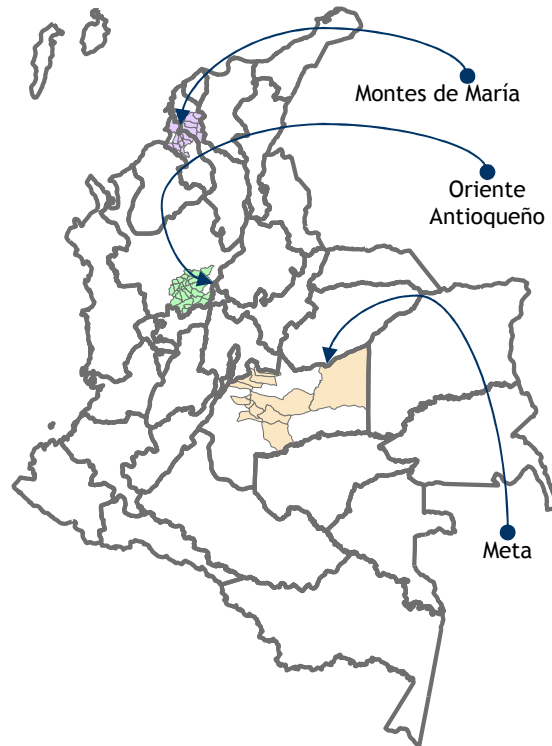


Sida – UNDP Partnership for Peace in Colombia 2003 - 06

“RECONCILIACION Y DESARROLLO”

Report of the REDES Program Evaluation



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Executive Summary

In November 2003, Sida and UNDP signed a Partnership for Peace in Colombia for a period of three years to support the Reconciliation and Development Program, REDES in short. The partnership aims to address eight impediments to sustainable development and peace in Colombia, which perpetuate violent conflict, inequality and exclusion of vulnerable groups: i) armed conflict, ii) unequal distribution of economic and political power; iii) weak democratic institutions; iv) increasing poverty; v) unequal distribution of land; vi) impunity and human rights violations; vii) humanitarian rights violations and viii) trafficking of illegal drugs.

REDES philosophy is to promote reconciliation and development initiatives in violent conflict zones involving all stakeholders, with the aim to rebuild fragmented communities, to strengthen weakened democratic institutions and revive traditional social networks, to restore relations between local government and civil society, to counter corruption and end practices of coercion and impunity, and to provide viable economic livelihood alternatives. REDES partners with civil society, government actors and private sector; emphasizes human rights and public policy and practice changes in all its programs; and works simultaneously at local, regional and national level.

The purpose of the evaluation was to provide UNDP, Sida and other REDES donor agencies with an assessment and recommendations vis-à-vis REDES' focus, progress, organizational and structural issues, as well as to distil lessons learned and best practices. The review assessed whether the REDES interventions have contributed to reduce the impact of the violence on communities and most vulnerable groups and how development and peace building projects could be successfully initiated in two conflict ridden regions, Montes de Maria and Meta. The evaluation process served as a dialogue platform for all REDES beneficiaries and stakeholders to influence future agenda and cooperation areas for Sida/UNDP Colombia partnership (2007-10).

The evaluation concluded that the REDES program is highly strategic with a clear focus on finding solutions for the key problems and bottlenecks to sustainable development and peace in Colombia. REDES creates new spaces for multi stakeholder participation to promote regional and national development debates, in which the voice of most vulnerable groups -historically excluded- is fairly represented. Its empowerment strategies for marginalized people comprise reviving traditional networks, building capacity and providing accompaniment, which facilitates their inclusion in new participatory governance processes. As a result, UNDP plays a unique role in the Colombian conflict context, as REDES is the only UN program that champions a development and peace building approach in poor zones deeply affected by the armed conflict. REDES attempts to structurally transform public policies and practices at local, regional and national level, where most aid agencies remain stuck in the humanitarian service delivery mode.

REDES has laid out a series of strategies that prove to be effective to initiate development and reconciliation projects in the midst of armed conflict. The evaluation highlights five best REDES practices that sum up the success of the program in the regions and require more in-depth documentation to provide possible models to UNDP programs operating in other conflict environments:

- Accompaniment of development and peace processes at local and regional level
- Revival of local civil society organizations to (re)build social capital and cohesion
- Fostering of alliances between local government–civil society to begin restore confidence
- Facilitation of local dialogue and protection initiatives of vulnerable groups, particularly successful among youth and peasants
- Linking local initiatives to national public policy agenda and vice versa to promote structural transformation and CPR awareness (e.g. mine awareness and prevention).

- Use of international community leverage in regional programs.

The evaluation has identified six common characteristics from the analysis of these practices, which may well explain their accomplishments:

- i) Political vision
- ii) Political commitment to accompany risky dialogue processes
- iii) In-depth knowledge of conflict and stakeholder interests
- iv) Participatory, multi-stakeholder involvement
- v) Identification and engagement of local leadership
- vi) Rights based development orientation (inclusion and equality).

At the same time, REDES experiences a number of serious limitations that harbor some intrinsic weaknesses. The evaluation highlighted four problem areas:

- Lack of good governance and impunity in deadly conflict zones
- National level political institutional and advocacy engagement
- Internal UNDP program coordination and CPR mainstreaming
- Limited donor communication and lack of coordination.

Two sets of recommendations were formulated to provide advise to REDES and its stakeholders in designing the next phase:

a. Strengthen the REDES development strategy

- Right to Development and Human Security: elaborate REDES strategies to include the rights' based development approach and human security dimensions
- Apply good governance criteria in CSO partner monitoring to strengthen sustainability of the social networks (representativity, accountability, transparency and democratization)
- Introduce Small Grants Fund to CSOs in regional programs to facilitate small livelihood and social cohesion projects and increase beneficiary ownership of regional programs
- Restructure and reduce action lines, by grouping and strategic linking them to objectives
- Promote and accompany specific vulnerable group organizations, e.g. displaced people, women in vulnerable positions, indigenous and Afro-Colombian people; and promote representation and participation of these vulnerable groups in work of all CSO partners.

b. Mainstream human rights focus

- Mainstream human rights issues and change agents in REDES regional programs, for example through community conflict resolution projects in collaboration with the 'justices of peace' and 'conciliadores en equidad'; HR and conflict resolution training for mayors.
- Gender equality: develop gender equality analysis and include prevention of violence against women strategies in all programs
- Truth, justice and reconciliation: focus on accompaniment of processes of reconstruction of the truth and access to justice, strengthening victim organizations at local and national level, and advocacy for international standards in the NRCC process.

c. Role of REDES in UNDP Colombia

- Articulate the REDES approach in UNDP Colombia's new territorial strategy to increase programmatic coherence and consistency in funding, coordination and CPR approach among UNDP Colombia's development programs
- Strengthen national level advocacy with political actors and vice versa to anchor national peace and development debates in the regions, and to connect local and national agendas
- Systematize best practice collection within UNDP and wider UN community and clarify concepts and methodology of best practice documentation with SURF and HDU etc.
- Choose ten indicators that reflect REDES achievement in overcoming peace impediments

d. Secure and enhance sustainability of REDES achievements in the next phase

- Develop an exit strategy for REDES in MM and Meta for next program phase
- Come to an overarching REDES strategy, justifying differences between MM and Meta
- Decentralize program management, increase staff presence in the field
- Additional selection and preparation criteria for new REDES regional programs
- Develop a sustainable budget plan in line with the unique REDES socio-political strategy
- Promote an in-country UN mini-reform by piloting experimental, lean UNDP procedures and innovative inter-agency partnerships.

Recommendations to REDES in relation to other actors:

c. Strengthen dialogue with national government institutions

- Develop peace advocacy dialogue with key peace stakeholders (like the DP, PGN)
- Develop a unified strategy to interact with government departments and local entities, to this end REDES needs to improve its external communication tools and formulate a public information strategy to promote the REDES message
- Seek broader institutional support for REDES good governance initiatives, like signing of good governance pacts, citizens' participation in planning and budgeting of municipal development plans and fostering ongoing dialogues between state and civil society.

f. International leverage to political national level advocacy processes

- Step up high level political advocacy support involving UNDP leadership to promote good governance and peaceful resolution of the conflict at national level
- Increase UNDP and International Community involvement in national level advocacy for public policy change (with for example the High Commissioner for Peace) to complement the regional efforts to build a new governance tradition from bottom up
- Strategically position REDES in UN community, e.g. through participation in four inter-agency working groups and launching a clear CPR communication strategy.

g. Improve communication and coordination among REDES donor agencies

- Form a donor consortium, consider institutional funding to reduce project planning, monitoring and reporting burden on REDES administration
- Continue the good donor partnership practice and "political accompaniment" and actively support REDES' good governance, development and peace advocacy at national level advocacy to change public policy and create a culture of peace in Colombia.

I. Introduction

1.1 Rationale

In November 2003, Sida and UNDP signed a Partnership for Peace in Colombia for a period of three years that ends in December 2006 (Decisión RELA 130/03 y 2005-003592). The partnership aims to address the eight impediments to sustainable development and peace in Colombia, which perpetuate processes of violent conflict and exclusion of vulnerable groups, i.e. i) armed conflict, ii) unequal distribution of economic and political power; iii) weak democratic institutions; iv) increasing poverty; v) unequal distribution of land; vi) impunity and human rights violations; vii) humanitarian rights violations and viii) trafficking of illegal drugs.

During 2003, UNDP Colombia published an acclaimed Human Development Report, facilitated the London multi-stakeholder development and peace dialogue and conceived the Reconciliación y Desarrollo (Reconciliation and Development = REDES) initiative in partnership with BCPR and Sida, in an attempt to initiate development and peace initiatives in poor rural zones deeply affected and divided by the protracted civil conflict. By the end of the year, the REDES program was launched in three regions (Montes de Maria, Meta and Oriente Antioqueño) for a period of three years and a total accumulated budget of ten million USD.

REDES philosophy is to promote reconciliation and development initiatives in conflict zones involving multiple stakeholders with the aim to rebuild fragmented communities, to strengthen weak democratic institutions and revive traditional social networks, to restore relations between local government and civil society, to counter corruption and end practices of coercion and lawlessness and to provide viable economic livelihood alternatives. REDES partners with civil society, government actors, private sector and other UN agencies; it emphasizes human rights and public policy and practice changes in all its programs and works simultaneously at local, regional and national level.

The purpose of the evaluation is to provide UNDP/REDES, Sida and other REDES donor agencies with an assessment of and recommendations on REDES' focus, progress, organizational and structural issues, as well as to distil lessons learned and best practices. The review was to assess whether the REDES programs have contributed to the reduction of impact of the violence on communities and vulnerable groups and how development and peace building projects were successfully initiated in two conflict ridden regions, Montes de Maria and Meta. The evaluation process served as a dialogue platform for REDES stakeholders to discuss future program and cooperation priorities in Sida and UNDP Colombia partnership (2007-10). REDES beneficiaries, from local counterparts, government, CSOs and community leaders to regional and national recipients and networks, participated in the evaluation. Lastly, the evaluation analyzed impact indicators and provided recommendations to consolidate REDES achievements in the next phase.

The ToR formulated five specific objectives of the evaluation:

1. Systematize methodologies and their impact on the generation of development and peace building initiatives, as formulated and promoted by REDES.
2. Identify and analyze the achieved results vis-à-vis the set REDES program objectives.
3. Identify best practices and weaknesses in the various development and peace initiatives, and advise how REDES can consolidate and sustain its achievements.
4. Analyze the REDES impact from national perspective.
5. Analyze the capacity generated and catalyzed by REDES and identify which process aspects contributed most to meeting the set objectives.

1.2 Evaluation methodology

The mission collected data in Bogota, Montes de Maria and Meta from August 13 to September 5, followed by eight days writing and analysis. The team consisted of three members: Maria Camila Moreno (anthropologist, IDPs and human rights), Anders Rudqvist (sociologist, methodology and Colombia analyst) and Elisabeth Scheper (regional planner, conflict prevention, program management, and team leader).

To assess the overall relevance, efficiency and effectiveness of the program, the team reviewed REDES programs through desk review of background documents, workshops and meetings with REDES and UNDP staff, key donors and local and international implementation partners. Concurrently, the team conducted a host of interviews with beneficiaries at local, regional and national level (at intermediary and target group level; in individual and focus group settings) and observed a wide variety of ongoing programs activities in Montes de Maria (=MM) and Meta (i.e. Mesas Humanitarias, zonal youth committee meetings, Noche Monte Mariana, Consejos Regionales de Empleo, alternative development program planning meetings with small-scale coca cultivators and field visit to coca-producing areas in Meta etc).

The consultations included five sets of stakeholders: i) beneficiaries; ii) reference groups; iii) local, national and international counterparts; iv) UNDP staff and management; and v) other UN agencies. The team analyzed and documented five key regional and local processes:

- i) Community organizations and social networks
- ii) Local government initiatives
- iii) Mesas Humanitarias y Consejos Regionales de Empleo (Human Rights Roundtables and Councils for Alternative Employment)
- iv) Participatory public policy advocacy (PDPs)
- v) Network of communicators.

At national level, the team reviewed REDES' involvement in five initiatives:

- i) National public policy change with NPD and Acción Social
- ii) Post-Cartagena process and G24
- iii) Peace Laboratory III
- iv) National Commission on Reparations and Reconciliation
- v) Mine Action

In addition, the team assessed REDES' crisis prevention and recovery (=CPR) mainstreaming efforts in UNDP, in the wider UN system and among national and local counterparts.

To assess the effectiveness of the REDES program at national level, the team evaluated the alliance building and advocacy efforts to influence public policy by documenting and reviewing:

1. Recognition of REDES and its partners' work by national and international actors;
2. Frequency and nature of advocacy interactions at national level facilitated by REDES, especially the interaction between civil society and government at national level;
3. Effectiveness of advocating for public policy changes, both in terms of actual changes, generated capacity of civil society and quality of advocacy messages and supporting documents (including mainstreaming the CPR agenda at national level);
4. Sharing and accessibility of best practices data generated through the REDES experience.

The regional and national REDES' programs were reviewed using its strategic framework (communities, alliances, public policy and knowledge); expected direct and indirect results were valued on their contribution to overcome the four main conflict and violence impediments at regional level: fragmented communities, weak democratic institutions, coercion and despair, and weak rule of law and illicit drug-trafficking; and gender equality aspects. Two key beneficiary networks were documented: the youth networks to protect and prevent recruitment in Montes de

Maria and the peasant cooperatives working on alternative income generation to replace illicit cropping in Meta. Lastly, the team conducted individual interviews with all REDES program staff to review job descriptions, discuss self assessments and identify human resource bottlenecks. In addition, the team met with the UNDP Human Development Unit and the regional SURF staff to discuss documentation and dissemination practices of the lessons learned and best practices to formulate recommendations for REDES' monitoring and evaluation unit.

Various limitations were encountered during the evaluation process. REDES had not collected systematic data on its social mobilization processes, nor does a baseline exist from the start of the program phase. Furthermore, REDES annual reports and thematic project documents present output data, but provide few insights on direct and indirect results, while the REDES knowledge management unit had not yet documented good practices. In absence of these data, and in view of the complex nature of the program in a violent conflict context, it was not possible to assess the impact of the REDES program in the span of only three weeks. Annex 2 provides a more elaborate reflection on methodological limitations and concepts used in this evaluation. The team like to express gratitude to the REDES team for organizing and accompanying our many field trips, for their open and responsive attitude and for their warm and cheerful hospitality that made the mission a memorable and cultural experience.

The report is divided in five chapters. Chapter I introduces the rationale of the evaluation and its methodology. Chapter II presents a brief conflict context, the preparatory phase of the REDES program and REDES program outline. Chapter III records the findings of the REDES work in three clusters: regional development and peace programs, the role of REDES in national level peace processes, and REDES planning, monitoring and knowledge management systems, impact assessment, knowledge management and CPR mainstreaming. Chapter IV draws conclusions on the relevance, efficiency and effectiveness of the program and highlights lessons learned, both positive (best practices) and negative (threats and weaknesses). Chapter V to conclude provides two sets of recommendations to the REDES management and its key partners.

II. Conflict and REDES response

2.1 Conflict statement

2.1.1 Conflict analysis

Colombia has been the stage of violent conflict since the 1940s, when two long standing political parties (Partido Liberal and Partido Conservador) entered into an armed political confrontation. Each party mobilized its own militias, which operated mainly in rural areas. In the late 1950s and early 1960s, these embryonic self-defense peasant groups were transformed into guerrilla movements, which aggravated the political conflict. During period known as *La Violencia* (1948-1965) alone, app. 180,000 persons were killed. In the 1980s, the violence further intensified when paramilitary groups moved into the guerrilla controlled territories. Various peace and demobilization initiatives in the 1980s failed, resulting in regrouping and resumption of combat. In the 1990s, a broad national people's peace movement gained ground, with 10 million Colombian citizens voting for peace in 1997. Advanced peace negotiations with the FARC broke down in 2002, rendering the tenth subsequent peace process unsuccessful.

The current armed context is characterized by intensification and geographical expansion. The presence of armed actors controlling different regions, the intensity of the conflict and its dynamics and effects are the result of multiple and complex factors, including: i) the strategic, political and military plan of each group, ii) the region specific economic, political and social

dynamics; iii) the search for and diversification of income sources of armed groups. At national level, the geography and the economic, social and military scope of the conflict had a different impact on the North and South of the country. In the North, a process of streamlining and legalizing of paramilitaries was preceded by demobilization of most visible paramilitary structures. While military interventions did reduce considerably over the past year, their political and economic influence continues to consolidate, as the paramilitaries penetrated deeply in different society circles. In the South, regions like Orinoquia and Amazonia, the FARC has been relatively successful in gaining control in the colonization frontiers and over the coca economy, besides proving to be a great military force and destabilizing factor.

The government has changed its traditional response by developing an ample military presence to the regions, as part of its policy of "seguridad democrática" and has created a kind of "armed peace". However, over the past decade, the percentage of Colombians living below the poverty line increased from 53.8% in 1991 to 59.8% in 2000, which indicates that this middle income country is in conflict and suffering from grave human rights and international humanitarian rights violations. The government's response is indicative of internal contradictions and reflects a trend common in some western nations to lump concepts of insurgency, insecurity and terrorism in one bag. At the same time, these contradictions also provide possibilities to advance peace initiatives and a process of reconciliation, as a major responsibility and decisiveness is expected from the state to find political and legal compromises and in the process be accountable to civil society and the international community.

Though indicators show some reduction in violence over the past few years, there are threats which could intensify the conflict and put democratic governance in danger, challenging the government to face actual peace scenarios. The demobilization process resulted in demobilization of 30,000 paramilitary combatants and now the judiciary faces the historic challenge to enforce the Law on Justice and Peace. According to governmental and international reports however, local armed structures set up by the self-defense forces; manage to perpetuate their de facto powerbase. The Government and ELN are exploring the possibility for a negotiated peace and recently, both FARC and the government showed interest to seek new ways for the humanitarian exchanges of prisoners. Future negotiations between the government and armed groups will likely require bilateral scenarios, international facilitators, agenda and procedures. To be really effective, they need to adhere to proper democratic participatory principles, in which civil society has a role in building peace, develop and implement peaceful conflict resolution alternatives and set agendas to exercise their rights in the search for social justice.

2.1.2 The development dilemma

The key obstacle for peace negotiations and the historic problem in Colombia is the unequal distribution of wealth and income, combined with the social, economic and political exclusion of large parts of the population. Many observers therefore conclude that Colombia needs urgent, structural reforms, aimed at resolving problems of extreme inequality, poverty and exclusion¹, also because poverty and unequal distribution is a major obstacle for the development of the domestic market and thereby restricts the overall economic growth.² The large investments in the

¹ Véase, por ejemplo, Programa de las Naciones Unidas para el Desarrollo, Informe Nacional de Desarrollo Humano Colombia, Bogotá, 2003, Andes 2020: A New Strategy for the Challenges of Colombia and the Region Council on Foreign Relations, New York, 2004, Washington Office on Latin America, Blueprint for a New Colombia Policy, March 2005, Adam Isacson, Failing Grades: Evaluating the Results of Plan Colombia, Yale Journal of International Affairs, Summer, Fall 2005.

² El informe reciente del Banco Mundial mantiene que los países latinoamericanos tienen que combatir la pobreza más agresivamente si desean crecer más y competir con China y otras economías asiáticas dinámicas, y afirma que mientras crecimiento económico es clave para la reducción de la pobreza, la pobreza misma dificulta el logro de tasas altas y sostenidas de crecimiento en América Latina, que sigue siendo una de las más desiguales regiones del mundo con cerca de una cuarta parte de la población viviendo de menos de US\$ 2.00 por día. G.E. Perry, O.S. Arias, J.H. López, W.F.

reinforcement and expansion of the National Army are increasing the national budget deficit, while investments in the social sector remain proportionally low. Side effect of the inequality, the military expenditure and fiscal deficit, is that out of an economically active population of 20 million people, only app. 740,000 pay income taxes.³

An important feature of power struggle and conflict in Colombia is the land tenure, characterized by high concentration, low productivity and lack of access to land of the majority of the peasant population. Only 20% of all arable land is cultivated and much of it is dedicated to grasslands. The land tenure concentration was accelerated by the conflict and land acquisition by drugs traffickers.⁴ Of the estimated 1.4 million land owners in Colombia, 1.1 million are small owners, while 1.3 million peasant families (54 percent) have no access to land. Historically, government policies have made no efforts to redistribute land or capital, while the redistribution of expropriated land from drugs traffickers and paramilitaries has been slow and inefficient. The national agricultural policy continues to focus on the promotion of agro-industry and investments in animal husbandry and export crops like African palm, rubber y cacao. The economic growth of recent years did not favor low investment sectors at all. According to information from the National Planning Department, based on a household survey in the 13 largest cities, the real income of workers dropped 10,6 percent in 2004 and 2005.⁵

The production of coca and illicit drugs trafficking have played a key role in the spread and intensification of the conflict, as it reinforced the economic base of illegal armed groups and has penetrated and corrupted many local administrative and public institutions. Colombia is the main cocaine producer in the world (approximately 70% in 2005). 93 percent of the coca is produced by small farmers, which make up for 69 percent of the total area under coca cultivation.⁶ By comparison, the poppy cultivation spans app. 4000 hectares and represents only 2 percent of the world production. The strategy of the government is to forcibly eradicate illicit crops among others by aerial fumigation. Colombia is the only country in the world that allows fumigation. Initially, only large plantations were fumigated, but since 2002 also small peasant plots are targeted, but without a matching policy to resolve the structural problems that cause the drug cultivation. In 2002 and 2003, over 260,000 hectares were fumigated to eradicate less than 60,000 ha and the CIA admits that as in 2004 around 135,000 hectares was under cultivation, they have effectively failed to eradicate even a single hectare.⁷ According to the latest available data, the area under coca cultivation has further increased with 6000 hectares in 2005, despite intensive fumigation, which clearly underlines the need to rethink and radically change the strategy and prevailing practices.

The implications of the conflict and drug production have rendered Afro-Colombian and indigenous communities even more vulnerable, because of their geographic and political isolation and poor economic situation. Repeatedly, these groups have been the victim of massacres, human rights violations and forced displacement and recruitment by armed groups. The most vulnerable groups in the conflict context, are the internally displaced and the peasant sector in remote parts of the country. The situation is particularly critical for women and young IDPs.

Maloney, L. Servén, *Poverty Reduction and Growth: Virtuous and Vicious Circles*, The World Bank, Washington DC, 2006. En Colombia, dependiendo del método de cálculo, entre 52.8 and 66 por ciento viven de menos de US\$ 2.00 por día.

³ Julia E. Sweig, *Challenges for U.S. Policy Toward Colombia: Is Plan Colombia Working*, The Regional Dimensions? (Written statement before the 108th Congress United States Senate Foreign Relations Committee) Council on Foreign Relations, October 29, 2003.

⁴ Que tienen 4 millones de hectáreas de las mejores tierras, o sea el 48 por ciento.

⁵ *El Tiempo*, 4 de septiembre de 2006, Ingreso real de los trabajadores cayó 10,6% en dos años, Eduardo Sarmiento P., *El modelo inequitativo*, *El Espectador*, semana del 10 al 16 de septiembre 2006, p. 2C,

⁶ Todos los datos referentes a los cultivos de uso ilícito y narcotráfico deben ser considerados como aproximaciones ya que no hay uniformidad y coincidencia en la información suministrada por diferentes fuentes.

⁷ *El Tiempo*, editorial, *En los Parques*, no, 15 de mayo de 2005.

2.2 REDES response

2.2.1 Preparation phase

REDES started a visionary program to (re)build social capital and social cohesion in areas with protracted civil conflict. The main objective of REDES program is to revive and strengthen traditional social organization strategies for peace and development in the context of violent, protracted conflict with the aim to revive social and institutional networks. This is expected to result in increase human security, reduce vulnerability of groups marginalized by the conflict and facilitate sustainable development processes to resolve conflicts and build peace and reconciliation at local, regional and national level.

The REDES concept is result of an elaborate consultative process with participation of a diverse set of social and institutional actors, both local and international, held in the context of UNDP Colombia's Human Development Report, "Callejón con Salida" published in 2003 and devoted to the conflict⁸, and negotiations between UNDP, Bureau for Crisis Prevention and Recovery (=BCPR) and the Government of Colombia over the new Colombia Cooperation Framework (CCF 02-06) and the Humanitarian Action Plan (PAH 02-06). Two priorities were formulated:

1. The CCF's main priority is to reduce the incidence of complex emergencies and promote strategic action to reduce violence and the UNDP is best placed to coordinate crisis management.
2. A conflict prevention program approach directed at regional level will maximize coordination and avoid isolated, dispersed and fragmented project- and resource allocation.

UNDP/BCPR New York and Sida played an active role in the REDES strategy development and area selection. An integrated BCPR identification mission assisted the Country Office in the program design, in May 2003 and comprised five experts representing BCPR's service lines (justice and security sector reform, transitional recovery, mine action, small arms and demobilization, disaster reduction). The mission visited five regions (Meta, Oriente Antioqueño, La Ciénaga Grande de Santa Marta, Chocó and Montes de María), held extensive discussions in Bogotá and made many recommendations, which are summarized in two categories:

Recommendations regarding approach:

- Acknowledge local specificity of conflict realities
- Respond to conflict emergency with medium to longer term focus
- Promote dialogue and coordination at and between local, regional and national level
- Secure local participation at every stage of regional program design
- Build on existing structures and identify legitimate actors in each local context, to foster strategic alliances with certain neutrality to accelerate the peace process.

Recommendations regarding program components:

- Build horizontal social bridging capacity through network building
- Promote vertical links between regional programs and national politics
- Design innovative risk reduction strategies to create new windows of opportunities
- Enhance local good governance and responsible citizenship
- Strengthen institutional capacity of counterparts at regional and national level
- Mainstream gender equality
- Exchange, document, disseminate experiences and lessons learned at regional and local level in cooperation with National Planning Department (=NPD) and INDH

⁸ This HDR won the price of best HD report and the process become a model for other countries' preparation of Human Development Reports. An Analysis Unit was maintained to follow up the Human Development Report "Callejón con Salida.", developed a Data Bank for Best practices, where projects to overcome the conflict and peace building efforts are documented. (Sida Annual Report 2004)

- Develop diverse mechanisms to coordinate bilateral and multilateral resources
- Improve participation and coordination mechanisms among regional UN system programs for peace and development to avoid duplication.

The mission recommended six thematic priorities, in accordance with BCPR' service lines:

1. Reduction of armed violence (DDR, civilian protection, preventive youth initiatives to reduce recruitment risk)
2. Mine Action (develop technical capacity of local and national government agencies; local structures to decentralize mine action; integrate of mine action in national agenda)
3. Internally displaced (capacity building and coordination among agencies; aid to municipalities with large displaced populations; public information/ communication)
4. Natural disaster risk reduction (build capacity of local and regional committees of SNPAD to formulate local risk reduction strategies and strengthen DGPAD and GIS).
5. Justice and Security (connect national reflection on security reform with local realities)
6. Local economic and social development and income generation (local development processes based on local organizational structures, link peace building, development and peaceful co-existence.

2.2.2 Site and counterpart selection

With BCPR seed funds, a six months "Preparatory Assistance Program" was launched in July 2003, in which the REDES strategy took shape. Three regions were selected: Meta, Montes de María (=MM) and Oriente Antioqueño (=OA), based on five common characteristics:

- i) A violent conflict scenario characterized by fierce disputes over territory between legal and illegal armed actors
- ii) Resulting in a deteriorating humanitarian crisis, due to proliferation of land mines, forced recruitment of youth and displacement
- iii) Conflict and disaster management and risk reduction strategies urgently needed
- iv) High incidence of poverty, social polarization and fragmentation of civil society actors and necessity for alternative income generation initiatives.
- v) Historic civil society capacity for social mobilization and conflict resolution present, which has been badly affected by the violence and protracted conflict.

During the interviews, several additional criteria surfaced, like new conflict openings, strong local leadership with national level networks (i.e. gelling actors like the Catholic Church with grass roots members and moral authority) and selection preferences of the Government. Lastly, the relative proximity and accessibility of the areas, either from the main office (Meta and OA) or regional UNDP office in Cartagena (MM), was considered vital in the first phase to pilot innovative reconciliation approaches at community level, which required intensive monitoring and political accompaniment. Also, in environments such as Meta and MM where armed illegal actors, through threats, corruption and political connections at all levels, enjoy extended political and economic influence or control over local governments and public institutions, special measures to protect and closely monitor project activities and social actors are clearly warranted. The question was raised why REDES did not target the most violent regions head on. The evaluation concludes that the site selection was wise, as the violence and poverty in MM and Meta is severe (i.e. disappearance, selective assassinations, extra judiciary killings and forced displacement) and justifies support, while a presence of local structures and multiple actor willingness to partner are prerequisites to pilot a long term development and peace model that works simultaneously at local, regional and national level for policy and practice change. The REDES socio-political CPR approach should not be confused with humanitarian crisis response.

REDES program implementation concentrated on Montes de Maria and Meta, while the more affluent region of OA thrived mostly on thematic interventions of mine action, income generation and women and peace. The two territories have distinct geographic settings and problems sets, which are consistent with the previous conflict analysis. It allowed REDES to pilot the applicability of its peace and development strategies in different conflict contexts. MM's civil society has been traditionally divided, with weak but relatively stable local government institutions. Meta mirrors a reverse context: stronger civil society structures are matched by rogue local government institutions. (See Annex 3.1 for more details) The geographic differences impact deeply on the conflict too. Low lying, pastoral MM borders the Gulf coast in the North and is a trafficking zone for drugs to be shipped overseas, with substantial Afro-Colombian populations, presence of indigenous groups and a history of extreme poverty and landlessness. Meta lies to the South of Bogotá, where the planes start sloping into the Amazon basin. It is a new frontier area with economic opportunities abound for those with access to land or capital, with new land opening up for cattle farming, oil drilling, agro industry and coca production, encroaching into natural reserve areas. Both regions have strong regionally defined presence of National Army, FARC and paramilitaries. Towards the end of the first phase, a new program area was opened in Huila, built on some networks that were funded through the Small Grants Program. Huila presents another geographic conflict challenge, as the region has historically been dominated by one armed group, the FARC, and is rather isolated by high mountain ranges and deep valleys.

The REDES program stands out as a BCPR best practice model, in view of its strategic set of counterparts at community, regional and national levels and its integrated sector approach. Over the past three years REDES managed to build relationships with five actor sets:

- Community networks, regional committees etc. to restore fragmented communities and foster people's participation in governance and peace building
- Alliances between regional and national Government actors and civil society;
- Specialized government agencies, like National Landmine Observatory, Procuraduría Nacional, UN Human Rights Office, National Directorate of Attention to Disasters and National Planning Department
- European Commission and World Bank, through the 3rd Peace Laboratory (=LPIII) and the "Peace and Development Program" managed by Acción Social
- UN system: UNICEF and UNFPA on youth protection, violence against women and gender mainstreaming; UNHCR, UNCHR, OCHA and IOM on IDPs and PDP drafting; and lastly with UNODC on alternative development strategies for coca growing areas.

2.2.3 REDES program outline

Taking all recommendations to heart, REDES program chose three specific objectives:

- i) Reduce the impact of the violence on vulnerable communities
- i) Increase the capacity of civil society and state institutions to implement consensus strategies with the aim to overcome the conflict
- ii) Promote socio-economic incentives that provide development alternatives to vulnerable actors and reduce the impact of the economy of conflict in the region.

In four regional programs, REDES seeks to strengthen local democratic processes that promote people's participation and good governance, as well as stimulate income generating activities and foster public policies for employment and development that is rights based and inclusionary to all stakeholders involved. To this end, REDES adopted a multi focal, regional development approach with four distinct strategies: i) strengthen communities, ii) foster public-private partnerships and international alliances, iii) generate knowledge on the internal conflict and CPR approaches and iv) create spaces for participatory public policy formulation and follow-up.

Colombian civil society has historically been subjected to repression, but its leadership suffered disproportionately over the past five decades of violence (disappearances and extra judiciary killings etc). As a result, the social fragmentation and disorganization has left vulnerable communities even more exposed to exploitation by human rights abuses, land grabbing and forced recruitment by armed groups, legal or illegal. Local government has been badly affected by the armed conflict and suffered high mortality among its leadership too. As a result, the basic public service provision in poor, conflict ridden regions is minimal and human security is extremely low. The international actor dimension of the REDES' alliance building has two added values: it has strengthened the political accompaniment and protection of local civil society networks and it has been successful in linking beneficiaries with World Bank & EU peace and development programs.

The REDES program furthermore plays a catalyzing role in strategic alliance building to initiate economic, social and cultural recovery process in the regions. REDES facilitates the building of horizontal and vertical advocacy alliances at local, regional and national level. A participatory conflict and poverty analysis with involvement of multiple stakeholders is a first step to formulate regional Peace and Development Programs (=PDPs) and will inform required public policy and practice changes. The third key strategy is to develop long term, national level political, good governance and equity oriented, solutions to the conflict, based on regional experiences. Lastly, REDES documents its experiences to mainstream conflict prevention approaches and will develop knowledge management strategies to exchange good practices with other BCPR programs in (post) conflict and crisis environments around the world.

REDES developed twelve project lines of actions, combining themes and sectors, which can be grouped in four categories: i) human security; ii) socio political and institutional development, iii) socio-economic development, and iv) reconciliation and justice.

III. Findings

3.1 Regional REDES development and peace programs

3.1.1 Revival of civil society organizations

REDES selected one local civil society organization in each region, to coordinate the participatory planning process and to assist in capacity building of community networks and local leadership. The region specific conflict dynamics and different management styles resulted in distinctly diverse social mobilization strategies and partner choices in MM and Meta.

In MM, REDES chose to partner with the religious leadership to bridge the deeply divided society; its network connects a wide and active community at local and national level and has moral authority to appeal to virtues of inclusionary development and participatory accountable governance. REDES accompanied the foundation of the Fundación Red de Desarrollo y Paz de los Montes de Maria (=FRDPMM, in short the Fundación); a registered membership organization of social networks and CBOs, which coordinates the implementation of Peace and Development Programs in MM. Separately, the "Red Montemariana" was built to link CBOs in 15 municipalities and facilitate PDP activities at community level. It serves as a support, solidarity and knowledge network to all members. In addition, REDES developed a regional youth network to formalize their participation in development planning activities and partnered with BCPR's SADU and IOM to develop a small grant fund to initiate cultural, social and economic youth activities. Due to its catalyzing role in capacitating civil society in MM, REDES developed a close relation with

vulnerable community groups and directly assisted in building horizontal networking capacity, confidence and trust, essential to enhance community's resilience in armed actor context.

In Meta, civil society is historically much stronger; hence REDES chose to partner with existing CSOs. CORDEPAZ was founded as a service delivery CSO in 2000, had prior experience in back stopping civil society peace initiatives and received international funds before. It became REDES' main partner in conflict assessments, PDP planning, capacity building training, youth organizing etc. Its Board is comprised of religious leaders and founding members, local recipient CSOs are not represented. REDES' second partner is the Meta Department branch of ANUC (National Peasant Association). The ANUC leadership was under extreme pressure over the past decade and its local associated poor peasant members were in dire need of solidarity and economic support. In interviews, ANUC leaders confirmed that the REDES' accompaniment has provided "political" protection and generated renewed confidence to regroup and launch new initiatives on alternative income generation, legal aid to victims of forcible land evictions and peasant youth network building for peace in the Meta region. As a result, REDES has mostly indirect relations with community based organizations in Meta, though recent initiatives with associations of small-scale agricultural producers in Puerto Lleras subregion indicate that issue based direct CBO partnerships are developed too.

More research is needed to determine the impact of different civil society organizational models on the sustainability of the revival efforts. The membership orientation of the Fundación provides institutional guidelines for participatory planning, decision making and accountability. However, it strongly depends on the bishop's leadership and REDES' accompaniment; hence its capacity to continue to act as a bridge builder across horizontal divides in MM on the long run needs careful management to become sustainable. CORDEPAZ may have a stronger management capacity as CSO service organization, which could lead to institutional concerns on representativity and sustainability. First, its permanent board is not elected and thus not accessible to CBO recipients of the services, which could eventually raise issues on legitimacy and accountability. Second, as a professional agency, it depends on external funding to run and may not prove sustainable in the long run. ANUC is an interesting in-between partner. It is membership based, but with a strong national level influence on the regions. It would be interesting to study how the REDES work with community based ANUC affiliates strengthens their position in the national movement. A measure of success would be when the sustainable peasant network in Meta can change public policy in ANUC at national level too. In sum, when promoting development amidst conflict, building on existing local structures and in a manner that is responsive to local conflict context, different counterpart sets among regions are unavoidable and should be promoted. However, to enhance longer term sustainability of local organizations, it is absolutely necessary to monitor the good governance and democracy practices of civil society in the region, to guarantee that organizations become more representative, transparent and publicly accountable.

REDES makes a conscious effort in all aspects of its work, to generate awareness of and respect for human rights and to include most vulnerable groups. They are identified as youth at risk of recruitment by armed groups or drugs-traffickers, indigenous and Afro-Colombian populations, subsistence farmers and vulnerable women. The MM youth network and Meta's peasant networks are successful examples of social mobilization that begin to rebuild a sense of social cohesion (see Chapter 4.4 and Annex 3). At the same time, the evaluation observed that gender equality in civil society networks and government institutions needs more strategic thinking in the REDES program, especially with regards to inclusion of women in decision making, access to information and reduction of gender based violence. REDES needs to define "vulnerable women", i.e. female headed households or women subjected to domestic violence and analyze causes of their predicament to come to more effective strategies. For example, the 11th REDES action line, "reproductive health of women through UNFPA", was launched in 2005 as an increase in sexual violence against women was expected in the wake of paramilitary demobilization and reinsertion

programs. It was to address multiple adolescent pregnancies as result of fragmented family and community relations as well. Both problem sets however, are symptomatic of structural gender inequalities, low physical security and low economic status of women, particularly in Caribbean communities. Hence, REDES needs to rethink its women's program and set targets to increase the physical, social and economic security of women, their participation in decision making and peace processes, and their organizational capacity. UNFPA recently completed a gender diagnostic (regional analysis) in MM in partnership with REDES, which provides a baseline to monitor interventions aimed at structurally redressing gender inequality. Good practices were developed in the Small Grants to CSO program with women and indigenous groups; these need to be documented and applied in the REDES regional programs as well.

Internally displaced persons are a most vulnerable group that requires more strategic REDES attention too. An estimated 3.5 million persons or 8% of the Colombian population is displaced, as result of conflict, land grabbing and drug-trafficking. Eighteen urban centers function as IDP magnets and include Sincelejo (MM) and Villavicencio (Meta). IDPs have participated in a local planning and pilot activities in MM (i.e. Morroa PDP, Consejo de empleo in Sincelejo), but a clearer program strategy is in order. In our meetings with OCHA and UNHCR, keen interest was expressed to collaborate with REDES in social and economic IDP reintegration programs and in advocacy efforts to prevent future displacement through public policy, protection and early warning mechanisms. The new, Sincelejo based, regional UN coordinator could facilitate such close collaboration as a first pilot. However, this new post has been vacant for 12 months, which indicates that the "UN mini-reform" objective is not a real priority for UNDP and its UN partners.

REDES' political accompaniment is of paramount importance to generate safe spaces for dialogue and dissent to bridge divides and provides mental and moral support that motivate CSO partners to gather courage and resume social mobilization activities in violent conflict environments. To imagine one's future without conflict, poverty and fear, and jointly plan interventions to that end, proved a powerful and convincing idea to mobilize and motivate shattered communities to join REDES development efforts. The team interviewed community leaders and network coordinators around MM and Meta, who all reached the same conclusion: the political accompaniment is equally important as REDES' financial and technical support. Leaders claim to be better informed of conflict causes and trends, more abreast with government intentions and initiatives (or the lack thereof) at Department and municipal level, more familiar and in contact with community leaders across the MM region. Collaboration in the REDES program has given them new ideas, means, motivation and confidence to take responsibility to rebuild their communities and resist the impact of violence. The REDES' presence as impartial but compassionate bridge builder, has seemingly discouraged armed groups to commit large scale human rights violations.

In sum, in the perception of REDES beneficiaries, the program has made major contributions to reduce their vulnerability to violence, even though recent conflict statistics do not indicate improvements in absolute terms yet. First signs of improving bridging relations among divided communities can be found in the regional culture and social events organized by the Red Montemariana and the MM youth network (the rotating 11 municipalities' football tournament in which all local youth groups participated and fund raised; the Montemariana Cultural Night in Cartagena); and the courageous March to Commemorate the Disappeared in San Onofre on August 29, organized by victims groups to call for truth, justice and reparation and a fair NCRR process. The matrix below gives an overview of main achievements and beneficiaries based on data provided by REDES staff ("datos duros" excel sheet). The information is rather general and not complete, nor consistent between regions, which illustrates a more standardized and diligent monitoring system an urgent requirement.

Several recommendations can be made. First, horizontal links between REDES' thematic and community based initiatives can be improved. Cross fertilization opportunities have been

overlooked, as managing the large number of parallel initiatives proves a major logistical challenge. To convene annual all partner meetings, i.e. like the September conference in Meta, is a good start, but effective regional cross fertilization requires coordination in the planning stage. Second, REDES needs to strengthen organizations of vulnerable groups and promote that their representatives are better represented among staff and programs of larger CSOs, particularly in the REDES' regional counterparts: Fundación, CORDEPAZ and ANUC/Meta. Third, REDES has forged interesting vertical alliances between community based networks and national civil society in its public policy advocacy work (i.e. linking youth, victim organization and women groups between regions). However, these vertical alliances are mostly event based and their long term sustainability is in question. The conflict literature shows that societies with strong vertical social capital between state, civil society and citizens are better capable to anticipate and resolve conflicts peacefully. Hence, the networks and alliances building ideally need horizontal bridging and vertical linking components, which requires more strategic planning in the next phase.

REDES program partners and achievements in Meta and Montes de María (2003 -06)

Region/ 2003 - 06	Meta	Montes de María
Processes/Spaces generated/assisted	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Initiated regional peace and development program and assist in the preparation of LPIII of the EC 2. Strengthened coordination of civil society to respond simultaneously to emergencies, rehabilitation, reconciliation and development, resulting from poverty and conflict 3. Strengthened the "Corporación Desarrollo para la Paz del Piedemonte Oriental CORDEPAZ" as coordinating body 4. Human capacity building and technical assistance of local staff. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Initiated Development and Peace program in Montes de María 2. Established the "Asociación de Entes Regionales" 3. Accompanied the regional assembly process 4. Supported the establishment of the regional office of the National Commission for Reparations and Reconciliation.
Involved Entities	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Corporación Desarrollo para la Paz del Piedemonte Oriental, Diócesis de Villavicencio, Cámara de Comercio, Diócesis de Granada, Vicariato Apostólico de Puerto Gaitán, 2. CINEP, Federación de Comerciantes (Fenalco), Comité de Ganaderos, PRO ORIENTE y Pastoral Regional para la Orinóquia y la Amazonía. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Fundación Red Desarrollo y Paz de los Montes de María, Diócesis de Cartagena, Magangue and Sincelejo; and Menonite Church 2. Government of Sucre and Bolívar and mayors of 15 municipalities 3. Chamber of Commerce of Sincelejo, University of Cartagena 4. NCRR, IOM, OCHA
People working in REDES initiatives	100 persons	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -App 550 local leaders in 15 municipalities -AET has 19 members (15 mayors, 2 governors and 2 technical staff) -25 members of organizing committee of the Proceso Regional Constituyente
Beneficiary Population	18 municipalities (total population: 500,000)	15 municipalities (total population: 450.000)
Participants in REDES initiatives	App. 20,000 persons	App. 120.000 villagers
Duration	Three years	3.5 years
Allocated budget	UDS 460,000	U\$. 2.000.000
Relevance to achieve REDES aims	Organized most vulnerable and poor people in the department, made an effort to build organizational processes to increase democracy and overcome violent conflict	Enhanced institutional dynamics and social processes traditionally present, to find peaceful negotiated settlement to armed conflict, extreme poverty and strengthening of local democracy and reconciliation.
Expected direct results	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Consolidated a regional development and peace proposal that has legitimacy and recognition - Selection of the Meta Dpt. As participant in LPIII for the EU. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Regional structures will promote peace and development strategies and interventions. -Built regional political framework for peace and development -Strengthened social organization and community mobilization capacity -Create space for strengthening public institutions -Built alliances between international

		community and local/regional level -Fostered increase of resources streaming into the region from national government and international community
Contribution to promoting peace and development	Built social, political and economic alternatives to respond to dynamics that feed conflicts and obstruct development processes.	Same as previous question

3.1.2 Local good governance

In societies affected by protracted violent conflict, the relations between embattled civil society and weakened local authorities often get profoundly disrupted, which negatively impacts on the vulnerability of poor communities to violence and extortion. REDES therefore seeks to reconnect local civil society and state institutions at municipal and department level and to build their capacity to develop and implement consensus based policies and programs to end the conflict. To this end, REDES has initiated ongoing dialogue processes on participatory governance, civilian protection, human rights, mine action and economic recovery initiatives with the Departmental governments of Meta, Bolivar and Sucre, with mayors and municipal offices. In addition, REDES convenes joint events for civil society to assist local authorities in planning and budgeting exercises and in the process develop longer term private – public partnerships. In our meetings, the Governors of Bolivar (deputy), Sucre and Meta commended REDES especially for the planning and budgeting dialogues with civil society and for the mine action campaigns that focus on awareness raising, preventative monitoring and caring for the mine victims.

REDES allocated only a small part of its budget directly to local government activities, as the neutrality of local authorities is questioned and their capacity to deliver basic services to poor and vulnerable populations is extremely low. The Governors would welcome greater input from local authorities in the REDES' program and budget decisions (and in the LPIII as well) and greater emphasis on economic development programs as productive investments are scarce in conflict regions. However, as Colombia is a middle income country, REDES advocates in its national policy work for a fairer regional distribution of government resources and (re)allocation of available local development budgets from NPD, EU's LPIII, WB's Acción Social program and from UN sister agencies. In interviews with the Governors, officials shared the impression that advances made by the REDES programs are an important factor in the selection of MM and Meta as focal regions in the PLIII. In addition, they acknowledge that REDES' continued local capacity building back stopping is an important service that the EU will not provide.

The diverse regional contexts and visions of responsible REDES managers resulted in different local governance partnership strategies. MM is divided over two departments (Bolívar, Sucre) and 15 municipalities. Most mayors lived outside the region in the 1990s, because of high intensity conflict and multiple assassinations. President Uribe's national "seguridad democrática" policy has substantially increased the military presence in MM since 2003. Most mayors returned to their duty stations at the time REDES started; they remain quite vulnerable to undue pressure of armed groups in this "military enforced" peace context. To buttress the mayors' position and to launch regional participatory governance initiatives, REDES facilitated the foundation of the Asociación de Entes Territoriales (=AET) in 2005. Concrete objectives are to develop a joint vision and voice, to manage regional resources for projects involving multiple municipalities and to discuss peace building and development strategies. Two Governors and 15 mayors meet on a regular basis to discuss development, peace and human rights issues.

The AET is still in the confidence building stage and the five mayors interviewed indicated as main results: improved interpersonal relations and a sense of joint purpose (i.e. they now call each other spontaneously for advice, jointly analyze problems and face armed threats to their

territory together). Yet, the AET has been actively involved in a few programs too, like in the foundation of the Youth Small Grants Program in 2005 and in the preparations of the Peace Laboratory III, in partnership with the Fundación in 2006. To show commitment to other actors in the region, the AET members signed a "Pacto de Gobernabilidad Montemariana" (good governance pact) and they plan new activities to improve relevant skills, including human rights and conflict resolution training. If successful, the AET could become an important network to plan and advocate for regional assistance at national level and to promote peace and development efforts, with local authorities assuming a greater role in protecting and providing basic services to its citizens. It will take an effort on part of REDES tough to sustain the AET for some time, as mayors are elected for one term office only and the next municipal elections are scheduled for October 2007.

In Meta, a formal mayors' network, like AET, was not deemed feasible in view of the rogue nature of local authorities (a high incidence of discharge and legal persecution of mayors on corruption charges) and their close alliance with armed actors controlling the region. Therefore, REDES chose to work and dialogue with mayors on individual basis only to reduce the political risks and adhere to "do no harm" principles. Regional good governance efforts in Meta thus focus mainly on the Governor's office (planning and budgeting exercises, mine action). Interestingly, the Army is actively involved in REDES' landmine awareness program. However, in the absence of an AET like structure, it seems the space for regional local governance dialogue opportunities in Meta is limited, which makes it harder to foster institutional local government – civil society relations and promote regional activities. The peace and development dialogue is limited to a few municipalities with more 'neutral' leadership. The dilemma resonates the earlier questions on criteria for future REDES region selection. The team notes that the MM mayors have close relations with paramilitary too and attributes variation to different assessments of risk and willingness to take risks by regional coordinators. Even a flawed AET structure can create spaces and structures for innovative dialogue that otherwise do not exist (i.e. the Good Governance Pact of MM). Others put more weight on "do-no-harm" aspects to avoid support to armed actors. However, structures like AET could be a prerequisite for a regional good governance dialogue process, in the absence of other forums. The mission therefore recommends that REDES' senior management analyzes different approaches to engage local government in MM and Meta and inherent risks, to distil an informed and more uniform REDES approach on local government engagement.

3.1.3 PDP and public policy change

Alliances between public – private sectors promoted by REDES are best understood as pluralistic dialogue networks that work simultaneously on transformation of conflict, defending and realizing human rights, promotion of alternative equitable economic development initiatives and inclusive, capable and legitimate local and regional government. Its participatory, inclusive and rights based development focus challenges traditional development vision and provides alternative approaches to promote and sustain public policy changes. In terms of results, the team identified three.

First, REDES managed to open channels of communication and meeting spaces for civil society and local government in MM and Meta, and to connect them to national level. REDES acts as facilitator and at times as mediator between the two parties, which harbor a deep sense of distrust towards one another, when dialogues get polarized. The convening REDES capacity creates unique spaces for multiple stakeholders to discuss conflict and peace concerns. Second, REDES introduced a public policy agenda focused on equitable and sustainable development and peace to its regional partners, which could have a great impact on poor and excluded communities. It launched a thinking process among public and private actors and showed some

first results in joint advocacy strategies for mine action and youth participation, which got institutionalized in regional plans and incorporated in local budgets. Third, REDES accompanied civil society's revival and repositioning in the regional peace and reconciliation arena by strengthening its capacity to analyze conflict and poverty, formulate more equitable public policies and identify alternative approaches to peace building and development in their communities.

Since 2005, REDES pays more attention to the role of communication and media in the sharing results of local consensus building processes. The Red de Comunicadores in MM was launched in 2005 to play an important role in communicating peace and reconciliation messages to influence public opinion and change the peace discourse to seek a political end to the conflict (see 3.1.6). In Meta, a communicators' network is in the making; in their presentation in the annual partner meeting in August 27, representatives explained they need six more months to get operational. While the MM network has a community activist basis, the Meta network seems to draw more from journalist, academics and human rights defenders.

Several municipal planning processes have been initiated since 2005. The representative of the Morroa municipality (MM) summarized how local government and civil society jointly undertook a social mapping exercise to formulate a municipal development plan. The participatory planning process included 96 civil society actors, over 50% female. 200 IDPs who are currently residing in Morroa were involved in the planning too. Youth and peasants groups formed two special interest committees to have their specific interests reflected in the plan. Art played an important role in communicating the ongoing dialogue to the wider audience during the planning process and helped building community consensus. The Morroa civil society committee plans to monitor the operationalization of their PDP into public policy and to safeguard its continuation after next year's municipal election. Three municipalities are replicating the experience at the moment. María la Baja has just completed a participatory budgeting exercise, Zambrano is to start one, while the mayor of Carmen de Bolívar has recently launched a public accountability initiative.

In addition, some initial thematic successes, in which regional and national levels were linked, should be mentioned too. Intensive dialogue between the NCRR and REDES partners in OA and MM, led to the decision to open regional NCRR branches in Oriente Antioqueno and Sincelejo.⁹ As the program most active in mine action, REDES succeeded to partner with the National Mine Observatory to create national awareness and protection programs, as well as initiate care projects for mine victims.

3.1.4 Mesas Humanitaria y Derechos Humanos

El componente de derechos humanos del Programa REDES es uno de los de menos desarrollo. Durante el 2005, la persona del staff encargada del tema era la misma que ejercía las funciones de asistente administrativa. A partir de este año (marzo) se asignó este tema a una persona. De acuerdo con el marco lógico del Programa (Partnership Program for Peace in Colombia, UNDP – Sida), el resultado esperado del componente de derechos humanos es: "las autoridades estatales y la sociedad civil han desarrollado estrategias regionales para la protección de las comunidades vulnerables y para la reducción de los ataques y amenazas contra ellas y de las violaciones de derechos humanos". En términos generales el resultado más visible de REDES en el tema de derechos humanos es la conformación de Mesas Humanitarias y de Derechos Humanos en Montes de María y Meta.

⁹ REDES partner in OA, Madres de la Candelaria got national recognition for the work with victims of the violence and won the national peace prize in November 2006.

Estas dos regiones se caracterizan por haber sufrido el escalamiento desmedido del conflicto armado interno. Tanto en Montes de María como en Meta, a finales de la década pasada, ocurrieron unas de las más atroces masacres de las que tenga noticia la historia del país (Masacres en Chengue y el El Salado en Montes de María y en Mapiripán en el Meta). La disputa regional entre los paramilitares y la guerrilla y posteriormente el control militar por parte de las AUC ha dejado en estas regiones una marca indeleble de dolor, temor y desconfianza que ha dado como resultado la desestructuración y debilitamiento de los movimientos sociales y de las organizaciones de derechos humanos.

Hasta hace poco tiempo los defensores de derechos humanos eran perseguidos, en algunos casos aniquilados, y en el mejor de los casos señalados y estigmatizados. Sin embargo, lentamente los espacios para hablar de la situación humanitaria y de derechos humanos en Montes de María y Meta se han ido reactivando, en buena medida gracias a la presencia internacional como la del PNUD, a través de Programa REDES, y de otras agencias del Sistema de las Naciones Unidas. En el marco de la intervención de REDES en estas regiones y de su acompañamiento a los procesos organizativos de la sociedad civil, se conformó recientemente una Mesa de Derechos Humanos en Montes de María, que apenas inicia su funcionamiento, y una Mesa Humanitaria en el Meta.

Mesa de derechos humanos de Montes de María

La idea de conformar una Mesa de derechos humanos en la región surge en el marco del programa de desarrollo y paz y por iniciativa de la Fundación Red de Desarrollo y Paz de los Montes de María, durante el proceso de formación en derechos humanos promovido por REDES y ejecutado por la Fundación Social. Este proceso de formación, que culminó en diciembre de 2005, convocó a sectores sociales e institucionales y tuvo como objetivos el reconocimiento de los participantes como sujetos de derechos, la formación en derechos humanos y la réplica a través de promotores. El hecho de poner el tema nuevamente en el centro de la reflexión de organizaciones sociales e institucionales creó las condiciones para la propuesta de la Mesa de Derechos Humanos.

Al igual que en el Meta, esta Mesa pretende ser una instancia articuladora y una plataforma para las diferentes iniciativas de construcción de paz en la región. Los objetivos son visibilizar la situación de derechos humanos de los Montes de María e incidir en la incorporación del enfoque de derechos humanos en las políticas públicas regionales y locales. Si bien hasta ahora empiezan a definir las posibles líneas de trabajo, es claro que las organizaciones participantes buscan articular esfuerzos y construir una agenda común de trabajo en derechos humanos orientada en primer momento en la pedagogía de los derechos humanos. Consideran sus participantes que esta es una buena forma de empezar pues el tema de la pedagogía en derechos humanos no los pone en riesgo y prepara las condiciones para en futuro cercano subir el perfil político de la Mesa.

El acompañamiento de REDES en esta fase de preparación y convocatoria para la conformación de la Mesa de Derechos Humanos ha sido muy importante, por al igual que en el Meta implica respaldo y legitimidad. Para una segunda fase del proyecto con la Fundación Social se espera fortalecer el apoyo técnico a la Mesa. Por otro lado, la Fundación Red de Desarrollo y Paz de los Montes de María ha manifestado su interés de incorporar el enfoque de derechos humanos en el programa de desarrollo y paz. Esta iniciativa es muy interesante pues pretende que los derechos humanos no sean un tema más de la agenda del PDP, sino que realmente oriente todas sus acciones. Para ello REDES, como parte de la asistencia técnica que brinda al proceso del PDP, ha puesto a disposición de la Fundación un consultor para que elabore una propuesta en este sentido.

Con el fin de apoyar la consolidación de estos espacios, resulta pertinente que REDES fortalezca y amplíe la asistencia técnica a través de alianzas con la Oficina de Naciones Unidas para los Derechos Humanos – OACNUDH -, la Defensoría del Pueblo y organizaciones nacionales de derechos humanos. En el caso de OACNUDH, existe ya una propuesta para capacitar en derechos humanos a alcaldes y concejales de Montes de María y Meta, con lo cual se avanzaría en crear condiciones para la incorporación del tema en los planes de desarrollo municipales.

Adicionalmente el apoyo de REDES puede también consistir en ampliar la formación en derechos humanos a los integrantes de estas Mesas, visibilizarlas a través de acciones de incidencia nacional y regional ante las autoridades e instituciones competentes en el tema, propiciar el diálogo y la relación con espacios, REDES y plataformas nacionales de paz y de derechos humanos con quienes REDES tiene relación y promover una mayor presencia de la comunidad internacional en las regiones para elevar el costo político de posibles violaciones de derechos humanos en contra de los miembros de estos espacios.

De otra parte es importante que la estrategia de derechos humanos de REDES priorice la inclusión de los grupos más vulnerables de la sociedad (mujeres cabeza de familia, desplazadas y víctimas de la violencia, población desplazada, indígenas y afrocolombianos) en las acciones de capacitación en derechos humanos, su participación en los diferentes escenarios de concertación y negociación y la inclusión en las agendas regionales y locales de problemáticas como la violencia contra las mujeres, la búsqueda de soluciones duraderas para la población desplazada, la resolución pacífica de conflictos vía el fortalecimiento de actores como los jueces de paz y los conciliadores en equidad, creados por la Constitución de 1991 y los temas relacionados con la verdad, la justicia y la reparación, en particular el fortalecimiento de los procesos organizativos de víctimas y la exigibilidad de sus derechos.

Mesa Humanitaria del Meta

El principal antecedente de esta iniciativa promovida por REDES, por la iglesia católica y por sectores de la sociedad civil del Meta, es el Comité Cívico por los Derechos Humanos del Meta cuyos principales objetivos eran reconstruir la memoria de las violaciones de los derechos humanos en el departamento desde 1985, denunciar las violaciones a los derechos humanos y las infracciones al DIH y documentar casos para su litigio. A finales de la década de los noventa, los integrantes de este Comité fueron perseguidos y asesinados, lo cual lleva a la disolución de este espacio, dejando un importante vacío en materia de derechos humanos en el Meta y generando un clima generalizado de desconfianza.

En mayo de 2005, nace la Mesa Humanitaria, a pesar del temor y de la pregunta permanente por si existían las condiciones de protección necesarias para hablar de derechos humanos en el departamento. Un año y medio después el balance de la experiencia es muy positivo, aunque aún falta avanzar en una mayor consolidación del espacio y una mayor apropiación por parte de sus integrantes. La Mesa Humanitaria del Meta es un espacio mixto cuyo objetivo principal es garantizar la vigencia plena de los derechos humanos a partir de una visión incluyente y democrática. En ella participan Cordepaz, la Pastoral Social, ANUC y otras organizaciones sociales (afrocolombianos e indígenas), la Defensoría del Pueblo, PNUD, entre otros.

El propósito de la Mesa es constituirse en una plataforma de trabajo conjunto que visibilice las iniciativas comunitarias de paz y promueva y adelante una pedagogía de los derechos humanos y la incorporación de los derechos humanos en las políticas públicas regionales y locales. Si bien aún está en proceso de discusión la definición del carácter de la Mesa y sus estrategias, entre ellas la de denuncia, el hecho de que exista un espacio de encuentro para hablar de la situación humanitaria y de derechos humanos del Meta es altamente significativo. En este sentido, el apoyo de REDES ha sido determinante para respaldar la iniciativa y de alguna manera para

“blindar”, otorgándole legitimidad a la Mesa, el trabajo de defensa de los derechos humanos de las organizaciones que participan. De igual forma es de destacar el apoyo técnico que REDES, a través de un consultor, está brindándole a la Mesa para la definición de su carácter y para la formulación de su plan de trabajo.

3.1.5 Consejos Regionales de Empleo

Las cifras de empleo del Meta son preocupantes. La tasa de desempleo del departamento (29 municipios) es 14% y la del subempleo 35%. En la capital de Villavicencio las tasas son 16% y 30% respectivamente. Según el estudio “Estructura y dinámica del mercado laboral urbano en el Meta, 1984-2003” realizado por REDES, el tiempo de búsqueda de empleo llega en promedio a 64 semanas (para desempleados con educación secundaria 79 semanas, universitaria 77 semanas, de la edad de 30-49 años 80 semanas). El sector informal del mercado de trabajo ha crecido, especialmente en Villavicencio, y el “trabajo por cuenta propia” actualmente constituye el 45% del empleo (en Villavicencio asciende a un aberrante 75%). El crecimiento del empleo está asociado a empleos de baja calidad y productividad y la composición sectorial del empleo departamental sigue la pauta de lo que ha venido a ser la terciarización de la economía, el sector servicios ocupa el 80% del total de ocupados.

Las condiciones actuales de empobrecimiento y marginalidad en Montes de María resultan de varios factores, como el cambio de modelo económico de los 90s propiciando la apertura económica y el desmonte de la política social hacia el sector agropecuario, desarticulando así la base económica de la región, disminuyendo cultivos y productividad y causando, junto con la situación de inseguridad debido al conflicto armado, el abandono de las tierras. En 2004 el departamento de Sucre registró el 24.5% de su población (209 462 personas) en indigencia y el 67.2% (574 525 personas) en pobreza.¹⁰ En la región es incipiente la acción de los sistemas de atención a los grupos vulnerables, víctimas y desplazados del conflicto armado interno que ha contribuido a que la tasa de desempleo sea superior al 30% en las áreas urbanas y superior al 40% en las áreas rurales. La falta de acceso a la educación, sumada a las limitadas oportunidades laborales contribuye a un floreciente mercado criminal y la violencia particularmente entre los jóvenes, quienes son enrolados en los grupos armados. Las circunstancias referidas en las dos regiones son la razón para que REDES busque impulsar la creación de empleo en las mismas regiones.

Los Consejos Regionales de Empleo de Meta y Montes de María son espacios intersectoriales de diálogo y concertación entre el sector público, el privado, la academia y las organizaciones de la sociedad civil, que buscan orientar el diseño de las políticas, estrategias, proyectos y acciones locales y regionales que incidan en la actividad económica, promoviendo la competitividad, la generación de empleo e ingresos y contribuyendo a aclimatar la paz y convivencia de las regiones. Los CRE surgieron por directriz del Ministerio de Protección Social apoyado por REDES en el ámbito regional. Participantes en los concejos son, con algunas variaciones entre las dos regiones, representantes del sector público, el sector privado, el sector financiero, la academia, organizaciones de la sociedad civil y grandes, medianas y pequeñas empresas.

A partir de estudios de la problemática laboral y empresarial en las dos regiones (la Estructura y Dinámica del Mercado Laboral, en Meta y una encuesta de detección de necesidades de capacitación de microempresas, pequeñas y medianas empresas en Sucre), los CRE han realizado una serie de actividades (reuniones, foros, conferencias, talleres de participación-acción sobre temas específicos y mesa de concertación), para visibilizar problemas de empleo y contribuir con elementos para políticas departamentales de empleo. En el Meta se ha dado énfasis a las

¹⁰ María M. Aguilera Díaz, La Economía del Departamento de Sucre: ganadería y sector público, Agosto 2005.

actividades de abogacía información e incidencia en creación de políticas por medio de diferentes eventos públicos, con avances tales como Participación en "Agenda Interna de Productividad y Competitividad", incorporación en el PDD, y en el Plan Indicativo para el Departamento, propuestas para formular el Plan de Desarrollo Empresarial y de la Política de Empleo, desde la perspectiva del CRE, el Plan de Desarrollo Empresarial en formulación y una política departamental de empleo formulada. En el Meta, durante el 2005 y 2006, el Consejo ha sido el único proceso en donde se mantiene una activa y representativa participación, donde confluyen los diferentes actores del Departamento, y que ha motivado un encuentro de diálogo y reflexión.

En Montes de María se ha dado más énfasis a micro-proyectos y actividades productivas tales como exportación de miel, cosecha y adecuación de aguas, explotación minera de mármol, formación para el trabajo mediante capacitación y asistencia técnica y micro-finanzas complementado por información sobre incentivos, acceso a mercados y las políticas públicas de empleo del Estado. Se considera como una fortaleza de los CRE la credibilidad que ha logrado el proyecto así como un avance el haber logrado un espacio de convergencia neutral donde los actores expresen sus puntos de vista con respecto al desarrollo socio-económico regional y busquen alternativas conjuntas de respuesta. Hay un gran compromiso de parte de unos actores, aportando activamente a los procesos.

Entre las debilidades se encuentran la incertidumbre alrededor de la sostenibilidad de las actividades, la falta de un mayor compromiso de algunos actores, en el Meta acciones concretas y tangibles, problemas de continuidad y la baja gobernabilidad de los departamentos respectivos. Hay que agregar que todavía subsiste un *problema fundamental* que reside en las *relaciones de poder* muy desiguales entre los integrantes de los CRE, de los cuales algunas categorías representan las elites locales y otras los grupos vulnerables y económicamente, políticamente y socialmente excluidos por causa del conflicto y las mismas relaciones de poder imperantes en estas regiones. Además estos respectivos grupos representan visiones o modelos de desarrollo económico muy diferentes y con frecuencia opuestos. Por eso es de extrema importancia que REDES sigue muy de cerca la dinámica de las relaciones, tanto formales como *informales* en el desenvolvimiento de las actividades de los CRE. Además, valdría la pena revisar detenidamente si, y en que forma las actividades productivas y de empleo de las CRE se distinguen de cualquier proyecto de desarrollo o de empleo. Para realizar tal examen se debería determinar en que medida las actividades económicas y productivas inciden directamente en ejes u objetivos tales como procesos de paz, participación ciudadana, gobernabilidad democrática y defensa de los derechos humanos ya que tales criterios deben ser los que justifican o no los proyectos económico-productivos en el ámbito del programa REDES o en el de un Laboratorio de Paz.

Desarrollo Alternativo and cultivos de uso ilícito

Uno de los problemas más graves del departamento del Meta es la existencia y expansión de los cultivos de uso ilícito, que se relacionan en forma directa con el conflicto armado, porque constituyen una fuente primordial de financiación para los diferentes grupos armados. La lucha por el control de las zonas cocaleras es un factor que extiende e intensifica el conflicto armado en la región. El acceso de los grupos armados a las grandes ganancias y el capital producido por la economía cocalera contribuye en forma decisiva al fortalecimiento militar y económico de los mismos y la economía cocalera afecta igualmente, por medio de la corrupción, a las administraciones públicas, los gobiernos locales y los aparatos judiciales, empeorando las condiciones ya críticas de gobernabilidad y calidad de los gobiernos locales. Como secuela de la expansión de la economía cocalera se ha podido observar también un incremento fuerte durante los últimos años en los índices de compras y concentración de la tierra, debido a inversiones y "lavado" de activos de paramilitares-cum-narcotraficantes, proceso que amenaza directamente la existencia y la estabilidad de la economía de los medianos y pequeños productores campesinos.

Para abordar la problemática de la coca en el Meta, REDES y Cordepaz han realizado un estudio sobre la economía política de la coca en el departamento del Meta y para continuar este esfuerzo se ha formulado un proyecto de Desarrollo Alternativo Integral e actividades de fortalecimiento de organizaciones campesinas de la zona cocalera más importante del departamento para abordar en forma seria y decidida la problemática de los cultivos de uso ilícito en el ámbito de REDES y el III Laboratorio de Paz en Meta. Las primeras acciones consistieron en establecer relaciones con tres organizaciones de campesinas de reconocida trayectoria municipal y departamental en las zonas cocaleras más afectadas, fundamentalmente asociaciones de productores pequeños.

Con estas organizaciones se está preparando proyectos sociales con un fuerte componente productivo para responder a los compromisos de los campesinos de sustituir gradual y voluntariamente los cultivos ilícitos. Los proyectos productivos que se identifiquen deberán adaptarse en términos de transferencia tecnológica e investigación a las condiciones ecológicas de la selva húmeda tropical y tener un fuerte componente ambiental (arreglos agro-forestales, sistemas agro-silvopastoriles). Para esto es fundamental el conocimiento y la experiencia acumuladas por los Centros Provinciales y otras entidades como Corpoica y Cormacarena; además es básico la cultura productiva de los habitantes de las zonas donde se pongan en marcha los proyectos así como el reconocimiento del potencial de demanda de los mercados locales que pueden ser aprovisionados con productos de los proyectos de desarrollo alternativo. Se ha establecido contactos con instituciones especializadas en asistencia técnica Departamental, regional y local como Corpoica, Fedecacao, Centro Provincial Agroparques, SENA y Puertos del Ariari para las actividades de acompañamiento técnico (estudio de suelos, pasantías visitas e identificación de cultivos y capacitación) previas al inicio de actividades productivas adecuadas a las necesidades de los productores campesinos y con potencial de mercado.

Un elemento clave en los acuerdos de sustitución que se efectúen consiste en remplazar el "flujo de caja" generado por la economía ilícita. Las fumigaciones y la erradicación forzada quiebran al productor y ejercen un efecto negativo en las economías de los municipios. Esta es la razón de la oposición de los habitantes a las medidas de fuerza¹¹ que además constituyen una humillación para los pequeños productores. Se propone, en consecuencia, la sustitución manual, gradual y voluntaria para estos productores. Los ingresos de origen legal deben sustituir a los generados por la coca y ser permanentes en el tiempo. La situación de titularidad, posesión o tenencia de la tierra es un factor sustancial para la estrategia y este proyecto piloto. Por ser un territorio de colonización reciente y escenario de disputas por el acceso a la tierra entre colonos, ganaderos, indígenas, empresarios agrícolas, desplazados, trabajadores o jornaleros, etc., es fundamental contar con la intervención del Estado para adoptar mecanismos (titulación individual o colectiva, reconocimiento de cabildos o resguardos, etc.) que permitan la estabilización de la ocupación del territorio y de la recuperación del suelo con procesos productivos adaptados a las condiciones ecológicas y de medio ambiente. Asimismo es clave conseguir cierto nivel de autonomía de las comunidades y de las asociaciones de productores frente a los grupos armados ilegales (FARC y Autodefensas) para adelantar procesos de desarrollo, vía sustitución de cultivos ilícitos. En este punto es clave la intervención de entidades internacionales (p.e. Naciones Unidas, embajadas de países europeos, etc.) y nacionales (p.e. Iglesia Católica, Universidades, Centros de Investigación científica, etc.) para el acompañamiento permanente a las comunidades que decidan participar en el proyecto de desarrollo alternativo.

Este, sin duda, es uno de los proyectos más importantes y estratégicos de REDES y Cordepaz en el Meta. Los productores pequeños en las zonas cocaleras es uno de los (si no *el*) grupos más vulnerables del Meta, expuesto a presiones y amenazas de los diferentes actores armados. Los cultivos ilícitos a su vez constituyen una dimensión clave en el conflicto armado interno en el

¹¹ En privado, comerciantes, transportadores y autoridades locales lamentan el uso de estas medidas por parte del Gobierno nacional.

Meta y en el país. La política del gobierno en la materia ha fracasado y las intervenciones de UNODC han sido marginales, demasiado sujetadas o cercanas a la política controvertida del gobierno y sin mayor renovación metodológica. Por lo tanto, este proyecto piloto basado en permanente interacción con y participación de los pequeños productores, constituye una posibilidad importante de renovación del desarrollo alternativo, con proyecciones hacia todos los Laboratorios de Paz en Colombia.

3.1.6 Red de Comunicadores Populares de los Montes de María

Se inició la red en Junio 2005. En Octubre se realizó la conformación de "coordinaciones" de la red y finalmente en Noviembre el mismo año se efectuó el primer encuentro regional de comunicadores. La red en la actualidad cuenta con 274 miembros que participan de varias maneras en sus actividades de comunicación popular. Los miembros son dueños y directores de medios comunitarios, gestores sociales y culturales, periodistas y comunicadores así como pobladores interesados en el tema. Existen 12 emisoras comunitarias en Montes de María todas legalizadas y de las cuales un 60% tiene cubrimiento municipal, mientras 22% y 17% respectivamente tienen cubrimiento subregional y regional. La red tiene miembros en los municipios de El Carmen de Bolívar, Córdoba, Marialabaja, San Jacinto, Los Palmitos, Ovejas y San Juan Nepomuceno y Zambrano.

En la región de los Montes de María los medios de comunicación, incluyendo los comunicadores populares, practicaban autocensura en el marco del cual ciertos temas eran tabú. Todavía las condiciones de la libertad de expresión son insatisfactorias, existen temas tabú, pero hoy es posible de actuar con más libertad y los comunicadores atribuyen parte de este cambio de clima al acompañamiento y la presencia de REDES y la Fundación en la región. Ahora se puede tratar temas que hace poco tiempo no se podían presentar y discutir. Aún, no obstante, existe coartada en contra de los derechos de libre expresión e inclusive la Fundación de Desarrollo de los Montes de María ha sido expuesta a presiones. Frente a esta situación y para no arriesgar represalias los comunicadores populares están tratando de utilizar formas creativas de presentación no provocadora.

Las coordinaciones de la red a red se reúnen mensuales con la Fundación y estas reuniones sirven para desarrollar el acompañamiento de la Fundación al proceso así como para establecer un espacio de fortalecimiento y retroalimentación entre los socios de la red. Las emisoras comunitarias de la red hacen una fuerte apuesta a los procesos de comunicación desde el enfoque en cambio social. Son medios donde hay mayor escolaridad en el personal, y piensan la comunicación como una forma de incidir en la comunidad. Para estos medios es muy importante que la educación, la cultura y la comunicación sean ejes centrales de los procesos participativos de la población, para lo que organizan talleres de formación con jóvenes y niños, y adelantan programas de sensibilización sobre temas de salud, educación y formación política (derechos humanos, democracia, convivencia, etc.). La red está proponiendo una alianza para la coordinación y difusión de programas específicos simultáneamente en varias emisoras. Asimismo coordinará colaboración y espacios de difusión con RESA, el proyecto de seguridad alimentaria y utilizará el programa Finca Montemariana para llegar a los campesinos de las subregiones con información sobre problemas de medio ambiente y promoción de proyectos. Otros proyectos a futuro son: radios escolares, colectivos infantiles, casas de la cultura, temas culturales, de paz y comunicación así como campañas de salud, solidaridad y conciencia política en procesos electorales.

La experiencia de Red de Comunicadores Populares es todavía incipiente, pero no hay duda de la importancia del acompañamiento de REDES y la Fundación para establecer un espacio de fortalecimiento y retroalimentación entre los socios de la red, así para brindar una especie de

visibilidad y blindaje frente a los actores armados. Además, las emisoras populares aunque pequeñas en ciertos casos, tienen la capacidad de llegar a los grupos más marginados en las subregiones más apartadas de la región.

3.2 Role of REDES in national level peace processes

3.2.1 National level public policy engagement

Dos convenios de cooperación y financiación existen entre REDES y el Departamento Nacional de Planeación (=DNP) y entre REDES y Acción Social. En el primer caso se trata de un convenio de cooperación técnica que tiene como objetivo fortalecer la Unidad de Desarrollo y Paz de la Dirección de Justicia y Seguridad de DNP cuyas funciones son la evaluación de impacto de los programas de desarrollo y paz, el fortalecimiento institucional de los mismos y la formulación de una política pública de desarrollo y paz. Esta última función interesa particularmente a REDES en la medida en que la institucionalización de los PDP en el marco de una política pública de paz estatal, es decir de larga duración, permite sentar bases sólidas para la sostenibilidad de la intervención de REDES en las regiones. Según la Dirección de Justicia y Seguridad, no se trata únicamente de incorporar el tema en el nuevo plan de desarrollo. Se quiere ir más allá y formular una política pública de más largo aliento, concertada con las regiones, a través de un diálogo de políticas públicas.

El apoyo de REDES al DNP ha consistido en recursos económicos para el equipo de la Unidad de Desarrollo y Paz, pero principalmente en respaldo técnico e interlocución política alrededor de los programas de desarrollo y paz y, más recientemente, del LPIII. DNP reconoce el importante aporte que REDES ha hecho para el fortalecimiento de los programas de desarrollo y paz de Montes de María y Meta y para que en estas regiones existan las condiciones organizativas, operativas y financieras para la llegada del tercer laboratorio de paz. Tanto REDES como el DNP coinciden en que es necesario fortalecer sus mecanismos de articulación y coordinación en las regiones, pues en ocasiones se repiten esfuerzos. Esta mayor coordinación permitiría optimizar recursos y garantizar que el Gobierno nacional asuma de manera más coherente su responsabilidad en el acompañamiento a los procesos regionales de desarrollo y paz y a los laboratorios de paz. Iniciativas de la sociedad civil la llegada de recursos de la cooperación internacional, pero no puede significar para el Estado Colombiano delegar sus responsabilidades y deberes en materia de garantía y realización de los derechos económicos, sociales y culturales. En este sentido, preocupa a la Comisión Europea que el Gobierno nacional transfiera la responsabilidad técnica de la formulación del Plan Operativo Global y los Planes Operativos Anuales del tercer laboratorio de paz al Programa REDES del PNUD.

En el segundo caso se trata de un convenio de cooperación entre PNUD/REDES y Acción Social (convenio DEX) mediante el cual REDES recibe recursos del Gobierno nacional y Banco Mundial para fortalecer sus acciones en las regiones en donde se va a ejecutar el tercer laboratorio de paz (MM, Meta y Oriente Antioqueño) y 5 otras regiones priorizadas por Acción Social (Eje Cafetero, Buenaventura, Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta, Cartagena y Huila). Sin embargo, en la práctica la ejecución de estos recursos y de las acciones en estas zonas, a excepción de Huila, no están en cabeza de REDES, aún cuando es este Programa el ordenador del gasto. En el caso de Cartagena, por ejemplo, es el Programa de Desarrollo Local del PNUD el encargado del desarrollo de las acciones. Acción Social reconoce la pertinencia e importancia de la intervención de REDES en las regiones en donde viene acompañando los programas de desarrollo y paz, especialmente por la asistencia preparatoria para el tercer laboratorio de paz. Asimismo, reconoce, como contribución determinante, el enfoque metodológico de REDES orientado al fortalecimiento de capacidades locales institucionales y de la sociedad civil.

Por su parte, Acción Social coordina el crédito de paz y desarrollo del Banco Mundial que se ejecuta en varias regiones del país, entre ellas la región de los Montes de María. Allí la Fundación Red de Desarrollo y Paz de los Montes de María tiene bajo su responsabilidad la ejecución de los proyectos financiados por el crédito y por REDES. Esto implica, como fue manifestado a la Misión de Evaluación, una carga administrativa muy importante que hoy prácticamente desborda la capacidad de la Fundación. Esta situación evidencia una débil coordinación en el territorio entre los diferentes programas y falta de articulación y coherencia entre los mismos.

3.2.2 REDES' role in national level peace processes

De acuerdo con los documentos del Programa REDES (Project Document – Partnership Program for Peace in Colombia, UNDP – Sida e informes respectivos), el componente de sociedad civil y proceso post – Cartagena tiene como resultado esperado el empoderamiento de la sociedad civil en procesos democráticos de construcción de paz, conjuntamente con el Gobierno nacional y la comunidad internacional. En el ámbito nacional, este componente se concreta principalmente en el acompañamiento del Consenso de Cartagena, el G-24 y la iniciativa Punto de Encuentro.

Punto de Encuentro

Punto de Encuentro¹² es una iniciativa que surge en diciembre de 2005, como resultado del Congreso de Iniciativas de Paz. Reúne a la mayoría de las organizaciones nacionales y espacios de confluencia que vienen trabajando en el tema de la paz. Este espacio para la articulación de las iniciativas de paz pretende avanzar hacia la construcción de consensos entre sus participantes y definir acciones vinculantes que les permita realizar tareas y actividades conjuntas. De igual manera Punto de Encuentro quiere ser un espacio de articulación para una mayor incidencia en temas de paz.

El proceso de consolidación de esta iniciativa ha sido lento pues en ella confluyen diversos criterios, visiones e intereses. Según algunos de sus representantes¹³, fueron los procesos organizativos regionales los que presionaron a las iniciativas nacionales para que llegaran a acuerdos y orientaran esfuerzos para la articulación de su accionar en las regiones. Este proceso de reconocimiento mutuo entre las iniciativas de paz nacionales ha estado acompañado desde sus inicios por el PNUD, a través del Programa REDES. La labor de REDES ha sido la de ejercer la secretaría técnica y facilitar las condiciones logísticas y operativas para las reuniones de Punto de Encuentro. Según las organizaciones que hacen parte de esta iniciativa, el acompañamiento de un agente externo como PNUD – REDES ha permitido la consolidación de Punto de Encuentro, a pesar de las prevenciones y desconfianzas que las diferentes organizaciones manifestaron al principio. Consideran que PNUD – REDES ofrece un espacio neutral que les permite construir confianzas, en la medida en que no sienten la presión de la convocatoria de ninguna red u organización en particular. Las organizaciones nacionales que hacen parte de Punto de Encuentro reconocen la labor de secretaría técnica del PNUD, pero no establecen con claridad cual es el rol de REDES. Esta desconexión debería ser resuelta de establecer agendas conjuntas que potencien a REDES en los territorios y contribuyan asimismo al fortalecimiento de las organizaciones nacionales y su articulación con los procesos regionales. El mandato 2007 de Punto de Encuentro será determinante para validar un accionar político conjunto entre las diferentes iniciativas

¹² Punto de Encuentro está conformada por el Programa por la Paz – CINEP, Planeta Paz, la Redprodepaz, Redepaz, Iniciativas de Mujeres por la Paz, INDEPAZ, Asamblea Permanente por la Paz, Comisión de Conciliación Nacional, Corporación Nuevo Arco Iris y Suippcol.

¹³ Estas apreciaciones surgieron en la reunión realizada por miembros de la Misión de Evaluación y las organizaciones Redepaz, Asamblea Permanente por la Paz e Iniciativas de Mujeres por la Paz y la Comisión de Conciliación Nacional.

nacionales de paz. El objetivo a mediano plazo es que Punto de Encuentro se convierta en un referente de opinión sobre temas de paz en el país.

De otra parte, la metodología de permanente intercambio de información y de opiniones y de participación equitativa de los diferentes actores promovida por REDES desde la secretaría técnica ha permitido avanzar hacia la construcción de una agenda común. A diferencia de experiencias anteriores para constituir plataformas de acción conjunta – como Paz Colombia, en esta oportunidad las iniciativas consideran que se han ido superando los sectarismos y que las organizaciones, REDES y plataformas han madurado políticamente. La mediación de Naciones Unidas a través del programa REDES del PNUD ha contribuido significativamente a avanzar en este sentido. En cuanto a los principales retos y desafíos de esta experiencia de fortalecimiento y articulación de la sociedad civil y de la facilitación de REDES se deben mencionar los siguientes:

- Cada iniciativa nacional de paz debe incorporar en sus agendas particulares la agenda de Punto de Encuentro. De igual forma es necesario que se establezcan estrategias concretas de acción conjunta e identidad política y programática.
- La articulación nacional de las diferentes iniciativas de paz debe también tener un referente en los procesos regionales y fortalecer la relación entre lo que se hace en Bogotá y lo que se hace en las regiones. El programa REDES, en la medida en que tiene presencia en cuatro regiones del país (Montes de María, Meta, Oriente Antioqueño y Huila), podría promover y facilitar una mayor interlocución y relación con las iniciativas de paz nacionales.
- Las iniciativas nacionales de paz coinciden en que es necesario ampliar la reflexión acerca de la coyuntura del país para tener en cuenta los diferentes posibles escenarios de paz (AUC, ELN, FARC), el momento político (segundo mandato del Presidente Uribe Vélez) y temas que han sido abordados aún sistemáticamente como el narcotráfico.
- Es necesario, como lo señalan algunos de los participantes del Punto de Encuentro, ampliar la interlocución con otros sectores, como los gremios económicos y los sectores políticos.
- Asimismo, resulta muy pertinente fortalecer la interlocución entre el movimiento de paz y el movimiento de derechos humanos. Iniciativas como la Techo Común que reúnen en mismo espacio de trabajo organizaciones de derechos humanos y de paz deben fortalecerse para acercar las agendas de paz y de derechos humanos en el país. En este sentido, el programa REDES puede contribuir, como actor externo imparcial, a generar confianzas y a facilitar el acercamiento entre estos sectores.
- Por otro lado, los esfuerzos de articulación y coordinación entre las diferentes expresiones de la sociedad civil alrededor de los temas de paz y derechos humanos deben apuntar también a ser consideradas como interlocutores válidos por parte del Gobierno nacional, quien define la agenda pública de paz. El PNUD sería el llamado a tender puentes entre el Gobierno y Punto de Encuentro, como lo ha hecho por ejemplo con los gremios. Esto requiere que Naciones Unidas fortalezca la interlocución con el Gobierno nacional y reconstruya confianzas.

G – 24 y Consenso de Cartagena

Al inicio del 2003, se comienza a discutir la realización de una mesa de cooperación internacional entre Colombia y países cooperantes, para la cual el Reino Unido se ofrece como anfitrión. La última Mesa de donantes había tenido lugar en Milán. Diversos sectores coincidían en que no había concluido con resultados satisfactorios; participación de la sociedad civil había sido mínima y la agenda gubernamental no incluía los temas priorizados por la cooperación internacional. Para superar las dificultades de Milán, el Gobierno colombiano, la sociedad civil y la cooperación internacional proponen como facilitador de las instancias de diálogo preparatorias a una nueva Mesa al Coordinador Residente y Humanitario de las Naciones Unidas. Esta solicitud surgió del

reconocimiento de la fuerte polarización que existía en el ambiente político nacional. Como resultado de las preparaciones tripartitas se logró la concertación de los temas de la agenda, la cual finalmente se centró en aspectos tales como derechos humanos, paz y crisis humanitaria. Paralelamente se buscó una representación amplia de la sociedad civil colombiana en la mesa, que incluyera no solamente ONG de diversas orientaciones, sino también la Iglesia, el movimiento social, el sector privado y actores regionales.

La conclusión de la Mesa de Londres fue la aprobación de la Declaración de Londres, la cual se convirtió en marco estratégico ineludible en las relaciones Gobierno, sociedad civil y comunidad internacional. Para dar continuidad al proceso iniciado, en enero de 2005 tuvo lugar una nueva Mesa de Cooperación Internacional, en Cartagena. Al igual que en Londres, durante el período de preparación el Coordinador Residente Humanitario facilitó los diálogos que permitieron construir acuerdos en temas claves. Como resultados de dichos acuerdos se lograron dos documentos de consenso, el primero respaldado por las organizaciones de la sociedad civil – Declaración del Consenso de Cartagena – y el segundo acordado entre todos los gobiernos presentes en la Mesa – Declaración de Cartagena. Es de destacar el logro de estos acuerdos ya que los temas tratados en las reuniones fueron muy controversiales: derechos humanos, desmovilización, conflicto armado y crisis humanitaria.

El proceso posterior a Londres activó un mayor seguimiento a los temas definidos en la agenda por parte de la comunidad internacional. Por iniciativa de Naciones Unidas, se conformó el Grupo de los 24 países – G-24 -, el cual constituye una instancia periódica y regular de encuentro, diálogo y eventual construcción de consensos entre las representaciones diplomáticas de los países donantes. Dicho grupo cuenta con una presidencia rotativa y una instancia de coordinación del grupo (Troika). El G – 24, además de permitir un canal de diálogo e intercambio permanente entre las principales embajadas presentes en Colombia le ha dado a la comunidad internacional una mayor gravitación en temas de alta sensibilidad política, y le ha permitido jugar un rol de puente entre las autoridades y la sociedad civil. Por otro lado, el proceso de Londres desencadenó una mayor articulación de la sociedad civil, la cual le ha permitido una participación más orgánica y coordinada en los procesos de consulta de la estrategia de cooperación internacional. Esta mayor coordinación y articulación de la sociedad civil se expresa en el Consenso de Organizaciones de la Sociedad civil reunidas en Cartagena, mejor conocido como Consenso de Cartagena¹⁴.

El papel de secretaría técnica del Coordinador Residente Humanitario, a través REDES, ha facilitado el diálogo entre la sociedad civil y el Gobierno nacional. Las reuniones permiten la participación equitativa y el intercambio de ideas. Igualmente, algunos de los representantes del Consenso¹⁵, señalan que PNUD/REDES ha generado confianza en los diferentes actores de este proceso, lo que ha permitido el diálogo entre visiones diferentes. La presencia del Coordinador Residente Humanitario de Naciones Unidas implica respaldo político y legitimidad al proceso. Al igual que en el caso de Punto de Encuentro, el mayor desafío del proceso Post Londres – Cartagena, en lo que se refiere a la sociedad civil y al papel desempeñado por REDES, es consolidar los procesos de diálogo entre los diferentes sectores (gremios, organizaciones sociales, sectores políticos, movimiento de paz, movimiento de derechos humanos, etc.), incluir en la agenda temas especialmente sensibles como los modelos de desarrollo y el papel de las regiones en la discusión acerca de las agendas de la cooperación internacional (llevar los bloques

¹⁴ El Consenso de Cartagena está conformado por la Alianza de Organizaciones Sociales y Afines, la Confederación Colombiana de ONG, el Consejo Nacional de Planeación, el Consejo Gremial – Asociación Nacional de Industriales (ANDI), Fundaciones Empresariales – Fundación Restrepo Barco, el Secretariado Nacional de Pastoral Social y la Federación Colombiana de Municipios.

¹⁵ Opiniones expresadas por Consejo Nacional de Planeación, Comisión Colombiana de Juristas y Corporación Nuevo Arco Iris, organizaciones que hacen parte del Consenso de Cartagena, en reunión con el equipo de la Misión de Evaluación.

temáticos definidos en el proceso Londres – Cartagena a las regiones y al diálogo con los gobiernos regionales).

Un mayor valor agregado del Programa REDES podría estar en facilitar el diálogo entre la agenda nacional de cooperación internacional y los procesos regionales, como los Programas de Desarrollo y Paz.

3.2.3 National Commission for Reparations and Reconciliation

La Comisión Nacional de Reparación y Reconciliación fue creada en el marco de la Ley 975 de 2005 o Ley de Justicia y Paz. Es una comisión mixta integrada por representantes de entidades gubernamentales, representantes de la sociedad civil nombrados directamente por el Presidente de la República y por dos representantes de las víctimas seleccionados por la misma CNRR de personas postuladas por las organizaciones de víctimas, en una convocatoria nacional.

Si bien la Ley de Justicia y Paz, se aproxima a los estándares internacionales que tienen un efecto reparatorio (investigación, juicio, sanción, verdad), los mecanismos propuestos para su puesta en práctica no logran proteger los derechos de las víctimas y representan serios obstáculos para que la CNRR logre realmente sus objetivos. En fallo reciente la Corte Constitucional (Sentencia C-370 de 2006) se refirió a la constitucionalidad de la Ley de Justicia y Paz delimitó sus alcances y declaró la inexecutable de los artículos que contradecían los principios constitucionales vigentes y los tratados internacionales de derechos humanos. Sin embargo, el Gobierno nacional en los proyectos de decretos que reglamentan la mencionada ley, haciendo caso omiso del pronunciamiento de la Corte Constitucional, se excede en su competencia reglamentaria y amplía la favorabilidad de esta ley para los victimarios y restringe aún más las garantías para las víctimas. Frente a esta situación, la CNRR no se ha pronunciado oficialmente y en conjunto. Sin embargo, algunos de los representantes de la sociedad civil, a través de un comunicado de prensa, manifestaron su preocupación y desacuerdo con el contenido del proyecto de decreto. Evidentemente el carácter mixto de la CNRR impide que pueda pronunciarse en bloque frente a decisiones del ejecutivo. Esta situación pone de presente las restricciones que puede llegar a tener la CNRR al momento de tomar decisiones que involucren la posición oficial del Gobierno.

A este panorama complejo es justamente al que se enfrenta el Programa REDES cuando decide apoyar y acompañar el proceso de la Comisión Nacional de Reparación y Reconciliación. Por otro lado, desde el punto de vista de la Misión de Evaluación, no es claro el papel que desempeña REDES. Actualmente la CNRR está siendo asistida técnicamente por el International Center for Transitional Justice para la elaboración de su plan de trabajo, por OCHA para el mapeo y caracterización de las organizaciones de víctimas y por una serie de asesores temporales en diversas materias, contratados por donantes como ASDI y USAID. Hasta donde esta Misión pudo conocer, el apoyo de PNUD a través de REDES ha sido más de carácter político, y este se ha concretado en la iniciativa de constituir y administrar un Trust Fund que recibiría los aportes de los diferentes donantes para la financiación de las actividades de la CNRR.

De otra parte, REDES viene acompañando y respaldando la iniciativa de Monseñor Nel Beltrán (miembro de la CNRR) de constituir una Comisión Regional de Reparación y Reconciliación en Sucre que tendría cobertura en toda la Costa Atlántica (hace parte de las 5 comisiones regionales aprobadas por la CNRR). Esta propuesta, que ya fue presentada a la Mesa de Operadores Humanitarios, pretende lograr el respaldo de las agencias internacionales que tienen presencia en la región, con el fin de que constituyan un segundo círculo que rodee y respalde a esta Comisión. Algunas agencias de Naciones Unidas, como ACNUR, han manifestado su preocupación por la posible confusión entre las acciones humanitarias necesarias en la región para atender los

efectos de la grave crisis humanitaria y las acciones más de carácter político de la Comisión Regional de Reparación y Reconciliación.

Esta posición, desde el punto de vista de la Misión de Evaluación, corresponde al principio de imparcialidad que debe defender el Sistema de Naciones Unidas en un país en conflicto como Colombia. REDES puede revisar la pertinencia de apoyar a la CNRR y sus expresiones regionales, sin aparentemente aportar un claro valor agregado. La opción de Naciones Unidas en el tema de la verdad, la justicia y la reparación debe ser principalmente por las víctimas y por la defensa de los principios constitucionales y los instrumentos internacionales de defensa de los derechos humanos que el país y el Gobierno han asumido y suscrito. En este sentido, consideramos que REDES debe ampliar sus acciones para promover los procesos organizativos locales, regionales y nacionales de víctimas para que tengan la capacidad y la fuerza para hacer exigibles sus derechos a la verdad, la justicia y la reparación. Asimismo, REDES, siendo coherente con sus estrategias, puede contribuir a fortalecer las iniciativas de reconstrucción de la verdad de la sociedad civil y a preparar las condiciones para el establecimiento de una futura Comisión Extrajudicial de la Verdad, independiente e incluyente.

3.2.4 Peace Laboratory III

Tanto los diferentes PDPs como los Laboratorios de Paz en Colombia surgieron inspirados por el enfoque, el diseño y las experiencias prácticas del primer Programa de Desarrollo y Paz, el del Magdalena Medio. Cada uno de los PDP en Colombia, no obstante, tiene sus características particulares impuestas por las condiciones y circunstancias de las diferentes regiones donde están ubicados. El Primer Laboratorio de Paz surge cuando la Unión Europea decide apoyar el PDPMM en una coyuntura política de diálogo entre el Gobierno de Andrés Pastrana y el ELN incluyen do la desmilitarización de una zona en la subregión del Sur de Bolívar¹⁶ para realizar una Convención Nacional, con participación del Gobierno Nacional, ELN y la sociedad civil. Los diálogos de paz con el ELN ofrecieron una oportunidad de realizar concretamente la voluntad europea de apoyar una salida negociada al conflicto. Además, las experiencias, aprendizajes y el fortalecimiento del PDPMM en sus fases anteriores, hacían del Magdalena Medio una región estratégica en el ámbito de los procesos de paz en Colombia y permitió a la contraparte europea iniciar un esfuerzo de paz y desarrollo que complementaba y fortalecía una base ya sentada y un proceso en camino.

El proceso con ELN no tuvo éxito esa vez, pero la colaboración entre el PDPMM y la Unión Europea siguió y resultó en el lanzamiento del Segundo (Norte de Santander, Macizo y Oriente Antioqueño) y el Laboratorio de Paz III (Meta y Montes de María). El Tercer Laboratorio parte de las experiencias de los dos primeros Laboratorios, y tiene el propósito estratégico de consolidar iniciativas de paz y desarrollo en zonas de conflicto con miras a constituir un sector estratégico para que la cooperación internacional sea más integrada y coordinada a la vida nacional.

El programa tiene tres formas de intervención:

- apoyar a dos programas regionales de desarrollo y paz (Meta y Montes de María) que han demostrado algún impacto sobre violencia, conflictos y exclusión. Este componente profundiza la experiencia de los anteriores laboratorios.
- extender el apoyo a otras iniciativas de la sociedad civil y comunidades en el ámbito local y regional que aportan un elemento significativo de desarrollo y paz, focalizando especialmente en mujeres, jóvenes y grupos étnicos (indígenas y afrodescendientes); y

¹⁶ Al principio del diálogo, en 1999, la zona sugerida comprendió 7.600 km² de los municipios de Santa Rosa, Simití, San Pablo y Morales. Al final, 2001, quedaron solamente los dos municipios de San Pablo y Cantagallo.

- basándose en las contribuciones de los dos componentes mencionados, contribuir a la formulación de una política pública de paz y desarrollo incluyente dentro del marco de la Constitución política del país.

El LPIII tiene el propósito de fortalecer las iniciativas nacionales, regionales y locales de paz como contribución a la construcción de una cultura de paz con justicia social, y la resolución pacífica de conflictos regionales, económicos, sociales y políticos.

1. El geográfico que profundiza la experiencia de los dos anteriores laboratorios, en dos regiones que reúnen las condiciones necesarias en función de las acciones enmarcadas en la filosofía de Laboratorio de Paz.
2. El político siendo la otra herramienta, que se desarrolla a partir de la lectura de los procesos y realidades locales y regionales para que de manera participativa y analítica permita alimentar la política estatal, como respuesta institucional a los esfuerzos de la sociedad civil en construir un País en paz con desarrollo equitativo en el pleno respeto del estado social de derecho.
3. El temático se orienta en iniciativas de paz y desarrollo lideradas por grupos étnicos (indígenas y afro colombianos), organizaciones de mujeres y jóvenes del nivel local y regional, siendo estos grupos unos de los más vulnerables frente a los efectos del conflicto, propiciando la creación de espacios de paz, de respeto a los DDHH, y al mismo tiempo fortaleciendo la gobernabilidad democrática como resultado de la participación ciudadana.

3.2.5 Mine action campaign

El componente de acción contra minas antipersonal del Programa REDES busca reducir el impacto del empleo de estos artefactos en las comunidades y disminuir el riesgo en la población civil, mediante la creación y fortalecimiento de capacidades institucionales, de la sociedad civil y comunitarias locales, regionales y nacionales para la acción contra las minas. Con el fin de avanzar en el fortalecimiento de capacidades institucionales, REDES ha suscrito un memorando de entendimiento con el Observatorio Nacional de Minas del Programa Presidencial de Derechos Humanos y Derecho Internacional Humanitario. En el marco de este esfuerzo conjunto entre REDES y el Observatorio se han conformado los Comités Antiminas de Antioquia, Meta y Montes de María y reciben el acompañamiento y apoyo técnico tanto de REDES como del Observatorio.

De igual manera, las acciones de REDES están encaminadas a posicionar el tema en las agendas públicas departamentales y municipales y a promover su incorporación en los planes de desarrollo departamentales, lo cual ya se ha logrado, incluso con alguna asignación presupuestal. En el caso del Meta, la Gobernación asignó ochenta millones de pesos para el tema, en su presupuesto de 2007. REDES reconoce que no existe la voluntad política suficiente para que el tema ocupe realmente un lugar relevante en la agenda pública nacional y sea visto también como un tema de política pública. La acción gubernamental aún se limita al asistencialismo y no existe una visión estratégica que aborde el tema como una de las más graves expresiones de la crisis humanitaria por la que atraviesa el país. Al respecto, es importante que REDES fortalezca su capacidad de incidencia ante las autoridades nacionales competentes, a fin de visibilizar aún más las problemáticas de departamentos como el Meta y lograr decisiones para aumentar las medidas de prevención y atención a las víctimas. En cuanto a la prevención REDES ha impulsado en Meta, Montes de María y Antioquia, conjuntamente con los Comités Antiminas, la formación de multiplicadores en las diferentes comunidades para que difundan la información y las medidas de prevención que se deben tomar.

El tema representa retos y desafíos que deben considerarse en la definición de estrategias para fortalecer las capacidades locales, regionales y nacionales y para promover en el Estado

colombiano un mayor responsabilidad y compromiso. Estos desafíos pueden resumirse en incremento del uso de minas y presencia en nuevos territorios; dificultad de acceso a zonas afectadas en riesgo; insuficiente capacidad institucional para el desminado de emergencia; escasa disponibilidad de recursos en las entidades regionales; deficiencias en los datos, canales y flujos de información entre las entidades competentes; y falta de programas de restablecimiento para las víctimas.

3.3 REDES' PME and knowledge management systems

3.3.1 Planning, budgeting and monitoring

REDES started as a visionary program to (re)build social capital and social cohesion in areas of protracted violent conflict. To develop innovative, territory specific, socio political strategies REDES needed and obtained programmatic and budgetary freedom and flexibility from Sida and BCPR in the initial stage to learn while doing and adjust its activities in response to region specific circumstances. However, the absence of program oversight systems to plan, budget and manage the variety of regional and sectoral programs created serious efficiency challenges, which were not adequately addressed by the UNDP and REDES management in the early years.

The sharp increase of the overall REDES budget in the last year poses an additional challenge to the management and a possible threat to REDES' cutting-edge socio-political strategy. The program was designed to absorb one million USD on annual basis, but its budget almost triple in 2005, with new contributions from Spain, Acción Social and a doubling of the Sida budget to a grand total of 10.3 million US\$ for 3 years. Moreover, the REDES networks in MM and Meta have been selected as partners in the LP III, which will add another couple of million dollars to the regional program budget (total PL III budget: 14-17 million €) and requires an extra effort on the part of REDES counterparts like Fundación and CORDEPAZ to monitor and report on. There is an urgent need for UNDP and EU to work on a set of joint monitoring indicators to reduce reporting duplications.

While the successful resource mobilization record proves that REDES succeeded in gaining trust of national and international agencies with its innovative approach, it raises a number of profound institutional concerns at the same time. The team was surprised that apparently no internal debate was held to assess potential programmatic consequences of a rapid program expansion. This would require more standardized administrative and monitoring systems that may well clash with the REDES' management tradition of programmatic flexibility and responsiveness to changes in the local context. One explanation could be that the sharp budget increase coincided with a change in senior management of both the Resident Coordinator and the REDES coordinator. Hence, the team advises the new management and donor agencies to design a more sustainable resource mobilization and related human resource strategy for the next phase.¹⁷

Only towards the end of the first program phase REDES acknowledged and acted on the urgent need to develop planning, monitoring and evaluation systems (PMES) to properly manage its activities, resources and results to begin to sustain its impact. A new annual planning and monitoring system became operational in June 2006; it links for the first time individual program

¹⁷ There is a lack of coordination among the international donors of REDES, both in terms of program planning and in narrative + financial reporting. This seriously burdens the program staff that needs to produce multiple reports and financial statements to donors, which each have different funding timelines, outline formats and indicator sets and needs streamlining in the next phase.

activities to planned budgets, funding source, expected outputs and results, categorized by overarching REDES objectives per regional and project line. Regional managers can make major changes to their plan only with a written request and management approval. This enables REDES to monitor program progress to target and will generate essential management information to improve planning in subsequent years. When well maintained and monitored, the new system will prove a highly valuable instrument to improve the sustainability of next REDES programs.

The new monitoring system can be improved as management tool. First, guidelines need to be set for the desired level of detail in the planning sheets (e.g. the PDP planning for Meta on one page for a budget of 408.000 US\$ does not provide sufficient monitoring information). Second, specific project allocations need to be in accordance with the overall REDES objectives. Third, the sector and thematic planning sheets need to clearly indicate where the activities are envisaged, to enable the system to generate region specific summary sheets. This information will allow the management to bring greater efficiency in the large number of workshops, diagnostics and trainings. Fourth, it is advisable to produce quarterly region specific activity overviews and use them as active planning and monitoring tools in REDES management team meetings. As a bonus, this tool will enhance the insight of the thematic program staff in the overall implementation of REDES program in the field.

Slow UNDP administrative approval procedures and transfers of funds to local counterparts, led to delays and are a source of complaints, the only major complaint from local counterparts after much praise for REDES). The Fundación explained they needed to undertake several additional motivation efforts to re-engage community beneficiaries, because activities were delayed for months. This is a common UNDP problem around the world. However, as UNDP country offices are getting more involved in Direct Execution (DEX) programs in (post)conflict environments, it is absolutely necessary to simplify procedures and reduce UN bureaucracy when it partners with CSO and community based organizations. The team lauds Sida's efforts to advocate both at the High level Commission and in-country for a "UN mini-reform", which would moreover imply to improve aid coordination and harmonization between UN agencies at regional and local level.

In the meantime, to make partnering with local CSOs more efficient and effective, a Small Grants Fund could be integrated in each regional program in the next REDES phase. UNDP's BCPR and Bureau for Resources and Strategic Partnerships (BRSP) launched a Small Grant pilot Program (SGP) with the aim to experiment with more effective and sustainable partnerships with CSOs in post-conflict environments. REDES was one of three Country Offices selected to participate in the pilot phase (2003-05), which aimed to building peace through dialogue, recovery of democratic and civilian institutions and economic revitalization. The SGP evaluation (2006) concluded it was desirable to initiate a second phase for the ongoing pilot projects to solidify gains, incorporate CSO partnerships in regular national UNDP programs, conduct special capacity building trainings (dialogue, consensus building, conflict assessment, prevention etc) and to strengthen the vertical linking of CSOs with key stakeholders, especially regarding Government – CSO partnerships in national peace building and reconciliation efforts.¹⁸ An interim grant to REDES to this effect is to be approved in the amount of 100,000 US\$ this September. The planned budget includes several components of interest to the planning of the REDES second phase: e.g. consultant advice to launching small grants in MM and Meta, capacity building of vulnerable group organizations to access the national Laboratory III fund, capacity building of victims organizations to participate in the NCRR and several youth initiatives.

¹⁸ Regarding Colombia, the SGF evaluation proposed to generate strategies how to integrate and foster sustainable CSO partnership in the country program; discuss possibilities for matching grants from SIDA and the EU and World Bank peace funds; develop additional strategies to strengthen the vertical linkages between national government and track III peace initiatives; to document UNDPs accompaniment role and share its work on peace building CSO definitions and monitoring indicators to improve the quality of future mappings.

3.3.2 Outcome and impact assessment

To evaluate the effectiveness and impact of the REDES program has been complicated from the onset. First, there was no baseline data collected in the first REDES program regions. Starting as a sociopolitical intervention strategy, REDES did not initiate a thorough planning process. Most energy was devoted to create an environment to reconvene traditional community networks and advocate with local officials to support civil society building work in the middle of armed conflict. Second, because REDES piloted a novel development and peace approach, they felt that many regular program indicators would not apply. Third, the logical framework provided by Sida as planning and budgeting tool is output oriented. Four, REDES aims to address root causes of conflict and has ambitious overall objectives that require structural transformation in the regions, which can not be achieved in a three year program with a limited intervention. Also, regional development and peace programs are susceptible to external factors beyond the direct influence of REDES. Hence, it proved nearly impossible for REDES to show lasting impact according to conventional and orthodox evaluation criteria and even harder to own those results of REDES interventions. In other words, the traditional problem in evaluation of complex development programs in rapidly changing environments, attribution, becomes particularly acute in this case.

In the 2nd half of 2005, a small team worked for six months to develop a monitoring and evaluation model, entitled "REDES: hacia un modelo de implementación deliberativa". The largely theoretical paper provides definitions, explains PMES processes and proposes a monitoring model for REDES. The model, which is currently used in REDES reporting, chose the four REDES core strategies, called strategic objectives in the model, as basic entities to measure outcome: community organization, alliance building, public policy and knowledge management.¹⁹ However, the indicators proposed in the model, measure mostly outputs or at best direct results, and no effort is made to link achieved results to improvements in the situation of beneficiaries or to advances made to overcome the key impediments to development and peace in Colombia.²⁰

The team strongly recommends that REDES and Sida review their logical framework to make it result oriented and internally consistent. Aims, objectives, strategies are frequently interchanged in annual plans and reports, with detrimental effect on reporting of results. For example, most of the results presented in the 2005 REDES report to Sida are actually realized activities or outputs (like 'work with civil society', 'accompaniment of partners in the territories' etc.). REDES' four core strategies (=how to reach the objectives) are called strategic objectives in recent documents, which made a means become an end in itself. This explains too why the REDES monitoring model is output-oriented. The original aims, objectives, strategies and interventions from the REDES program document reworked by the team below begin to show more coherence (please note there is no exclusive relation between boxes in and no objectives could be found reconciliation):

REDES aims	Objectives	Core strategies	Program clusters
Reduce the impact of the armed conflict on vulnerable groups in specific territories	Promote and endorse local strategies to human development	Communities (Revive civil society)	Human Security (protection of vulnerable groups)
Rebuild local institutions and social networks	Build capacity of civil society and state institutions to jointly develop consensus strategies to overcome the conflict	Alliances (Build horizontal and vertical alliances)	Sociopolitical and organizational development
Build good governance at	Promote socioeconomic	Public Policy	Pro poor Socioeconomic

¹⁹ The document formulates them as results: comunidades organizadas, alianzas constituidas, políticas públicas adoptadas and conocimiento común creado. (p.12-13)

²⁰ With the exception of the public policy, but there it is not clear how "level of incorporation of new policies" and "opportunity for incorporation" are exactly measured.

local, regional and national level	initiatives to provide options to vulnerable groups and reduce the impact of the illegal armed actors and drug-trafficking	(Prepare, propose, adopt public policies)	development
Promote development and peace in protracted violent conflict zones	Consolidate and mainstream a form of development that includes conflict prevention, peace building and critical learning	Knowledge (documentation management and Mainstreaming CPR)	CPR Mainstreaming
Facilitate processes of reconciliation	-	-	Reconciliation and Justice (HR mainstreaming?)

To select indicators that provide insight into REDES' effectiveness in reaching its aims, objectives and results requires linking of the four main strategies to conflict and violence impediments at the root of the conflict: fragmented communities, weak democratic institutions, coercion and despair, impunity and illicit trade. One of the most interesting results of the REDES intervention is the increased confidence and trust that beneficiaries attributed to participating in the program. This increased sense of community is seemingly more based on perception than actual change in the armed conflict context or human security provided by the State. Nevertheless, as this changing security perception has motivated communities to take up mobilization efforts and engage in planning dialogue with local authorities, the team concludes these important results indicate that a beginning is made in rebuilding fragile communities and re-establishing relations between civilians and local government. Thus, the time has come for the REDES team to end its global search and choose ten key indicators close to home that link systematic quantitative data (to establish a presence on which basis the results can be "owned") with qualitative data that measure changing relationships, capacity building. The matrix below compiled by the team, provides a summary of major programs, direct results and expected impact can assist in the process of indicator selection:

REDES Outcome	Beneficiaries/networks	Direct results (outcome)	Impact: overcoming impediments
Community organizing, social network revival	Youth Local CSOs Subsistence and small farmers Indigenous groups Victims of the violence IDPs ANUC	-Revived local organizations -Cross region networking, bridging capacity building across divides -Increased confidence and creating environment in which trust can be built -Political protection, reduced vulnerability -Participation in planning processes as dialogue partner for government -Restructuring of peasant and indigenous organisations in MM	-Fragmented communities recuperate -Reduced vulnerability to armed groups. E.g. forced recruitment -Pre-empted land eviction -Informed public policy change for peace -Mainstreaming in national development as future recipients of LPD funds and technical assistance
Thematic dialogue spaces	Mesa Humanitaria Constituent Assemblies Defensoria	-Safe space to analyze roots and impact of violence -Platform to bridge dissenting opinions and formulate solutions	-Respect for human rights and dignity, reduced deadly violence -Community conflict resolution capacity/mechanisms developed
Good and participatory governance	AET, Fundacion, CORDEPAZ, Observatorio Minas, National Army, Governor's office, Consejos regionales empleo	-Regular Government – Civil Society dialogue to re-establish relationships -Prepared ground for joint PDP planning -Regional mine action plans -Multi actor planning/preparation of LPD	-Shared analysis on conflict and peaceful resolution of the conflict -Citizen's participation, increased transparency and accountability of local government -Rebuilt vertical relations between state and civilians, state protects civilians
Alliances	Red de Comunicadores Red de Jovenes Red Montemariana ANUC/Meta, Peasant Ass.in MM, Ass.of small coca producers in Meta	-Planned and implemented joint regional programs, like football tournaments, cultural nights, alternative cropping strategies -Succeeded to have special needs of youth incorporated in regional	-Alliances produce more social cohesion through confidence and trust building =Increased visibility and protection of local and regional processes to include most

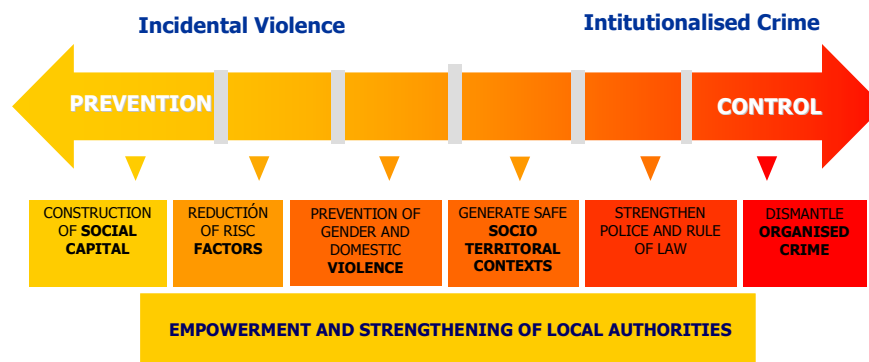
	Consejo Regional de Empleo	development plans -Process to land rights and reparations to peasant IDPs and victims initiated in Meta -Alternative employment creation	vulnerable groups -Increased resource allocation to conflict zones through Accion Social and LPIII
National level PDP work	NPD, NCCR, Vice President's Office Fiscalia, Defensoria National Mine Observatory National CSOs G24 Small Grants Program	-Policy and practice change on mine awareness -G24: tripartite national level peace and development dialogue -Strategic partnerships with NPD to monitor the LPIII and include results in public policy change	-G24 keeps Peace high on national agenda, advocacy pressure on government to seek for peaceful solutions to conflict -London/Cartagena -Civil Society repositioned at national dialogue table -National recognition of regional work: Madres de la Candelaria are recipients of National Peace prize 2006.
Knowledge management	REDES, SURF, HDU, Small Grant Program to build CSO capacity	-Best practice bank -Urban security project -UNDP CPR mainstreaming through new "territorial development strategy" -Small Grants to CSO model	-Innovative approaches adopted elsewhere (Pacific) -Improved effectiveness of UN system in conflict environments -Improved UN capacity to partner with CSOs in conflict zones
Coordination	Gov: Accion Social, NPD, Observatorio, Defensoria UN: UNDP, UNICEF, UNHCR, UNHCHR, UNFPA, UNIFEM, OCHA, UNOCD Int: Sida, EC, G24	-Aid harmonization (ISAJ mission) -Strategic partnerships added value to sum of total -Improved resource efficiency and effectiveness -Joint Sincelejo UN coordination	-REDES as UN mini reform model -Increased efficiency in conflict prevention programs in Colombia's conflict zones

3.3.3 Knowledge Management

REDES established a knowledge management unit in its office late 2005 (one full time person). To address the difficulties encountered in measuring impact, the unit set out to undertake an elaborate study to collect indicators to measure development in the context of violent conflict around the world, in order to develop widely appropriate knowledge management tools. Mid 2006, this research process had been completed and a working group comprised of the REDES monitoring coordinator, financial monitoring officer and knowledge management coordinator was established to: *"prepare and disseminate methodological and conceptual tools for the analysis, design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the REDES strategy and other international good practices."* (REDES Annual Report 2005-06, p.36) The working group is to present a proposal by the end of 2006. Hence, REDES had not published best practices as yet.

While the team appreciates the thorough approach of the new knowledge management unit, it was at the same time surprised there are no pilot impact indicators being tested in MM and Meta as part of the methodology development process, given the sense of urgency to establish the impact at the end of the 1st REDES phase with a 10m US\$ price tag. Moreover, exchange with two other UNDP Colombia knowledge management and best practice initiatives appears to be limited ("Banco de Buenas practicas para superar el conflicto" managed by the Human Development Unit and the "Urban security monitoring project" managed by the SURF office for Latin America and the Caribbean). The team received the Banco's first best practice case study on the work of the social networks in MM, dated June 26/27 2006, but its follow-up is not clear. The SURF adopted a different strategy. At its start, it inherited a data base of 8000 best practices cases and set out to analyze them: 60% were purely local initiatives in which international agencies had not played a role. Only 10% of the good practices had some form of UN involvement, 7% had UNDP involvement. The data base was rarely used by development practitioners, UN staff and counterparts; mainly students consulted the website. Hence, SURF decided to fundamentally change its approach, from providing services to delivering "products".

Three SURF approaches seem of particular interest to REDES knowledge management. First, to actively broker supply and demand, the team tried to capture common lessons that characterized the best practices. For example, five common success factors could be distilled from good local governance practices: vision, legitimacy, stakeholder collaboration, good governance and community participation. This analysis was translated in a diagnostic tool, accessible on the internet. The common lessons were shared with wider audiences in so-called “knowledge fairs”. SURF offered to assist to host a knowledge fair on the REDES experience in Colombia or the region to mainstream CPR. Furthermore, the urban security project has developed interesting indicators, grouped in six categories: deficit of social capital, risk factors, organized crime, gender and domestic violence, socio-regional context and inefficient police and rule of law. Many could apply to the REDES regional context.²¹ See Annex 4.



However, to get an approximation of the REDES impact on regional security would require a decent baseline, an intensive quantitative and qualitative monitoring of both political-military conjuncture at regional and national levels and the project interventions, in a project area plus a comparable non-project area). This would imply a huge investment time, staff and funds, but could generate interesting and reasonably acceptable results. In the meantime, while REDES can not adjust indicators from the urban security model, it will be useful to adopt common lessons analysis (the Annual Report 2005 identified among other PDPs, Red Montemariana, Punto de Encuentro, Colectivo Comunicadores, Asambleas Regionales Constituyentes as best practices) and to borrow from the indicator sets (i.e. the social cohesion, gender based violence and reduction of risk) to develop an internal evaluation system.

3.3.4 CPR mainstreaming

The mainstreaming of CPR is a global UNDP priority; however concrete guidelines on how this should be achieved are absent and no official Spanish documentation on the CPR mainstreaming

²¹ However, the urban security project applicability has two limitations. It monitors trends in urban security, but does not measured impact of UNDP program interventions. SURF agreed it will be methodologically extremely difficult to prove correlations between increased security and a program result. Second, quite a few indicators are culturally and contextually sensitive and may indicate improved security. Increased police presence in communities may provide security to some, but could instil fear in vulnerable communities if not combined with good governance practices. To get an approximation of REDES impact on community security would require a decent baseline, an intensive quantitative and qualitative monitoring of both political-military conjuncture at regional and national levels and the project interventions, in a project area plus a comparable non-project area). This would imply a huge investment time and money wise, but could generate interesting and reasonably acceptable results.

policy is available in BCPR. Hence, the concept of CPR mainstreaming was not clear to the REDES team at the start of the evaluation. It was mostly understood as a documentation and knowledge management process, less as an active dialogue process to promote a CPR analysis and approach in UNDP and the wider stakeholder community at national and regional level.²² The REDES approach is considered one of BCPR's best practices and often presented in interagency/office presentations. For example, the REDES youth program is one of the six best practice cases in the ongoing Youth and Conflict policy and program development project and mid 2006 a (departing) REDES staff member spent six weeks at the regional BCPR office in Fiji to exchange REDES approaches during the UNDP Pacific CPR program formulation.

The team concludes that REDES has been quite effective in mainstreaming CPR approaches in the regions, through its conflict and actor analyses and partnerships with UNICEF, UNFPA and UNCHR. A Sincelejo UN coordinator could further facilitate this inter-agency CPR process. CPR mainstreaming in the UNDP Country Office has been limited. The team advises to strategically link CPR to UNDP's new "territorial strategy". As to the CPR mainstreaming at national level, the evaluation team concludes this can not be the sole responsibility of REDES, although improved knowledge management, combined with a good communication strategy would help. Promoting effective CPR approaches in the UN system would require the active involvement of the UN Resident Coordinator to overcome inter-agency competition and broaden the focus from humanitarian assistance to early recovery and development. Senior management engagement and HQ support from BCPR/New York is required to make progress in transforming the programs of the UN family in Colombia towards a rights based approach to development in conflict zones.

REDES' mission could be enhanced and better understood as good practice, if the Right to Development (=RTD) approach is incorporated in its socio-political strategy, in accordance with the global UNDP policy. It wouldn't change, but strengthen the REDES program narrative and provide focus to its national advocacy for public policies change. The RTD approach differs from previous development models, in that it attaches a more explicit normative and legal context to development programs and policies. Four RTD components could be stressed:

- i) Its focus on inclusion of vulnerable groups that have been marginalized and traditionally excluded from the benefits of development; to ensure participation, equality, non-discrimination and access to opportunities in society by promoting the rule of law, transparency, accountability and sound public management practices and institutions.
- ii) The RTD Covenant specifies clear obligations of the State to ensure full exercise and progressive enhancement of the RTD and to eliminate obstacles. It should end "massive and flagrant violations" of human rights and promote fundamental freedoms for all.
- iii) The State should also develop and promote (inter)national peace and security, to "achieve general and complete disarmament" and to use the resources thus released "for comprehensive development".
- iv) Great importance is placed on the role of civil society, as key mediating agents between communal groups, governments and markets and partner of the government to resolve conflicts, which is the essence of the REDES strategy.

Other UNDP strategies that will enhance REDES' discourse are the Millennium Development Goal principles that are informed by the same rights values, including freedom from hunger and fear of violence, oppression and injustice.²³ Both RTD Covenant and the MD Goals are ratified by the Government of Colombia. Two MDG strategies focus on human security:

²² The BCPR definition of CPR mainstreaming is "a process of assessing the implications for UNDP of any planned action, including legislation, policies or programs, in all areas and at all levels, through a crisis lens."

²³ See Elisabeth Scheper - Gender Equality, Human Rights and Freedom from Despair; Towards a Strategic Stakeholders' Partnership to Prevent Violent Conflict in Asia. Expert paper presented at the UN Conference on Gender Mainstreaming and the MDGs, Islamabad, March 2005.

- *"We are determined to free our peoples from the scourge of war, whether within or between States"* (MD, 2000, Peace, security and disarmament, p.3)
- *"We will spare no effort to ensure that children and all civilian populations that suffer disproportionately the consequences of natural disasters, genocide, armed conflicts are given every assistance and protection so that they can resume normal life as soon as possible."* (MD, 2000, Protect the vulnerable, p.7)(see Annex...., MDG strategies)

REDES is a valuable program concept to BCPR, with "freedom from fear, want and despair" as its main objective, and works simultaneously on three core dimensions of human security²⁴:

- *Development dimension*: to reduce the risk, vulnerability and insecurity resulting from poverty (poor access to productive assets and basic services), gender disparities and other forms of inequality (freedom from want).
- *Governance dimension*: to reduce the probability (risk/vulnerability) of human insecurity and violent conflict poverty (relative deprivation), resulting from income and asset inequalities accompanied by weakened institutions, failed governance and a lack of respect for political and individual rights (freedom from fear).
- *Societal cohesion dimension*: to address the social-psychological aspects of security, including a sense of dignity, identity, efficacy and hope, re-enforced by an institutional and social network of support based on interpersonal trust and societal cohesion (freedom from despair).

Profiling REDES programs using these universal UNDP RTD and human security principles could also facilitate the formulation of more strategic outcome and impact indicators and increase the accessibility of REDES knowledge and experience to UNDP staff in other conflict environments and thereby enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of CPR mainstreaming.

IV. Conclusions

4.1 Relevance

Strategic interventions to overcome key impediments

The evaluation concludes that the interventions of REDES are highly strategic with a clear focus on finding solutions for the key problems and bottlenecks to sustainable development and peace in Colombia. REDES creates spaces for multi stakeholder' debates promoting local and national development and peace program, in which the voice of vulnerable groups -historically excluded- is included and their issues addressed. Empowerment strategies for vulnerable groups include promotion of traditional organization, capacity building and accompaniment, and as such provide equitable access to marginalized communities in participatory planning processes. UNDP plays a unique role in the Colombian conflict context, as REDES' programs champion a reconciliation and development approach in deprived regions deeply affected by the armed conflict. It advocates for structural transformation of public policies and practices at local, regional and national level, where most agencies continue in the humanitarian service delivery mode.

REDES as socio political regional strategy

To work on development in areas of protracted violent conflict requires a novel "geographic sociopolitical strategy", as traditional development program approaches fail to respond effectively

²⁴ See **Colletta**, N.J. (2003) Human Security, Poverty and Conflict: Implications for IFI Reforms.

to ever changing volatile conflict environments. The REDES focus on social political mobilization and strengthening of community networks and local capacities is achieving results in enhancing community resilience. However, the rogue nature of local government institutions, the territorial presence of armed groups and the illicit drug-trafficking have limited the prospects for effective economic development program results in REDES program areas.

Selection of regions

The main criteria for program area selection included: violent conflict scenario characterized by fierce disputes over territory between legal and illegal armed actors; a deteriorating humanitarian crisis; need for crisis management and risk reduction strategies; poverty, social polarization and fragmentation of civil society actors; historic civil society capacity for social mobilization and conflict resolution. The selection of MM and Meta with distinct geography, actor sets and socio-economic trends, represents the diverse conflict and development dilemmas in Colombia and allowed REDES to pilot novel approaches to work with civil society and state actors in different violent conflict settings. During the pilot phase, REDES coordinators thus developed different program emphases and methodologies in MM and M. Some agencies with a human rights oriented mission cautioned REDES in our interviews to partner with local counterparts in areas controlled by legal and illegal armed actors, as they likely hijack project results and “do-no-harm” principles can not be safeguarded. The team concludes that working in conflict zones with a wide spectrum of state and non-state actors implies taking risks. Hence, REDES needs to systematize these regional experiences, document lessons, weigh pros and cons and agree on a common REDES actor strategy before selecting and expanding to new REDES regions.

The Government has played a critical role in the area selection too. In the preparation phase, OA was prioritized by the government, while Acción Social has provided additional funds to UNDP since 2005 to start new REDES programs in Eje Cafetero, Buenaventura, Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta, Cartagena and Huila. With the exception of Huila, UNDP decided to allocate the resources to other UNDP Colombia programs without giving REDES even a CPR mainstreaming role. The team recommends clarifying the nature and content of the partnership of REDES and UNDP with Acción Social. Staff of Acción Social is on UNDP’s payroll and the other way around without a clear justification, while Acción Social is representing UNDP/ REDES on occasion and carries its logo on their business cards. There is little programmatic justification for this decision that was taken during the senior management transformation stage. The team concludes such management decisions undermine specific program, monitoring and advocacy responsibilities of REDES in coordinating its development and peace programs. UNDP needs to adopt clear institutional program planning, implementation and monitoring procedures and responsibilities among its programs to enhance the consistency and relationships with government donors.

Mobilization of local civil society

The two regions have distinctly different strategies for social mobilization and capacity building of civil society. MM has a historically weak and divided local civil society, while Meta knows stronger civil society structures. REDES played an important role in accompanying the foundation of the Fundación, a local membership organization incorporating CSO and community based organizations and the Red Montemariana. Due to its catalyzing role, REDES develop more direct relations with vulnerable communities. In Meta, the collaboration with existing agencies like CORDEPAZ, a service delivery CSO, and the Meta Department branch of ANUC (National Peasants Association) resulted in both direct and indirect relations with community organizations.

REDES has integrated vulnerable groups in its programs, including youth, indigenous, peasants and women. The youth and peasant networks are quite strong, while the women’s network need organizational strengthening. REDES needs to rethink its women’s program and set targets to

increase the physical, social and economic security of women, their participation in decision making and peace processes, and their organizational capacity.

Collaboration in REDES funded programs with political accompaniment and technical support, have helped CSO leaders get better informed of conflict trends and causes, more abreast with government intentions and initiatives (or the lack thereof) at Department and municipal level, and more familiar and in contact with community leaders across the regions. As a result, new ideas, means, motivation and confidence were generated to take responsibility to rebuild their communities and resist the armed actors. In short, in the perception of REDES beneficiaries, the program has made major contributions to reduce their vulnerability to violence.

Strengthening of local governance

The two regions show a similarly different focus on strengthening and enhancing the quality of the local governance. In MM, the AET was established to improve good governance at municipal level and initiate development and peace dialogue to initiate participatory planning and budgeting processes involving civil society and government at department level. In addition, the local authorities actively participate in sector programs, like landmine awareness, youth networks, human rights round tables etc.

In Meta, REDES started similar participatory governance exercises with the Governor's office, but refrained from building formal alliances with the mayors in view of their political affiliation with armed actors, as not to jeopardize the program. The capacity of local civil society to participate in the planning of local public policies has improved, which puts them in a stronger position to advocate for good and more legitimate governance. However, in the absence of an AET like structure, it seems the space for regional local governance dialogue opportunities in Meta is limited, which makes it harder to foster institutional local government – civil society relations and promote regional activities.

Public policy chance

Changes in public policy for development and peace at regional and national level are equally important to address the negative impact of the protracted conflict and the drug-trafficking on local good governance in the two regions. National peace dialogue initiatives, involving large international agencies, advocate for negotiated solutions to the armed conflict. However, the National Government actions appear insufficient. In the absence of articulate national peace strategies, REDES advocated for desired policy changes, i.e. working with the NPD on monitoring of EU and WB peace and development programs and raising awareness for the importance of public policy sector changes, e.g., through the national land mine observatory and regional committees and through accompaniment of the Madres de la Candelaria's advocacy for victims of violence and the regional CNRR offices (as part of the Small Grants to CSO fund).

In the next phase, REDES and the UNDP Resident Coordinator need to put more concerted effort, in accordance with international community initiatives, on the promotion of public policy changes at national level. It is necessary to reinforce the regional REDES initiatives and sustain their impact by improving good governance, strengthening the rule of law and stepping up the protection of citizens at regional and local level through top down policy and practice changes. Furthermore, UNDP can provide added political leverage of UN-system participation in LPIII to reaffirm the importance of the EC's efforts, especially vis-à-vis the National Development Plan.

4.2 Efficiency

4.2.1 Programming and financial management

REDES obtained programmatic and budgetary freedom from Sida and BCPR in the initial stage to respond to region specific conflict circumstances in a flexible way. The absence of management and oversight systems created serious efficiency challenges, which were only addressed by the UNDP management in 2006. The new annual planning system will prove, if maintained properly, a highly valuable instrument to manage and monitor future REDES programs.

Slow UNDP approval procedures and transfers to the regions has caused delays and at times loss of motivation among engaged beneficiary groups. UNDP needs to simplify its procedures for DEX project interventions in conflict zones, beyond introducing Small Grants to CSO. Furthermore, it needs to improve the aid coordination in the UN system and respond the calls for a "mini-reform" in line with High Panel discussions in New York and the Paris Agreement on donor coordination

The lax attitude of UNDP in recruiting two key management positions (REDES Program Coordinator and the Montes de Maria Region Coordinator remained respectively 10 months and one year vacant) created a leadership void in a crucial program phase and has hampered the overall maturation of the REDES program in 2005/6. The new UNDP Coordinator initiated internal discussions to launch a territorial development strategy to build much needed cohesion among the UNDP Colombia programs. The team saw only brainstorm documents, in which REDES seems to be presented as UNDP's grassroots and local capacity building program that operates at regional and local level only to prepare the ground for economic development programs like ART GoLD. This suggests that the REDES' unique sociopolitical intervention strategy is either not well understood or appreciated in UNDP Country Office, as the preambles of these programs are totally different and national advocacy policy and practice change work is an essential REDES component to work the transformation of the conflict context from both bottom-up and top-down.

Financial coordination among UNDP Colombia programs is not only an issue in relation to Acción Social funding of REDES regions. When analyzing the budget, the team noted that 23% of the proposed Sida allocation for 2006 is allocated to knowledge management, which seems out of proportion. The budget line is largely absorbed by the Human Development Unit and the Best Practice Bank (17%), while these programs have no direct relation to REDES. This explains why in spite of high budget allocations to best practice documentation and knowledge management, three years on there is little research and no publication on the REDES experience. The team recommends to negotiate closer programmatic collaboration between different UNDP units, or, if this is not feasible, to lift these components out of the REDES budget

4.2.2 Human Resource policies and institutional sustainability

The nine individual staff interviews were held at the end of a 10 months interim period without a REDES program coordinator, in which management responsibilities were divided among the two senior REDES staff members.²⁵ Confusing instructions from UNDP leadership made REDES focus more on specific sectors (economic pilots) at the cost of others. These two combined caused tensions in the REDES team. While the evaluation served as a reaffirmation process of REDES' vision and purpose, the internal staff dynamics still needed to be sorted out and hence influenced

²⁵ The nine positions are: Program Coordinator, two Regional Coordinators, and six Thematic Coordinators (Civil Society, Mine Action, LPIII, London/Cartagena, Human Rights, PMES and Knowledge Management). The CSO Coordinator is also the new Regional Coordinator for Huila. Four of the nine core staff members are foreign nationals (2x Italy, 1x Sweden, 1x Spain).

the responses. The evaluation team was impressed by the brightness and commitment of the individual staff members, but noted that most are young and therefore have limited field and management experience. The main conclusions are divided in three categories:

Management, coordination and communication

- The exchange of knowledge, experience and internal communication among staff members is limited. There were no regular team meetings convened to inform, coordinate efforts and formulate common agendas. As a result, the staff has insufficient insight in the overall REDES program progress and direction, which affects its effectiveness. For example, most team members are not familiar with the position and role of REDES vis-à-vis the NCRR.
- The communication lines in REDES seem vertically structured, in which junior professional staff is informed through regional coordinators. The first claims to have little say in program decision making. It is important to pay more attention to internal consensus building to instill and strengthen the team spirit and coherence among different REDES interventions.
- The new Coordinator has the important task not only to rebuild the team spirit and provide guidance to the thematic staff, but also to analyse existing differences in programmatic choices and selection of counterparts in the regional programs, to develop a common intervention strategy in future program areas.

Team composition, job description and selection criteria

- The team composition needs to be reviewed to meet the technical needs of the program.
- All core staff interviewed is based in the Bogotá office, which seems not in line with the REDES program philosophy; field postings need to be considered in the next phase.
- The recruitment of the Sincelejo Coordinator should be a top priority.
- Donors expressed concerns over the lack of seniority in the REDES team. In the interview with the UNDP Resident Coordinator, this was explained by the low professional scales (P2 and P3), while donors claim they are compatible with other UN agencies field programs.
- The job profiles are too broad, the tasks too many and not compatible with the staff's practical experience. They need to get synchronised before the next phase starts and the scales need to be reviewed too. In addition, it would be good to include in each profile the shared responsibilities of the overall REDES performance.
- For specialised themes like human rights and justice, REDES needs to hire professionals with broad field experience to strengthen the vision, strategy and monitoring of regional programs.
- As to general selection criteria, work experience with communities, thematic knowledge, stakeholder networks, analytical capacity and report writing skills could orient contracting of new staff.

Staff capacity building

- UNDP and REDES need to design a staff capacity building plan to strengthen the knowledge of priority themes. During the interviews, the staff showed keen interest in such provision.
- Special training in program management, monitoring and evaluation skills is essential to strengthen the efficiency and sustainability of REDES interventions
- A strategic planning exercise for the next phase, as well as annual planning workshops, will prove valuable tools to strengthen program cohesion and give direction to the team.

4.3 Coordination and collaboration with local and international partners

UNDP and REDES highlighted three success factors for its much appreciated Sida partnership:

- i) Size and flexibility of Sida's resource mobilization
- ii) Dialogue partnership: jointly strategized and provided confidence building support to REDES coordinators during the inception phase

- iii) Accompaniment in building political alliances at national and international level, i.e. assisted REDES in convincing authorities and donors to collaborate with the program.

While the Sida –UNDP partnership was close and mutually satisfactory in first two years (“political accompaniment”), it got strained in the course of the 2005-2006 budget year, when REDES was without a Program coordinator for 10 months and UNDP repeatedly failed to meet commitments regarding planning, timely reporting etc. During the management void, REDES program staff received confusing directions from the UNDP management, damaging its internal cohesion. With the arrival of the new leadership a week prior to the mission, REDES commenced to rebuild its partnership with Sida. This evaluation served as a program review and team building exercise that got the REDES team geared up to start a nation wide stakeholder consultation process to plan the next three year phase. The team advises UNDP and REDES to appreciate and use Sida’s institutional multilateral development and aid harmonization policy and its high profile among international and national actors in Colombia more to strengthen the sustainability of its regional programs and effectiveness of its national level advocacy.

The partnership with BCPR office in New York was likewise strong in the initial two years, but started to dwindle after the 2004 mission, to be picked up in late 2005 by its Conflict Prevention Unit. The technical advice missions and financial support to REDES in the early days (2002/4) were vital in REDES’ program formulation and staff capacity building to develop a multi-stakeholder and sector approach that incorporated all six BCPR service lines. While REDES matured and diversified its funding sources, the SADU (Youth and Protection) and Mine Action units continued its funding and backstopping dialogues, which left a clear mark on the REDES program, considering the progress made in mine awareness and youth network building. Furthermore, BRSP/BCPR’s Small Grants to CSOs pilot project allowed REDES to develop insights in partnering with the women peace movement and experiment with organizational development of vulnerable groups: women, indigenous and youth organizations, both in and outside three program regions, with a strong focus on horizontal bridge building and vertical advocacy linking capacity. The Colombia SCP was evaluated by BCPR in the spring of 2006; results were very encouraging, making BCPR approve a second SGF phase, with a continued focus on national level LPIII, NCRR and vulnerable group initiatives. In all, BCPR provided two two-year integrated grants to REDES for a total sum of 1.84m USD. With the seed funds, REDES brought Sida on board in 2004 and four smaller grants in 2005, which doubled the annual budget from 1.3m USD to 3.5m USD in 2006.

At the debriefing session to REDES’ bilateral donor agencies, hosted by Sida, there was general agreement that communication and coordination among bilateral donors needs to be improved. With the exception of Sida, all donors have picked specific themes and/or regions to fund, which not only reduces effective donor coordination, but puts a heavy monitoring and reporting burden on the REDES administration too. Closer consultation among donors could lead to a core funding approach and the formation of a donor consortium will reduce administrative burden. Lastly, the REDES’ regional counterparts would benefit from a more active role of the international donor community in national level advocacy for peace, inclusionary governance and public policy changes.

All interviewed stakeholders (European Commission, Acción Social among others) involved in the EU funded third Peace Laboratory (LPIII) agreed that REDES has made a valuable and important contribution in preparing the ground for the actual implementation of its two regional programs in the Meta and MM. In this respect, the work carried out by REDES at national level and in its articulation with the regional and local levels, constitutes a particularly important asset. REDES’ work and methodology is also likely to be useful with regard to project activities focused on ethnic minorities, women and youth, based on REDES’ Small Grants Program, which enriched its work with civil society at large.

It therefore seems likely that REDES will provide added value through the accompaniment of the LPIII in the coordination of its thematic component, "Iniciativas para la paz", which prioritizes Afro-Colombians, indigenous peoples as well as women and children as special beneficiary categories. REDES would be particularly well equipped to: i) provide technical assistance to this component implementation; ii) provide access to linkages and dialogue platforms that form part of the REDES work carried out so far, to reach new groups and initiatives; and iii) convey the political importance of UN involvement in the LPIII, thus reaffirming the importance of the effort promoted by the European Commission, especially vis-à-vis the new National Development Plan.

The channeling of EU and World Bank funds to the regions however, puts a heavy administrative management burden on the local REDES counterparts. In the case of MM, the Fundación is at risk of getting overstretched by these additional responsibilities, to the detriment of its technical assistance work and deserves greater attention and better sharing of coordination roles. Moreover, it was not clear to the team what the REDES responsibility is vis-à-vis the oversight of LPIII and Acción Social funds disbursed in the regions. Because the Acción Social budgets are integrated in the overall REDES and UNDP budgets, one may assume a direct responsibility, even for the programs in regions outside the REDES program, while in case of the PLIII, REDES will not play an intermediary funding role. It is important to clarify this political, coordination and funding responsibilities before the next REDES phase starts.

4.4 Lessons learned

4.4.1 Common characteristics of REDES' best practices

REDES has developed a series of strategies that prove to be effective to initiate development and reconciliation projects in the midst of violent conflict. Chapter 3, the findings, documented the variety of project interventions and networks and alliances fostered. Without repeating details, the evaluation selected five REDES best practices, which sum up the effectiveness of the program in the regions and require in-depth documentation to provide possible models to other UNDP programs operating in conflict environments.

The core good REDES practices can be identified as:

- Accompaniment of development and peace processes at local and regional level
- Revival of local civil society organizations to (re)build social capital and cohesion
- Fostering of alliances between local government–civil society to begin restore confidence
- Facilitation of local dialogue and protection initiatives of vulnerable groups, particularly successful among youth and peasants
- Linking local initiatives to national public policy agenda and vice versa to promote structural transformation and CPR awareness (e.g. mine awareness and prevention).
- Use of international community leverage in regional programs

Six common characteristic could explain the success of these good practices:

- i) Political vision
- ii) Political commitment to accompany risky dialogue processes
- iii) In-depth knowledge of conflict and stakeholder interests
- iv) Participatory, multi-stakeholder involvement
- v) Identification and engagement of local leadership
- vi) Rights based development orientation (inclusion and equality)

Experienced REDES coordinators need to reflect on these practices in the next phase planning and work with the knowledge management and SURF staff to develop ten simple, measurable

indicators to monitor future REDES progress and share their experiences with UNDP staff active in other conflict environments. During the staff interviews, several best practices were identified; most are micro cases in which one or several of the good practices helped make a breakthrough at community or CSO level. To increase the cases' universal applicability, it is necessary to seek for the common lessons, like the ones suggested above or others, which identify aspects of a higher order, to improve the mutual benefit of ongoing BCPR linking and learning exchanges with international agencies' staff. A final good practice that was raised by several REDES staff members, is the predominantly local (Colombian) identity of the REDES team; the mission had no means to verify this, but it could be an interesting topic in future comparative BCPR research.

4.4.2 Threats and weaknesses

The REDES program has also met with several restrictions that caused intrinsic weaknesses. The evaluation has highlighted four:

- i) Lack of good governance and impunity in deadly conflict zones
- ii) National level political institutional and advocacy engagement
- iii) Internal UNDP program coordination and CPR mainstreaming
- iv) Limited donor communication and lack of coordination

Opportunities and threats posed by the internal UNDP coordination and management implications of limited donor coordination were discussed in chapter 3.3; thus only i and ii are explained here.

Good governance in deadly conflict zones

MM and Meta were selected as REDES regions, because of their violent conflict scenario in which legal and illegal armed groups fiercely defend territories under their economic, political and social control. In MM and Meta, the national Army, FARC and AUC are the de facto ruling powers and use their military force and affiliated organizations to exercise full authoritarian control, which includes directing the nomination of local government officials and allocations of budgets at the cost of the public policy and fundamental human rights. In this context, the authority of local and regional authorities is severely undermined and debilitated, and the civilians are rendered at the mercy of armed groups. How to strategically empower democratic governance institutions in such a hostile and corrupt environment? The lack of good governance and rule of law makes working on transforming government-civil society relations and creating participatory development processes a serious challenge in the regions.

A few inspiring results, like the signing of the "pacto de gobernabilidad" in MM and Meta, indicate that intermediate strategies can be pursued to create spaces for public-private debate in which civil society can influence regional public planning and budget processes to improve the social accountability and transparency of local governments. Such strategies largely rely on capable social organizations that can advocate for changes in political practices and participate in political dialogues. The accompaniment of REDES proved essential in building local capacity to interact with official institutions. Still, major public policy change and structural transformation of power relations can not be among the expected REDES results and impact. This reality should inform the choice of indicators too.

National level political advocacy engagement

REDES has strategic cooperation agreements with various national level government institutions, most notably the National Planning Department (= DNP) and Acción Social. The Development and Peace Unit in its Directorate for Justice and Security evaluates EU's LP programs, and REDES' technical assistance and political dialogue support is meant to institutionalize PDP practices as good public policy to eventually enhance the impact of REDES interventions in the regions. While the EU is concerned that REDES involvement is convenient for the national government to

delegate responsibilities of formulating operational peace and development plans to REDES and civil society partners, again in the given context, it seems the best of options.

What is however of paramount importance is to maintain a high national level advocacy pressure on the Government to provide minimal guarantees to realize essential policy changes to improve the participation and inclusion of marginalized communities in national development and peace processes. In this effort, REDES needs more substantial and strategic support from UNDP and the wider UN system.

V. Recommendations

5.1 Recommendations to UNDP and REDES management

a. Strengthen the REDES development strategy

Rights approach to development: The team recommends that REDES incorporates the RTD in its program analysis and international dialogues, while preserving the unique Colombian peace and development discourse for local audiences. Profiling the REDES program from the RTD and human security perspective will facilitate the formulation of more strategic outcome and impact indicators and a better understanding of the REDES model and experience in other post-conflict countries. The twelve separate action lines need reformulation in five comprehensive clusters: human security, socio-political and organizational development, socio-economic development, reconciliation and justice and CPR mainstreaming.

The team strongly recommends that REDES continues to strengthen and expand the support to and incorporation of grassroots organizations and groups such as peasants and indigenous peoples in the Meta and MM regional programs, since these are representing the most vulnerable and prioritised groups with respect to the aims and objectives of REDES and the regional PDPs.

The team advises that the pilot project on integral alternative development activities to substitute illicit coca cultivation in Meta be continued and deepened in order to produce methodological and organizational knowledge and experience that can subsequently be transferred to the regional components of the Peace Laboratories as well as used as inputs into an urgently needed alternative strategy to reduce illicit coca cultivation.

Good governance in CSOs: Both the RTD and human security strategies place a great importance to the role of civil society, as key mediating agents between communal groups, governments and markets and as key partner to the government to resolve conflicts, which is the essence of the REDES strategy too. A strong civil society is vital to Colombia's capacity to manage social and economic transformation peacefully and mediate conflict. To increase the sustainability of the networks and alliances fostered in the REDES regions, it is recommended to pay more attention to monitoring good governance practices in CSOs (representative and rotating leadership, accountable and transparent management and participatory decision making with beneficiaries). A Small Grants Fund for CSOs initiatives needs to be integrated in all regional programs to facilitate community level economic and social projects and increase beneficiary ownership of regional efforts.

Vulnerable groups: REDES needs to promote representation and participation of vulnerable groups in the work and management of all its CSO partners, next to strengthening and accompanying vulnerable group organizations, like youth, women in vulnerable positions, IDPs, indigenous people and Afro-Colombians. REDES can tap from the valuable experiences of the

Small grants program to strengthen women, minority CSOs and the REDES' national-regional alliances, which also provides an interesting framework for the thematic component of the LPIII.

b. Mainstream human rights focus

HR mainstreaming: to increase the sustainability and impact of the human rights awareness and dialogue projects, round tables and regional constituencies, it is recommended REDES mainstreams human rights issues and relevant HR change agents in its regional programs. The RTD approach provides a more explicit normative and legal context and underlines government responsibility. In addition, specific projects could be developed to follow-up on the network meetings at local level; i.e. to launch community level conflict resolution projects in collaboration with the "Justices of Peace" and "conciliadores en equidad" and the training in human rights and conflict resolution of mayors (UNHCHR & PGN).

Gender equality: gender equality and women's rights require a more deliberate focus too. While women are participating in good numbers in all REDES programs at every level, the program lacks an explicit gender analysis. REDES needs to rethink its women's program and set targets to increase the physical, social and economic security of women, their participation in decision making and peace processes, and their organizational capacity.

Truth, justice and reconciliation: at the time of the mission the development of nine regional NCRR offices and the involvement of key REDES' partners were much debated. The evaluation recommends focusing primarily on strengthening of victim organizations at local and national level, on advocacy for international standards in NCRR process and on accompaniment of essential work in reconstruction of the truth (historic memory), access to justice and to reparation. REDES could partner with various initiatives, recently started, to monitor the impact of the reincertion of demobilised combatants and IDP populations on the receiving communities.

c. Role of REDES in UNDP Colombia

Territorial Development Strategy: REDES needs to articulate its strategy and unique CPR approach in UNDP Colombia's new "Territorial Development and Peace Strategy" that is being developed to bring greater coherence and consistency among UNDP programs and improve resource mobilization and coordination. The team learned this new strategy gives REDES the responsibility for internal monitoring and coordination of field program planning. This would provide a good opportunity for CPR mainstreaming, provided clear guidelines on REDES' responsibility and authority are agreed upon by all. REDES can lead an institutional reflection on the way in which UNDP Colombia identifies new regional programs and improve its methodology and focus. However, some internal brainstorm documents seem to present REDES as social mobilization program, after which other programs like ArtGold take over. Other debates suggest that REDES should focus on local and regional levels, while national level advocacy for policy change will be coordinated by the UNDP Office.

National level advocacy and vertical alliances: Both lines of thought could undermine the comprehensive REDES philosophy. Linear regional program planning does not seem feasible, as geographic and beneficiary selection criteria differ dramatically among UNDP programs (REDES deliberately works in conflict zones with most vulnerable groups). REDES' national level public policy advocacy is rooted in its regional work through facilitation and accompaniment of vertical alliance building processes between national government and local civil society actors. Moreover, local actors in key reconciliation processes (like DDR, reinsertion, NCRR, victim organizations claims) need the accompaniment of REDES at national level. National peace and development debates need to be shared in the regions and local and national agendas need to be linked. Hence, national policy advocacy is vital to the REDES concept and its ultimate success.

UNDP support to REDES: Although the advocacy work carried out by REDES at national level needs strengthening in terms of technical backstopping, the alliances promoted by REDES offer good platforms to influence participatory public policy formulation, to operationally national policies in the field and to provide a feedback mechanism for local civil society that will be affected by these policies. UNDP and REDES need to restore national level advocacy relations that were somewhat neglected during the long senior management transition phase in 2005/6, to advocate for more institutional support (political, technical and financial) to the NPD's Justice and Peace Unit that monitors the Peace Laboratories with REDES support, dialogue on security, protection and economic aspects of the reinsertion process of demobilized combatants and displaced communities, on improving procedures for victim testimonies in the NCCR, on land tenure conflicts etc.

Strengthen coordination of UNDP knowledge management: A third priority is to streamline the knowledge management and best practices collection efforts in UNDP Colombia. According to the Annual Plan 2006, 23 percent of Sida's REDES contribution is to be spending on three units: HDU, REDES' knowledge management unit and the SURF. This high allocation is however not met by practical results on REDES best practice dissemination. Three recommendations: i) clarify concepts and methodology of best practice documentation among the units; ii) as HDU received 17% of REDES budget, it is fair to request them to partially support the REDES knowledge management unit and conduct applied research in REDES program regions, iii) UNDP Colombia publications need to include REDES achievements to share with BCPR practitioners elsewhere. A priority is to analyze the Youth networks, as part of BCPR's global 2nd Youth and Conflict project.

d. Secure and enhance sustainability of REDES achievements in the next phase

To promote the development and reconciliation strategy nation wide, REDES would need to expand its program to additional regions and develop an exit strategy for MM and Meta in the next program phase. To this end, different program choices in MM and Meta need a thorough analysis to come to an overarching strategy, especially vis-à-vis desired partnership models with local authorities. To increase its programmatic efficiency and sustainability, REDES needs to consider decentralizing its program management and increasing its staff presence in the field.

REDES has to select ten outcome indicators that reflect how objectives have been met as result of its four key strategies (community organizing, alliance building, public policy, knowledge management) and assess the impact of these results on overcoming the eight development and peace impediments. REDES needs to seek the assistance of experienced program management and monitoring experts to assist in designing a simple but effective system. Unfortunately such expertise is not available in REDES partner institutions (HDU, SURF, Sida nor BRCP New York), that are all weak in result and impact assessment. Next REDES need to provide training to its field staff to get familiarized and enabled to monitor their own work as a continued process.

Selection criteria for new regions, beyond the existing list, could include cross-border conflicts²⁶ and humanitarian aid harmonization considerations (follow-up of the ISAJ mission, UNDP is to coordinate early recovery programs). REDES could also build on its work with ethnic minorities, women and youth at national level under the Small Grants Program, e.g. in the accompaniment of partners in the Peace Laboratory III that has a similar thematic focus. REDES needs to prepare its expansion to new regions in timely manner, construct a good baseline and design regional partnership strategies with monitor-able indicators. For its longer term feasibility and sustainability REDES need to develop a sustainable budget plan that generates sufficient funds, but keeps at the same time, room for the unique REDES sociopolitical strategy. In this respect, UNDP needs to

²⁶ The border region with Ecuador seems good option, as UNDP runs a regional development and peace program on the other side.

promote a more comprehensive in-country UN mini-reform by piloting experimental lean UNDP procedures and innovative inter-agency partnerships

5.2 Recommendations to REDES in relation to other actors

a. Strengthen dialogue with national institutions

Formulate a unified strategy to interact with government departments and local entities (like the DP, PGN); to this end, REDES needs to improve its external communication and formulate a public information strategy to promote the program's core messages. Stepping up political advocacy at national level will complement the bottom up transformation process. Such advocacy could aim at building wider institutional support at national level for REDES' regional good governance initiatives, like the signing of good governance pacts, citizens' participation in planning and budgeting of municipal development plans, which require willingness and investments of government institutions to partner with civil society.

b. International leverage to political national level advocacy processes

Support from REDES core donors, like Sida, BCPR, Spain and Netherlands, in national level advocacy for public policy change (e.g. High Commissioner for Peace) will complement the local efforts to build a new governance tradition bottom up. It is important that REDES gets strategically positioned in the international and UN-community, e.g. through participation in four permanent inter-agency working groups to seek advocacy alliances and to fulfill its CPR mainstreaming obligation.

c. Improve communication and coordination among REDES donor agencies

The team advises to REDES' donor groups form a donor consortium, consider institutional funding (unearmarked) and to agree on one common project planning, monitoring and reporting system. This would reduce the administrative burden on REDES and its key partners like CORDEPAZ and Fundación considerably. Likewise, it is recommended that UNDP and EU work together to come to one set of monitoring indicators and financial reporting requirements for LPIII program funding in MM and Meta.

The team strongly recommends Sida to continue its good donor partnership practice and "political accompaniment" of REDES' good governance, development and peace advocacy at national level advocacy to change public policy and create a culture of peace in Colombia.