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PRACTICAL GUIDANCE FOR A PARTICIPATORY PEACE AND DEVELOPMENT ANALYSIS

Drawing on the Bougainville experience.

JUNE 1, 2014

Koenraad Van Brabant

an initiative of interpeace

GUIDANCE FOR A PARTICIPATORY PEACE AND DEVELOPMENT ANALYSIS

SUMMARY

❖ PREPARING A PARTICIPATORY PEACE-SECURITY-DEVELOPMENT ANALYSIS

1. Ensure a correct and realistic understanding among all stakeholders in country, of the amount of funds that are made available under the UN Peacebuilding Fund and the purposes of a PDA.

There may be unrealistic expectations about the amount of funding that the UN PBF will providing. It would also be wrong to link a PDA exclusively to the availability of PBF funding, or to appreciate its relative value on a par with the amount of PDF funding.

2. Ensure that multi-agency visits prior to the PDA are well coordinated.

Personnel from different agencies come with their own priority interests. So when a group of people from different agencies meet together with interlocutors in country, the objectives and focus of the conversation are best determined in advance. It might be prudent to separate those dealing with the PDA exercise from those with a more explicit political mandate, so as to keep the PDA 'depoliticised'.

3. Ensure a basic understanding of the rationale behind a participatory PDA.

The dominant modus operandi is for consultants to conduct an 'analysis' based largely on literature review and conversations with some 'key informants', leading to a report with recommendations articulated largely by the consultants. It may be advisable to proactively brief all key stakeholders about the rationale and potential of a more participatory PDA.

❖ DESIGNING A PEACE-SECURITY-DEVELOPMENT ANALYSIS

4. Be clear in advance about whether the PDA will be merely a document or also a process.

If a PDA is seen as an 'administrative' or 'procedural' requirement, it is likely to be conducted as a 'technical exercise'. The main 'result' then is the PDA report. A participatory PDA becomes itself a first step of a 'peacebuilding' action, generating facilitated debate and conversations within the society. The 'process' here is as important as the 'document'.

5. Allow sufficient time for a proper prior literature review.

The prevailing habit of allocating just a few days for 'literature review' is unhelpful. There may be hundreds of pages of relevant documentation well worth going through. This can be done as a separate exercise in advance, leading to its own 'preliminary findings', which can then partially guide the participatory fieldwork.

6. Clarify the practical understanding of 'gap analysis' and ensure the resources to carry it out.

Different people may have a different understanding of what an analysis of 'peacebuilding gaps' is really about? Is it a mapping of all programmes and projects per actor, sector and geographical area? Is it a mapping of all programmes and actions that explicitly claim to contribute to violence reduction and peace? Is it an assessment if not an evaluation of the main approaches, strategies and institutional architecture 'for peace'? This needs to be clarified in advance, and the desired approach needs to be matched with the time and resources required.

7. Determine a realistic time frame from the outset.

Unrealistic timeframes at the outset, even if subsequently adjusted, tend to force short cuts at the beginning, the consequences of which may be hard (and costly) to reverse later on. Typically the time required for the preparatory work and for the processing and writing up is underestimated. This reference list can help establish more realistic time frames from the outset.

❖ THINK FROM THE OUTSET ABOUT THE ANALYTICAL FRAMEWORK(S) THAT WILL BE USED

8. A participatory exercise has to be undertaken with a lot of openness, to allow people of the society to draw attention to issues that the PDA team may not have thought about at all. At the same time, the literature review and field work are also best guided by a broad analytical framework, which 'directs the eye' and allows the notes and data gathered to be placed in a relation to each other. A useful framework is one that considers on the one hand 'drivers of conflict' (and 'contributing factors') and on the other hand 'capacities for peace' (the understanding of what builds peace, competencies, approaches, strategies, institutional architectures…). This can be enriched with a forward-looking scenario exercise (if relevant) and an appreciation of the role and capacities of different actor-groups.

❖ SELECTING AND BUILDING A PDA TEAM CAN BE A SERIOUS PROCESS IN ITSELF

9. Agree early on who will be part of the PDA team, and key roles and responsibilities.

Key stakeholders need to agree from the outset who will be directly involved in the PDA exercise, and who will determine who goes on the PDA team on what grounds? A collaborative multi-agency effort can be desirable but is likely to lead to a PDA team that is larger and harder to integrate and manage. Precise clarity should be established from the outset about who plays what role and is responsible for what and to whom? This may require some relationship building if there is to be 'collective leadership' of the PDA team.

10. Clarify in advance people's availabilities and set agreed rules for attendance or not.

If the fieldwork is planned to take several weeks, not everybody might be able to be available all the time. There has to be clarity about this again in advance. Changes in personnel on the PDA team create additional challenges of training, team cohesion and methodological consistency. Agreed rules are also to be set for when PDA team members 'need' to absent themselves to attend to other matters.

11. Get 'local knowledge' help to identify key locations and key people.

Outsiders and even central-city based people are not best placed to identify what locations might be important to go to for group discussions and which 'key' people (political, economic, military, religious, social etc.) to approach. That often requires more 'local knowledge', which can be mobilized e.g. by hiring local 'antennae' or 'local/regional focal points'. Here too it is advisable to establish qualifying criteria for such role and to be precise about their responsibilities. Crosschecking might be needed to ensure that no bias – intentional or not- creeps into their recommendations/selection of locations and key individuals to engage.

12. Don't leave out any strategically important group.

Prior to the fieldwork, some preliminary actor- and stakeholder mapping will have to be carried out, to ensure that no group that might be strategically important is being left out. Or that groups that are consistently left out are this time being included.

13. Consider in advance dedicated PDA team members to handle the engagements with women and youth (or another specific social group).

Properly capturing women's and youth perspectives, and enabling them to actively participate in conversations may require organizing separate women and youth (focus) groups. These are then best facilitated by a few PDA team women and youth whose role is dedicated to this. If the documentation of these conversations is rich enough, it can possibly become the object of separate sections in a PDA report. There would have to be a very specific objective or reason to try and produce separate 'women' and 'youth' PDA reports.

14. Build in time for preliminary 'training' or skill reinforcement of the PDA team members.

Some critical skills may need preparatory assessment and reinforcement if needed, as well as ongoing mentoring support during the work: Fundamentals of group conversation facilitation; the art of asking powerful questions, deep listening and deepening inquiry, and note taking and processing. The latter is a critical attention point: The richest conversations become words in the wind unless they are well documented. "Well documented" means capturing all significantly different divergent points of view on a topic, and the underlying arguments, as well as some telling quotes. But the preparatory training/learning may also involve a thorough 'cultural briefing' on the society for the outsiders on the team. Moreover, facilitating conversations about sensitive issues carries a serious responsibility as there is a risk of 'doing harm'. For example, the team needs to anticipate that working on issues that may well be painful and/or politically sensitive, is likely to trigger strong emotions – among those invited to the conversation but also among the PDA team members themselves. That requires the articulation of specific guidance on how to handle certain possible developments during the exercise.

❖ CHOOSE THE METHODOGICAL APPROACH(ES)

15. Decide on quantitative and/or qualitative approaches.

The combination of qualitative and quantitative data is richer than using either type alone. The choice for either or a mix of them will depend on the primary purposes of the exercise (and the competencies

available in the PDA team). A participatory PDA may deliberately seek to create experiences of (constructively facilitated) debate about sensitive issues, where Bougainvilleans would not only interact with the research team but also with each other. That is not something that questionnaires can generate. A qualitative approach may also be better suited to explore the reasons for people's perceptions or 'choices', and to identify whether they are in a position to make informed choices – two key attention areas from a peacebuilding point of view.

❖ PLAN CAREFULLY THE LOGISTICAL, FINANCIAL AND SECURITY ASPECTS OF THE WORK

The logistics of course is planned after the methodological choices have been made, and the locations for the field research identified. The financial arrangements need to be clarified beforehand – as constraints in this regard may impact on the methodological and geographical choices

16. Do detailed operational planning to ensure smooth logistics.

Transport and accommodation for the field work will have to be prepared and organized in advance, as well as the identification of suitable larger spaces or halls for orientation and feedback sessions (see below).

17. Establish clarity about the available budget and especially about the cash flow procedures and disbursement time requirements.

If the overall PDA exercise is being funded from different budget with different budget holders, establish a mechanism that allows overall budget management and expenditure monitoring. If cash is being provided from one or more sources, determine the procedures and lee times to make cash payments, and ensure the availability of cash advances. Otherwise the operational work may grind to a halt because of cash flow problems.

18. Assess the capacities and determine the responsibilities to handle security threats and incidents.

An assessment of the security risks needs to be complemented by the clarification of responsibilities for threat and incident management. But above all, there needs to be frank acknowledgment about the real operational capacities of those who have the formal responsibilities.

❖ MANAGE THE ACTUAL FIELDWORK

19. Consider organizing local area actor 'orientation' and 'feedback' sessions.

Prior to starting fieldwork in a certain local area (district, province…) it may be very worthwhile to provide an orientation session to a selected group of local actors. Here the PDA team as a whole can communicate again what the exercise is about and what will happen with its findings. It will be an opportunity for local actors to ask questions, but also to engage them in some small group conversations. This can be complemented at the end of the fieldwork in a certain local area, by a 'feedback' session. This needs to be prepared in advance by the PDA team (which will have to look back at its notes), and if well-handled can be an opportunity to seek a degree of 'validation'.

20. Organize a manageable amount of focus group conversations and individual interviews in different locations.

Be clear in advance about whether local level group discussions will be open to anybody who wishes to attend, or whether the PDA team (with the help of a regional/local focal point?) will organize more pre-determined 'focus groups' (mixing social categories or not?). If focus groups are organized, there need to be criteria for who will be invited to each such group. Be also clear in advance who will conduct individual interviews, how much time a quality interview is likely to take. If translation is required, the interviewer and designated translator have to work together in advance to ensure common understanding and accurate translation of key terms.

21. Clarify for the team the relationship between 'research/listening' and 'fostering informed debate'.

Provide clear guidance to the PDA team on the appropriate combination of participants in a focus group talking to the team and the team facilitator fostering conversation among the participants, as well as about what are appropriate ways for members of the PDA team to engage in the conversation or not.

22. Manage evolving lines of inquiry.

Going out on a listening exercise in a society is likely to be a learning curve for the PDA team, including its 'local' members. In a very qualitative approach it will over time become more productive to pursue evolving lines of inquiry in the conversations with new participants, than to listen to repeats of by now well-documented views. Such organic evolution of the lines of inquiry, into new subjects or into greater depth, has to be tracked however, and also regularly reviewed and discussed within the team.

23. Build in time to rest, process and reflect – and to prepare.

Reviewing and writing up the growing number of notes cannot wait till the end of the fieldwork. Build in moments of rest and of reflection for the PDA team, for each to process their notes but also to compare notes and the picture(s) emerging from them – and to prepare as a team for the next steps.

24. Manage the required internal and external communications.

Building and maintaining team cohesion and consistency of work will require regular and good internal communications. At the same time, expect various 'external' stakeholders of the PDA exercise to want to be kept informed – about how things are going, and whether the exercise is likely to stay on budget and within the original time frame. There may also be demands for 'emerging findings' while the fieldwork is still going on. These requests can become a heavy burden if uncoordinated. Agree pro-actively on a schedule of periodic updates, and assign someone the responsibility to draft external communications if needed.

❖ **APPRECIATE AND PLAN FOR A SERIOUS 'WRITING' CHALLENGE**

25. Build in time after the fieldwork to further process notes and check emerging understandings within the PDA team.

The critical importance of documenting – often through note taking- has been mentioned repeatedly. It requires attention in the preparation of the PDA team for the fieldwork, during and now also after the fieldwork. The amount of time available after the field work will depend on the volume of conversations had of course, but also on whether there has been some periodic processing of the notes during the field work, and whether a structure-providing analytical framework was actively used or not.

26. Be clear about the correlations between the possible analysis and the methodology/ies chosen.

Quantitative approaches may enable the assessment of the relative numerical support for certain views or options, and leave out of the 'analysis' those views that were only expressed by a very few. Highly qualitative approaches may value 'data' irrespective of their quantification – in other words, an interesting view even if only expressed by a very few, may find its way into the PDA report. That is all the more the case if the PDA exercise is intended to contribute to a culture of reasoned public debate, where different perspectives are argued but also attentively listened to. Each is valid in its own right, but the coherence between methodology and analysis needs to be explained to the audiences for the report.

27. Plan for internal team validation and sustained team ownership.

Inevitably there will be one or very few 'lead writers' of a PDA report. But 'writing' is also 'interpreting'. Hence it is important that the lead authors formally crosscheck with the other PDA team members the picture that emerges for them, and how they interpret it. This is all the more important if the lead writer is an 'outsider' and most of the PDA team members are 'nationals'.

28. Avoid identifying and adding large numbers of insights and 'data' from other sources during the 'write up' time.

Processing all the notes in writing and 'making sense' out of them is a serious task and demands intense concentration. Doing (additional) literature review at the same time is guaranteed to create a nightmare scenario. Notes from all the major sources of information and insight need to be at hand when the writing starts.

29. Consider however referring to relevant 'comparative' information and learning.

A PDA report will primarily draw on the literature related to the society concerned and conversations with people from that society or working there. It can however be enriched by references to relevant experiences, learning and initiatives from other societies/countries.

30. Determine which formats are realistic to produce within the time available.

Different audiences will want the 'findings' in different formats, and may have different expectations about the 'substance'. Senior people may expect to see a short document with recommendations from the PDA team. Specialists on the society concerned may look for extensive literature references. Local people to whom the 'findings' are fed back may respond most to extensive 'quotes'. Those who are familiar with the society will not want to read too much 'background' and 'context' -those who are not will need it to understand the meaning of certain findings. To determine broad priority areas for

programming, not too much detail is needed, but when it comes to actual programming of actions under these priority areas, depth of understanding and hence detail, can again become crucial. No single format of PDA report will satisfy everybody, so negotiate in advance what is realistic within the constraints.

❖ PRESENTING THE PDA EXERCISE AND FINDINGS

31. Be pro-active about handling sensitive issues in writing.

The factors and actors that drive conflict and peace dynamics have to be brought up in the PDA report. They are inevitably going to be sensitive topics. A PDA that does not touch on sensitive issues has missed the ball or has been (self-) censored. Moreover, a participatory exercise is likely to generate a large amount of negative views, due to the human need or tendency to first focus on what is not going well and only then on what is going reasonably well. This may be upsetting to influential actors and hence has to be handled responsibly and proactively, to avoid a PDA report aggravating already problematic relationships with low trust. There are various ways of doing this, among them: Make sure to make people also talk about what is going reasonably well; push people a bit to reflect also on their own roles and responsibility in ensuring that the situation improves; and discuss pro-actively and privately with those likely to be offended the negative views heard, so they are not taken by surprise. Ask them to help presenting critical perspectives in a manner that is constructive without leading to censorship.

32. Consider pro-actively who presents what aspect of the PDA exercise and report and in what language(s)?

Who presents the PDA findings to various audiences, and in what language(s), sends some important signals. It may be felt that the lead presenter(s) should be the 'outsider(s)' on the PDA team, especially if they are perceived as very articulate and have taken a lead in the drafting of the PDA report. But presentations by 'national' members of the PDA team and in the national language(s) indicate a strong sense of or at least desire for 'national ownership'. A well-coordinated presentation in which 'insiders' and 'outsiders' play balanced roles can signal the actual composition of the PDA team and the potential richness of each contributing their respective strengths.

33. Try 'participatory analysis' – but prepare for 'business as usual'.

Peacebuilding, like other important actions, should be done thoughtfully. Ideally the decision-makers should be presented with 'findings' and then join the PDA team in exploring together what picture seems to emerge from the findings and where that seems to direct the efforts. But most decision-makers are not used to such participatory analysis, and expect a report with recommendations that they can approve or reject. Violence reduction and peace building are not hard science. So a PDA report should be a 'think piece'. It is worth making the attempt at more participatory analysis, though in practice the PDA team may be forced to articulate certain suggested priorities and 'recommendations from the PDA team'.

34. Invite reflection and debate on why something should be a 'priority'.

'Prioritising' is widely acknowledged as necessary yet in practice there is seldom explicit reflection on why something should be considered a 'priority'? There can actually be very different reasons for such, and especially when different decision-makers need to agree, it is worth them reflecting more explicitly on

why they consider something a 'priority' or not. A PDA report can draw explicitly invite the decision-makers using it, to do so.

35. Draw attention to the 'how' and the 'who'.

Effective peacebuilding is not so much a matter of the 'what', of identifying what critical areas and issues are that need to be worked on. The effectiveness in peacebuilding often relates more to the 'how' and also the 'who' the action is undertaken. The 'how' is critically important, because also actions with peacebuilding intent-if not very knowledgeable about the micro-context and very conflict-sensitive- can unintentionally exacerbate or create new antagonisms. The 'who' is important because a critical element is the trust that key stakeholders have in the lead actor and the competencies to manage interventions that often seek to transform very delicate and inflammable relationships. Formally the lead may have to be taken by the governmental authorities and/or the best-resourced development partner – in practice they may not be the best placed to take the lead. That doesn't mean they have to be out of the picture. But it does mean they may wish to consider inviting the help and collaboration of one or more other actors who have the relevant competencies and (potential) trust.

PRACTICAL GUIDANCE FOR A PARTICIPATORY PEACE AND DEVELOPMENT ANALYSIS
LEARNING FROM THE EXPERIENCE IN BOUGAINVILLE

A. BACKGROUND

In early 2013 Bougainville became 'eligible' to receive funds from the UN Peacebuilding Fund (PBF). While Bougainville, an island that is part of Papua New Guinea (PNG), is not on many people's 'conflict map', it experienced a decade of brutal violence and isolation (late 80s – late 90s), which ended in a negotiated peace agreement (2001). Two provisions of that agreement are the creation of an 'autonomous region' within PNG – with the first Autonomous Bougainville Government (ABG) being elected in 2005 - and a referendum that will include the option of independence. That referendum has to take place between 10-15 years of the establishment of an ABG, which therefore is between 2015 and 2020. In light of this important political event in the near future, the Government of Papua New Guinea, the Autonomous Bougainville Government and the UN Country Team in PNG decided to strengthen the peace consolidation efforts related to Bougainville.

Prior to releasing funds from the PDF for specific actions, the UN wants to see an agreed Peacebuilding Priority Plan, which in turn should be based on a solid Peace and Development Analysis (PDA). Such PDA was conducted for Bougainville in late 2013-early 2014 by the UN Team in Papua New Guinea and the Autonomous Bougainville Government (ABG), and methodologically supported by the International Peacebuilding Advisory Team (IPAT) of Interpeace. [1]

This document presents 'guidance for participatory Peace and Development Analysis' derived from that particular experience. Presumably such 'guidance' can be enriched by adding the experience of Peace and

[1] The Autonomous Bougainville Government tends to frame 'peacebuilding' in terms of 'peace' and 'security', whereas the exercise was framed as 'peace' and 'development'. The analysis revealed the close interlinkages between 'peace', 'security' and 'development'.

Development Analysis exercises in other countries, whether against the backdrop of UN PBF funding or not.

Initially planned to be undertaken in eight weeks (November-late December 2013), the whole exercise eventually needed five months (November 2013 - March 2014). The field work took some six weeks, period within which about 1,100 Bougainvilleans were engaged in conversation to hear their views on the drivers of conflict and insecurity, and the capacities for governance, peace and development in their society. A serious literature review and an analysis of 'gaps' were also part of the whole exercise.

The PDA findings report received positive comments for the scope and depth of its analysis and for sometimes shedding fresh light on a fairly well researched situation. But it did not go without its challenges. Several of these could have been avoided or mitigated by investing more time and attention in preparations. Hopefully this guidance note can be encouragement and inspiration for better preparation in other comparable analyses.

B. PREPARING A PARTICIPATORY PEACE-SECURITY-DEVELOPMENT ANALYSIS PROCESS

1. Ensure a correct and realistic understanding among all stakeholders in country, of the amount of funds that are made available under the UN Peacebuilding Fund and the purposes of a PDA.

For quite a while after the approval of Papua New Guinea's 'eligibility' to receive funds from the PBF, there was no common understanding within the UN Country Team, among governmental stakeholders and key development partners, of the purpose of the UN Peacebuilding Fund and of the Peace and Development Analysis. There were certainly unrealistic expectations about the amount of funding that would be available, which created misplaced hopes and competitive tensions. When it subsequently became understood that the amount of funding from the UNPBF for PNG was modest, some major actors became dismissive of the opportunity of PBF funding (thereby negating its 'catalytic intent') and of the potential value of the PDA.

From an IPAT point of view, there is no direct correlation between the amount of PBF funding and the value of a Peace and Development Analysis. Indeed, for those who want to grasp the opportunity, a Peace-Security- Development Analysis can serve at least three purposes simultaneously:

- It provides the foundation for a 'priority plan'. That will be partially funded from the UN PBF but can also be a reference for additional funding from other sources;
- It provides an opportunity to review ongoing actions through a conflict- and peace lens: Even those actors and programmes that do not intend to seek funding from the UN PBF can use a PDA – if credible done- as an opportunity to review their work;
- It provides an opportunity to start up or strengthen a society-wide conversation about the challenges and opportunities to deepen the peacefulness, mobilizing therefore greater collective

responsibility. For that to happen, the PDA needs to be designed as a peacebuilding intervention and not just as a technical exercise (see below).

2. Ensure that multi-agency visits prior to the PDA are well coordinated.

Colleagues from the PBSO and DPA arrived in PNG and in Bougainville at the same time as the IPAT person who was expected to provide methodological leadership for the PDA exercise. This had the advantage of being able to create a common understanding among some key stakeholders for the exercise. But it also became a large number of people to introduce at the same time to key interlocutors. As there had not been explicit internal coordination of the objectives or priorities of each, and of the questions for the respective conversations, the meetings may have left the interlocutors with a still somewhat unclear picture. The combination of staff from DPA and one or more individuals tasked with preparing the Peace and Development Analysis, also risks giving the PDA a more 'political' profile from the very outset. It is probably preferable to let the PDA be lower profile.

3. Ensure a basic understanding of the rationale behind a participatory PDA.

Key stakeholders, in government but even among some of the development partners, who may be making up the Joint Steering Committee and Technical Committee, are not necessarily familiar with 'peacebuilding' or attuned to the importance of 'conflict sensitivity'. The dominant modus operandi being one of 'consultants/experts' doing the job while relying a lot on their own insights may also mean that they are not familiar with more participatory processes and their underlying logic. They are also likely to be most used to seeing a report with recommendations from the consultants as the central product, not fully appreciating the value of the process. So prior to the start of a more participatory PDA process, it might be useful to introduce these key stakeholders to a somewhat different approach and its underlying logic and inherent potential.

C. DESIGNING A PEACE-SECURITY-DEVELOPMENT ANALYSIS

4. Be clear in advance about whether the PDA will be merely a document or also a process.

In conversations prior to the initiation of the PDA, reference had been made to both 'document' and 'process'. From an IPAT point of view, drawing on the Interpeace experience, a PDA is best designed as part of a peacebuilding process rather than handled as a 'technical' exercise. Consequently, from the outset it was envisaged that the PDA team would not just go through documents and have conversations with some privileged 'key

informants', but rather go on a broad-based 'listening exercise' across the island. This has important implications for the nature of the 'PDA report': It is not the end but the beginning of a conversation, partially among the international assistance actors, but especially among the Bougainvilleans. Sustaining the conversation is however beyond the scope of the PDA team, and others will have to prepare well in advance to sustain and take forward the conversations once the (initial) report has been completed.

5. Allow sufficient time for a proper prior literature review.

One of the casualties of the originally short time frame of eight weeks was the literature review. There is quite substantive literature on Bougainville, made up of three major types: review and evaluation documents related to the implementation of the Bougainville Peace Agreement, to contemporary governance capacities or to major programmes (e.g. disarmament); a few 'peace relevant' strategy documents; and a lot of high quality 'academic' research by Australia-based researchers, several of whom have been involved with and in Bougainville over a long period of time. Even without the immediate time pressure, it would not have been possible to properly absorb such relevant documentation amounting to a few thousand pages, in the few days that traditionally tend to be allocated for 'literature review'.

A proper literature review could have been the object of a separate preparatory exercise, which would have generated its own 'preliminary findings'. That could have been completed in advance of the 'field work', and partially inspired the lines of inquiry. As it happened, a comprehensive literature review largely took place at the same time as the field notes were being written up and analyzed. Though this often complemented and enriched what had come out of the listening exercise, it created a huge workload for the lead PDA drafters.

6. Clarify the practical understanding of 'gap analysis' and ensure the resources to carry it out.

An analysis of the 'peacebuilding gaps' had also been mentioned in the preliminary conversations prior the start of the actual PDA. But the practical meaning of this had not been clarified at the outset. There are various possible interpretations of 'gap analysis', among them:

- It is a mapping of all projects with a stated peacebuilding objective or that claim a peacebuilding intent. If so, how to deal with the subjective dimensions of this: there are widely differing understandings and claims of what contributes to violence reduction and sustainable peace[2], including the rather problematic opinion that everything and anything that is being done in a post-violence situation contributes to such[3];
- Is it a geographical and social mapping of all programmes and projects, to see whether there are significant differences or 'gaps' among who benefits, that can fuel resentment and hence unintentionally perhaps sustain or aggravate antagonistic attitudes? In other words, do we seek

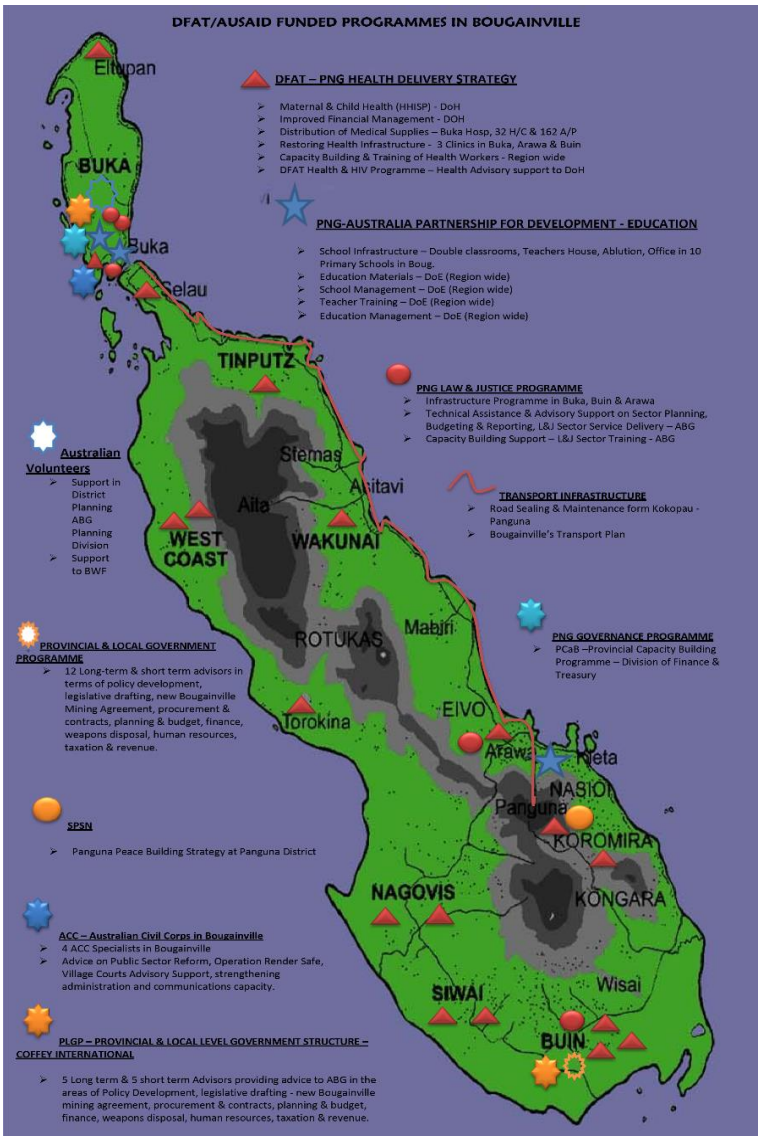
[2] While it is possible to simply take those actions and projects and programmes that explicitly claim to contribute to violence reduction and/or peacefulness, without seeking to critically assess such claim, we still remain with the finding, a few years ago, of a comprehensive research study (Utstein Study 2003), which highlighted that most 'projects' suffer from a 'strategic deficit'?

[3] See Van Brabant, K. 2010: What is Peacebuilding? Significantly different perspectives on peacebuilding. Geneva, Interpeace http://www.interpeace.org/publications/peacebuilding-and-policy-resources/145-what-is-peacebuilding-significantly-different-perspectives-on-peacebuilding-english

to assess the possible perception of discrimination from the benefits of project and programme activities?

- It is a critical assessment of the official peace strategies that are being pursued in a given environment, to see whether they are missing out on important issues (and whether they are designed and implemented in ways that indeed reduce violence, and build trust and peacefulness?)

As it turned out, the PDA report, drawing on the listening and the literature review, reflects on the 'peace architecture' in Bougainville, the apparent understanding of peace and the most prominent peace strategies (third understanding). A separate effort was made to start mapping the inventory of projects and programmes, per 'sector', per 'agency' and per geographical area (second understanding). This separate effort was undertaken by one Bougainvillean who had first actively participated in the field work throughout the island. Given that at the time no such overview existed of 'programmes' and 'projects' per sector, lead agency and geographical concentration (a first mapping had only started shortly before of activities in the highly sensitive Panguna district), this was a relevant contribution. Minimally the absence of such basic 'inventory' complicates overall management by the ABG and coordination among the 'development partners' and the ABG. Beyond that it might indeed generate perceptions of favouritism or discrimination among sections of the population. Interestingly, while various agencies generally were happy to share what activities they had where, none was willing to provide budget information.



This was a lot to put on the shoulders of one person, however dedicated she turned out to be. This mapping exercise, like the fuller literature review, could only be pursued while the writing up of the field notes was taking place. In retrospect it would again have been worthwhile to invest time in this before the field work, as it too might have raised attention points that could have been explored more intentionally during the field level conversations.

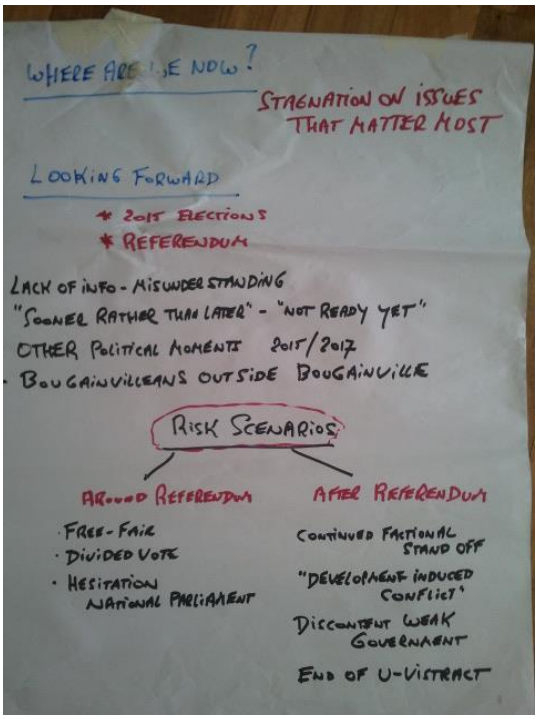
7. <u>Determine a realistic time frame from the outset.</u>

The original timeframe for the PDA exercise to the delivery of a draft report was a good eight weeks (November-late December 2013). That should be enough time to conduct a PDA based on literature review and conversations with 'key informants'. But it was obviously not enough time for a much more participatory exercise, in which many Bougainvilleans could participate and that would allow more Bougainvilleans members on the PDA team to play more prominent roles. Compare this with similar participatory analysis exercises conducted by Interpeace-supported teams elsewhere: in western Côte d'Ivoire for example, the training, field work, report writing and presentation of findings took a good four months, but the field work was concentrated in three carefully selected locations. A similar exercise in Nimba County in Liberia took eight months. But that involved a more advanced process within which local actors started formulating a number of agreed recommendations for different actors to address the conflict issues they had identified and clarified in a first stage of the process.

For Bougainville serious time pressure was therefore created from the very outset, with immediate impacts: no extensive literature review or form of 'gap analysis' prior to the 'field work', and a team that had to be put together and prepared, and logistical arrangements made in rather a hurry. When it was pointed out after a few weeks that the original time frame would not allow a proper process, all key stakeholders agreed that a quality 'peace and development analysis' was more important than a rapid one, so there was no argument about extending the time frame. But some of the consequences of the initial rush were hard to fully reverse.

D. THINK FROM THE OUTSET ABOUT THE ANALYTICAL FRAMEWORK(S) THAT WILL BE USED

8. In this PDA three main 'analytical frameworks' were used (see Annex). None of them are incompatible, but greater clarity from the outset could have provided guidance for the lines of inquiry for the conversations, that would have allowed a quicker 'fit' of the notes during the write up phase.



- Conflict analysis frameworks: At the outset of the field work in Bougainville, the PDA team had been exposed to some basic conflict analysis frameworks such as the conflict cycle with underlying causes and trigger points; and 'connectors & dividers". Both turned out to be useful frameworks that Bougainvilleans partaking in the conversations often quickly grasped as well.

- A historical narrative as framework: A historical frame is easy to use to structure the conversations and the emerging analysis: How do people see the emergence of the violence and what happened during the 'crisis'; how do they see the situation today; and how do they see the medium-term future? Under each of these, some key issues are likely to emerge from the conversations. Such framework was used to provide rapid feedback of emerging findings. The limitation is that a historical

narrative can acquire good internal coherence, but it is more descriptive and doesn't offer a clear map to identify where to undertake what sort of peacebuilding action.

▪ Drivers of conflict and capacities for peace: The final PDA report therefore adopted again a structure that expanded on the 'dividers' and 'connectors'. Starting from the thesis that there will always be division and conflict but that peacefulness depends on the societal capacities to manage this constructively, the PDA analytical format first looks at 'drivers of conflict & contributing factors' and then at various 'capacities for peace', such as institutional architectures, and approaches and formal 'strategies' for peace' pursued so far. That framework was complemented by observations about scenarios, related to the referendum process and possible outcomes. Finally, some actor-groups were considered, and their role and capacities with regard to conflict and peace.

E. SELECTING AND BUILDING A PDA TEAM CAN BE A SERIOUS PROCESS IN ITSELF

9. Agree early on who will be part of the PDA team, and key roles and responsibilities.

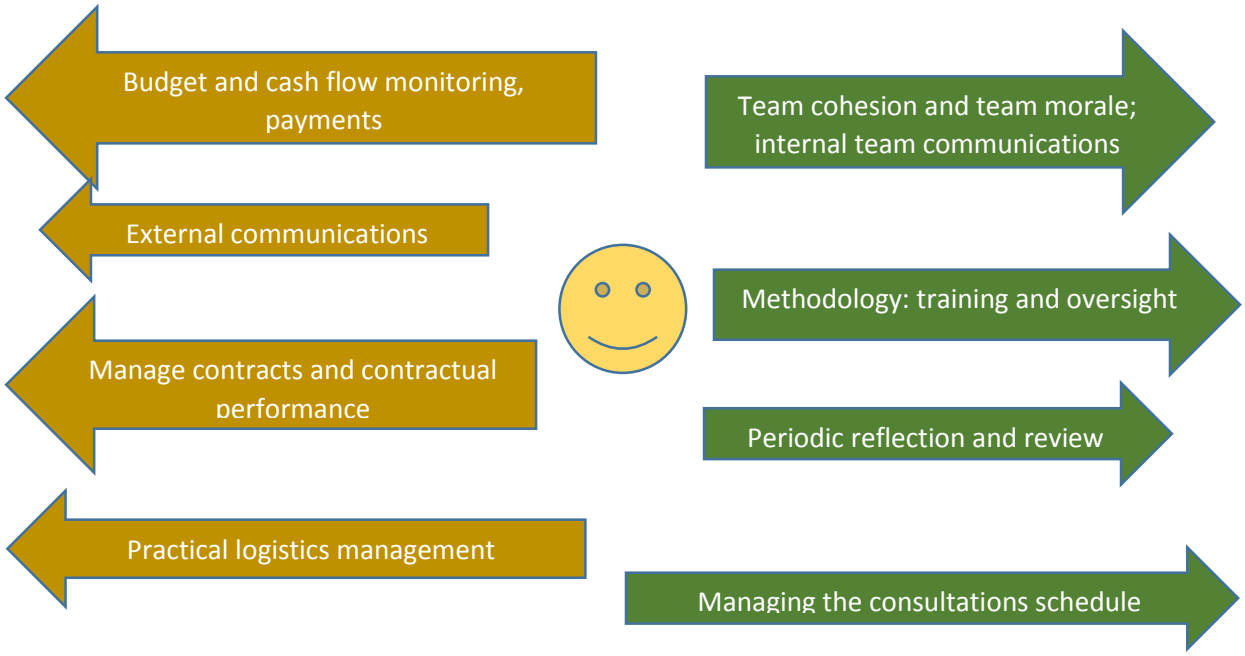
Based on the preliminary conversations, the first IPAT advisor arrived in Bougainville with the understanding that the PDA exercise would be led by the IPAT personnel with the assistance of 2-3 local researchers that IPAT would recruit. Accordingly an advert had been circulated to which people responded. But it turned out to be not advisable to select people largely on the basis of a formal profile, especially in a small place like Bougainville where many individuals know each other. Moreover, it also turned out that both the UN office in Bougainville and the Autonomous Bougainville Government wished to actively participate in the PDA exercise, and put forward their own personnel (all Bougainvilleans). The PDA team thus evolved into a multi-agency outfit.

As a matter of principle, a collaborative PDA exercise is definitely a positive factor, as it can enhance the likelihood of buy-in by key stakeholders. Bougainvilleans participating in the conversations on several occasions also expressed happiness to actually see involvement of their own regional government, and of the UN and Interpeace for their perceived image as a 'neutral' actor.

But putting together a multi-agency team takes more time and is a somewhat more complex process.

- Ideally agreement is reached early on about the desirable profiles and criteria for the selection of different potential PDA team members, and candidates are vetted together;
- Clarity is also required about roles and responsibilities, especially regarding the overall management of the process and the supervision of individual team members. Not surprisingly, different 'team' members tended to report to their respective senior colleagues so it was of vital importance to ensure that respective 'managers' developed good relationships and a form of collaborative leadership;
- A larger team with members coming from different agencies, will need more time and ongoing attention for team building.
- Collective leadership also implies collective responsibility for the quality of the process and the results.

As this note and the picture below show, there is wide range of tasks that need to be attended to, and which becomes more complicated if the PDA exercise is a multi-agency effort that creates a large PDA team. These cannot all be put on the shoulders of one person. So a clear division of labour will be required while there is also a procedure to ensure consensus-building among the different 'leaders' of the exercise.



10. Clarify in advance people's availabilities and set agreed rules for attendance or not.

Not everybody can make themselves available for several weeks of 'field work'. As a result, some PDA team members (other than the regional focal points mentioned below) joined in for part of the exercise. Most of them had notified in advance when they would have to attend to other matters, but some also suddenly disappeared at times, without advance warning or indication when they would return. Team leaders of participating agencies in the PDA exercise would also have to attend to other matters and therefore sometimes step out of the field work without it being clear when they would be back. One Bougainvillean team member, who had played a certain role during the 'conflict' but is now an active peacebuilder, also occasionally chose not to be present in certain locations, so as not to risk compromising the perception of the PDA team with how some people might perceive him. Even on the IPAT side there was a significant change after a security threat forced the IPAT collaborator who had led the consultations in the Northern and Central Regions to rapidly leave the country, with an IPAT Senior Advisor having to take over the further field work in the Southern Region. Such changes in the PDA team composition obviously pose additional challenges in terms of the adequate training of all team members, maintaining cohesion of a team with variable membership, and internal continuity of the exercise.

11. Get 'local knowledge' help to identify key locations and key people.

Outsiders and even central-city based people are not best placed to identify what locations might be important to go to for group discussions and which 'key' people (political, economic, military, religious, social etc.) to approach. That requires more 'local knowledge'. For this purpose, the PDA team identified and hired "geographical focal points:" one for the northern region of Bougainville, two for the central region and three for the southern region. These were complemented by regional focal points from the ABG so that each region would have minimally one male and one female focal point. Their role was to

advise on locations and to identify key people, then subsequently to bring local people together for larger 'regional meetings', to prepare the PDA team visits to the specific locations, and to organize the logistics. Sometimes they would also have to act as interpreters where local people do not speak Pidgin or English.

There is of course always a risk that bias creeps in, intentionally or unintentionally, when key individuals are identified by a local actor. To reduce this, it is advisable to develop an initial set of criteria for whom to consider a 'key individual' likely to be interviewed, and then have different local actors jointly work through a provisional list of names, reviewing each name on the list but also consciously checking who might be missing. Another way of picking up 'key individuals left out' is to inquire in the course of interviews 'who else the PDA team should definitely be interviewing and why?'. This doesn't make sense of course if the time frame is so tight that the PDA team will simply be unable to follow up on any 'addition' to what has been planned.

On the main island of Papua New Guinea, key individuals should have been identified and approached by the governmental and UN partners in the PDA. That happened but only partially and sometimes belatedly. As a result one of the PDA team members who had gone to Port Moresby for this purpose, in addition to conducting the interviews, also had to be pro-active in identifying more key individuals, setting up the meetings and making the logistical arrangements.

12. Don't leave out any strategically important group.

One strategically important group unfortunately was left out of the field work plan, again because of the original short time frame i.e. the Bougainvilleans that live in other parts of Papua New Guinea, and who often are economically and politically relatively influential. It can be assumed that they have a specific perspective on the possible scenario of Bougainville becoming independent, as this has significant implications for their position in PNG. As many of them are concentrated in certain urban centers, it would have been practically possible to engage them in the exercise. Although several key individuals of this 'category' of Bougainvilleans were interviewed, no wider focus group discussions could be organized, nor has there been an organized feedback to them. This has probably been the most important strategic omission and might not have happened if initially some more time had been taken for mapping stakeholders and planning.

The PDA team also didn't make it to two commonly neglected populations/geographical areas of Bougainville: the so-called 'Atolls' and the Nissan Islands. This was partially due to time constraints but also for security reasons: there is no safe transport to either (one of the PDA focal points for the northern region, shortly after the field work was completed, drowned on his way to one of those island groups). Fortunately, some individuals from both island groups that happened to be on Buka Island could be brought into the conversations. But the PDA team not going there implicitly confirms the relative marginalization of these populations.

13. Consider in advance dedicated PDA team members to handle the engagements with women and youth (or another specific social group).

Properly capturing women's and youth perspectives, and enabling them to actively participate in conversations may require organizing separate women and youth (focus) groups. These are then best facilitated by a few PDA team women and youth whose role is dedicated to this. This was not foreseen in the original design and work plan. When it became clear during the initial consultations in Buka and the Northern Region of Bougainville that it was difficult to get women's and youth perspectives, the proposal to include this further as separate strands of the PDA exercise was put to the PDA team at large and the Technical Committee. Both supported it whole heartedly. As a result, two youth (one woman, one man) were identified with the help of an Australian Youth Ambassador working in Bougainville. Ten prominent Bougainville women were also brought together by UN Women to identify a series of core questions they felt to be worthwhile to take up in the conversations with women. The youth facilitators stayed with the whole process, but there were some changes in the facilitators of the women's conversations, due to availability constraints.

As this was introduced while the PDA field work was ongoing, and still under the initial short time frame of eight weeks, there was limited ability to provide adequate preparatory support and mentoring during the exercise. While the women's and youth conversations were undoubtedly rich, the note taking and subsequently the processing of the notes proved a major challenge for the group facilitators. As a result the richness of perspectives has not been fully captured, and there are no

separate 'women' and 'youth' PDA reports as a few stakeholders at times hoped for. With better advance planning and a time frame and resources commensurate with the ambitions, this can be done better.

14. Build in time for preliminary 'training' or skill reinforcement of the PDA team members.

A short pre-field work 'training' was provided to the (first set) of PDA team members, which focused on some useful frameworks (the conflict cycle, connectors and dividers….), and on a few core topics and core questions to be pursued. That learning was then reinforced during the field work when the team would meet every day at the end of the day, to share impressions, experiences etc. and to plan for the next day. Some critical skills may need more sustained attention and mentoring support however: Fundamentals of group conversation facilitation; the art of asking powerful questions, deep listening and deepening inquiry, and note taking and processing. The latter is a critical attention point: The richest conversations become words in the wind unless they are well documented. "Well documented" means capturing all significantly different divergent points of view on a topic, and the underlying arguments, as well as some telling quotes.

But pre-field work preparation and 'training' can also usefully devote attention to less 'technical' aspects.

- Outsiders for example have to be given a thorough 'cultural briefing' about Bougainville society, its social structure and dynamics, basic behavioural etiquette etc.
- Facilitating especially public conversations about sensitive issues carries a serious responsibility as there is a risk of 'doing harm'. That underscores the importance of carefully selecting who becomes part of the PDA team, and investing in preparatory skill assessment and development, as well as the articulation of specific guidance on how to handle certain possible developments during the exercise. For example, the team needs to anticipate that working on issues that may well be painful and/or politically sensitive, is likely to trigger strong emotions – among those invited to the conversation but also among the PDA team members themselves. Given the alleged prevalence of 'trauma' among Bougainvilleans (in their own everyday discourse and as established through other rigorous field research), this is a very important attention point. As it turned out, on several occasions Bougainvilleans participating in the conversations started telling stories that brought back strong emotions, often painful. A few got upset that the exercise made experiences re-emerge that they normally tended to suppress. This requires from the PDA a strong value-base but also an explicit guideline to the team on how to react when such a situation arises (which they didn't have). It is important to recognize that the team will leave, and cannot take any responsibility for helping certain individuals deal with the emotions that the exercise has evoked. Moreover, also the team members conducting the conversations could at times be affected by strong emotions. This after all is about their own society and a recent past that is typically not talked about yet still very much alive. Appropriate moments and ways have to be found to attend to the emotions that team members are experiencing.

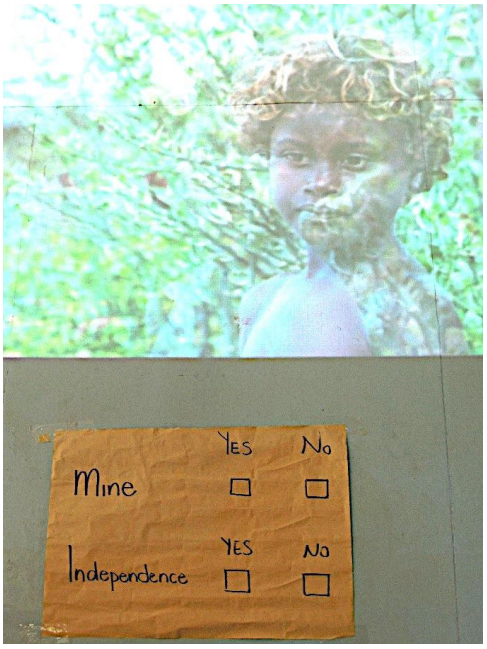
All in all, including the various regional focal points, in the end some 21 individuals took part at different moments and in different locations. This created serious challenges of team skill training, continuity and management. Here again the initial short time frame of eight weeks created intense pressure to 'get' and 'keep going'. As a result there was little time for assessing and/or developing the relationships among the quite large number of team members and the senior personnel, and to review and if needed strengthen some of the core skills that the exercise required.

F. CHOOSE THE METHODOGICAL APPROACH(ES)

15. Decide on quantitative and/or qualitative approaches.

The combination of qualitative and quantitative data is richer than using either type alone. Questionnaire-based surveys combined with qualitative conversations have already been conducted very effectively in Bougainville about particular topics, including sensitive ones such as gender-based violence.

As it happened, on a number of occasions in the beginning of the field work, participants in public meetings were sometimes asked to express their position as a 'yes' or 'no' choice, on two key questions for Bougainville: re-open the Panguna mine or not, and independence for Bougainville or not. This was stopped however after a particular gathering where it was obvious that people were very reluctant to take a position on these sensitive issues in public.



Overwhelmingly then this PDA was pursued through qualitative conversations in focus group conversations and individual interviews. Three reasons supported this preference:

- Seeking to analyse drivers of conflict and capacities for peace, no precise and easy to understand questions present themselves, that lend themselves easily to questionnaire format treatment;
- Preparing and testing a questionnaire, training the surveyors and then processing the data, requires time and skills that were not available;
- More importantly, the PDA exercise wanted to create experiences of debate about sensitive issues, where Bougainvilleans would not only interact with the research team but also with each other. That is not something that questionnaires can generate.

The qualitative research actually indicated that the opinions about the Panguna mine's re-opening were more diverse than just a 'yes' or 'no'. The PDA identified four strands of opinion, with respective arguments. As for the question of 'independence' or not, at the moment there is an assumption that the referendum will be about only two choices: stay with Papua New Guinea albeit with a special 'autonomous region' status, or become independent. But it is not inconceivable that more options/variations on the two might be identified and offered during the coming referendum. More importantly, the qualitative research confirmed what had already been noted in a 'Review of the Autonomy Arrangements' that had been completed a few months earlier, namely that Bougainvilleans have very poor understanding of the realities of the implementation of the Autonomy Arrangements, and therefore are not in a position to make an informed choice. From a peacebuilding perspective, identifying people's current inability to make informed choices about key issues (such as the Panguna mine or their future political status) is a more important 'finding' at this point in time, than trying to assess how they might currently 'vote'.

Having said this, based on these qualitative findings, it appears that Bougainville could well benefit from forms of 'participatory' or 'deliberative polling' which mix repeat polling with informative dialogue and debate sessions. [4]

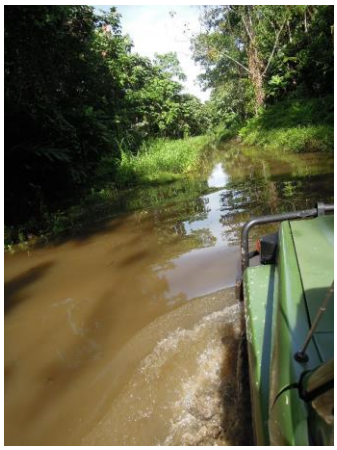
G. PLAN CAREFULLY THE LOGISTICAL, FINANCIAL AND SECURITY ASPECTS OF THE WORK.

The logistics of course is planned after the methodological choices have been made, and the locations for the field research identified. The financial arrangements need to be clarified beforehand – as constraints in this regard may impact on the methodological and geographical choices.

16. Do detailed operational planning to ensure smooth logistics.

The relatively large PDA team needed transport and accommodation. Vehicles and boats had to be rented, and accommodation obtained in the various guesthouses that are available in Bougainville. Larger 'halls' had to be found for the regional orientation and feedback gatherings. In practice these logistical arrangements worked well.

[4] For a resource note explaining 'participatory polling' see http://ipat-interpeace.org/advisory-support/participatory-polling-and-other-polling-mechanisms/



17. Establish clarity about the available budget and especially about the cash flow procedures and disbursement time requirements.

What didn't work well at all in the Bougainville exercise were the financial arrangements. This applied to the overall budget available for the PDA exercise and particularly to cash flow and cash transactions.

- The budget: The initial time frame of eight weeks was obviously also determined by the original budget that the UN and IPAT had made available for it. When it became clear that the time frame would have to be extended, it turned out that more resources could be made available without too complicated procedures. Still, as financing came from different budgets with different budget holders, there was not one single entity maintaining overall budgetary oversight.
- Who pays for what: The arrangements for who would pay for what became complicated. IPAT for example paid the fees or salaries of its own personnel (international but also the locally recruited regional focal points from civil society), while the UN paid their international travel and their DSAs. That was not always effectively communicated to the persons concerned, which led to unnecessary confusion and irritation. Where people are paid daily rates, they also need to be provided with the timesheets and rules to keep track of their time investments, and someone needs to have the formal responsibility to verify these.
- The cash flow has to work: Cash for operating expenses such as fuel for the rented vehicles, and DSA payments, were often not available when needed. As a result the IPAT personnel occasionally had to advance money for accommodation, phone credit, fuel etc. Not 'solving' those cash flow problems might have affected the motivation of some PDA team members, and compromised the smooth continuation of the PDA exercise. These inefficiencies then later required a lot of time to sort out.

18. Assess the capacities and determine the responsibilities to handle security threats and incidents.

Who is responsible for security and what the procedures and especially capacities are, in case a threat emerges or an incident occurs, need be determined prior to any fieldwork. As it happened, during this exercise one key team member one evening received a targeted dead threat via a mobile phone message. Unable to determine the source or assess the seriousness of the threat, it was decided to play it safe and

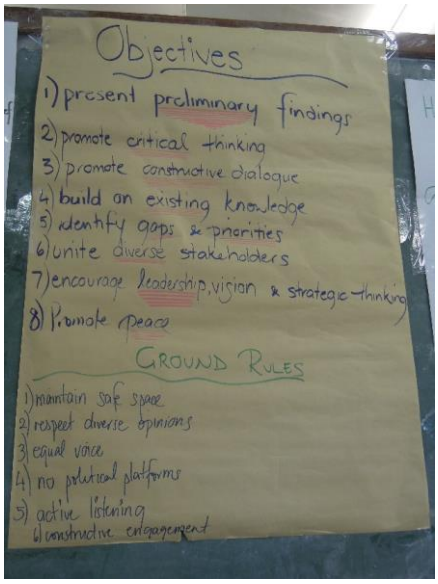
evacuate the two individuals mentioned in the message. In the absence of any real rapid operational capacities from the key agencies involved in the PDA, the quickest way to do this turned out to call upon a trusted person from a personal network, who could come with an unmarked vehicle very early the next morning, and take the targeted individuals to the airport.

H. MANAGING THE ACTUAL FIELD WORK

19. Consider organizing local area actor 'orientation' and 'feedback' sessions.

Prior to the fieldwork starting in each of the three regions of Bougainville (Northern, Central and Southern) and at the end of it, larger one-day events were organized.

- The initial 'orientation' meeting sought to communicate more clearly to participants from the region where the exercise came from, what the team sought to explore during the days in the region, and what the findings would be used for. The opportunity was there for participants to ask questions, and small group conversations would be organized, e.g. around 'dividers' and 'connectors' ("*what are the issues or actors that create or sustain division in your community; what are the issues or actors that bring you together?")*. The orientation sessions would also provide the regional focal points with the opportunity to confirm the schedule and logistical arrangements with people from the different locations.



- The session at the end of the consultations in a region would serve to provide feedback and some validation.

  Typically an orientation and feedback session would take a big part of a day (10 am- 4 pm or so), and have some 60-70 participants. No one was paid to attend, and the fact that such larger numbers remained for so many hours may be taken as an indicator of interest. Once again, the time pressure meant that these important day events had to be prepared the night before, sometimes after a day of focus group discussions and individual interviews.

20. Organise a manageable amount of focus group conversations and individual interviews in different locations.

Be clear in advance about whether local level group discussions will be open to anybody who wishes to attend, or whether the PDA team (with the help of a regional/local focal point?) will organise more pre-

determined 'focus groups' (mixing social categories or not?). If focus groups are organized, there need to be criteria for who will be invited to each such group.

Typically in every location within a region, there would be again an introduction about the why and how of the exercise (as more people would show up in individual locations than had been at the orientation session) after which the team would split up to conduct several focus group discussions at the same time. Common types of focus groups would be women, youth, veterans (ex-combatants) and, depending on numbers, one or more groups of local leaders (district administration staff, church people, traditional chiefs, a member of Parliament etc.), and a group of 'ordinary people' that might include some business people, disabled persons, teachers, medical staff from a local health centre etc. Foreigners working in Bougainville might have been present at the above mentioned orientation or feedback sessions but would not be present in local focus group conversations.

Individual interviews were all conducted by the IPAT personnel, in Port Moresby, in Buka (main urban centre in Bougainville today, and seat of the Autonomous Bougainville Government), and in the regions. This was encouraged by the Bougainvillean team members who felt that it would create more enabling conditions to discuss sensitive issues. Overwhelmingly the person being individually 'interviewed' would have good English – on a very few occasions only was translation required. Translation would be provided by one of the team members or focal points, though not all proved equally adept at that. At times there had also been misunderstanding, and anybody who was somebody locally had been lined up for an individual interview. On one occasion no less than 19 individuals were on the list, for a team presence in a location of about 3.5 hours. Interviewing so many people individually in a relatively short time was of course unrealistic. So the number was simply limited to perhaps 3 or 4 successively, or those expecting to be individually interviewed were asked whether they would be happy to have the conversation in small groups of 4 or 5 with the proviso that anyone who wanted to discuss something more confidentially, could actually do so.

21. <u>Clarify for the team the relationship between 'research/listening' and 'fostering informed debate'.</u>

Essentially the PDA exercise consisted of a listening exercise and was in that sense a form of (qualitative) 'research'. On occasion facilitators of group meetings would allow or encourage debate to take place

between participants in the group. But PDA team members were not supposed to express their personal opinions and enter into debate with those being consulted.

Yet in three ways, members of the PDA team could go beyond 'listening':

- Inviting interlocutors to consider what appeared to be contradictions in their views. This would not be allowed to develop into an argument but to deepen the inquiry – for example someone within the span of 10 minutes would lament that the ABG has almost no money and admit that s/he does not want to pay any taxes – this can be an opportunity to draw the interlocutor's attention to the possible relationship between both points;
- Providing essential information when it became apparent that participants in the process missed out on it or had wrong information. This concerned particularly the central clauses of the Bougainville Peace Agreement;
- Helping people think things through. This might happen around various issues, such as when the suggestion was made that weapons could be collected through a buy-back scheme. PDA team members might then pose the question: "How do you ensure that the week after the same person doesn't have a new gun from the WWII stockpiles or from the Solomon Islands"?

22. <u>Manage evolving lines of inquiry.</u>

A few core issues had been identified at the outset of the field work that conversations definitely had to take place about: the critical issue of the Panguna copper and gold mine and its role in past and current tensions; the equally critical issue of the referendum in Bougainville, that might lead to independence; the Bougainville Peace Agreement; the 2015 elections in the Bougainville Autonomous Region and reconciliation. When separate conversations with women were being introduced, these were (sometimes) guided by a set of questions (as a conversation guide, not a questionnaire) that a group of prominent Bougainville women had developed together.

Over time the line of inquiry organically evolved and broadened out to other issues as these were raised by the participants in the conversations e.g. land disputes, changing cultural norms, a sense of insecurity etc. This is almost inevitable as the listening experience also takes the PDA team on a serious learning curve as the conversations proceed. Yet after a while, the same general opinions on key issues start

reappearing. It then becomes more interesting to allow the lines of inquiry to evolve. This can go in different directions, e.g.

- Exploring the reasoning underpinning different views on key issues;
- Taking the conversation more quickly to greater depth about a particular topic or experience, for example one that a particular participant or group of participants seems very knowledgeable about (e.g. education with teachers, marketing with cash croppers, rivalries among the churches with religious figures, artisanal gold mining with those who practice it). This generates a 'richer text' picture.

Allowing the lines of inquiry to evolve in an exercise that takes place over several weeks, means a further shift in the nature of the qualitative: from something that at the outset was closer to a semi-structured conversation guide to something that starts looking more like a form of ethnographic research, which examines a reality from multiple angles, taking the different entry points offered by different interlocutors. This can create a 'rich text' understanding, but also needs to be managed methodologically. That 'organic' evolution of the lines of inquiry has to be kept track off, perhaps through a 'daily journal', and also discussed within the team in periodic review sessions.

23. Build in time to rest, process and reflect – and to prepare.

Because of the perceived time pressure and the planning of an ambitious island wide listening exercise, the first several weeks the PDA found itself working long hours seven days a week. This was not sustainable physically. But more importantly, it left no time for the facilitators of conversations to work out their notes, and then compare notes to see what picture emerged. Nor did it leave much time for deeper reflection and learning or focused mentoring on how to conduct this sort of exercise. Nor was it possible to put aside enough time to prepare as a team for the 'feedback' presentations in the regions.

24. Manage the required internal and external communications.

Often neglected or underestimated are the requirements to manage multiple internal and external communications. Certainly in larger, multi-agency teams with different 'leaders', constant internal communications are required regarding the methodology, what is coming up in the conversations, the practical planning ahead etc. But also to enhance and sustain team cohesion and team morale. In addition, there might be multiple other 'key stakeholders' who all want to 'stay in touch' or whose input and decisions are required to deal with certain challenges arising: in this case this were especially the ABG (especially two 'Divisions' or Ministries', the PBSO and DPA in New York, the UN office in Port Moresby, and IPAT headquarters in Geneva. Understandably various such stakeholders want to know how things are going, and whether things are staying in line with the budget and the schedule, as well as 'emerging findings'. Sometimes changes have to be formalized on paper, which requires additional effort. While understandable and legitimate, such expectations and requests for 'updates' –all the more so if not coordinated- can create quite some workload and put significant additional pressure on a PDA team. This too could have been better formalized, with an agreed schedule of periodic 'updates', and possibly a person dedicated to 'key stakeholder communications', with a clear procedure of authorization of communications before they are circulated.

I. PLAN FOR A SERIOUS 'WRITING' CHALLENGE

25. Build in time during after the field work to further process notes and check emerging understandings within the PDA team.

A very participatory exercise conducted by a large multi-agency team will generate a huge amount of 'notest'. As there had not been much time to train people on note-taking or to periodically take time out from the ongoing conversations to write up and begin to process notes, it was not a surprise that no Bougainvillean team member had taken as extensive notes as the two IPAT persons notes; nor that notes from different team members came in different formats and were of variable quality. Some were fairly raw - bullet points of the successive meetings; others more processed but sometimes in too summary form, missing nuance and failing to capture the diversity of views. When all notes were put together, a coherent picture emerged, though some of the richness of the conversations got lost due to this lack of experience with note taking and –processing.

This is an observation and not a criticism: adequately documenting is one of the bigger challenges in qualitative research (and requires a self-discipline that few of us enjoy), and developing or strengthening the skills on this again would have require more preparatory time which was not available.

26. Be clear about the correlations between the possible analysis and the methodology/ies chosen.

As mentioned, this PDA exercise was not undertaken as a 'technical' but as a fairly participatory exercise, seeking through its interactive approach to create a certain momentum among a section of the population, which can be further capitalized on. But it was also not undertaken as a 'research project'.

Interesting questions were asked after the PDA report circulated, notably what percentage or proportion of the population listened to (some 1100 people) held what sort of opinion on a certain issue, or what the minimum (qualitative) threshold was for a view or opinion to make it into the report? These are very valid questions – for a research effort. But the qualititative approach did not enable the reliable 'quantification' of the spectrum of opinions. That would have required a form of 'opinion survey/polling' for which the exercise was not designed. Designed as a peace-relevant intervention and not as a research exercise, this PDA also did not have to have a quantitative 'threshold' for a certain view to make it into the report. In principle, any perspective or idea that was 'relevant' and 'thought provoking' could be captured, even if was only expressed by a very few individuals. The purpose was to feed a (facilitated) public debate among Bougainvilleans with a richness of ideas and thinking.

Nor is it certain that attempts at a more quantifying canvassing of opinions would have worked very well, or yielded findings relevant for the objective of identifying where to focus the peacebuilding efforts:

- It is not certain whether individuals would have given honest answers on very sensitive issues to surveyors they didn't know, and belonged to a team that included the ABG (which in the eyes of some actors in Bougainville, is a 'faction' among other 'factions');
- It is also not certain whether individuals would act on their personal opinion; Bougainville remains a society where the individual is deeply embedded in a social circle and where 'group solidarity' remains a strong expectation;

- Variations in opinions and positions on some key issues may or may not coincide with group dynamics and divides between groups. In any case, a major objective of peacebuilding is for individuals and groups to be able to engage in constructive conversations across divides, which means bringing them together and not staying with individual conversations, which are the basis for opinion surveys.

As it is, the PDA report captured significantly different views on two of the most salient issues – the question of the re-opening of the Panguna mine and of possible independence. Although not quantified, each of the respective views on these had a fair number of supporters.

Had there been better documentation experience and skill however, it would have been possible to more clearly capture the views of different social groups (certainly women, youth, ex-combatants, traditional Chiefs, local civil servants etc.) as focus groups were normally organized accordingly.

This of course are issues to be determined prior to the field work and then addressed in the preparatory skill confirmation or development.

27. Plan for internal team validation and sustained team ownership.

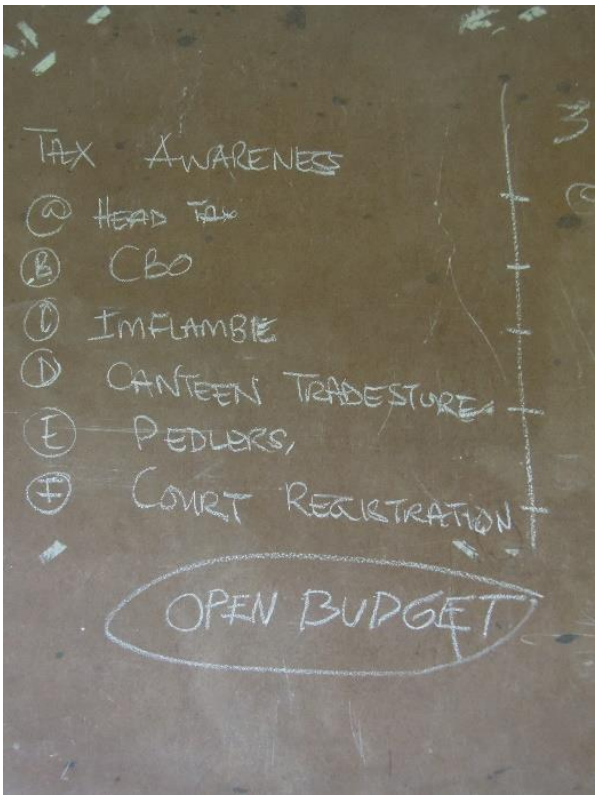
Inevitably there is going to be one or two lead authors of the PDA report. Especially when these have not been able to partake in all the conversations, caution need to be exercised that the picture that emerged from their engagements corresponds to the picture that come out of the conversations led by other team members. All 'analysis' also involves a form of 'interpretation', all the more so in qualitative research. Again it is necessary therefore that the lead author(s) check that other team members share their analysis/interpretation. This is all the more important when the lead author(s) is/are external actors: the Bougainville team members need to 'own' the analysis, as they will be the ones who will be presenting and defending it, and subsequently working with it. For these purposes, when the emerging picture of findings was beginning to take shape, a short retreat was organized with some key members of the team, for internal verification and to maintain broader team ownership.

28. Avoid identifying and adding large numbers of insights and 'data' from other sources during the 'write up' time.

Because there had not been a strong literature review or gap-analysis (at least in the form of a mapping exercise) prior to the fieldwork, this was being done while the field notes were being consolidated on paper and analysed. In practice then, further 'desk research' was made to coincide with what formally was planned to be the 'writing up' and 'analysis' phase, creating a fairly impossible situation whereby the lead author(s) were comparing their emerging picture from the field work with that of other PDA team members, while also obtaining new 'data' that would throw its own light on the 'picture emerging'. This situation could only be handled by several weeks of massive overwork.

29. Consider however referring to relevant 'comparative' information and learning.

The Bougainville PDA report drew not only on the insights and 'data' gathered from the Bougainville literature review and conversations with over 1100 Bougainvilleans. It also drew on comparative experience, from the IPAT personnel's experiences elsewhere. For example, nowhere in the conversations or in the literature consulted was there any clear reference to how Bougainvilleans were dealing with their recent violent past, which had involved a lot of internal violence and brutality, other than through 'amnesty' and 'customary reconciliation' rituals which had become corrupted by aid money. It was out of the comparative experience that the PDA report raised the issue of 'truth telling' – not with a firm take on whether Bougainvilleans should face up to what happened more explicitly and how to do it, but definitely recommending that they more explicitly examine the question of 'avoiding' the 'truth' or not. It were also references to the experiences of other countries, e.g. Timor Leste and South Sudan that allowed the PDA to draw attention to the fact that even if Bougainville would gain independence, it is not automatically immune against renewed internal violence. The PDA report furthermore noticed that there was very little knowledge of initiatives and comparative case research that seem very relevant to Bougainville. Some examples would be the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative, the Open Budget movement, the Palm Oil Buyers' Scorecard, Domestic Revenue raising in fragile governance situations etc. It is up to Bougainvilleans to assess the relevance and value of these experiences and resources, but they can't do that unless somebody alerts them to their existence.



30. Determine which formats are realistic to produce within the time available.

The writing of a PDA report can become an even more time consuming exercise, as different audiences will want different formats. Some readers will have in-depth knowledge of the society and its recent history, others not. Key policy- and decision-makers tend to look for very short executive summaries. Those need to be underpinned by a more substantive text, which elaborates on the findings. This too however cannot be too long, or it will not be read. When policy priorities are being turned into programming however, 'shorter is not always better' as extensive detail may again become necessary. Indeed, the relative effectiveness of any programming often depends on in-depth understanding of the context (and micro-contexts), and on 'how' the action is carried out and by whom. That requires finesse and attention to detail. For policy makers and programme designers, quotes from conversations are often not seen as so relevant. But if the findings are shared back with the populations whose views were canvassed, then more quotes may be wanted in the text material, as it will be in the quotes that participants in the PDA exercise will recognize their voice. To perceive the report as 'robust', some

researchers or policy-advisors on the other hand may wish to see more literature references. In short, there is not one format that fits all potential and likely readers/users.

J. PRESENTING THE PDA EXERCISE AND FINDINGS.

31. Be pro-active about how to handle sensitive issues in writing.

The factors and actors that drive conflict and peace dynamics have to be brought up in a PDA report. They are inevitably going to be sensitive topics. A PDA that does not touch on sensitive issues has missed the ball or has been (self-) censored. Moreover, when canvassing a population's perceptions and opinions, a PDA team will be confronted with the widespread human tendency to first vent frustration and criticism, and to see the glass half empty rather than half full. Negative and harsh views and judgments can be expected. This risks upsetting important actors.

It would not be acceptable to take the sensitive issues or critical perceptions totally out of the PDA report, though they must be phrased in a more palatable manner, so that the report itself does not aggravate already difficult relationships and low levels of trust. Some of the possible tactics to enable this might be:

- Ask those who voice negative views also what they see as positive, what has improved, what is going reasonably well.
- Those with exclusively negative views can also be pushed a bit deeper to reflect on what makes it possible for such an allegedly negative situation to persist. Often that leads to the acknowledgement that many actors share at least part of the responsibility by 'omission' i.e. by being passive and staying on the side-line rather than take active responsibility to stop what needs to be stopped, and to support more constructive moves. To illustrate this: people can be complaining about the quality of their leadership, yet there are no leaders without followers and supporters. If poor leaders periodically get elected and re-elected, then surely part of the responsibility also lies with those who vote for them.
- Take up the negative views heard and noted with those concerned, privately and prior to the circulation of the (draft) report. They are then at least not taken by surprise. It may give them an opportunity to reply and present their point of view out of the spotlight. And when they acknowledge that there are grains of truth in the criticism voiced (which to their credit different key actors in Bougainville were gracious enough to do), they may be asked to help the PDA report authors to phrase the criticisms in a way that does justice to what was said but is also constructive.

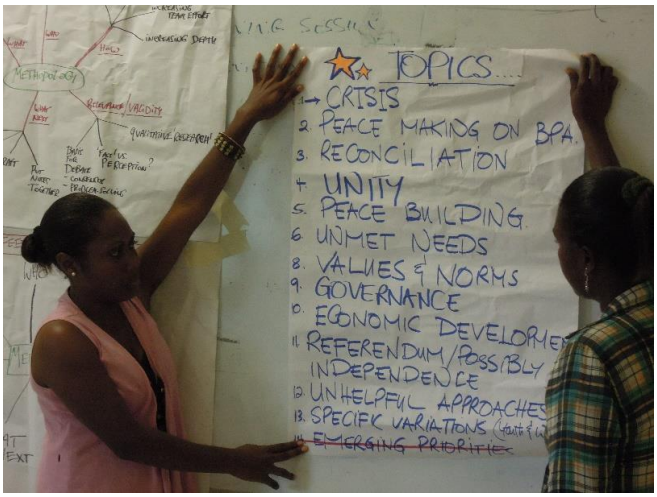
32. Consider pro-actively who presents what aspect of the PDA exercise and report and in what language(s)?

Four presentations were held by the PDA team, two 'during' the process and two after the first draft of the PDA report had circulated. A first 'informal debrief' was organized in Port Moresby for the available members of the Technical Committee. This happened after consultations had taken place in the Northern Region of Bougainville and with some key individuals in Port Moresby. This 'presentation' was done entirely by an IPAT person – the Bougainville members of the team were in Bougainville and not in Port Moresby. Rather than doing a briefing, the presenter sought to give the members of the Technical Committee present a 'feel' for how the fieldwork was being undertaken. He presented them with similar questions as they would be presented to the Bougainvilleans being consulted, inviting this audience to

discover the length and breadth of their own understanding of and views on the issue. Most responded positively to this and understood the intent.

A second 'informal debrief' was organized for members of the ABG administration immediately upon completion of the fieldwork. With only one day to prepare, there was of course no time to process all the notes of weeks of listening. It was made clear therefore to the audience that the feedback was only 'preliminary', to give a feel of what was emerging, but by no means as yet of the 'findings' let alone likely 'priority areas'. On this occasion the (other) IPAT staff member only presented the methodology, while Bougainvillean team members presented different aspects of the work. Bougainvillean women presented the emerging insights from the conversations with women, and Bougainvillean y outh (members of the team) key messages from the conversations with other youth. From IPAT's point of view, Bougainvillean team members presenting insights and 'findings' from the exercise is preferable: it signals that there is broader ownership and that what is being presented does not come largely from an outsider. Secondly, as one Bougainvillean team member correctly observed: "*Interpeace-IPAT will go but we are here to stay.*" The strategic objective for any outsider must inevitably be a strengthening of local capacities, which also means making place to allow the local actors to be center-stage.

Following the circulation of a first draft of the PDA report two other, more formal meetings, took place. One was supposed to be for members of the 'Technical Committee' (although in practice the attendance was wider), the other for mostly 'Bougainville civil society actors', although some ABG members (including two Members of Parliament) attended the second rather than the first meeting. Both meetings were chaired by Bougainvilleans, who had not however read the draft, as was the case with the majority of the other attendants. Therefore the time was essentially taken up with the presentation of the findings around some of the most important issues, rather than with reflective debate around them. In this case the Bougainvilleans PDA team members preferred the IPAT person to lead on most of the presentations. Whereas on the first day the development partners' presence was fairly strong and visible (as several are part of the Technical or even Joint Steering Committee), their numbers were less on the second day and they took more of a back stage position. This enabled more Bougainvilleans to come forward with comments and observations, and not surprisingly the conversation then started turning into pidgin – a positive sign.



33. Try 'participatory analysis' – but prepare for 'business as usual'.

One purpose of a PDA is for policy and decision-makers to identify priority areas for peace-relevant programming, with but not limited to funds from the UN PBF. Since IPAT or the PDA team are not decision-makers, a first circulated draft of the PDA report (30 pages) presented findings, but deliberately did not include 'recommendations' or 'suggested priority areas'. The idea was that the readers, including the decision-makers, would go through to the findings and ideally at a joint meeting consider together what picture emerged from those, and hence what would be sensible 'priority areas' for programming. To that end the 'PDA report' deliberately calls itself a 'think piece'.

As it turned out, there is little precedent for 'participatory analysis' involving relatively high-level individuals. The prevailing practice and hence expectation is for a 'report' to be presented with 'recommendations' included. From the PDA team's point of view, this means however that key decision-makers will not necessarily have been involved in 'thinking through' what the findings are telling us and where they are directing us. An experienced Bougainvillean, member of the PDA team, articulated the wider concern that Bougainvilleans should be careful not to get used to '*outsourcing the thinking*'.

Unable to conduct a more participatory analysis (beyond the PDA team), a second version of the PDA report (40 pages) did include 'possible priority areas'. These were phrased however as suggestions for consideration rather than as firm 'recommendations', to encourage the members of the Technical Steering Committee and the Joint Steering Committee (and other stakeholders) to actually debate the substance of the report, and not just select certain recommendations to 'adopt' and others to 'reject'.

34. Invite reflection and debate on why something should be a 'priority'.

There are different reasons why something can be called a 'priority'. The PDA report list some possible considerations (e.g. 'it is urgent', 'it needs to happen first before something else can be addressed', 'it affects a large number of people', 'it affects a minority of people but that is a significant minority' etc.) it deliberately invites the readers and decision-makers to more explicitly consider the reasons why something would be defined as a 'priority'. As the priority areas to be determined will be the object of a collective decision (the Joint Steering Committee includes the Government of PNG, the ABG, the UN in PNG and some of the key development partners), this too might increase the quality of the conversation among them.[5]

35. Draw attention to the 'how' and the 'who'.

A lot of analyses stop with the 'what' i.e. what the key issues are. Often many of these are known, inviting the question of what value the whole effort has added. Yet the promotion of peacefulness and security very much depends on 'how' things are done, and a solid PDA should draw the attention to this.

The second version of the PDA report therefore has some sections on the 'how' and the 'who'. The 'how' is important because any given issue (a 'what') can be addressed in a conflict sensitive manner, or in a manner that 'does harm' and therefore confirms or even fuels conflict. Thinking first about the 'how' also sheds a different light on the 'who'. The prevailing tendency is to assume that the leading role should

[5] A short resource note on this is available from the IPAT website www.ipat-interpeace.org

pertain to those with the formal authority (the government) and/or with the money (the key donor or best resourced agencies). From an operational peacebuilding point of view, this may not always be the case. To illustrate this with two examples:

- The level of trust in a given actor: A critical factor to be able to play a peace-enhancing role is often 'trust': Bougainvilleans were quite explicit at times in their demand for a 'neutral' actor (as per the prevailing perception) to take the lead, and not their own government or the best resourced development partner.
- Certain organizational and individual competencies: More often than not there are multiple stakeholders on any given issue, with unequal power relationships but also without any predominant authority. Interventions then have to be designed and implemented as excellently facilitated multi-stakeholder processes. This is a particular way of working and competencies that many agencies are not good at – and that their internal modus operandi does not encourage or enable. It may then be advisable to work together with an agency that has these competencies.

K. IN RETROSPECT: WAS THE DESIGN OF THE BOUGAINVILLE PDA OVER-AMBITIOUS OR NOT?

This PDA exercise was designed and conducted in a manner that was 'new' in Bougainville. There had been other exercises within which a fair number of Bougainvilleans were involved as interlocutors or respondents to questionnaires, such as the Peace Audit, the Review of the Autonomy Arrangements, the Weapons Disposal Evaluation or the Bougainville Human Development skills survey. So what was different? According to Bougainvilleans familiar with these different exercises, the quality of the interaction in this PDA exercise was different: some of the key factors in this were the preparations in identifying key people and key groups prior to the PDA district level visits; the orientation workshop that allowed people to think and gather their thoughts prior to the conversations; the open agenda and open listening without preconceptions in the PDA team about the nature of the problem or what would be the appropriate solutions; the creation of a (relatively) 'safe space' encouraging people to talk freely; the encouragement of everyone to contribute; the depth of inquiry through the interactive conversations; and feedback/validation workshops in each of the three regions.

There is no doubt that the effort and time for the necessary preparatory tasks were severely underestimated, which creates challenges that were hard to fully resolve during the field work. When it comes to the actual field work it can be argued, in retrospect, that it might have been better to invest some more time in the methodological preparations and ongoing mentoring, and periodic review and comparison of notes. That could have been possible within the same time frame, with a slight reduction of the number of locations in all the districts being visited for focus group and individual interviews. Such somewhat smaller number of locations could have been identified based on agreed criteria (as was done in the comparable exercise undertaken by Interpeace in western Ivory Coast in 2012). This would have reduced somewhat the sense of 'inclusion' among sections of the Bougainville population (an important sentiment from a peacebuilder point of view), but could have improved the overall quality of the documentation and eased the writing task.

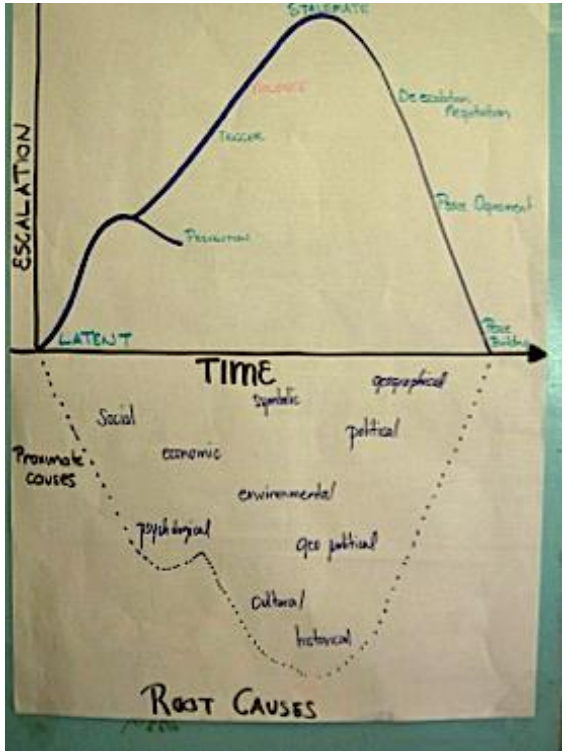
Still, the question can be asked: Was this PDA not over-ambitious in its design? Was this a 'Rolls Royce' while a more regular car would have been 'good enough' for the purpose it was intended to serve? The answer is: it depends. The key policy makers who sit on the Joint Steering Committee and Technical Committee will not need nor use the scope, depth and nuance obtained in the PDA exercise. Yet that scope, depth and nuance *should* be required 'knowledge' and 'understanding' once policy priorities are being translated again into programmes, projects and other types of actions with peacebuilding intent. That scope, depth and nuance also become relevant if the conversations started in the PDA exercise are indeed continued, and turned into a form of 'national dialogue' in the 'public sphere' (rather than 'elite dialogues') – because when it comes to peacebuilding the 'angel is in the detail'.

Photographs: Koenraad Van Brabant & Peter Bauman.

ANNEX: ANALYTICAL FRAMEWORKS.

1. CONFLICT CYCLE; CONNECTORS & DIVIDERS

The 'conflict cycle': the diagram invites reflection on 'root causes' and 'proximate causes', latent and overt conflict, the possibility to 'prevent' escalation as tensions are rising, triggers that push the situation into larger scale violence, and the de-escalation of the violence. But have the root causes been addressed – and transformed? It can be a powerful framework to inspire and orient debate.



2. 'Connectors' and 'dividers': What are the issues and actors that connect you, that divide you. A framework to inspire conversation and structure the thinking that Bougainvilleans of all walks of life picked up easily.

2. TEMPORAL STRUCTURE TO ORIENT THE INQUIRY AND ORGANISE THE RESPONSES & KEY THEMES THAT EMERGED FROM THE CONVERSATIONS.

PAST	PRESENT	FUTURE
Why the crisis? Why the internal violence? How was the violence reduced? Nature of Bougainville Peace Agreement	Economic recovery? Quality of governance? Political unity? National government-Bougainville relations? Bougainville social customs and culture? Trauma Reconciliation? Weapons and feelings of (in)security? Bougainville capacities for peace? (Un)helpful approaches? Perspectives on different actors: roles and capacities? (ABG, civil society, churches, youth, ex-combatants, development partners….)	Scenarios around referendum? Vision medium-term future (economic, social, governance)?

Priorities

Not only the key issues of concern, but also the total picture can and will invite reflection or can trigger deeper conversation: What happened in the past and how people dealt with that will partially influence their experience and perspectives on the presence, which in turn will partially shape their perspectives on and hopes and fears for the future.

3. DRIVERS OF CONFLICT AND 'CAPACITIES' FOR PEACE[6]

CORE DRIVERS OF CONFLICT	***CAPACITIES FOR PEACE***
❖ Perceived threat from outsiders to Bougainville identity, culture and resources ❖ Unequal distribution of benefits and costs ❖ Internal jealousies and disputes ❖ Leadership rivalries and divisions ***CONTRIBUTING FACTORS TO CONFLICT*** <u>Tangible factors:</u> ❖ Heavy-handed actions ❖ Guns ❖ Alcohol and drug-abuse ❖ Poverty? – or future food insecurity? <u>Intangible factors:</u> ❖ Trauma ❖ A sense of insecurity ❖ Weakened and changing custom and traditional norms and values ❖ Lack of relevant and trusted information and a practice of reasoning ❖ Skepticism about and distrust in the leadership	1. <u>The What: Major Approaches.</u> ❖ The BPA and its implementation ❖ Reconciliation – and compensation ❖ Dealing with and learning from the past ❖ Trauma healing ❖ Weapons disposal ❖ Effective governance ❖ Conflict-sensitive and peace relevant economic development and environmental management 2. <u>The How: Peacebuilding Architectures and Strategies.</u> ❖ Understanding peacebuilding and its relationship to 'security' and 'development' ❖ Peacebuilding architecture at the central level ❖ Peacebuilding Architecture at the local level ❖ Managing the Konnuo conflict ❖ The Panguna Peacebuilding Strategy ❖ The Peace and Security Strategy Framework 3. <u>The How: Mapping Programmes and Projects</u>
Observations on some actor groups**:** Women; Churches; Youth; Ex-combatants; Development partners	
Where do Bougainvilleans feel they are now?	
Looking Forward ❖ The 2015 Bougainville elections ❖ The referendum – and beyond	
What is this picture telling us? ❖ Emerging priorities ❖ Emerging recommendations	

[6] *Take out the specifics under each heading for a more generally applicable framework. Like any 'tool', it is to be used creatively and not simply 'copied.'*