Mid-Term Evaluation of the Central Asian Community Action Investment Program

October 28, 2003

Claire Ehmann, E&E
Sharon Morris, DCHA/CMM
Mahabat Alimkulova USAID/CAR

Table of Contents

Introduction

This report summarizes the findings of a mid-term review of USAID's Community Action Investment Program (CAIP). The review is intended to: (1) evaluate the progress of CAIP relative to its stated goal of building the capacity of communities to address causes of violence at the local level; (2) provide suggestions on how CAIP can be improved and/or adjusted; and (3) make recommendations on the sustainability of CAIP and the prospect of renewed program funding following its conclusion in 2005.

The review was undertaken over the course of three weeks in September 2003, eighteen months after the start of the program. The team visited four of the five Central Asian Republics where CAIP is being implemented (Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan[1]) and met with all five of CAIP's implementing partners (CHF, Mercy Corps, ACDI-VOCA, UNDP, and the Aga Khan Foundation). A more detailed schedule of meetings is attached in Appendix A. For each partner, the team interviewed senior and mid-level managers, local staff, local government officials, and target communities using a standard set of questions for each group (Appendix B).

Although there was considerable variation in country context and partner approach, all of the programs adhere to the same basic model that uses community mobilization around small scale infrastructure projects as a vehicle for addressing underlying tensions. The program emphasizes a number of key elements: collective decision-making, the inclusion of marginalized groups including women and young people, transparency in the selection and implementation of projects, and constructive engagement with local authorities. CAIP is based on the hypothesis that encouraging communities to find solutions to the problems that most immediately affect their daily lives will ease tensions at the local level and reduce the potential for violence.

A number of key questions guided the review. Are the skills learned through collective decision making "transferable" to the management of local conflict? Does the inclusion of previously marginalized groups in community decision making allow them to assert their priorities and address their needs? Do the skills learned by the community allow them to more confidently and competently engage with local authorities? Does local government in turn become more receptive to the concerns and priorities of local citizens as the result of a community mobilization project? How important are local factors relative to other factors in determining whether a community suffers from violent conflict? To what extent can local level initiatives contribute to the broader goals of conflict management and stability?

This last question is critical and sets the parameters for an evaluation of CAIP. It is important to be realistic about how much community-based programs can realistically accomplish in terms of conflict management or mitigation. Community development programs cannot address many of the macro-level issues that drive violence in the region, such as the disruption of trade due to border closures, corruption and poor governance at the national level, a lack of private land ownership, an unfavorable climate for foreign and private investment, human rights abuses, and widespread economic stagnation.

Widespread conflict, however, often starts as a small spark at the community level. What community mobilization programs can do, if done well, is help to improve

---

[1] Turkmenistan was excluded because of difficulties encountered in start-up.

community relations with local government officials, encourage independence and initiative at the community level, bring antagonistic groups together in order to find solutions to common problems, and provide a measure of hope (through the provision of basic services) to a handful of communities that might otherwise be susceptible to the appeals of extremist or violent organizations. But it must be remembered that all of this will necessarily be on a limited scale and its success and impact depends very much on how well communities and projects are chosen.

Another key issue to consider concerns sustainability. While this was an explicit part of the evaluation and the team did consider the issue, it is important to ask whether conflict management programs need to be sustainable in the same way that regular development programs do. Certainly if the institutions and processes that emerge through community mobilization programs help ease tensions, then one would hope that these would endure beyond the life of the program. However, in some areas, sustainability may not be necessary.

For example, if young people in a particular community are particularly at risk for being recruited by extremist groups or criminal enterprises because of a lack of jobs, then relatively targeted, short-term job creation (through small start up grants) may provide a safety net or small measure of hope to this cohort until broader economic growth programs take hold or immediate sources of instability are attenuated. As long as a handful of job creation programs in high-risk areas do not lead to major distortions in the economy down the road, these types of projects should probably not be evaluated according to the same criteria as other development programs.

General Findings

Because this mid-term review is meant to help redirect and refocus CAIP, many of the comments that follow are critical. But this should not overshadow the fact that many of our partners have done extraordinary work, often in very difficult circumstances. Each has developed innovative responses to the challenges they have encountered and if the best of each were combined into one program, CAIP would be considerably strengthened. Even in its existing form, CAIP has been successful in meeting a number of key goals.

For many communities, CAIP represents one of their first experiences with collective decision making, an experience that many see as extremely positive. While there are certainly exceptions, on the whole CAIP appears to have been successful in terms of increasing community activism, encouraging the participation of a broad range of community members including women and young people, and building a sense of community solidarity and confidence.

CAIP also seems to have been successful in terms of pushing local communities to take the initiative to improve their environment. In CAIP communities, there appears to have been a gradual shift away from the notion that the local government should take care of all of the community's problems. Reduced dependence on local government for solutions to community problems is a very encouraging development.

In some cases, CAIP also appears to have helped communities develop closer ties with local government officials, a central goal of the program. This is a much more mixed finding, as will be discussed below, but there were numerous examples of local government authorities providing moral support, helping to ease bureaucratic red-tape on project approval, or donating machinery, land, or a building. There are also some

outstanding examples of direct cash contributions, for example, one local government contributed roughly 10 million som ($10,000) toward the repair of a kindergarten in Uzbekistan. In those communities where the government has taken an active interest in CAIP and has contributed in some direct way, community members seem more willing to approach local officials than before and seem to have a more positive view of local officials.

When asked about what they had learned through participation in CAIP, many community members spoke very highly of the training they had received. This varied by partner, but virtually all communities indicated that training in areas such as problem solving, project planning, proposal development, and project monitoring gave them useful, practical skills that increased their sense of confidence and competence.

Finally, some projects do appear to have reduced tensions in communities, either by bringing divided ethnic groups together, meeting a critical basic need, or improving relations between a community and local government officials.

While these are significant accomplishments, there are a number of trends that limit CAIP's effectiveness as a conflict program. The central difficulty is that the vast majority of our partners view CAIP as a straightforward development program that takes place in a high-risk context rather than as a program that explicitly addresses the causes of violence or that needs to be modified in order to take account of conflict dynamics.

The working hypothesis that most of our partners use is some variation on the theme that conflict is caused by poverty, which leads to competition over resources and frustration with government, and therefore poverty alleviation programs will reduce the potential for violence. Some of our partners have a more sophisticated understanding of conflict than others, for example, Mercy Corps and CHF seem to have a pretty solid grasp on the causes of conflict, at least at the senior levels. However, even in these organizations, the level of understanding drops off sharply as you move from chief of party to local staff.

None of our partners sponsor any systematic, formal training in either conflict analysis or conflict resolution for their staff, although a handful of staff members had participated in conflict seminars or conflict training prior to joining CAIP. Nor do many of our partners seem particularly interested in getting more training at the senior level or in providing it to their local staff. For example, in Tajikistan, none of our partners requested conflict training in response to a recent solicitation from USAID, and senior staff at UNDP were clearly frustrated that they were being required to work with their Bureau for Crisis Prevention and Recovery. Local staff on the other hand seemed to want more training in conflict analysis and mediation, although certainly not all saw this as a priority.

The lack of training has a direct impact on how effective our partners have been in terms of targeting at-risk communities and working with them to develop creative and effective projects. Probably the greatest difficulty is that even when communities are chosen well (in-terms of conflict risk factors), there is a disconnect between the conflict issue identified in the initial profile and the infrastructure project that follows, even when a fairly clear relationship exists between the problem and the project, for example, competition over water and an improved irrigation system.

To illustrate, in Kara Suu a survey conducted by ACDI-VOCA identified the migration of rural Kyrgyz into a predominantly ethnic Uzbek town as a potent source of tension. This type of demographic shift can in fact be highly destabilizing. However, rather than locate their infrastructure project in a peri-urban area where recent migrants and poor urban Uzbek residents are more likely to clash over scarce resources or cultural differences, they chose a community and a project (the repair of a kindergarten) in downtown Kara Suu. Nor did they focus on the age cohort (15-29) most likely to be involved in this type of violence. Several possible projects might have better helped bridge lines of division, for example, a clinic offering services geared to youth health concerns (Kara Suu has the second highest HIV/AIDS rates after Osh) or a youth center that brings together newly arrived Kyrgyz and poor urban Uzbek youth around vocational education. The point here is that the conflict lens should not disappear once a community has been selected. It needs to stay engaged throughout program design and implementation.

This points to a second difficulty which is that the democracy goals and the conflict management goals of CAIP may sometimes contradict each other, particularly when local staff do not explain the conflict goals of the program to community members. A strict adherence to democratic selection of community priorities may result in effectively targeted infrastructure projects, but just as often will not.

Another problem is that all of our partners are stretching the "do no harm" principle past the point it was meant to go. Local (and particularly expatriate) staff should never go into a community and start talking about violence in an incendiary way or in a way that puts community members at risk. But "doing no harm" does not mean never mentioning the word conflict or never asking divided communities to think about what is keeping them apart and what might bring them closer together. These are difficult issues to discuss – for example, the discussion of ethnic tension is seen as taboo by many in southern Kyrgyzstan – and most of our partners realize this. However, with proper training these are not impossible issues to discuss, although they are probably better handled by local staff rather than expatriate staff. In fact, many local staff mentioned that they would welcome conflict training that would help them talk about the potential for violence in a constructive and non-threatening way.

While partners could be more creative (and slightly more directive) in terms of the projects they choose to support, it is important to be realistic about how much infrastructure programs alone can do to address the causes of violence, such as widespread youth unemployment and alienation, tensions between internal migrants and established urban residents, or inter-ethnic competition over resources such as land. Most of these are not issues that a gas pipeline, or any small-scale infrastructure program, will solve on its own.

Even building a social center that brings together young people from different ethnicities may not be effective (and could in fact be counter-productive) if it is not paired with the appropriate 'software', for example, vocational education or tolerance training. ACDI-VOCA has been most effective in terms of folding training or other 'soft' programs into its infrastructure projects. Mercy Corps has also done a limited number of social events through its CAIP program and Aga Khan has stressed that this is an area it is looking into, but more needs to be done.

In terms of strengthening relations with local government, as mentioned earlier this is a mixed result. In addition to the positive results discussed above, there is some evidence that CAIP can sometimes increase anger toward local government authorities

particularly in Uzbekistan. Some communities question why it is that Americans can travel thousands of miles to help their community when their own government will not. In other cases, local government authorities have actively disrupted or attempted to hijack projects. In one particularly egregious case in Uzbekistan, the community negotiated a reduction in the fee it needed to pay for project approval. Once the project (a gas pipeline) was completed, government authorities shut off the gas and demanded the full fee. If there is little possibility that the government will become more responsive to communities, then community mobilization programs may in fact increase tensions.

In a number of instances, CAIP also appears to have created tensions between communities. The size of the award and the number of projects that benefit one community over another appears to be a major factor contributing to this trend.

Finally, one message that still is not getting through to some of our partners is the importance of letting program recipients know that funding comes from people in the United States. CHF does well on this front; community members used CHF, USAID, and the United States interchangeably in our discussions. UNDP and ACDI-VOCA were also reasonably good in this regard. However, Mercy Corps and Aga Khan communities often had no idea that program funding came from USAID or from the United States. In several cases, communities thought that USAID was a UN organization. In one meeting, a local government official in Tajikistan was not only unaware that USAID provided funding for programs he appeared to hold in high regard, he stated that he would not allow any organization (including USAID) other than Aga Khan to work in his district since they all lacked AKF's transparency and accountability. Both Mercy Corps and Aga Khan put up the obligatory sign boards, but in the communities the evaluation team visited, it was very clear that there had not been much time devoted to explaining the message of U.S. support for the project beyond the sign.

The next sections look at each partner in more detail. The sections cover: 1) each partner's working definition/understanding of conflict; 2) how communities are initially chosen; 3) the process for selecting community groups and prioritizing projects; 4) relations with local government; and 5) sustainability. The report concludes with a series of recommendations.

Recommendations

1. Training for local staff on how to identify, analyze, and talk about conflict.

It was clear through our meetings that understanding of conflict decreases from senior staff to local facilitators to the community level (where communities do not discuss conflict at all). With notable exceptions, most local staff had difficulty explaining the conflict rationale for target communities and could not explain whether or not the project implemented reduced tensions. All of the partners told us that aside from initial problem identification, they do not discuss conflict or tensions with their communities once into the infrastructure stage. Training on how to better analyze, discuss, and resolve conflict in non-threatening ways with communities and local government is crucial to implementing CAIP effectively. While many of our partners suggested that USAID should provide them with training, the evaluation team feels that partners who are implementing conflict programs have a responsibility to gain expertise in conflict analysis and resolution. To provide guidance, USAID/CMM will soon hire a training specialist and is developing training modules and "required reading" bibliographies.

2. Be more explicit about conflict in communities where trust has been established.

This recommendation follows on the need for conflict training for community mobilizers and facilitators. Too often our partners seem to be taking the "do no harm" approach past the point that it was meant to go. Do no harm requires that assistance be provided in such a way as to not reinforce existing tensions or create new ones, it does not mean never talking about the potential for conflict. One partner representative (Mercy Corps) told us, "I hope conflict would never come up in community discussions." This seems excessive, particularly because CAIP *is* a conflict program. While these issues might be more difficult to address in the start-up phase of CAIP, at this mid-term period trust has been established in many CAIP communities. This would be an appropriate time to make Community Groups (CGs) aware of CAIP's conflict focus and to encourage CGs to think creatively about how to address conflict issues in their communities. This would also allow partners to guide their CGs to place more emphasis on building a conflict resolution component into planned infrastructure projects, and should lead to a re-prioritization of projects that will alleviate conflict: building an irrigation canal that will serve two communities of different ethnic backgrounds, for example, instead of a school or youth center that would only serve one ethnic community.

3. Move to a cluster community approach – particularly in rural areas.

Some of the implementing partners (CHF, MCI, UNDP) are already moving in this direction. Cluster programs that pool resources between communities to work toward solutions for common problems are more effective in building stronger ties between communities and reducing the potential for conflict. In areas such as Tajikistan and parts of Kyrgyzstan where there is the potential for intercommunity conflict, partners should select clusters that help break down ethnic and social barriers. However, in all countries this approach could be useful since larger clusters may be more effective in lobbying local governments for increased resources.

4. Don't limit CAIP to just infrastructure -- allow more flexibility in project design. Integrate social projects into infrastructure.

Some partners told us that the heavy infrastructure focus of CAIP does not allow for some of the "softer" programming, such as social events that would bring communities together. The CAIP cooperative agreements do not restrict CAIP to just infrastructure, however; this seems to be a self-imposed restriction on the part of implementers. Some implementers also seem to be framing CAIP as an infrastructure-only program, which does not encourage communities to brainstorm about other types of projects that might address the tensions in their community. While infrastructure is a very useful tool to unite and mobilize communities, to prevent conflict it should also be accompanied by social programs that help communities address sources of tension. It is not enough to just build a youth center or sports playground to solve the problem of "youth having nothing to do", for example. Programs must be put in place to engage youth constructively; refurbishing a building is not enough. For example, it might make sense to organize a school debate club or after-school youth peer groups to accompany a school rehabilitation project. Other good examples of social programming might include vocational training to accompany refurbishment of a youth center or formation of a water user's association to accompany an irrigation canal project.

5. Place increased focus on job creation – particularly for young people.

While most of the CAIP partners discuss job creation in their cooperative agreements, and many do create short-term employment in the form of construction, the evaluation team found few examples of longer-term job creation in practice. Because youth unemployment is a key destabilizing factor in the region, more attention needs to go to infrastructure projects that create long-term jobs (such as rehabilitating a flour mill, for example). Such programs might require small investments in market research before the project is undertaken to ensure viability of the business; however, sustainability of jobs does not necessarily have to be the first priority in a conflict prevention program. Under the CAIP expansion, three implementers will be focusing specifically on employment creation; but all partners should be thinking about how to use CAIP to create jobs.

A sub-recommendation would be to allow partners who received the expansion (ie, Mercy Corps, CHF, ACDI/VOCA) to work in communities where other partners are also working (provided both partners agree to this arrangement). For example, AKF told us that they would like MCI to be able to work in some of their VO communities in the Rasht Valley to do employment generation projects. The attachment in Appendix C lists examples from other countries of youth employment/engagement projects.

6. Make more effort to involve women and youth.

While every partner told us that they include women and youth in their mobilization groups, actual representation varied. Youth especially were underrepresented on CGs, due to cultural mores which dictate that youth should be seen and not heard. One potential model to increase youth involvement is MC Tajikistan, which created separate youth and women's CAGs. Youth and women both have representation on the larger CAG, but the smaller forums seemed to encourage more involvement and creativity in project design. The mission may also want to consider encouraging the communities to implement at least one youth-specific project as a priority. However, it should be reinforced to partners and their CGs that just building a sports field or youth center is not enough to ensure youth involvement – other activities to engage youth constructively must be included in project planning. One good example we saw was MC Tajikistan, where the community was building a youth center that included a disco, a small canteen, and a hotel for local government officials visiting the village, which was also the district center. The idea was that the center would provide youth with a place to go, and that it would also generate revenue and create jobs for up to 20 young people.

7. Link CAIP with other USAID programs

Where possible, the mission should consider more of a "clustering" approach, encouraging economic, democracy, and health program implementers to work in or near CAIP communities. Some implementers, including ACDI/VOCA, are doing a good job of linking up with other USAID programs such as civic education, Urban Institute's local government program, Pragma, and others. But some implementers are working in regions that do not have concomitant USAID programs. A clustering approach will help to address some of the underlying sources of conflict that CAIP cannot easily directly influence, such as access to credit, poor quality education, deteriorating irrigation systems on a larger scale, and ineffective local government.

8. Geographic focus: Recommend continuing CAIP in Ferghana Valley and Tajikistan, phase-out or re-focus at end of 3 years in Kazakhstan and southern Uzbekistan.

While this evaluation could not be an in-depth conflict assessment of each region in which CAIP is active, our cursory review led to the conclusion that CAIP makes the most sense in the Ferghana Valley (Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan) and in Tajikistan, particularly the south and the Rasht Valley/Batken area, where the potential for future conflict is highest. In Kazakhstan, higher levels of local government and community resources and availability of input materials make CAIP somewhat easier to do, and sustainability may be easier to ensure. However, likelihood of conflict seems lower than in other parts of Central Asia. One exception may be Turkistan, a Muslim pilgrimage site which has had reports of Hizb ut-Tahrir (HT) activity. In southern Uzbekistan, main problems include poverty, corrupt local government officials, presence of religious extremist elements including HT, and repressive national government economic and political policies. CGs often have difficult relationships with *hokimat* leadership, so sustainability of the CG model is doubtful. USAID is one of the only donors in southern Uzbekistan, and there are significant development needs and political incentives for staying engaged in this area. Instead of CAIP, however, development programs that focus more directly on youth employment and participation in civic life might be a more appropriate follow-on program than continued infrastructure rehabilitation.

9. Consider working with neighboring communities.

This recommendation follows the "clustering communities" approach. One thing we heard often from both partners, local government, and CGs was that neighboring communities were "jealous" of CAIP communities, and often asked how they could attract CAIP into their communities. While in some cases we heard of neighboring communities establishing their own CGs, the reality is that these often go nowhere because resources are unavailable. This problem is inevitable – CAIP cannot reach every community. One idea to mitigate potential for conflict between CAIP and non-CAIP communities might be to explore the possibility of working with neighboring communities to have projects that could be shared more broadly (particularly in Tajikistan, for example, where communities are often targeted somewhat randomly in certain high-risk geographic areas like Batken). This would also address some questions of absorptive capacity of one community. In addition, social activities should be designed to reach out to people in neighboring communities.

10. Partners must be more aware to avoid infrastructure projects that reinforce lines of division, eg. ethnic differences.

Too often we saw examples of projects that addressed only one ethnic community – refurbishing an Uzbek language school, for example. Schools in Central Asia are somewhat problematic in this regard since they are language-based and thus reinforce lines of division among people. One partner showed us a community where they were rehabbing an Uzbek school, with plans to rehab a neighboring Tajik school in the future. Conflict funds would be better spent on a project that would bring both groups of children together.

11. Put minimum standards/procedures in place for selection of CG and leadership; consider supplementary training to account for CG turnover.

It is natural that in some cases, the community mobilization process can be taken over by a "bully" or influential but non-constructive person. There is also a danger of the CGs being "hijacked" by local government or *mahalla* leaders.   In these cases other CG members may not be sure how to assert their rights or deal with a recalcitrant leader. Procedures to remove of bad leadership should be addressed in every CG. While some CGs have re-election built in to the leadership, some elections do not occur for 2 years – this is too long to wait to get rid of bad leadership. More frequent CG elections will also help ensure that more community members have a chance to participate, receive training, and gain mobilization skills.

12. Re-emphasize to partners the importance of giving the USG credit for the CAIP program.

While CHF and ACDI/VOCA seem to be doing a good job of letting communities know that CAIP is a program funded by the U.S. Government, the other partners, especially the Aga Khan Foundation, Mercy Corps and to a lesser degree UNDP are not working hard enough to send this message to their communities. In one egregious example, a local government official in Tajikistan told us that while he would never work with USAID or the UN, he is always happy to work with the Aga Khan Foundation. It should be emphasized to implementers that one of the goals of the CAIP program is to let the citizens of Central Asia know that Americans care about them and are helping them. CAIP is an excellent opportunity to increase goodwill toward the U.S. in Central Asia; but too often partners promote themselves, not the USG, as the source of assistance.

13. A composite CAIP model

Every implementing partner we met with is doing interesting, creative work through CAIP. Some of the best lessons learned from each partner include: training for local staff in conflict; including "software" (social programs, vocational training, civic education) into the "hardware" of an infrastructure project; clustering communities to work on common problems; developing infrastructure that can generate employment; actively including youth in CGs; and perhaps exploring revolving credit funds, if properly managed, as a sustainability mechanism.

ANNEX A – Meetings

Dates	Site	Meetings
9/14-9/15	Tashkent	Mercy Corps - Heather Carlisle, Chief of Party
		CHF - Ivana Sirovic, Country Director and Sanjar Juraev, Information Specialist
9/16-9/17	Shymkent	ACDI/VOCA - Hugh Brown, Chief of Party
		ACDI/VOCA Shymkent Staff
		Saule CIC
		Bagys CIC
		Makulbaev Tyllabaevich - Akim of Sary-Agash
		Zharty-Tobe CIC
9/18-9/19	Qarshi	CHF - Karshi Staff
		Pakhtazor CIC
		Nazar Hakimov, Deputy Hokim, Qarshi
		Denov CIC
9/21-9/23	Ferghana	Mercy Corps - Melinda Leonard
		Mercy Corps - Namangan staff
		Mustaqillik - mahalla leader/CIC
		Haqqulobod - local government, mahalla leader, CIC
		Mercy Corps - Andijan staff
		Honobod CIC
9/24-9/25	Osh	ACDI-VOCA Osh Staff
		Kara-Suu CIC
		Bazar Korgan CIC
		Uzgen Mayor
9/27-9/28	Dushanbe	UNDP staff
		Aga Khan Foundation staff
		Mercy Corps staff
9/28-9/30	Shaartuz	UNDP Shaartuz staff
		Guliston JDC
		Mercy Corps Shaartuz staff
		Bahor CAG
		Octyabir CAG
9/30-10/1	Kulyab	AKF Kulyab staff
		Navobod VO

Annex B: Interview Questions

Local Government Questionnaire
1. Are you aware of CAIP projects working in the region?
2. What do you see as a goal of this project?
3. How does the CAIP activity in your rayon affect participating communities? Are these projects helpful? In what way?
4. How do you perceive the approach of mobilizing people to solve their problems? What do you think about the process?
5. How have you been involved in the community-development process? Have you attended the planning meetings and how frequently?
6. What was your level of participation? Were you a part of the CIC/CAG?
7. Did the LG contribute resources or in some way?
8. What are your views on your relations between local government and community?
9. Is your relationship with CAIP communities different from those that are not participating in activities?
10. Because CAIP is working only in the selected communities, do you hear of any problems from other communities, where CAIP is not working?
11. How do you see this activity continuing after CAIP leaves? Would you like to see the Initiative Groups continue their activity?
12. What role will the government play after CAIP leaves?
13. Are there any important issues facing your community that CAIP is not able to address?

Community Initiative Group Questionnaire
1. How were the CIC/CAG members chosen?
2. Was there a lot of interest/did many people want to join the CIC?
3. How do you make decisions? For example, how does your community decide on the needs and priorities of your community? By consensus? By majority voting?
4. How does your Group manage situations in which members of the CIC/CAG have differing opinions? (Or, how do you manage conflict of opinions?)
5. Do important issues ever come up in your discussions that CAIP/infrastructure cannot address?
6. Were there any projects that the implementer refused to deal with?
7. Do you have any youth members on your CIC/CAG?
8. Which community group do you think benefits most / least from this project?
9. What efforts were made to insure that all segments of the community were informed about and encouraged to participate in the CAIP project?
10. What was the role of the local government, local NGOs, and local businesses in the project?
11. How are your relationships with LG different since CAIP?
12. How do you involve young people in your work?
13. Do you think the CIC/CAG will continue working after the CAIP leaves?
14. How do you see it working? If resources are needed, how would the CIC/CAG solve the problem?
15. If you were director of USAID, how would you change the CAIP project? (and you can't ask for more money)

Partner/Staff Questions

1. How do you select your communities?

2. How do you choose the ones that are most vulnerable to conflict?
3. Have you had any training on conflict?
4. What are some of the issues that communities raise when talking about tensions/problems?
5. Do communities ever raise issues/problems that infrastructure projects cannot address?
6. How do you involve LG in CAIP?
7. Do you think CAIP is sustainable? How? What will remain behind?
8. How would you change CAIP?
9. What do you like most about CAIP/best results?
10. Do you work with any other USAID programs?

Annex C: Youth Activities

<div style="border:1px solid">

Youth and Conflict Management:
Potential Measures

</div>

There is a strong correlation between large youth cohorts (a high number of 15 to 29 year olds relative to the total population) and political violence.[2] A large pool of young people does not need to be destabilizing, however if young people – particularly young men – are uprooted, jobless, intolerant, alienated and with few opportunities for positive engagement, they represent a ready pool of recruits for ethnic, religious, and political extremists seeking to mobilize violence. Young people living in urban and semi-urban areas are particularly at risk, in part because they lack the informal social and economic safety nets that exist in rural areas. It is important to state that young people are not a cause of violence; in many places young people have been a powerful force for positive change. However in many societies, there is a disturbing tendency for political elites to harness the destructive rather than constructive potential of young people. The challenge is to identify those youth most at risk and find ways to engage them in constructive economic, political, and social activities.

The following programs are examples of efforts to engage at-risk young people. This is a new area and tools are still being developed to measure the impact these programs have on reducing the potential for violence. However, many of these programs have shown promise in reaching out to young people who often are left behind in more traditional development efforts.

Job Training and Youth Employment Programs

Unemployment is at the heart of the risk this age group represents. Young people often participate in violence because membership in extremist organizations provides immediate economic benefits, because violence itself offers opportunities for economic gain (through direct payment or looting), or because conflict promises to open up longer term economic options (for example, through patronage if 'their' ethnic or religious group captures power). Providing targeted job training and employment for young people is therefore a critical element in dampening incentives for violence. Examples of possible programs include:

- In the **West Bank/Gaza**, a program developed together with local Palestinian businessmen uses small scale entrepreneurship as an engine for youth employment. After participating in the program, 96% of the beneficiaries were either employed or self-employed; overall income levels increased 110%; and 84% of the small businesses started are still successfully operating.

- A young man who grew up in the slums around **Nairobi** founded an organization that provides a range of services to at-risk urban youth including recreational activities, computer training, basic business skills, and start-up loans for small enterprises. Because young people are considered a bad credit risk, they are often excluded from traditional micro-finance programs.

- In southern **Sri Lanka** where support for the radical, anti-peace JVP party is strong, the local chamber of commerce is working with vocational schools and universities to

---

[2] See for example, Daniel Esty et al.1998. *State Failure Task Force Report: Phase II Findings.* McLean, VA: Science Applications International, for State Failure Task Force.

match training to market needs and has a database that links local businesses to unemployed youth, particularly those that form the core base of support for the JVP.

- In **Brazil**, a local organization works to combat violence in urban slums through a comprehensive program that provides job training and employment placement, voluntary weapons collection programs through local churches, and social activities such as boxing, concerts, and citizenship classes.

Constructive Political Participation:

In many parts of the world, political parties and other social movements use young people to intimidate rivals, destabilize opponents, and fill campaign coffers. This is often the only form of political participation open to young people, particularly those with little education or few personal connections. A number of programs attempt to offer at-risk youth the opportunity for constructive political engagement.

- Civic education programs in **Nigeria** and the **Balkans** bring young people from different ethnic and religious groups together to identify local problems, develop realistic solutions, and work through democratic channels – the media, local government, civil society – to implement solutions. These programs scale up to national level competitions, which can encourage exchange and collaboration across regions.

- In **Sierra Leone**, urban youth who were used by politicians as thugs to intimidate voters in past elections were trained in voter registration and election monitoring, thereby giving them a stake in the success of the process. The young people also held events where they challenged politicians to pledge not to use youth as a destabilizing force in their campaigns.

- Young people played a critical role in the pro-democracy movement that ultimately toppled Milosevic in **Serbia**. The Democracy Learning-Youth Participation program has built on that strength through a project that supports the work of youth NGOs by equipping them with basic knowledge, values, and skills to engage in democratic participation. Encouraging tolerance for difference is an explicit component of the program.

- A project in **Yemen** promotes youth participation in decision making and civic responsibility at the community level. It emphasizes the positive role that youth can play in the democratic process through activities, such as the publication of a quarterly newsletter that discusses important youth issues and issues related to democracy, direct participation in elections for association leadership, and regular sporting and cultural events.

- In **Angola**, a project provides training and education to young people so that they can be active players in the national reconciliation process. The target group includes university students, political and community youth associations, and internally displaced youth and returnees.

Peace Education and Tolerance Training

In many parts of the world, leaders use negative ethnic and religious stereotypes to mobilize support for violence, stereotypes that are often reinforced in school, by family members, and in the media. A number of programs, both inside and outside the formal

school system, attempt to build tolerance for difference and give young people the skills they need to manage conflict in a non-violent way. Examples include:

- In **Burundi**, young Hutu and Tutsi ex-combatants jointly developed a program that reaches out to school children to talk about the personal costs of violence. They have developed cartoon books (now used by the Ministry of Education throughout Burundi) that deal with the previously taboo subject of how elites recruit youth to engage in ethnically-motivated violence.

- Designed to prevent conflict in refugee camps in **Kenya**, a UNHCR Peace Education Program (PEP) provides materials that were designed for use in resource-poor environments. The program emphasizes developing locally-meaningful resource materials, including posters, role-play scenarios, proverb cards, booklets of poetry, and stories that illustrate both challenging and hopeful issues for reflection and discussion. The success of the program led Kenyan police to call on a program graduate to facilitate an agreement between two disputing clans. Similarly, a group of program graduates formed a group to resolve daily conflicts in camp affairs.

- A network of young people in the **Balkans** encourage inter-ethnic cooperation and non-violent communication by focusing on activities that youth find interesting, new, and progressive. Formed at the height of the conflict, early projects focused on simply bringing young people together across ethnic divisions to participate in social activities such as drama, music, and films. Without losing the focus on fostering tolerance, post-conflict initiatives have expanded to include discussions about globalization, unemployment, the media, the public school system, and civic engagement.