

9. There is a need to increase the level of serious academic and non-academic studies on issues concerning the peace process and the transformation of the nation. This would include systematic opportunities for reflection and analysis - something that many groups simply have not had the time to engage - and could include opportunities for cross-national analysis. Again, IDRC could request that the War-Torn Societies Guatemala project provide forums for reflection and analysis on themes relevant to Guatemalan civil society.

10. Organizations go through great changes at the start of a process like the transition to peace. It is a period of experimentation with new leaders and new structures. At times it is impossible to provide detailed proposals for future work because of the changing nature of the situation and the arrival of new actors. Funding for the project development stage is often essential in this period.

11. Roundtable participants noted that donor agencies need to be more flexible in their prerequisites during the transition period. It is important that the donor community not overwhelm national NGOs with competing, diverse demands. Coordination of international efforts should be an objective where possible. It is useful to have a realistic appraisal of local technical, administrative and organizational capacities. Donors' administrative requirements should take into account the current capacity of the NGOs in question and work with them to increase their administrative and technical capacity for effective project management. Contributions to the professionalization of NGOs trusted by the population is an important support to long term sustainable development.

12. Finally, it is important to remember that there is often a disjuncture between the expenditure curve and the learning curve of actors within civil society. Most funds are disbursed soon after an agreement is signed, when local communities and many NGOs are least able to articulate a coherent set of priorities, and organizations are least able to deploy resources effectively. This reflects the need for a longer term commitment as important new actors will be better able to administer funds in the future than they are soon after the signing of the peace.

As the Roundtable discussion drew to a close, the participants were reminded that cessation of hostilities and demobilization were significant first steps in what would be a longer term process to break with an inequitable and racist history. It is equally important that the Guatemalan people continue to articulate and implement a clear social vision based on the premises of the peace accords and inclusive of all its citizens.