of publicity. It places them under big pressure to sustain their publicly stated positions on the conflict which might result in the lack of space for accepting different negotiated agreements from the previously stated ones.

Middle-range leadership consists of persons who are considered to be leaders but are not connected to any official political structures, for example individuals highly respected within the society. These people may come from different sectors (education, business etc.) and institutions (religious groups, universities, humanitarian organizations etc.). Usually they have links to both the top-level leadership and the local community at the grass roots level. They are not as visible as the top-level leaders; therefore they are much more flexible in their actions. The number of middle-range leaders is higher and they are interconnected across the conflict.

Leaders at the grass roots level represent the largest group of actors important for the process of peacebuilding. This level comprises diverse groups of people, such as members of local nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), people involved in the local communities, elders of clans, health officials etc. They have in-depth knowledge of the situation and they personally experience the problems of the society that fuel the conflict on a daily basis. At the same time they have links to leaders of local governments.

Waisová (2008) describes a different model that divides actors of peacebuilding into two groups: track one and track two. Track one is associated with official representatives of states or international intergovernmental organizations, such as the UN, Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) or African Union. On the other hand, all unofficial non-state actors (local and international NGOs, religious organizations, journalists, academics etc.) are classified as track two. Diana Chigas (2007)

uses similar model for categorization of NGOs' interventions in conflict and post-conflict situations (see chapter 1.4).

1.3 Approaches to Peacebuilding and Typologies of Peacebuilding Activities

On the basis of the pyramid of actors in the peacebuilding process Lederach (1997) suggested three levels of approaches to peacebuilding: top-level, middle-range and grass roots approach.

Approach to peacebuilding focused primarily on the top-level leaders is called top-down approach. The goal of such an intervention is to achieve a cease-fire, and later to negotiate a peace agreement between the high-level leaders of the conflicting groups, which would create a framework for the political transformation from war to peace. The mediator who is working to get the leaders to one table for negotiations is usually someone publicly known and officially supported by a country not involved in the conflict or an international organization such as the UN. The approach works with the presumption that the agreement reached at the high level will be respected by the rest of the society.

The middle-range approach engages the middle-range leaders since it is assumed that they can facilitate the establishment of an infrastructure for sustaining the process of peacebuilding due to their position in the society. Initiatives at this level can take concrete form of e.g. problem-solving workshops where the unofficial representatives of parties meet together to analyze existing problems, or conflict resolution training which provide middle-range participants with the techniques for dealing constructively with conflicts.

There are massive numbers of people at the grass roots level. Therefore, peacebuilding initiatives at this level, following the bottom-up approach, are often directed at leaders of the local communities through whom masses can be reached. Variety of activities can be implemented at this level, from peace conferences attended by the leaders of the local communities, seminars on various topics related to the problems of communities during the conflict and post-conflict period, to training on how to deal with violence and prejudices in the communities and how to empower local people to engage in the decision making processes. The main aim of these activities is to provide the grass roots leaders with the opportunity to actively take part in the process of conflict resolution and peacebuilding.

Activities undertaken within the process of peacebuilding can be classified according to different criteria, e.g. according to thematic focus of the initiatives or duration and time perspective of the interventions.

Dan Smith (2004: 27–28) offers one way of thematic classification of peacebuilding activities, to use his words, a “peacebuilding palette”. The palette includes four types of instruments used in the process of peacebuilding:

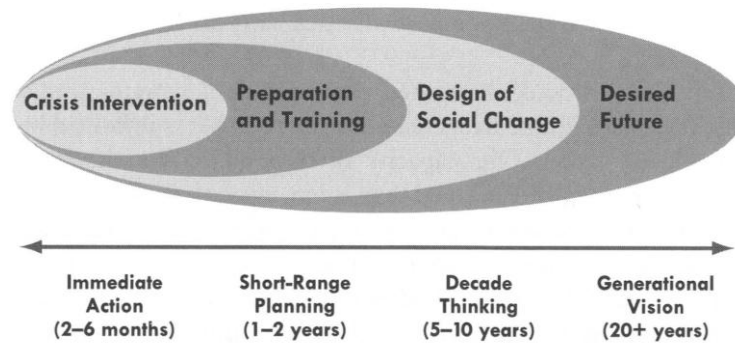
- activities providing security: mine action, disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration of combatants, security sector reform etc.;
- establishing the socio-economic foundations: physical reconstruction, economic infrastructure, food security, repatriation of refugees etc.;
- establishing the political framework: democratization, institution building, human rights etc.;
- bringing reconciliation and justice: dialogue between leaders, grass roots dialogue, Truth and Reconciliation Commissions, trauma therapy etc.

As the author emphasizes, the components of this model are inter-dependent and usually used in combination according to the specific situation and needs of the concrete conflict. Moreover, by combining different activities the chances for creating greater effect are higher.

With regards to time frames, Lederach (1997) distinguishes four sets of peacebuilding activities: crisis intervention, preparation and training, design for social change and desired future (see figure 1).

The first stage, crisis intervention (on the left), represents immediate activities aimed at ceasing the violence and providing necessary relief. The second phase is of a short-term nature and is focused on building capacities for better management of conflicts in the future. The third, middle-range step is dealing with the design of social change – creating mechanisms that would enable the transition from the experience of crises toward better and sustainable future. The last phase represents a long-term vision of the common future the stakeholders are trying to build. With this model, Lederach is trying to suggest that peacebuilding activities, both short- and long-range, must be planned and implemented with a longer-term vision of desired future.

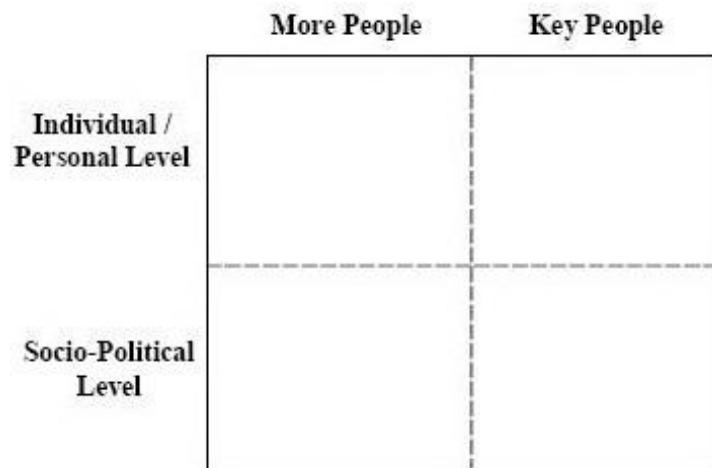
Figure 1: The time dimension in peacebuilding



Source: Lederach, 1997: 77.

As a result of a project called “Reflecting on Peace Project” (RPP), which studied peacebuilding interventions around the world, Anderson and Olson (2003) identified basic strategies that are used in the peace practice. They argue that all peacebuilding activities can be illustrated by a simple matrix (see figure 2).

Figure 2: Diagram illustrating peacebuilding strategies



Source: Anderson, Olson, 2003: 48.

On the horizontal axis, two approaches to engaging people in peacebuilding activities are indicated. Interventions are either directed towards engaging a lot of people, since it is assumed that peace can only be achieved when many people are involved in the activities, or towards engaging people who are seen as important for the peace process with the assumption that the activities have to involve the “key” people in order to achieve peace. The vertical axis represents the levels at which interventions work. They work either at the individual/personal level, attempting to change the attitudes and perceptions of individuals, or at the socio/political level, trying to achieve changes in political, economic

or judicial institutions. In this case it is assumed that peace can be accomplished only when political and societal institutions support it.

1.4 The Role of NGOs in the Peacebuilding Process

The new understanding of the concept of peacebuilding, which firstly emerged from the *Agenda for Peace*, was reflected in a rapid increase in the numbers of NGOs engaged in the peacebuilding and conflict management processes (Paffenholz, 2010). The focus of such organizations has been broadened as well. Currently, NGOs involved in the peacebuilding range from conflict resolution, humanitarian and developmental, to educational and human rights organizations (Richmond, 2001).

There are both advantages and limits of NGOs' engagement in the process of building peace. They have a good knowledge of the situation, since they are in a close contact with the local environment and other grass roots movements. NGOs are flexible and respond rapidly to emerging problems. They do not only provide aid and services to those in need but also empower beneficiaries to deal constructively with problems, monitor and lobby for human rights, and build capacities of local communities. Moreover, they often provide the necessary safe space where people from opposing sides of the conflict can meet. Generally, NGOs can contribute to the peacebuilding process by addressing those aspects of conflict which official actors overlook or cannot reach. On the other hand, NGOs are often criticised for the lack of accountability, vulnerability to being manipulated or misused by one of the parties to the conflict, limited effectiveness and vague impact of their activities on the peace process (Richmond, 2001; Chigas, 2007; Paffenholz, 2010).

Chigas (2007) modified the model of dividing actors of peacebuilding into two tracks described above (see Waisová, 2008) for the roles NGOs can play in the process of building peace. According to her, three levels, or tracks, of interventions can be distinguished: track one and a half, track two and track three.

During the track one and a half interventions unofficial actors such as churches or international organizations meet official representatives of parties to the conflict with the goal of promoting peaceful solution to the conflict. At this level, two activities are usually implemented: direct mediation where unofficial actors work as intermediaries between the official representatives of the antagonist groups, trying to negotiate a settlement to the conflict, or consultation in a form of problem-solving dialogue among official actors where unofficial facilitator assists in analyzing the root causes and resolving the conflict.

Track two initiatives are characterized by unofficial intermediaries working with unofficial, but influential people from the conflicting parties. The main aim is to improve communication and understanding as a prerequisite for developing constructive solutions to the conflict. Such initiatives can take the form of the so called public peace processes, where middle-range representatives of all conflict sides meet and engage actively in the process of analyzing problems and designing concrete steps for resolving them.

In track three interventions NGOs work with people from various sectors of society to overcome all forms of violence, rebuild communities divided by the conflict and promote cooperation at the grass roots level. Activities at this level can range from trainings, dialogue initiatives, peace education, joint sport or cultural events and work with media and religious organizations, to joint business and economic projects. The idea behind the track three interventions is that peace also has to be built from the bottom up.

1.5 Financing Peacebuilding Interventions

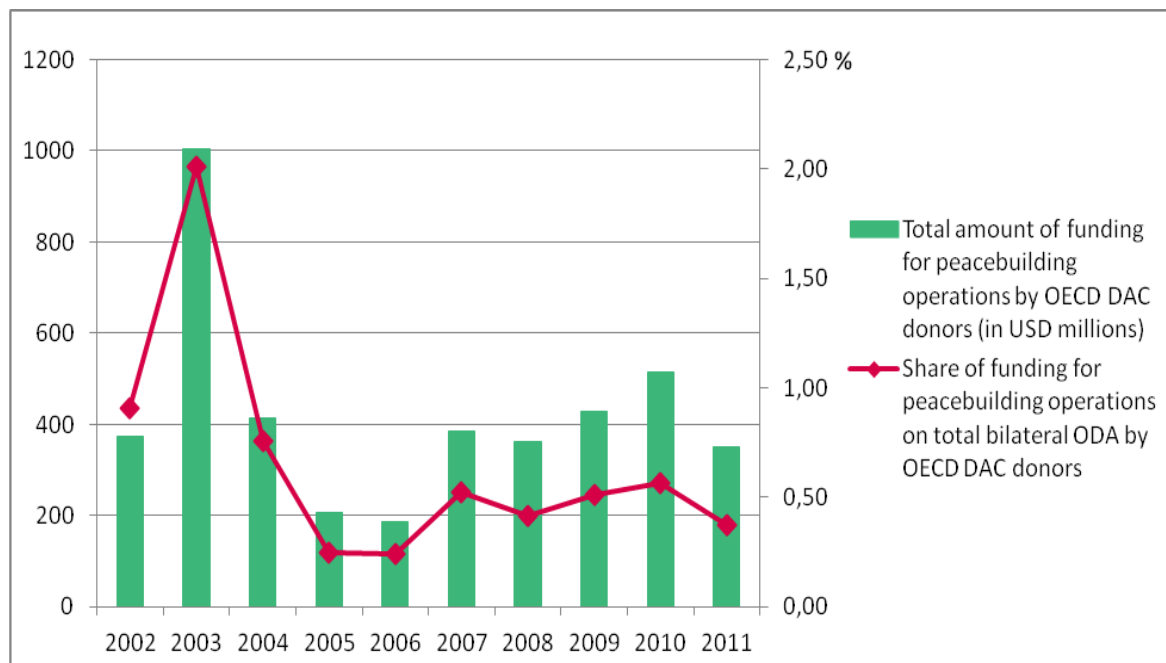
Three main financial flows to conflict-affected or fragile countries can be identified: official development assistance (ODA) provided by external donors, remittances and foreign direct investment (FDI). ODA is the biggest financial inflow into these countries and has been growing since 2000. Remittances are regarded as more stable than other flows and represent an important source of income for many communities. FDI are not channelled into fragile states very often and are concentrated in the resource-rich countries¹ (OECD, 2012 b).

The amount spent on the peacebuilding interventions financed by the external donor countries is included in ODA under the category of “Post-conflict peacebuilding operations”. The share of the funding for the peacebuilding interventions on total bilateral ODA provided by the biggest donors, members of Development Assistance Committee (DAC) of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), amounted to 2.01% in 2003, which was the biggest volume between 2002 and 2011, the period monitored by the OECD. As we can see in figure 3, there was a modest increase of the proportion in 2007 after a strong decline in 2004 and 2005. However, the share of the funding for the peacebuilding operations decreased again in 2011 to 0.37% of total ODA provided by DAC donors. When looking at total amount of the funding for the peacebuilding operations provided by DAC donors, we can see similar trend as in the case

¹ Currently, three-quarters of FDI to conflict-affected and fragile countries are going to seven states which are endowed with natural riches (OECD, 2012 b).

of the share on ODA. In 2011, OECD DAC donors spent almost 352 million USD on post-conflict peacebuilding operations (OECD, 2012 c).

Figure 3: Financing peacebuilding operations within the ODA by OECD DAC donors in the period 2002–2011



Source: Constructed by the author according to OECD, 2012 c.

2 Evaluation of Peacebuilding Interventions

2.1 Definition of Evaluation

Before presenting the criteria for evaluating peacebuilding interventions, the term evaluation will be defined and discussed. Since the majority of the conflicts after the Cold War occurred in the countries of the Global South, and peacebuilding activities have often been placed on the development agenda, the definition of evaluation will be adopted from the field of development cooperation.

Development Assistance Committee (DAC) of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) defines evaluation as “systematic and objective assessment of an on-going or completed project, programme or policy, its design, implementation and results” (OECD, 2002: 21). Purpose of an evaluation is “to improve future aid policy, programmes and projects through feedback of lessons learned” and “to provide a basis for accountability, including the provision of information to the public” (OECD, 2010: 7).

Morra Imas and Rist (2009) name several reasons why it is beneficial to conduct evaluations. Evaluation provides answers to questions such as what are the impacts of the intervention, whether the project or programme is going as planned, or who is actually benefiting from the intervention. By evaluating policies, programmes and projects, better distribution of financial and human resources and accountability and transparency can be achieved. Another important feature of evaluation is that it generates knowledge and lessons learned.

OECD (2010: 13–14) suggests the following criteria which should be considered when evaluating development interventions: relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability (see table 1).

Table 1: OECD DAC evaluation criteria

Relevance	extent to which the aid activity is suited to the priorities and policies of the target group, recipient and donor
Effectiveness	measure of the extent to which an aid activity attains its objectives
Efficiency	extent to which aid uses the least costly resources possible in order to achieve the desired results
Impact	positive and negative changes produced by a development intervention, directly or indirectly, intended or unintended
Sustainability	extent to which the benefits of an activity are likely to continue after donor funding has been withdrawn

Source: Compiled by the author according to OECD, 2010: 13–14.

Wholey et al. (2010) distinguish two types of evaluations based on the timing of the evaluation. Formative evaluation focuses on the way in which a programme or project is implemented with the aim of improving the performance. This type of evaluation is conducted during the implementation of an intervention. On the other hand, summative evaluation is conducted after completing a programme or project. The goal of the summative evaluation is to assess the worth and impact of the intervention. Morra Imas and Rist (2009) also define the third type of evaluation, prospective evaluation. It aims to assess the outcomes the proposed intervention is likely to have; hence it is conducted before the realization of the intervention starts.

Evaluation questions are, according to Morra Imas and Rist (Ibid), the key element that gives direction to the evaluation. They present three categories of evaluation questions: descriptive, normative and cause-and-effect questions. Descriptive questions are used to determine what is. They describe the programme or project, its activities and outputs. Normative questions compare what is with what should be, meaning that they compare the course of the intervention with the defined target, goal or a given standard. Cause-and-effect questions determine what changes the project or programme caused. When evaluating any intervention, all three types of evaluation questions should be used.

Before conducting an evaluation, the evaluation design has to be determined. According to Wholey et al. (2010), evaluation design is a plan for conducting an evaluation that specifies, among others, the data to be collected and analysis to be undertaken in order to answer the evaluation questions. Morra Imas and Rist (2009) distinguish three types of the evaluation design: experimental, quasi-experimental and non-experimental design. Both experimental and quasi-experimental designs are based on the comparison between

the situation in a group which received the intervention (treatment group) and a group which did not receive it (control group). Non-experimental design, also called descriptive, does not involve the comparison. It explains the changes that have occurred based on a detailed description of the intervention, its outcomes, outputs and activities. It also analyses the relationship between the intervention and its effects.

2.2 Evaluation of Peacebuilding Interventions

2.2.1 Need for specific approach to evaluation of peacebuilding interventions

Even though evaluations are already well established and required by donors in the field of development assistance, the need for evaluation of peacebuilding activities has not been discussed until the late 1990s. As Paffenholz and Reyhler (2007) describe, since then the donors started to be concerned about the actual impact of peacebuilding interventions and required the agencies and organizations to prove that their activities have had a positive long-term impact on the peace processes. OECD (2012 a) refers to the situation of nonexistence of good evaluations of peacebuilding interventions as an evaluation gap. This situation has resulted in the lack of credible information about the effectiveness of such activities and weak learning process and accountability.

Peacebuilding activities differ from development efforts in the context in which they operate. The situation of ongoing armed conflict or the post-conflict environment is characterized by very complex social and political relations (Paffenholz, Reyhler, 2007). When operating in such conditions, interventions may unintentionally cause negative effect. Thus, both interventions and evaluations of such interventions have to be adapted to the conflict or post-conflict context and put special emphasis on the so called conflict sensitivity of implemented activities in order to avoid negative effects. An organization is conflict sensitive when it understands the context in which it operates and the interaction between that context and the intervention, and acts according to that understanding to maximise positive and minimise negative impact on the conflict or post-conflict situation (OECD, 2012 a). Moreover, Paffenholz and Reyhler (2007) stress that it is crucial to evaluate the contribution of an intervention to sustainable peacebuilding, since when such interventions fail the violence could occur again. Hence, it is much more important to carefully look at the effectiveness of peacebuilding than development efforts, as the consequences of an unsuccessful peacebuilding intervention could be far-reaching.

2.2.2 Distinguishing features of evaluations of peacebuilding interventions

As described above, peacebuilding interventions are implemented in different, more complex environment than development projects and programmes. Therefore, as Paffenholz and Reychler (2007) argue, while the same methods and tools can be applied to evaluate development and peacebuilding interventions alike, standard criteria used for evaluations need to be adapted when evaluating peacebuilding activities.

OECD (2012 a) adds other elements specific for peacebuilding evaluations in the recently published guidelines for evaluating peacebuilding activities. Before evaluating a peacebuilding intervention a conflict analysis has to be conducted. It provides the evaluation team with the information about the causes, drivers and dynamics of the environment in which the intervention is or was implemented. The analysis is then used in many different ways, for instance as a basis for assessing the relevance, effectiveness and impact of activities, or for determining the evaluation questions. It is also helpful in the process of evaluating sensitivity of the intervention to the conflict or post-conflict context, during which the evaluation team should assess whether the intervention caused aggravation or mitigation of grievances and tensions.

The Collaborative for Development Action (CDA, 2009) emphasizes the importance of looking beyond the immediate results of a project or programme at the micro-level. When evaluating peacebuilding interventions it is crucial to assess whether it had an impact on macro-level, meaning the whole peacebuilding process for which they used the term “Peace Writ Large”. However, peacebuilding process is influenced by many different external factors; hence it is difficult to attribute the changes in the process of building peace to a single intervention.

2.3 Criteria for Evaluating Peacebuilding Interventions

2.3.1 “Aid for Peace” framework for evaluating peacebuilding interventions

Paffenholz and Reychler (2007) developed an integrated approach for both planning and evaluation of peacebuilding, development and humanitarian interventions that are implemented in the conflict and post-conflict settings. Regarding the evaluation criteria for peacebuilding efforts, the “Aid for Peace” framework combined the experiences from the field of development and humanitarian evaluations and peace research. As a result, the authors proposed seven criteria for evaluating peacebuilding interventions (see table 2).

Table 2: Comparison of OECD DAC and “Aid for Peace” evaluation criteria

OECD DAC Evaluation Criteria	“Aid for Peace” Evaluation Criteria
Relevance	Peacebuilding Relevance
Effectiveness	Peacebuilding Effectiveness
Efficiency	Impact on Macro Peacebuilding
Impact	Sustainability for Long-Term Peacebuilding
Sustainability	Participation and Ownership of National/Local Stakeholders
	Coordination and Coherence with other Initiatives
	Efficiency, Management and Governance

Source: Compiled by the author according to OECD, 2010: 13–14; Paffenholz, Reyhler, 2007: 47.

1. Peacebuilding Relevance

The first criterion is used to determine to what extent are the objectives and activities of the intervention relevant to the process of building peace. The conflict analysis conducted before the evaluation provides a background for the assessment of the intervention’s relevance for peacebuilding. The criterion also focuses on answering the question whether the project or programme worked with a concrete vision of peace which the intervention is trying to achieve, what should it look like, and whether the objectives and activities correspond with that vision.

2. Peacebuilding Effectiveness

Within the second criterion the outcomes of the intervention and the changes in the immediate peacebuilding environment caused by the intervention are identified. Both positive and negative changes should be searched for. Then it is assessed whether the intervention has achieved its objectives.

3. Impact on Macro Peacebuilding

This criterion identifies the effects of the intervention on the macro level of the peacebuilding process and conflict or post-conflict environment. Hence, it evaluates the link between the micro and macro level of peacebuilding.

4. Sustainability for Long-Term Peacebuilding

The criterion evaluates whether the intervention contributed to the creation of the conditions for long-term peacebuilding. Sustainability is a crucial criterion since it takes a long time to build a peaceful society, and long-term engagement is needed for it. Hence, the organizations or agencies have to either continue with their activities in the field for a

long time, or develop a strategy for sustaining the results of the interventions after the end of their engagement.

5. Participation and Ownership of National/Local Stakeholders

With this criterion it is assessed whether relevant actors have been involved in the intervention. It evaluates the involvement of local partners relevant for the peace process, and selection of partners and beneficiaries according to the criteria of inclusiveness, inter-group fairness and gender-balance. The criterion is also used to determine whether the partners and beneficiaries have initiated their own peacebuilding actions.

6. Coordination and Coherence with other Initiatives

The assumption underlying this criterion is that coherent peacebuilding activities are much more effective than single actor activities. Thus, it evaluates whether the intervention was planned coherently taking into account the efforts of other actors active in the same area and whether there is a cooperation established between different peacebuilding donors, organizations and agencies.

7. Efficiency, Management and Governance

The last criterion assesses the appropriateness of human and financial resources spent to reach the objectives and the efficiency of the general management of the intervention.

2.3.2 “Reflecting on Peace Project’s” criteria for assessing effectiveness of peacebuilding interventions

The second approach to assessing effectiveness of peacebuilding interventions that will be presented here was developed by the Collaborative for Development Action (CDA) within their “Reflecting on Peace Project” (RPP). RPP is a research and learning project analysing experiences of broad range of agencies and organizations involved in the process of peacebuilding in different conflict and post-conflict areas around the world. The aim of the project is to propose the ways how to improve effectiveness of peacebuilding interventions (CDA, 2013).

RPP associates the effectiveness of peacebuilding interventions with the ability of such efforts to contribute to the above mentioned Peace Writ Large, meaning the peacebuilding process in the overall environment, peace at the macro level. The criteria for assessing effectiveness of peacebuilding activities are rooted in this theoretical assumption. They were introduced in publication by Anderson and Olson (2003) that summarized the

main findings of the RPP. The following criteria for the identification of an effective peacebuilding intervention were proposed:

1. The effort causes participants and beneficiaries to develop their own initiatives for peace

An intervention can be seen as effective if, as a result of the effort, participants and beneficiaries undertake their own independent initiatives to positively influence the process of building peace in their society. The intervention should be a catalyst for the shift in people's position in the conflict – from being bystanders or victims to being actors actively engaged in the peacebuilding process.

2. The effort results in the creation or reform of political institutions to handle grievances that fuel the conflict

The second criterion that defines an effective peacebuilding intervention argues that the intervention should support institutions and mechanism to address the root causes that fuel the conflict, e.g. inequalities or injustices. It should build the capacities of political institutions to manage conflicts in a non-violent way.

3. The effort prompts people increasingly to resist violence and provocations to violence

An effective intervention should enable people to resist manipulation and provocations to violence. This goal can be achieved through educational activities that provide participants with skills for analyzing, managing and responding to conflict.

4. The effort results in an increase in people's security

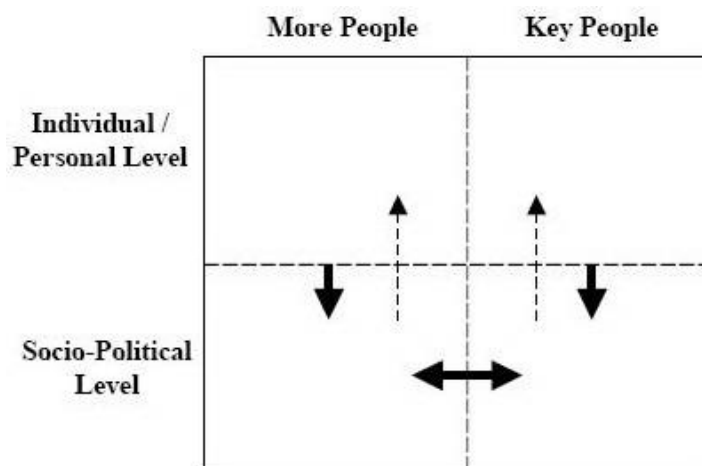
An effort can be deemed effective if it contributed to reduction in the threat of violence or, if the perception of the threat is exaggerated and could lead to unnecessary acts of violence, to reduction of the perception of the threat. The reduction of the perception of the threat can be achieved through the promotion of contact between the conflicting sides and accurate information in the public discourse.

RPP went beyond the identification of criteria for assessing effectiveness of peacebuilding activities and proposed a strategy on how to improve the effectiveness and widen the impact of such interventions. The strategy is based on the matrix showing basic strategies of peacebuilding activities, which was developed as a result of the RPP (see figure 2 in chapter 1.3).

Anderson and Olson (2003) argue that peacebuilding efforts usually stay within one of the quadrant of the matrix. However, if an intervention is to be more effective it has to affect other quadrants of the matrix, too. This does not necessarily mean that an

intervention has to have an impact in all four quadrants. Anderson and Olson suggest the following directions for connecting peacebuilding approaches and levels (see figure 4):

Figure 4: Diagram illustrating interconnections among approaches and levels



Source: Anderson, Olson, 2003: 56.

1. Connecting the Individual/Personal level and the Socio/Political level

If an intervention focuses its activities only on the Individual/Personal level and these activities do not translate to the Socio/Political Level, the intervention will not have an impact on the Peace Writ Large. To have a real impact on the overall process of building peace the intervention has to affect the Socio/Political Level (shown by the bold downward arrows in the figure 4). Therefore, if the intervention achieves only, for example, a personal change of participants who attended the activities, it will not have an impact on the peacebuilding process at the macro level.

It may and may not be true the other way around (dotted upward arrows). If the changes at the Socio/Personal level, such as new structures or agreements, are not internalized by individuals, they will not endure. However, if the change takes form of a law, the individuals will be forced to internalize it.

2. Connecting More People and Key People at the Socio/Political level

For activities working at the Socio/Political level it is important to involve both More People and Key People to be effective and have impact on the Peace Writ Large (bold horizontal arrow in the figure 4).

PART II: Case Study: Evaluation of the Project “Reconciliation and Integration through Education and Dialogue”

In the second part, evaluation of a three-year project “Reconciliation and Integration through Education and Dialogue” implemented in Bosnia and Herzegovina by a local NGO, Nansen Dialogue Centre Sarajevo (NDC Sarajevo), in the period from 2009 to 2012, will be presented. First, methodology of the evaluation together with evaluation questions will be outlined. Then, the thesis will briefly describe the implementing organization and the evaluated project. Finally, findings and answers to the evaluation questions will be discussed.

3 Methodology of the Evaluation

3.1 Evaluation Purpose

Two main purposes of the evaluation can be defined. Firstly, the evaluation seeks to assess the impact of the project on the stakeholders involved in the process and on broader post-conflict environment in BiH. It will look at positive as well as negative changes the project might have contributed to. The evaluation will not limit its focus only to the outcomes the project intended to have but will also try to assess unintended impact.

Second purpose of the evaluation is to identify lessons learned and describe the best practices that could be used in similar contexts in the future. As already mentioned in previous chapters, evaluations of peacebuilding interventions are not very frequent; hence there is a need for knowledge sharing on what kind of approaches to peacebuilding work in what conditions.

3.2 Evaluation Questions, Design and Data Collection Methods

Evaluation questions were defined according to the approaches to evaluating peacebuilding interventions as described in chapter 2. The questions follow the “Aid for Peace” framework developed by Paffenholz and Reychler (2007) and “Reflecting on Peace Project’s” criteria for assessing effectiveness of peacebuilding interventions presented by the Collaborative for Development Action (Anderson and Olson, 2003). The questions were defined after a brief analysis of the project documentations, namely project application, logical framework matrix (goal hierarchy) and activity plan. The evaluation

followed the non-experimental evaluation design, hence did not apply a comparison with a control group.

Data collection methods are outlined together with the evaluation questions in table 3. Both quantitative and qualitative data collection methods were used.

Table 3: Evaluation questions and data collection methods

EVALUATION QUESTIONS		DATA COLLECTION METHODS
I. Peacebuilding Relevance		
1.	To what extent does the project correspond with the needs of the peacebuilding process?	analysis of project documents, interviews with project team
	Has NDC Sarajevo conducted a conflict analysis prior to project planning? How was it done?	
	What peacebuilding needs has NDC Sarajevo identified?	
	How do the objectives and essential activities correspond with the peacebuilding needs?	
	What kind of vision of peace, to which the project should contribute, has NDC Sarajevo developed?	
	What is the theory of change of the project?	
	To what extent is the theory of change relevant to the current post-conflict situation in the target regions?	
2.	To what extent has the project influenced the relevant actors?	analysis of project documents, interviews with project team
	What actors have been chosen to participate in the project? How was the target group defined?	
	Have the target groups been chosen according to peacebuilding needs?	
	How were the project municipalities selected?	interviews with project team
3.	To what extent does the project correspond with the target groups' visions of the peacebuilding needs?	interviews/questionnaires with target groups
4.	To what extent does the project correspond with the priorities of local and national governments?	analysis of official strategies
	What are the priorities of the local and national governments in the area of peacebuilding? To what extent does the purpose of the project correspond with these priorities?	
	Has NDC Sarajevo consulted the purpose of the project with representatives of local government?	interviews with project team
5.	How has the project reflected past interventions (successes and failures) in the planning and implementation process?	interviews with project team

II. Peacebuilding Effectiveness		
1.	What were the reasons for choosing the implemented strategy?	interviews with project team
2.	How were the beneficiaries willing to participate in the project?	interviews with project team, interviews with target groups
	What was the motivation of the beneficiaries to participate in the project activities?	
3.	What kinds of project activities were implemented to achieve the project outcome and goal?	analysis of project documents
	How were potential beneficiaries approached at the beginning of the project?	interviews with project team, interviews with target groups
	How were the participants for the project activities selected? According to which criteria have they been chosen (for the seminars, for the core groups)?	
	How well were the beneficiaries informed from the beginning about the intended outcomes of the project (creating NCBs, NFYPs, Teachers Alumni)?	
	What kind of strategy on dealing with potential spoilers of the process did the project have?	interviews with project team
	What was the content of the training sessions and seminars?	analysis of project documents, interviews with project team, interviews with target groups
	Who has lectured the training sessions and seminars? What are their skills and qualifications?	interviews with project team
	Were the participants of the training sessions and seminars satisfied with the content of the lectures and acquired skills?	questionnaires with target groups
	What was the purpose and programme of the study trip to Nansen Academy in Lillehammer?	analysis of project documents, interviews with project team
	How were the participants satisfied with the content of the study trip to Nansen Academy in Lillehammer and skills they gained during the study trip?	interviews/questionnaires with participants
4.	To what extent has the project succeeded in achieving the intended outcome and outputs?	analysis of project documents, interviews with project team
	Has NDC Sarajevo been able to achieve all intended outcomes and outputs? If not, what outcomes and outputs have not been achieved?	
	Were the intended local coordination groups (NCBs, NFYPs, Teachers Alumni) established as planned?	

	How active are the established groups in initiating and implementing activities aimed at building peace in their local communities?	
	How has the achievement/non achievement of the intended outcomes and outputs differed in different municipalities?	
	How has the achievement/non achievement of the intended outcomes and outputs differed in different target groups?	
	What were the major factors influencing the achievement/non-achievement of the intended outcomes and outputs?	
5.	What process of desired change has the intervention initiated in its immediate environment?	interviews with project team, interviews with target group

III. Impact on Macro Peacebuilding/Peace Writ Large

1.	Is the project on the right track to contribute to the overall project goal as stated in the project proposal?	analysis of project documents, interviews with target groups and project team
2.	To what extent has the project stimulated the participants to develop their own initiatives for peace?	
	How have the participants applied the skills and knowledge acquired during the seminars? What problems do they face when applying these skills?	analysis of project documents, interviews/questionnaires with target groups
	What kind of initiatives have the target groups implemented?	
3.	Has the project resulted in the creation or reform of political institutions to handle grievances that fuel the conflict?	analysis of project documents
	How have the municipality councillors and administrators, who participated in the seminars organized by NDC Sarajevo, changed their work at the municipality level or as politicians?	interviews/questionnaires with beneficiaries in the municipality component, interviews with project team
	Have they initiated a creation or reform of political institutions that would increase their ability to act in the reconciliation and integration process?	
4.	How is the link between the micro and macro level of peacebuilding assured?	analysis of project documents, interviews with target groups and project team
5.	Has the project caused unintended negative effects on the peacebuilding process? What kind of negative effects has the project caused?	

IV. Sustainability for Long-Term Peacebuilding

1.	What steps have been taken to create long-term processes, structures and institutions for peacebuilding?	analysis of project documents, interviews with project team
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2.	To what extent are the structures created able to function and work for peace in their communities without the support of NDC Sarajevo?	interviews with representatives of institutionalized structures and project team
	Do the structures have sufficient knowledge about using dialogue and other means for reconciliation in divided societies?	
	Are they skilled in conflict sensitive approaches for operating in post conflict areas?	
	Are they able to acquire funds to finance their activities?	
	Are they trained to monitor and evaluate their activities?	

V. Participation and Ownership of Local Stakeholders

1.	Has NDC Sarajevo identified "local capacities for peace" in target communities? How have these been included and supported by the project?	analysis of project documents, interviews with project team
2.	Have the beneficiaries been selected according to the criteria of inclusiveness, interethnic fairness and gender balance?	
3.	How have the target groups participated in the creation of the project proposal?	
4.	How are the project and the implementing organization perceived among the target groups?	interviews/questionnaires with target groups

VI. Coordination and Coherence with Other Initiatives

1.	Are there other actors in target municipalities working towards the same objective? How is NDC Sarajevo cooperating with these actors?	interview with representative of the network of peacebuilding NGOs, interviews with project team and target groups
2.	How are Nansen Dialogue Centres in BiH cooperating with each other to build a peaceful society in BiH?	interviews with project team, interview with representative of NDC Mostar
3.	Have the activities of the project been planned and implemented coherently?	analysis of project documents

VII. Efficiency and Management

1.	Has the project been implemented on schedule?	analysis of project documents
	What caused the changes in the schedule?	interviews with project team
	How has NDC Sarajevo dealt with the changes in the schedule?	
2.	How efficiently has the intervention used the financial and human resources?	analysis of project documents

3.3 Data Collection

The process of data collection for the evaluation had two phases. Firstly, all project documents related to the project were examined during the desk review. NDC Sarajevo provided the author with all relevant documents, including the project proposal, progress reports, final report, original and revised activity plans, lists of realized activities and evaluation surveys on the satisfaction of the participant of the seminars organized during the project. These surveys were conducted by the implementing organization.

Second phase of data collection had a form of a two-month study stay in BiH (September–October 2012). During the stay, the author conducted nine individual and four group semi-structured interviews with the members of the project team, with the participants of the seminars organized during the project, and with other relevant stakeholders. The beneficiaries from all four project municipalities (Srebrenica, Bratunac, Jajce and Zvornik) and both project lines were interviewed. Data was also collected during the survey. Questionnaires were distributed among the participants of the seminars organized during the implementation phase of the project. In total, 26 questionnaires regarding the participants' experiences with the activities of NDC Sarajevo and 28 questionnaires about the current situation in the target municipalities have been collected². The questionnaires were written in the languages used in BiH. Both quantitative and qualitative data was collected during the research.

In addition, the author participated in a seminar organized by NDC Sarajevo in December 2012 in order to observe the process, as similar seminars were organized during the project evaluated in the thesis. The seminar focused on the inter-ethnic dialogue in divided communities and was organized for a group of participants from Jajce. Mr. Steinar Bryn from Nansen Centre for Peace and Dialogue, Norway, was the main speaker and facilitator of the seminar. An interview with Mr. Bryn was conducted after the seminar.

3.4 Limitations of the Research

One of the main limitations of the evaluation is the relatively small number of responses to the surveys conducted during the research. The questionnaires were first available on a web site and the beneficiaries were able to fill them in online. Because of the low rate of responses, the questionnaires were distributed also in paper among the

² The exact response rate cannot be determined since the number of participants among which the questionnaires were distributed is not known. In total, 230 beneficiaries participated in the seminars.

participants that were reached during the study stay. However, the number of filled in questionnaires is still relatively low.

Secondly, the author had only one opportunity to observe the seminar NDC Sarajevo organizes within its projects due to the late receipt of funds for the following three-year period, which was supposed to start in April 2012. The first activities of the new project were implemented at the end of October 2012.

The past activities and projects of NDC Sarajevo, especially the project implemented in the period from 2006 to 2009, are very similar and overlapping, hence it was difficult to separate the activities of the evaluated project from other initiatives. Moreover, some of the interviewees and respondents participated not only in the evaluated project but also in the previous activities.

Lastly, the evaluation was conducted approximately six months after the end of the implementation phase of the project. It is possible that after such a short time not all changes to which the project might have contributed can be visible. As it is often stressed, the process of building peace takes a long time and requires the change of the mindset of the population affected. However, the evaluation questions were defined in such a way that they should assess the effectiveness of the project, and thus reveal whether the project was implemented in the right direction to contribute to the overall peace in BiH or not.

4 Situation Analysis: Current Situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina

Before evaluating a peacebuilding intervention, an analysis of the context in which the intervention is or was implemented should be carried out. Hence, a brief analysis of current situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH), where the evaluated project was implemented, is presented here.

4.1 Post-War Organization of Bosnia and Herzegovina

The war in BiH, which followed the disintegration of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, started in April 1992 and was officially terminated on 14th December 1995, when the Dayton Peace Agreement was signed by the representatives of all conflicting sides (Hladký, 2005). The war was mostly presented as a conflict between the three ethnic groups (Bosniaks, Bosnian Croats and Bosnian Serbs) inhabiting the area. Ethnic cleansings, massacres and mass rapes became the weapons in the conflict. It is estimated that half of the pre-war population was displaced internally or found refuge abroad (NDC Sarajevo, Saferworld, 2010). The conflict fundamentally changed the current nature of the country. The multi-ethnic state became a divided state where the three predominant ethnic groups now live more or less separately, either because of the territorial division of the country or the division of the society on the basis of ethnicity (Hladký, 2005).

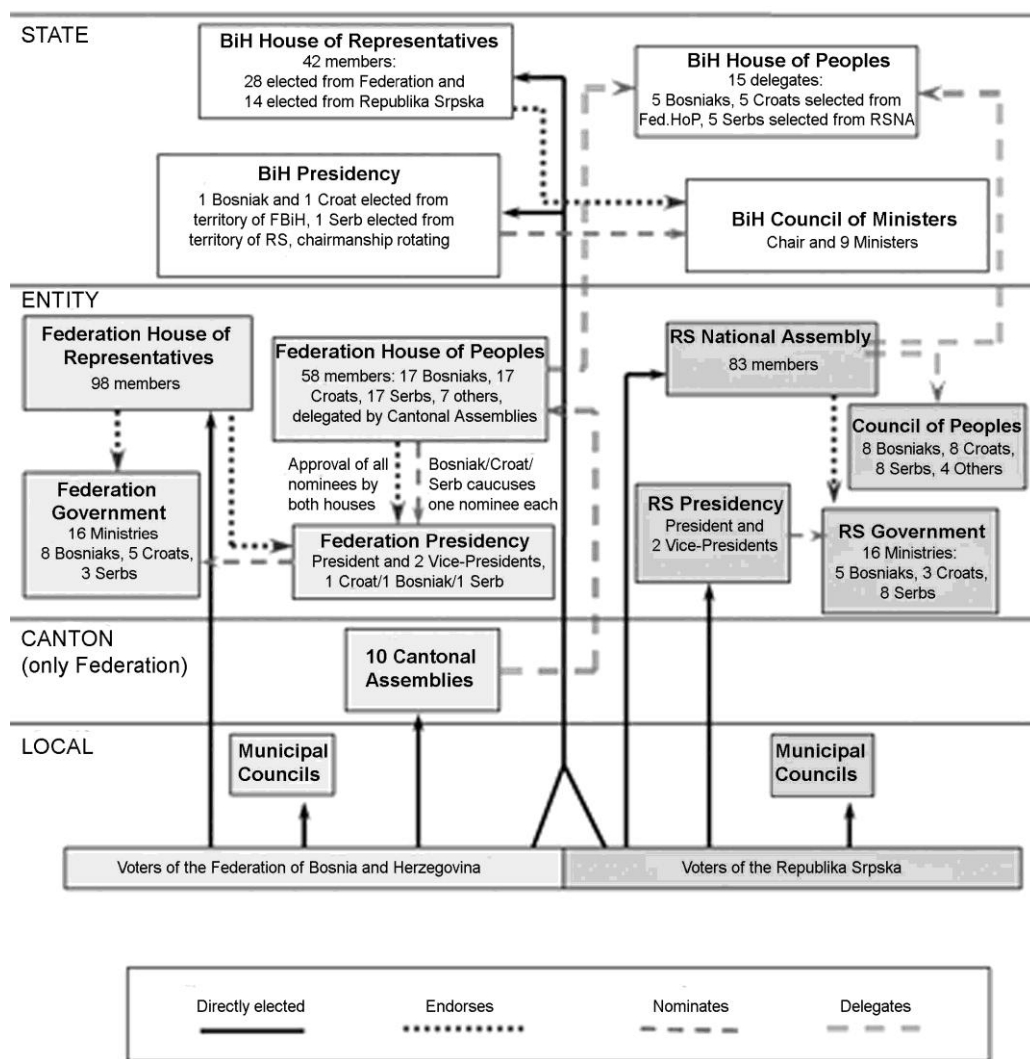
4.1.1 Political system

The current political system in BiH was established by the Dayton Peace Agreement. The Peace Agreement, facilitated by international negotiators, was successful in ceasing the violence and preserving the existence of BiH; however, the socio-political structure defined in the Agreement is immensely complicated, bureaucratic, expensive, inefficient and unsuitable for a functioning state (NDC Sarajevo, Saferworld, 2010; Ó Tuathail, O'Loughlin, Djipa, 2006).

The territory of BiH is divided into two entities: Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina (FBiH) primarily inhabited by Bosniaks and Bosnian Croats, and Republika Srpska (RS) primarily inhabited by Bosnian Serbs. Third self-governing administrative unit is Brčko District which has a special status and is subjected to international supervision. FBiH is further divided into ten cantons with significant powers, which are then subdivided into municipalities. RS is divided into municipalities only (see appendix 1). Both FBiH and RS have a significant degree of autonomy and are governed by the governments of individual entities. In the case of FBiH, the cantons have autonomous

authorities, too (NDC Sarajevo, Saferworld, 2010). In BiH, there is also a central state-level Parliament, Council of Ministers and rotating State Presidency, which consists of three members (i.e. presidents) for each term. Each member of the presidency represents one of the “constituent peoples”³. Bosniak and Bosnian Croat members are elected from the territory of FBiH, Bosnian Serb member of the presidency from RS. Seats in almost all legislative and executive bodies have to be distributed between the three “constituent peoples” according to defined ethnic key (Office of the High Representative, 1995). Figure 5 shows the political structure of BiH in more detail.

Figure 5: Political structure of BiH



Source: Ó Tuathail, O’Loughlin, Djipa, 2006: 62.

³ Dayton Peace Agreement distinguishes two types of inhabitants: “constituent peoples” of BiH (Bosniaks, Bosnian Croats and Bosnian Serbs), and citizens of different ethnic groups inhabiting the territory of BiH, or people who do not declare themselves as members of any ethnic group, who are labelled as “others”. Some civil and political rights are assigned exclusively to “constituent peoples”, e.g. an opportunity to run for a president (Office of the High Representative, 1995).

The current political system described above institutionalizes ethnic divisions in the country. As a result, political parties still see substantial benefits in defining themselves according to their ethnic affiliation, rather than according to their position on the right-left political spectrum (NDC Sarajevo, Saferworld, 2012). For voters, the ethnicity of the candidates is usually more important than the solutions they offer to the problems of the society. Hence, they tend to re-elect the same politicians from their “own” ethnic group. One of the reasons for such electoral behaviour can be seen in the way the electoral campaigns are run. Candidates often use the language of fear, that is the expressions which provoke feelings of hatred or fear of other ethnic groups. This can be achieved for example by reminding the voters of wartime atrocities and creating the impression that something similar could happen in the future (NDC Sarajevo, Saferworld, 2010).

There is a consensus among international and majority of domestic actors that a reform of the constitution and new administrative organization is needed for BiH in order to be a functioning state, and to progress towards the accession to the European Union (EU) (Kostić, 2009). However, political representatives of the three “constituent peoples” express different, often opposing ideas on the future organization of the country, particularly when it comes to the issue of transferring power from entity (i.e. FBiH and RS) to state level (BiH) authorities (NDC Sarajevo, Saferworld, 2012). Representatives of RS support the creation of a confederation with a significant degree of autonomy for the entities. On the other hand, Bosniak politicians favour a federal state where the central state-level institutions would have more power than they do now. Moreover, Bosnian Croats are increasingly advocating for the creation of a third, Bosnian Croat entity (Fischer, 2013). After the general elections in October 2010, the deep political conflict resulted in the delay of more than 14 months in forming a government. Another event which contributed to the frustration of the people in BiH with the political situation was the proposal of the RS Prime Minister, Milorad Dodik, to organize a referendum on the secession of RS from BiH. As a result of the prompt visit of the EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy Catherine Ashton, the referendum eventually did not take place (NDC Sarajevo, Saferworld, 2012).

4.1.2 International presence in BiH

The post-war BiH can be characterized by extensive international engagement. Dayton Peace Agreement established the Office of High Representative (OHR) that is overseeing the implementation of civilian aspects of the Agreement on behalf of the

international community. This institution has significant influence and power in BiH. The High Representative is the final authority to interpret the Agreement and has a mandate to intervene if the decisions of local actors are incompatible with the negotiated Agreement. In the period from 2002 to 2011, the High Representative served at the same time as the EU Special Representative. However, the EU decided to strengthen its presence in BiH in order to facilitate the integration of the country to the EU and appointed a special Representative of the EU (Office of the High Representative, 2012). Since the OHR has been criticized for the undemocratic nature of the power it possesses, the institution has restricted the use of power in local politics and is putting bigger emphasis on the responsibility of officials and citizens of BiH for the peace process. Since 2009, Valentin Inzko, an Austrian diplomat, is serving as the High Representative in BiH (NDC Sarajevo, Saferworld, 2010; Office of the High Representative, 2012).

To ensure a safe and secure environment in BiH and to provide training support to the BiH Ministry of Defence and Armed Forces, the EU military operation EUFOR ALTHEA is present in the country. It was established in 2004 after the withdrawal of NATO troops under the SFOR operation. Currently, there are approximately 600 troops in BiH (EUFOR, n.d.).

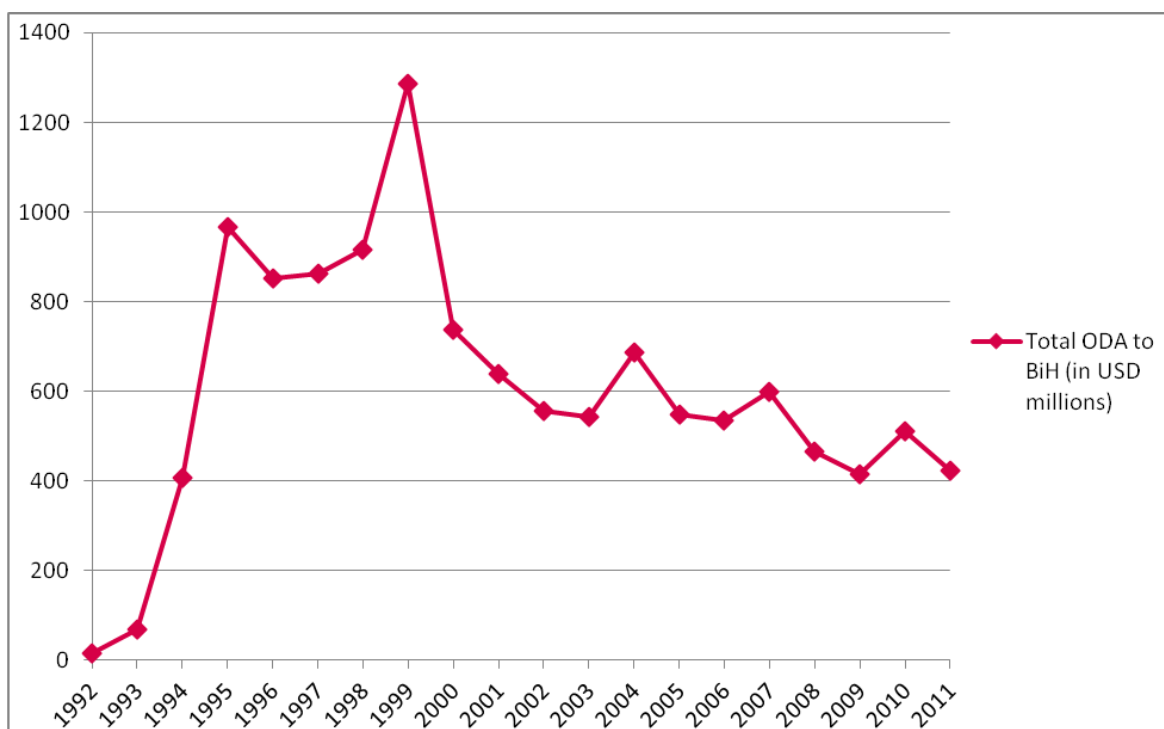
Similarly to other post-communist countries, there was no or little independent civil society in BiH before the war (Fischer, 2006). When the war ended, an extensive amount of humanitarian and development aid flowed into the country and, as a result, a lot of NGOs financed by external donors were established. Moreover, many international governmental and nongovernmental organizations started to be active in BiH, e.g. UN agencies and programmes, Caritas, Mercy Corps or Catholic Relief Services, to name just a few. Many of the international organizations and donors closed their offices in BiH and terminated their activities after the reconstruction and stabilization phase; however, there are still approximately 12,000 NGOs, both local and international, officially registered in the country⁴ (NDC Sarajevo, Saferworld, 2010; Brey, et al., 2013). Regarding the donors, there are currently 209 external donors providing funding for NGOs in BiH according to recent publication by Network for Building Peace (Mreža za Izgradnju Mira, 2012).

Figure 6 shows the total amount of ODA received by BiH between 1992 and 2011. We can see a sharp increase in the ODA immediately after the conflict. In 1999, BiH received the largest amount of ODA, over 1.286 billion USD. However, in the following

⁴ It is estimated that only 10–15% of the registered NGOs are actually active (Brey, et al., 2013).

years ODA received by BiH was gradually declining. In 2011, total ODA to BiH amounted to more than 424 million USD (The World Bank, 2013; OECD, 2013).

Figure 6: Total amount of the ODA received by BiH in the period 1992–2011



Source: Constructed by the author according to The World Bank, 2013 and OECD, 2013.

4.1.3 Educational system

Ethnic divisions are obvious not only in the political structures, but also in the educational system. Each entity is responsible for the elementary, secondary and higher education within its territory. There is one centralized Ministry of Education in the RS. In the FBiH, each canton has its Ministry of Education responsible for cantonal educational policy, while the entity Ministry has only a coordinating role. Different educational legislations are valid in each canton of the FBiH and in the RS. Three different curricula and three sets of ethnically-centred textbook exist in BiH. Education is thus organized according to the ethnicity (Lorencic, 2008). It results in the lack of sense of common citizenship among children and contributes to further ethnic segregation and antagonism in BiH (NDC Sarajevo, Saferworld, 2012).

Nansen Dialogue Centre (NDC) Sarajevo and Saferworld (2012) describe the educational system in more detail. At the primarily level, three types of schools can be distinguished: “two schools under one roof”, mono-ethnic schools and multi-ethnic schools with separate curricula for some of the subjects.

The system called “two schools under one roof” was introduced by OSCE immediately after the war in order to prevent future violence and to allow parents, who returned to their home where ethnic cleansings took place and feared to send their children to schools where other ethnic group dominated, to provide their children with education. Although it was meant to be a temporary solution, there are still more than 50 such schools in BiH. These schools are completely divided along the ethnic lines. Two schools with separate administration, teaching staff and students operate in the same building. The students have classes in shifts, thus there is no contact among the pupils of different ethnicity.

Mono-ethnic schools exist not only in the areas which are inhabited exclusively by members of one ethnic group, but in multi-ethnic municipalities, too. Most of the parents choose the school their children will attend according to the ethnic group that dominates in the school, not according to location of the school. Therefore, it is not unusual that a child travels to a neighbouring village to attend a mono-ethnic school with pupils of the same ethnic background, even if there is a mixed school closer to its home.

Nevertheless, there are schools in BiH which are multi-ethnic. However, separate curricula exist for some subjects that are considered sensitive, such as religion, language and literature, history and geography. For these subjects children attend segregated classes only with the schoolmates from the same ethnic background and do not learn what the others are taught.

As NDC Sarajevo and Saferworld (2012) argue, secondary and higher education is not ethnically separated, which may cause a shock for students from mono-ethnic environment. On these levels, low quality of education and lack of coordination and cooperation among universities is seen as the main problem.

4.1.4 Economic situation

The complicated and cumbersome structure established by the Dayton Peace Agreement also influences the economy of BiH. Each entity, in the case of FBiH each canton, has its own political and legal framework. Moreover, there are different fiscal and taxation systems in each entity. All these factors negatively affect economy of the country and the system is highly confusing especially for foreign investment, which is still low in BiH (Mirascic, 2011).

BiH has undergone, as well as other post-communist countries in the region, a transition from the socialist centrally-planned economy to the open-market economy.

However, the economy has still not returned to the pre-war level. Although the infrastructure destroyed during the war has been reconstructed, unemployment remains high (NDC Sarajevo, Saferworld, 2010). The global economic downturn in 2008 contributed to further decline in economic activity and growth of the unemployment rate (Mirascic, 2011). According to the Agency for Statistics of Bosnia and Herzegovina (2013), total number of the registered unemployed in December 2012 was 550 255 out of roughly 3 840 000 inhabitants of BiH⁵ (Agency for Statistics of Bosnia and Herzegovina, 2012, own calculation). The problem of youth unemployment is particularly serious. In 2011, around 58% of young people between 15 and 24 years were without a job, compared to the total unemployment rate of 43.8% in 2012 (European Commission, 2012). One of the major employers in BiH is the public sector, mainly because of the extensive bureaucracy that the current administrative structure requires. A lot of people are also employed in the informal sector which is very strong in the country (Mirascic, 2011).

Other factors that hinder economic development of BiH are, according to NDC Sarajevo and Saferworld (2012), nepotism and widespread corruption. It is difficult to get a job for applicants who are not members of political parties or do not have personal connections, especially when applying for a job in public institutions. As the majority of political parties are defined according to their ethnic affiliation, the job placement is based on the same ethnic principle, which again contributes to the segregation of the country along the ethnic lines. Regarding the corruption, BiH ranked 72nd among 176 countries worldwide in the Corruption Perceptions Index 2012 issued by Transparency International, which measures the perceived level of corruption in the public sector⁶ (Transparency International, 2012). As the EU Progress Report for 2012 (European Commission, 2012) describes, in spite of the modest effort of BiH to address the problem, corruption affects all spheres of life, public sector and interaction between the public and private sphere, economic development of the country and the rule of law.

⁵ The most up-to-date number of inhabitants of BiH available on the website of the Agency for Statistics of Bosnia and Herzegovina is 3 839 737 and it is estimation from June 2011. Since the last census of the population of BiH was organized in 1991, before the war, the exact number of inhabitants of BiH is not known. Only estimations are used (Agency for Statistics of Bosnia and Herzegovina, 2012).

⁶ In comparison with other countries in the region, BiH ranked worse than Slovenia (37th), Croatia or Macedonia (62nd and 69th respectively), but better than e.g. Bulgaria or Serbia (75th and 80th respectively) (Transparency International, 2012).

4.2 Perceptions of the Local Inhabitants

The survey conducted during evaluation, mainly with the participants of the activities organized by NDC Sarajevo, revealed that local citizens consider high rate of unemployment and bad economic situation to be the most acute problems their communities are facing. The respondents stressed particularly low employment opportunities for young people and large influence of the political parties over many spheres of life, including the business sector. When asking about the situation among different ethnic groups in the local communities, 43.3% out of 30 respondents indicated that they consider the interethnic situation to be moderate. 40% of the respondents believed the situation is good, 16.7% assessed it as bad. Not a single respondent claimed that the situation is very bad, nor very good. More than a half of the respondents thought that the situation among different ethnic groups is slightly improving. When asking about the influence of different actors over the interethnic situation, the youths and civil society organizations were assessed as having a positive impact on the situation, while political parties and representatives of the state-level government were indicated to have a negative impact on the situation among different ethnic groups. Two respondents argued that the relationships among ordinary people from different ethnic backgrounds are improving; however, the politicians are stirring fear of the others, especially before elections.

5 Description of the Implementing Organization: Nansen Dialogue Centre Sarajevo

Nansen Dialogue Centre (NDC) Sarajevo is a local non-profit nongovernmental organization working in BiH. The main office of the organization is situated in Sarajevo, the capital of BiH, however, the activities of NDC Sarajevo are currently focused mainly on small communities in the rural areas of BiH. The aim of NDC Sarajevo is “to contribute to the development of democratic practices and the prevention and resolution of conflict in Sarajevo and throughout Bosnia and Herzegovina by creating dialogue across ethnic and national divides”. (NDC Sarajevo, 2013)

5.1 History of the Organization

NDC Sarajevo was established in September 2000. However, the process that led to the creation of the centre had been initiated already in 1994 in Lillehammer, Norway, which just hosted the Winter Olympic Games. At that time, Sarajevo, where the Olympics were organized exactly ten years earlier, was still under siege, and media coverage of the war in BiH caused a wave of solidarity in Lillehammer. Under these circumstances the idea of organizing an intensive educational training for people from former Yugoslavia was conceived in the humanistic Nansen Academy⁷. (Aarbakke, 2002)

5.1.1 “Democracy, Human Rights and Peaceful Conflict Resolution” training programme

It was still in 1994 when the rector of Nansen Academy, Inge Eidsvåg, working also as a vice-chairman of Lillehammer Olympic Aid supporting humanitarian projects in the countries of former Yugoslavia, visited besieged Sarajevo. After this experience he developed, together with the Norwegian Red Cross and the Norwegian Church Aid, an educational programme “Democracy, Human Rights and Peaceful Conflict Resolution” which would bring people from former Yugoslavia for a 12-week course to Lillehammer. The programme was hosted by the Nansen Academy and financially supported by the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA). (Nansen Fredssenter, 2010)

⁷ The Nansen Academy is an educational institution founded in 1938 as a protest against the growth of Nazism and Fascism in Europe. The aim of the Academy is to strengthen the attitude of humanism and to work for human rights, freedom of expression, democracy and peaceful conflict management. It is named after Fridtjof Nansen, a Norwegian polar explorer, scientist and humanist awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1922 for his work for refugees displaced after the World War I. (Nansenskolen, 2009).

When recruiting participants for the first two seminars, Nansen Academy used the existing networks of the partner organizations of the project, Red Cross and Norwegian Church Aid. At that time, Nansen Academy was not a well known international organization and did not have any contacts in the Balkan region. Third group of participants was selected based on the advice of previous participants. The rationale behind this method of identifying potential participants was that it is more beneficial to build a network of people who already have a relationship to former participants. The potential candidates had been interviewed before they were selected for the training (Bryn, 2012). The Academy had specific selection criteria for the students. Chosen applicants were supposed to come from the conflict environment, be young and active, have a potential to become leaders within their network and be willing to stay in former Yugoslavia working for the future of their countries (Aarbakke, 2002).

The first two training programmes were focused especially on powerful syllabus with many high-level lectures; thus on the transfer of knowledge from Norwegian teachers to foreign students. The participants had a number of lectures on human rights, democracy and peaceful conflict resolution. After the first year of the project, the concept of the trainings changed significantly. The project team realized that what was more important than the lectures was what the participants, of different ethnic background and coming from various parts of former Yugoslavia, had to tell each other. Thus, the focus on dialogue became the central feature of the project. The training programmes were providing space and safe environment for re-establishing communication between people divided by the war and for exchanging views on past and future political and social processes in their countries. Dialogue, that puts more emphasis on listening and understanding of the other's opinion than for example a debate, was used as the main communication tool during the seminars. (Bryn, 2012; Aarbakke, 2002)

As Nebojša Šavija Valha, a participant of the training programme in Lillehammer and currently an employee of NDC Sarajevo, pointed out during an interview (Šavija Valha, 2012), "socializing was even more important than the lectures". The participants were forced to spend time together with people who had become their enemies during the war, and thus to re-establish the connections that existed before the conflict. The programme was therefore a very intensive experience for the participants. According to Šavija Valha, the intensity of the programme created some kind of energy the participants wanted to use after they came back to their home countries.

Another important aspect of the “Democracy, Human Rights and Peaceful Conflict Resolution” programme was that the Nansen Academy has not lost contact with the alumni after they returned home. As Aarbakke (2002) describes, there has been systematic follow-up which has taken the form of individual visits of the participants by the project director Steinar Bryn and reunions of Nansen alumni. Thus, a network of the former participants was carefully maintained.

5.1.2 Establishment of Nansen Dialogue Centres in the countries of former Yugoslavia

Several Nansen alumni were thinking about how to use the energy that the training in Lillehammer created. First incentive emerged in Kosovo. During the follow-up meeting in 1997, one Albanian and one Serb from Pristina, Kosovo, asked the project director Steinar Bryn and Dan Smith, lecturer, to organize seminars for people from Kosovo (Aarbakke, 2002). As a result of the initiative of these two Nansen alumni, eight weekend seminars were organized in Herceg-Novi, Montenegro, between November 1997 and 1999. The seminars were aiming at establishing the dialogue between Albanians and Serbs living in Kosovo, as there was absolutely no communication between these two groups inhabiting the same area. However, these activities, as well as Nansen centre in Pristina that had been opened in order to coordinate the activities, were brought to an end by the war (Bryn, 2012).

Many factors played a role in the process of further spreading the work of Nansen Academy from Lillehammer to the countries of former Yugoslavia. The Norwegian MFA wanted to strengthen their support for peacebuilding and reconciliation initiatives in the Western Balkans. Therefore, they suggested increasing support for building local Nansen centres in the region⁸. Moreover, Nansen alumni expressed their willingness to share the knowledge and experiences they gained in Lillehammer (Bryn, 2012). Thus, at the end of 1999 and beginning of 2000, the centres have been opened in Belgrade (Serbia), Skopje (Macedonia) and Podgorica (Montenegro). The Nansen centre in Pristina (Kosovo) was re-opened again after the war. Later on, the Nansen centres were opened in Osijek (Croatia) and Mitrovica (Kosovo) (Aarbakke, 2002).

The establishment of Nansen centres in BiH started in 2000, when Nansen Academy organized a gathering of Nansen alumni from BiH in Sarajevo. Former

⁸ The project of the establishment of the Nansen centres was called the “Balkan Dialogue Project” (Aarbakke, 2002).

participants of the training programme in Lillehammer discussed the need to involve more people in the dialogue, possibilities of expanding Nansen activities in BiH and together with Steinar Bryn, who has taken an active role in this process, decided to open Nansen centres in Banja Luka, Sarajevo and Mostar. Alumni then prepared a needs assessment which was used as project proposal for the creation of the three centres (Goranci Brkić, 2012; Šavija Valha, 2012). Since the Norwegian MFA was very supportive from the beginning of the process, the proposal was approved. The Nansen Dialogue Centre Sarajevo started to operate on 1st September 2000. The staff of the centre was mostly recruited among the alumni of the Lillehammer training programme due to the fact that they did not perceive the work for the NDC as a job but more as a mission. Interethnic balance of the NDC's staff was emphasized (Bryn, 2012).

NDC Sarajevo was created as an independent local organization, registered in BiH. At the same time, it is a member of the Nansen Dialogue Network (NDN) which gathers all Nansen centres in the Western Balkans. The coordination unit of NDN is provided by the Nansen Academy in Lillehammer (Nansen Dialogue Network, 2013). The cooperation between the coordination unit of NDN and local centres was very intensive at the beginning. The staff of NDCs received training in accounting and other administrative routines. Three people employed in International Peace Research Institute, Oslo (PRIO), which was a partner of the project, were overseeing the activities of the centres, collecting project applications and reports and preparing budgets. The funding for the centres from the Norwegian MFA was channelled through the coordination unit as well. Later, NDN office was opened in Oslo to coordinate these activities. Since 2008, NDCs have taken the responsibility for all administrative procedures and are, thus, fully independent (Bryn, 2012).

5.2 Past Activities of NDC Sarajevo

NDC Sarajevo was gradually developing and changing its approach to building peace in BiH. At the beginning, people in the centre, mostly Nansen alumni, were applying the model the Nansen Academy used for its seminars in Lillehammer. They were bringing people from different ethnic groups together, providing training in interethnic dialogue and peaceful conflict resolution. The focus of the seminars was primarily on the middle-range actors from bigger cities, such as politicians, journalists, activists, representatives of the judicial system etc. (see Lederach's typology of actors, chapter 1.2). However, after approximately two years NDC Sarajevo realized that, in spite of inviting people from

different sectors, the participants had already known each other from seminars organized by different NGOs. They were inviting like-minded people who did not have problems talking to other ethnic groups. Moreover, it was hard to follow their activities after the seminars to see whether they have changed their behaviour as a result of the training. Therefore, NDC Sarajevo decided to change the strategy and focus on areas outside of Sarajevo, on people from smaller towns where communication and cooperation between different ethnic groups was very scarce. (Goranci Brkić, 2012; Šavija Valha, 2012)

In 2002, Educational Section of the OSCE Mission in BiH contacted NDC Sarajevo with the proposal to organize training on interethnic dialogue for teachers in BiH. NDC Sarajevo implemented one-day seminar called “Upbringing and Education for Human Rights” in December 2002. Since the pilot seminar was successful, NDC continued to organize training on interethnic dialogue, peaceful conflict resolution and facilitation of open, non-discriminative and democratic educational process for teachers in Bosnian-Herzegovinian schools. The project was financially supported by the Norwegian Embassy in Sarajevo. Later, NDC received additional grant for the project from the European Commission. Part of the project was implemented by the Sarajevo office, other parts by the Nansen centres in Banja Luka and Mostar⁹. Until the end of the project in 2005, all schools in BiH have received the training. (Šavija Valha, 2012)

While working in schools around BiH, NDC Sarajevo acquired wealth of information about the situation in local communities, mainly from the teachers participating in the seminars. In 2005 they have undertaken several fact-finding missions, during which they organized a series of round tables about interethnic relations in all major towns in Eastern Bosnia. People from different sectors of the society, such as representatives of civil society and local government, youth, journalists, returnees, ordinary citizens etc., participated in the discussions. For many of them it was the first time they sat together with people from different ethnic group since the end of the war. After the gathered data was analyzed, NDC Sarajevo selected two municipalities for its further work. (Cero, 2012; Šavija Valha, 2012)

Two neighbouring municipalities in Eastern Bosnia were chosen, Srebrenica and Bratunac. They were selected according to the need to improve the interethnic relations among the inhabitants, and the interest of the people to work on the improvement of the

⁹ Bosnian-Herzegovinian NDCs agreed upon working in different regions of BiH. Sarajevo office is working in Eastern and Central part of BiH, NDC Banja Luka in Western and Northern BiH (the office was closed later on) and NDC Mostar in Herzegovina (Southern region of BiH) (Šavija Valha, 2012).

situation. The situation in Srebrenica and Bratunac was even more problematic than in other regions of Eastern Bosnia because of the ethnic cleansings that happened there during the war. Many victims of the Srebrenica massacre were from the neighbouring Bratunac. Inhabitants of these two municipalities are connected on daily basis. The political situation in these municipalities is particularly difficult and past events are often misused by local politicians to gain support during the election campaigns (Goranci Brkić, 2012; Šavija Valha, 2012). The municipalities are predominantly inhabited by Bosnian Serbs and Bosniaks, majority of whom returned to the region after they were displaced during the war. The level of communication and cooperation between these two ethnic groups was assessed as very low (NDC Sarajevo, 2007). Thus, NDC Sarajevo has intentionally chosen the hardest cases thinking that if they could succeed in these municipalities, they could succeed using similar model also in other municipalities (Goranci Brkić, 2012).

For selected project municipalities NDC Sarajevo has developed a new holistic approach. In the project named “Srebrenica and Bratunac – Return through Dialogue”, which was implemented in the period from 2006 to 2009, NDC Sarajevo was working on three different, albeit intertwined, levels: municipality level, school, and youth level (NDC Sarajevo, 2009 b).

On the municipality level, the project was working with municipality administrators and councillors in the Municipal Assemblies. In these small municipalities, councillors are usually involved in other spheres of society as well. They might work as directors of health centres, schools or other public institutions, or might have a local business; hence within this level the project covered wide spectrum of inhabitants of the communities. Seminars and training in interethnic dialogue and project management were organized for selected participants. Later, the participants were provided with the opportunity to plan and implement their own interethnic activities with the support of NDC Sarajevo. For those who were the most active in preparing local activities, a week-long study tour to Nansen Academy in Lillehammer was organized, where they received an advanced training. Municipality councillors and administrators of both ethnic groups participated in the study tour. As a result of the project, multiethnic Nansen Coordination Boards (NCBs), informal bodies consisting of trained municipal councillors and administrators, as well as returnees and NGO workers, were established in both project municipalities. NCBs became responsible for designing and implementing local activities. Thus, NDC Sarajevo

succeeded in breaking the ethnic division and encouraging cooperation of representatives of different ethnic groups. (NDC Sarajevo, 2009 b; Šavija Valha, 2012)

Second target group of the project included school administration, teachers, pupils and parents. NDC Sarajevo focused on Petar Kočić elementary school in Bratunac municipality. This school is an example of ethnically divided school. It comprises of two school buildings, the main building is located in the village of Kravica and field school in Konjević Polje. However, the school administration and teachers are the same for both schools. In Kravica, the school is attended exclusively by Bosnian Serb children, Konjević Polje by Bosniak pupils (mostly returnees). Hence, parents choose the school for their children according to their ethnic group, not according to the proximity of the school building. As a result of the division, there is no interaction between the children of different ethnic groups. NDC Sarajevo organized training in interethnic dialogue, focusing on the work in multiethnic environment for all teachers. Seminars for parents were planned as well; however, they were reluctant to get involved since they feared being expelled from their own community for communicating with “the other”. After several field visits and explaining the project to the parents, NDC Sarajevo succeeded in engaging many of them. The parents of both ethnics jointly planned and realized small projects in the school, for example reconstruction of one classroom in Kravica or cleaning of the schoolyard in Konjević Polje. Moreover, they decided to organize, together with the teachers, regular multiethnic extracurricular classes in information technology and English language, one in the Kravica school building, the other one in Konjević Polje. Later, multiethnic drama courses, folk dance section and football team were established. The most active parents created a multiethnic Parents Council. All these activities are the result of the initiatives of parents and teachers, and show that multiethnic education and cooperation is possible. The project had impact not only on the school, but on the whole community of these villages and contributed to the integration of previously deeply divided society. NDC Sarajevo is not engaged in this school anymore, nevertheless, these activities still continue. The director of the school is an active member of NCB Bratunac and supports such activities. (NDC Sarajevo, 2007; Šavija Valha, 2012)

The third component of the project was not as successful as the previous two. It focused on young people aged 18–25. NDC Sarajevo organized a seminar called Facing the Past where the participants were talking about the past events and possible future activities. The seminar was seen as an icebreaker which brought together young people from different ethnic groups who would not even come to the same bar in the past.

However, NDC Sarajevo expected them to create a network and to develop and organize their own multiethnic initiatives after the seminar, which happened on a much smaller scale than expected. The reason for such limited engagement was found in the presence of many other NGOs in the region which work with the youth. Therefore, young people can choose to work with the organization that provides them with better opportunities, such as a trip abroad. Hence, NDC Sarajevo decided to change the strategy towards the youth in the following project. (NDC Sarajevo, 2009 b; Šavija Valha, 2012)

At the end of the implementation period of the project “Srebrenica and Bratunac – Return through Dialogue”, members of NCBs in Srebrenica and Bratunac proposed creating a multiethnic local NGO that would work independently on improving the interethnic communication and cooperation in the region. Dialogue Centre Srebrenica – Bratunac was officially registered in November 2009 and received funding from the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). (Cero, 2012; Šavija Valha, 2012)

In 2010, the Norwegian MFA decided to close NDC in Banja Luka. However, its projects in Sanski Most and Prijedor municipalities still continue under the supervision of NDC Sarajevo. There is an office in Prijedor and NDC Sarajevo is providing logistic support to the team. (Goranci Brkić, 2012)

5.3 Brief Description of the Project “Reconciliation and Integration through Education and Dialogue”

The project evaluated in the thesis was implemented in the period from 1st April 2009 to 31st March 2012. The project was named “Reconciliation and Integration through Education and Dialogue” (NDC Sarajevo, 2009 a) and followed the approach and strategy developed for the previous project which is described above.

5.3.1 Target municipalities and direct beneficiaries of the project

The project was implemented in four municipalities around BiH: Srebrenica, Bratunac and Zvornik in RS, and Jajce in FBiH (see appendix 2). Within the project, two project lines can be identified according to the target groups they affected. The first, municipality component, was working with municipal administration and councillors in Municipal Assemblies in all four project regions. The educational project line was focusing on school administration, teachers, students and parents of selected school. The evaluated project was working with three high schools (in Srebrenica, Zvornik and Jajce) and one

elementary school in Bratunac municipality, where the activities of NDC Sarajevo had already started during the previous project.

5.3.2 Project goal and intended outcome of the project

The overall goal of the project was to contribute to the transformation of the targeted, ethnically divided communities into functional and stable communities from the perspective of interethnic communication and cooperation among the municipality administration and councillors, school administration, teachers, parents and students.

The project was supposed to contribute to the overall goal by achieving the project outcome. NDC Sarajevo intended to initiate and facilitate the process, in which selected and trained multiethnic local coordination bodies initiate, design and implement their own concrete activities with the aim of improving interethnic relations and contributing to the reconciliation process.

5.3.3 Main activities of the project

Three phases of the project can be distinguished. At the first stage, the project selected beneficiaries from the target groups and provided them with training in interethnic dialogue, peaceful conflict resolution, intercultural communication and human rights. In the second phase, the groups of the most active participants were supposed to receive an advanced education in interethnic communication and in the methods and tools for the planning and implementation of small activities in their local communities. Finally, NDC Sarajevo intended to create coordination bodies consisting of the most active participants. In every targeted municipality, Nansen Coordination Boards (NCBs), Teachers Alumni and Nansen Forums of Young Peacebuilders (NFYPs) were supposed to be established within the municipality and educational project line, respectively. It was expected that these multiethnic bodies consisting of local people trained and empowered by NDC Sarajevo would initiate their own activities in order to improve the interethnic relations and general situation in their local communities with the support and supervision of NDC Sarajevo.

6 Findings of the Evaluation

6.1 Peacebuilding Relevance

1. To what extent does the project correspond with the needs of the peacebuilding process?

To be able to positively contribute to the process of building peace, the aim of the project should be relevant to the current situation in the conflict or post-conflict society in which the project is implemented, and the needs of the peacebuilding process. Thus, the implementing organization has to first conduct an analysis of the situation in order to define the project goal.

Before creating the new strategy for their work in local communities in the rural areas of BiH, NDC Sarajevo conducted field research in the regions of potential interest. The research took place in 2005 and involved many different actors, such as representatives of the municipalities, civil society, journalists, young people and ordinary citizens in several round table discussions. All major towns in Eastern BiH have been surveyed during the field visits. The purpose of the research was to analyse the situation in each individual municipality, their recent history, the problems people in these regions were facing, the level of interethnic communication and cooperation among the citizens, and the presence of other organizations initiating interethnic dialogue. The findings of the research became the basis not only for the strategy developed for the project “Srebrenica and Bratunac – Return through Dialogue”, which was implemented in the period from 2006 to 2009, but also for the evaluated project, since it was implemented in the municipalities covered by the research. Moreover, Srebrenica and Bratunac had been chosen already for the previous project in 2006, thus, NDC Sarajevo has been constantly present in these municipalities since 2006 and has been monitoring the situation regularly. (Cero, 2012; Šavija Valha, 2012)

The situation in the project municipalities and the needs of the peacebuilding process are described in the project proposal (NDC Sarajevo, 2009 a). NDC Sarajevo has characterized the selected municipalities, Srebrenica, Bratunac, Zvornik and Jajce, as ethnically divided communities where the interethnic communication and cooperation is low at all social levels. NDC Sarajevo identified the following causes of this situation:

- lack of interest of the local councillors and other authorities to change the situation which suits the political interests of their parties;
- unskilled and ethnically biased municipality councillors;

- educational system which reproduces ethnic divisions;
- lack of interest of the parents to overcome the situation in the educational system, which is caused not only by past war experiences, but also by the current economic and political situation, lack of unbiased information, and media manipulation.

The peacebuilding need is clearly stated in the proposal as well (Ibid). NDC Sarajevo argues that it is necessary to create a space for representatives of different ethnic backgrounds to meet, reconcile their differences, and take the initiative in overcoming the existing deep ethnic divisions.

When looking at the project goal and purpose, it fully corresponds with the above defined peacebuilding need and reflects the causes of the current situation in the target municipalities which were identified by NDC Sarajevo. Moreover, the goal is defined very specifically; hence it is clear how NDC Sarajevo perceives the peaceful situation the project aims to contribute to. The objective is to create functional and stable communities with rebuilt interethnic communication and cooperation among the municipality administration and councillors, school administration, teachers, parents and students.

The following theories of change, representing the rationale for the strategy of the project developed by the project team, have been identified:

1. By providing an open and safe space for the representatives of different ethnic groups to meet, discuss and reconcile interethnic differences, they will be enabled to take initiatives and actions to find feasible solutions which will improve life in their communities for all citizens equally.
2. By concentrating on stakeholders from the municipality administration and educational sector, the largest peacebuilding impact on the situation in the communities can be ensured.

Defined theories of change can be assessed as relevant to the current situation in the target municipalities as described by the implementing organization and in chapter 4. There are many factors which are creating and maintaining the ethnic divisions in BiH, but for a small peacebuilding NGO it is difficult, if not impossible, to directly change many of them, such as educational policy, behaviour of the political parties, economic policies etc. However, the NGO can work with the local people to re-establish cooperation among different ethnic groups at the grass roots level and thus initiate the process of building a peaceful and functional multiethnic society from the bottom.

The project municipalities were chosen according to the findings of the research conducted by NDC Sarajevo in 2005. Firstly, only Srebrenica and Bratunac municipalities

were included in the project starting in 2006. Besides Srebrenica and Bratunac, the evaluated project also targeted the Zvornik and Jajce municipalities (see appendix 2). The municipalities were selected according to the acuteness of the interethnic divisions of the local communities and the interest of the citizens of the municipalities in being involved in improving the situation. The reasons for choosing Srebrenica and Bratunac are discussed in chapter 5.2. All four municipalities have been identified as ethnically divided communities. In Zvornik, Bosnian Serbs and Bosniaks represent the majority of the population. Many of the pre-war inhabitants of the municipality were expelled from their homes and are now returning. Regarding Jajce, before the war, the municipality was inhabited by Bosniaks, Bosnian Croats and Bosnian Serbs. During the conflict, Jajce was occupied by all sides of the conflict at different times. Hence, the majority of the current population are returnees, regardless of ethnicity. While Bosniaks and Bosnian Croats have returned, only a few Bosnian Serbs have. For these reasons, Zvornik and Jajce were added to Srebrenica and Bratunac as target municipalities of the evaluated project (Cero, 2012; Goranci, 2012).

2. To what extent has the project influenced the relevant actors?

The project had two main components according to the defined target groups: a municipality component and an educational component. Within the municipality component, the project focused on municipality administrators and councillors in the Municipal Assemblies. The reason for choosing this target group was the positions and decisive roles the municipality administrators and councillors have in their communities. Moreover, they are usually key actors in other sectors of the society as well, such as education, health, economy and culture. Within the second, the educational component, the project involved school teachers and administrators, students and parents.

The selection of the target groups followed the analysis of the current situation in the municipalities and the identified peacebuilding need. In the municipality component, the project focused on the actors who are influential in their local communities, and are thus able to take actions that will broadly affect the society in a positive way. At the same time, by including these actors in the process, their possible negative reactions to the project were eliminated. In the educational project line, all local important stakeholders in the educational process were included, hence ensuring cooperation at all levels in order to increase the possible impact of the project.

NDC Sarajevo acknowledged that it might be important to focus on other spheres of society as well in order to achieve the peaceful situation they have envisioned. However, only the two most important sectors of society in their opinion, local government and

education, have been chosen due to limited resources (NDC Sarajevo, 2009 a). Nevertheless, NDC Sarajevo is planning to include the business sector in their future projects, for example through corporate social responsibility (Goranci Brkić, 2012).

3. To what extent does the project correspond with the target groups' visions of the peacebuilding needs?

During the interviews conducted with the participants in the activities implemented by NDC Sarajevo, the interviewees acknowledged the necessity to improve the interethnic communication and cooperation and to initiate activities that would improve the situation. Thus, the needs of the peacebuilding process identified by the beneficiaries correspond with the project goal and purpose.

A similar conclusion can be drawn from the survey. 57.7% of 26 respondents absolutely agreed with the claim that NDC Sarajevo dealt with the most acute problems of the municipalities in terms of the peaceful coexistence and cooperation of local inhabitants. 42.3% of respondents thought that NDC Sarajevo dealt with the most acute problems only partially. When asking the respondents which problems NDC Sarajevo did not address, two of them indicated the bad economic situation and unemployment. Not a single respondent thought that NDC Sarajevo was not dealing with acute problems of peaceful coexistence and cooperation of local citizens.

However, to fully and appropriately assess this aspect, the survey would have to include all inhabitants of the selected municipalities. Participants of the seminars might be partially biased because they were involved in the project at the time the survey was conducted, which might have had an impact on their understanding of the situation, and because they were selected by NDC Sarajevo as active members of their communities, thus they already differed from the ordinary citizens of the municipalities.

4. To what extent does the project correspond with the priorities of local and national governments?

In the development strategies of BiH, the goal of re-building interethnic communication and cooperation is not directly stated. However, the emphasis is put on social inclusion and re-integration of returnees and on the important role NGOs are playing in this process. Regarding the strategies in the educational sector, any reform of the ethnically divided education system seems not to be a priority for the relevant key authorities (see e.g. Directorate of Economic Planning, 2009; Kafedžić, 2010).

Nevertheless, before starting the project, NDC Sarajevo contacted local authorities, such as mayors or presidents of the Municipal Assemblies, in each of the project

municipalities, and provided them with information about the project. In order to be able to implement activities in the educational project line, NDC Sarajevo was provided with permission from the authorities in charge of the educational sector to work in schools. Thus, all important authorities were informed about the project in advance and did not oppose the process (Cero, 2012; Goranci, 2012).

5. To what extent has the project reflected past interventions (successes and failures) in the planning and implementation process?

As described in chapter 5.2, before implementing the evaluated project, NDC Sarajevo conducted a wide range of activities. The seminars on interethnic dialogue with the school teachers were considered successful, whereas the work with young people was assessed more as a failure. Based on the interviews with the project team, their experiences were reflected in the preparation of the evaluated project. For example, seminars with teachers became part of the new strategy, since they had proved to be successful. On the other hand, the youth component was incorporated into the school project line. NDC Sarajevo worked with the students in secondary schools, provided them with training and empowered them to create their own interethnic initiatives. The reason for working with high school students, not older youths, was to avoid involving the young people “spoiled” by the presence of a large number of different youth organizations. As it appeared after the “Srebrenica and Bratunac – Return through Dialogue” project, this was the reason why the older youths were not that active in creating a network and initiating their own activities.

6.2 Peacebuilding Effectiveness

1. What were the reasons for choosing the implemented strategy?

Based on the interviews with the project team, the main strategy underlying the evaluated project was for it to act as a catalyst that would empower people to create their own interethnic activities according to what they believed was needed in their local communities. NDC Sarajevo did not impose any activities; only brought people of different ethnicities together, provided them with the opportunity to openly speak about their relationship, and encouraged them to act to improve the situation. The reason for choosing this strategy was the belief that local people know the situation in their communities better than the staff of NDC Sarajevo; hence they should be the ones initiating specific activities in order to improve their own lives. An important part of the strategy was the long-term engagement in local communities and regular follow-up of the activities. NDC Sarajevo has not withdrawn from the target municipalities after the

seminars were organized, or after the project ended. Core bodies of local people who would initiate and coordinate local activities were established and NDC Sarajevo still supervises these local bodies.

Dialogue was used as the main tool for initiating communication and cooperation among the participants from different ethnic backgrounds. The philosophy of NDC Sarajevo is that dialogue is the only approach that can solve the problems of divided communities, since the aim of dialogue is not to impose ideas on others but to listen to their opinions and understand their positions. (Cero, 2012; Goranci, 2012)

2. How were the beneficiaries willing to participate in the project?

It emerged from the interviews and analysis of the project documents (NDC Sarajevo, 2012 a; NDC Sarajevo, 2012 b) that NDC Sarajevo did not have serious problems recruiting the intended number of participants for the seminars and trainings. They focused more on the quality of the participants than on the quantity; the goal was to train highly motivated individuals who would be active in creating initiatives in their local communities. During the research conducted in 2005, NDC Sarajevo analysed the willingness of the local inhabitants to engage actively in the processes of improving the interethnic situation, and the target municipalities were also selected according to this criterion. Therefore, the implementing organization was able to identify a sufficient number of motivated participants.

During the interviews and in the questionnaires, when the beneficiaries were asked about their motivation for becoming involved in the project, the most frequent answer was that they wanted to help improve the interethnic relations in their local communities (10 respondents of the survey out of 26). Six respondents found the topic of the seminars interesting and four wanted to learn how to communicate better. The rest of the respondents mentioned other reasons, e.g. to meet new people and learn new skills. Some interviewees, especially the teachers, stressed that they wanted to participate in the seminars in order to learn the skills they could use in their work, for example when resolving problems in classes.

3. What kinds of project activities were implemented to achieve the project outcome and goal?

The evaluated project was a continuation of the work of NDC Sarajevo in two of four target municipalities, Srebrenica and Bratunac. The core groups of local coordinators for the activities had already been established in the previous project; hence, NDC

Sarajevo relied on the recommendations of these Nansen Coordination Boards (NCBs) when reaching possible participants.

In the new target municipalities, Jajce and Zvornik, as well as in the schools newly included in the evaluated project, NDC Sarajevo first contacted the local authorities, such as mayors, heads of the Municipality Assemblies, principals of the schools etc. Based on the analysis of the project documentation and interviews with the project team, possible participants were contacted through these authorities. In the selected schools, principals recommended teachers who could participate in the project and, in a later phase, the teachers recommended students for the project activities.

Possible candidates were first informed about all phases of the project NDC Sarajevo was going to implement in their communities. Later they were interviewed by the project staff. During the interviews the candidates were asked about their motivation to participate in the activities, whether they had already been engaged in any activities organized in their local communities, and if they were willing to participate in the whole process NDC Sarajevo was planning to implement. After the interviews, the candidates who showed the most interest in becoming actively engaged in the project were selected for the seminars.

The selected municipality administrators and councillors as well as teachers from the school project line first attended basic seminars on interethnic dialogue in divided communities. These multiethnic seminars were organized in Sarajevo and the lecturer was Steinar Bryn from Nansen Academy who first explained the importance of dialogue, how it differs from other communication tools and how it can be used in everyday situations. The seminars also required participants to actively participate in the exercises during which they practiced various tools of dialogue in small groups. (NDC Sarajevo, 2009 a)

The follow-up seminars were organized in the local communities and lectures were given either by the project team (in the case of the municipality project line) or external lecturers. The participants were taught how to plan and implement multiethnic activities in their communities. The Logical Framework Approach (LFA) for planning an intervention was also presented. (Goranci, 2012)

The topic of the seminars for students was intercultural communication and peaceful conflict resolution (NDC Sarajevo, 2012 b). These seminars were led by external NGO, Maly Korak, which is based in Zagreb, Croatia, and focuses on development of the culture of peace and non-violence, and strengthening of human rights and democratic civic involvement through educational programmes, especially for primary and secondary

schools (Maly Korak, n.d.). Thus, the lecturers from this NGO were experienced in facilitating similar seminars.

After the beneficiaries were provided with the training, they were expected to plan and implement their own multiethnic initiatives in their local communities. They had the opportunity to apply to NDC Sarajevo for funding for these activities. The specific focus of the initiatives was completely up to the beneficiaries; the only requirement was that these activities had to engage citizens from different ethnic backgrounds. The most active participants (municipality administrators and councillors, and teachers) were chosen for advanced training, which involved a study trip to the Nansen Academy in Lillehammer, Norway. The programme for the study trips consisted not only of theoretical lectures on dialogue in divided communities, but the participants also visited several institutions related to their job positions to become acquainted with the different procedures and mechanisms which are implemented in Norway.

The evaluation will also assess the satisfaction of the participants with the seminars organized during the project using the surveys NDC Sarajevo conducted immediately after the seminars. Questionnaires from the basic seminar for the representatives of Jajce municipality and the basic seminar for the representatives of Zvornik municipality, both organized in June 2010, will be analysed¹⁰. Generally speaking, participants were highly satisfied with the seminars. In the case of the seminar for the participants from Zvornik, 81% indicated that they were fully satisfied with the facilitator, Steinar Bryn, and the rest of the respondents were satisfied partially. 69% of the respondents were fully satisfied the content of the seminars, the rest of the participants were satisfied partially. Applicability of the acquired skills was rated a little bit lower. 75% of the respondents indicated that they are to some degree, but not fully, able to apply the skills in their lives. The results of the survey conducted after the seminars with the participants from Jajce are very similar.

The survey conducted during the evaluation also revealed the satisfaction of the participants with the study trip to the Nansen Academy in Lillehammer. The beneficiaries were highly satisfied with the lecturers, the activities and the skills they acquired. Regarding the skills and experiences the participants gained during the study trip, they acknowledged that they learned the importance of good communication, how the problems in multiethnic communities are solved in Norway, what the educational system in Norway looks like and how the local communities function. Most of the participants responded that

¹⁰ 16 beneficiaries from Zvornik and 17 from Jajce participated in the survey.

they can use the skills in their work and everyday life; however, two out of 12 respondents claimed that the differences in the standard of living in Norway and BiH are too large, and hence it is impossible to use everything they learned and saw in Norway.

4. To what extent has the project succeeded in achieving the intended outcome and outputs?

As mentioned above, the project is a continuation of the previous project implemented in the period from 2006 to 2009. The participants trained in interethnic dialogue during the former project proposed the creation of an informal group that would plan and coordinate further multiethnic activities. Thus, Nansen Coordination Boards (NCBs) were created in Srebrenica and Bratunac in 2007. At the end of the project, members of the NCBs suggested that they would like to establish a formal organization that would implement the activities the NCBs would initiate. Hence, at the beginning of the evaluated project, Dialogue Centre (DC) Srebrenica-Bratunac was opened. In Srebrenica and Bratunac municipalities this project focused on strengthening the existing NCBs through providing training to motivated participants who would join the NCBs, while DC Srebrenica-Bratunac was implementing the multiethnic activities with the supervision of NDC Sarajevo (Cero, 2012). At the beginning of the project, NCBs Srebrenica and Bratunac had in total 21 members; at the end of the project these NCBs had 25 members (NDC Sarajevo, 2012 b).

In Zvornik and Jajce the participants who passed the training and were actively engaged in the creation and implementation of multiethnic initiatives, created NCBs in 2010. The establishment of NCBs was planned by NDC Sarajevo at the end of the second year of the implementation phase; however, the participants proposed the creation of the NCBs at their first coordination meeting in 2010. The NCBs Zvornik and Jajce had 10 members each at the end of the project period. All NCBs have multiethnic composition.

The most active students who participated in the seminars created multiethnic informal Nansen Forums of Young Peacebuilders (NFYPs) in three secondary schools involved in the project in 2011. NFYP in each school consists of 20 members from different ethnic backgrounds. Moreover, there is a group of active and trained teachers in each of the schools (18 in total) helping the students to plan and implement their ideas. (NDC Sarajevo, 2012 b)

Table 4 offers an overview of all outputs planned in the project proposal compared to outputs actually achieved.

Table 4: Comparison of planned and achieved outputs of the project

(O – Output, P – Phase of the project)

PLANNED OUTPUTS		ACHIEVED OUTPUTS
O1	Multiethnic Nansen Coordination Boards are established	
P1	80 ethnically mixed municipal administrators and councillors from Zvornik and Jajce are educated and trained	72 representatives of Jajce and Zvornik municipality educated during 8 basic and follow up dialogue seminars
P2	Two multiethnic core groups for Jajce and Zvornik are established by the most active participants from the first year	NCB Jajce is formed on 19th August 2010, NCB Zvornik is formed on 23rd August 2010
	The core groups initiate, design and implement 4 small scale interethnic activities in their local communities	NCBs Jajce and Zvornik designed and implemented 25 small scale interethnic activities in their local communities
	21 members of existing multiethnic NCBs Srebrenica and Bratunac design, plan and implement 21 interethnic activities in their local communities	NCBs Srebrenica and Bratunac designed and implemented 43 small scale interethnic activities in their local communities,
P3	Multiethnic NCBs for Jajce and Zvornik are established	NCB Jajce is formed on 19th August 2010, NCB Zvornik is formed on 23rd August 2010
	Strategic and action plans for concrete improvement of interethnic relations in the local communities of Srebrenica, Bratunac, Zvornik and Jajce are developed by NCBs	4 strategic plans of NCBs Srebrenica, Bratunac, Zvornik and Jajce are developed
O2	Multiethnic groups of high school students are gathered in Nansen Forums of Young Peacebuilders	
P1	60 ethnically mixed high school students from Srebrenica, Jajce and Zvornik are trained and educated	60 ethnically mixed high school students from Srebrenica, Jajce and Zvornik participated in 12 training workshops
P2	3 multiethnic student core groups are established and additionally educated for joint initiatives	3 multiethnic core groups of students are established in the period between April and May 2010
	The core groups develop and implement 18 concrete actions related to interethnic cooperation in the respective schools/communities	The core groups developed and implemented 22 activities
P3	3 multiethnic NFYPs are established and as a logical step forward, NFYPs will start the process of transforming themselves into youth NGOs	3 multiethnic NFYPs are established in the period between April and May 2011

O3	Multiethnic Teachers' Alumni from the selected schools are trained and empowered for autonomous work with students in the subjects of intercultural communication and conflict resolution	
P1	36 selected and ethnically mixed high school teachers and administrators are educated and trained in upbringing and education for Human Rights	36 ethnically mixed high school teachers from Srebrenica, Zvornik and Jajce are educated during 5 training sessions
P2	18 most active high school teachers/administration are additionally trained for independent work	18 most active teachers and administrators participated in 2 advanced training sessions
P3	Teachers educated in the previous phases take over the process of educating new groups of students in related subjects	Teachers who passed previous phases of training co-facilitated workshops for the students and help them articulate ideas for actions
O4	Parents' Councils from the selected schools are empowered by providing the majority members with knowledge and skills in upbringing and education for Human Rights	
	54 ethnically mixed parents passed education programs in upbringing and education for Human Rights	54 parents from Srebrenica, Zvornik, and Jajce participated in 6 ethnically mixed training sessions
O5	A publication is issued at the end of the project implementation	
	500 copies of the bilingual (English and Bosnian-Croatian-Serbian) publication will be issued and distributed throughout BiH and abroad	Publication "Leaving the Past Behind – The Perceptions of Youth in Bosnia and Herzegovina" has been published in 200 copies in English and 650 copies in Bosnian-Croatian-Serbian language

Source: Compiled by the author according to NDC Sarajevo, 2012 b.

As it is apparent from table 4, NDC Sarajevo was successful in achieving almost all intended outputs. Moreover, the bodies created (NCBs and NFYPs) were even more active in creating and implementing their own activities than the project proposal expected. The NCBs in Zvornik and Jajce were established sooner than planned because of the initiative of the participants. NFYPs were not transformed into officially registered youth NGOs since the NCBs assumed that there were a number of youth NGOs in each community. Hence, members of NCBs decided that NFYP would function within the schools providing education for other students and creating their own activities in schools and local communities.

The output and outcomes were achieved in all target municipalities and target groups with one exception. Only 72 municipality administrators and councillors from Zvornik and Jajce participated in the training sessions, compared to the plan, which was to

educate 80 administrators and councillors from these municipalities (NDC Sarajevo, 2012 b). However, the target was 90% achieved.

4. What process of desired change has the intervention initiated in its immediate environment?

It emerged from the interviews conducted with the beneficiaries and the project team that the project successfully improved interethnic communication and cooperation in target municipalities and mobilized local inhabitants to engage actively in the process of improving the interethnic situation in their local communities. Interviewees mentioned several examples of changes in the interethnic situation in their local communities. For example, bars used to be monoethnic, young people gathered in the bars according to who owned the bar. Nowadays, young people visit the bars regardless of the ethnicity of the owner or other people in the bar. Less and less parents were concerned about what kind of primary school their child was attending, and what ethnic group dominated in the school. The interviewees believed that NDC Sarajevo contributed to the improvement of the situation since they selected well known, respectable and influential people to participate in their seminars and training.

6.3 Impact on Macro Peacebuilding/Peace Writ Large

1. Is the project on the right track to contribute to the overall project goal as stated in the project proposal?

The goal of the evaluated project is defined in a very concrete way. The project seeks to contribute to the situation when the “targeted local communities are functional and stable from the perspective of interethnic communication/cooperation among the municipality administration and councillors, school administration, teachers, parents and students” (NDC Sarajevo, 2009 c: 1). The project activities and outcomes are intended to directly contribute to the project goal and NDC Sarajevo succeeded in achieving all intended outcomes and the output. Therefore, it can be concluded that the project contributed to the creation of functional local communities and improved the interethnic communication and cooperation among the target groups.

2. To what extent has the project stimulated the participants to develop their own initiatives for peace?

The very aim of the project was to mobilize the beneficiaries to become more engaged in their local communities and initiate their own activities. As can be seen in the table 4, the participants of the seminars and training implemented a number of small-scale

activities. In the conducted survey, 64% of respondents answered that they have organized their own activities after participating in the seminars.

It emerged from the analysis of progress reports, questionnaires and interviews that the activities implemented by the participants were focused on many different topics. The NCBs organized several public discussions in order to improve the communication between the inhabitants and the Municipalities, and different cultural events. NCB Bratunac continued to be engaged in the elementary school Petar Kočić where extracurricular classes have been running since the engagement of NDC Sarajevo during the previous project.

NFYPs have been closely cooperating with the Teachers' Alumni. In each of the targeted high schools, the Nansen classrooms have been established and used for the interethnic activities organized by NFYPs. For example, teachers and students in Jajce have organized regular multiethnic theatre classes and culinary sessions. In total, 30 students have participated in these classes. The teachers have organized a trip to Zvornik and Srebrenica where the students from all three municipalities had the opportunity to meet. A volleyball team called Nansen Jajce was established. Similar multiethnic cultural and sport activities were also initiated in other schools. For example the teachers in Zvornik, together with students, prepared a theatre play about nonviolent communication and they also organized study trips to Sarajevo. When organizing the activities, NCBs, NFYPs and teachers often cooperate with other cultural, environmental and youth organizations.

All these activities promote interethnic cooperation at different levels and thus contribute to the improvement of the situation in local communities. As the project team indicated, there has been a sharp increase in the involvement of the beneficiaries after they participated in the study trip to the Nansen Academy in Lillehammer. They started to initiate more activities and the proposal to create NCBs Zvornik and Jajce was also made after the study trip.

However, as many of the interviewed participants mentioned, the engagement of parents has been low so far. Some parents were trained during the project, but they have not been as active in getting involved in schools and communities as other target groups. Teachers particularly would welcome cooperation with parents, but they have not yet shown much interest in these activities.

3. Has the project resulted in the creation or reform of political institutions to handle grievances that fuel the conflict?

As is apparent from the analysis of the current situation in BiH, surveys and interviews conducted during the research, the majority of beneficiaries believe that the main factor contributing to the lack of interethnic communication and cooperation is the political atmosphere and mainly the politicians misusing the interethnic issues and invoking the fear of other ethnics to achieve political goals. Since the activities that directly targeted middle-level politicians proved to be ineffective (see chapter 5.2), NDC Sarajevo decided to implement a different approach to deal with this problem. They are applying the bottom-up approach; hence working with the local people, the voters, who are, according to NDC Sarajevo, the only ones able to change the political situation by changing their voting behaviour. However, these changes are difficult to assess after such a short time since the implementation of the project, as changing people's mind-set can take a long time.

Municipality councillors and administrators were directly involved in the project activities and became members of the NCBs which are initiating multiethnic activities in local communities. Through their engagement in NCBs they are influencing the situation in local communities and working towards the improvement of interethnic communication and cooperation. Through the interviews it emerged that they have changed on a personal level and are communicating more with the people from different ethnic backgrounds. Moreover, Municipal Assemblies in each of the target municipalities expressed official support for the work of NDC Sarajevo in the Letters of support endorsed by the Assemblies and addressed to NDC Sarajevo. However, the politicians have to follow the official agendas of their parties and it is difficult for them to change anything if they want to keep their positions.

4. How is the link between the micro and macro level of peacebuilding assured?

As can be seen from the research, the project deliberately targeted, among others, people who are respected and influential in their local communities. NDC Sarajevo contacted official as well as unofficial authorities, not only to get permission for their work, but also to actively involve them in the seminars and other activities. Educated municipality administrators and councillors, who are often important stakeholders in other sectors of society as well, are active members of the NCBs in target municipalities, thus proposing and implementing different multiethnic activities aimed at improving the situation in the local communities. Hence, the project impacts the peacebuilding process in

the target municipalities as a whole, not only among the target groups. However, it is more difficult to assess a link to the peacebuilding process at the state level so far. In the future, NDC Sarajevo is planning to connect four existing NCBs to create a network that would initiate joint projects across municipal and entity borders (Cero, 2012; Goranci, 2012). With these interregional initiatives, together with engaging more influential people in existing NCBs, NDC Sarajevo might increase the impact of its projects on the peacebuilding process in BiH.

5. Has the project caused unintended negative effects on the peacebuilding process? What kind of negative effects has the project caused?

No negative effects caused by the project are apparent from the analysis of collected data. However, a few weaknesses in the project were identified and will be summarized in the conclusion.

6.4 Sustainability for Long-Term Peacebuilding

1. What steps have been taken to create long-term processes, structures and institutions for peacebuilding?

The very aim of the evaluated project was to create structures within the target municipalities that would be empowered to work independently towards the improvement of interethnic communication and cooperation in the local communities. NDC Sarajevo successfully prompted the target groups to establish coordination bodies which then took the initiative and started to implement multiethnic activities by themselves. Moreover, as it emerged from the interviews with the target group, NCBs welcome this supervising and supportive role of NDC Sarajevo and the fact that they are the ones responsible for the creation and implementation of the activities.

NCBs Srebrenica and Bratunac proposed the establishment of the NGO Dialogue Centre (DC) Srebrenica-Bratunac, which is now in charge of implementing activities proposed by NCBs Srebrenica and Bratunac and should continue doing so after the involvement of NDC Sarajevo ends in these two municipalities (Cero, 2012; Šavija Valha, 2012).

2. To what extent are the structures created able to function and work for peace in their communities without the support of NDC Sarajevo?

All members of the established bodies (NCBs, NFYPs, teachers) are educated and trained by NDC Sarajevo, not only in interethnic dialogue, but also in the methods of how to plan and implement multiethnic activities in their local communities (logical framework

approach – LFA). However, as several interviewees mentioned during the research, the beneficiaries have not fully comprehended the LFA method and would need additional training to be able to use it when preparing project proposals. During the evaluated project, the majority of the activities proposed by the created bodies have been financed by NDC Sarajevo. However, some members of these bodies are planning to initiate cooperation with other institutions, such as ministries, to obtain funding for their activities from other sources. Hence, if the beneficiaries are more skilled in the LFA method, later in monitoring and evaluation of their projects, they will be better prepared for the independent work after NDC Sarajevo ends its activities in these municipalities.

Regarding DC Srebrenica-Bratunac, there are two people employed in the centre. After the centre was established, staff was trained in interethnic communication and dialogue in divided communities, project cycle management, fundraising etc. (Medić, Smajlović, 2012). However, they are still not fully self-sustainable and independent from NDC Sarajevo. The project proposals are prepared by NDC Sarajevo and the majority of the activities organized by DC Srebrenica-Bratunac are financed through the projects of NDC Sarajevo. Thus, the process of building the capacities of DC Srebrenica-Bratunac still continues and should focus more on the ability of the staff to ensure the funding for their projects by themselves as well as to monitor and evaluate their activities in order to be able to function without the supervision of NDC Sarajevo.

6.5 Participation and Ownership of Local Stakeholders

1. Has NDC Sarajevo identified "local capacities for peace" in target communities? How have these been included and supported by the project?

NDC Sarajevo selected participants for the seminars according to their engagement in local communities. They conducted an interview with every potential participant in order to identify and choose those participants who had an impact in their local communities and were already active in different initiatives. NDC Sarajevo believed that these people could considerably contribute to the process of improving the interethnic situation. (Cero, 2012)

2. Have the beneficiaries been selected according to the criteria of inclusiveness, interethnic fairness and gender balance?

All activities, as well as the composition of NDC Sarajevo and DC Srebrenica-Bratunac, are multiethnic. Local NCBs also reflect the ethnic structure of the target

municipalities. Emphasis is also put on gender balance of the beneficiaries. In NBCs, there are 21 women and 24 men. NFYPs gather 31 girls and 29 boys. (NDC Sarajevo, 2012 b)

3. How have the target groups participated in the creation of the project proposal?

The strategy for the evaluated, as well as the previously implemented project, was developed after the research conducted in 2005. Hence, the strategy tried to address the problems which, based on the research, were seen as acute. The beneficiaries were not directly involved in the creation of the proposal for this project. However, when preparing the proposal for the currently implemented project, which is again a continuation of previous projects, NDC Sarajevo asked NCBs to create strategies for the following three-year period. The ideas that appeared in the strategies were incorporated in the proposal for the current project (Cero, 2012; Goranci, 2012).

4. How are the project and the implementing organization perceived among the target groups?

Generally, the interviewed and surveyed beneficiaries perceive NDC Sarajevo as a professional organization that is really interested in the problems of local communities. They appreciate the approach NDC Sarajevo has, that the beneficiaries are the ones initiating activities, not the implementing organization. They believe that NDC Sarajevo is successful in their work and wish that the organization would remain involved in their municipalities. From the conducted research it also became very apparent that there are close relationships between the staff of NDC Sarajevo and the beneficiaries. Many of the interviewees indicated that they consider them to be close friends.

6.6 Coordination and Coherence with Other Initiatives

1. Are there other actors in target municipalities working towards the same objective? How is NDC Sarajevo cooperating with these actors?

There are many NGOs working toward peace in BiH. Currently, Network for Building Peace, which gathers organizations working directly or indirectly towards peace in BiH, registers 81 local and 7 international member organizations. However, NGOs working in target municipalities are mostly focused on work with young people (Mreža za Izgradnju Mira, 2013). From the research it can be seen that NDC Sarajevo is unique in their approach to the work with the target groups, especially with regards to the follow-up activities initiated by the beneficiaries themselves. Training and seminars are organized by many NGOs in BiH; however, there is usually no follow-up after these seminars.

Activities initiated by members of the established bodies are often implemented in cooperation with other organizations which are present in the target municipalities, such as youth centres, hiking and environmental organizations and cultural associations.

2. How are Nansen Dialogue Centres in BiH cooperating with each other to build a peaceful society in BiH?

As mentioned above, there are currently two NDCs in BiH; in Sarajevo and in Mostar. The activities of these centres are based on a similar holistic approach and both use dialogue as the main tool for integrating divided communities, although NDC Mostar focuses even more on work in ethnically divided schools. At the beginning, these two NDCs, together with NDC Banja Luka, which no longer exists, implemented a few joint projects; however, they are currently working on independent projects. NDC Sarajevo concentrates on the Eastern, Central and Western part of BiH, NDC Mostar on the Herzegovina region. Both are members of the Nansen Dialogue Network which includes all NDCs in the Western Balkan region. (Đuliman, 2012; Šavija Valha, 2012)

3. Have the activities of the project been planned and implemented coherently?

The bodies established during the project (NCBs, NFYPs and Teachers Alumni) implemented a wide range of activities, ranging from different cultural, environmental and sporting activities to public discussions. All local small-scale activities were planned by these bodies; hence the coherence of these activities was ensured by the members of these bodies who jointly decided about the implementation of the activities. Moreover, NDC Sarajevo supervised all the activities. (NDC Sarajevo, 2012 a)

6.7 Efficiency and Management

1. Has the project been implemented on schedule?

The implementation of the project started with a five-month delay which was caused by the late reception of the grant from the Norwegian MFA. Nevertheless, NDC Sarajevo managed to implement the planned activities and achieve the intended outcomes within the project period. (NDC Sarajevo, 2011)

2. How efficiently has the intervention used the financial and human resources?

Five full-time employees of NDC Sarajevo have been working on the project. The total expenses of the three-year project were almost 596,000 €. The establishment of the DC Srebrenica-Bratunac was financed by the grant from USAID which amounted to 200,000 USD (approx. 152,300 €). (NDC Sarajevo, 2012 a)

This thesis will not deal with the financial efficiency in more detail since it was not the main aim of the evaluation and the author does not have all the necessary information to be able to assess how efficient the project was.

7 Conclusion and Recommendations

The main aim of the thesis was to evaluate the peacebuilding project “Reconciliation and Integration through Education and Dialogue” implemented by Nansen Dialogue Centre Sarajevo in rural areas of Bosnia and Herzegovina. The thesis first introduced the concept of peacebuilding, described the different approaches to the process of building peace in conflict and post-conflict environment, identified actors who may be involved in this process and characterized the role the nongovernmental sector plays in peacebuilding. It then defined the term evaluation and explained how the criteria for evaluating peacebuilding interventions should differ from those used to evaluate development assistance efforts.

When defining the evaluation questions, the author followed the criteria for evaluating peacebuilding interventions as defined by Paffenholz and Reychler (2007) in the “Aid for Peace” framework and “Reflecting on Peace Project’s” criteria for assessing the effectiveness of peacebuilding interventions presented by the Collaborative for Development Action (Anderson and Olson, 2003). The evaluation sought to assess the project according to the following criteria: peacebuilding relevance, peacebuilding effectiveness, impact on macro peacebuilding/peace writ large, sustainability for long-term peacebuilding, participation and ownership of national/local stakeholders, coordination and coherence with other initiatives and efficiency, management and governance.

7.1 Main Findings of the Evaluation

The project can be assessed as relevant to the process of building peace in the local communities. Before implementing the evaluated project, NDC Sarajevo had closely analysed the situation in the target municipalities and identified the most acute problems in terms of peaceful coexistence and cooperation of citizens of different ethnicities. A specific peacebuilding need had been stated and the goal of the project, as well as the selection of the target groups, followed the conflict analysis and identified peacebuilding need. The project corresponds with the target groups’ opinions on what is necessary in order to improve the situation in local communities. NDC Sarajevo had obtained approval from local authorities to implement the project; hence there were no objections to the proposed activities. When preparing the project, the implementing organization acknowledged past successes and failures and planned the project strategy and activities according to the lessons learnt.

NDC Sarajevo succeeded in achieving the intended project output and outcomes. The project educated and empowered people who are now active in their local communities and have implemented their own multiethnic initiatives without NDC Sarajevo imposing any activities. The implementing organization has only a supervising role and provides financial support for these small-scale projects. Moreover, the intervention of NDC Sarajevo in target municipalities is already reflected in some changes in the interethnic situation in the communities.

The evaluated project is on the right track to contribute to the overall process of building peace in the target municipalities. The project goal is very clearly defined and the project activities and outcomes are directed to contribute to the overall goal. The project targets those actors who are influential in the local communities, and the target groups are active in initiating and implementing interethnic activities aimed at improving the interethnic communication and cooperation in their communities. If NDC Sarajevo succeeds in creating a network of trained individuals from the target municipalities that would initiate interregional multiethnic activities, it might also contribute to the peacebuilding process at the macro (state) level. However, the project strives to change the attitudes and perceptions of people, their mind sets, and such changes need long-term commitment. To change the work of local politicians proves to be particularly difficult since the political system in BiH is heavily centralized and politicians at all levels have to follow the agenda of their political parties. Nevertheless, with the proactive strategy of targeting representatives of the municipalities, NDC Sarajevo gained official support from the local authorities and a number of municipality councillors are now active members of NCBs. The research did not identify any negative effects of the project on the situation in target municipalities.

Since the goal of the project is to create structures that would work independently to improve interethnic communication and cooperation in local communities, and since NDC Sarajevo has succeeded in the creation of these bodies, it can be concluded that the project is sustainable for the long-term process of peacebuilding. The self-sustainability of the structures created could be even more improved by providing them with additional training in topics such as project cycle management, fundraising and evaluation, so they are able to obtain funding from other donors independently.

NDC Sarajevo itself is heavily dependent on a single donor since the establishment of the centre. Although the organization received a few smaller grants from European Commission, USAID and Balkan Trust for Democracy, all major projects have been

financed by the Norwegian MFA. However, the conducted research revealed that the Norwegian policy towards the Western Balkans is changing and other NDCs in the region are no longer financed by Norway. Hence, NDC Sarajevo should prepare a strategy for ensuring the funding of their projects from other sources in case the Norwegian MFA ceases its support.

The strategy of the evaluated project is based on the active involvement of the target groups in the process of planning and implementing project activities and the interviewed beneficiaries appreciated this approach. The feeling of ownership of the project is thus very strong among the target groups and greatly contributes to the success of the intervention.

The majority of the activities implemented in the target municipalities were prepared by the beneficiaries themselves. They are the ones who are the most familiar with the local situation and can therefore tailor the activities to the needs of their communities. Hence, the established coordination bodies proposed activities which they believed were needed and, at the same time, they were cooperating with other organizations to achieve a larger impact on the local communities. Therefore, the project did not overlap with other initiatives.

In spite of the five-month delay in the start of the project, NDC Sarajevo successfully achieved all intended outcomes.

7.2 Lessons Learnt

Based on the findings of the evaluation, it can be concluded that the strategy NDC Sarajevo has adopted in the process of building peace in the ethnically divided communities has proved to be successful. There are several aspects of the strategy that played a crucial role in the achievement of the project outcomes.

First, the project did not have a strictly defined plan of activities and did not impose any activities on the target group. The activities that were implemented during the project, except for the seminars and training organized by NDC Sarajevo, were initiated by the beneficiaries themselves and reflected their perceptions of what should be done in order to improve the interethnic situation in their communities. This approach contributed to greater involvement of the beneficiaries through the feeling of ownership – the participants were themselves responsible for the activities they developed.

The very specific approach of the donor was also a key factor of success. Based on the interviews it was evident that the aim of the donor was not to simply implement an

intervention, but to successfully arrive to the desired objectives. In such a fragile post-conflict environment there is no prescribed method of implementing interventions and each situation requires individual assessment and accordingly tailored interventions. Through very open, flexible and understanding approach, the Norwegian MFA made it possible for the project to succeed.

With the careful selection of the participants in the seminars and training NDC Sarajevo identified not only the most active individuals ready to become engaged in the process of improving the interethnic situation in the target municipalities (so called “agents of change”), but also those who could hamper the successful implementation of the project if they were not well informed and included in the project themselves. Moreover, thanks to this selection the project experienced only a few cases of “spoilers”.

The seminars in the dialogue in ethnically divided communities were not perceived by NDC Sarajevo as the main goal of the project, but as a space where the participants could talk openly about their experiences and opinions, and a tool that would activate them to become engaged in their local communities. Greater emphasis was put on the follow-up activities of the participants which were financially supported by NDC Sarajevo. Furthermore, the implementing organization maintained a constant presence in the target municipalities through the frequent field visits of the staff of NDC Sarajevo and thus regularly monitored and supervised the activities.

The study trips to Nansen Academy in Lillehammer, Norway, appeared to be an important driving force behind the mobilization of the participants. Many of the interviewees indicated that the experience of the study trip changed them personally and motivated them to become more engaged in the process of improving interethnic cooperation in their local communities. The personality and facilitation skills of Steinar Bryn, lecturer of the dialogue seminars, were very well appreciated by the participants.

7.3 Recommendations

In order to ensure the self-sustainability of the established structures (NCBs, NFYPs, and Teachers Alumni, as well as the Dialogue Centre Srebrenica-Bratunac), NDC Sarajevo should concentrate more on the capacity building of these bodies in areas such as project management, fundraising and monitoring and evaluation.

Parents appeared to be less actively engaged than the other target groups. Many of the interviewed teachers noted that parents are generally not very interested in education and activities of their children and their passivity negatively affects the pupils. Hence,

focusing more on the work with the parents would increase not only their involvement, but it would also mobilize the kids.

The economic situation and high unemployment rate in the target municipalities are particularly alarming. If the situation does not improve, or even worsens, the activities of NDC Sarajevo, as well as the engagement of the established bodies, could be endangered, since the beneficiaries would be more concerned about securing their basic needs. As one surveyed participant noted, “if a family does not have a job and income, it will hardly be interested in solving other problems” (interviewed participant). Therefore, NDC Sarajevo could focus on involving the business sector in their activities, since the majority of the companies in the target municipalities are monoethnic, providing employment opportunities for one ethnic group only, thus contributing to the ethnic divisions and further frustration of the inhabitants.

Peacebuilding projects aimed at integrating ethnically divided communities and improving interethnic communication and cooperation undoubtedly require a long-term commitment. NDC Sarajevo has been present in rural areas of BiH since 2006 and the results of its involvement are now starting to be visible. In order to maximize the impact of its projects, NDC Sarajevo should continue their work in the target municipalities until the structures of the active local citizens are fully self-sustainable and prepared to continue with the activities initiated by NDC Sarajevo independently. NDC Sarajevo should consider including other municipalities in BiH in their projects to achieve greater impact on the overall situation in BiH.

So far, NDC Sarajevo has maintained its presence in the target municipalities thanks to the stable support of the donor, the Norwegian MFA. However, if Norway ceases its support, NDC Sarajevo would not be able to finance its activities. Hence, it should either focus more on obtaining funding from other sources, or on convincing the current donor that their support is still needed.

To conclude with, the model applied by NDC Sarajevo, as well as the flexible and open approach of its donor, appears to be relevant to the fragile post-conflict environment of BiH and successful in achieving its purpose. If promoted more, it could be adopted by other organizations and donors active in similar conflict and post-conflict settings.

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Table 5: List of the interviews with the beneficiaries of the project

Type of the interview	Interviewee	Gender	Date of the interview	Place of the interview
Group	Teacher	M	2012/10/08	Jajce
	Teacher	M	2012/10/08	Jajce
	Teacher	F	2012/10/08	Jajce
	Teacher	M	2012/10/08	Jajce
	Teacher	F	2012/10/08	Jajce
Group	Student	F	2012/10/08	Jajce
	Student	M	2012/10/08	Jajce
Individual	Municipal administrator	F	2012/10/09	Srebrenica
Individual	Teacher	F	2012/10/09	Srebrenica
Individual	Student	F	2012/10/09	Srebrenica
Individual	Municipality administrator	M	2012/10/09	Srebrenica
Group	Municipality councillor	F	2012/10/11	Zvornik
	Teacher	F	2012/10/11	Zvornik
	Municipality administrator	M	2012/10/11	Zvornik
	Representative of the NGO sector	M	2012/10/11	Zvornik

Surveys

Survey on the general situation in the target municipalities. Conducted in the period September 2012 – February 2013 in Srebrenica, Bratunac, Zvornik and Jajce municipalities. 28 respondents.

Survey on the motivations and experiences of the participants in the seminars organized by NDC Sarajevo. Conducted in the period September 2012 – February 2013 in Srebrenica, Bratunac, Zvornik and Jajce municipalities. 26 respondents.

Survey on the satisfaction of the participants from Jajce municipality with the organized seminar. Conducted by NDC Sarajevo on 6th June 2010 in Sarajevo. 17 respondents.

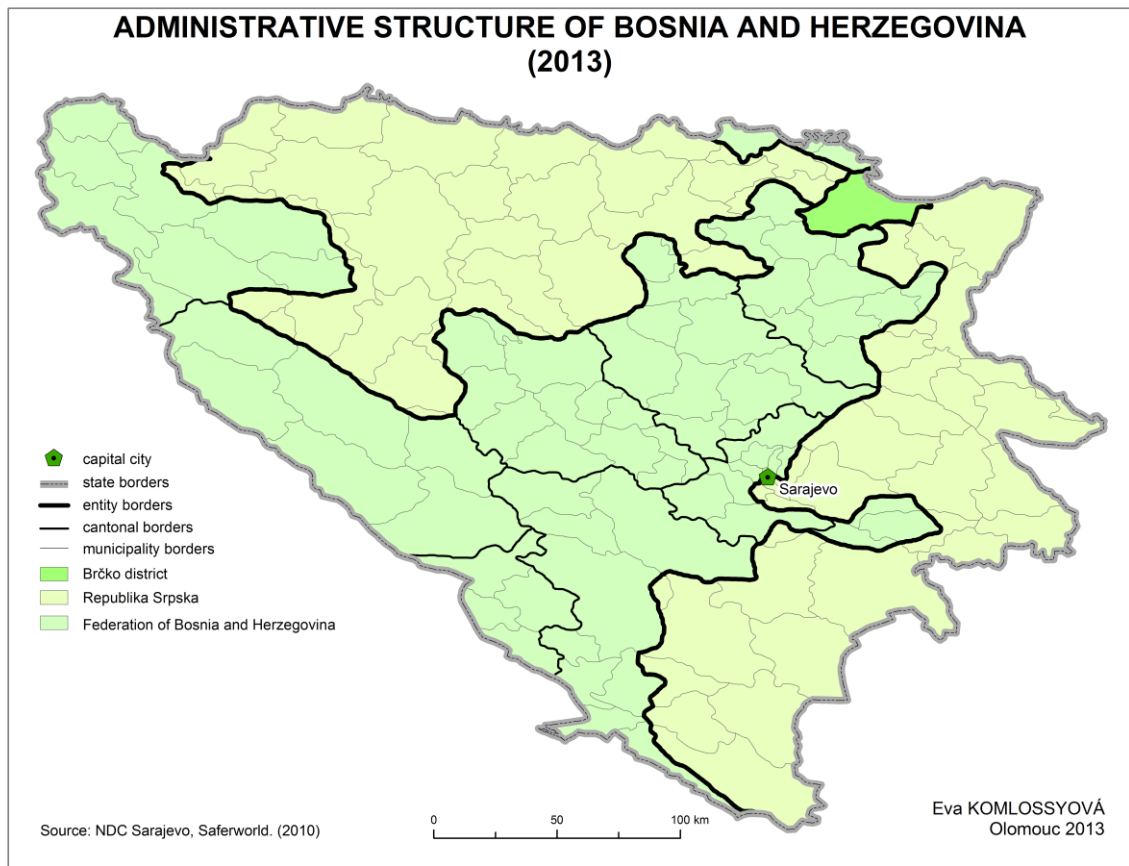
Survey on the satisfaction of the participants from Zvornik municipality with the organized seminar. Conducted by NDC Sarajevo on 27th June 2010 in Sarajevo. 16 respondents.

Appendices

Appendix 1: Map of administrative structure of Bosnia and Herzegovina

Appendix 2: Map of the target municipalities of the evaluated project

Appendix 1



Appendix 2

