

Witnessing as a space for engaging outsiders in active nonviolence to respond
to land-based conflict in Cambodia

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Christopher Baker Evens

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WITNESSING AS A SPACE FOR ENGAGING OUTSIDERS IN ACTIVE
NONVIOLENCE TO RESPOND TO LAND-BASED CONFLICT IN CAMBODIA

Christopher Baker Evens

MRR Approved by:

Name, Chair Person

Name, Major Professor

Name, Member

Name, Member

MoEYS Representative

ABSTRACT

This action research project paper presents a theoretical framework for understanding violence in general and land-based conflict in Cambodia specifically, beginning with an overall understanding of the domination system (culture of violence) and how it is manifested in the Cambodian context. It considers themes of power, change and conflict transformation as understood by the Partnership System and the application of active nonviolence in response to violent land-based conflict in Cambodia. Active nonviolence is presented as a valid and effective response to the specific issue of land-based conflict in developing practical responses, as well as mitigating factors of latent conflict that predict potential for civil conflict. The research explores the space of witnessing as a model for outside actors (particularly, but not limited to, expatriates) engaging in active nonviolent responses to land-based conflict in Cambodia, in this case the forced eviction of the Dey Krahorm village in Phnom Penh. The data and findings suggest that witnessing occupy three spaces for nonviolent engagement: witness alongside, witness towards, and witness to alternatives. These spaces enable outsiders to engage in nonviolent action namely, protective accompaniment, observation, presence, relationship building, dialogue, advocacy, awareness, community, listening, story-telling and organisational change. This paper recommends further research and action learning to explore effective nonviolent methodology for the Cambodian context, and needed improvements to better implement these three witnessing spaces by outsiders.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

7NG	The 7NG Construction Company Ltd
BBC	British Broadcasting Corporation
CPN	Cambodian Peacebuilding Network
CSJ	Christians for Social Justice
DK	The Dey Krahorn village, a Phnom Penh community using nonviolent resistance against the 7NG Construction Company. The name means “Red Earth”.
EU	European Union
INGO	International Non Government Organisation
Licadho	The League for the Defense of Human Rights in Cambodia
MPP	Municipality of Phnom Penh
NGO	Non Government Organisation
PBI	Peace Brigades International
RGC	Royal Government of Cambodia
SBS	Australian government-owned television channel focusing on international awareness.
UN	United Nations
WAC	Womyn's Agenda for Change

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Both direct and structural violence are prevalent in Cambodia, producing a climate of fear particularly among the poor and marginalised. Lack of legal protection for the poor creates space for opportunistic individuals and businesses to seize land that is increasing in value at a great rate. The cultural models available to Cambodians to respond to violence and conflict are few: either one fights back to destroy one's enemy becoming stronger in the process, or one takes a passive posture unable to respond waiting until a more opportune time to seek revenge (Hinton, 1998). A third alternative of active nonviolence has gained proponents since the end of the Khmer Rouge regime, championed by Buddhist leaders and local community activists, but is still a cultural anomaly. The purpose of this inquiry is to determine how individuals, groups and communities can be motivated to take up active nonviolence in response to land-based conflict in Cambodia.

I currently serve as the Country Director of InnerCHANGE, an international religious community that focuses on personal and social transformation. InnerCHANGE primarily works in partnership with urban poor communities and local churches. My two main work goals are: to lead and support the InnerCHANGE team in Cambodia; and, to encourage, facilitate and mobilise nonviolent actors in response to land-based conflict in Cambodia.

InnerCHANGE first arrived in Cambodia in 1993. Since that time staff have observed a culture of violence at all levels of society. Domestic violence, acid-throwing on cheating spouses, mob violence when thieves are caught in the act, assassinations of political rivals

and seemingly random revenge attacks. Over the past few years, land has become a major focus of violent conflict in Cambodia. In both urban and rural settings, communities are losing their land to private developers, government officials and wealthy individuals. Any attempt to resist these encroachments are met with derision, at best, and fatal retaliation, at worst. Corruption and political interference within the justice system makes it hard going for communities to seek redress. However, a growing number of individuals and communities have taken up advocacy and nonviolence as a way to resist those who would steal their lands. Major barriers to the practice of active nonviolence are the cultural models supporting aggression, authoritarianism and deception as valid responses to conflict and violence (Bit, 1991; Hinton, 1998; Chor, 2004). In the process of conducting this action research project InnerCHANGE inaugurated a Peace and Justice focus group to specifically promote nonviolence as a viable alternative to violence, and as a specific response to land-based conflict. This focus group works to mobilise active nonviolent responses to land-based conflict, provide information on land conflict, as well as relationship building between specific conflict-affected communities, local and international NGO's, and other key actors (eg donors).

CHAPTER 2

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

In this following chapter I will outline a broad framework of the culture of violence that supports and promotes violence, in all its forms, as a normative response to conflict. This culture of violence directly impacts the Cambodian context and the conflict created over land (and other natural resources). I will look at theories of change, specifically nonviolent change. I will conclude that as the culture of violence is based on story and myth, an important element for transforming the conflict system is changing the underlying myths from violent stories to stories of peace by peaceful means promoting equality, participation, freedom and justice. These stories are not readily available in most cultures, Cambodia being no exception. Therefore, a new body of stories must be told and retold functioning as a critical and reflective learning tool for praxis (acting and reflecting on the action) (Freire, 2007) as well as a living mythology of nonviolence.

Fundamental to this paper is the notion that peace and violence are human choices. Violence is possible but not inevitable as we who are capable of war are also capable of peace (Eisler, 1995). Indeed, Walter Wink (2003) encourages us that while violence seems to be ever-present, peaceful and nonviolent social and political change is on the increase. And so we are faced with a two realities: the presence of continued violence and the undying reality that humans can and do build lives together in peace.

A number of authors describe the simultaneous presence of two cultural 'systems' at work, each with its own set of goals, models, mindsets, and moralities. These are variously

referred to as: the Domination System, culture of violence, royal consciousness, the Hydra, the *status quo*, and the powers-that-be on one side and the Partnership System, God's Domination-free Order, and culture of peace on the other (Eisler, 1995, Wink, 1992, Curle, 1999, and Brueggeman, 2001).

The Domination system seeks power at all costs. It sees that there is a limited amount of resources and the best way to maintain power is to seek as many resources as quickly as possible. Power-sharing is ultimately doomed to failure, except as a temporary situation until one side gets the 'upper hand' and is able to dominate the other (Hinton, 1998). Domination interprets reality through an US vs THEM paradigm, utilizing any means for the purpose of strengthening its own power: deception, trickery, confusion, use of higher authorities, and direct and structural violence. Preventing and ending violence is possible when one side demonstrates overwhelming power over the other, and where there is no outright winner violence can and will persist for years, even decades.

The Partnership System views humanity as an emergent process, that our creative energies combined can build a future where power is used collectively, where no one individual, group or state benefits alone, but all seek the good of others (Eisler, 1995). Conflict is not ignored or feared, but is seen as an opportunity for growth, understanding and deeper collaboration. The partnership system promotes respect of the Other.

The Partnership System understands violence as a disconnection with, and dehumanisation of, groups that are different and difficult to understand, or simply less powerful. Violence can be avoided and conflicts resolved effectively by seeking commonality

and understanding. History supports the effectiveness of collaboration and nonviolence in both neolithic societies (Eisler, 1995), as well as recent history (Wink, 2003). The partnership system proposes that suffering on the behalf of another (who would normally be considered an enemy in the Domination System's eyes) will create space for peace and reconciliation (Gandhi, 1922). We see that much of the world exists somewhere in between these two cultural models. For collaboration, partnership and nonviolence to become the dominant reality a fundamental shift is required in the thinking and skill sets at all levels of society and human interaction.

The thesis of this paper is that outsiders can occupy valid social space to engage in nonviolent activism as “witnesses” to situations of violent conflict¹. Witnessing has a range of roles: *witness alongside*, including observation, presence and protective accompaniment; *witness towards*, including advocacy and awareness; and *witness to alternatives*, including stories of significant change. This outsider space involves witnessing to potential external supporters (organizational constituencies, donors, other international NGO's, embassies, private citizens, etc) as well as to the internal institutions that exercise power over the conflict system. Witnesses also have a role to play in creating safe spaces for communities, for rest, relaxation and renewed planning, as well as offering insights and possibilities not seen by those inside the conflict. Witnessing, therefore, is a valid and effective application of nonviolent social power, creating impetus for the changed thinking required to move from domination to partnership and violence to peace.

¹ Violence in all it's forms – natural, direct, structural and cultural.

2.1 The Domination System:

Violence is more than physical attacks on a person, but exists in social systems, structures, institutions, relationships and is essentially “insulting basic needs” (Galtung, 2004, p. 3). Other writers conclude that violence exists at the cultural level and that social systems are a reflection of the underlying cultural consciousness. Violence, then, exists at a mythological level, and to effectively change a violent system the cultural mythology must also be addressed and transformed. A myth is “not a made up story, fiction, or false idea. Rather, it refers to those founding narratives that provide whole societies with orientation to the world” (Wink, 2002 p.271). Walter Brueggemann (2001) distinguishes two myths or cultural systems: the '*Royal Consciousness*' and the '*Alternative Consciousness*'. Royal consciousness is characterized by affluence, oppressive social policy and static religion, which actively works against the alternative consciousness of equality, justice and freedom.

2.1.1 *Myth and Symbolism*

Walter Wink (1992, 1999) explains the *Myth of Redemptive Violence* as a cultural story visible in cartoons, movies, the media, political rhetoric - pretty much anywhere. The myth's archetype is as follows: A Hero has certain powers to battle the forces of Evil. A Villain enters the story and wreaks mayhem in the world. The Hero sets out to defeat the Villain using his (usually) special powers. For a long stretch of time he is overwhelmed by the Villain to the point of death and defeat. Just when it seems impossible for the Hero to survive any longer he finds the capacity to use his powers to violently defeat the Villain. The myth often leaves it unclear if the Villain is dead or not, opening the door for the pattern to repeat itself ad infinitum. The story reinforces the belief that violence in the service of the greater good is not only acceptable, but a moral obligation. No other means is possible. "In

short, the Myth of Redemptive Violence is the story of the victory of order over chaos by means of violence. It is the ideology of conquest, the original religion of the *status quo*". (Wink, 1999, p.3) It is the shared story of the Domination System throughout human history. Violence is not just a function of physical blows or economics, but exists at the very core of our understanding of who we are as human beings. *The domination system believes that order is best maintained by violence.*

One way to maintain the order of domination is through social legitimization of structures and institutions. These could be the state, the police department, the military forces, the education system or the health system (and their related institutions). They are imbued with a sense of legitimacy to act on behalf of the populace. The state is a legitimate body through democratic elections, succession by birth (monarchy), military power (dictatorships, coups, etc), or recognition by the international community as well as backed up by the cultural myths of that society. Hence, societies lend legitimacy to structures, usually states, to be the actors of the violence-that-orders. In general, state actors are provided with an *a priori* legitimacy, that is, their existence proves this legitimacy. They require no, or very little external legitimacy. Where they do leaders will refer to cultural mythology in speeches, actions and symbols. For example, during President Obama's Inauguration speech this year ("President Obama", 2009) he referred to Abraham Lincoln seeking external legitimacy from the American mythology of freedom and democracy. Regardless of the issue or injustice being fought, few non-state actors are likely to receive legitimacy from the public for acting violently as they require external validation from the State (usually) for their existence and few states are willing to cede their control. Where this has happened, in globalisation and privatisation, there is concern over who will be accountable for the actions of multi-national

organisations. Any action perceived as being violent will, therefore, reduce or eliminate social legitimacy of any non-state actor.

In Cambodia the media regularly report on state-sanctioned violence such as forced evictions, beatings of monks and murder of political activists (Khemara, 2005 and Licadho 2006 and 2008). These reports reinforce the sense that the State is in control. Wherever there are violent responses to state-sanctioned violence, for example the throwing of rocks by a community defending itself from forced eviction, they serve to de-legitimise their own cause by using means reserved only for the state or legitimate actor. The media will use language to villainise them, calling their actions illegal, labeling them as disturbers of the peace, anarchists, trouble makers, squatters, and opportunists, thus turning the state itself into the victim.

The Myth of Redemptive Violence, then, legitimates the use of violence to those actors who support and perpetuate it. It guides and protects them. Furthermore, those who use violence against the Domination System face destruction by its overwhelming might, and in addition deny the very alternative consciousness they seek to awaken. The *only* legitimate option for aggrieved groups is either non-action or active nonviolence. There is a subtle irony here. The most legitimate options of responding to conflict reinforce the domination-partnership dichotomy. If legitimate state actors use nonviolent methods they communicate weakness. For the nonviolent activist nonviolence communicates strength through vulnerability and openness. States are invariably stuck in the domination cycle. The more violence is used the more it is required to maintain social equilibrium. For the social activist, non-action maintains the *status quo*, once again legitimising the domination system. Active

nonviolence, is therefore the only effective and legitimate form of action for non-state actors, at the same time highlighting and rendering morally ineffective the violent nature of the Domination System, and ultimately undermining it into non-existence. Achieving this in practice is quite another matter, particularly with the relative lack of nonviolent historical precedence in Cambodia. Resisting authority, in any way - physically, vocally, politically, economically - is viewed as violent, as violence is not defined as preventing access to people's basic needs but the disruption of social harmony.

2.1.2 *Khmer Cultural Models*

The following section analyses the Domination System within the Cambodian context, which like other societies, provides the Domination System ample opportunity for expression. Well known cultural stories such as *Tum Teav*, the *Reamker*, and Judge Rabbit, as well as the Warrior archetype (Bit, 1991), stimulate and perpetuate both direct and structural violence and inhibit the choice of nonviolence as a valid response to conflict.

The story of *Tum Teav*, while on the one hand presented as a tragic love story, contains major themes of violence, deception, trickery, authoritarianism and revenge. All of which are used by both the 'good' and 'bad' characters.

Tum, a young monk, and Teav, a beautiful young girl, fall in love with each other but cannot marry. Tum leaves monastic life by defrocking himself in order to be with Teav. However, Teav is already promised by her mother to the provincial Governor, Archoun, and later to the King. In a moment of passion Tum and Teav sleep together and reveal their love to the King who compassionately releases Teav from the marriage agreement between Teav

and the King. But Teav's mother and Archoun renew the original agreement. This grossly displeases the king, who rallies a massive army and descends upon Archoun. To demonstrate the King's absolute power and authority he "... commands that Archoun's family and relatives seven generations removed be buried up to their necks in the ground and then have their heads raked off by an iron plough and harrow. In addition, all the members of Archoun's political faction are to be boiled alive and the residents of the district forbidden to leave the area". This story illustrates a moral code of revenge - returning malicious actions back to the one who caused suffering or humiliation (Hinton, 1998).

Revenge restores the honour, face, social standing, superiority, power, and respect sought after "because Cambodians are strongly motivated to want to be 'higher than' others, they will strive to defeat – and thus rise above – their adversary by doing something even worse to them" (Hinton, 1998:357). Hinton claims this may be modelled from early childhood. Parents who separate children in fights will not make them say sorry, which would cause loss of face for the child and parent. Over time children 'do not learn how to forget their anger' and begin holding grudges. In addition, the severity of revenge is not just about returning honour to oneself, but limiting the possibility of counter revenge, knowing that the person, if able, will seek revenge at a later date. If the other person is able to retaliate then one is open to the possibility of future humiliation and death.

Those 'on top' of Cambodian society are there as much from their honourableness and political prowess as their ability to demonstrate that their revenge is far superior to any others' and attempts to defeat them will unleash the worst of their capabilities such as : assassinations, humiliation, blocking out of deals, even destroying entire family lines

(Hinton, 1998). Therefore others are afraid to challenge their power. Power is defined not by wealth or social standing but by the capacity to enact revenge beyond all others.

Whether fighting for land, domination of resources, or political and military victory, the Warrior has been part of the Khmer heritage for millennia providing an archetypal image of strength, invincibility, courage and honour. It's dark side desires to maintain the *status quo*, is aggressive, demands submission, resorts to power plays and toughness, promotes superstition and stereotypes, and is destructive and cynical (Bit, 1991).

The Warrior archetype is often observed in leadership in Cambodia whether at the elite political and business echelons, or in smaller community organisations, local pagoda's and Christian churches. This archetype perpetuates a model of sole leadership who maintains position, authority and power by controlling (limiting) the flow of information through the organisation, and by demanding complete obedience. Concepts of partnership, democracy, collaboration, reconciliation, empowerment are foreign to the Warrior, thus power sharing arrangements are hard to find, and those that do exist highlight the predominance of the Warrior model.

The Judge Rabbit character can be found in many books of traditional Cambodian stories, and are collected from a wide variety of oral sources. Judge Rabbit is a trickster figure who is clever, skilful and witty, popular with the public, and analogous to the wily fox (Chor, 2004:1). As a trickster, Judge Rabbit is full of contradictions. Judge rabbit is “good and bad, clever and stupid ... ” and who “helps man only incidentally by advancing his own interests” (p.16). On his good side Judge Rabbit is portrayed as judge, benefactor, saviour,

advisor, mediator, intervening between animals and men or both, to save a victim or the right person's life (p.31). Importantly, Judge Rabbit is seen to provide real justice, because he is not tempted by bribery or flattery and is able to outwit and ridicule those who are.

“The most crucial element of Judge Rabbit stories is the development of a conflict between characters and then its resolution. Conflicts of adultery, revenge, various complaints and differences on opinion, and problems with wealth” (pp. 6-7). Chor (2004) claims that the authors of these stories try to resolve the conflicts nonviolently, but that is clearly not the case with many 'resolutions' involving the violent death of the losing party (Pp. 74-75).

Cambodian leadership displays characteristics of the Judge Rabbit archetype. A leader is one who outwits others, overcoming any problematic situation; one who can change one's shape or form (alliances or goals) to suit circumstances; one who deceives and causes disruption amongst his/her enemies and one who is able to distort reality in order to deflect attacks by others. It is these very characteristics that make a judge rabbit-type leader attractive for others to seek his or her counsel.

The Judge Rabbit figure is not all-compassionate or benign. Quite often a just 'resolution' comes about by the violent death of the party found to be in the wrong. This violence is justified on the basis that the character brought it upon his or her self. In the story of the Hermit and the Tiger the tiger dies a second (and final) time through his own stupidity and pig-pigheadedness.

Even as a good character, Judge Rabbit displays characteristics similar to that of

authoritarianism. Revenge is clearly within his moral sphere of action. While Judge Rabbit works for the good of the poor against the greedy rich, in many stories Judge Rabbit presents behaviour that reinforces domination and perpetuates the Myth of Redemptive Violence.

Cambodian culture, like many, is full of stories and myths that entrench the Domination System paving the way for concrete violent behaviour and action. This next section analyses the presence of violent domination in Cambodia's economic sphere as it relates to land and investment and its effects on local communities.

2.1.3 The Economics of Civil Conflict

The Domination System, then, is embodied in Cambodia in the forms of (but not limited to) land encroachment, forced evictions, illegal granting of land concessions, blocking of access to land titles, lack of justice for wronged and poor parties, and even use of fatal force to protect commercial interests of acquiring land.

Land, as a primary commodity, helps explain the prevalence of violent exploitation. According to Collier (1999), primary commodities (such as diamonds and precious stones, opium, timber and oil) are good predictors of civil conflict as they are easily looted through opportunistic business practices. Cambodia has several valuable primary commodities: rice cultivation, gold and other minerals, oil, rubies and land². Land, and the opportunities land present (i.e. speculation (Levy & Scott-Clark, 2008), agro-business and mining (Global Witness, 2007 & 2009)), represents Cambodia's greatest natural resource, and are already

² I include land here because it is a vulnerable primary commodity. The decades of war and policies of the Khmer Rouge mean that written records of private ownership are scarce, leaving the door open for powerful parties to acquire land, especially from poor communities. Its valuable because of high levels of rural and urban investment, by both local and international interests, and while land was relatively cheap, the rate of investment has driven prices upwards.

prey to opportunistic business practices (CHRAC, 2005).

Other relevant predictors of civil conflict include: large numbers of young men and low levels of education, which are present in Cambodia. Repression, especially in pseudo-democracies (of which Cambodia may be classified as one) affects conflict (Regan & Henderson, 2002). However, Cambodia's high level of centralised power (Global Witness, 2007) may explain why, despite the presence of civil conflict predictors, Cambodia is experiencing a stable negative peace.

In places of civil conflict opportunistic business practices thrive (Collier, 1999). In Cambodia private companies acquire land titles and concessions through questionable means, such as bribery, intimidation or close relationships at high levels (CHRAC, 2005; Global Witness 2007 & 2009). Extortion and bribery limits policing for the poor and most vulnerable, and the legal system serves the highest bidder. When poor communities challenge the legality of land acquisition by a large company there is little hope of justice (CHRAC 2005, Licadho 2005b, 2006, 2007a, 2007b, Licadho and Licadho Canada, 2008). Thirdly, monopolistic trade squeezes out competition. Those who control the primary commodity market resort to ever more violent methods to maintain dominance.

Opportunistic business utilises three major strategies: 1. gaining international support (or at the least, building an environment where there is no direct international interference), 2. building a satisfying propaganda by labelling opponents as illegitimate, and 3. recruit an army on the cheap. The cheaper the work force, the larger the potential army (Collier, 1999). All these strategies were employed against Dey Krahom (DK) by 7NG (Yun & Quinn, 2007,

Licadho Canada, 2007 and Poynton, 2007) over the past four years until it's violent eviction on January 24, 2009, and continues to this day in the relocation site in Damnak Trayong as 7NG company workers spy and intimidate the newly displaced families.

The language of grievance is used on a regular basis to support the propaganda of company and government officials involved in land grabbing. Groups and individuals that stand up against them are quickly labelled as anarchists, illegal squatters, renters, disturbers of the peace, and opportunists. If a group retaliates with force (such as throwing plastic bags filled with water or human excrement) the government (and media) highlights their violence thereby excusing intimidation tactics, extortion and the use of overwhelming force - batons, electric batons, excavators, razor wire, imprisonment, criminal charges, semi-automatic assault rifles, riot police in large numbers hiring cheap day labourers as eviction crews who are often from previously evicted communities, filled with angst and provided with economic incentives they are otherwise unable to guarantee themselves (Kay, 2007, Licadho 2007a, 2006, 2005b).

For poor and unconnected communities violence is a tempting defence but will produce no lasting fruit or change. Any use of violence will be used as evidence of their illegitimacy to claim justice. Therefore, as stated earlier, their only viable response is: do nothing or resist nonviolently.

Collier (1999) advocates that if *"the international community can change the economic incentives for conflict, it can substantially reduce their incidence" (p. 11) and "effective policy should reduce ... the economic power of the groups which tend to gain from*

the continuation of social disorder." (p. 14). However, the international community in Cambodia has made it clear by its silence that such action is not in their interest thus opening themselves to the criticism that they benefit from the 'rebel' activities that go on (Poynton, 2007) and that they are part of the same Domination System as Cambodia's leaders. Rahman (2004) argues that international development is simply a guise, couched in humanitarian language, for rich countries to buy economic rights to cheap natural and human resources from poor countries. If this is so, the international community will be reluctant to change the current system as it benefits them just like rebels and corrupt government officials, demanding a strength of will from the international community that has yet to be seen.

These factors indicate that there are significant numbers of predictors of future civil conflict present in Cambodia. The highly centralised power structures currently mitigate the potentially explosive latent conflicts. If those power structures fail violent conflict is likely to erupt. Collier (1999) suggests that a peaceful and realistic alternative to violent conflict will "depend on those groups which benefit from peace being more influential than those which gain by continuing the war" (Collier, 1999:2). Finding nonviolent solutions is not just for those with land conflict but an imperative for all to prevent Cambodia from descending into another wave of deadly war. So while active nonviolence poses a threat to the centralised power of current leaders civil conflict poses a threat to the entire country. Actualising the Partnership System is vital to preventing open violent conflict in Cambodia.

2.1.4 War as a Network Enterprise

The Domination System is under-girded by myths and stories embodied in institutions, social and governmental structures, and in opportunistic business practice. The concept of the

network enterprise helps us see that the actors involved cross all section of Cambodian society, shifting the focus of conflict from between levels of society (e.g. class warfare, or the poor versus the rich) to one between complete hierarchies of “elite/non-elite, rich/poor and male/female.” A network enterprise, say, of illegal logging not only comprises the complicity and engagement of the elite, but also employs the poor and requires the support of the middle-level bureaucratic players. In the case of land-grabbing and other forms of land-based conflict in Cambodia effective strategies must address the potential impact on subsidiary economies, migrant labourers, contractors, local and district officials – all who are innocent of the crime of choice but who are seeking a day's wage for their families and leverage for economic advancement and find themselves warring against people with whom they have no particular grievance (Duffield, 2002).

These preceding sections reviewed and analysed theories of Domination, demonstrating how they are embodied in the Cambodian context. The following sections will analyse theories of conflict, power and nonviolent social change as a response to the Domination System and it's outworking in Cambodia, forming the basis of the resultant research actions.

2.2 The Partnership System - Conflict, Power and Nonviolent Change

This chapter attempts to describe the perspective of the Partnership System, particularly it's values, strategies and tactics used to respond and transform the Domination System. This chapter begins with a discussion on conflict transformation and power, then moves to consider several theories of change going more in depth in theories of nonviolent change. Finally, this chapter will defend the thesis that outsiders can occupy valid social space to engage in nonviolent activism, particularly as “witnesses” to situations of violent

conflict³. Witnessing has a range of roles to be played beyond observation and presence, and includes external witnessing, what is often called advocacy and awareness. This external space involves witnessing to potential outside supporters (organisational constituencies, donors, other international NGO's, embassies, private citizens, etc) as well as to the internal institutions that exercise power over the conflict system. Witnesses also create safe space for communities, for rest, relaxation and renewed planning, as well as offering insights and possibilities not seen by those inside the conflict.

2.2.1 Conflict Transformation

Conflict Transformation theory emphasises the commonality and centrality of conflict in human social life and the positive opportunities conflict offers these relationships for adaptation to new information and changing circumstances and needs. Rather than a “monotonously flat topography of sameness [where] our relationships would be woefully superficial” (Lederach, 2003) conflict provides a 'seascape' of relational variety, of constantly shifting waves and troughs, that cannot be truly understood in isolation from each other. Conflict is not a problem to be solved or avoided, but an opportunity for individual and social transformation. This 'partnership model' view of conflict contrasts sharply with the Domination System's desire to control under the banner of harmony.

Conflict transformation “emphasises the importance of building right relationships and social structures through a radical respect for human rights and life. It advocates nonviolence as a way of life and work,” (Lederach, 2003:4) and is a useful starting point for the nonviolent activist in understanding not only how to deal with violent conflict but also

³ Violence in all its forms – physical / direct violence, and structural / indirect violence

seeing the opportunities inherent in any conflict, violent or otherwise, to build a collaborative mindset as a foundation of the Partnership System.

A difficulty that exists in the peacebuilding community is the lack of consistency and definition of conflict transformation and peacebuilding. Additionally, where does the field of active nonviolence sit? This paper takes to view that conflict transformation and active nonviolence are sub-sets of the peacebuilding field of study. Peacebuilding, then is any action or strategy aimed at creating peace and working against war and violence. This definition of peace includes the double definition of positive and negative peace. Negative peace being the absence of war and overt physical violence, as in a cease-fire. However, at the moment of cease-fire there continues to exist many other forms of violence such as structural injustice and domestic violence. Positive peace, then, is the ability of an individual or community to achieve their human rights, to resolve conflicts peaceably, to participate meaningfully in decisions that affect them and access to justice. Methods for achieving peace may include: negotiations, boycotts, dialogue, peacekeeping missions, military intervention, humanitarian aid, and development assistance.

Conflict transformation and active nonviolence, then, are subsets of the larger field of peacebuilding. Again, there are many similarities. Both distinguish themselves as nonviolent, in that they seek peace through peaceful means. Active nonviolence however, seeks to make use of interventions of mass social power (Gandhi, 1987, Sharp, 2002) whereas the conflict transformation approach will make use of a variety of levels of influence. It could be argued that active nonviolence is a further subset of the conflict transformation. However, no clear definition is possible from the literature.

Change, like conflict, is ever-present and unless forced to, individuals and societies avoid acting and reflecting on it. Yet understanding change is vital for responding well to conflict and adapting to new environments or from transforming say, a Domination to a Partnership paradigm. Writers from biology, quantum physics and business management provide a variety of metaphors and schemata for understanding the nature of change. The metamorphosis of a caterpillar illustrates the process and content of change. The butterfly is not simply a mature caterpillar but something completely different fashioned out of the raw material of the original caterpillar. The change process makes use of the caterpillar's cellular structure, breaking down what was, in order to create what will be: all the parts of the old are reconstructed into the new – nothing is lost, all is required for the change to take place. Change is not just inevitable, some ordeal to survive through, but a tool for creating a new reality more adaptable and resilient than the old one (London, 1996 and Curle, 1999). In nonviolent (conflict) transformation the point is not the destruction (Curle, p. 31) but transformation of the old system into the new. This is referred to as a dissipative system – the old system is dissipated to become the building blocks of something different and more adaptive.

Change can be both reactionary and innovative. Reactionary change involves solidifying 'tried and tested' ways of doing things, repressing new alternatives, and seeing these changes as the source of social stress. On the other hand, societies that are innovative attempt to help the whole of society 'catch up' to the emerging cultural processes. Change enables adaptive responses to cultural stress: a conflict between new ideas, technologies and attitudes surfacing and gaining traction which conflict with old ways of living (London, 1996

and Curle, 1999). For example, introducing nonviolent resistance in contexts that place a high value for harmony and the absence of obvious conflict.

Planning for change ensures enough momentum and commitment for it to become the new *status quo*. Clear identification of a new reality that is attainable for all allows for communication of this vision “beginning with those most affected by the stresses at the root of the problem” (London, 1996:4). The development of a clear plan and the opportunity for flexibility allows for more people and groups to buy in to the vision. Finally, lasting cultural transformation is made possible when major sections of the culture/society begin implementing the change and normalise the changes into a new '*status quo*' (London, 1996).

The difficulty of promoting innovative social change is that “it is only after the failure of a reactionary revitalisation attempt that a culture is willing to risk fundamental change” (London, 1996:4). In recovery groups such as Alcoholics Anonymous participants talk of 'finding rock bottom', the place where one has tried every means to ignore the root problems that drives one to addiction or some other maladaptive behaviour. It may not be until one has tried every means possible, and failed, that the individual is willing to try the innovative approach. Groups and societies may need to 'find rock bottom' before an innovative attempt at change can be made. One might have thought the Khmer Rouge horror was such a rock bottom experience, and while change occurred, and resulted in a far more adaptive system, it has benefited a few while the majority are still waiting for tangible results. This continued experience of inequality is of concern as it created space for the Khmer Rouge regime to gather recruits from all over the country.

Change is complex and requires change-agents to look at the whole rather than individual parts, to see patterns and cycles instead of linearity, relationships instead of units, and to see individuals as active (intentional and volitional) participants rather than passive or reactive entities (London, 1996). Anderson (2004) suggests six criteria of effective peace work (generating positive social change): 1. addressing main factors creating the conflict; 2. reforming institutions and structures; 3. encouraging local peace initiatives; 4. building capacity to resist violence and the use of violence; 5. increasing real and felt security of people, and 6. improving relations between conflicting groups (pp.17-18).

Reinforcing London's insight for effective change is the concept of positive deviance. "Positive deviant behaviour is an uncommon practice that confers advantage to the people who practise it compared with the rest of the community...affordable, acceptable, and sustainable because they are already practised by at risk people, they do not conflict with local culture, and they work" (Marsh, Schroeder, Dearden, Sternin & Sternin, 2004). While primarily developed within the health field and looking at differences within a specific local community, this same concept can be applied at a larger level, say, within a national situation, and see which communities are responding more effectively than others, for example, to land-based conflict. Some individuals are likely to be key to those approaches, but also community qualities will also be present. For example, a possible "positive deviance" for a community-at-large will be its strength of internal solidarity. The greater the level of solidarity within a community, the more effective its resistance to external threats, such as actors attempting to undermine community leadership, threat-making, buying out individuals one at a time at cheaper than market rates, and incarceration. A recent example of effective solidarity comes from a community in Snuol district, Kratie province where the community

representative was summoned to the provincial court house. To prevent his arrest the entire community of around three-hundred villagers turned up *en masse*, surrounding the community representative and refusing to hand him over to the authorities. Positive deviance will look for community-wide characteristics that enhance qualities conducive to nonviolent action. These characteristics may look like:

- high internal community solidarity (e.g. not selling land without consulting with the entire community first, setting and communicating community rules around the engagement with companies and government representatives)
- a capacity, and history, of learning from their own experiences and the experiences of others (e.g. how they or other communities have been tricked in the past)
- an ability, or access to, effective and useful information (e.g. legal information on the Land Law, human rights, freedom of expression, etc.)
- a willingness to follow and support community leadership / decisions in difficult times, even to the point of facing court and going to prison.

The importance of positive deviance will be elaborated on in the following sections, particularly as a way to build a body of nonviolent stories to create a mythology of the Partnership System with the energy to dissipate the mythology generated by the Domination System. In summary, change is constant, adaptive, complex and possible, utilising available power resources. It is constant because conflict arises from interpersonal interaction creating dissonance between seemingly incompatible goals and needs. Change is an adaptive response to conflict in refining relationships in order for the multiplicity of needs to be successfully met by all involved. Change is complex because the source of conflict is never found in one

isolated factor, but existing in a 'sea' of relationships, emotions, experiences, fears, hopes and challenges. Change is possible in that it happens all the time, however, planned change requires forethought, attention, strategy, hope in the goodness of humanity and a willingness to throw out old assumptions about 'the way things are meant to be'. These reflections on change are useful for planning nonviolent responses to land-based conflict in Cambodia as they highlight areas of potential strength as well as undermining the Domination System's tactics that centre power, wealth and control within a few, and lock out the most vulnerable and directly affected.

2.2.2 Nonviolent Social Change

This section attempts an overview of nonviolent action promoting it as a viable option for social and political change, and will go on to analyse more fully its philosophical underpinnings, theories of power and change and respond to several common criticisms of nonviolence. It then looks at nonviolent strategy and existing and emerging Cambodian nonviolent expressions.

Human history is punctuated by the presence and absence of violence (Eisler, 1995 and Wink, 2003). Archaeologists argue there was a time when nonviolent society was the norm, but that eventually violent societies emerged over scarce resources and all but wiped out the more ancient nonviolent societies. Even so, nonviolent action and social change has been used as a strategic and tactical response to violence and oppression in many situations and for thousands of years. Walter Wink points to the story of the Hebrew midwives in Exodus (Ex 1:15-19) who disobeyed the direct order to strangle any male children born to Hebrews as the first recorded event of civil disobedience using nonviolent methods to save

the lives of innocent children (Wink, 2003). Later, the Buddha lives a life renouncing wealth and violence, searching for a way to live with compassion for all living beings. And Jesus used active nonviolent strategies to highlight the violence of Roman occupation and the oppression caused by the religious hierarchy (Wink, 2002, Kraybill, 1978). Socrates lived a life of active engagement with his society, challenging people to think differently. Even when forced to commit suicide he did not resist, fight back or flee his doom (Gandhi, 1928). In South Africa and English-ruled India Mohandas K. Gandhi led movements of nonviolent non-cooperation against rulers who economically and politically discriminated against blacks in South Africa and native Indians in India. Martin Luther King and others led black Americans to nonviolently protest their lack of political power. Daw Aung San Suu Kyi continues to nonviolently battle the ruling junta of Burma. These are but a few of many highlights in the history of nonviolence.

During the Nineteenth century, many writers such as Tolstoy (1894) and Thoreau (1849) professed pacifism and non-participation in governmental affairs that developed nonviolent practice and philosophy. It was not until the Indian Independence movement, led by the Mahatma Gandhi, that active nonviolence was tried and tested, and found to be effective, not just on small local scales, but on an international scale to achieve independence from England. The international solidarity movements also utilise nonviolent means for social change: the early women's movement (McMillen, 2008), preceded by the anti-slavery movement. Active nonviolence is now used as a matter of course by labour unions, national and international human rights organisations (eg, Peace Brigades International, International Peace Force, Christian Peacemaker Teams, Licadho (Cambodia) and nonviolent strategies and tactics have been operationalised by many others.

Active nonviolence has two strands delineated as 'principled' and 'pragmatic' (Dudouet, 2008). One pursues nonviolence from inner spiritual, ethical or philosophical convictions to refrain from any kind of violence (direct or structural) towards another living being, and has been championed and popularised by well-known figures such as Gandhi and Martin Luther King, Jr., following in the traditions of the civil disobedience philosophical movement of Tolstoy (1894), Thoreau (1849) and others. The pragmatic strand focuses on nonviolence as an effective body of tools to be used in times of asymmetric power imbalances and where violent responses are impractical or impossible. This form of nonviolence has been particularly developed by Gene Sharp, and utilised by groups such as Peace Brigades International and in national nonviolent change movements such as in the Phillipines and Serbia. While nonviolence may be divided into these strands there remains much cross-over between the two. Gandhi utilised strategic campaigns of economic non-cooperation, while 'strategists' may also have a strong set of principles. The separation can be seen by the use of vocabulary and what is defined as the goal. For 'principalists' their goal is usually the 'conversion' of the oppressor to their viewpoint. For the 'strategists' their goal is coercive regime change. Proponents of nonviolent resistance suggest that it is better suited to situations of power asymmetries where one side is unlikely to see any benefit or need to enter into mediation or negotiation with a small or powerless section of the population. Therefore, the bread-and-butter tools of conflict transformation, such as mediation and conflict mitigation, are not as useful. The purpose of nonviolent resistance is to create (provoke) a context where, at least mediation if not complete regime change, is politically (or otherwise) expedient to the powerful, even if they are not 'converted' to a position of nonviolence and justice themselves.

There are several objections to active nonviolence, the three main ones being: 1) it's too passive, 2) it's too political, and 3) it's ineffective, un-patriotic⁴, illegal and violent. (Ruckus Society, 2003). The first objection is made by those who see the need to fight fire (violence) with fire. How does inaction and the unwillingness to inflict harm on an opponent create change? The examples given above show just a small, and well known, array of individuals and groups who have used active nonviolence against violence. It is evidenced that nonviolence can be effective against violence in many different situations. This objection may also be confusing two different philosophical viewpoints. Pacifism is a specific viewpoint and political stance that refuses to actively participate in any violent acts, as well as refusing to engage in any resistance of others'. Active nonviolence is steeped in resistance language and metaphor and is distinctly different from pacifism which will not oppose an violent opponent (Sharp, 1973). The second objection is often made by those with vested interests in the economic and political *status quo*. Active nonviolence states as it's goals to resistance and bring change to any individual, group, state or state mechanism (policy, arm of government, armed forces, etc) that is inherently and overtly violent. Active nonviolence takes a broad view of violence, meaning it understands the need to challenge and resist both direct (physical) violence, and indirect (structural) violence. For those directly benefiting from a violent system it is easy to see why they are against such 'political' methods as nonviolence. Nonviolence is not party-political, but political in the sense of empowering individuals (the polity) to engage in all decisions that effect them. For those who are not directly causing violence, but who are benefiting from the system at-large (even if they disapprove of the violent system) may be resistant to such overwhelming change as their

⁴ Usually specified, such as 'un-American', 'un-Australian' or other country, as well as making the most dire accusations against nonviolent adherents (either passive or active) that they are 'against our troops'.

livelihood and lifestyles may be targeted by nonviolence actors (e.g. the environmental movement's attempts to change people's behaviour around the emissions of greenhouse gases). The third objection stems from a deep commitment to the *status quo* and a belief that anyone upsetting the *status quo* is in fact acting violently. This holds true in Cambodia, a country which places a high social value on harmony in social relationships as well as outward appearances of good relations between people and groups. Even voicing criticism against another, especially an authority figure, is deemed inappropriate, if not violent in and of itself⁵.

The following section will review Sharp's (2002) theory of nonviolent of social change. Behind active nonviolence is an understanding of power that power is something given, not imbued in, a person, position, structure or system. This power (to influence and make decisions on behalf of others and is categorised into: authority, human resources, skills and knowledge, intangible factors like psychology and ideology, material resources, and sanctions) is given by the mass of the population to those in formal positions and may be done so consciously or unconsciously (Sharp, 2002). Nonviolent resistance seeks to make use of so-called “popular power” by activating the population into exerting it's power by blocking government (military or private company) action and forcing the two (or more) parties into negotiation, usually demanding a certain law or policy be implemented. Or further, the entire power base of a given government or structure is undermined and a new system is developed in the ashes of the old.

In general, populations cede their power to governments. Democracy tends to assume

⁵ I recently had a story related to me by a colleague of a provincial authority who was adamant that nonviolent land activists were acting violently, simply by discussing nonviolent methods of responding to their land problems.

a benign nature to government, that it governs for the good of the people. Yet experience shows that democracy does not ensure good governance and all that is assumed to come with it (freedom of speech, movement, religion, etc). Other forms of government (dictatorship, Socialism, Communism, Marxism, etc) also do not guarantee human rights, but are no less responsive to the use of popular power.

Nonviolent resistance is effective on the premise that withdrawing and/or blocking local and international legitimacy and other forms of power (see above) from governing bodies will cause the internal structure to weaken or completely collapse by starving an oppressor of power resources and the effectiveness to maintain power and control. This allows for new social arrangements to be implemented. Sharp (p.14) argues that nonviolent campaigns can quickly (days, weeks or months) achieve their objectives and can be far more efficient than protracted violent warfare which may takes months and years.

“The conclusion is then clear: despite the appearances of strength, all dictatorships have weaknesses, internal inefficiencies, personal rivalries, institutional inefficiencies, and conflicts between organizations and departments. These weaknesses, over time, tend to make the regime less effective and more vulnerable to changing conditions and deliberate resistance.” (Sharp, 2002:23)

Sharp continues to argue that violent resistance strikes at the strength of any government or regime, whereas nonviolent resistance aims at the Achilles heel of the government. Resistance movements refuse to fight on the terms of the violent power, choosing their own battleground. Importantly, “Nonviolent discipline is a key to success and must be maintained despite provocations and brutalities by the dictators and their agents” (Sharp 2002:28). This reinforces Anderson's (2004) third criteria of effectiveness, of

strengthening communities' abilities to resist violence and provocation to violence (Anderson, 2004). According to Sharp, “the historical record indicates that while casualties in dead and wounded must be expected in political defiance, they will be far fewer than the casualties in military warfare. Furthermore, this type of struggle does not contribute to the endless cycle of killing and brutality. As stated earlier, Cambodia faces not only land-based conflict, but the potential for violent civil conflict (Collier, 1999). Nonviolent resistance is clearly a preferred option than any violent one, and has greater potential to create more adaptive systems for a stable peace.

In summary, active nonviolence tactics and strategies, utilise counter-power: “the capacity of a social actor to resist and challenge power relations that are institutionalised” (Castells, 2007:239), and unbalance asymmetrical power systems where one group has far more power over another. Active nonviolent tactics seeks to exploit weaknesses in the side of the powerful so that greater equality of power is gained, thereby giving the “weaker” party bargaining power, or by completely destabilising the power structure of the oppressor.

2.2.3 Cambodian Expressions of Nonviolent Response to Land-based Conflict.

Active Nonviolence is in its infancy in Cambodia. Where is it practised it offers a beacon of light and hope to communities throughout the Kingdom attempting to address direct and structural violence. At times individuals stand out as examples for people to follow (Ezer, 2005) such as Maha Ghosananda who instituted the Dhammayietra (peace walk) as a symbolic statement that violence would not rule Cambodia (Weiner, 2007 and Nuch, 2009). In addition, a variety of NGOs, both local and international promote nonviolence to solve conflicts in communities, such as Khmer Ahimsa. A growing source of nonviolent response

comes from communities, both rural and urban, who feel they have no choice but to respond to developers encroaching on their lands, or outright stealing them. Without an effective justice system or police protection, they utilise active nonviolent techniques to support their claims. In a few communities, they have begun using creative means to tell their stories, helping to build up a body of nonviolent 'myths' from the Cambodian context.

There is a growing body of evidence of nonviolent narratives, people and communities working for peace by peaceful means – even if it means to suffer for it. In the beginning I was looking for a stand-out figure who could “lead Cambodia to salvation”, but I have long-since put that thought to bed. There will be people who act as focal points, but nothing more. Critics of the American Civil Rights movement contend that historians of the movement have focused too much on Martin Luther King Jr. and not enough on the many community organisers and participants who made the mass-rallies and civil disobedience possible (Douglass, 2000). What this looks like in Cambodia is communities, community leaders and representatives, networks, local and international NGO's (broader than the human rights organisations), faith-based groups and youth groups are beginning to talk about peace and justice, to think through the implications of an eviction, say, for a community and empathise with the situation. The next response is usually, “that's wrong! What can I do to help?”. Communities and NGOs are beginning to gather and create stories (not simply static documents for legal evidence) that can be used for education, dissemination, reflection, coaching and training, empowerment, and advocacy. Some examples of these are:

- “The Messengers” band producing music and video CDs addressing issues of land grabbing and privatisation in Cambodia. Their method, supported by Womyn's Agenda for Change (WAC), is to spend time in an affected community and listen to

their stories. The lyrics reflect these interviews, and often contain direct quotations.

- “Ratanakirri Story” was completely produced by villagers in Ratanakirri province. They tell their story of land grabbing through role plays.
- “Don't Take My Land” uses role plays to teach what may happen in a land-grab situation and what can be done about it. Produced by Samakhum Theang Thnaot.
- In the course of it's four-year, three-way conflict between community, company and community representatives (who illegally sold the land to the company) former DK residents have many stories to tell, and have done so to a variety of audiences, from the Prophetic Imagination Tour of Phnom Penh to international donors to other communities. Community members have also written and recorded their own songs, and are currently producing music videos using footage they have recorded themselves using cameras donated by Witness and with support from Licadho-Canada and Platapus.
- A community in Snuol, Kratie Province, prevented bulldozers from clearing their land by gathering the whole community to stand in front of the machines. This action forced a negotiation between the community and developer. The developer agreed to stop clearing their land.
- Kratie communities use stories in meetings as a way to promote their indigenous culture. They have also accompanied their community representative to court to prevent intimidation and incarceration.
- A growing list of communities (Kampot, Siem Reap, Ratanakirri, Kompong Som, Koh Kong, Phnom Penh) responding nonviolently to land threats emphasise that

communities are not passive, nor willing to lose their land without seeking all possible courses of action. In several instances, particularly in Kampot, communities have secured their land rights.

- Licadho Canada and Platapus Productions - although mainly focusing on the violent abuse of rights than nonviolent responses, have produced a number of videos now available on the Internet (www.licadho-canada.org) highlighting forced evictions in Cambodia.
- The annual Dhammayietra, or peace walk, began under the leadership of Cambodian Buddhist monk Maha Ghosananda and continues annually as a symbol of peace.

2.2.4 Outsiders as Nonviolent Actors

Outsiders add value in a partnership with local communities when they “support internal forces working for peace” (Anderson, 2004). This happens when outsiders, 1. lobby, advocate, and raise awareness; 2. apply influence and pressure; 3. leverage outside constituencies and make use of on-site presence, monitoring, and reporting; 4. provide comparative experiences and new ideas; 5. host safe spaces for dialogue, training, conferences, and joint work; and 6. mobilise resources. (Anderson & Olsen, 2003).

For nonviolence to become a viable response to land-based conflict in Cambodia several obstacles need to be overcome. There is a strong culture of violence, perpetuated by cultural stories and myths such as the rabbit trickster, the Warrior archetype, authoritarianism and Cambodian forms of the Myth of Redemptive Violence. As land prices continue to soar local and foreign investors look towards Cambodia as a favourable investment opportunity,

poor land-owners will continue to be targeted for eviction and their lands for encroachment. The nonviolent activist must be a careful student of cultural change processes and power dynamics choosing cultural stories appropriate for a vision of openness, love, forgiveness and other core values of nonviolence. In short, they seek a new kind of leadership, one that gives, sacrifices, encourages, hopes, and most of all, loves. There are existing models of nonviolent responses to land-based conflict in Cambodia which can serve as models for future activists to come. Further analysis of the specific use of violent tactics in land-based conflict is required to enable more informed nonviolent responses, as well as identification of key nonviolent cultural stories that will help build an alternative archetype for responding to conflict and community leadership. These nonviolent narratives are likely to come from the lived experiences of those resisting the encroachment and loss of their lands, and should be used as source material for documentation, reflection, strategy, learning, advocacy, encouragement, remembering and building hope of a new reality of peace by peaceful means, including the presence of justice for all.

Secondly, Cambodia displays several key predicting factors for civil conflict for example, the presence of natural resources, high percentage of male youth, low education attainment and is independently rated as having a high risk of civil unrest (Economist Intelligence Unit, 2009). Land conflict aside, the development of nonviolent mythology, symbols, stories as well as philosophies, strategies and actors in Cambodia is vital to ensure an ongoing peaceful future of equality, participation, freedom and justice.

The thesis of this paper is that outsiders can occupy valid social space to engage in nonviolent activism, particularly as “witnesses” to situations of violent conflict⁶. Also,

⁶ Violence in all its forms – physical / direct violence, and structural / indirect violence

witnessing has a range of roles to be played beyond observation and presence, and includes external witnessing, what is often called advocacy and awareness. This external space involves witnessing to potential outside supporters (organisational constituencies, donors, other international NGO's, embassies, private citizens, etc) as well as to the internal institutions that exercise power over the conflict system. Witnesses also create safe space for communities, for rest, relaxation and renewed planning, as well as offering insights and possibilities not seen by those inside the conflict.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Work goal and purpose:

InnerCHANGE is a faith-based community without tightly defined job descriptions. My work role relevant to this research was to assist a network of expatriate actors from various groups, organisations and faith communities to respond to structural and direct violence using active nonviolence, with a specific focus on land-based conflict.

3.2 Research goal:

The inquiry that this research paper asks is “what are the most effective spaces for expatriates to engage in nonviolent responses to land-based conflict in Cambodia, promoting both structural change and reduced direct violence?”. A key element to the inquiry emerged as, “what violent stories exist in Cambodia that perpetuate the Domination System”, and, “how can nonviolent actors effectively build up a nonviolent mythology that promotes and mobilises nonviolent action?”. Therefore, this inquiry looks at two areas of effectiveness – space for nonviolent action (relationships, strategy and tactics), and nonviolent mythology (story, symbol and philosophy).

In more fully understanding the question of, “what are effective spaces for expatriates to engage in nonviolent responses to land-based conflict in Cambodia?” I began asking myself, “how do I promote and hinder effective nonviolent engagement,” knowing that mobilising engagement is not a given. Nonviolence evokes many negative responses, from “it's dangerous” to “it's ineffective” and I desired to be reflective on how my actions helped

or hindered engagement. Additionally, as an outsider, I wanted to reflect on my role and where I could best position myself in both mobilising expatriates as well as connecting with the DK community. How was I going to enable people's involvement, especially as my target group are not professional human rights workers or peace builders. Was I to be an activist, orchestrator or animator? By activist I mean someone working at the grass roots level, addressing the direct concerns of the DK community. As an orchestrator I mean someone who manages the resources available for an effective response. As an animator I mean someone who is able to engender internal strength and desires for practical action – both by expatriates as well as DK.

To reflect on the broader question of effective spaces for nonviolent action I asked myself, “what motivates actors to engage in nonviolent action?” and, “what addresses the fears of potential actors (such as violent reprisal or ineffectiveness). These questions are important in finding effective spaces for expatriates in Cambodia. They also address common questions and blockages to action.

To develop my theoretical understanding of nonviolence and effective spaces for expatriate engagement I asked myself, “what are the underpinnings of structural violence, such as land-based conflict?” as it is important to correctly analyse the conflict and ensure that the overall response is a direct response to the fundamental causes (Anderson, 2004, and Mitroff & Silvers, 2008). And finally, in order to address the cultural mythology of domination, as it appears in Cambodia, I asked myself, “What culturally relevant non-violent meta-narratives exist or can be developed?”.

3.3 Action plan.

Much of the work was done in collaboration with other expatriates from a variety of organisations and networks, and particularly in partnership with Licadho, a local human rights organisation, Licadho-Canada an INGO, and the DK community. I met (face-to-face or through email) with these work colleagues on a regular, sometimes daily, basis to maintain information flow and to organise the many events designed to enable nonviolent engagement. I actively participated in a range of nonviolent witnessing events throughout the duration of the project. Some events were initiated and carried out solely by myself, however, many were carried out in partnership with the above people and groups mentioned. These meetings and events contributed to many discussions and evaluations of “what next” to support the DK community. A number of events I participated in did not connect directly with DK, but were intended to continue exploring various spaces for nonviolent engagement. Finally, my research journal formed an integral part of my research, both taking notes and reflecting over them later on. The journal forms the backbone of the data collection and I use my recorded observations and reflections as the means to assess the theoretical perspective in light of my practical experiments in nonviolent engagement.

3.4 Methodology.

This project makes use of action-research methodology in which the researcher's focus is on the relationship between the researcher's action and processes that emerge following the action. Research projects follow a cyclical action-reflection process that includes active participation in the research environment and both reflective and reflexive practices. The reflection process is both external and internal to the researcher and s/he looks

at how the action influenced the research context (reflection), and also reflects on his/her own internal processing and how this both affects the research environment as well as that environment affecting the researcher (reflexion).

Action research is an emergent process. Research is not linear, but cyclical and each cycle of action and reflection builds on past cycles. Action research may involve quantitative methodologies, however, it is primarily subjective and qualitative. As such, clear causal attribution is not possible, but conclusions can be made on the contribution of the research action to changing relationships and processes in the research environment.

3.4.1 Target Groups

My research was focused on several target groups, who make up the sub-samples of the research project. The primary target group was the faith-based network Christians for Social Justice, of which I am a part. This primary group, it should be noted, is not of professional peacebuilders or human rights activists, but reflect a small segment of the expatriate community that have observed the growing number of communities threatened with eviction and desired to respond in a practical way that would make a tangible difference. Many of us have little formal training in nonviolent activism. The network meets monthly to discuss issues of social justice in Cambodia and to plan possible responses to these situations. At any meeting approximately five to fifteen people will be present, however, the email list has around sixty people receiving communications. The secondary target groups included: the residents of DK in Phnom Penh, and several other local Cambodian communities (both urban and rural communities) and community-based networks (eg the Cambodian Peacebuilding Network) who are directly affected by land-grabbing in Cambodia. At the time of the research there were less than one thousand residents remaining in DK. On the day of the

eviction there were 152 families.

3.4.2 Data Collection

Data collected was of a qualitative nature and included observations, interviews and interactive discussions, feedback from colleagues and DK residents, and video documentaries made by NGO's, the DK community, the Messengers band and nonviolence education groups such as A Force More Powerful. Data collection took place by keeping a research journal, entering recordings as they took place, or as soon after as was practically possible. On a few occasions there was a delay of a few days. In the case of the video documentaries I kept a growing library. The journal recordings were of actions that I directly observed or was involved in, as well as actions that the sub-sample groups undertook on their own. Furthermore, a variety of interactive discussions took place, either in person, via text message or email. Some of these interactive discussions were engendered through a process of informal questioning where I would send out a question on a topic to key colleagues to garner their thoughts and perspectives.

3.4.3 Data Analysis

I reviewed the recorded data during each cycle for further reflection and deeper evaluation of the questions being asked in the paragraphs above. These reflections, then, form the basis of my findings and conclusions.

3.4.4 Outline of Action Cycles

The research underwent three action cycles, the first two taking roughly three months each and the third five months. The first cycle began with the initial witnessing action on

December 11, 2007 and following weeks. The cycle also included the 'prophetic imagination tour of Phnom Penh', initial awareness raising and advocacy efforts, and an attempt at engaging with the 7NG Construction Company. The second cycle saw less direct engagement with the DK community and more actions of supporting a variety of nonviolent actors and actions from a range of communities and networks, including the Andong community, the Cambodian Peacebuilding Network and the Christians for Social Justice. A further action was the development of the Peace and Justice: Cambodia website. The third action cycle centred on the witnessing actions in the day preceding, and weeks following, the forced eviction of Dey Krahom. Each cycle consisted of the above mentioned actions (described in more depth in chapter five) and times of discussion, reflection and planning with colleagues and interaction with the Dey Krahom residents and other nonviolent actors.

3.4.4 Learnings and Findings

At the end of each cycle I reviewed my research journal and outlined key learnings and findings. From these I proposed recommendations for further action in the next cycle.

CHAPTER 4

A NARRATIVE ACCOUNT OF THE WORK CARRIED OUT

In this chapter I describe my work of creating space for “outsiders” to engage in nonviolent actions while supporting the DK community. The account begins with the decision to use protective accompaniment in support of DK. Further action stems from the first experience of witnessing to DK's resistance to 7NG, including a variety of attempts at advocacy-as-witnessing. The narrative ends with the community's eviction and subsequent attempts by DK to receive compensation from the company, and a discussion of the space witnesses can occupy, and where witnesses failed to occupy valid space.

4.1 Witness Alongside

The initial actions undertaken for the purposes of this research were to prevent or reduce the experience of direct violence by the DK community. The following narrative follows two key attempts to reduce direct violence which is referred to as 'witnessing alongside'.

4.1.1 Space for Protective Accompaniment.

In the beginning of 2007 I began a dialogue with Licadho, a local human rights organization, to find ways I could engage in social justice issues in Cambodia. In a subsequent meeting I mentioned the work of Peace Brigades International who engage foreign nationals (usually with an EU or US passport) in highly volatile situations in Central American and other countries. These volunteers work side-by-side individuals and

communities at risk of direct violent attacks by government or military groups because of their human rights activities. The presence of foreign nationals provides international protection because any threats, injury or death to that foreign national would create an uncomfortable diplomatic situation, thus lowering the likelihood of it ever happening (“Peace Brigades International”, n.d.). I suggested the use of this tactic in relation to current events in the DK community who were intimidated and harassed by 7NG, the company claiming ownership of the land of the villagers. This tactic has its roots in Sharp's (2002) theory of nonviolent power, that the presence of international observers is an implied threat of the international community watching the events and has the capacity to withdraw legitimacy and support, thus weakening the power base for oppressive behaviour. While the threat may be accurate, and many groups like PBI and Frontline Defenders suggest it is effective, the international community has been slow to react to the ongoing use of forced evictions as a means of paving the way for investment and development in Cambodia. The situation is beginning to change as more international bodies, the UN and EU being the most recent, vocalize their deep concern over forced evictions (Brady, 2009).

Following this discussion, Licadho and I recruited twelve volunteers⁷ to support DK and set up a meeting to brief them in the practice of witnessing at DK when needed, supporting the existing work of Licadho-Canada. This meeting involved discussing the history of the community's situation, the expected scenarios of attempted forced eviction or harassment of the villagers, as well as potential issues to be aware of – how to handle violent clashes between the two groups, how to handle our own fear, the different places people could observe from, clarifying that we were not asking people to stand between the two

⁷ these volunteers were not from human rights organisations

groups, nor try to intervene, but simply observe. We discussed also body language and what to do in an emergency (who to call to ask for extra support).

I was expecting fear to be expressed by the volunteers, but most were feeling no overwhelming emotions and presumably anyone with a high level of anxiety would not have volunteered in the first place. We outlined a telephone communication structure, and by the end of the meeting had a daily schedule of observers for the following three weeks. Even after the scheduled three weeks had ended observers continued to witness at the community. This schedule covered a vulnerable period when many human rights organisations' monitoring staff were on end-of-year leave, thus any violent events would be recorded.

In the first weeks following December 10, company workers lined up along the street

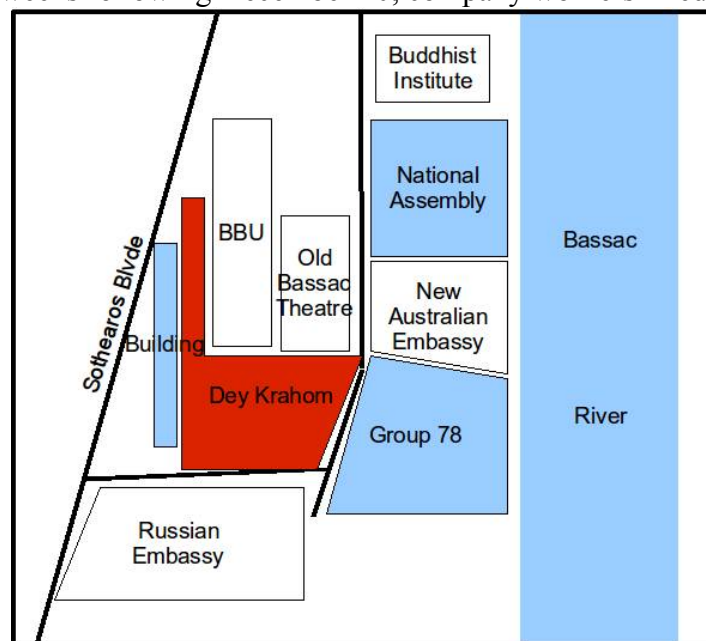


Figure 1. Dey Krahom and surrounding area

or gathered in groups to periodically approach the community and attempt to erect a fence around it. Whenever the workers came too close the community rallied together using a loud-speaker and attempted to repel the company workers. At first the community was able to do this nonviolently by lining up and holding hands, thus creating a visible barrier of their own

bodies, but also prevented themselves from doing anything violent because their hands were already doing something else. As the days progressed, however, frustration increased and many young people (particularly) threw objects (stones, bags filled with water, urine, filthy water, water laced with chillies, bottles) into the group of company workers. Fortunately the harder objects never seemed to hit their intended targets, though the plastic bags did.

Within two weeks of regular, daily witnessing from December 10 to January 10 the level of open and direct violence and intimidation had subsided significantly and by the end of February, 2008 had ceased. This action was supported by several other human rights groups such as Housing Rights Taskforce, Licadho-Canada, Bridges Across Borders, as well as private individuals. During that time we observed decreasing levels of overt intimidation of the community by the 7NG Construction Company.

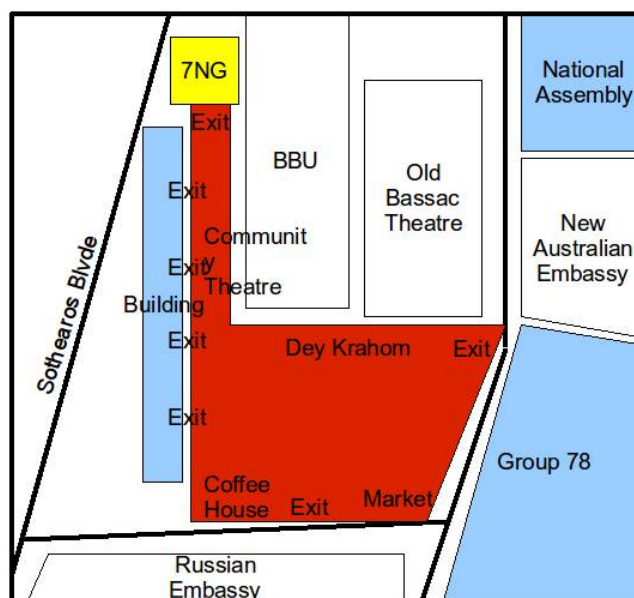


Figure 2. Dey Krahom community map

For most of the observers, my self included, we felt comfortable observing from either

behind the line of the community, or off to the side or perhaps on the other side of the road near the Russian Embassy (see Figure 1). However, there were times when the situation became tense, sometimes violent, that we all felt uncomfortable. These incidents lasted from a few minutes to several hours. I felt most uncomfortable when the community began using violence to retaliate to the company workers. Firstly, because I felt that approach would increase the level of violence on both sides. Secondly, it increased the likelihood the police would be involved to quell the violence. Thirdly, someone could well be injured. Few of us felt directly threatened. On one early occasion a witness joined the hand-holding line-up with the community. One company worker ran up to her and pretended to punch her. In a split second the community picked up anything at hand (they were next to the market so there was plenty of fish, fruit, etc – see Figure 2 below) and threw it at the worker, bringing him to the ground quickly and hitting him. This was a very early and timely lesson that our presence as observers is not neutral, that where we stand is noticed and had implications for DK. We were not seen as neutral parties, but as supporting the community. This was true, because in our minds the community has the least power in the situation, therefore we placed ourselves obviously to support them, but never attempted interposition by placing ourselves between the community and company workers to prevent a direct clash. Following this incident no witness joined the line-up again. Not only are observers easily spotted by their size, skin color, or dress, but by joining the line-up and placing ourselves in a position of risk we took the focus off our stated goal – reducing violence. The community was willing to protect us just as we were protecting them, but they were willing to do so violently. Instead of focusing on the issue of reducing violence we were potentially increasing it by joining the line-up.

A further result of the witnessing was to develop relational ties with the community,

our presence also gave them hope that they were not forgotten or ignored by the outside world. Our presence helped embolden their spirits, and gave them breathing space (usually at nights when observers slept in the community) to relax and not worry so much about potential confrontations with the company workers.

In the absence of confirming evidence (for example, interviewing the 7NG Construction company for their perspective) it is very difficult to directly link the actions of the witnesses to the inferred non-actions of the company workers. However, previous experience, and discussions with colleagues from human rights organisations indicate that the situation unfolded differently and less violently from previous similar situations. Hence, our presence can be said to contribute to reducing direct violence used by the company workers in it's form of open street clashes.

This story of engagement, being one of the first stories of nonviolent engagement in Cambodia for me, has become important to retell. I have heard other colleagues refer back to this time as a way of remembering a positive experience and motivating ourselves to continue our work, as well as to inform others of the situation and encourage their active participation at some level. Being the first story, it has taken on a somewhat larger-than-life dimension. Not being unfactual or exaggerated in details, but in meaningfulness. That short period of one month carries meaning for those involved. In addition, we not only remember and reflect on the events to learn from them, it gives us hope that people are willing to step in to the defense of others who are unlike each other in so many ways, building our positive view of human nature (by humanising the residents of DK). The reflective and meaning-building capacity of this story indicates that building nonviolent mythologies are desperately important, as I

suggest in chapter two, and quite achievable.

A weakness of this volunteer witness approach was that it worked well for the four weeks around the end of the year (2007/8) but the energy to sustain ongoing witnessing fell off afterwards. Fortunately, there was little need for observers for several months. However, the ability to call on observers when required – usually at inconvenient times with little notice, continues to be a struggle. To fully realise the potential of witnessing a core contingent of 'witnesses' need to commit to making that action a high priority. I found for myself, being called to witness with little notice, a few hours at best, demoralising and frustrating. I truly wanted to respond to the call but I had other pre-planned commitments (both work and family) that were difficult, if not impossible, to re-schedule. Furthermore, at times the information used to determine the need for observers could be suspect. What seemed like an urgent need for observers could quickly turn out to be nothing more than a mild rumor running through the community with no validation from other sources. This situation played out many times and served to de-motivate me, as well as other witnesses.

This first experience of witnessing, for many of us, involved proved significant as a number of the volunteers have continued to work in support of DK in other capacities. As the need for witnesses declined in January our efforts moved towards greater advocacy and awareness efforts which are described below.

It was with great sadness that eight volunteer witnesses entered DK following significant rumours and evidence of an imminent eviction on Friday, January 23. The witnesses came from several human rights NGO's as well as concerned individuals. There

were both expatriates from a range of countries (Australia, New Zealand, Nepal, United States and Canada) and Cambodian nationals. During the eviction itself, approximately 5:30am to 11:00am, a larger number of national and international NGO personnel (about 30 people) joined the volunteer witnesses.

The volunteer witnesses arrived at DK during the evening of January 23 to an alert that the company may evict the community the next morning. At 12pm the witnesses met for a tactical meeting of what to expect during an eviction, how we would communicate with each other using ICOM units and mobile phones, and ensuring each individual understood the potential risks they faced during a forced eviction. At this point one witness decided to remain outside DK for the duration of the eviction to avoid the risk of arrest. This decision turned out to be a positive experience for both that witness as well as those who stayed inside the community. Firstly, those of us inside DK felt comforted by a close-by voice on the outside. Secondly, the witness was able to engage with 7NG workers and the 7NG lawyer once DK was closed off by police cordons.

There was information of police and military police troop movement indicating a potential action such as a forced eviction. At 2am the police cordoned off the community on both main street entrances (to the south west near the coffee shop and to the east near Group 78) using road blocks (see Figure 2). Police and military police began patrolling in and around DK so we, the witnesses, began our own patrols to monitor what was happening. Again, our purpose for witnessing was to observe events of the evictions and by our presence reduce any violence that may occur. In addition, we were to communicate to human rights organisations that were preparing to arrive once the eviction physically began.

As we walked around the community there were some who were roused by a loud hailer proclaiming the police arrival, but many people simply stayed in their homes. In the market section it seemed as though sellers were preparing for another day of trading with customers. Many people seemed to me to be going about their life as normal. While a small group of people got up to see what the police were doing, no one gathered people together to discuss response options, or to prepare for resistance or removal to the relocation site. It's likely that people thought it another false alarm. Though this time the police presence and the numbers of “breakers”⁸ were very large⁹ and unlikely to be a hoax.

At about 3 or 4am one person started creating a barrier using street carts¹⁰ as a way to block the path of any advance of police, military or “breakers”. The barrier was a great idea. While it was obvious that it would serve as a temporary impediment only. A number of other community members helped with the barrier and then people continued to mill around, waiting to see what would happen. It was a visual deterrent that would slow down the progress of the company workers and military police, and later acted to prevent large numbers of people clashing violently together. Without the barrier the later violence could have been much higher with more devastating results. I applaud that young man's insight and action.

By this time all the official community representatives had fled the community for

⁸ Breakers are itinerant workers hired by a company to carry out the demolition of the homes and possessions of a community. In this situation, a good number of the breakers were former residents of Group 78 and other formerly evicted communities. It was the “oppressed becoming the oppressor” in a most twisted and ironic sense, and give further evidence of the reality of forced evictions, land-grabbing and un-checked corporate investment is a network enterprise (Duffield, 2002).

⁹ Approximately 300 police and 600 “breakers”

¹⁰ Small hand-pushed carts used for selling small shell fish

fear they would be arrested on sight for inciting public disorder. To this one colleague commented, “A community without its leaders ... let's see how well they do”.

Once the barrier was made (in front of the “coffee house” – there were three entrances to the community that the “breakers” used. Two from the main street that surrounds DK to the south-west and the east and one entrance near the 7NG company offices to the north. See Figure 2 above). There was no more leadership and no more actions of community defense or nonviolent resistance. On reflection, the community could have continued creating “barriers”. In the first days after Dec 10, 2007 the community held hands and stood in a long line around their community. They could have tried this. But the greater challenge for DK was to control and harness the energy and passion of those wanting to strike back violently at their opponents. Even if there was a peaceful line up there were many who would have continued to throw rocks and other objects. This was an enduring problem for the community - an inability to win over the violent factions in the community and give them concrete tasks to do such as maintaining communications, first aid, carrying water, looking after children, etc. The community could have formed other kinds of nonviolent barriers – by sitting or lying down around the community. That way bulldozers and other heavy equipment could not enter the community without injuring or killing people, an unlikely risk with so many international observers.

It was unclear to me if the community thought or knew of the impending eviction (some were certain it was going to happen that night). The only planning done on the eve of the eviction was for the community representatives to leave and avoid certain arrest. It is important to remember that evictions have been rumoured for several years, and on numerous

occasions it looked like “the end” was at hand. Therefore it's easy to see how complacency could settle in.

This time hired “breakers” amassed across the road from the community in three separate groups of several hundred each wearing red, green or blue t-shirts, company officials dressed in white with 7NG logos on their caps, and military police and riot police armed with shields, AK-47 assault rifles, tear gas and suspected rubber bullets. The company's strategy was clear - the military police would approach the community with the “breakers” taunting and provoking the community to acts of violence (throwing bricks, rocks, bottles, bags filled with various liquids, etc) giving the riot police “an excuse” to use overwhelming force to quell a “violent” community disturbance. That is exactly what occurred, taking approximately 15 minutes, and the resistance was over. Nothing could stop the eviction at that point.

Throughout the eviction witnesses spread themselves out to cover the entire area. We recorded events on digital cameras and video cameras, several times observing residents being severely bashed by police, but unable to intervene. Several people were taken to hospital. Overall, however, the violence was restrained and no one was seriously injured. This is in marked contrast to previous forced evictions that did not have outside witnesses present. In the past deaths were not unusual.

At one point I was observing a bulldozer clearing rubble from the coffee house area (see Figure 2). About a dozen residents were going through the wreckage to salvage what belongings they could. The bulldozer drove very close to them and pushed rubble around

them quite dangerously. The residents became agitated by the bulldozer as it made their search difficult. Finally several residents began throwing rubble at the driver who stopped and covered himself with his arms. Once the residents stopped throwing objects the driver started his bulldozer and was in an obvious rage and drove the bulldozer directly at the residents. Witnesses and other observers began yelling at the driver to stop and use caution. One of the residents fainted and was feared to have been crushed by the bulldozer, but had simply fainted from the stress. I approached a senior police officer and asked him to have the bulldozer driver replaced or stopped for a time because he was driving dangerously and was obviously upset from being attacked by DK community. The police officer just smiled at me.

At another point I found a severely handicapped woman in a wheel-chair surrounded by her belongings. She was on her own and many breakers were tearing down houses close by. I wanted to stay close to her as she was unable to move herself and seemed disoriented. As the breakers moved past us a 7NG leader instructed me to leave the area, but I refused to leave because I wanted to ensure the woman's safety from flying debris or an angry breaker. This upset the 7NG leader who started to threaten me with arrest and motioned for some military police to come over. I stood my ground for some minutes and then saw that the woman wasn't in any immediate danger so decided to move away to where I could still see the woman, but not risk being arrested or removed from DK.

By 10:30 am virtually all homes had been razed. Many residents were in a state of shock as well as standing around what possessions they had gathered waiting for family to help transport them. Many people were forced to use the company-provided trucks that were waiting to take the community to the Domnak Troyong relocation site.

In the days following the eviction the former DK residents pressed their advantage to evoke compassion for a suffering community in the press and wider community by holding vigils and press conferences in front of the National Assembly, the Municipal offices of Phnom Penh, and at the 7NG offices. They petitioned support from Prime Minister Hun Sen at his house in Ta Khmao producing a response by the PM's office ordering that 7NG, the Municipality and DK representatives to sit down to find an agreeable solution (compensation). This was set for the morning a day or so later.

When the morning came, DK and the international community arrived to observe and support DK. A message arrived from the municipality and company saying that the meeting was postponed to later in the day. Later, it was canceled completely. Two days later DK returned to the PM's house to petition once more but were angrily told to leave because they'd had their chance and didn't take advantage of it.

The story of Dey Krahom continues. However, from this point on all residents, including community representatives, ceased fighting for compensation from 7NG and moved into the assigned relocation area or found alternative living arrangements in and around Phnom Penh. At the time of writing a number of DK residents are considering moving to Preah Vihear province in the hope that they can begin a new home away from the constant presence of 7NG.

4.1.2 Space in Building Relationship

Enhancing any presence role in witnessing is developing relationships with the

communities the witness seeks to support. Part of my work role, then, included building relationship with DK outside of the crisis events, confrontations and eviction. I found that relationship building enabled me to show interest and support for the community, specifically by visiting and sitting down to drink coffee, accompanying community members to their court appearances, discussing nonviolent possibilities, and join in celebratory dinners. However, it was erratic and limited as my time was split between other work and personal demands. I also found myself unable to connect well with the female community leaders. It wasn't until a few months before the eviction that I was introduced to the male community leader and I was able to develop a stronger relational connection.

Having discussed the observer and presence roles of witnessing to violence the following sections will explore the role of witness beyond these such as witnessing to external actors through advocacy and awareness, and witnessing to nonviolence through story-telling.

4.2 Witness Towards

Following the experience of witnessing at DK it was obvious the presence of expatriates positively effected violence levels, but had little effect addressing the underlying conflict system. Anderson (2004) identified 6 criteria for effective peace work, the first being the peace work directly affects the causes of the conflict. Acting as witnesses served to reduce the violence of the conflict (a worthy goal, relating to one of Anderson's criteria), but was not influential beyond that. Therefore, we began looking for other spaces to engage.

4.2.1 *Space in Dialogue.*

During the the first witnessing event, one colleague suggested we try opening a conversation with 7NG and appeal to their business interest that forcing the eviction of a poor community through illegal land deals may affect future investment in Cambodia and the company, and their Buddhist religious beliefs (particularly the karmic consequences of using opportunistic business practices) in the hope that an appeal to these practicalities and beliefs may open communication to find a more agreeable solution to the DK community and which outlined a case for why the company should seek to deal responsibly with DK.

This action stemmed out of a critique of the “name, blame and shame” human rights watch-dog model allowing little or no space for dialogue with the party causing harm. Groups such as PBI, Christian Peacemaker Teams and Peace Force International maintain careful communications between all parties of a violent conflict, offering space for conflicting parties to meet in safety, building on the Gandhian concept that conversion should precede coercion.

Two colleagues and I formed an entity called the International Coalition for Business Integrity¹¹ to approach the 7NG company with a letter outlining our concerns over their attempts to take DK's land (See Appendix A). This also addressed our concerns that, being such a high-profile issue, anyone standing up for the community on their own would be at risk of an adverse reaction from the company, such as deportation. We thought at worst our visa's could be at stake.

As my colleagues and I are not business people and we have no experience of the business world, except as consumers, and have little understanding of the business world in

¹¹ <http://coalition4.businessintegrity.googlepages.com/home>

Cambodia, we felt out of our depth to find a logical leverage point to influence behaviour change. However, by writing the letter from a business risk-management perspective we felt we were encouraging 7NG to consider the financial cost not only to themselves but to Cambodia if Cambodia is seen to deal so harshly with poor communities. We also attempted to find a facing-saving option for the company by suggesting that 7NG was a victim of the original DK representatives who falsely claimed power to sell the land on behalf of the whole community, which is illegal. We requested a meeting with Srey Sothea, the spokesperson for 7NG. However, we never received a reply.

Another challenge was finding information about the 7NG company. At the time the company website listed minimal information and no contact details. All the links on the website led to pages saying, “under construction”. As such we were at a loss to know who to send the letter to. We assumed the company had enough money and political connections to secure a lucrative land deal in the middle of Phnom Penh at a time when under-the-table agreements were occurring regularly, usually in relation to land-swapping. Indeed, the original community representatives who 'sold' the land to 7NG can be found at the current relocation site of DK evictees, Damnak Troyong, who were observed allocating food rations to the newly relocated villagers following the January 24 eviction.

This action germinated an interactive discussion with several people, some outside of Cambodia. Private business has a large stake in Cambodia's development and in the last several years their interests have posed increasing threats to communities and the natural resources used for livelihood (Levy & Scott-Clark, 2008).

Sadly, the desire to engage 7NG creatively and positively passed quickly after our single attempt failed. I say sadly because 7NG has perhaps the greatest power to enact change in the conflict system and we failed to pursue that option in any depth. Now several colleagues are researching ways to put pressure on 7NG and to find out background details of who owns the company, who are majority shareholders, and what countries they are from. This now involves the international business and human rights group Business & Human Rights Resource Centre who have attempted direct communication with 7NG. To date no further information about 7NG has been uncovered, and 7NG have not responded to any phone calls and emails requesting responses to allegations regarding their company.

These latest actions are a return to the “name, blame and shame approach” even though an important direction is seeking to win over the “enemy” before any other options are attempted. Of course, the community have unsuccessfully engaged the company for four years and this contributed to dropping the strategy of engagement as we reasoned, “if the community can't engage the company who are directly involved, how can we who are on the outside?”. However, there are endless creative options for building relationship with 7NG and it's staff and hired workers. We didn't explore these options deeply and seriously enough.

4.2.2 *Space in Awareness*

Beginning June 2008 InnerCHANGE, with key support from an InnerCHANGE intern, developed a website¹² about current 'land events'¹³ in Cambodia, the purpose to present information visually on a map of Cambodia and providing ready access to the information.

¹² <http://peace-and-justice-cambodia.awardspace.com>

¹³ Such as such as evictions, stand-offs, shootings, government statements and decrees, corporate investments, land-grabs and activities, dams, agribusiness and inter-community conflicts.

The site uses free and open source technology to plot “land events” directly onto an interactive satellite image map. This has gained a lot of interest from the NGO community as it provides “real time” information, and serves as an example for how communities could themselves set up a similar information site.

The website draws on publicly available information, such as newspaper, NGO and government reports, but which are often hard to track down. This website provides activists and interested actors with easier access to information and builds on the role of witness and it's capacity to influence actors outside of the immediate conflicts including international NGO's, donors, advocacy groups, etc. The website has raised the level of awareness of the complexity of land as a basis of violent conflict in Cambodia opening a larger space for advocacy. Since internship ended of a key support volunteer, I have maintained the website, but several key functions cannot be fulfilled – particularly the digital mapping and regular news updates.

4.2.3 Space in Advocacy.

Recognising that expatriates have connections outside of Cambodia that can be brought to bare on the Royal Government of Cambodia, in February and March of 2008 I began communicating with family members, friends and colleagues in Australia and America about the situation at DK. Both Australia and the US have bilateral trade and aid commitments with Cambodia which gives them a level of influence in Cambodia, albeit limited and possibly biased, as Rahman (2004) claims. At this point, the Australian embassy is silent on the issue, though a recent Australian documentary sought a response from the Australian Ambassador (*Cambodia for Sale*, 2009).

NGO's and DK were attempting to mobilise international contacts to put pressure on the Royal Cambodian Government to cease using forced evictions, and seek a just and equitable solution to DK's conflict with 7NG. The situation was clearly in breach of the law (Licadho and Licadho Canada, 2007; and COHRE, 2009) so I decided to add my own efforts of sending information updates to raise awareness, and later, response options to my contacts outside Cambodia.

Some of the response options included signing online petitions, and sending emails and written letters to embassies, foreign affairs ministers, as well as the 7NG company, the Cambodian Prime Minister and the Phnom Penh Municipality (see Appendix B). The response was encouraging but often frustrated by emails to Cambodian authorities “bouncing”. The online petitions had many names of people I had contacted, and I received offers of financial and material aid following the eviction.

During the eviction I sent text messages and emails via mobile phone to friends and colleagues in and outside of Cambodia (particularly Australia and the United States) to raise awareness of the eviction and have people praying for the community. Alerting people to the imminence of the eviction was powerful. There was no denying it was happening. Oddly, I didn't accept the inevitability of the eviction until three or four o'clock in the morning when a large number of large trucks carrying hundreds of “breakers” trundled past DK. At this stage the advocacy strategy was to build awareness of what was going on by alerting embassies, the UN, all our international contacts and ensure the local authorities knew international observers were present.

4.3 Witness to Alternatives

As I found 'witnessing alongside' and 'witnessing to' DK was effective, 'witnessing to alternatives' was also instrumental in my capacity as an outsider. Particularly witnessing the alternatives being used by other communities and networks in Cambodia. The following is a discussion on several spaces to 'witness to alternatives'.

4.3.1 *Space in Storytelling*

Based the work of Wink (1992, 1999 & 2002), Brueggeman (2001), and Eisler (1995), I began toying with ideas how to engage people with the mythic dimensions of violence in Cambodia. I drew on two experiences of mine: first, 'city walks' run by the Australian faith-community Urban Seed, which takes participants around the Melbourne CBD to reflect on wealth, status and power ("Bible City Walk", n.d.); second, while living in San Francisco for a few months, I was taken on a 'prayer journey' through different urban neighbourhoods affected by poverty, violence and marginalisation. These journeys asked participants to look beyond the physical realities of the areas, to the realm of spirituality and mythology.

In light of these experiences I devised a half-day tour of Phnom Penh highlighting the mythological aspects of the Domination System including the abundant imagery from Hindu mythology, the Reamker,¹⁴ historic stories of Phnom Penh and the Khmer Rouge, explanations of mythology in the development of Phnom Penh as capital city and the way in which myth and symbol is used in the political sphere, such as the confluence of the Mekong, Bassac and Sap rivers, and the Brahmin phallic symbol at the Pochentong airport entrance

¹⁴ the Cambodian version of the Indian epic the Ramayana

celebrating Hun Sen's power and authority.

On January 21, 2008 The Prophetic Imagination Tour of Phnom Penh began at Wat Phnom, travelled to the river confluence in front of the Royal Palace, made it's way to the DK community and ended at a restaurant for lunch, refreshments and a time to debrief the experience. There were twelve expatriate participants.

The sites were chosen for several reasons. Firstly, to keep the 'tour' to a minimum given the heat during that time of the year. Secondly, the first two sites are full of symbols of Cambodian religion and mythology – from Animism, Brahmanism, Buddhism, and modern culture.¹⁵ They are also central points within the city providing good vantage points from which to tell the history of Phnom Penh. The last site was chosen to listen to the residents of DK their experiences of the past few years with 7NG. I purposefully ended the tour there as I wanted the tour to have a human face, not just lecture notes and ancient statues. Also, I wanted to include the DK community in the process of telling the story of violence in Phnom Penh and Cambodia. For many expatriates and visitors to Phnom Penh, poverty is visible everywhere, but rarely do people deeply engage with it and allow the experience of poverty to speak into their own lives. Unfortunately, the young woman I asked to translate for me was unable to do so frustrating one of the residents I had asked to speak to the group. Part of the problem seemed to be that the resident used a thick colloquial style and accent that is hard for city people to understand. Finally, a resident turned up who spoke English and was willing to translate for us. Within a short time the people telling the story of DK became quite agitated and upset. I was concerned that the group was getting little out of the exchange, and that I

¹⁵ I leaned heavily on information taken in a lecture given in 2003 by French priest, Fr Francois Ponchaud, and a collection of articles by various authors (Ponchaud, 1977; Dupraz, Birsens J-M and Ponchaud, F. (n.d.); and “The Reamker”, 2001).

was compounding the community's misery by making them tell their story. It certainly wasn't the amazing interactive experience I had in mind. But later on the community has had many occasions to tell their story – to NGO's, international donors, and to the municipal court. As it turned out, they have become quite expert at telling their story, and it seems that our group was a step in that direction.

Obviously, this tour dealt only with violence, and not how to respond to it. I hoped to give participants the hard truth to grapple with, and that might spark them into action. Many reported that the tour was insightful and added to their knowledge, filling in gaps, and helping them see the city and its history in a different light. However, I realise the limitations of this approach, that looking only at the violence can be overwhelming and freeze people into inaction or apathy. I had in mind a second part to the tour where participants would process how to engage the violence in Cambodia. This part of the tour has yet to emerge.

4.3.2 Space in Alternatives

During June 24-27, 2008 I organised accommodation for 50 people from the Community Peacebuilding Network (CPN) to stay in a variety of places including homes and NGO offices, enabling members of the network to stay in the city to collaborate on their work and approach government ministries with their land complaints. After numerous texts, calls and emails eager support available became available via CSJ members as well as the InnerCHANGE team.

The CPN held a large meeting with donors and NGO's on the boat of the Women's Agenda for Change (WAC) to promote a national petition supporting Hun Sen's statements

calling for forced evictions and land grabbing to immediately cease, and on Hun Sen to back up his words with action. Many communities and individual activists have experienced intimidation and obstruction against this petition, with signed petitions being confiscated and those carrying or signing them being threatened in several provinces. These difficulties forced the CPN to move their planned activities to Phnom Penh. Additionally, five situations of land grabbing in Preah Vihear, Mondulakiri, Rattanakiri, Kratie, Koh Kong were unable to be resolved at the provincial level also because of threats and intimidation. The CPN decided to 'go public' by holding their activities in Phnom Penh, affording them a measure of protection through exposure to the media that is not available in the provinces. Following the meetings the boat lost its permission to berth in its usual place and was forced to berth much further up-river, creating difficulties for WAC and its beneficiaries to access the facility.

On the whole the community activists had a successful time, though they did not secure any solid assurances of help from the Government or other agency. They were able to make and present their cases safely. They were forced to leave one venue, but this served as a media opportunity to highlight their marginalised situation. I am unsure of any problems during their return home, if it was safe or not, but many individuals were concerned what would happen to them when they went back to their villages as local authorities were unhappy they were allowed to voice their concerns so publicly.

I had first met the CPN earlier in the month when I attended a meeting promoting the national petition encouraging the Prime Minister to act on his public statements to curb land-grabbing. As a network of community activists and community representatives affected by land and natural resource conflict (because of the granting of economic land concessions on

or near their lands) they were asking for feedback from INGO's to assist their cause, specifically meeting with high level government officials and foreign embassies.

If felt there was confusion about the purpose of the meeting and communication was limited by translation from Khmer to English so that I'm not sure the CPN was really able to explain themselves fully and the INGO's didn't quite know how to relate to them. The INGO's offered a lot of advice but little commitment to practical action. What struck me was how the CPN had naturally adapted their response to conflict over time and some of my earlier observations (see Appendix C) regarding the DK situation are already a part of how CPN operates.

As a network they have very little hierarchy, which poses difficulties for communication and goal setting, but provides significant protection to the movement as no one person or group can be targeted as the leadership. The group is broad, has members from almost all provinces in Cambodia, and it will be hard for an antagonistic interest to negatively impact their leadership as there are many people who can step up to replace someone if a leader is unable to participate for any reason, such as imprisonment or fear. On the other hand, this makes communication extraordinarily complex and inefficient. From my experience I constantly received different answers to my simple questions in preparing accommodation for them, eg "how many people are coming?", "how many meals do you need?", "how much money do they have to cover costs?". It was frustrating and my life would have been made easier if one person had all the information, not several. But despite this difficulty they pulled off the events they had planned. As a group they are still protective about their identities - I don't know who they really are, and the people who stayed with us

seemed equally in the dark. Again, this may be a result of their decentralised system, which is both a strength and a weakness.

The network focuses on collective action, an almost intuitive grasping of a fundamental of Anderson (2004) that any response to a conflict must tackle it at the level it occurs in – in this case, nationally. Initially each village responded on its own as situations arose. Now they understand their best opportunity for success is to rally groups from all over the country and make it a highlighted public issue, hence their national petition. I was impressed by this particular strategy. It makes a lot of sense and I'm wondering how far they are looking ahead and how 'national' their response is likely to go. At present, 'national' means those who are affected by land and natural resource conflict throughout the country. However, they still need to mobilise large numbers of 'average' Cambodians to their cause. This will more likely gain government attention and reaction. Currently, the CPN are gaining little ground in government ministries that have jurisdiction over their complaints.

4.3.3 Space in Organisational Change

An important function of witnessing is to develop nonviolent space within the witnesses own organisations, to better understand the processes that lead to violence, both personal and social, direct and indirect, so that organisations can play a role in training staff in active nonviolence and use any available organisational influence to build a more peaceful and just society.

On May 5-7 2008, InnerCHANGE Cambodia held a two-day facilitated workshop to better define its goals in Cambodia. The purpose was to build a more collaborative approach

to InnerCHANGE's work in Cambodia. I'd been planning to have some kind of 'Peace Project' under InnerChange for a long time, but had put it on the back burner. I wrote a draft proposal in 2007 and it stayed in that form for quite a while. Then our team invited a facilitator to assist a process to redefine our team's identity and mission. The end result of this process was the delineation of three focus groups, one of them being the Peace and Justice focus group, with the specific goal of responding to land-based conflict.

This development meant that my goals of supporting organisations and communities regarding land-based conflict was not just my own independent goal, but is an integral part of the organisation here in Cambodia. Excitingly for me, the whole team supported it. I was surprised but buoyed by this fact. Partly, people were encouraging my passion for communities affected by land-based conflict. I also saw a depth of passion for justice in others that perhaps hadn't had opportunity to be expressed in the past. The 'past' on this team has been to avoid anything 'political', as per protocol agreements with the Cambodian government. There was far more political oppression when the organisation first arrived in Cambodia in 1993. Staff were assigned secret police and spies - who would introduce themselves to the team, "Hello, I'm your spy to watch on you". Literally. Nowadays that doesn't happen, and if there's any spying going on it's less observable.

A key goal of the Peace and Justice focus group is to make connections with the Cambodian Christian community and mobilise this community to respond to justice and human rights issues, including land-based conflict. As the number of Christians in Cambodia are steadily growing it is likely that Christians will be affected by this issue (and I know of at least three Christian groups directly affected: in Snuol, Bu Sra and Oddar Meanchey). At the

very least the Cambodian Christian community should be made aware of the issue and its intricacies. At best the community can be mobilised to support others (Christian and other faiths) who face violent conflict over land.

CHAPTER 5

FINDINGS

5.1 Witness as “Space” for Outsider Agency

The role of a “witness” is somewhat ambiguous as the witness is not a direct party of the violent conflict, however, I found that as a witness I, and others, were participants and not simply dispassionate or objective observers. As such, a witness has agency during a violent or conflict. The primary agency involves observing whatever action takes place, and is easily achieved providing repression is not used against the witness(es). However, being present in situations of violence or potential violence with the goal of reducing the level or likelihood of violence is more difficult, as it is not possible to assign causality to the witnessing actions given the research methodology, and the witnesses used no coercive means to ensure that goal was achieved.

During times of witnessing I found that we (the witnesses) had several choices to how we practically functioned. Some of us took an external position away from the angry confrontations (a few meters to many distant). This provoked less reaction from 7NG workers, possibly by communicating a greater level of neutrality or passivity. Some of us stood beside the actors (either 7NG or community member) communicating some alignment, and from behind the actors (thereby explicitly aligning the witness with one or other of the actors). Although standing alongside 7NG workers rarely communicated alignment with them, and the workers themselves seemed uncomfortable with this approach. Alternatively, and rarely, we took up a position between the actors, or interposition, where the witness placed his/herself between the conflicting parties as a physical barrier to prevent violence.

The key findings of this research are the presence of three spaces used in witnessing which I termed *witness alongside*, *witness towards*, and *witness to alternatives*. **Witness alongside** occurs during the violence / repression experience of a community where the witness observes their experience in order to inform others about the violence and repression, and to use the witnesses external identity as a means of social pressure. **Witness to the community** occurs over time and is particularly focused on communicating the many ways in which the community attempts to respond nonviolently to the repression and violence. This changed my perspective on DK, enabling my colleagues and I to see DK not as a helpless victim, but as an active agent in the conflict. **Witness to alternatives** brings outside experiences to the community in order to expand their understanding of the situation and the options available to them to further enhance their responses.

In response to the growing number of witnesses, utilising the different spaces available, witnessing contributed to the involvement of at least 15 volunteer witnesses, the advocacy action of international actors such as the UN, EU and bilateral aid donors, scrutiny by the press, the presence of several foreign television crews (BBC and SBS), many published reports and documents by national and international NGO's, and most importantly, little direct violence during open confrontations and as compared to similar evictions in the past and in other provinces where witnessing was not utilised (in part or at all).

These findings indicate that the agency of a witness is, therefore, more nuanced than simple observation of a violent event, elevating the perceived risk to the perpetrator through outsider awareness.

I found several factors hindered my use of the space of **witness to alternatives**. As there were many expatriates and NGO's advising DK another voice seemed potentially confusing and divisive. Additionally, I was not particularly close with any of the community as my primary connection was with Licadho-Canada and Licadho staff. Also, it was unclear if the alternative was appropriate, thus fear of giving an option that may exacerbate the conflict with 7NG was present. Finally, knowing that DK were working hard on their responses and a foreigner giving advice about doing things differently could well be taken as implicit criticism.

I also found that witnessing was not easily used in situations where more indirect methods of violence, intimidation and repression were used by 7NG.

5.2 Engaging Outsiders

Throughout the research project it was possible to see emerging patterns in the relationship between fear and involvement in witnessing. People often expressed fear of involvement because of the potential for reprisal to themselves. However, realistic and potentially effective options for responding to issues of social injustice, including land-based conflict, contributed to involvement. Thirdly, if actions were perceived as unrealistic, likely to bring down government reprisal, or unable to achieve the stated aims of the action, people were hesitant to become involved. I found that when certain actions were proposed and I thought the action unrealistic I did not participate, either, even though I was committed to the overall goal of the witnessing project. Lastly, regular, successive and successful involvement in responses to land-based conflict contributed to people expressing confidence in witnessing.

5.3 Engaging Faith in Community

I found a sub-element of witnessing included the experience of community¹⁶.

Community facilitated common relationships and opportunities to discuss ideals, concerns, strategy and tactics with each other, including faith perspectives. This contributed to: a decreased fear and anxiety about my faith background (Christian) and increased trust in my role as a co-activist; encouragement in building open conversations about the role of faith in activism; overturning and confronting negative stereotypes of Christians; and, working towards actions that humanise previously dehumanised actors such as the various staff and 'workers' of 7NG – rather than seeing them as the enemy, as potential allies and actors able to be engaged for peace.

I also found that while as an outsider (Christian in a secular environment or Expatriate in a Cambodian context) it takes time to build trust with insiders, the time it takes for trust building provides important opportunities for introducing new ideas and making new connections. (eg, humanising of the enemy, looking for ways to positively engage with the 'hard to reach' such as government and business elites, and the military).

5.4 Dey Krahorm as Nonviolent Actor

As an observer of DK's use of nonviolent social power I found that their practice missed opportunities to press their advantage. Firstly, nonviolent social power often makes

¹⁶Community is a sense of commitment by groups and individuals working together on common goals.

Community may be a short-term goal-oriented experience, or an enduring relational experience, lasting beyond the goal-oriented actions.

use of mass action. DK applied this to a small degree, notably on December 10, 2009, and during the daily skirmishes with 7NG for the following two months. However, few people involved were from outside of DK. This limited the numbers of people present and the ability to claim widespread support.

More critically, however, was the missed opportunities to apply further social pressure. For example, when decisions were made against the community by the courts or 7NG company, or positive decisions failed to be made (such as legal counter-suits against 7NG), there was an opportunity to apply social pressure by a range of tactics. DK did make use of the media before an event such as a key court decision, highlighting their situation to the public eye, but rarely followed up except on the media's own initiative.

If the DK community did manage to force an issue, such as sufficient compensation for vacating homes, to a point where the company and municipality were forced to negotiate or make a public statement of compensation or negotiation, a day or so later the company would pull out of the agreed meeting or compensation package. DK would become disappointed and disperse to wait for the company or municipality to honour the original agreement (which never happened). It is unclear if the 7NG company fully honoured any compensation packages to any resident of DK throughout the last four years of conflict.

A significant area of weakness in DK's use of nonviolent social power was in their lack of solidarity. The DK community consisted of a constellation of family groupings and interest groups (eg traditional musicians, orphanage, Khmer boxing school) rather than a single cohesive community. While this is common, it allowed for 7NG to apply a 'divide and conquer' strategy. Each group and family were approached individually by 7NG and offered

various compensation packages depending on their political connections. Anyone offered more than others was either less likely to stand with others offered much less (in case they lost their package) or were marginalised out of envy by those receiving smaller compensation amounts. In the case of the musicians, several of whom have national and international reputations, were offered what many considered fair compensation, but far greater than anyone else. They were clearly told by 7NG not to engage in resistance with the rest of DK or lose their compensation.

Furthermore, the lack of solidarity contributed to the use of violence. During nonviolent resistance of 7NG workers there would be simultaneously a group of younger residents (usually) hurling rocks and other objects. These contradictory approaches made it easy to label the community as miscreants who should be removed.

NGO's also lacked the nuanced understanding of 'community' dynamics, often referring to DK as a whole. In reality, DK was a geographic area consisting of a variety of communities based along lines of family connection or economic interest. I am not aware of any support projects to build greater cohesion between the various communities.

A further weakness I observed was little or no evidence of strategic planning from DK. NGO's and other outsiders (including the witnesses) also struggled to give support in this area. There were a range of reasons for this. Firstly there was a concern for creating dependency on organisations by giving too much support to DK. Secondly, if they gave too much support to DK this reduced the perception that resistance was coming from the community, and heightened the perception it was being manufactured or incited by

outsiders. Thirdly, fear of reprisal from MPP, RGC and 7NG existed by those potentially seen to be inciting, or simply supporting, the community. This obviously included DK residents, too.

The result of this lack of strategic planning meant there were few, if no, plans for obvious eventualities such as when the company or municipality failed to honour agreements, or the handing down of a negative court decision. If DK and others had planned for these eventualities they may have kept one or two steps ahead of the situation as it takes a lot of energy to build the pressure to the point where authorities will address key issues, and may have denied the authorities opportunity to control the momentum for change.

In the situations I observed offers of negotiation meant that the DK community ceased applying social power in a proactive way. They passively waited for the negotiations to occur. The company and municipality inevitably used delay tactics (such as suggesting a later date). Already on the back foot, this delay reinforced passivity as the more time between promise and inaction (by 7NG or MPP), the less momentum remained in DK's actions. Rather than waiting for the company or municipality to negotiate, the community could have planned methods to maintain pressure for a positive outcome.

That DK were able to hold out for four years against a very well connected private business suggests that there was strong political dynamics preventing the forced eviction at an earlier date. This was also a positive situation for DK, particularly if they could have found an ally within the MPP or RGC. However, when I asked several DK residents what connections they had to higher authorities or ministries (as some worked in various

ministries) they would shake their heads and say they had no-one willing to support them. It was likely true that their contacts were unwilling to publicly support them, but one wonders the relational avenues that could have been attempted, building on one key relationship to gain connections with someone with more power in the system.

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In light of the thesis of this paper that outsiders can occupy valid social space to engage in nonviolent action as “witnesses” to situations of violent conflict and the observation of a growing number of community-led alternatives to violence and repression, the following section provides some conclusions and recommendations.

My findings suggest that witnessing has three spaces. The space of *witness alongside* nonviolent insider actors occurs in times of violence and repression, raising the perceived cost of violent actions of one party towards another. *Witnessing towards* nonviolent insider actions raises understanding of the situation of violence and repression and how the community experiencing violence is responding nonviolently. As many marginalised groups are often misunderstood and vilified this space offers a rich opportunity to humanise them in the eyes of the wider community. The space of *witness to alternatives* seeks to enhance insider actor's knowledge and use of nonviolent tactics and strategy from the personal to socio-political levels of engagement. These spaces are important for the success of an insider actor's nonviolent response to a violent and repressive situation. The above case of witnessing with Dey Krahorn indicates that both insider and outsider nonviolent actors require further training in active nonviolence to develop skills, knowledge and attitudes in order to plan more flexible and robust strategies that are able to predict and respond to the actions of violent actors, and those attempting to forcibly evict communities or encroach on their land.

A key element to nonviolent engagement is the perception of agency, that is, the

ability to engage in effective and valid nonviolent actions in a given situation that will create desired change. The following recommendations were developed to enhance the perception and content of agency by insider and outsider nonviolent actors, in the belief that agency exists in all situations, no matter how violent and oppressive.

6.1 Research and Action-Learning for Nonviolent Insider and Outsider Actors

To capitalise on the current experience of nonviolence in Cambodia and develop more advanced techniques, the development of a range of research and training programs (formal and informal) would focus on: active nonviolence for both insider and outsider nonviolent actors; the promotion and facilitation of collaboration in the documentation of current nonviolent actions; the development of new nonviolent tactics and strategies that are culturally and contextually appropriate; and the promotion and training of nonviolent actors. Training in the different roles of witnessing for outsiders will improve support of local communities. The research and training programs should draw from, the history, tactics, strategy, and spirituality of active nonviolence, a range of analytical tools, witnessing skills, community mediation, community organising and other alternative 'dispute resolution' mechanisms, as well as investigating how to build and sustain a national active nonviolence movement. Furthermore, the programs would include a range of characteristics described below.

6.1.1 Leading from the Inside

Outsider nonviolent actors have the valid and useful roles of providing support, encouragement, ideas, and material support to local nonviolent actors, but must follow the leadership of local communities or risk pushing communities too fast too soon into situations

they are unprepared to respond to. However, the spaces an outsider can access are clear and should be used to their fullest extent.

In addition, cultural differences between insiders and outsiders mean that outsiders may unintentionally exacerbate conflicts or create conflicts where none existed. This may arise over competition for resources (material, human or knowledge), perceptions that participation will ensure certain benefits or is the solution to the conflict, a mis-reading of intra- or inter-group dynamics, lack of readiness of individuals or community's to take 'the next step' in a strategy, or an unwillingness to challenge cultural norms and values.

6.1.2 Balancing Power Asymmetries

Until power asymmetries are addressed the tools of conflict transformation, such as dialogue, negotiation, mediation, and listening, will have limited effect. Therefore, greater effort on the part of both insider and outsider actors needs to be placed on creating ways to balance power relations between community and aggressor. This includes the use of nonviolent social power.

Dey Krahorm's experience of nonviolent action was often limited because of the asymmetric dimensions of the conflict. Negotiations were attempted, even after training by an NGO, and failed to gain any changes. Moreover, the company and government officials rarely listened to DK representatives, simply explaining to them the company or municipalities position. At best DK was able to pressure a public display of negotiations, only to experience a range of delay tactics that required further nonviolent tactics to maintain pressure. More training on these skills are urgently required.

Another area of responding to asymmetric situations is the reality of repression following nonviolent resistance. This may be simply a delay tactic, or may be in the form of arrests or brutally violent crackdowns. These must be factored in to the overall strategy, and nonviolent actors carefully prepared for such eventualities. In particular, communities should be wary of negotiations and offers of negotiation as they may simply be a way to have the community cease using nonviolent social power, allowing the repression and violence to continue.

Strategic social change will have at its core a desire to change institutions or create new ones. However, DK was not able to effectively engage, let alone change, any of the institutions that facilitated the use of violence and repression against them. This finding is of great importance as the abuse was able to continue unabated and able to occur in other places. Further research is urgently required to find effective methods to create change in current institutions that harbour violence of any sort.

6.1.3 Learning from Action and Experience

Nonviolent campaigns most often aim to make space for advocacy. With some notable exceptions, few actions have made use of coercive nonviolence to pressure government or private developers to change their practice. The few notable exceptions can be used as learning case studies exploring the specific situation that made the tactic successful, as well as the internal process that enabled the community to resist authority. Further research is also required to learn from similar contexts that had high levels of power asymmetry but have transitioned to respect of, and access to, human, legal, social and economic rights through nonviolent action.

Communities should also be encouraged to learn and teach from their own experience, as personal experience is a powerful source of learning. These experiences can be their successes and failures, how they have been treated violently and how they have responded both violently and nonviolently. These experiences are vital for developing nonviolent meta-narratives that combat the Domination System. Nonviolent meta-narratives are derived from the day-to-day experience of people living with constant threats, repression and violence yet responding with patient and creative active nonviolence. These meta-narratives do not exist in the abstract, but are defined in the particular context of each nonviolent actor.

Additionally, these experiences can be used as stories of “significant change”, in song, dance, visual media, and oral presentations. The very act of telling one's own story can aid communities to reflect more deeply on it, the successes, mistakes, and opportunities taken or missed. Creative story telling provides the story-teller an opportunity to process the tension, trauma, and feelings that are pent up through confrontations or where nothing seems to be moving forwards, as well as a space to imagine answers to these problems.

6.1.4 Investigating Alternatives

Building a case for challenging authority in a culture that places high value on authority and harmony is urgently required. This includes the current practice of human rights training and legal education, but must also go beyond these as the current legal system is a major impediment to the access of justice and rights. Therefore, investigating potential

parallel institutions and processes that reduce reliance on the legal system and opportunity for corruption, as well as options for engaging with businesses and investors from within the business framework, are of great importance.

Engaging the violent actors and those in positions of power in ways that enhances their capacity to be agents of nonviolence is an important alternative. For example, training military police, village, commune and provincial officials, even business leaders in conflict analysis and conflict transformation skills may facilitate vital business development occurring in participation with local communities' interests rather than in opposition. It also opens ways for these currently violent actors to build up identities as peace builders or nonviolent actors themselves.

Currently, violent land and natural resource conflict is seen as a legal and human rights issue. Finding alternative perceptions to the conflict will increase the range of tactics available to nonviolent actors. Promoting conflict analysis skills will ensure that each situation, from the local to the national, is understood from a variety of perspectives. This broader analysis must then transition to concrete and agreeable-yet-just solutions for each party.

Helping local communities to engage proactively with the Other by humanising or breaking down perceptions (warranted or not) of enmity, hatred and the impossibility of reconciliation or a shared future, is key to encouraging local communities to engage in nonviolent actions. This includes the internal conversion of the witness and community from violence to nonviolence and then working towards the conversion of their adversary, opening spaces for dialogue and understanding.

6.1.5 Moving from Domination to Partnership Mythologies

The majority of outsider nonviolent actors (not to mention at-risk communities) in Cambodia are only beginning to develop skills and philosophies that allow them, and those who follow them, to suffer willingly under threat and experience of violence. This is a key strategy to nonviolent campaigns. Greater exposure to nonviolent actions outside Cambodia will assist in the creative, imaginative and spiritual aspects of nonviolent strategic thinking. Assisting insider actors to visit other communities using effective nonviolent resistance is vital, as well as providing access to current documentation and information on nonviolence.

A number of countries face authoritarian regimes and have unsuccessfully attempted nonviolent change. Cambodia exists in a state of negative peace and it remains unclear if a widespread campaign of nonviolent non-cooperation and resistance would be effective and not result in violent repression by those in authority, such as seen in Myanmar recently. Dissemination of nonviolent stories and actions to the general populace will ensure a greater understanding of nonviolent practice and openness to participation in the future as well as provide alternatives to the violent archetypes of the Warrior, Judge Rabbit, the King in Tum Teav, and Preah Ream.

6.1.6 Enhancing Community From Within

A growing number of communities are resisting encroachment and forced eviction. However, these resistance efforts are often undermined by internal conflict that are exploited by outside parties, and a lack of understanding by outsiders of the complex range of relationships and alliances that exist within what is referred to as 'community'. Legal efforts, in particular, rely on communal agreement in an outcome for any chance of success. Where

communities cannot come to a common agreement legal support has even less chance of a successful outcome. By developing internal nonviolent skills such as community mediation and nonviolent communication, communities will be better able to resist incentives to fight amongst each other. Other skills include setting communal goals for a desired future, creative self-expression and story-telling, advocacy and legal support, self-awareness, and connection with other communities will be of great benefit.

6.1.7 Planning Proactively and Strategically

Nonviolent actors skilled in a broad range of tactics and skills are better able to respond creatively to difficult situations (New Tactics, 2005, Sherman, 2007). A significant impediment to DK's, and others, nonviolent actions has been a limited plan of action. Often plans responded to immediate threats and were of a reactive nature. Assisting communities to think through the many possible scenarios of nonviolent actions and subsequent repression is a major area for development. This includes the need for developing creative and critical thinking capacity and helping nonviolent actors to weigh up potential reprisals such as job loss, arrest, incarceration, heavy fines, and physical attack.

LIMITATIONS OF THE RESEARCH

There are a number of limitations inherent in this research project. This section attempts to make explicit these limitations.

The use of action research methodology means that causal relationships from one event or action to a following action cannot be deduced. This research project can suggest a contribution to an emergent process or relationship only.

The faith-perspective I bring is as a Christian, yet the work was carried out in the midst of two distinct and different faith traditions, namely, Buddhist-Animist (eg, Dey Krahorm), and Secular-Humanist (eg, many expatriate human rights' activists). There are many 'kinds' of Christians. I work within a faith-based organisation, however, I do not align myself with any particular denomination.

I brought with me a male gender and identity. Many community activists are women and this contributed to the relationships with the target group. In my sub-samples women outnumbered men substantially, however, no attempt at collecting detailed numbers were attempted.

My involvement in the Dey Krahorm story has a limited chronology. My presence in the research environment began in November 2007 and ended in May 2009 (some very limited involvement continues). The conflict between DK and 7NG existed from mid-2004 and continues beyond the time-frame of the research project. It is difficult to say what impact

preceeding events had on my observations, and I cannot predict what will emerge in the future that is related to the events and research action during the project.

The research project was focused on reducing direct violence in the conflict system, not preventing the eviction from happening.

I entered Dey Krahorm as an outsider, both as a foreigner and someone who does not live in the community. I was not aware of all the stresses of living in that community, hence my criticisms come from a distance, not as a community insider.

This research project did not attempt to be neutral or impartial in the conflict, taking a clear and active stance of supporting the DK community, with a strong commitment to social justice. Hence, the view points of 7NG, the MPP or RGC are not represented.

As an 'independent', concerned, individual, the project did not sit within a specific NGO programmatic response to DK. It was difficult to know how I fit within the existing NGO support.

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APPENDIX A. A LETTER TO 7NG CONSTRUCTION CO LTD

March 2008

Mr Srey Chantou
Company Director

Mr Srey Sothea
Consultant
7NG Construction Co. Ltd

Dear Sir,

We the **International Coalition for Business Integrity** wish to bring to your attention our deep concerns over the continuing conflict between the **7NG Construction Co. Ltd** and the residents of Dey Krahom.

We believe that **7NG** has been misled into an invalid and illegal contract that hurts both the residents of Dey Krahom and the integrity of **7NG** company. We are most concerned that this case and the negative publicity surrounding it will badly affect the reputation of **7NG**, and badly affect the business investment climate in Cambodia. It is certain that cases of forced eviction will deter current and potential investors from wanting to do business in this country. Investors need to know they are operating in a business environment governed by clear rule of law and the protection of both individual and corporate legal rights.

Unfortunately, in 2005, former community representatives from Dey Krahom approached **7NG** with a proposal to purchase the land even though they did not have the authority from all the actual landowners in Dey Krahom.

Furthermore, Dey Krahom was designated as a **Social Land Concession** in 2003 so the land was not available to be bought or sold for a period of 5 years, until July 2008. As a result of these unfortunate misunderstandings, **7NG** workers and staff have engaged in violent stand-offs towards the residents of Dey Krahom for the past two years.

After consulting with legal authorities, we believe that:

- the contract was signed illegally by former community representatives in 2005 as defined by the Contract Law and the land law regarding Social Land Concessions.
- when all the residents of Dey Krahom found out about the contract they immediately dismissed their community representatives, elected new ones and sent a complaint to the Phnom Penh Municipality rejecting the validity of the contract
- there is no documentation to show that each landowner agreed to the sale
- at least 18 residents have had criminal accusations filed against them by **7NG** and local authorities, many of these charges lack evidence to support them.
- The residents of Dey Krahom have entitlement to ownership as they have lived at Dey Krahom for at least five years and are eligible for full compensation based on the current market value of the land
- current compensation offers do not come close to current market value
- Workers hired by **7NG** Construction Co. Ltd have:
 - tried to erect a fence around the properties of Dey Krahom residents
 - threatened residents with physical violence and criminal accusations
 - threatened an international human rights worker

- bulldozed and destroyed a spirit house located on the property of Dey Krahorn resident
- intimidated residents
- blocked off access to the community and
- used law enforcement to blockade the community.

We have seen:

- the villagers have shown great patience and restraint in the face of acts of intimidation and provocation against them by workers hired by **7NG**.
- video footage of residents being physically and verbally attacked by **7NG** workers and staff

We call upon the 7NG Construction Co. Ltd. to:

- Cease all hostile attacks, intimidations and provocative actions against residents of Dey Krahorn, including construction work on disputed land near the remaining properties of residents;
- Withdraw criminal complaints against residents of Dey Krahorn; and
- Engage in a process of negotiation with the residents of Dey Krahorn (or a mediator) to ensure fair compensation, based on the current market value of the land allowing all residents to buy alternative land in Phnom Penh and leave Dey Krahorn peacefully.

These actions will increase both **7NG's** and the Cambodian Government's standing in the public's and international community's eyes, and will help create the kind of environment that encourages businesses to invest in Cambodia.

Over the coming months, we hope to be able to report back to our international network:

1. that **7NG** is a Company of integrity which we could recommend as a sound business partner; and
2. that the Cambodian business environment is an increasingly safe and secure place in which to conduct business whilst contributing to its ongoing social development.

We invite **7NG** to meet with representatives for the ICBI to discuss our mutual concerns as raised in this letter.

Please respond before our next ICBI meeting on Tuesday 1st April, at which we will be discussing ICBI's next step on this issue.

Thank you for your consideration and attention to these matters.

Signed
 Mr. Steve H.
 On behalf of ICBI
 On behalf of
 The International Coalition for Business Integrity
 "Successful Business with Social Responsibility "
 coalition4.businessintegrity@gmail.com

APPENDIX B. URGENT ACTION APPEAL

Cambodia: Threat of Forced Eviction of the Dey Krahorh Community in Phnom Penh

16 January 2008

Dear friends,

152 families in Dey Krahorh village, Tonle Bassac commune, Chamkarmon district, Phnom Penh are facing imminent forced eviction. The families have been residing in the prime-city location since the 1980's, and have valid rights to the land under the Cambodian Land Law. The families have been resisting forced eviction attempts by a private construction company 7NG since 2005. The company wants to evict the families to develop the land into a high-end residential and retail centre. The families received the latest and 'final' eviction notice on 27 December 2008 from the Governor of Khan Chamkarmon giving the community three days to dismantle their houses and vacate the land by the deadline of 30 December 2008. The eviction order was suspended temporarily after the three parties agreed to peaceful negotiations to settle the land dispute. However, the 7NG company and the Municipality of Phnom Penh (MPP) have since pursued a campaign of intimidation and threat to pressure the community to accept either of the company's compensation packages:

1. A house in a distant relocation site in Damnak Trayoeng, (20 km from Phnom Penh); 770,000 Riel (USD 192), 30 kg of rice, a box of instant noodles, ten bottles of soy sauce and fish sauce or
2. Cash compensation of USD 15,000 per house; 770,000 Riel (USD 192), 30 kg of rice, a box of instant noodles, ten bottles of soy sauce and fish sauce.

The families have rejected the 7NG company's compensation offers as unacceptable. According to the latest evaluation, land in the same area could cost between USD 2,000 and 6,000 per square metre with the total land reportedly valued a year ago at USD 44 million. The Phnom Penh Deputy Governor Mann Chhoeun during a press conference on the 'Development in Dey Krahorh' on 13 January 2009 made a 24 hour offer of USD 20,000 to the families to relocate or else face forced eviction. By 15 January 2009, 10 families had accepted the compensation offer of USD 20,000 amid fear of violence and eviction. The remainder of the community continues to resist and has pressed for sufficient time to negotiate with the 7NG company, stating that they are open to selling their homes in exchange for acceptable compensation.

The community is therefore seeking your support to urge the Government of Cambodia to:

- Immediately halt the planned forced eviction of the Dey Krahorh community;
- In consultation with the Dey Krahorh community establish without delay, an independent Mediation Panel to facilitate negotiations between the 7NG company and the Dey Krahorh community for fair and just compensation for their land. Ensure that the Terms of Reference of the Mediation Panel are made public and all negotiations are carried out in a fair, peaceful and transparent manner;
- Respect the right to assembly and the right to freedom of expression of all Cambodian citizens, and ensure that police, public order officials, other Government agencies and company employees refrain from acts or threats of violence or intimidation against the residents.

Suggested Action

Please send an appeal letter by e-mail or fax to the addresses listed below requesting the Government of Cambodia to act on this issue. Sample letters are also provided.

To

H.E. Kep Chuktema
Governor,
Municipality of Phnom Penh
No 69 Preah Monivong Blvd,
Sangkat StrahChak, Khan Daun Penh
CAMBODIA
Fax: +855-23 724156
Email: phnompenh@phnompenh.gov.kh

H.E Heng Samrin
Chairman,
National Assembly,
National Assembly Road,
Sangkat Tonle Bassac, Khan Chamkarmon
CAMBODIA
Fax: +855-23 220629

cc

H.E. Samdech Hun Sen
Prime Minister
Office of the Council of Ministers
No 41, Russian Federation Blvd,
Phnom Penh
CAMBODIA
Fax: + 855 23 426 054
Email: cabinet1b@camnet.com.kh

Mr. Srey Sothea
Chairman,
7NG
No 22, 23A, Borei Santepheap II
Sangkat Chom Choa, Khan Dangkoa,
Phnom Penh,
CAMBODIA.
E-mail: info@7NGgroup.com

H.E. Sok An,
Minister,
Office of Council of Ministers,
No 41, Russian Federation Blvd,
Phnom Penh
CAMBODIA
Fax: +855-23 880624
Email: ocm@cambodia.gov.kh

Bcc

Housing Rights Task Force (HRTF)
Email: cam.hrtf@gmail.com

Kindly bcc a copy of your letter to HRTF so we can monitor the responses. Please note to bcc (blind carbon copy) and not cc.

Background

Dey Krahor, or Red Land village is located in Tonle Bassac Commune, Chamkarmon District in the capital Phnom Penh. With the new National Assembly building nearby, it is in the heart of the fastest growing area of the city. The community began residing in Dey Krahor in the mid 1980's, when they cleared the swamp land and filled it with red soil making it habitable for housing. The population of the village grew to over 805 families.

Dey Krahor land was granted to the community as a Social Land Concession in 2003, following Prime Minister Hun Sen's welcome announcement to provide secure land tenure and to assist in the onsite upgrading of 100 inner-city poor communities each year until all of Phnom Penh's urban poor communities have secure land tenure and full basic services. Dey Krahor was to be among the first urban poor communities to become beneficiaries of this plan. The Social Land Concession included the provision for onsite upgrading on 3.7 hectares of the total 4.7 hectares of land, and the provision of secure legal tenure rights for the community. The remaining 1 hectare was allocated for private development.

On 13 January 2005, a private company, 7NG Construction Co, negotiated a contract with the village chiefs of Dey Krahor, effectively swapping the prime land in Dey Krahor for housing on a relocation site in Damnak Trayeung, 20km outside of Phnom Penh. The Dey Krahor residents have maintained that they never agreed to an off-site relocation and that they were never consulted about the contract. Under Cambodian land and contract laws it is illegal to sell other people's rights to land. The contract with 7NG is therefore legally invalid. The community through its new village representatives filed numerous complaints disputing the validity of the contract, which were all rejected. Instead over 300 families were forced to take part in a 'lottery draw' trading their Dey Krahor land for a house in the relocation site. Others, due to fear of threat and intimidation accepted minimal compensation offers for their homes and land and left the village. Many villagers continued to stay in Dey Krahor.

On 14 December 2006 the Department of Land Management, Urbanization, Construction and Cadastral Survey illegally issued an ownership title to 7NG, conferring the property rights over the Dey Krahorh land to the company. The community has since then been living under the constant threat of forced eviction.

Since the beginning of the land dispute between the Dey Krahorh community and 7NG, the community has been subjected to continuous harassment by authorities and company officials. Community leaders and outspoken community members who have tried to defend their human rights, have faced false criminal charges for destruction of company property or incitement against the government.

Despite the harassment, the Dey Krahorh community has consistently maintained that it has rights to the land and should be offered the market value price should 7NG wish to purchase it. In a show of good will, the community worked with NGOs to prepare an on-site upgrading and land sharing plan. The community's claims and the plan were, however, rejected by the MPP and the 7NG company.

On 29 August 2007, an eviction crew comprised of over 100 armed police and hired breakers entered the community to demolish the houses. The community resisted the eviction attempt by forming a human barricade. A clash ensued, during which four community members were injured and one woman was falsely arrested for injuring a 7NG company worker. The woman was later released following a protest outside the National Assembly by the community. The eviction crew succeeded in demolishing 30 houses. Further eviction attempts on 30 and 31 August 2007, as well as in December 2007 were thwarted by the community.

On 6 January 2008, over 20 armed police and 7NG company workers set up oil barrels and other roadblocks to prevent the community from accessing the entrance road and setting up shops and stalls on the land. The community with the support of over 400 people from neighbouring communities managed to remove the roadblocks and prevent the armed police and 7NG company workers from entering the land. The standoff between the community and the 7NG company lasted for three days.

On 28 January 2008, the 7NG company workers destroyed the community's sacred spirit house, and attacked the women who were trying to save it; one woman was hit by rocks and received injuries to her head.

On 7 March 2008, workers from the 7NG company set fire to a wooden house belonging to a family who had refused to relocate. The 7NG company on 6 October 2008 tried to tear down the community art centre which has served as a gathering place for the children to learn how to dance and play. Intimidation and threats against the community continue unabated, but the community continue to resist such actions and fight for the right to their homes and land.

- - Sample Letters - -

Sample 1

Dear Governor Kep Chutkema,

Re: Negotiation instead of Evictions

I have heard of the problems affecting the Dey Krahorh community who fear they will be removed from their homes, so their land can be converted into high-end residential and retail property. I ask the Cambodian Government to halt all eviction plans in the area and take immediate steps to facilitate a fair and peaceful negotiation between the Dey Krahorh community and the 7NG company. I believe this conflict can be resolved peacefully if the community is given the opportunity and time necessary to conduct fair negotiations.

I have every confidence that the human rights enshrined in your Constitution will be fully observed in resolving this matter.

Yours sincerely,

Sample 2

Dear Governor Kep Chutkema,

Re: Allow for fair negotiations between the parties in the Dey Krahorh land dispute in Phnom Penh

I am writing to express my deep concern over the apparently imminent forced eviction of residents from the Dey Krahorh community in Phnom Penh. I appeal to you to allow sufficient time for Dey Krahorh residents

and the 7NG company to conduct meaningful negotiations in a fair, peaceful and transparent manner.

Recently, the Phnom Penh Municipality facilitated negotiations between the parties. These efforts are commendable and a positive step towards the peaceful resolution of the land dispute between the residents of Dey Krahom and the 7NG company. However, the improved compensation offer by the 7NG company made on 13 January was only valid for 24 hours, which did not provide sufficient time for families to discuss this offer and gave no opportunity for further negotiation. The community responded on 14th January with a letter to the Municipality expressing their willingness to negotiate a fair price for their land with the 7NG company. These negotiations should be allowed to go forward, without the threat of forced eviction.

Cambodia is a State party to the International Covenant on Economic Social Cultural Rights (ICESCR). Under Article 11 (1) ICESCR, all authorities in Cambodia are therefore obliged to refrain from the practice of forced evictions, and to prevent third parties, including private companies, from carrying out forced evictions. Evictions can only be justified under very exceptional circumstances. These include, among others, the conduct of meaningful consultation with all those affected and adequate compensation for the loss of homes and land.

I am convinced that this dispute can be resolved peacefully if the community is given the opportunity and time necessary to conduct fair negotiations. Taking time to reach a peaceful agreement between the parties in this case will clearly demonstrate the Government of Cambodia's consideration for its citizens and respect for human rights and the rule of law.

I therefore urge you to intervene in this matter and to ensure that no evictions take place, and instead peaceful negotiations continue between the residents of Dey Krahom and the 7NG company until an acceptable agreement for compensation is reached..

Respectfully yours,

APPENDIX C. THE EIGHT INDICATORS OF EFFECTIVE NONVIOLENT RESPONSES

1. Nonviolence **engages all sections of the community**: men and women, children, adults, aged. (though not all will be 'front line').
2. Nonviolence **seeks to restore broken relationships** through dialogue, promoting inclusivity and understanding.
3. Nonviolence enables the entire community to **develop and nurture a culture of peace** to counteract the culture of aggression and violence.

4. Nonviolence means that **everyone resists the temptation to use violence** in ANY situation.
5. Effective nonviolence **continues to build momentum**, especially in times of calm, working towards a vision of positive peace.
6. Nonviolence **gains strength from unity**: "Communities that stick together stay together":
 - **Building trust within a community** early on is vital to the success of a nonviolent strategy.
 - Identifying **common 'bottom lines'** that everyone agree to.
 - **Community leaders must demonstrate the highest qualities** expected:
 1. *openness and transparency,*
 2. *the ability to forgive and to ask for forgiveness*
 3. *the ability to give trust to others*
 4. *rejecting the temptation to respond with violence or injustice to small and large affairs*

7. Nonviolence ensures that **community leadership and vulnerable sections of the community are protected** (physically, emotionally, legally and financially).
 - Leadership may need to be 'hidden', 'dispersed' or 'networked'
 - Clear strategies for protecting leadership are worked out ahead of time.
8. Community leadership may be **supported by outside actors, but not replaced by them**.

GLOSSARY

Nonviolence	“Nonviolence” is used as it relates to theory and philosophy, which represents a spectrum of ideals and practices. For example pacifism is built on a philosophy of non-resistance, which is very different from active nonviolence which promotes direct confrontation, non-cooperation, coercion and other methods to work towards intentional social change without the use of violence.
Active Nonviolence (ANV) or Nonviolent Resistance	The set of principles and strategies employed to achieve inner and social/structural “peace by peaceful means”. It is both a refusal to use violence nor be conquered by it. ANV will often use tactics of confrontation, coercion, interposition and non-cooperation to achieve it's aims. ANV will usually first seek the rational and/or emotional transformation of the opponent before utilising more coercive means. ANV is a subset of Conflict Transformation approaches.
Nonviolent Struggle (Sharp)	“Nonviolent struggle is a political technique that ... uses social, psychological, economic, and political methods of applying sanctions, that is, pressures or punishments, rather than violent methods.” Sharp (1990) p1.
Non-cooperation	An active nonviolence tactic of withdrawing or blocking social power to systems and structures.
Nonviolent Coercion	The use of nonviolent force to apply pressure on an opponent
Nonviolent Confrontation	Tactics that highlight and/or exacerbate existing systems and practices of Domination.
Interposition	The physical placing of nonviolent actors between two opposing groups to prevent physical violence.
Protective	A strategy of following and being present with an individual or

Accompaniment	group identified as being vulnerable to physical attack. Placing obvious outsiders in a local situation is used by many nonviolent organisations to successfully protect people's lives and reduce violence against them. It is most effective when the accompanying organisation has a good relationship with authorities and a large external support base that can be mobilised quickly when needed.
Violence	Anything which prevents people from securing their basic needs and reaching their potential. Violence may be either or both direct and structural in nature.
Direct / Physical violence	Physical violence – hitting, shooting, bombing, destroying property; may also include non-physical violence such as emotional, psychological and spiritual abuse in an overt use of power over another.
Indirect / Structural Violence	Structural violence – the use of social systems, structures and institutions in a way that benefits one group over another. Racism, sexism, economic exploitation, political oppression, prejudice.
Domination System	a.k.a. Culture of Violence, Royal Consciousness, Powers That Be, The Way Things Are.
Partnership System	a.k.a. God's Domination-free Order, Culture of Peace, The Way Things Can Be, Alternative Consciousness, the Kingdom of God
Myth	A story that may or may not be factual but relates a commonly held belief or worldview by a group of people. See Wink (2003)
Conflict Transformation (CT)	The set of principles, values, practices, skills and actions that seek to bring positive and healthy change in conflict situations – whether at an intrapersonal, interpersonal, social, institutional, structural or systemic level. Conflict Transformation does not seek to prevent or stop conflict, rather sees conflict as a healthy opportunity for positive adaptation. CT, however, will work to

prevent and/or minimize *violent* conflict.

**Power /
Nonviolent Social
Power**

"Power" is used here to mean the totality of all influences and pressures, including sanctions, available to a group or society for use in maintaining itself, implementing its policies, and conducting internal and external conflicts.

Power may be measured by relative ability to control a situation, people, and institutions, or to mobilize people and institutions for some activity. Such power may be used to enable a group to achieve a goal; to implement or change policies; to induce others to behave as the wielders of power wish; to oppose or to maintain the established system, policies, and relationships; to alter, destroy, or replace the prior power distribution or institutions; or to accomplish a combination of these. (Sharp, 1990).

**Land-Based
Conflict**

Forced evictions, land-grabbing, physical violence caused between two dissenting parties (a community and a company, or two communities), the presence of both direct and indirect violence over the competing goals of two parties relating to land as a resource.