



„If we can train people for war, we can train them for Peace“

Bert Layson, Initiator of the Peace Zone in Pikit

The Peace Zone movement as an alternative form to pacify ethnopolitical war and conflict.

Presentation for the:

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RC 07, Debating Futures; Session 07

Social Movements and alternative Futures



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What influence can social movements on grassroots level have on the individual identity and thereby on the society as a whole?



Outline

- > The Peace Zone movement
- > Background information
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 - > Conflict in Mindanao/Philippines
- > Case Study – The Space for Peace in Nalapaan/Pikit
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 - > Evaluation
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The Peace Zone movement

Peace Zone (definition)

- **territorially limited** geographical areas
- **off-limits to war** and any other form of armed hostility.
- **Unilaterally declared** by the people
- committed to **sustainable Peacebuilding**
- managed through **community-based implementing structures**.

Peace Zones (in the Philippines)

- Three waves, most important one in Mindanao since 2000
- 80 and counting Peace Zones so far



Background information

Ethnopolitical conflict in general and in Mindanao

In general

- At least one of the combating parties defines **Ethnicity as a source of conflict** (for more information concerning the concept of Ethnicity see the paper)
- Combination of individual (ethnic identity) and societal factors (state failure, war economies etc.)

In Mindanao

- Typical **multidimensional ethnopolitical conflict**
- Conflict lines predominantly along ethnic lines **Muslims** (MILF), **Christians** (GRP) and **Indigenous**
- Further **private actors** (war lords, international companies, „terrorists“)
- Long-lasting (>30 years), temporary ceasefires → fall-backs to violent action



Case study

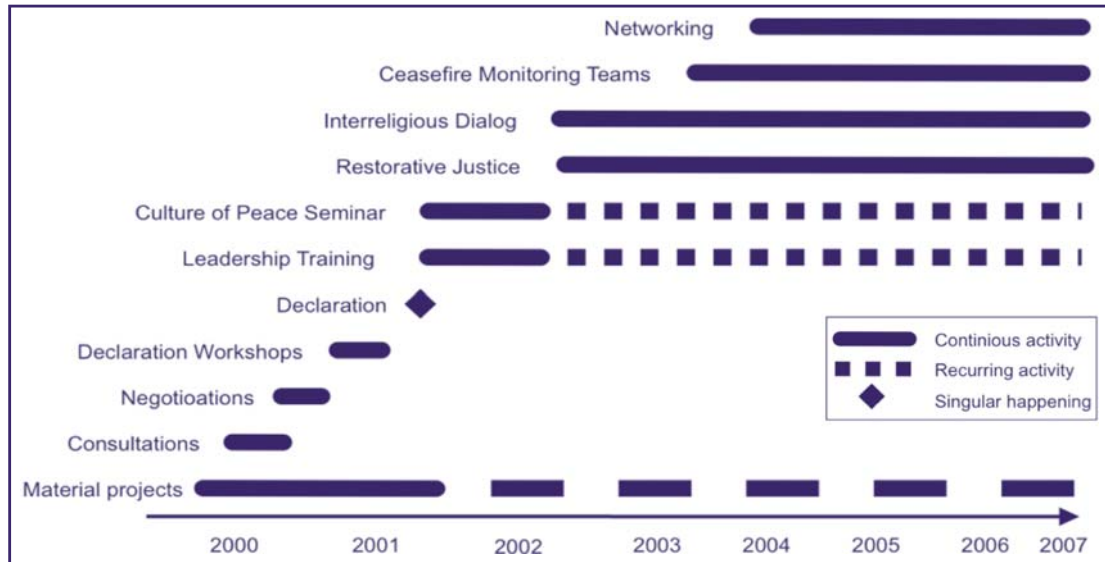
The Peace Zone of Nalapaan/Pikit

- Located in Mindanao, along an important Highway
- Often scene of severe fightings
- Founded in 2000 after a long time in evacuation centres
- Initiated through local NGO



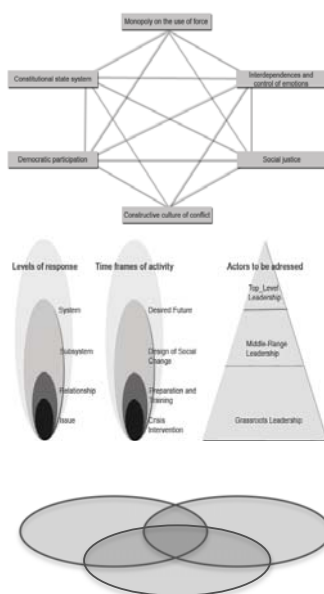
Case study

Activities in the course of time



Case study

Criteria for Evaluation



Societal level
(Civilizational Hexagon, Senghaas)

(Re-)establish a **Monopoly on the use of force** and a **Constitutional state system**
Foster **Democratic participation** and a **Constructive conflict culture**
Work towards **Social justice** and creating **Interdependences**

Approaches taken
(Integrated Framework for Peacebuilding, Lederach)

Address all **levels of response**
Address all **time frames of activity**
Address all **relevant actors**

Individual level
(Theory of communicative action, Habermas)

Create a **shared lifeworld** (identity)



Case study

Empirical base

Interviews

- **Bert Layson**, initiator of the Peace Zone
- **Edwin Antipuesto**, project officer CRS working in Nalapaan since 2000
- **Tiburcio Flores**, former soldier and now major
- **Omar Unggui**, chairman of the SfP in Pikit
- **Adele Nayal**, Advocacy
- **Pressia Arifin**, supporting the set-up of an other Peace Zone

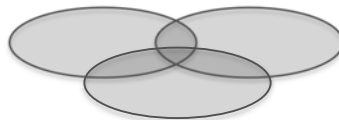
Documents

- Papers and manuscripts of local **scholars**
- Conference proceedings, internal manuals and evaluations of various **NGOs and GOs**
- Documents from inside **Peace Zone** (protocols, reports etc.)



Case study

Evaluation - Habermas



Individual level:

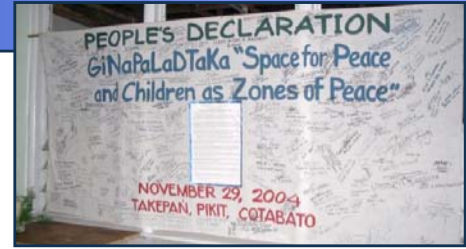
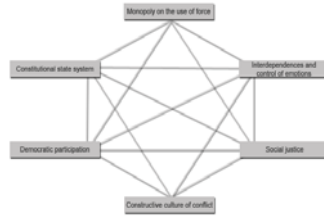
Create a common
lifeworld
(shared identity)

- **Consultations:** discussion of local issues, unifying wish to return home
- **Declaration:** remember common roots, start collective project: Peace Zone
- **Culture of Peace Seminar:** recreate trust, reflect war-experiences, establish common vision of peace
- **Material projects:** support common happenings and successes
- **Networking:** emphasize common identity as Peace Zone member

→ **New identity as Peace Zone member reduces the importance of ethnic identities and gives them an integrative frame**



Case study Evaluation - Senghaas



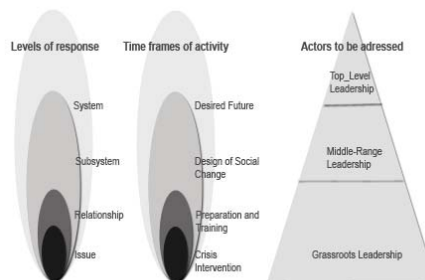
Societal level:

- **Monopoly on the use of force:** Regulation for the conduct of weapons, Monitoring teams
- **Constitutional state system:** not literally but comparable community structures such as Restorative Justice or guidelines for decision making
- **Democratic participation:** inclusive and consensus oriented approach, enhance participation of underprivileged (women, youth, indigenous)
- **Constructive culture of conflict:** teach methods and provide institutions for dialogue, mediation and reconciliation
- **Social justice:** improvement of community facilities (health care, school, infrastructure), extensive livelihood projects
- **Interdependences:** multi-ethnic and multi-sectoral approach, Bayanihan, collective use of farming machines, places to dry rice etc.

→ based on individual processes, but limited to communal level and dependent of superordinate governmental structures



Case study Evaluation - Lederach



Approaches taken:

- **Levels of response:** limited to the level of Subsystem, working on concrete issues and relationships (immediate personal environment and relations)
- **Time frames of activity:** all addressed through various activities but reaching desired future (peace in Midanao) needs systemical change
- **Actors to be addressed:** focus on grassroots, few activities addressing Middle-Range and Top-Leadership.

→ Good working local structures through integration of grassroots level, but extension to superordinate levels, time frames and actors necessary to reach sustainability



Conclusion

Local level

- **Change of mind** reached
- **Civil Society** empowered
- **Working structures** of cooperation in public and private

Regional and national level

- Small influence, but influence!
- Less instrumentalisation through Elites
- Growing opposition to violent „solutions“, engagement in peace talks
- Providing alternatives of cooperation and working societal structures
- BUT still vulnerable to outside attack



- **Social movements** as an option to transform violent conflict from the bottom up and rooted in the cultural context of the people → sustainable change, but longterm approach!



Thank you for listening



On August 4 2008 the war in Mindanao escalated again,
so far 220 000 people have evacuated and 50 were killed

*- Despite all the scientific need for objectivity, we should never loose
our empathy for those who are more than mere subjects of our research -*