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Contributions by the Media to Crisis Prevention and Conflict Settlement

Kurzfassung: Weder lösen Medien einen Krieg aus, noch können sie ihn beenden. Medienkommunikation kann aber verstärkend in Prozesse von sozialer Kommunikation und gesellschaftlichem Wandel positiv eingreifen. Medienwirkung ist stets multikausal und langfristig. Medienwirkung im Hinblick auf Krisenprävention und Konfliktbearbeitung erfordert eine institutionelle Absicherung in der Form von kontroverser Öffentlichkeit, Möglichkeit zu Vielfalt und Pluralismus, Medienrecht als Rahmenbedingung von Rechtstaatlichkeit und journalistischen Ethikkodices als Regulativ für verantwortliches Handeln auf individueller Ebene.

Bei Projekten im Bereich von Medienarbeit zur Krisenprävention und Konfliktbearbeitung müssen folgende Probleme und Dilemmata gesehen werden: (1) das Verhältnis von Gewalt zu kultureller Autonomie, (2) das Verhältnis von innen zu außen, (3) das Verhältnis von sozialem Lernen zu technologischer Intervention, (4) das Verhältnis von NGOs zu Staat und Regierung und (5) das Verhältnis von Eingreifen zu Zurückhaltung.

Die Diskussionen in den 70er und 80er Jahren im Rahmen der sogenannten Entwicklungskommunikation stellen eine gute Ausgangsbasis für neue Aufgaben dar. Der alte Ansatz von Sozialarbeit mittels Medien ist zu revitalisieren und im Sinne von Gewaltprävention durch Medien neu zu durchdenken. Den für die Gewaltprävention geeigneten Medien Radio und Video sind heute neue Medien an die Seite zu stellen.

Um erfolgreich zu sein, aber auch, um eine notwendige neue politische Moral in der Entwicklungszusammenarbeit sichtbar werden zu lassen, wird empfohlen, ein soziales Netzwerk mit daran interessierten NGOs zu gründen und diese auf die folgenden vier formalen Projektprinzipien festzulegen: (1) Die Bedürfnisorientierung der Zielgruppe hat allerhöchste Priorität. (2) Vor Ort ist eine intensive Kooperation und Koordination mit allen anderen Projekten (gerade auch aus anderen Ländern und von "konkurrierenden" Geldgebern) erwünscht und notwendig. (3) Jedes Projekt muss professionell von außen evaluiert werden (vorher, während, nachher). (4) Es wird eine größtmögliche Transparenz in Bezug auf die Projektfinanzen, die politischen Auftraggeber und die Projektziele angestrebt. Zwar sind solche Grundsätze unspezifisch für Medienprojekte auf dem Gebiet der Krisenprävention und Konfliktbearbeitung, aber gerade bei in diesem Aufgabenfeld gilt es eine Übereinstimmung zwischen Ziel und Mitteln anzustreben: Der Weg ist das Ziel.

Es wird außerdem empfohlen, sich insbesondere mit Medienprojekten im präventiven Bereich zu profilieren, da sie bislang kaum durchgeführt werden, da sie grundsätzlich auf Nachhaltigkeit angelegt sind, da sie eher im Bereich der Infrastruktur als der Nothilfe liegen und da sie (in einer Anstoßphase) einfacher zu veranstalten sind als Medienprojekte während eines oder nach einen Krieg/Konflikt. Präventive Projekte haben den methodischen Nachteil, dass man aus einer ex post-Perspektive nie eindeutig feststellen kann, ob gerade sie die Verschlimmerung eines Konfliktes verhindert haben; sie weisen aber den Vorteil auf, dass man sich im Vorfeld eines manifesten Konfliktes bewegt, also bei weitem weniger falsch machen kann als in der Hektik und Dynamik eines manifesten Konflikts oder unter den schwierigen Bedingungen eines Post-Konflikts.

Abstract: The media neither start wars, nor can they end them. Communicating media can however have an increasingly positive influence on processes of social communication and societal change. The influence of the media is always multi-causal and long-lasting. In terms of crisis prevention and the treatment of conflicts, media influence requires institutional backing in the form of a controversial public presence, the opportunity for variety and pluralism, media rights as a condition of the rule of law and journalistic ethics codices as a regulating factor for responsible activities on an individual level.

When dealing with projects to do with media work on crisis prevention and the treatment of conflicts, the following problems and dilemmas must be recognized: (1) the relationship between violence and cultural autonomy, (2) the relationship between inside and outside, (3) the relationship between social learning and technological intervention, (4) the relationship between NGOs and the state and government and (5) the relationship between getting involved and staying clear.

As part of what was known as development communication, the discussions in the 1970s and 1980s provide a good starting point for new tasks. The old approach of social work through media should be revitalized and thought through anew along the lines of the prevention of violence by media. New forms of media should be placed alongside radio and video as suitable for the prevention of violence.

In order to be successful, but also so as to bring to the forefront a necessary new political moral stance in development cooperation, it is recommended that a new social network with interested NGOs be founded and have these committed to the following four formal project principles: (1) An orientation towards the needs of the target group has overriding priority. (2) Intensive cooperation and coordination on a local basis with all other projects (especially from other countries and "competing" sponsors) is welcome and necessary. (3) Each project must be professionally evaluated by outside observers (before, during, after). (4) Transparency with regard to project financing, the political clients and the project goals should be as great as possible. Although principles such as these are unspecific for media projects in the field of crisis prevention and conflict treatment, but in this area in particular there ought to be harmony between the goal and the means: the means are the end.

Furthermore, because they have rarely been undertaken, because they are designed to last, because they form part of the infrastructure rather than being a form of first aid and because they are easier to organize (at an early stage) than media projects during or after a war/conflict, making one's mark with media projects in the preventative field is actually recommended. Preventive projects are at a disadvantage in terms of methodology in that one can never really ascertain in hindsight whether they prevented a conflict worsening; they do however have the advantage that one operates in advance of a manifest conflict, in other words can do much less wrong than in the hustle and bustle and dynamics of a manifest conflict or under the extremely difficult conditions of a post-conflict situation.

1. Introduction

There are several reasons why it is necessary to reflect once again, and more intensively, on the role of the media in crisis prevention and conflict settlement in the context of development aid cooperation.[1]

- The rejection of a rigid two-camp confrontation after the end of the Cold War enabled international law to develop further, in the sense that today more weight is given to human rights than in the past. Legally, it is easier today to become active in advance, in a preventive, anticipatory way, in a country other than one's own.
- The continuing shift from a world of states to a world society (in the sense of a world without states, a world with only people) (Czempiel 1991) is providing new political actors with legitimation for their actions. This applies to many new NGOs from the realm of civil society. They in particular are known, among other things, for their creative, fresh and new ways of handling the media.
- The Gulf War (1990/91), the first and second wars in Chechnya (1994/96 and 1999/2000), the war in Bosnia (1992/95) and the war in Kosovo (1999) all highlighted the enormous role of the media, be it as the so-called CNN Factor, or the new military concept of an "information war." And because of these new experiences, more consideration is being given to the use of the media in preventing crises and wars.
- As a result of the new information and communication technologies, especially of the Internet, all global considerations of communications and the media are being intensified. This also applies to the potential of the media to make a positive contribution towards crisis prevention and conflict settlement. Thus the World Bank could justifiably entitle its 1998/99 annual report *Knowledge for Development* (World Bank 1999). Focusing so much on knowledge, as this report does, means, among other things, the deliberate use of mass media and information and communication technologies.

During violent conflict it is, in principle, conceivable that the quality of communications might be considerably endangered on the following levels:

- Communication inside an intervening institution
- Communication between different intervening institutions
- Communication between intervening institutions and local elites (so-called Aidid-factor)
- Communication between intervening institutions and the local population
- Communication between intervening institutions and decision-makers
- Communication between intervening institutions and the mass media
- Communication between intervening institutions and local competing military and civil groups.

This study is mainly concerned with communication between intervening institutions and the local population, for the simple reasons that the local population usually suffers most from wars, and indeed to a steadily increasing degree. It is initially

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1. This paper is based on the following study by Jörg Becker: Der Beitrag der Medien zur Krisenprävention und Konfliktbearbeitung. Eine Analyse der internationalen Diskussion und Implementierungsmöglichkeiten mit Empfehlungen für die Technische Zusammenarbeit, Eschborn: Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit (= Working Paper No. 1/2002 of the Sektorberatungsvorhaben Krisenprävention und Konfliktbearbeitung) 2002. Missing from the shortened version for this publication are, in particular, the seven practical reports mentioned under point 4, a detailed list of institutions with media projects on crisis prevention and conflict settlement, and a checklist for planning media projects in the field of technical aid. A shortened reprint of this GTZ study was published under the title: Der Beitrag der Medien zur Krisenprävention und Konfliktbearbeitung, Bonn: Arbeitsstelle Friedensforschung 2003 (= AFB-Texte, No. 1/2003). Christian Schicha published a positive review of the original GTZ study in the Austrian journal *MedienJournal*, No. 2/2003, pp. 78-79.
    After I completed this study for the German Agency for Technical Cooperation (GTZ), the responsible Advisory Sector Crisis Prevention and Conflict Settlement informed me that my study unfortunately did not adequately reflect the "very active status of the international discussion." I herewith vehemently reject this evaluation of my scientific work by that GTZ advisory sector as defamatory.
    To the best of my recollection, in the many discussions of my study with the advisory sector quite different problems emerged: What was expected of me was an uncritical and positive evaluation of humanitarian interventions and an uncritical and positive evaluation of Internet communication within the field of development communication. I was neither able nor willing, from a professional viewpoint, to assume responsibility for fulfilling these expectations. Furthermore, in conversations with those responsible at the GTZ, I met with a complete lack of understanding for my ideas on an ethics of restraint (cf. Wils 2003), for my estimation that sometimes NGOs were nothing more than covert state institutions, and for my evaluation of individual activities by Catholic grass-roots communities as successful NGO work.
    While the World Bank devoted its 1998/99 Annual Report to "Knowledge," and in its *2002 Annual Report* on "Building Institutions for Markets" granted the topic of "Mass Media" considerable space, and while in early December 2003 the UN even organized a World Summit on the Information Society in Geneva, the GTZ had already decided in 1991 to shut down its department for "Media and Communication." An absurd state of affairs: As the whole world talks about the information society, the Internet and globalization, there is not one communications expert within the whole of the GTZ. The situation is similar at the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation (BMZ).

meaningful, therefore, because it is easy, to speak about the use of the media before, during and after a conflict. Needless to say, with such a phase model it is clear that in the ups and downs of a continuing civil war it is difficult to make a strict distinction between before and after.

In 1999 the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) commissioned the Institute for Media Policy and Civil Society (IMPACS), headquartered in Vancouver, to draw up a background paper on *The Media and Peacebuilding.* The author of this IMPACS paper, Robin Hay, elucidated the different functions of the media before, during and after a conflict in three different tables. His system highlights the various facets in an overall context. This division into temporal phases means that at different points in a conflict, sometimes very different strategies are required of the intervening institution.

Changes in the social system	Changes in the media system
Increased social mobility in the direction of war	Increased censorship and less press freedom; closing down of oppositional and alternative media; suppression of information from outside; increase in state control
Nationalist, tribal or ethnic propaganda in support of war and violence	Polarization of the media according to national, tribal or ethnic criteria; prejudices towards the Other in the media; attacks on alternative media
Opposition by independent media	Agitation by independent media against war and for peace; contact with outside media, publication of outside information
Increase in infringement of human rights	Polarized perception of infringements of human rights, ignoring infringements at home and highlighting those abroad

Source: Hay 1999, 18.

Table 1: Role of the Media Before a Conflict

Changes in the social system	Changes in the media system
War, violence, destruction, death of soldiers and civilians, devastation, genocide	Increased patriotism in the press; blatant censorship; violent suppression of diverging opinions; cover-up of misdemeanors in official media; media at center of political interest; propaganda and demonization of the enemy; increased interest of the international press; expulsion of international press from the country
Damage to the infrastructure and the social system	Media become emergency information system announcing destruction and numbers of dead; damage to and destruction of production plants
Mobilization of the whole of society	Participation of media staff in the war; media work by laypeople; reduced number of journalists for research and reporting; tendency of journalists to mobilize people and strengthen their morale
Shortage of materials	Tax on the media; reduced reach; possible substitution by foreign media
The whole of society in a state of permanent crisis	Concentration of attention on war and sensationalism; reduced perception of other topics; drop in quality

Source: Hay 1999, 19.

Table 2: Role of the Media During a Conflict

Changes in the social system	Changes in the media system
Victory, defeat	Reassignment of victor and vanquished roles
Peace negotiations and pacification	Mediating role for the media; potentially destructive role if they undermine peace plans, pass on sensitive information; task of providing the public with information
Implementation of peace	Active participation of the media in the implementation of peace; educational task; central role in the construction of a peaceful society; potential to undermine this by disseminating false information
Elections	Mediation of information; observation and monitoring of elections
Processing elections, tribunals	Monitoring the media; disseminating information

Source: Hay 1999, 19.

Table 3: Role of the Media After a Conflict

Needless to say, as put forward by Robin Hay, this model has only a heuristic character. It provides a special systematic methodology for approaching the subject, but on closer inspection rests on a series of dubious assumptions. Both the doctrine of three clear chronological stages from "before the war" via "during the war" to "after the war" should be examined

critically in the light of empirical evidence , as should the (nonsensical and universalistic) assumption that the model can be applied across all historical and cultural dividing lines.

For several years now, different international and national actors have been involved in the use of the media for crisis prevention and conflict settlement, some with an extensive program, others still cautiously. If one examines which actors operate in this field, the following emerges:

- The main donor countries are the USA and Switzerland.
- Many of these actors are not, as might be presumed, new NGOs, but rather known large traditional corporate actors like the BBC, the Voice of America, the International Committee of the Red Cross or the International Federation of Journalists.
- Many of the actors operating in this field are government institutions (something that also applies to all UN organs), are close to governments, or, as NGOs, are financially supported by governments.
- Small and financially independent NGOs are the exception in this field.

2.   Peace, Media and Development
2.1 Peace Obligation of the Media

It can be regarded as more or less globally accepted that the mass media are fundamentally important in the creation of what is generally understood as the public domain, public discourse or public debate, a sphere that is of basic significance for each and every democracy. There is also global agreement that the activities of the mass media are anything but value free, that there are actually binding legal or ethical norms according to which reporting by the mass media has to take place. The legal and ethical norms whereby the mass media have to serve peace and never the opposite are older than is generally acknowledged and more or less universally valid.

The history of the emergence of broadcasting after the First World War is very closely linked with an international peace mission. Broadcasting, by radio and television, was and is always international in character because of the boundlessness of electromagnetic waves. As for the unintentional side effects of trans-border broadcasting, these too are legally part of international broadcasting. In legal contrast to this, foreign broadcasting deliberately seeks its target audience outside its own national borders (for example, by deliberately using exiles as news readers). Many of the radio broadcasters currently active in crisis regions constitute foreign broadcasting and not international broadcasting.

Stricter international legal restrictions are imposed on the activities of foreign broadcasting than on international broadcasting. According to the (still valid) Broadcasting Peace Pact of 1936, foreign broadcasters are generally obliged to pursue and guarantee a dissemination of information that is truthful and aimed at peace and rapprochement. The international media discourse of the past decades generalized such legal principles in the 1976 UNESCO media declaration. Art. 3 of that declaration states: "Mass media have to make a vital contribution to the consolidation of peace and international understanding and to the fight against racism, apartheid and war mongering."

What is valid in the case of international law also applies to national media law in Germany. In his treatise *Recht und Moral im Journalismus* (Law and Morality in Journalism) (1992) the legal expert Udo Branahl pointed out that the German legal code makes a disruption of both "external" and "internal" peace by the mass media punishable. In Germany the mass media can neither call on people to engage in an aggressive war, nor in any way undermine the "unthreatened community" and the "harmonious togetherness" of individual citizens and their groups without threat of punishment. Freedom of opinion and freedom of the media do not justify any significant impairment of "internal" peace by the mass media.

Given that a strict regulation of the activities of the mass media contradicts any democratic understanding of their tasks, many rules for self-regulation exist in this particular field. The numerous ethical codes for journalists that apply in almost all countries lend expression to such self-imposed obligations. Some of those codes contain the obligation to operate for peace and against any kind of war propaganda. Thus the 1987 ethical code of the Confederation of ASEAN Journalists states that no journalist may promote armed confrontation between two ASEAN countries.

In 1995 the Finnish communications researcher Kaarle Nordenstreng was commissioned by the Council of Europe to examine twenty different codes of ethics for journalists in Europe. Except for those in Iceland, Luxembourg, Poland and Switzerland, all the texts he examined contain self-imposed obligations for the mass media to refrain from racial and ethnic discrimination, to respect other nations and countries and to condemn violence (Reports 1995).

As early as 1986 the Iranian communications expert Hamid Mowlana summarized such debates and raised the following question: "If international media have repeatedly and successfully pursued war-mongering and thereby increased tensions, could they not also do the opposite?" Subsequent to this rhetorical question, Mowlana drew up a code of ethics for journalist aimed at preventing war and promoting peace; it includes the following eight points:

- Greater emphasis on the publication of information that facilitates peaceful conflict settlement
- Reduction of prejudices that demonize the opponent
- Sensitization to covert false perceptions, especially on controversial issues
- Redefinition of the mass media as a kind of social early warning system for potential flash points
- Inclusion of the opponent in peaceful proposals for conflict settlement
- Increased and positive reporting on peace-makers
- Creation of a public climate in a spirit of reconciliation
- Creation of possibilities for dialogue and communication with the peacemakers on opposing sides (Mowlana 1986, 220)

Parts of this proposed code were adopted in December 2000, in the form of security guidelines for journalists in crisis regions, by three large TV stations (CNN, BBC and ITN) and two important TV news agencies (Reuters, APTN).

2.2 Crisis Media

Irrespective of the discussion outlined so far, with its very long scholarly and political tradition, the mid-1990s saw the coining of the term "crisis radio" and, more generally, the terms "prevention media" and "crisis media." There is no general or scientific definition of such prevention and crisis media. Sometimes they are also used as political catch phrases or fashionable terms for putting new wine into old skins. In the following, the term crisis media will be used for those media which become active when violent social groups and/or warring military forces restrict the public order of a state/country/region/culture to such an extent that objective/neutral/unbiased/balanced reporting on the crisis is no longer possible. This means public, civil tools for crisis management by the mass media, and not those ascribed to the different combatants. What is more, these are mostly international and/or foreign electronic media. (Crisis radio, in the sense that UN institutions or other international authorities have their own radio station at their disposal, is actually nothing new. In 1926, the League of Nations had its own radio station, Radio Nations.)

We can reach some agreement on what the term crisis media means by taking a look at the actors currently working with this concept. When we do this, we notice that the concept of prevention and crisis media has been used more frequently since Kofi Annan became Secretary General of the United Nations in 1997. Since then, crisis media have been part of a new and active understanding of the UN's peace mission. Interference in the name of peace can extend from legal, desired and necessary humanitarian intervention to illegal concepts of military-humanitarian intervention (such as in the war in Kosovo, for example). What is new about such – legal – concepts is, above all, the active, dynamic aspect of this kind of interference and intervention.

Even if the concept of international law is currently undergoing change, and even if the concept of humanitarian intervention is being expanded and revitalized, there is still an unresolved legal-rights conflict between the principle of non-interference in the internal affairs of a country (1945 UN Charter and the 1970 UN Declaration on amicable relations) and the human rights principle of a free flow of information (1948 General Declaration of Human Rights). Thus the dominant opinion among international law experts was that the occupation of the TV station in Pale by NATO troops in October 1997 was illegal. The bombing of the TV stations in Belgrade by NATO planes during the Kosovo War in spring 1998 was also illegal (Gidron and Cordone 2000, 13). By contrast, foreign broadcasting such as that by the BBC or Deutsche Welle is legal in the sense of international law.

As for cross-border information flows, non-interference in the internal affairs of another country is a legal principle which, in France, for example, assumes the form of an "exception culturelle" (Bourdieu 2000,15.). French social scientists like Pierre Bourdieu argue that the globalization of international media could result in all the media taking the same stance. Given that national cultures could thus become homogenized, culture should be kept out of any cross-border free market model, and there should be nationally protected areas for endogenous cultures.

Since the early 1990s, many crisis radio stations worldwide have been working under the authority of either the UN or of humanitarian organizations. They are doing this in a legal gray zone, as a balancing act between non-interference in internal affairs and necessary humanitarian intervention and international solidarity with victims and with people suffering poverty or hardship. Both legal principles, non-interference and humanitarian intervention, make good sense in their own way and have their own long legal tradition. The tension between these two principles should be preserved and decisions in the one or other direction only made in concrete individual cases.

The existence of crisis media since the mid-1990s is just one of many expressions of a reform movement in the UN, an active peace policy, a policy of development cooperation that must also take the prevention of crises, catastrophes and wars into account. However – and this always applies – when intercultural communication, cultural exchange, cultural encounter and cultural dialogue are involved, intense consideration must also be given to whether or not the social cost of humanitarian intervention is greater than the social gain.

2.3 Development Communication

When the media are used for crisis prevention and conflict settlement, in many developing countries they intervene deliberately, consciously and significantly in various social processes. A large number of research studies and reports from the last 60 years are available on the use of western media in developing countries. These studies fall under the heading of "Development Communication."

In 1958, Daniel Lerner published his paradigmatic book *The Passing of Traditional Society* after having done research on advertising campaigns and political influence in the 1930s and 1940s. A supporter of a modernization theory, Lerner assumed that people in developing countries had to be fully exposed to Western influence by the media and that, consequently, those countries would be transformed into modern industrial societies based on the Western model. Today, we know that not only have the means of mass communication failed to bring about the desired social impact and economic development, but also that Lerner's whole approach was inappropriate. Traditional society does not constitute a mere preliminary state, it does not simply pass away or disappear. Tradition is not a remnant of yesteryear that has to be changed, rather it is a mature state of contradictory social upheavals. Everett Rogers' work on the diffusion of communication (1995) refined Lerner's approach: here the figure of the opinion-leader functions as a social catalyst between a Western broadcaster and a receiver living in a developing country.

In contrast to Lerner and Rogers, communications science studies throughout the 1970s started from the Latin American dependency theory. The arguments put forward in such studies were contrary to modernization theory. The essential function and task of Western media in developing countries was to prevent modernization. The information flows from North to South actually contributed more to the fact that the developing countries were being 'dictated to' and monitored, that they were losing their cultural identity and that the dependence of the South on the North was being consolidated.

The main weakness of works on the media in developing countries by both modernization and dependency theorists is that they represent macro-structural theory formation which at the micro-level of practice and technical collaboration is only conditionally relevant to individual media projects and the active implementation of large projects. What is more important in the context of a possible contribution by the media to crisis prevention and conflict settlement are the many and varied reports and research findings by media practitioners in developing countries. Over the past twenty years, both the German Agency for Technical Cooperation (GTZ) and political foundations in Germany have carried out a series of successful projects in this field. These projects produced the following important practical findings:

- All media work presupposes precise knowledge of the target group, especially in rural areas in which people's lives are deeply rooted.
- The yardstick applied is always specific to a culture. The measure for the respective target group, therefore, can only come from that group.
- The rural population in developing countries often associates the mass media (coming from the West) with closed, vertical, hierarchical, formal and official communication and sees themselves as silent extras.
- Offers of advice are successful when they take into account traditional ways of communication at the village level (wells, food stands, river sources, bathing places).
- Offers of advice are successful when they avail themselves of local forms of communication. For example, shadow games in Bali are a mixed form of one and two-way communication. The messages mediated deal with cultural value and behavioral standards in familiar verbal forms and images (Esche/Köhne 1983).

Similar conclusions have been reached by experts in many countries. It is therefore meaningful, indeed imperative, to transfer such experiences and findings to the field of media usage for crisis prevention and conflict settlement. Here too the use of local media and the active participation of those affected represent important variables in terms of the success of the project. Hartmut Albrecht, former holder of the only German Chair of Communications Research and Agricultural Advice at the University of Hohenheim, systematized the practical experience gained through Development Communication in projects in developing countries. The role and function of communication can best be grasped when actual communication activities are confronted with a catalogue of conditions for successful communication. Accordingly, the statements made must:

- enter the perceptual fields of those addressed
- be comprehensible to them
- link up with their values and be relevant to their needs and problems
- point to solutions that they can achieve
- be such that they can believe and check them

In the context of developing countries, Albrecht sees three communications problems that turn up repeatedly: 1. Comprehensibility, 2. Communications strategy, 3. Monitoring.

At the level of *comprehensibility* he regards the following insights as confirmed:

- The project leader must be someone who has close contact with the target population and corresponding experience. Experience and perceptual capacities are more important than academic qualifications.
- The target population must be involved in decisions relating to the content and form (medium, images, symbols, language), and in the supervision of changes and corrections. The content to be communicated must be confined to important major statements.

At the level of *communications strategies*, Albrecht makes a distinction between "information diffusion" and "information seeking." Information diffusion assumes the existence of a centrally-defined problem to be solved. This approach stands and falls on whether the definition of the problem and the recommendations for its solution correspond with the life situation of the population (which is usually not the case). Information seeking defines the problem together with members of the target group. In Latin America in the 1970s and 80s the information seeking approach was extremely successful – given its focus on grass roots-related communication, non-formal education, and conscienticacão, as understood by Paulo Freire, as important components of a strategy of "comunicación popular." At the level of the media, such projects linked non-school education and different technical media with traditional forms of narrative, drama and visual representation.

As regards *monitoring* media projects, it is important to maintain an overview of the project as it proceeds in order to recognize wrong developments in good time and make corrections if necessary. This is only possible when the overall project is subdivided into detailed primary and secondary objectives. The project leadership, therefore, must have something like a continuous feedback system. The staff and technical situation, both at the central office and for project members at the local level, must be such as to enable any recommended corrections to be implemented (Albrecht 1983).

Experience so far in development communication and that of Hartmut Albrecht can be summarized as follows: Media projects are successful when they are not media but target group-oriented, i.e., when they initiate a process of social communication. This insight gained by development communication in the 1970s is – independently of Western development experts – the lived reality of hundreds of local media projects, particularly in present-day Latin America, especially in places where the Catholic Church has already initiated grass roots-activities. Such projects involve many different technical media – in Peru currently, Internet cafés in the form of so-called "cabinas publicas."

Compared with the 1970s, the theory and practice of development communication is currently undergoing two important shifts in emphasis: 1. The current media debate is dominated by technological determinism as a consequence of the upheavals brought about by the new information and communication technologies and as a side effect of postmodern theories. By totally abbreviating a complicated discussion on the interrelations between society and technology, conclusions are drawn about an increase in positive social contacts through the technical interactivity of the Internet, for example, or else the broadcasting of a single radio station to a huge number of recipients is regarded as an example of authoritative social communication from the top down. 2. As a consequence of the discussion instigated by Samuel Huntington's *The Clash of Civilizations* (1993), a cultural debate is gaining in significance in the field of international relations. In this context, the work of the Norwegian peace-researcher Johan Galtung is worthy of mention; Galtung regards most cultural relations and contacts as forced relations (1998).

Whatever such estimations of cultural contacts may mean in particular, is it clear that for development communication the culture factor must be given greater consideration than in the past. With many examples and for good reasons, Ramm (1985), Eilers (1992) and Maletzke (1996) draw attention to the fact that development communication adheres to cultural patterns and dividing lines. Visual perception, the experience of time and space, thought, language, non-verbal communication, values and behavior patterns all follow culturally defined norms. Not to know these means to communicate ineffectively. To approach them requires the instrument of empathy, an attitude that involves being open-minded and listening to the other.

Given these considerations it comes as no surprise that the use of small and group media is mainly the domain of NGOs, grass-roots organizations and self-help groups with no commercial interests. The handling of these media, their content, the kinds of mediation and the technologies used assume a largely active and participatory form, whereby the potential of these media to support learning objectives and promote solidarity becomes particularly obvious. By contrast, the commercial mass media evade the possibility of the target groups having an active influence on their content. The messages communicated by these media foreground what is topical, unusual, and attracts attention in the short-term. By doing this, they bank more on superficial information, entertainment and confirming the prejudices of the recipients, thereby making novelty a value in itself.

3.   Crisis Prevention, Media Potential and Media Choice
3.1 Media Impact Research

Within the field of communications research, media impact research is not only one of the most thoroughly researched special areas (Prokop 1981; Medienwirkungsforschung 1986; Schenk 1987), it is also that area in which there can be no reliable and unambiguous statements and findings. Above all, it is the area that must necessarily come to this or that conclusion, depending on the theoretical premises. Research on media impact has always centered around one of the following two claims: first, that mass media are omnipotent influence carriers, and second, that their influence is relatively ineffective. While the omnipotence thesis was important in the 1950s, it has gradually lost ground. And while at the beginning of communications research the power of the broadcaster was central, over the years greater importance has been given to the recipient as the individual person who consciously chooses the contents. Under the influence of new information and communication technologies and the technological determinism of postmodern theories, the omnipotence theory is again currently gaining in influence and importance.

A so far unique study commissioned by the German Research Fund (DFG) (Medienwirkungsforschung 1986) of the status of media impact research came to the conclusion that science has not been in a position to make widely acceptable assumptions about media impact. Schenk (1987) concludes that media impact connections are so complex that linear and mono-causal claims about their content and impact cannot be made. According to Schenk, individual factors (dependency, selection, attention, activity, information processing, gratification seeking, etc.) play a role, but also local and interpersonal givens (primary communication, direct access) and socio-structural conditions (reporting structures, system differentiation, etc.). Impact research can only make valid and meaningful statements by subjecting these intervening conditions to careful scrutiny.

Statements on media impact are so difficult because all too often they are based on a reduced perspective, a product and broadcaster-oriented understanding of communication (a current example: the Internet decentralizes communication; decentralized communication is important for democracy). But only when communication is understood as a social process – and this is the result of a forty-year discussion in Development Communication – can concrete statements about media impact be made. Development communication can only have an optimum impact when it is:

- participatory
- endogenously anchored with empathy
- can be shaped in a culturally and socially sustainable manner

In other words: Development communication is only successful when a participatory network replaces top-down communication. Participation is both the key to effectiveness and the most important ethical basis for humanitarian intervention.[1] No scientific analyses are available on the impact of the media on crisis prevention and conflict settlement. (There are, however, numerous reports including the individual experiences of the actors involved.) With reference to Dusan Reljic's work on the media in times of conflict (1998), the following system seems meaningful when first approaching the problem. All media communication can be imagined as located in a societal force field influenced by the following five basic factors:

- Culture
- Politics
- Economics
- Quality of the media broadcaster and media statement
- Quality of the media reception

The reach, depth, kind, quality, time and space of these five factors vary considerably. What is more, the five basic factors are mutually dependent on one another. Media communication is a sort of vector, the quality and direction of which are determined by the strength of the influence of each of the five factors. The weakness of one factor can only be partially compensated for by the strength of another. But the reverse also applies. No factor can fully develop its strength when the others are weak. To put it simply: The media do not have an impact of and by themselves. Meaningful use of the media is always linked to conditions outside the media.

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1.   In December 2003 the GTZ published its eighth Cross Section Analysis with an evaluation of its own development aid projects. The ratio was 2/3 successful projects to 1/3 unsuccessful projects. The managing director of the GTZ, Bernd Eisenblätter, explained the failure of 1/3 of all their projects with reference to the failure to integrate the partners at the local level: "What was missing was the complementary views of the partners and target groups." (Bunzenthal 2003, 12) In the face of this "veritably revolutionary" insight into the importance of working with local partners, one might ask in astonishment why the GTZ, founded in 1974, needed thirty years to recognize the relevance of the participatory approach, and how long it still needs to act accordingly. (In an evaluation of media projects by two different institutions in developing countries that I was requested to do, the failure rate of the projects was much higher than at the GTZ. In the one institution 80%, in the other 50% of the projects were failures.)

According to Dusan Reljic, the growth of the media in Bosnia, thanks to support from international institutions and Western governments, may have led to quantitative growth in journalistic output, but not to a simultaneous qualitative improvement in the journalistic products. Or: promoting training courses in the field of peace journalism can be of no consequence when the given political power structures do not tolerate media autonomy or when the population's declining buying power does not allow any significant media consumption. Or: hate media can have only a limited impact when they are received by a democratically-aware audience.

The very different functions, roles and impacts of hate media in different countries can be illustrated by comparing Rwanda and the USA. After all, so-called hate radio stations also exist in the USA. Within the political ambit of far-right politicians like Rush Limbaugh and Donald Reagan, the US American hate radio stations are openly racist, yet they cannot develop the same force and impact in a social environment with a mature democratic culture as that of radio stations in Central Africa. The open call to genocide made on Radio-Télévision Libre des milles Collines or Radio Rutomorangingo in the mid-1990s in Rwanda or Burundi were only conceivable against the backdrop of a chaotic society torn and segmented in itself, a society in which the state was in a process of dissolution. Media can only assume the role conceived for them in crisis prevention and conflict settlement when there is a clear will for prevention and reconciliation on the part of the different political elites (and these also include endogenous NGOs). Furthermore, strengthening any one of the five basic factors can only bring about the desired results when simultaneous progress is achieved in the other four.

3.2 Radio, Video and Internet

People, not media, communicate. If this insight is taken to heart, then there can be no list of good or bad media with a view to crisis prevention and conflict settlement. The focus will thus not be on an isolated technocratic choice of media, but on a well-founded choice of socio-technical system, i.e., interface between man and medium. Then one can ask which of these interfaces is best suited to the objective of crisis prevention and conflict settlement. Some time ago the department of development communications at the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) presented an informative evaluation of the potential effectiveness of such socio-technical systems. Ten important judgment criteria are listed in that survey:

- Cost
- Credibility
- Comprehensibility
- Target group
- Reliability
- Interactivity
- Handling
- Speed
- Adaptation
- Expression

Of what use is the currently much lauded Internet interactivity, for example, if the target group is not reached, if there is no technical reliability, if the telecommunications costs are too high, if the medium cannot be used by illiterate people? What is striking about the FAO's survey table is the outstanding role of radio, which clearly takes first place. This evaluation of radio comes as no surprise either to the practitioner or to the development communications theorist. Of all the extensive research literature, I would like to focus here on the works of the American Harold A. Fisher (1990). In the 1980s, Fisher headed several rural radio projects with various objectives in different developing countries. Fisher's comparative evaluation of such projects in Jamaica, Ecuador, the Dominican Republic, India, Sri Lanka and Liberia turned up eleven criteria favoring a successful project:

- Intensive research into the needs of the target group prior to the project
- Accompanying research throughout the project to guarantee effectiveness and keep sight of the needs of the target group
- Participation of the target group in the production of the program
- Interaction between project staff and target group
- Communication solely in the language of the target group
- Balanced combination of information and entertainment using mainly local program material
- Intensification of all radio work through personal, face-to-face communication at the local level
- Well-trained employees
- Inclusion of local groups in the construction and the financial support of the radio station's infrastructure (for example, in the construction of the buildings for the broadcasting station)
- Cooperation with government offices

Positive experiences with radio as a motor for general projects in the field of development communications have left their

mark in the setting up of so-called crisis radio stations since the early 1990s. Under the aegis of the UN, the following crisis radio stations operated in the following regions in the past decade: UNTAG (Namibia), ONUVEH (Haiti), UNPROFOR (former Yugoslavia), UNTAC (Cambodia), UNAVEM (Angola), UNOSOM (Somalia), ONUMOZ (Mozambique),UNAMIR (Rwanda) and UNUSAL (El Salvador). How these UN crisis radio stations operated differed greatly. The range of activities extended from the production of 5-minute contributions placed at the disposal of local stations to the construction of new production sites. The reports on these radio projects all agree that radio is the ideal medium for explaining the meaning of a peace-keeping mission to a local population, for addressing and communicating with that population. Radio has the following positive features:

• large reach
• flexibility, from providing programs to the establishment of local radio stations
• illiterate target groups can be addressed in every conceivable language
• flexible and technically-simple medium
• relatively low program production costs (compared to TV)
• quick and easy participation by the local population
• as a medium of the spoken language, radio is rooted in the often strongly oral communication structure of the culture in many developing countries.

Video comes after radio on the FAO table in terms of high potential. Why? When people in crisis and conflict regions are filmed and then have the possibility of seeing themselves (and others) on a TV or canvas screen, great credibility attaches to such an experience. The audio-visual medium of video has a degree of recognition, identification, credibility and comprehensibility greater than that of any other such medium. Tape-recording for radio and video-recording for video presentation both involve primary and traditional forms of communication in the most authentic way possible. And these traditional forms of communication are well-suited to effective development communication. Over the past years, numerous drama and puppet theatres, dance and singing groups in all parts of the Third World have successfully participated in pro-social change. In Palestine, for example, the El Hakawati Theatre prepared the way for peaceful reconciliation between Israelis and Palestinians (Shinar 1987), and in the more recent history of the German Agency for Technical Cooperation (GTZ) the project with the Salohy Puppet Theater successfully informed viewers in Madagascar about AIDS (Ruby 2000).

Given the predetermined function of this socio-technical system, it is understandable that the terms video, alternative communication and social change were almost synonymous in the context of development communication in the 1970s and 80s; this applied and still applies in particular to all the variants of "comunicación popular" in Latin America. Correspondingly, in the 1989 UNESCO Global Communications Report we read: "Alternative video production in Brazil was in the cultural and political vanguard during the 1970s. Independent producers experimented with new uses of the media that changed the traditional vertical relationship between producers and audiences. The work of the alternative producers attempted to reduce the homogeneity of commercial television by presenting the cultural, linguistic, ethnic and religious diversity of Brazilian people." (UNESCO 1989, 205). The fact that women and women's groups actively turned to Development Communication is also partially due to the potential social function of the video medium. At the 1994 Women Empowering Communication conference in Bangkok the following, among other, women's communications projects were introduced:

• The Women's Feature Service, New Delhi, India
• The Development Through Radio Project, Harare, Zimbabwe
• Cali for Women, New Delhi, India
• The Friends of Women Foundation, Bangkok, Thailand
• Women Living Under Muslim Laws, Grabels, France
• Feminist International Radio Endeavour, Colon City, Costa Rica
• Tanzania Media Women's Association, Dar es Salaam, Tanzania
• Women's Communication Networks in Brazil, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.

These communications experts were in agreement not only on numerous gender issues, but also on the fact that radio and video were among the most effective socio-technical systems in development communication. Given this background, it is surprising that the medium of video is not used more often as a means of crisis prevention and conflict settlement.

Media type	Features of the different socio-technical media systems									
	Cost	Credi-bility	Compre-hensibility	Target group	Relia-bility	Inter-action	Hand-ling	Speed	Adap-tation	Expres-sion
Traditional media										
1. Theater	–	xx	x	x	xx	xx	xx		xx	
2. Story, Idioms, Riddles	–	x	xx	x	xx	x	xx		xx	x
3. Puppets	+	xx	x	x	xx	xx	xx		xx	
4. Songs	–	xx	xx	x	xx		xx		xx	xx
Modern media										
1. Radio	+	xx	xx	xx	xx	x	xx	xx	xx	xx
2. TV	+	xx	x	xx	xx	x	x	x	x	x
3. Video	+	xx	x	x	x	x	xx	x	x	x
4. Audio cas-settes	–	x	xx	x	xx	x	xx	x	x	x
5. Slides	–	x	x	x	x	x	xx	x	x	x
6. Print media	–	x	x				xx			
7. Film	++	x	xx		xx				x	x
8. Flip charts	+	xx	xx	xx	xx	xx	xx	xx	xx	x

x = good, xx = very good, – = cheap, + = expensive, ++ = very expensive

Source: Guidelines on Communication for Rural Development 1989, 15.

Table 4: Characteristics of the Media in Development Communication

For some time now, the Internet has been talked of as a particularly effective interactive medium for development aid work. This is the case where it links NGOs from the North and South, and such activities are described and analyzed in countless documentations by the women's and the peace movements, the environmental protection and the human rights move-ments (Luber 1993; @t ease 1998). At this point, however, some problems should be focused on that are often not given enough consideration by the many supporters of the Internet:

- Given the unequal global dissemination of telecommunications infrastructures, the Internet could in fact lead to de-pendence by the southern on the northern NGOs.
- Most Internet supporters argue on the basis of a technological determinism and deduce from the technical networking of the South that it politically participates in decisions made by the North. Such direct inferences from the field of technology to the field of politics are not permissible.
- The Internet's almost temporally-simultaneous, direct, interactive form of communication heightens a basic problem of the North-South structure: What democratic legitimation does any NGO have for becoming involved per Internet in the internal affairs of another country, another culture? Roberto Verzola, a civil rights activist from the Philippines, speaks, therefore, about the Internet as a new wave of colonialism (Verzola 1999).

The medium of the Internet must also be looked at soberly; the following statistics may promote such sobriety:

- 88% of all Internet hosts are in North America and Europe
- About 93 % of all Internet use is by the richest 20% of the world's population – only 0.2% by the poorest 20%. As most of the world's poor live in Southern Asia, it comes as no surprise that this region has only 1% Internet users, although it is home to 23% of the world's population.
- In the USA, a PC costs less than a month's salary; in Bangladesh a PC costs eight years' salary.
- The telephone density in Africa is 2 connections per 100 inhabitants; however, most states do not even have 0.5 con-nections per 100 inhabitants.
- The typical Internet user profile in Latin America is as follows: 67% between 18 and 43 years of age; 78% male; 78% with a university education; 61% have a credit card.

Globally speaking, the Internet divides, not just in developing countries, but also in North America and Europe: into black and white, men and women, rich and poor, old and young, educated and uneducated, rural and urban dwellers, non-English and English speakers. From a global viewpoint, Internet users are currently a global enclave, and Internet users in the Third

World are an enclave within an enclave. It is a matter of disagreement among researchers whether the dissemination of the Internet in developing countries will result in globalization or in sharper polarization.

Thus most communication using the Internet can currently be regarded as communication by an elite. This does not mean that it should not be considered in development aid work or in the field of crisis prevention or conflict settlement; it simply means that the reach of that medium is presently very small. In the past few years, Internet communication has often resulted in opposition groups being able to gain attention abroad during a conflict or war. There is evidence for this regarding the coup against Soviet President Gorbatchev in August 1991, the fall of Indonesian President Suharto in June 1999, and the Kosovo War in spring 2000.

But to repeat this once again: People, not technology, communicate. And the existence of many new additional channels is no guarantee of communication. This also applies to the Internet. After the first wave of Internet euphoria, therefore, the following finding is anything but surprising for communications experts: "The structural features of mass media communication are repeated in the Internet; the problems that arise include asymmetrical communication relations, the absence of counter-arguments, a lack of depth in the information provided. The interactive telecommunication technologies place many and varied channels and niches at the disposal of the social actors to deliberate on, but they do not guarantee a free discourse." (Schulz 2000, 43)

In the search for case studies on the role of the media after conflicts, many Germans in particular forget that the re-education policy, as it was called, of the American occupying forces after 1945 was also a media policy. Extensive reports are available on this policy; it has also been taken into account by many researchers. For example, it is well documented that as early as December 1944 the American military radio station 1212, broadcasting from Luxembourg to Germany, consciously worked with the concept of initially (but only initially) reporting in an accurate/ objective/ independent/ undistorted/ unbiased/ professional manner. From the very beginning, however, the strategy envisaged a second step involving the exact opposite, namely, manipulating the news, once its credibility had been established among the recipients. This example not only highlights the sometimes shifting borderlines between enlightenment and manipulation. The experience with the US-American media policy of re-educating the German population leads to the following conclusions:

- The direct experiences of the German people with the American occupying forces (consumer goods, administration, organization, leisure activities, etc.) had a more long-term impact than the new media experiences.
- American media policy in the immediate post-war period was not disinterested. It also served political and economic interests (for example, opening up a market for American films).
- The construction of a new friend-image by the American-controlled media (West link, German-American friendship, education to freedom and democracy) was closely associated with the construction of an enemy-image (Cold War, anti-communism, etc.)

4. Reports on Practice: Use of the Media before, during and after a Conflict

There are currently a large number of media projects underway in many developing countries (and also in Europe) in which media are used for crisis prevention and conflict settlement. This paper refers to a total of seven reports by media practitioners on various kinds of projects. The first report is by George Bennett, an English journalist and for many years Director of the BBC's Africa Service. As director of the communications department of the UN Somalia Mission from 1993 to 1995, he reports on a radio project in Somalia. Then there is a report by Andrea Gros, former communications expert at the Hirondelle Foundation in Geneva, on a media project in Rwanda from 1995 to 1996. In a third report George Bennett describes his radio work in Liberia during the civil war in 1997. In a fourth report, Khallel Toraubully, poet and social scientist from Mauritius, describes the role of Mauritanian TV during the ethnic conflicts on the island in February 1999. Loretta Hieber is a founder-member and director of the non-profit foundation Media Action International in Geneva. The fifth report is her account of radio enlightenment among refugees from Kosovo. The sixth report comes from WDR journalist Friedrich W. Zimmermann, who gives an account of the establishment of a local radio station in South Africa. The seventh report is by Jacques Franquin from the communications department of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and deals with the use of video in a refugee camp in East Timor.

4.1. Lessons Learned

Of these seven reports, only one refers to the use of the media during a war (Somalia), none refers to preventive measures before an outbreak of violence, while six of the reports refer to the use of the mass media after the end of violent conflicts. Thus the seven reports consulted for this study confirm what is also mirrored in the special literature: media projects are only initiated by western NGOs when a violent conflict has ended. Media projects of a clearly preventive character are almost unknown, even though they are urgently necessary. Except for the Somalia report, whose author evaluates the radio project as unsuccessful because it was pure US military propaganda and not intended for enlightenment, all the other six

reports regard their projects as having been successful.[1] In five of these six reports, the topic is the medium of radio; in the one report on media work with refugees in East Timor it is video films. What are the success criteria applied in these reports?

• Being embedded in local cultural traditions
• Consideration given to the languages of the target groups
• Cooperation with the local people
• Cooperation with the local media
• Demystification of media technology (participatory media)
• Complete independence from the military (even in the form of UN Peacekeeping Troops) and from other (mostly Western) government institutions
• Active work (including social work, work with youth, adult education, introductory courses, training courses) in media mixing (video, film, radio, print, music, painting, dance, poetry) as a method of social learning.

In most of these six reports the success criterion "quality news" is also applied: The project was successful because of accurate/ objective/ unbiased/ professional news broadcasts; the project has successfully assumed the role of watchdog. This particular success criterion should not be doubted, but it should be put in perspective. First, it is striking that the evident so-called BBC-ideology mainly stems from Anglo-American authors. Second, reference must be made here again to the claim by Dusan Reljic that the "quality of the media statement" can only have a strong impact when the other four basic factors are also strong. Third, for some time now Wilbur Schramm's theory of the press as a fourth force (1956) has been justifiably suspected of not doing justice to the totally different forms of public domain that exist in many developing countries.

A more than remarkable exception to the rule is the report by Khallel Toraubully on the role of the state television network MaBc during violent ethnic conflicts on the island of Mauritius in February 1999. The television network had decided not to report much on the conflicts, i.e., to pursue an ethic of restraint. The report suggests that this reserved attitude may well have contributed to a lessening of the violent clashes (in contrast to many other media reports on violence during a conflict. For example, local radio in Solingen could be seen as having intensified unrest after the murder of five Turkish women in May 1993 rather than as having defused the conflict). This report on Mauritius is notable above all because it questions the idea, widespread in communications science, of communication as a means of contributing to peace.

No report could be found on successful crisis prevention through the use of the media, yet the concentrated efforts of the media in the non-violent overthrow of the Marcos regime in 1986 provides a positive example which is well-documented in the respective special literature (Murphy 1986; Goss-Mayr 1987; Kotte 1988). If the reasons for the success of the AKKPKA project against former President Marcos in the Philippines are studied, the following factors emerge: 1. Social mobilization by a "local NGO," namely, the Catholic Church. 2. Huge mobilization of many millions of people. 3. Coordinated and systematic preparation and rehearsal of social actions. 4. Use of the media (radio, flyers, brochures) as integrated components of social actions. 5. Inclusion of traditional and group media (prayer, sermon, dance) when working with modern mass media. 6. Spiritual basis. 7. Existence of a strong "enemy-image" in the person of President Ferdinand Marcos. 8. Existence of a charismatic and strong "friend-image" in the person of Corazon Aquino. (It is interesting to note that these success criteria coincide with some of those put forward by the UNHCR.)

Needless to say, the preventive use of the media is always controversial, as such prevention is confronted with the following conflicts: it touches on the difficult relationship between a country's political self-determination and the moral and legal criteria for measures from outside that country, and it does so at a point in time when there is as yet no open violence. So far, it is not clear what form a democratically legitimate and socially and culturally sustainable decision-making process would take which makes outside decisions for another country as to whether or not a war/crisis/conflict exists and then correspondingly uses the media in a meaningful way.

5. Problems and Dilemmas: Approaches for Development Aid Work

The media can neither initiate war, nor can they end it. But media communications can positively intervene in processes of social communication and social change. Media impact is always multi-causal and long-term. Media impact in the sense of structural crisis prevention and conflict settlement requires institutional security in the form of a public domain for con-

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1. The fact that more reports on successes exist than on failures has nothing to do with a general success rate for such media projects, but more with the difficulty of getting hold of reports on failures and being allowed to make them public. If one reads an evaluation of all the UNHCR media projects between 1991 and 1998, then the failures outnumber the successes. Other methodological problems exist because in the case of most of these media projects carried out by NGOs or UN authorities there are neither valid planning studies nor valid evaluations, and because the success or failure of many media projects has to do with social processes that eschew quantification.

troversy, the possibility of diversity and pluralism, a media law as the framework for a state based on the rule of law, and ethical codes for journalists as a regulative for responsible action at the individual level. The promotion of such institutional conditions for media communication in development aid work must be the point of departure and objective of individual media projects before, during and after conflicts. These are indeed very big demands to be made on media projects. But because the reality of project work leads to compromises one way or the other, it does not make sense to begin with compromises.

In development aid work, the media sector is generally an extremely sensitive one, because media communications always have to do with issues of culture, and it is first and foremost in cultural issues that many developing countries reject all intervention from outside. Given this background, development aid work is faced with the following problems: 1. the relationship between force and cultural autonomy. 2. the relationship between the internal and the external. 3. the relationship between social learning and technological intervention 4. the relationship between NGOs and state and government. 5. the relationship between intervention and restraint.

5.1 Relationship between Force and Cultural Autonomy

There is no doubt that the major objectives of media projects for crisis prevention and conflict settlement are to reduce violence and promote reconciliation. It is equally clear, however, that abstract agreement on general principles of non-violence tends to crumble when, a) the concept of violence is differentiated, and b) when it is concretized. But what if intervention from outside is already part of structural violence, or if a "culture of violence" already exists in a country?

A general code of professional ethics for journalists often demands that neutral facts and objective information be mediated, as these need to be passed on, particularly in a conflict situation. This ethical neutrality faces the problem that content relevant to peace is often of such a kind that it tends to, and must, change predominant behavior patterns in a "culture of violence". In such a conflict, media work should promote and support content and behavior patterns that lessen conflict and which stem from the endogenous culture. Such an approach could result in lasting reconciliation and peace.

5.2 Relationship between Internal and External

Some of the most frequently-mentioned reasons why external NGOs become involved in conflict zones in other cultures and countries through media projects have to do with neutrality, independence and objectivity. These values could just as well be implemented by endogenous local media actors. Should such local media actors exist, then it is better to support their activities than to initiate additional new projects that come from outside. Robin Hay therefore rightly emphasizes in his paper *The Media and Peacebuilding* that, "peace work can only be carried on from outside to a very limited extent" (Hay, 1999).

In media impact research, the credibility factor plays a central role in successful media work. From the viewpoint of the victims of war and conflict, however, many media actors are structurally not credible, as they are rich and have white skin, they come from outside, etc. This structural weakness cannot be eliminated at the level of the system. Only at the individual level can the system's lack of credibility be effectively combated by empathy among all the individual media project workers. External project workers must therefore have at their disposal the emotional capacity to empathize with the situation and culture of the other people. Working with the media to promote trust and peace involves, among other things, normative and culturally very differently understood themes like "reconciliation," "human rights", "a state based on the rule of law", "pluralism", "democracy". Such themes should no longer be defined by NGOs, as if the target group of their media work were a "passive recipient", or worse still, a "passive victim"; a "passive victim" must become an "actively involved person". Each "victim" must be supported so that he or she can become active in the work of peacebuilding. Genuine participation at all levels of the project and at all times is the only possibility for overcoming the difference between the internal and the external.

5.3 Relationship between Social Learning and Technological Intervention

To recapitulate on the tradition and changes in what the theory and practice of Development Communication once were and now are, we can state the following about the high point of that debate in the late 1970s: Development Communication is social work that uses the media. The aim of this work is to make the recipients of the media emotionally and cognitively capable of self-determination and of determining the media. The difference between broadcaster and recipient, between expert and layman, between outside and inside can only be bridged by participation and empathy.

This social learning approach has been altogether successful in development aid work in numerous media projects in many different countries. Yet this predominant paradigm in development aid work collapsed without comment in the early 1980s. Whereas Development Communication was no longer an issue in the 1980s and 90s, it turned up again in the late 1990s in the form of a debate on the Internet and globalization, with no reference being made, however, to the earlier discussions.

Yet between the two strands of the debate there are evident conflicts related to generations, practice and theory. The current debate on the Internet and globalization is technology-friendly to the point of euphoria; it is mainly determined by the information and communication industry, often by NGOs, and occasionally by state institutions; it is borne along by the optimism of a networked world as regards overcoming all kinds of weaknesses in education, training and further training, and in communication, political participation, medicine, products, etc. (Becker 2001).

What is required in the use of media for crisis prevention and conflict settlement in development aid work is a mixture of the two approaches and conceptual traditions, namely, a combination of social learning and new and old media technologies.

5.4 Relationship between NGOs and State and Government

The involvement of NGOs in development aid work is relatively new. It is, among other things, an expression of state failure in development aid work. NGOs are prominent examples of civil society involvement independent of the state and the economy. Because NGOs represent civil social forces, their involvement is often grounded in ethical convictions. Therefore NGOs are mainly active in development work where symbolic politics plays a role, and this also applies in the case of the link between crises and media.

However welcome the involvement of NGOs in the field of crisis prevention and conflict settlement may be, however impressive their creativity, energy and sense of responsibility, their lack of distance regarding themselves is very striking. Many NGOs have little democratic legitimation for their actions, receive little feedback from their own grassroots (which are very small), often develop the same attitude of dominance towards NGOs in the South that is exhibited by the macro-structure of the North-South conflict, frequently allow themselves to be instrumentalized by governments through funding, and are rarely what they purport to be: namely, autonomous, grassroots-democratic, oppositional (Wahl 1998; Brunnengräber 1998; Brand 2000). Thus as regards the current landscape of humanitarian projects in the Balkans, an analysis by Gilles d'Aymery (2001) shows very clearly that behind a colorful diversity of ever new kinds of small NGOs active in the Balkans there is just a handful of known big actors, namely, the Soros and the Ford Foundations, the US Institute of Peace, or the National Endowment for Democracy.

Despite the justified criticism of many NGOs, they should still be actively involved in media projects for crisis prevention and conflict settlement, but under the following conditions: they require verifiable professionalism, an economic rationale, and scholarly project evaluations. This demand for the active inclusion of NGOs does not relativize the need to criticize their work to date, instead it aims at a critique of state institutions whose failed Development Communication policy or unsuccessful media work for crisis prevention and conflict settlement have been well-documented over the decades by international research.

5.5 Relationship between Intervention and Restraint

As long as there has been technically-mediated media communication (i.e., since the semaphore in the early 19th century), the protagonists of these respectively new technologies have never tired of claiming and promising that the newly-available media communication will finally, a) build bridges, b) broker peace and reduce prejudice, c) eliminate inequality by networking, and d) bring all people closer together. With the electronic networking made possible by the Internet, such notions have been intensified, based on the conviction that social structures can be altered through access to media and technologies.

By contrast, the report by Khallel Toraubully on the behavior of television broadcasters during the ethnic unrest on the island of Mauritius indicates that there are certain conflict situations where an "ethics of restraint" is much more likely to reduce violence than intervention by the media, however well thought out it may be. As shown in detail in Becker (2002, pp. 153), in the face of an accelerating media technology spiral, more importance accrues to strategies of restraint and refusal. In other words: the more wars, crises and conflicts become information wars, crises and conflicts, the more development aid work must consider whether intensive crisis and conflict management exists above and beyond the media.

These five problems and dilemmas are (for the moment) insoluble, in particular through easy compromises. Yet they must be repeatedly discussed before each and every media project aimed at crisis prevention and conflict settlement. There are no patent solutions for project work, but there must be a transparent discussion of the inadequacies.

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