

# MRG Conflict Programme Evaluation

## 0. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

MRG started to pay explicit attention to conflict prevention in relation to minority rights from 2002 onwards. The DFID-funded project, running from October 2005 to October 2007 (extended till April 2008), falls within its advocacy theme of “Prevention of Genocide and Conflict involving Minorities”. It involves general publications and specific ones on five ‘target countries’ (China, Iraq, Kosovo, Nicaragua and Sudan), combined with seminars and other advocacy activities aiming at national and international policymakers. This evaluation is based on a review of all relevant documentation, interviews with current and former MRG staff, other experts, partner organizations, and policymakers in national and international institutions, and a short field visit to Kosovo.

The evaluation concludes that the chosen direction of focusing on conflict prevention has overall been a successful one. It has allowed MRG to venture, both substantially as well as institutionally, beyond its traditional human rights world into new, more political terrain. The project has made a beginning of disseminating a conceptual framework for dealing with minority rights. The quality of the publications is considered very high, as is the professional competence and dedication of MRG’s staff. The principal weakness with regard to the publications is still their relative unfamiliarity among the target group of policymakers, partly due to the fact that MRG itself is not always well-known. It is therefore recommended to further develop MRG’s outreach and communication capacity. In terms of their contents, the publications could be made more relevant for its target audience by stepping outside the principled rights-based framework and taking into account political realities and constraints within which policymakers have to work. Seminars and other advocacy events could be made more relevant by giving more thought to strategic objectives and corresponding detailed planning, in terms of specific practical outcomes and realizable recommendations for action. It is recommended to intensify links to organizations in distinct but related policy fields, such as peacebuilding and conflict prevention, democracy and rule of law, and civic education, e.g. through a joint workshop.

The combination of general advocacy and working in and on five specific countries has created certain tensions, while the overall goal to “contribute to reducing the incidence of violent conflict involving minorities and indigenous peoples” might have been too ambitious. Yet, despite the critical notes and weaknesses identified, and a number of organizational problems and constraints, the Project has succeeded in implementing all its planned activities, establishing new and strengthening existing partnerships with local and international organizations, and beginning to sensitize a wider circle of policymakers with

respect to the importance of minority issues and for ways of dealing with them for the prevention of violent conflict. It deserves to be continued, preferably with a sharper regional focus and a longer-term commitment.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

This external evaluation was carried out by Guus Meijer, an independent consultant in international conflict transformation and peace-building based in The Hague, in the period between December 2007 and April 2008. The Project is part of MRG's first programme to make an explicit connection between minority rights and conflict prevention and thus realizing one of the organization's objectives identified in the course of the 2003 Strategic Review. It was initially programmed for a period of 24 months (from 1 October 2005 to 30 September 2007), but later extended till 30 April 2008, with the donor's permission and without extra costs. The evaluation was thus carried out in parallel with the implementation of the Project's final activities, mainly a number of important advocacy trips and meetings in Geneva, Brussels and New York. The month of April 2008 also saw the publication of a briefing report on Southern Sudan.

The evaluation focuses principally on the DFID-funded activities carried out and the publications produced during the period referred to above (October 2005 – April 2008). It was not always easy, however – neither for the evaluator nor for the people being interviewed – to determine exactly which activities and which publications were or were not included in the Project, due to the fact that activities on conflict prevention had already started under another grant, from the Ford Foundation. MRG organizes its programme work thematically as well as regionally and the present DFID-funded Project falls under the thematic advocacy programme “Prevention of Genocide and Conflict involving Minorities”. It built on and complemented the Ford-funded project, and activities were seemingly continued smoothly from one project into the other, not always clearly distinguishable for others (such as partner organizations, seminar participants, or even MRG staff not directly connected to the Project) than those with full insight in the administrative and financial details. Examples of activities/publications on conflict prevention not included in the DFID-funded project (and here only listed among the consulted documents; see Annex D) are the briefings on “Minorities and Conflict Prevention: The Case for a Special Representative” (March 2002)

and on “Genocide and Minorities: Preventing the Preventable” (April 2004), the “Submission to the UN High-Level Panel On Threats, Challenges and Change – Conflict prevention and the protection of minorities” (June 2004) and the report on “Preventing Genocide and Mass Killing: The Challenge for the United Nations” (January 2006). See Section 4.1 for another publication falling between two stools.

Despite the slight ambiguity resulting from this problem, it is the evaluator’s opinion that most of the findings, conclusions and recommendations contained in the current report are equally valid for MRG’s wider thematic advocacy programme referred to above, funded so far by two separate grants, as for the project activities strictly funded out of the DFID grant.

After agreement on the Terms of Reference, including the reduction in the number of ‘target countries’ to be visited to just one (viz. Kosovo), the evaluator was briefed by MRG staff and directors during a visit to London in mid-December 2007. He then also met with the responsible staff members of the Project’s funding agency, the UK Department for International Development (DFID).

As is usual in this kind of report, it is written on the basis of Chatham House rules, i.e. all insights and comments offered by interviewees are represented or taken into account as well as possible, but no specific statement or opinion is explicitly attributed to a particular person or organization.

Finally, I would like to thank all people who so generously shared their knowledge, insights and opinions with me either over the telephone or in face-to-face meetings – including current and former MRG staff involved in the Project – as well as those who gave me (further) suggestions for persons to be interviewed or other help in locating them.

## **2. BACKGROUND AND SHORT DESCRIPTION OF THE PROJECT**

### **2.1 History and background**

Since its foundation in the 1970s, Minority Rights Group International (MRG) has been working as an advocate for the inclusion of minority rights legislation in national constitutions and international frameworks, for the effective implementation of these laws and frameworks, and for the protection of specific minorities and indigenous peoples worldwide. Its main instruments for the realization of this mandate have been and continue to be publications (in print and on the web), lobby and advocacy with national governments and international organizations, education of the general public (in particular 'majorities') and work with the media, and assistance (technical and financial) to local minority organizations and other promoters of the rights of minorities and indigenous peoples, in order to strengthen their capacities and 'voice' and/or jointly implement activities.

By its nature, MRG's work has always and necessarily included references to conflict and potential violence and the desirability of prevention. Yet, it is only since the 1990s that more explicit attention began to be paid to issues of conflict and conflict prevention and that ways were explored to include these issues in concrete programming. In this context, one may refer to discussions and projects on violence and genocide and to a seminar of the International Council in Geneva on "Minorities and Conflict Prevention" in May 2002. This has culminated in the incorporation of conflict prevention as a primary focus and the conflict prevention world as a primary target in MRG's 2003 Strategic Plan and in the subsequent elaboration of project proposals to the Ford Foundation and to DFID, and thus to the Project under review.

Some of the considerations and assumptions underlying MRG's work on minorities and conflict prevention are the following:

- Too many conflicts that have disregard for minority rights at their centre are not being understood as such and minority rights have thus been marginalized in international conflict prevention;
- Therefore, the case needs to be made to institutions mandated with conflict prevention that their policies need to be geared towards

- addressing (often less visible and less ‘strategic’) minority issues, showing how better incorporation of these rights can strengthen their work;
- Minority rights – enshrined in Constitutions and implemented through electoral, justice and educational systems – and full inclusion and participation of minority groups is imperative to conflict prevention and post-conflict peace-building, while segregation is not the only solution if sustainable peace is the genuine aim;
  - Minority rights are not designed to separate people or to support secessionist movements, but aim to protect and empower groups and individuals who lack power

## **2.2 Nature and objectives of the Project**

The Project is in essence a world-wide and general advocacy project, targeting key policymakers and decisionmakers in national and international bodies and trying to raise their awareness of the key role of minority rights in conflict prevention and peace-building, while at the same time zooming in on five so-called ‘target countries’, located in different parts of the world and with different issues and problems as far as minority rights are concerned (viz. China, Iraq, Kosovo, Nicaragua and Sudan). Reports and briefings on these target countries serve, on the one hand, to strengthen the general advocacy campaign, providing concrete case-study material and lessons learned in the real world, while on the other hand trying to push forward the minority-rights agenda in the countries themselves. With respect to the latter, the Project followed in principle the MRG ‘model’ of working with and supporting local partner organizations.

The objectives of the Project, as stated in the original grant application to DFID’s Conflict and Humanitarian Aid Fund, are as follows:

- The overall **goal** is to contribute to reducing the incidence of violent conflict involving minorities and indigenous peoples by increasing understanding among key decision-makers in governments and international governmental organisations of the causal linkages between violent conflict, poor governance and violations of the rights of minorities.

- The **purpose** of the project is to increase the understanding and awareness among national and international policy makers regarding the issue of governance, policy, minority rights and conflict and the causal links between them, and provide them with feasible courses of actions from evidence-based advocacy and lessons learned.

### 2.3 Project activities

The same 2005 grant application lists the following planned activities:

- *Research* for all reports and the macro-study, conducted in-country where possible, by relevant experts on the country and/or issue at hand;
- *International seminar on conflict* in Sudan and advocacy on conflict prevention in Sudan in key capitals;
- *Consultation workshop* with Iraqi civil society representatives, officials and members of the Minorities Council, members of the Iraqi National Assembly and other stakeholders, followed by a human rights monitoring brief in Iraq's northern parts, with a special view to monitoring the 'Arabization' and 'Kurdization' processes in this part of the country;
- *Consultation workshops* on minorities in Kosovo; on the Atlantic region of Nicaragua; and on minorities in China;
- *International seminar* on governance, minorities and conflict prevention;
- *Policy advocacy meetings* in key capitals between MRG staff, partners from NGOs working on minority issues in Sudan, Iraq, Nicaragua, Kosovo and China, and key decision-makers in governments and IGOs;
- *Advocacy campaign* targeting decision-makers in international intergovernmental organizations involved in peace-building and/or conflict prevention.

The activities of the Project as realized and their outcomes can be grouped into the following more limited number of categories:

- **Publications**, in print and on MRG's website (see list in Annex B).
- **Workshops and high-level seminars**, to launch a publication and/or

bring the specific issues in question under the attention of a selected group of influential policymakers and/or experts, and to provide a platform for representatives of minority groups to meet with government representatives and other officials; in chronological order:

- **China:** “The Experience of Groups Living Under PRC Rule”. New York, 27-28 July 2006
  - **Iraq:** “Religious and Ethnic Minorities in Iraq”. Amman, 27-29 July 2006
  - **Nicaragua:** “El Proceso de Autonomía como Instrumento para la Prevención de Conflictos en Nicaragua”, Bluefields, 18-19 Sep 2006
  - **General:** “Preventing Ethnic and Religious Conflict: A Minority Rights Approach”. New York, 9-10 Nov 2006
  - **Kosovo:** “Kosovo’s Final Status: Securing Effective Protection of Minorities”. Brussels, 7 Dec 2006
  - **Sudan:** “Peace, Human Rights and Inclusion in Sudan”. Addis Ababa, 23-24 Jul 2007
- ***Bilateral briefings and advocacy visits*** to international organizations and national governments, mainly the UN and its agencies and offices in New York and Geneva, the EU (Brussels) and the Council of Europe (Strasbourg), but also including e.g. the African Union in Addis Ababa and various branches of the British government.

## **2.4 Partner organizations**

As indicated above, the Project was implemented partly through (local) partner organizations. The original project document specifies a total of nine partners, one or two for each of the five target countries as well as a global one to provide liaison with the UN in New York. In practice, not all planned partnerships proved feasible. Some partners were replaced by others, while in one case (Kosovo) the Project was implemented without a local counterpart. The partner organizations with whom the Project was in fact carried out are the following:



- China** - Human Rights in China (HRC), New York
- Iraq** - Iraqi Minorities Council (IMC), Baghdad – now called Iraqi Minorities Organization (IMO)
- Nicaragua** - Centre for Human, Civil and Autonomy Rights (CEDEHCA), Managua/Bluefields
- Regional Coordination Centre of the Central Region (CRRC), Matagalpa
- Sudan** - Darfur Relief and Documentation Centre (DRDC), Geneva
- Sudan Social Development Organization (SUDO), Khartoum

### **3. METHODOLOGY AND SOURCES OF INFORMATION**

As agreed in the ToR (see Annex A), the evaluation was conducted on the basis of a review of (i) relevant documents, including the published reports; (ii) a series of verbal interviews with international policymakers and experts, mostly by telephone; (iii) interviews with at least one staff member from all local partner organizations; and (iv) meetings with a sample of relevant actors in one of the target countries, viz. Kosovo.

#### **3.1 Documents**

MRG provided the evaluator with numerous (mostly electronic) documents, including the initial grant application consisting of a narrative description, logical framework and budget; the reports produced and published as integral part of the Project; other relevant MRG publications; donor reports; internal reports of activities such as seminars, meetings and work visits; policy and planning documents; contracts with and reports from partners, etc. A list of selected documents considered most relevant and informative is provided in Annex C.

### **3.2 Interviews**

MRG provided the evaluator with several lists, containing a total of over a hundred names of (mostly international) policymakers and other experts who in one way or another had been involved in one or more of the Project's activities such as workshops, briefings and high-level seminars, and/or who might be expected to be familiar with one or more of the Project's publications. The names provided were supplemented by others from the evaluator's own network and people recommended by others but not included in MRG's original lists.

Taking into account the organizational affiliations and whether the person was more of a generalist or dealing specifically with one of the five target countries, an initial selection was made and people were approached for interview, either face-to-face or – in the majority of cases – by telephone. In the end, more than 80 e-mail messages were sent out, containing some basic information about the Project and the evaluation as well as a rough outline of questions, and requesting an interview by telephone (or, in the case of Kosovo, a meeting in person).

The outline, slightly adapted to the position of the person being contacted, was intended as a rough guideline and not as a rigid question-and-answer format (see Annex E for examples of the outlines for international policymakers and for partner organizations). In fact, as many interviewees felt insufficiently informed about either MRG, the Project or the publication(s) in question, the outline sent out proved less useful than had been expected even as a checklist, and the conversations often took a more general character.

People who did not reply to the e-mail were subsequently contacted by telephone and some others, for whom no e-mail address was available, were phoned directly. Altogether, around 20 people contacted did not respond at all to either e-mail or telephone, or messages were received that were on mission and thus unavailable. From the lists provided by MRG and selected for interview by the evaluator, six people felt they were not sufficiently informed the Project in question to make an interview meaningful. Some others indicated that they were

no longer dealing with minority issues and suggested colleagues for interview. In many cases, the evaluator noticed a certain hesitation and trepidation, since the contact with MRG or reading the publication(s) in question had been quite a while ago and the points remembered were broad and general rather than concrete and specific. Some said they receive so many reports they only have time to skip through a publication or read the summary, while others made it clear that as diplomats or (inter)national civil servants they often have many different issues to deal with and therefore, unfortunately, not enough time for reading and reflection, however necessary that might be to do a proper job.

It quickly turned out that hardly anyone of the people identified independently by the evaluator as a potential interviewee was aware of MRG's project or publications on conflict prevention and could therefore serve as a useful informant. Thus, in the end and in contravention to the ToR, not many people were actually interviewed whose names did not figure on one of MRG's lists – with the exception of the interviews in Kosovo.

All six partner organizations listed by MRG were approached in a similar way for a telephone interview, with a list of issues/questions adapted to their specific role and position in the Project. Three partners were in fact interviewed (DRDC, CEDEHCA, and HRIC), while the two others sent in its comments and suggestions by e-mail, after a number of failed attempts to speak over the phone (IMO and SUDO). With the sixth one, CRRC in Nicaragua, all attempts to schedule a telephone interview failed.

In the end, a total of 47 people were interviewed, including staff and former staff of MRG, national and international policymakers and other humanitarian actors and experts, and staff from partner organizations (see Annex D). This number also includes the people met and spoken to in Kosovo (see 3.3 below).

### **3.3 Country visit**

From 18 to 21 March 2008, the evaluator visited Pristina and conducted face-to-

face interviews with 15 people from a variety of governmental and non-governmental organizations dealing with minority issues, both local and international (see Annex D).

For budgetary and security reasons, interviews were only held in Pristina, which probably has not much affected the effectiveness of the visit, given that the Project's main target audience consists of national and international policymakers, who tend to be based in the capital. It must be said, however, that the visit was a relatively short one and that the range of people interviewed certainly has its limitations, due in part to accidental circumstances of peoples' responsiveness and availability and partly because of more structural factors. Thus, two obvious groups which are virtually absent from the sample are Serbs and Kosovan politicians or other national officials (with the exception of the nominally independent Acting Ombudsperson), as the former are harder to find in Pristina and the latter not very accessible, while both are less open to and interested in foreign interlocutors than e.g. NGOs or ex-pats.

Ironically, while this visit took place just one month after Kosovo's unilateral declaration of independence on 17 February 2008 and ethnic tensions and frustrations were still manifesting themselves in violent incidents in the northern border region with Serbia, each night the international news channels were mainly highlighting the erupting protest movement of another of the minorities addressed by the Project, viz. Tibetans in China – thereby fulfilling one of the fears expressed in MRG's 2007 report on China with respect to the brute marginalization of minorities, the spread of discontent and resulting (violent) conflict.

#### **4. FINDINGS AND OBSERVATIONS**

#### **4.1 Quality and content of publications**

**General quality.** All of the reports and briefing papers received high praise from those people who had in fact read and/or used them, whether (country) specialists or generalists. Among the positive points mentioned were the reports' objectivity, relevance and comprehensiveness, the attractive and accessible format and lay-out, the clear conceptual framework, the attention paid to gender (see below), and the fact that they provide a guide to key minority rights instruments and a reference to further print- and web-resources. Several interviewees indicated they habitually use one or more of the reports in their own trainings or briefings, or actively disseminate and recommend them among their colleagues. Some of the reports were written under less than ideal circumstances, in the sense that there was no free or easy access to the country in question (China, Iraq, Sudan). As the authors in question themselves admit, while they consider the quality to be as good as possible given this constraining factor, the reports would have been richer and better had they been able to visit the country and interview people freely.

**Length.** Some people indicated that the shorter briefing papers were more likely to be read by policymakers and thus potentially have an impact than the 30-40 page reports. This ties in with the observation that, overall, it was difficult to extract specific opinions or comments on the publications, as many of the interviewees were rather vague as to whether they had in fact read them, or couldn't quite remember their precise content – except a very small circle of people who have a close relationship with MRG and/or with the issue or country being looked at in a given publication (e.g. the Darfur Centre with respect to the Sudan publications).

**General vs. specific.** One interviewee made the seemingly contradictory observation that many policymakers in her working environment who deal with specific countries seem more interested in country-specific reports and meetings and less in general policy issues or conceptual frameworks, while they are often

in fact among the most knowledgeable and well-informed specialists, who shouldn't need the more specific reports. She herself valued in particular MRG's conceptual framework, considered it highly practical and relevant for (country)specific policy development. (See also Section 4.5 below on Scope of the Project).

**Women.** A salient and much appreciated feature of MRG's publications is that the particularly vulnerable position of women, and especially women belonging to ethnic or religious minorities, with respect to violence, marginalization and further violations of human rights (political and economic participation, property, access to justice, sexual violence, etc.) is highlighted and often reflected in the recommendations. This applies to the general report on minority rights and conflict prevention, to the reports/briefings dealing with countries with a majority Muslim population (Iraq, Kosovo and Sudan), but also to the reports on the very different situations in China and Nicaragua. The point that minority women often suffer double discrimination, first on the basis of their gender and then as members of a minority, is a strong and recurrent theme. Special mention deserves MRG's involvement, subsequently to the July 2006 meeting in Amman and work on the main Iraq report, in a research project on minority women in Iraq undertaken by UNAMI's Human Rights Office (see Section 4.4).

**Minority voices.** Some interviewees stressed the importance of minority groups themselves being part of the project, as advocacy by their own representatives – either in writing, their voices being part of the reports, or in person, e.g. in the meetings or seminars in Amman, Addis, Bluefields, etc.; visits to Brussels, Geneva, New York, London, etc. – is much more credible and effective than those of external experts or campaigners. On the other hand, a certain danger was referred to as well, in the sense that minorities naturally tend to exaggerate their own plight and inflate their numbers, which could – and according to some interviewees, in one or two cases, in fact did – jeopardize MRG's objectivity and balance in reporting, though it was stressed as well that as international civil servants (UN or other) they themselves were often obliged to be overly

diplomatic and cautious, averting any language that might be seen as provocative.

This point is related to the perception of MRG as sometimes being too close to the minorities in question, reinforced by some of the partnerships it enters into with minority organizations and its past record as a more one-dimensional campaigning group speaking for minorities and indigenous peoples – a subtle yet crucial difference with its ‘model’ for this Project, the OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities (and not for).

**Media.** When asked about any weaknesses or shortcomings of the reports, one or two interviewees noticed a relative absence of attention to the media as an important instrument, in addition to education, for the maintenance and survival of minority languages, cultures and identities. This comment applied in particular to the general report and the one on Kosovo.

**‘Overselling’.** There were some cautious warnings that MRG may sometimes be ‘overselling’ its message or not be flexible enough, in particular in its publications, in terms of its own framework vis-à-vis alternative or slightly different positions (e.g. with respect to integration vs. (relative) separation, or political compromises contravening international standards of human rights or jeopardizing ‘justice’ yet deemed necessary to end the violence and killings – see also debatable issues below). This kind of comments was made with due respect and full recognition of MRG’s seriousness and professionalism which none of the interviewees put into doubt and, in fact, in acknowledgement as well that MRG cannot but be expected to insist on and advocate for its ‘unique selling point’ contained in its very name (i.e. minority rights).

**Reservations.** Some of the more critical comments and observations received during the interviews are reflected in the reasons listed in the 2008 Southern Sudan Briefing under the heading “Why do humanitarian actors resist the minority rights approach?” – published when most of the evaluation interviews had been completed. In itself, this may serve as a confirmation of the usefulness

of dealing with these issues in a form that is accessible and digestible by an audience of policymakers in international organizations, oftentimes busy and overloaded with multiple tasks.

**Debatable issues.** Despite eloquent arguments to the contrary offered by MRG – e.g. in the same recently-published Southern Sudan Briefing – two issues some interviewees brought up stand out as controversial or at least not universally accepted:

**(i) *Realpolitik vs. international law.*** Some interviewees indicated to view MRG's approach as sometimes politically naïve or unrealistic, and to that extent ineffective. MRG's general approach and recommendations are sometimes seen as rather "legalistic" and therefore likely to be difficult to put into practice – missing a reality check, e.g. in terms of power relationships, (national and international) political will (with capital P as well as lower case, cf. turf battles within the 'international community', between governments, ministries, organisations), available qualified people (e.g. judges, police), financial resources, etc.

At the international political level, it is easy to say that external actors need to work with governments in order to convince them of the advantages of implementing minority rights, or that minorities need to be protected by law from exclusion, marginalization and discrimination, but political realities 'on the ground' are sometimes not so benign as to make such principled stands workable in practice, e.g. when we are dealing with authoritarian regimes that can only survive by continuing to cater for its narrow powerbase, repressing any expression of dissent or challenge to its privileges (among the Project's target countries, China and Sudan provide clear examples).

Yet MRG's advocacy limits itself to a legal perspective based on international human rights and humanitarian law, overlooking, according to some, the reality of fundamentally opposing interests and the inherently political dimensions of struggle, as well as overestimating the power and/or political will of the international community to act. In this view, there is only so much humanitarian



actors (in the broad sense in which MRG uses the term) can accomplish, the rest has to be dealt with through political measures, which are always inherently flawed and 'injust' (including military intervention as a continuation of international politics by other means).

**(ii) *Universal citizenship vs. minority rights.*** Some interviewees expressed having a problem with viewing minority rights as a (or: the) key to conflict prevention and peace-building, especially when they are being codified in legal frameworks that specifically name the groups in question (e.g. reserved seats in parliament, which not only limits special treatment to a restricted number of groups, but also in practice often leads to the disappearance of any form of politics that is non-ethnic). In fact, this is not the minority rights approach that MRG was actually recommending in its materials. It does not put into question that conflicts are almost always played out along ethnic, religious or otherwise identity-based fault-lines. Yet according to this perspective such codification reinforces and entrenches the collective 'identities in conflict' and thus these very divisions. In many cases, these identities – especially in their inescapable and exclusivist form, which make it virtually impossible for people to see themselves and their fellows in categories other than the ones in conflict – must be considered as the consequence of violent confrontation rather than their cause. (Some participants commented in relation to their own idea and understanding of minority rights – not necessarily the views expressed in MRG's publications and at events). This issue is related to the question of whether, in human rights advocacy work, one should emphasize individual citizenship rights or rather, as the minority rights approach advocates for certain situations, (collective) minority rights. These seem to be fundamental debates with important policy consequences, which MRG should try and develop further.

**Minor editorial issues.** Several minor editorial shortcomings somewhat affect the readability or usability of some of the publications by the uninitiated reader, e.g. the absence of a list of acronyms/abbreviations (e.g. China report, Southern Sudan briefing), and the absence or inconsistent use of indicating the date of

publication – year and month, which could be relevant for putting the document in its proper temporal context (noticeable, albeit probably only for a close-reading evaluator, not only in some published reports but more frequently so in internal reports and the like).

**Electoral systems.** One thematic report published in 2006, on “Electoral systems and the protection and participation of minorities”, acknowledges financial support from DFID but is nevertheless not taken on board in this evaluation (cf. Introduction), as there were no specific meetings or other advocacy activities organized to promote it and none of the interviewees, with the exception of one former MRG staff member, did mention it. Suffice to say that its subject matter and the way it is presented should make it a potentially useful document for many national and international policymakers, but that the combination of its technical character and general scope will make it even less likely to be read than the other reports outside a narrow circle of specialists, given the constraints and pressures under which most of this potential audience claims to be working, as confirmed again by the interviews conducted for this evaluation.

## **4.2 Other activities**

**Seminars.** The general and country-specific seminars (see Section 2.3. above) were all realized according to plan, albeit with considerable delays. At a certain level they fulfilled their objectives, i.e. bringing together a range of relevant national and international policymakers and experts, and representatives of minority groups and organizations, exposing them to MRG’s conceptual framework and the specific issues in question and conducting general discussions around them. What seems to have been lacking, in some cases more than in others, is a clear strategic objective and corresponding planning, in terms of specific practical outcomes and realizable recommendations for action. As some interviewees indicated, it is not enough for minority groups to describe their plight and for MRG to present the available national and/or international

legal instruments, and then having people leave without a clear vision of what action they might in actual fact take in order to move towards a solution of some of the problems identified and discussed. This requires not only deep local knowledge and thorough political analysis, but also very detailed and sophisticated preparation on the part of the conveners and organizers (i.e. MRG and its partners) in terms of who to invite, the order and content of presentations, style of facilitation, organizations of side events and bilateral meetings, etc.

**Advocacy visits.** In addition to the more formal seminars and meetings MRG (co)hosted in the context of this Project, a number of interviewees emphasized the usefulness of the bilateral contacts with MRG staff, which is considered highly competent, engaged, objective and dynamic. Several also highlighted that their organizations were only at an early stage in the process of institutionalizing minority issues and rights in their policies and programmes and that they were still discussing with MRG the possibilities for further developing training and other forms of capacity-building. **4.3 Partnerships**

The character and intensity of MRG's partnerships with organizations 'on the ground' in the context of the Project vary considerably. As already mentioned, in Kosovo no local partnership was established, as civil society is still extremely weak and no organization could be identified that was sufficiently neutral and strong to deliver on the Project's requirements; an initial relationship was not continued when the English-speaking staff left and communication became virtually impossible. MRG has a good working relationship with the Roma and Ashkali Documentation Centre (RADC), but this would, as an organization representing just some of the minorities, not be a suitable partner for the conflict prevention project.

Strong and enduring working relationships exist in particular with the Iraqi Minorities Council / Organization (IMO), with the Darfur Relief and Documentation Centre (DRDC) and with the Nicaraguan Centre for Human, Civil and Autonomy Rights (CEDEHCA). The collaboration with Human Rights in China (HRIC) started with and so far limited itself to this Project, but was equally

intense and mutually beneficial. The last two partners – CEDEHCA and HRIC – are both more established and experienced organizations and e.g. don't need the kind of training and capacity-building or facilitated introduction into the "international community" as the others.

\* The July 2006 Amman meeting was co-organized by MRG and the United States Institute for Peace (USIP), with considerable help from IMO, which not only facilitated the participation of many minority representatives and some government officials, and subsequently arranged interviews with key actors for the author of the main Iraq report. It also hosted MRG on two occasions during work visits inside Iraq. Conversely, in July 2007 MRG organized a weeklong visit by IMO's Chair to the UK, arranging meetings with a range of key politicians, civil servants academics and the media. IMO also received a grant of USD 5,135 for institutional support and to implement advocacy activities inside the country, including a training workshop for minority representatives, a radio programme, and lobby with the Iraqi parliament.

\* CEDEHCA played an equally instrumental role in the organization of the Bluefields seminar in September 2006 on the autonomy process in Nicaragua; its strong partnership with MRG is also manifested by the membership of its Executive Director in MRG's International Council.

\* DRDC's relationship with MRG predates the conflict prevention project and goes back to the times of its foundation in 2004. It played an active consultative role in the conception of the Project and the production of the two Sudan micro-studies (on Darfur and Southern Sudan, respectively) and was instrumental in convening a one-day seminar in Banjul (The Gambia) in November 2006 and the high-level seminar in Addis Ababa (Ethiopia) in July 2007. In 2005, DRDC received crucial financial and technical support from MRG for bringing representatives of civil society groups and human rights activists to Geneva and Banjul (The Gambia), in order for them to prepare for and participate in meetings of the UN Commission on Human Rights, the Sub-Commission on the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights, the Working Group on Minorities (predecessor

of the Forum on Minorities Issues), and the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights and the associated NGO Forum, respectively.

\* HRIC is quite different from the other partner organizations (maybe with the exception of CEDEHCA), as it is well-established and experienced, with a wide network of Chinese and other partners and a fully-fledged programme of human rights lobbying work aiming at international media, national governments in North America and Europe (EU and non-EU), international bodies such as the UN Human Rights Council and the European Parliament, the corporate sector, etc. HRIC did not need MRG's help in terms of capacity-building, contacts or country expertise, but was grateful for the addition of new conceptual frameworks of "minorities" and "conflict" as well as for the financial means to intensify its work with Tibetan, Uyghur and Mongol representatives and organizations (most of whom don't like to be considered "minorities"). Consequently, the partnership with HRIC took a specific form. HRIC was not only responsible for writing the Project's report on minorities in China, it also played a crucial role in organizing the high-level meeting in New York in July 2006 on the subject, in the distribution of the report and its translation into Chinese and in subsequent advocacy meetings in Geneva and Strassbourg in 2007 and 2008.

In addition to these partnerships with civil society organizations, MRG has, in the context of the current Project, developed good and productive working relationships with other agencies and institutions, such as above-mentioned co-organizer of the Amman meeting, USIP. Another example is UNAMI's Human Rights Office in Amman, which has made use of MRG's expertise in designing and implementing a research project on the position of minority women inside Iraq; the resulting report, probably only in Arabic with a summary in English, will be launched at a big international conference on women in Iraq the Office is planning to organize shortly and in which the fragile position of minority women will be an important topic. The Office considers MRG as its main international partner in this endeavour. Another example of an informal yet very productive relationship is that with the Office of the OSCE High Commissioner on National

Minorities (HCNM) in The Hague, whose work has served as a model for the Project under review; a permanent exchange of experiences and lessons-learned is maintained through mutual visits, participation in meetings and exchange of publications.

#### **4.4 Kosovo**

As indicated above, the evaluator visited Kosovo from 18 to 21 March 2008, having meetings with 15 people from a variety of backgrounds and organizational affiliations. In addition, several external Kosovo experts and international policymakers formerly based in Kosovo were interviewed by telephone (see Annex D).

Of the local civil society organizations and international NGOs, one – the Roma and Ashkali Documentation Centre – has a close and ongoing relationship with MRG and, as a matter of fact, participated in the lobby and advocacy meeting in Brussels in October 2006, after the publication of the Kosovo report. The other NGOs met (Humanitarian Law Center, Norwegian Helsinki Committee, and Kosovo Foundation for Open Society) were poorly informed about MRG's work in general and the Kosovo publications in particular.

Among (current and former) staff of international organizations, the familiarity with MRG and the Project varied from thorough knowledge to virtual ignorance – this observation must be seen in light of the fact that all people interviewed with respect to Kosovo were still dealing intensively with developments there and that all internationals interviewed in Pristina had at least several years of experience in the country.

The overall impression, admittedly based on a very small and certainly not representative sample of people met and interviewed, remained that MRG's work on Kosovo, including the two publications (2006 Report and 2007 Briefing) remains relatively unknown, despite good coverage at the time of publication both in the local press and internationally. Several people interviewed reported

that they had just received a hard copy of the December 2007 Kosovo Briefing (RADC, HLC, CoE). None of the local people met had read or was aware of the Albanian or Serbian versions of the 2006 Report, but again, the sample was extremely small and definitely biased towards people speaking English (e.g. no Kosovan government official or parliamentarian was interviewed, the closest the evaluator came being the nominally independent Acting Ombudsperson).

One of the explanations advanced for MRG's lack of visibility was that the Project had no local partner organization, which could have supported dissemination and sustained interest from both Kosovan and international actors in-country. This may have been compounded by the fact that another international NGO dealing with minority issues, viz. ECMI, does since 2000 have its own office in Pristina (according to its website, "ECMI [...] is the only on-site organization devoted exclusively to minorities and minority-related topics" and its activities are geared towards "supporting the government in generating effective practices in majority-minority relations"). ECMI thus works principally as a consultant in support of Kosovan government structures (among others, the Prime Minister's Office, the Ministry of Communities and Returns, and the Communities' Consultative Council) and is seen by some observers as less independent and less critical than MRG. In fact, MRG's 2006 report is considered more objective and authoritative, while critical. Although its criticism is directed mainly towards the international community, this very fact may have made it less welcome not only for some of the local representatives of international institutions but also for the Kosovan authorities themselves, whose political project depends so much on a smooth relationship with these same representatives.

Yet, as is generally the case with respect to MRG's publications, those who had read the publication(s) – in some cases only after having been contacted with a request for an interview – and were willing to comment on it, were universally positive about its objectivity, relevance and usefulness.

#### **4.5 General issues**

**Wider impact.** Although difficult to prove or even to assess, the impression is that the Project's advocacy work, realized by MRG and/or its partners on the basis of the reports and briefings, has had some impact on certain key audiences, such as the governments and other national bodies of the five 'target countries' China, Iraq, Kosovo, Nicaragua and Sudan. Obviously, the more repressive regimes (China, Sudan) are the most difficult ones to reach and influence, but there are signs that some of the messages do arrive. For instance, the launch of the HRIC/MRG China Report in 2007 was extensively covered by BBC World, which helped to bring it to the attention of the Chinese authorities, who were far from pleased with its critical comments on uneven development and repression. Because the minorities in question themselves are often too vulnerable to speak out openly, pressure must be put on these governments by other actors in the international arena with more leverage, such as international organizations, other governments and/or transnational companies. Consequently, HRIC directs its lobby and advocacy efforts primarily at these sectors, rather than at the Chinese authorities directly. Other partners also reported that their activities had, in their judgment, reached and influenced the authorities in question in a positive way, making them more aware of minority rights and their violation in actual practice, yet these claims remain difficult if not impossible to substantiate – this evaluation in any case has not found a viable way to verify them.

**Institutional results.** Individuals in a number of international bodies declared that MRG's Project on conflict prevention was supportive to their own institutional development and had a generally positive impact. Examples include the Council of Europe and its Framework Convention on the Protection of National Minorities; the OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities; the UN Peace Building Commission, created in December 2005; and the UN Independent Expert on Minorities – a position for which MRG had lobbied hard and with which it is still actively engaged.

**Scope of the Project.** Several interviewees indicated they had not been so



much aware (or possibly had forgotten) that the activities they had been involved in with respect to a specific country were part of a wider project (cf. Introduction above). This is understandable, considering that the Project's activities were rather similar to MRG's general and ongoing work, of which it forms an integral part, albeit with a specific focus. Apparently this point did not hamper the constructive involvement of the individuals in question. Yet, in terms of institutional outreach and the Project's objective to bring about changes in international organizations and their awareness of minority issues in relation to violent conflict, it might have been a lost opportunity and another indication of how difficult it is to penetrate them.

This point is related to issues of organizational capacity and expertise. The Project was very ambitious (in some peoples' view, overambitious) and definitely suffered from a certain overstretch, causing – in combination of financial constraints and the consequent need for a reduction in staff – tensions and delays in its implementation. The combination of a general world-wide advocacy campaign, directed at national and international institutions and policymakers, with a 'target countries' approach, implying activities aiming at helping to bring about concrete changes 'on the ground', added to the variety of partnerships the Project entered into, can be identified as factors contributing to these tensions and this overstretch. There is a strong point to be made for feeding general advocacy about the importance of minority rights to conflict prevention with concrete 'case studies' and 'evidence-based' country reports, and the Project has to a large extent fulfilled its promises in this respect. Yet there is an unmistakable tension between a primary focus on a specific country or situation, and a more 'instrumental' approach, in which this country and situation (by definition involving concrete lives and livelihoods of vulnerable groups of concrete people) is used as 'case material' for a wider advocacy campaign. The first one requires stronger and longer-term commitment, deeper knowledge and expertise, and a different type of relationship with partners and 'target group' (minority and majority).

## 5. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The findings and observations contained in the previous chapter lead to the following conclusions and recommendations:

- In one way or another, MRG has always dealt with conflict issues, as these are inextricably linked to its core business of minority rights. Yet, the Project is (part of) MRG's first explicit venture into the (for them: new) 'world of peace-building and conflict prevention', in both a substantial sense as well as institutionally. As this evaluation shows, this has so far proven to be as such a successful and productive new strategy, yet it marks only a first step in a long process of institutional re-orientation, learning and capacity-building, which needs and deserves to be continued, broadened and deepened.
- Despite tensions, capacity problems, initial problems with external authors and partners, and taking into account the extension of the Project by six months, virtually all activities and publications were completed as planned, and generally to a very high standard, albeit sometimes with considerable delays. The problems encountered may be addressed and possibly resolved by taking on board some of the recommendations of the present report.
- In terms of its design, the weakest part of the Project has been its ambition, stated in the overall goal of "contribut[ing] to reducing the incidence of violent conflict involving minorities and indigenous peoples". Such a goal may serve as a far (and necessary) horizon towards which all activities are geared and as such have its value, it sets wrong expectations from staff, partners, other participants and funders alike, for a number of reasons:
  - The time-span of the Project is too short to be able to achieve such a result;

- The necessary base-line data to judge whether there has been in fact a reduction of violence over time do in general not exist and the Project did not include any component to compensate for this lack;
  - The causal chain between action and result is too long and complex, and involves too many steps;
  - There is a serious attribution problem: how to prove or make plausible that the Project's actions have, amidst so many other factors, contributed to any observed reduction?
  - MRG was, certainly at the start of the Project, not sufficiently equipped and experienced to fully meet all necessary requirements of such an ambitious undertaking (especially in terms of political sophistication and setting realistic yet strategic objectives for specific Project components and doing the preparation and planning according to such objectives).
- The weakest part of the Project in terms of its implementation has proven to be its outreach: Despite great efforts from MRG staff and partners, using high-quality publications, convening high-level seminars and forums, and paying numerous one-on-one visits, the (national and international) policymaking community remains an extremely difficult target, and the indications are that the Project has so far only scratched the surface, without really penetrating into the day-to-day operations of the relevant individuals and institutions. To some extent, MRG has even to begin to be known and recognized beyond a rather narrow circle of specialists and close 'friends'.
  - On the other hand, some of the international institutions and organizations targeted by the current Project (e.g. the OSCE-HCNM, UN Peace Building Commission, CoE Framework Convention on the Protection of National Minorities) do fully appreciate the materials provided and in some cases use them in their own outreach and/or training activities. Some trainings or

briefings have been conducted jointly with MRG and other such joint activities are still being planned. Some organizations also feel supported in their own work and even existence by MRG's principled and thorough advocacy work in the field of minorities and conflict prevention.

- There is general appreciation as well for the seriousness with which MRG includes gender relationships in its general conceptual framework as well as in its country-specific analyses and recommendations.
- On the other hand, the general framework and the specific analyses and recommendations would be enriched by paying more attention to the important role that the media can and do play in maintaining and promoting minority languages, cultures and identities.

MRG's future work on minorities and conflict prevention would benefit, both substantially as well as in terms of effective outreach, from a more open and proactive attitude and approach towards debates, guidelines, organizations and networks in 'neighbouring' fields such as conflict resolution / prevention, democratization / democracy promotion, promotion of the rule of law, and civic / citizenship education, without losing its own specificity and unique contribution. In this context, it is recommended to organize a workshop or a series of workshops, or other type of events) with a select group of NGOs working towards similar goals, but with different backgrounds, approaches and levels of experience, and working in different 'NGO environments' (human rights, peace-building and conflict prevention, democracy and governance, etc.) The agenda of such an event should be thoroughly prepared and would include the exchange of experiences, critical reflection on and sharpening of methodologies and positions on controversial issues (some of them referred to in this report). The aim would be to strengthen the participating organizations' effectiveness individually as well as collectively. Participants should include (but not be limited to) London-based NGOs such as Conciliation Resources, International Alert and Saferworld, as

well as (possibly) Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch, the International Crisis Group, the Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue and International IDEA.

- MRG has to find new ways of claiming and obtaining its rightful place among its better-known 'competitors' on the human rights and country reports 'market', in particular Human Rights Watch (HRW), Amnesty International (AI), and the International Crisis Group (ICG). (This comparison was made by several people interviewed, although MRG staff asked me to point out that all three of these organisations have budgets and staffing many times larger than MRG's). HRW and AI mainly focus on extensively documenting specific cases of human rights violations, combined with calls for action and recommendations on how to improve the situation in question, while ICG usually provides a broad political analysis, also combined with specific recommendations and policy advice to relevant actors. In addition to the obvious point of having a more specific focus on the single issue of minority rights, MRG's reports are less time-bound than those of these sister organizations and generally have a stronger conceptual framework. The single focus might at the same time be a strength and a weakness: it is a strength in so far as that everyone will know what to expect and the organization can more easily avoid dispersing its energies into ever wider issues; it is a weakness in that it more easily leads to a certain fixation and one-sidedness which may put off people one needs to reach, making it harder to move beyond rather narrow circles and have a real impact.
- MRG is different from the above-mentioned sister organizations in another respect, viz. in that it aims to work principally through local partner organizations. This general approach or model has definite implications for its visibility and general profile. In many instances, MRG's name and role becomes naturally subordinated to the local partners' (sometimes being, in the current Project, not so local, e.g. HRIC and DRDC), which take most of the credit and are in a better position to exploit follow-up opportunities,

because of their permanent presence and single country focus. Clearly this is highly beneficial to the partners and this is important. It is recommended that MRG, rather than to give up on its general approach, should look for ways to tackle this dilemma, giving higher priority to its own profile and to 'marketing' its name, not as a goal in itself, but in order to improve its outreach and strengthen the impact of its publications and other advocacy tools and activities.

- In this context it is recommended to continue on the path of strengthening and professionalizing the organization's communication capabilities, through the hiring of professional journalists or others with thorough experience of dealing with the media, as well as the training of all relevant staff in clear and effective communication, including written and verbal briefings, preparing and facilitating meetings, etc.
- One additional reason for the relative failure to have an impact even on the first link of the causal chain towards actually reducing violence (i.e. influencing policymakers) might be that MRG's principled, rights-based and, as some would call it, 'legalistic' approach does not always concur with the essentially pragmatic, messy and power-based world of conflict prevention. There is thus a tendency among policymakers in this field to use and appreciate the factual information that MRG provides, without necessarily accepting or acting on the basis of the rights-based framework. In other words, the factual evidence of its 'evidence-based advocacy' is rather readily accepted, but the presumed evidence for the effectiveness or viability of recommended measures or policies is not always taken for granted and thus not acted upon. MRG needs to become more pragmatic and realistic (probably also implying: more modest) in its recommendations, both in its publications as well in corresponding advocacy activities.
- In the implementation of its approach towards specific country situations

(i.e. working with or through partner organizations), MRG should try and be clearer with regard to the kind of partnership it is aiming at. There is a great value in working with smaller and less experienced organizations, providing them with training and material support, and introducing them to relevant international bodies and wider networks of like-minded organizations, but it is quite different from working with strong and well-established partners who don't need or expect this kind of capacity-building, but rather look for a more equal partnership based on complementary expertise and contacts. Both types of partnership could well imply the joint realization of activities (publications, advocacy campaigns, work with the media, etc.), but they call, on the part of MRG, for different objectives, different time frames, different methodologies and different in-house staff competencies which are challenging to manage in the same programme.

- For any continuation of its programme on minority rights and conflict prevention (or campaign theme "Prevention of genocide and conflict involving minorities", as it is called in the 2007 Programme document), MRG should be less ambitious and no longer combine a general and world-wide advocacy campaign, directed at national and international institutions and policymakers, with activities aiming at helping to bring about concrete changes 'on the ground' in one or more 'target countries'. In case it opts for continuing with a 'target countries' approach, it should seriously consider focusing on one region only (e.g. Middle East, East Asia, Central America, or Central Africa). Reasons for such an option would be that complex and conflict-prone situations call for long-term commitment of any actor or intervener, and that it would allow for the building up and nurturing of the necessary network of contacts and relationships, as well as the necessary in-house knowledge and expertise.

## **ANNEX A – TERMS OF REFERENCE**

This programme was a new departure for MRG as we had not focused systematically or in detail on conflict prevention in past work. The programme included a number of research reports, publications and a programme of advocacy and meetings. The work is due to end in March 2008 and we would like to run the evaluation concurrently with the last few months of work with the report due in April 2008. DfID who are one of the two main funders have indicated that they would like to be involved in the evaluation process but have not specified how. We are currently developing plans for a new phase of this work and would like the learning from this evaluation to feed into that process. We would expect that the evaluator selected would have both a good knowledge of minority rights and some experience of evaluating conflict prevention programmes.

### **Output level**

Referring to the logical framework, did we complete all of the **activities** as planned to a reasonably high quality. What problems were encountered at this level? How did they affect the activities and to what extent were they overcome?

- Were the reports authoritative, fit for purpose, convincing?
- Did they reach the right audience? Were they read?
- Was the advocacy well targeted and effective?

### **Outcome level**

Where completed as planned, did the activities contribute to the planned **results**? Where this was so, refer to evidence. Where not so, what factors intervened and explain how they impacted. Suggest ways that the organisations tried to overcome any problems and how successful this was (or not). Document any changes in the external environment that may have helped or hindered the project. If there were any unplanned results (positive or negative) explain what these were and how they came about.

### **Key results (taken from project logframe)**

1. Govts/IGO targets modify conflict prevention policies; implement MR approach to conflict prevention
2. Govts express interest in modifying election systems; IGO targets make recs to govts
3. Sudanese CSOs develop and implement effective advocacy campaigns with GOS and key int. targets
4. GO Sudan expresses interest in modifying policies/laws/ programmes; key targets make recs to GO Sudan
5. Iraqi CSOs develop and implement effective advocacy campaigns with GO Iraq and key int. targets
6. Iraqi officials propose key modifications to ensure minority rights respected
7. Kosovar CSOs develop and implement effective advocacy campaigns with GOKosovo and key int. targets
8. GO Kosovo expresses interest in modifying policies/laws/ programmes; key targets make recs to GO Kosovo
9. Other govts express interest in adopting accom. measures inspired by Nicaraguan model
10. GO Nicaragua expresses interest in modifying policies/laws/ programmes; key targets make recs to GO Nicaragua
11. Other govts express interest in adopting accom. measures inspired by China model
12. GO China expresses interest in modifying policies/laws/ programmes; key targets make recs to GO China

### **Impact level**

If at all possible, make an assessment as to whether the results achieved are likely, over the longer term to achieve or contribute to the achievement of the **purpose** of the project:



“To increase the understanding and awareness among national and international policy makers regarding the issue of governance, policy, minority rights and conflict and the causal links between them, and provide them with feasible courses of actions from evidence-based advocacy and lessons learned.” and linked to this “Relevant international actors and national governments change policies re. minorities and conflict, international actors increase pressure on national governments not doing so, advocacy material become part of future conflict prevent and resolution work.”

If it is unlikely that all or part of the purpose will be achieved, why is this and is this something that could have been foreseen or overcome?

### **Specific tasks of the evaluator**

- Read all project materials, publications, selected visit reports and notes of advocacy meetings, review dissemination lists, advocacy letters etc.
- Speak to MRG project staff: Chris Chapman, Clive Baldwin (by phone), Mark Lattimer (possibly Zoe Gray)
- Speak to at least one key staff member in all main partners organisations (5 partners). Possibly have face-to-face meetings with partners where possible.
- Visit 1 target states to meet with partners, officials and diplomats to assess whether they have read any materials, or attended any events or had other contact with the project and, if so, whether the contact had the desired effect (i.e. leading to new thinking, new practices, a review of policies or changed policies) and if not, why not.
- Speak to at least 15 targets (global actors/decision makers/influencers) from a list of around 25 provided by MRG as well as at least 10 additional key players independently identified by the evaluator who could be expected to have come across the work of the project to assess in each case whether they have read any materials, or attended any events or had other contact with the project and, if so, whether the contact had the desired effect (i.e. leading to new thinking, new practices, a review of policies or changed policies) and if not, why not.
- Involve DfID in ways to be agreed

The evaluation must be complete, the report submitted, reviewed within MRG and finalised and all financial transactions completed by the end of April 2008.

There is no preset format for this evaluation although MRG is particularly interested to learn from it, lessons that we can apply in continuing with the work and in designing a new future phase of work on this issue, we would also be keen to check whether there have been any unforeseen negative consequences to date and how we can avoid, minimise or mitigate these in future. We would also like to assess how well gender has been mainstreamed in the work throughout.

## **Annex B: List of Project Publications**

### **GENERAL**

- Clive Baldwin, Chris Chapman and Zoe Gray, *Minority Rights: The Key to Conflict Prevention*. MRG Report, May 2007. 40 pp. [French translation, July 2007]

### **CHINA**

- HRIC, *China: Minority Exclusion, Marginalization and Rising Tensions*. MRG Report, 2007. 40 pp. [Chinese translation, March 2008]

### **IRAQ**

- Faleh A. Jabar, *The Constitution of Iraq: Religious and Ethnic Relations*. MRG Micro Study, December 2005. 8 pp. [also in Arabic]
- Preti Taneja, *Assimilation, Exodus, Eradication: Iraq's Minority Communities since 2003*. MRG Report, 2007. 40 pp. [also in Arabic]

### **Kosovo**

- Clive Baldwin, *Minority Rights in Kosovo under International Rule*. 2006. MRG Report, 2006. 36 pp. [also Albanian and Serbian translations]
- Clive Baldwin, *Five essential elements for a long-term solution in Kosovo*. MRG Briefing, December 2007. 8 pp.

### **NICARAGUA**

- Sandra Brunnegger, *From Conflict to Autonomy in Nicaragua: Lessons Learnt*. MRG Micro, April 2007. 12 pp. [Spanish translation, April 2007]

### **SUDAN**

- Sharath Srinivasan, *Minority Rights, Early Warning and Conflict Prevention: Lessons from Darfur*. MRG Micro, September 2006. 12 pp. [also in Arabic]
- Chris Chapman, *Why a minority rights approach to conflict? The case of Southern Sudan*. MRG Briefing, April 2008. 20 pp.

### **OTHER**

- Maya Chadda, *Minority Rights and Conflict Prevention: Case Study of Conflicts in Indian Jammu and Kashmir, Punjab and Nagaland*. MRG Macro, August 2006. 16 pp.

## **Annex C: Selection of Consulted Documents**

## Project documents

Full Project Proposal as submitted to DFID – Conflict & Humanitarian Fund. 12 August 2005.

Reports to DFID: 1 October [2005] to 31 March [2006], 1 April to 31 September [2006], and 1 October [2006] – 31 March [2007].

Notes from Dr. Al Qaddo's visit to London, 11-17 July [2007].

Recommendation of the *Conference on Ethnic and Religious Minorities in Iraq*. Amman, 27-29 July 2006.

Recommendations of *High-level seminar on Minority Rights and Conflict Prevention*. New York, 9-10 November 2006.

Draft agendas, lists of participants, internal notes, etc. of seminars, workshops conferences in Addis Ababa (on Sudan), Amman (Iraq), Bluefields (Nicaragua), Brussels (Kosovo), and New York (China).

Reports and internal evaluations of advocacy visits and meetings.

## Other MRG documents

*Minorities and Conflict Prevention: The Case for a Special Representative*. MRG, March 2002.

Mark Lattimer, *Minority Rights Group International and Conflict Prevention. A note on past, current and future initiatives*. April 2002.

*Minorities and conflict prevention. Seminar with MRG International Council*. 25 May 2002.

John Packer & Erik Friberg, *Minorities and Genocide: Preventing the Preventable*. MRG Briefing, April 2004.

John Packer & Erik Friberg, *Submission to the UN High-Level Panel On Threats, Challenges and Change – Conflict prevention and the protection of minorities*. MRG Briefing, June 2004.

William A. Schabas, *Preventing Genocide and Mass Killing: The Challenge for the United Nations*. MRG Report, 2006.

*Minorities and the Prevention of Violent Conflict*. Final Report to FORD. Period covered: April 2005 to July 2007. 31 August 2007.

*Programme for 2007. Minorities and Indigenous Peoples: Justice and Peaceful Development.*

## **Miscellaneous**

Foundation on Inter-Ethnic Relations, *The Lund Recommendation on the Effective Participation of national Minorities in Public Life & Explanatory Note*. September 1999.

Monica Llamazares & Laina Reynolds Levy, *NGOs and Peacebuilding in Kosovo*. Working paper 13. Centre for Conflict Resolution, Department of Peace Studies. University of Bradford. December 2003.

Todd Landman & Meghna Abraham, *Evaluation of Nine Non-Governmental Human Rights Organisations*. IOB Working Document. February 2004.

Unofficial version of the Draft Constitution of the Republic of Iraq. [2005].

Council of Europe, Advisory Committee on the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities, *Opinion of the Implementation of the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities in Kosovo*. Strasbourg, 02 March 2006.

UN Security Council, *Comprehensive Proposal for the Kosovo Status Settlement*. 26 March 2007.

Norwegian Helsinki Committee, *Second-Class Minorities: The Continued Marginalization of RAE Communities in Kosovo*. October 2007.

Norwegian Helsinki Committee, *Kosovo – Need for a long term approach to the protection of human rights*. February 2008.

## ANNEX D: LIST OF PEOPLE INTERVIEWED

[T = by telephone, F = face-to-face, E = by e-mail]

### MRG and DFID staff

CHAPMAN, Chris [F]  
*Conflict Prevention Officer, MRG*

DESHMUKH, Shohab [F]  
*Programme Officer, Conflict Policy Team, Conflict, Humanitarian and Security Department, DFID*

LATTIMER, Mark [F]  
*Executive Director, MRG*

SILVEY, Daniel [F]  
*Conflict Adviser, Africa Conflict and Humanitarian Unit, DFID*

TANEJA, Preti [T]  
*Commissioning Editor, MRG, and author of the Report on Iraq*

THOMAS, Claire [F]  
*Deputy Director, MRG*

### Policymakers and other experts

ANDERSSON, Monica [T]  
*Senior Advisor, formerly in the Department for International Law, Human Rights and Treaty, Swedish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Stockholm (currently in the Prime Minister's Office)*

BALDWIN, Clive [T]  
*Senior Legal Advisor, Human Rights Watch, New York (former MRG Head of Advocacy and author of the Kosovo reports)*

CLARK, Howard [T]  
*Independent expert and author on Kosovo, Madrid*

GRAAF, Vincent de [F]  
*Legal Officer, Office of the High Commissioner on National Minorities, OSCE, The Hague*

GROENEWALD, Hesta [T]  
*Conflict Prevention Advisor, Saferworld, London*

HONWANA, João Bernardo [T]

*Director, Africa 1 Division, Department of Political Affairs, United Nations, New York*

HUESKEN, Jan [F]

*Senior Policy Advisor, Department of Human Rights and Peacebuilding, Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs, The Hague*

KARAM, Patricia [T]

*Deputy Director, Policymakers & Civil Society Unit, International Center for Transitional Justice, New York (formerly Senior Programme Officer, Grant Department, United States Institute of Peace)*

LENSU, Maria [T]

*International Relations Officer, Human Rights and Democratization Unit, Directorate General External Relations, European Commission, Brussels*

McDOUGALL, Gay [T]

*Executive Director, Global Rights, Washington; UN Independent Expert on Minorities Issues*

OBAZE, Oseloka [T]

*Senior Political Affairs Officer, Security Council Affairs Division, Department of Political Affairs, United Nations, New York*

PACKER, John [T]

*Director of the Human Rights Centre, University of Essex, Colchester; former Director of the Office of the OSCE High Commissioner on Minority Rights; member of MRG's International Council*

PHILLIPS, Alan [T]

*President of the Advisory Committee of the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities, Council of Europe (former Director of MRG)*

PONZIO, Richard [T]

*Senior Policy Analyst, Peacebuilding Support Office, United Nations, New York*

PULVER, Robert [T]

*Chief, Criminal Law and Judicial Advisory Section, Office for Rule of Law and Security Institutions, Department of Peace-Keeping Operations, United Nations, New York (former Co-Head, UN Mission in Kosovo)*

RABBANI, Hanan [T]

*Human Rights Officer, United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq, Amman, Jordan*

SAUNDERS, Christina [T]

*Desk Officer Sudan, Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, United Nations, Geneva*

TAMBURI, Elio [T]  
*Coordinator, Latin America and Caribbean Unit, Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, United Nations, Geneva (former Senior Human Rights Officer, United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq, Baghdad)*

VELDE, Johan te [T]  
*Africa and Latin America Programme Director, IKV-Pax Christi, Utrecht (former Head of Democratization, OSCE Mission, Kosovo)*

VILLA, Alessandro [T]  
*Crisis Platform – Crisis Response and Peace Building, Directorate General External Relations, European Commission, Brussels*

### **People interviewed in Kosovo [all F]**

AHMETAJ, Nora  
*Former human rights researcher and activist, Pristina (currently working for UNDP)*

BEHA, Adem  
*Roma and Ashkali Documentation Centre, Pristina*

BLAKAJ, Bekim  
*Head of Office, Humanitarian Law Center, Pristina*

CHADBOURNE, Julie  
*Kosovo Representative, Norwegian Helsinki Committee, Pristina*

DEVRIEZE, Franklin  
*Unit Coordinator / Project Manager, Department of Good Governance and Democratic Institutions, OSCE Mission in Kosovo, Pristina*

MAGNADOTTIR, Nanna  
*Head of Office, Council of Europe Secretariat Office in Kosovo, Pristina*

METAJ-DIKA, Ardita  
*Project Coordinator “Minority Rights in Practice”, Humanitarian Law Center, Pristina*

MILLER, Paul  
*Head of Office, Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Pristina*

O’CONNELL, Ruairi  
*Deputy Head of Mission, British Embassy, Pristina*

PULA, Vera  
*Program Coordinator, Kosovo Foundation for Open Society, Pristina*

SCHMIDT-GUTZAT, Oliver

*Head of Communities Division, Human Rights,  
Decentralization and Communities, OSCE Mission in  
Kosovo, Pristina*

SOHIJEVIC, Gozmen

*Roma and Ashkali Documentation Centre, Pristina*

SYLA, Bekim

*Coordinator, Roma and Ashkali Documentation Centre, Pristina*

VETTING, Kim

*Programme Portfolio Manager for Returns, United Nations Development  
Programme, Pristina*

ZHERKA, Arjana

*Minority rights expert, Pristina (currently working for USAID)*

### **Partner organizations**

ABDELBAGI, Jibril [T]

*Executive Director, Darfur Relief & Documentation Centre, Geneva*

ADAM, Mudawi Ibrahim [E]

*Chairperson, Sudan Social Development Organization, Khartoum*

AL-QADDI, Hunain [E]

*Chair, Iraqi Minorities Council / Organization, Baghdad*

HOM, Sharon [T]

*Executive Director, Human Rights in China, New York*

HOOKER, Miriam [T]

*Executive Director, Centro de Derechos Humanos, Ciudadanos y  
Autonómicos, Managua/Bluefields, Nicaragua; member of MRG's  
International Council*

WANG, Carol K. [T]

*Program Officer, Human Rights in China, New York*



## ANNEX E – INTERVIEW OUTLINES

### Interview outline for policy-makers

1. Please give your name, title and function and the name of your organization.
  2. Can you describe your/your organisation's relationship to MRG and in particular to its project on Minority Rights & Conflict Prevention referred to above?
  3. Are you familiar with any of MRG's publications on Minority Rights & Conflict Prevention and if so, which ones? (cf. list of publications)
  4. How did you find out about these publications and how did you get hold of them?
  5. How has the reading of this material influenced your knowledge, attitudes and positions, and your actual behaviour with respect to Minority Rights?  
[ E.g. *Enhanced knowledge (Very much – A little bit – Not at all)*  
*Made me more sensitive to Minority Rights, led to new thinking (Very much – A little bit – Not at all)*  
*Has had definite impact on my (professional) actions, e.g. advise, policy formulation/review/change or implementation, legislation, etc. (Very much – A little bit – Not at all) If so, please specify. If not, why not? ]*
6. Did you attend any event or had other contact with the MRG project on MR & Conflict Prevention? If so, please specify.
  7. How has this attendance or contact influenced your knowledge, attitudes or positions, and your actual (professional) behaviour with respect to MR?  
[ E.g. *Enhanced knowledge (Very much – A little bit – Not at all)*  
*Made me more sensitive to MR, led to new thinking (Very much – A little bit – Not at all)*  
*Has had definite impact on my (professional) actions, e.g. advise, policy formulation/review/change or implementation, legislation, etc. (Very much – A little bit – Not at all). If so, please specify. If not, why not? ]*
8. Do you feel MRG's material on Minority Rights & Conflict Prevention is missing or playing down some important issues, or, to the contrary, overemphasizing certain points? If so, please specify.
  9. Are you aware of any impact on the ground (i.e. on tangible changes in the position of minority groups and/or the relations between majority-minorities or e.g. in legal frameworks) that could, in your opinion, be attributed to MRG's advocacy work in this respect?
  10. Which lessons do you think MRG could draw from this (their first) programme explicitly linking Minority Rights to Conflict Prevention?
  11. What are in your opinion the strongest points of MRG's project on Minority Rights & Conflict Prevention? And the weakest ones? Any suggestions how to improve the project?

12. Do you have any other comments and/or suggestions?

### **Interview outline for partner organizations**

1. Please give your name, title and function and the name of your organization.
2. Can you describe your organisation's role within MRG's project on Minority Rights & Conflict Prevention referred to above?
3. What have exactly been the concrete activities that you have realized or been involved in, in the context of this project?
  - Joint implementation of activities
  - Publication(s) – production/writing, translation, distribution/launch event
  - Other ?
4. What has been the type of support MRG has provided?  
E.g.:
  - Capacity-building
  - Funding of activities implemented by ourselves
  - Joint implementation of activities
  - Publication(s) – production/writing, translation, distribution
  - Other ?
5. How would you rate the quality of this support?
6. Are you aware of any other human rights organisation / civil society movement in Sudan which has been positively influenced by this project? If so, please specify.
7. How would you assess the tangible outcomes of this project in China? Or in other words, could you specify what has been, according to your best judgement, the impact of the project's activities and/or publications on minority rights or minority-majority relations in China?
  - On the thinking and/or attitudes of national policymakers
  - On minority rights policies or legislation
  - On the actual situation with respect to the treatment of minorities
8. Do you feel MRG's publication on Minority Rights and Conflict Prevention in China is missing or playing down some important issues, or, to the contrary, overemphasizing certain points? If so, please specify.
9. Which lessons do you think MRG could draw from this (their first) programme explicitly linking Minority Rights to Conflict Prevention?
10. What are in your opinion the strongest points of MRG's project on Minority Rights & Conflict Prevention? And the weakest ones? Any suggestions how to improve the project?
11. Do you have any other comments and/or suggestions?