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The Conflict Prevention and Transformation Project (CPT) Approach and its Impact
– Internal Assessment –

A Report by Günther Schlee about a consultancy to the
Conflict Prevention and Transformation Project
of GTZ/DIALOG with visits to Addis Abeba and Adama (Oromia),
March 30 to April 9, 2006

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The CPT Project Approach and its Impact – Internal Assessment

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Contents

Acronyms

CBG   Capacity Building and Governance
CC   Competence Centre
CPT   Conflict Prevention and Transformation
GO   Government Organisation
GTZ   Gesellschaft für technische Zusammenarbeit
JIDA   Jijiga Indigenous Development Association
MoFA   Ministry of Federal Affairs
NGO   Non-Governmental Organisation
ONLF   Ogadeen National Liberation Front
OPDO   Oromo People's Democatic Organization
SNNPR   Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples Regional State
ToT   Training of trainers

0. Introduction

This is a report to DIALOG, a consultancy firm working for GTZ, about an 11-days consultancy in Addis Ababa and Adama (formerly Nazareth, in Oromia State, Ethiopia) from March 30 to April 9, 2006. The visit had originally been planned for September 2005, but needed to be postponed because of political turbulences. It is these political circumstances which occasion me to address a question of professional ethics at the beginning of this report:

Being a GTZ project, CPT (Conflict Prevention and Transformation) is located in a framework of government to government cooperation. More specifically, the Ethiopian partner is the Ministry of Federal Affairs. Generally, development cooperation takes place with many countries which are examples of growing democracies, and often the justification of projects comprises the argument that the measures taken might improve the conditions for invigorating democracy, transforming, in fact, difficult situations in democracies into an argument for, not against, cooperation.

The wider the gap between state and society, the more problematic it is to be closely associated with the state if one wants to promote a new culture of conflict resolution in the entire society. The relationship of the project to state and society therefore need to be well thought of.

A major component of the CPT project is to train conflict mediators and trainers of such mediators (the latter is also known as ToT, training of trainers). The course took place in a hotel at Adama were Dr Kassahun Berhanu, who was on the same assignment and submits a separate report, and the author stayed from March 30 to April 2. My other activities were participation in discussions on the resource conflicts in and around South Omo Park at the CBG office, Addis Abeba, a visit with Drs Ernst Reichenbach and Kassahun Berhanu to the Ministry of Federal Affairs (State Minister Maerego Haile Mariam, Mr Tesfaselassie Mezgebe, Acting Head, Democratization Department, Ms Amzale Zenebe, Democratization Department, April 4), participation in the Reflection Round (GTZ, DIALOG, MoFA, SNNPR authorities) in the Wabe Shebelle Hotel, Addis Ababa, April 6, and a renewed visit to Adama on April 7.

The present report will focus on the training and the conversations with trainees. Information gathered on the other occasions will find their way into footnotes and into the recommendations at the end.

1. The level of training reached

The author, together with Dr. Kassahun Berhanu, had the opportunity to witness the better part of a day's training on March 31, 2006, at Adama (Nazareth). On that day, mock training units were presented by teams of two or three. These covered a great variety of themes. This gave us not a complete overview but a representative sample of the contents taught and an idea of the level of training reached. We also had conversations with the trainer, Hagen Berndt, and the trainees, whom we interviewed in small groups, two or three at a time, in one case four, mostly region by region and by kind of sending institution (GO versus NGO).

The overall impression was that teaching had been done in a very systematic fashion and a great deal of knowledge as well as communicative skills had been transmitted. One of the trainees told us that he had not really worked on conflicts so far and that he was not sure he would do so in the future, but that on this training he had learned techniques of presentation (proceeding systematically, using visual aids, getting feed-back from the audience) and of moderating a discussion which would come in very useful whatever he would be doing. In the case of all other

participants to whom we talked, the professional connection to conflict and mediation was very clear, as that also had been among the criteria of selection. In a way, therefore, the one who said he was not very clear what his work had to do with conflicts marks the minimal line of achievement: Even if not all of the participants will work for the rest of their lives in conflict mediation, they still have acquired skills which are useful for all sorts of other tasks as well.

I shall continue with some limitations which need to be borne in mind when planning the future work. The complexities of ethnic conflicts had not been covered. The trainer was fully aware of that and stated that such matters might be the content of a more advanced level of training.

The definition of conflict frequently cited in the presentations, namely that "conflict is a relationship between two or more persons or groups who have incompatible objectives" may be good enough for the everyday cases of a quarrel in the office, the family or the neighbourhood or strictly localised resource conflicts looked at in a limited time perspective, i.e. for the less complex real or invented cases which have been used for the teaching.

Larger scale conflicts in which people seek wider alliances and in which changing ethnic and religious or other identifications play a role, cannot be analysed if one starts with the assumption that there must be two or more well-defined actors who can be easily identified. Who stands with whom against whom and how alliances as well as the definition of the enemies or opponents change over time, needs to be posed as a question and clarified at the start. Analysts who concentrate on the question what the conflict is about (the resource question) and fail to address the question who against whom (by accepting the first-glance information like "Oromo against Somali", "Orthodox against Pente" …as given fact) are likely to fail in their endeavour to gain more useful knowledge for conflict resolution than an untrained person would be able to gain.

Also the matter with the "incompatible objectives" is more complex than it looks at the first approach. In fact, conflict often goes along with sameness. There may be sameness of objectives, of values, and of means. If people covet the same object (say a gold mine or a water point), have the same values (say manliness) and habitually use the same means (say violence), prospects for peaceful conflict resolution are particularly bad. On the other hand, people with clearly defined differences, often visibly distinct groups occupying different occupational niches, pursuing different 'objectives', conforming to different standards of value, may live side by side with each other for centuries, maybe not always happily but without major violent clashes. Such models of ethnic division of labour or caste-like systems may not conform to modern ideas of equality and individual freedom, but they certainly are a way to secure relative peace.

On the whole it needs to be said that questions of closeness and distance, of identity and difference, of defining oneself and others, allies as well as 'enemies', have not yet been addressed in a satisfactory manner. In a country like Ethiopia, where the idea of splitting up territories between ethnic groups has led to innumerable conflicts of access to resources, as well as conflicts about administrative status and political representation, in all of which people stress differences or make appeals to wider similarities in order to form alliances, it is surprising that identity politics of this sort is so weakly represented in a curriculum about conflict resolution.

There seemed to be general agreement that the first module of the training, which was about communication skills (Peter Siebenhühner) and the third module about conflict theory and transformation (Hagen Berndt) had been thoroughly prepared and been taught in an excellent way. There seems, however, to have been a weak phase in the middle. The trainers chosen for module two on mediation appeared to have problems even with the English language.

Between the phases, it was planned to let the trainees acquire some practice. This, however, did not take place due to the lack of a qualified coach. There was a qualified person, but the consent to employ him was withdrawn by the Ministry. During our visit there we informed the State Minister of the adverse consequences of this decision and of the fact that all other stake-holders in the project unanimously lamented this decision of the Government.

2. Insights gained from conversations with trainees from the three project regions

The main text of the following sections (2.1.-2.3.) in a free form renders the information obtained from the interviewees. Comments by the author are added in edged brackets: […]. Additional information stemming from other sources has been relegated into the footnotes. In some cases these footnotes help to round of the information about the respective areas a bit. But the aim here is not to give a complete picture or conflict map of the respective regions, but to show in which kind of setting the trainees had worked and would be working on CPT. The description largely follows their perceptions of the conflicts. More complete regional overviews in the framework of this project have been given by Kalkalachew and Falge (2005) and Kalkalachew (2005). Also some of the present author's earlier work deals with conflict analysis directly, taking up examples from the region (Schlee 2003, 2004). Some of these analyses can by now be read as part of the history of Oromo/Somali relations (Schlee and Shongolo 1995). Attention also needs to be drawn to a recent MA thesis on the Boran Oromo/Degodia Somali conflict (Fekadu 2004).

During the Reflection Round mention was also made of a "confidential" report to MoFA on the 'Isa Somali/Afar conflict, which had been produced in the CBG framework. It is, of course, highly questionable what secret knowledge there might be in addition to what everyone can get from Afar and 'Isa elders, NGO workers, academics, or Government officers for the simple asking. Nevertheless, the spirit of confidentiality, is contrary to the ethos of development cooperation where transparency is a value of great importance. The emphasis should be on spreading knowledge, not on collecting and monopolizing it. The more people have an enlightened understanding of the conflicts they are involved in, the more rationality will flow into the resolution of these conflicts. Writing secret reports to the Government should therefore be stopped with immediate effect. Otherwise CBG could get into an unsavoury proximity to secret service work.

The veil of secrecy regarding other issues with which the Government surrounds itself may also at times be harmful to its own image. Ethiopia is a country rife with conspiracy theories, and the Government very often is regarded as being involved . Wherever there are signs of exploration or exploitation of mineral resources or any goods are shipped from A to B, there are rumours about secret deals. Transparency, openness in addressing problems, and consultation with everyone might do a great deal to improve relationships between Government and society.

2.1. Afar

Two of our interlocutors came from Afar Regional Government Institutions, namely the Border Affairs Office and the Afar Management Institute.

The Afar Region is bordered by four Ethiopian regional states: Amhara, Tigrai, Oromia, and the Somali Regional State. In other parts its border runs along international boundaries, namely with Eritrea and Djibouti. The Border Affairs Office deals exclusively with the borders internal to Ethiopia. Anything having to do with international borders falls under the competency of the Federal Government. In practice, however, problems with other Ethiopian regions and with foreign states may also interpenetrate each other. An example is the 'Isa-Somali who, apart from being the

largest ethnic group of Djibouti, can also be found in the Somali Region of Ethiopia. Among 'Isa raiders who were killed Djibouti soldiers were found[1].

As to inter-state relationships internal to Ethiopia, the counterparts of the Border Affairs Office are the *woreda*s of neighbouring regions which border Afar. The focus of activities is on conflict prevention. There are committees on *kabele* and *woreda* level. At the lowest, the kabele level, there is no involvement of the Regional Government except for some facilitation. It is only from the *woreda* level upwards that Regional Government personnel gets involved. The committees comprise elders, religious leaders and 'traditional' chiefs. In joint meetings of neighbouring *kabele*s and *woreda*s, from different sides of an inter-state border, the chair is assumed by an Afar if the meeting takes place on the Afar side, and by a Tigre, Amhara, Oromo or whatever the case may be, if the meeting is held on the Tigrai, Amhara or Oromia side. The instruments are not just border delineation and division of resources, but also forms of shared use. In times of need, access to pastures is granted to herders from across the border on a temporary basis. Another recurrent topic is cattle rustling. The committees engage in mediation with the aim of returning the cattle. If homicide has occurred in such clashes, that is a matter for joint committees on the *woreda* level.

On the usefulness of the training, the following comments were made: In Afar, traditional practices and procedures are followed. The methods taught in this training, are 'modern' and new to Ethiopia. In the case of Afar, a peripheral area with a largely nomadic population and very 'backwards', this contrast is even more marked. Our interlocutors did not elaborate on the prospect of being able or unable to combine the new techniques with the old procedures[2].

The Afar Management Institute was set up in 2003. It deals with Capacity Building and Human Resource Development. So far it has trained *woreda* level clerks. This Institute can also host one of the planned Competence Centres (CC).

2.2. Somali Region

From the point of view of our interlocutors who present institutions of the Somali Regional State, there are three levels of conflict in and around that region:
1. There are international conflicts which are beyond their capacity, because the Federal Government is in charge of them. They are a matter between the army and "rebel groups" with foreign links.
2. Conflicts of the second level are those about representation in the federal system. Border conflicts between territorial units and questions of status of towns and areas (zone, *woreda*, *kebele*) within them are such problems brought about in relation with the relatively new (1991-) order of ethnic federalism.
3. Finally there are "traditional conflicts". Some of these have undergone recent transformations. With the impoverishment and sedentarisation of nomads as a result of

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[1] In a similar fashion, Ethiopian soldiers have been suspected to increase their income by occasionally joining civilians on raids against Kenyan pastoralists.
[2] In the hierarchically structured Afar society in particular, but also in the case of all other groups where one might intervene with CPT measures, it needs to be clarified in which way the new methods taught to the trainees are to be integrated with the practice of customary law and the activities of elders, ritual leaders, and local institutions in general. Will elders be trained in the new methods? Or will there be parallel mediation, modern and traditional? Cf. on Afar Kelkelatchew and Falge 2005, 15 ff, on traditional institutions in general ibid. p. 4, 8f.

recent droughts, the question often is no longer about access to wells and rights to pastures, but about urban plots[3] and new forms of income.

Perceptions differ as to the linkages and transitions between these levels. The Ogadeen National Liberation Front (ONLF) no doubt is a political movement with foreign links (level 1). On the other hand the Ogadeen or various subclans of them are engaged in a struggle with the Shekhaash (Sheekhaal) who claim a territory of their own, in administrative terms a "special woreda" (level 2). One view was that the ONLF managed to stay clear of clan clashes within the Somali Region. It was, however, acknowledged that the opponents of the Ogadeen might have a different view of this. Also the following explanations point to interpenetrations of these levels.

The Shekhaash lived as a kind of priestly group interspersed with the Ogadeen. Now, with the new order of ethnic (and in the Somali case: clan based) territoriality, there has been an un-mixing of clans. The Shekhaash have gathered around Raaso. This happened at the territorial expense of the Ogadeen subclans who used to utilise that area. The conflict has so far demanded a death toll of over 2000. The Sheekhaash have got money from the diaspora [where they are well-represented because they have minority status in many areas and can use the corresponding mechanisms for claiming asylum] and from Saudi Arabia and are well armed, even with rocket launchers. This conflict has passed the traditional capacity of elders to handle it by means of compensation. Of some Ogadeen subclans the entire male population over 15 has been wiped out. Federal forces as well have supported the Sheekhaash in order to weaken the Ogadeen.

In the border issue with Oromia, in 13 *woreda*s a referendum has been held. Moyale is a special case, because the referendum there has been postponed repeatedly and has so far not been held. The reason for this is that the Oromo there are OPDO and are close to the Federal Government. As the Somali are the majority in Moyale, the referendum was stopped. It seems, however, unclear whether the claim to a Somali majority stated by our interlocutors implies that there are more Somali than (Boran) Oromo in Moyale or that there are more Somali than all other ethnic groups combined.[4] The idea that only the numbers of Somali and Oromo should count in order to determine whether the town should belong to Oromia or the Somali Region seems to point to the former. The OPDO propaganda in Moyale was said to have taken up Christian undertones: The Somali will take over the churches and convert them into mosques[5].

In the areas of Assabod and Birdode Somali have been evicted by Oromo who were supported by the police. There is mistrust among the Somali against the head of the Federal Police who is an Oromo. The most virulent conflict has been in Babille. That woreda had been split in near equal halves, and the referendum has confirmed that situation: 11 kebeles have voted for Oromia, 10 for the Somali Region. Here Karanle Hawiye (related to the subclan of the warlord Qanyere Afrax in Mogadishu) have in many cases voted for Oromia, because they were unsatisfied with their status within the Somali Region, an interesting twist on Somali nationalism. Further north the Jarso community has voted for Oromia and since then Oromia has a common boundary with Somaliland[6].

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[3] Urban land was mentioned in this context by our interlocutors. Sedentarization of nomads may, of course, also lead to increased competition for arable land.

[4] According to another sourche the (Boran) Oromo are said to have contended a referendum to be administered before the issue of a sizable Somali returnee population in Moyale has been settled. The returnees are reportedly temporarily settled in Moyale by the Somali-Moyale Woreda Administration. The Boran were said to have demanded that these Somali returnees who originally fled also from places in Southern Ethiopia other than Moyale area were excluded from the referendum.

[5] According to Kelkelachew (2005, part 2.2) thirty *woreda*s have been affected by the Oromo/Somali border dispute. In sixteen of these conflicts can be currently observed. Several of these are of a violent nature.

[6] Kelkelachew (2005, part 2.2 cites the Jarso as a case for a group "who have been considering themselves and have been considered as Somali by others, and are fond to change their claims […] in order to ensure entitlement both in the distribution of power and resources."

Elsewhere the referendums have resulted in "pocket areas" (exclaves, enclaves). While local populations, often bilingual or also just monolingual in the language of the group to which they genealogically do *not* belong, have settled peacefully for generations, now Oromo nationalists from Shoa or Wollega want to promote and expand Oromoness and force people to identify either as Oromo or as Somali. Accepting to be Oromo implies having to teach one's children the Oromo language. In spite of the high degree of bilingualism, Somali parents would not actively encourage the use of that language and give up their own, because of the closer association of the Somali language with Islam.

In a separate discussion with an NGO worker yet another aspect of the present situation were mentioned: Since 1988, the onslaught of the Siad Barre Regime against the Isaaq clan and the bombing of Hargeisa, there have been camps around Jijiga for refugees from what now (again) is Somaliland. Not all of them returned to Somaliland, but many left the camps because the strict regulations there interfered with their business. These "spontaneous resettlers", as they are known in the administrative jargon, have filled and expanded the suburbs of Jijiga. The problems this entails seem to be of two different kinds: Those who engage successfully in business are competitors of local Somali, and those who have failed to succeed have become destitute. This and other problems are addressed by the Jijiga Indigenous Development Association (JIDA) which counts the Belgian government among its donors.

About the training those among our interlocutors who were delegated from government institutions explained that they profited from it very much, but that they are uncertain of the prospects of being able to apply what they have learned here in the Somali Region. Because of political instability they were worried about their professional futures. Further inquiries in their clan affiliations and into how they were affected by Somali clan politics were not made.

2.3. Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples Regional State

Three institutions situated at the Regional Sate level of the Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples Regional State (SNNPR) were represented by one trainee each among our interlocutors: the Justice and Security Ministry (more specifically the Legal Research and Education Department of the Legal Division of that Ministry), the Council of Nationalities (CoN), and the Pastoralist Areas Development Coordination Commission (PADCC).

The SNNPR with its 15 Million people and 56 recognized ethnic groups differs from both Afar and Somali in its complexity. It can be compared with Ethiopia as a whole, and in fact, with its CoN it mirrors the House of the Federation at the national level. Every one of these ethnic groups has the right to develop its own culture unless the practices these cultures prescribe are contradictory to the constitution.

In family law, for instance, different customary forms of marriage are recognized. This, however, does not extend to polygyny. If a man marries more than one wife, all his marriages cease to be recognized by the state. What this means in practice, however, remains to be explored. Future children of a polygynist, for example, can be registered as children of their father. Non-recognition of a marriage thus in practice does not lead to non-recognition of relations of fatherhood resulting from it. [Possibly the legal status exclusively accorded to monogamous marriage is part of modernist rhetoric which amounts to little in practice. One could bring the law closer to reality by recognizing polygynous marriages as well. The alternative is to continue with the existing inconsistency of having a rule (monogamy) but not pushing it too far in practice. It makes sense to

be guided by pragmatism and not by the application of principles through all their logical ramifications.]

Ethnic diversity does not extend to penal law, which in theory is unified. In practice, this unification of a domain of law only extends to cases which are brought to the attention of state institutions or in which state institutions have an active interest to prosecute. Outside the reach of state law traditional forms of law are practiced and also applied to cases the state would have regarded as falling under its penal law. All this seems to be tacitly accepted by the state.

In and around towns, state courts tend to be overloaded with petty cases which could be resolved by arbitration. One trainee perceived a market niche there. He thought of setting up his own centre, were one would get arbitration for a fee. He was sure to deliver a better service than traditional elders who tend to "make a mess, are not trained, and do not know how to keep written records."

As a recent resource conflict with implications for justice and security and with involvement of various state institutions and development agencies, the lease of Nechsar National Park to a private company, African Parks, was mentioned. Due to the eviction of fishermen and wood collectors from the Park area (apparently commissioned by government, but publicly ascribed to the company) thousands of people have been deprived of their livelihood. "Now fishermen have become thieves, because they struggle for survival".[7] [There are divergent views. I have also heard the opinion that fishing is not really been made impossible, because only parts of the lakes near Nechsar are part of the Park. It is also claimed that there has been severe over-fishing and that some form of regulation is in everyone's interest.]

In the cases of ethnic conflicts along the borders of SNNPR[8] the Southern Region authorities try to document grievances and to mediate solutions. In the case of the massacres of Gedeo some years ago, it was regretted that no data had been collected on the Oromia side[9].

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[7] African Parks is seeking the cooperation with development agencies for resolving conflicts about resources within the parks, in particular the one in South Omo, and in the buffer zones surrounding them. The task required would under different circumstances be regarded as a classical state task. There are different actors clashing over the same resources to which they claim entitlement by recourse to different elements of the law: the rights of leaseholders in the case of African Parks, time-honoured rights to pasture or fishing grounds in the case of local populations, etc. To harmonise and regulate the actions of different economic actors and stakeholders in resources, normally the state comes in with its policies: a legal policy, an economic policy, a development agenda … In this case it needs to be explored which levels, elements or institutions of the state have maintained the independence and superiority required of a regulating power to which degree, so that they can be involved in the regulation process to this extent. In certain ways, the state seems to have given up parts of its sovereignty. The game wardens are lent by the state to the company, which refunds their salaries. After their service, the wardens will receive a state pension.

If a development agency is assuming such regulatory or mediating functions and cooperating with African Parks it must find an arrangement which maintains its independence. The agencies have their own objectives and obligations towards their sponsors (in the case of GOs the tax payers of other countries) and operate for the common good, not in the interests of one particular economic actor like a private company. Financial arrangements therefore need to be long-term and unconditional, so that African Parks can not ensure compliance by financial pressure, and these arrangements and how they are put into practice need external supervision. (Personal summary of discussions held at the CBG office, 04/04/2006)

[8] Due to the brevity of time, in this interview other kinds of ethnic conflict, namely those internal to the SNNPR have not been discussed. These are numerous. Examples are the Sidama/Wolaita conflict about representation/status/possible segregation from SNNPR in the Awasa area ,or the conflicts arising from Konso agricultural expansion into the lowlands. There are also non-violent conflicts about cultural and linguistic matters: Should Dawro, Gamo and Wolaita languages agree on a compromise orthography and standardize their closely related languages as one language, or should standardization go along three (or more?) different lines? The tendency seems to be to go for smaller and smaller subdivisions. On the Omotic Highlands cf. also Data Dea. An overview of conflicts in the whole of SNNPR and Afar can be found in Kelkelachew and Falge 2005.

3. Recommendations

We have to subdivide our recommendations in two parts:
1. what needs to be done until the end of 2006 to round off what has to be done so far and to secure what has been achieved already.
2. As in all proposals what we are dealing here is a phase 1, we need to think about a possible phase 2.

In fact much would be left incomplete and underutilized if there is no phase 2 which builds up on what has been done until now. So will also address the time perspective 2007-2008 and beyond.

Recommendations for the remainder of 2006

The new trainees need to acquire practice before their new skills decline again by disuse. Depending on their inclinations and capacities, they have to engage in training others and/or in mediating conflicts. To do so effectively and to improve their ability of learning by doing, they require coaching.

Within this year the first generation of Competence Centres (CCc) need to be established. Likely host institutions have been identified:

-Somali Region:
The Somali Regional Management Institute was proposed by the trainees from the Region as a likely host institution. This is in agreement with the recommendation by Mehari (Mehari 2005: 35)

-Afar Region:
Afar Regional Management Institute.
An alternative solution would be to attach competence centres to the Councils. In Afar and Somali Regions, however, no representative bodies of the people exist on *woreda* and zonal levels. The only parliament (Council) is at the level of the Regional State. Zones and *woreda*s there only exist as subunits of the administration[10]. For the prospect of later proliferation of CCs to lower levels, the parliamentary structures offered no advantage in comparison to the Management Institute, because both can only be fond at the Regional State level. In the SNNPR there are Councils at all levels, but for different reasons it was decided to seek affiliation or partnership at this stage with the Council of Nationalities, a body of representation with a set of special tasks, which is a separate body from the ordinary legislation (Council) at the State level and does not have equivalents or outposts at the lower levels of administration.

-For the SNNPR:
the Council of Nationalities (CoN), which already has been involved in various stages of the deliberations, is the most likely host institution for a CC because of the tasks defined for it by the SNNPR constitution. These tasks comprise

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[9] The Gedeo occupy a fertile highland area largely within Oromia. Against the Gedeo, the Oromo engaged in non-traditional types of warfare. There seems to have been some instigation by urban elements and some support by people who owned lorries. Traditionally, the Guji, Arsi and Boran Oromo were mortal enemies. In each of these groups one could achieve a higher ritual status by killing a male member of one of the other two groups. In this case, Guji, Arsi, and Borana were brought from the far corners of southern Oromia to commit jointly atrocities against the Gedeo. If this reflects the new Oromo nationalism, then it is a very sad aspect of it.
[10] I owe this information to the State Minister, Ato Maeregu Haile Mariam

-interpreting the constitution of the Region
-organizing constitutional inquiries
-defining special rights of certain territorial subunits like special zones and special *woreda*s
-promoting unity at the Regional level
-settling disputes between levels of the State
-creating favourable conditions for the culture, the language and the preservation of the historical heritage of each of the nationalities
-bringing forth ideas for constitutional amendments
-relations with neighbouring Regional States, border issues.[11]

Many of these activities are so akin to CPT, that this overlap of concerns makes the CoN a very likely host institution for CCs in the field of CPT. In a longer time perspective, only one CC in the whole Regional State, located in the State Capital, Awasa, will not be enough. Due to the linguistic diversity, the different localized conflict configurations, and the difficulties in communication comprising several days travel to get from one part of SNNPR to the other, necessitate a de-centralized approach. The problem where to attach CCs in different parts of SNNPR, once enough competence has been generated to make more such centres possible, will have to be solved at a later stage. The same applies to Afar and Somali Regions, but in the case of the SNNPR to create a multiplicity of CCs is more imperative due to the diversity, population size and geographical fragmentation of the Southern Region.

During the "reflection round" the question was raised to whom in the Government structure the CCs would be answerable and to whom they should "report". This question reflects a wrong emphasis[12]. It was clarified that it is not intended to form a new branch with an internal hierarchy. People who will have been sent to the CCs by different branches of government will continue to belong to these branches and to be answerable to whoever they have been answerable before. Anyhow, the CCs cannot be a branch of Government, because they are meant to comprise also knowledgeable persons from NGOs and the wider society. They are a forum of exchange, a resource and depository of knowledge for GOs and NGOs alike. The role of the Government institutions mentioned as partners in the different regions is that of hosts, not of directors or commanders.

Recommendations for 2007+

If the trainees are to be made capable of mediating complex and larger scale conflicts involving interethnic and/or interregional relationships, they have to acquire a more advanced type of conflict theory, taught to them via examples from the narrower and wider region (Ethiopia, Horn of Africa …). What, among other things, this theory will have to address, has been explained above (part 1: The level of training reached). Further training will not only be required for raising the qualification of those who have been trained earlier. Also the quantity of trainees will have to be increased, to meet the foreseeable demand in the regions to be covered by the programme. This can be done by employing some of the first bunch of trainees as trainers, because it has been the stated aim of the programme to be "training of trainers". Preferably, however, these new trainers should be coached by more experienced (international?) trainers for a couple of times, so that they get feed-back and improve their performance. It might also be envisage to let the new trainers only do part of the course, while for the rest of the time they can acquire some on-the-job training by assisting or observing more senior trainers.

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[11] I owe this information to Ato Tekle, Speaker of the CoN.
[12] See above about the culture of secrecy and the monopolization of knowledge.

Afar and Somali due to a variety of constraints could so far be covered only in a minimal way. Capacity building in the form of training more conflict resolution practitioners and trainers should be emphasised in these regions.

In addition, during our visit to the Ministry of Federal Affairs, the wish has been expressed to include Gambella Region in the project. There is a certain logic in including Gambella. It is the only one of the four "emerging regions", which still receive the special attention of the MoFA, which has not been included in the programme so far.

Most efforts have been devoted so far to the SNNPR. But in view of the population size and the complexity of that Region, project activities need to be on a quite different scale. So the emphasis in SNNPR needs to be on proliferation. The already trained trainers need to be used for training more practitioners, and, once they have reached a higher level of qualification and have gained more experience, to train other trainers who in their turn can train many more practitioners.

In this context also the possible role of international experts has been discussed. One of them is monitoring. They should observe conflicts, observe mediation, and assess the effects of mediation on these conflicts. By their feed-back on those they observe, they can influence the course of mediation and coach the mediators. They can train trainers in the advanced forms of conflict analysis which have been neglected so far and coach the training done by the newly trained new trainers.

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