Human Security in Post-Genocide Guatemala: Toward Collective Reparation and Reconstruction at the Micro and Meso Levels

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Introduction

The 36-year armed internal conflict in Guatemala (1960-96) wreaked a great deal of havoc, particularly in rural Mayan communities. The direct victims numbered, at least, 200,000 dead, 45,000 disappeared, and hundreds of thousands of refugees and internally displaced persons. The total number is estimated to surpass 10% of the entire population. According to a Commission for Historical Clarification (CEH) established by the Peace Accords, more than 90% of the massacres were attributable to the national security forces, with the URNG, a leftist guerrilla force, responsible for 3%. The Mayan indigenous population accounted for 83% of victims. 626 of their communities were literally eradicated from the map.

Ten years after the signing of the Peace Accords, almost half of the issues, particularly those related to the structural causes of the conflict (i.e. socioeconomic issues and agrarian problems, indigenous people's rights and reparation) still remain to be resolved. To make things worse, a sharp fall in the international market price of coffee – a pillar of the Guatemalan rural economy since the end of the 19th century – and the devastation caused by a series of huge hurricanes, have further damaged the human security of the majority.

There is nothing surprising in the fact that poverty and vulnerability are much higher in the regions heavily affected by the conflict. According to the World Bank, over half of all Guatemalans – 56% or about 6.4 million people – lived in poverty in 2000. About 16% lived in extreme poverty. Over 81% of the poor and 93% of the extremely poor live in the countryside. Poverty is also significantly higher among the indigenous (76% are poor) as compared with the non-indigenous population (41% are poor).

In this article, we will examine the struggle of the indigenous people to achieve a decent livelihood in post-conflict Guatemala. The discussion will begin with an analysis of the characteristics of the genocide in Guatemala, and will examine the present harsh living conditions from a human security perspective. Then we will examine the process of reparation and reconstruction programs since the conclusion of the Peace Accords. We will focus in particular upon the various collective reparation and reconstruction activities initiated by the indigenous people. We will conclude the article by considering the scope of action-oriented research at the micro and meso levels.

1. Genocide in Guatemala

1.1 Unearthing Genocide in Guatemala

Political violence in Latin America has been almost epidemic, and the systematic human rights violations in Southern Cone countries under military rule between the 1970's and the beginning of 80's are well known. Under the bipolar ideological antagonism of the Cold War, liberalist states framed National Security Doctrines (NSD hereafter) in which political activists, students, trade unionists, human rights advocates and other non-combatant civilians were considered "subversives". Agents of the state kidnapped, tortured, assassinated or forced these individuals to disappear in the name of anti-communist measures. However, mass killings definable as genocide were committed only in Guatemala.[1]

Despite this, other than those based upon the ideological framework of the Cold War, there had been few academic works on the internal conflict in Guatemala until recently. Since peace negotiations came into full effect in the early 90's, however, a good number of serious research projects have been carried out by an Archdiocesan Project for the Recovery of Historical Memory (*Recuperación de la Memoria Histórica*, REMHI hereafter), the Guatemalan Commission for Historical Clarification (*Comición para el Esclarecimiento Histórico de Guatemala*, CEH hereafter) and a group of forensic anthropologists (*Fondación de Antropologos Forense de Guatemala*, FAFG hereafter) among others, revealing the quite complex features of the causes and consequences of the conflict. The focus of these investigations has been to illustrate the causes of the genocide against the Mayan people and its social impact, in order to acquire the knowledge base necessary to frame the effective measures of prevention, justice, reparation and reconciliation.

Based on the testimony of more than 10,000 individuals involved in the massacres in some capacity, CEH drew the following conclusion.

> "Agents of the State of Guatemala, within the framework of counterinsurgency operations carried out between 1981 and 1983, committed acts of genocide against groups of Mayan people which lived in the four regions analyzed. This conclusion is based on the evidence that, in light of Article II of the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, the killing of members of Mayan groups occurred (Article II.a), serious bodily or mental harm was inflicted (Article II.b) and the group was deliberately subjected to living conditions calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part (Article II.c). The conclusion is also based on the evidence that all these acts were committed "with intent to destroy, in whole or in part" groups identified by their common ethnicity, by reason thereof, whatever the cause, motive or final objective of these acts may have been (Article II, first paragraph)."[2]

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[1] The horror and social wounds of the violence caused by Sendero Luminoso and national security forces in Peru may be comparable with those in Guatemala, as illustrated by the recent work of Santiago Roncagliolo, *Abril rojo*. However, the nature of the violence in Peru was political.

"These massacres and the so-called scorched earth operations, as planned by the State, resulted in the complete extermination of many Mayan communities, along with their homes, cattle, crops and other elements essential to survival. The cultural rights of the Mayan people were also violated. The Army destroyed ceremonial centres, sacred places and cultural symbols. Language and dress, as well as other elements of cultural identification, were targets of repression."[3]

Why did the Guatemalan army commit indiscriminate massacres, the destruction of the whole livelihood of and the entire elimination of the cultural symbols of the Mayan people? According to Lt. Gen. Prudencio Garcia of the Spanish army, who served as a military section chief of CEH, methods of state terror targeting city-dwellers were common in both cases, but as symbolized by an act of anthropophagy by soldiers, crimes against the rural indigenous people in Guatemala were carried out with extreme cruelty and savagery based on deep rooted racism.[4]

Since 1992, forensic anthropologists have conducted about 700 exhumations of clandestine grave sites (*cementerios clandestinos*). Their professional and extremely brave efforts, under constant death threats including against the members of their families, have unearthed a rich and complex picture of the genocide. (Moscoso 2006b)

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2) CEH, *Memoria de silencio*, Volume V, prf. 122.
Article II of the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, adopted by the United Nations General Assembly on 9 December 1948 and ratified by the Guatemalan State by Decree 704 on 30 November 1949 defines the crime of genocide and its requirements in the following terms:
"... genocide means any of the following acts committed with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial or religious group, as such:
a) Killing members of the group;
b) Causing serious bodily or mental harm to members of the group;
c) Deliberately inflicting on the group conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part;
d) Imposing measures intended to prevent births within the group;
e) Forcibly transferring children of the group to another group."
3) CEH. Vol. V, prf.86.
4) Garcia, Prudencio, *El genocidio de Guatemala a la luz de la sociologia military, Madrid*, SEPHA, 2005. According to Garcia, CEH has noted serious cruelty in many acts committed by agents of the state, especially members of the army, in their operations against Mayan communities. The counter-insurgency strategy not only led to violations of basic human rights, but also to the fact that these crimes were committed with particular cruelty, most typically in the form of massacres. In the majority of massacres there is evidence of multiple acts of savagery, which preceded, accompanied or occurred after the deaths of the victims. Acts such as the killing of defenseless children, often by beating them against walls or throwing them alive into pits where the corpses of adults were later thrown; the amputation of limbs; the impaling of victims; the killing of persons by covering them in petrol and burning them alive; the extraction, in the presence of others, of the viscera of victims who were still alive; the confinement of people who had been mortally tortured, in agony for days; the opening of the wombs of pregnant women, and other similarly atrocious acts, were not only actions of extreme cruelty against the victims, but also morally degraded the perpetrators and those who inspired, ordered or tolerated these actions. All these acts were also proved by the scientific works of the FAFG.

1.2 The "Internal Enemy": National Security Doctrine and Genocide of Indigenous People

Based on the NSD outlined by the US Army, the Guatemalan Army formulated a Counterinsurgency War Manual (*Manual de Guerra Contrainsurgente*) in 1965, setting three categories of groups as "Internal Enemies": (1) those elements and organizations which aim for the destruction of the existing order through illegal activities, (2) international communist organizations and their local allies, (3) those individuals, groups or organizations, not necessarily communist but suspected of plotting the destruction of the existing order.

The third category made it possible to define in a quite arbitrary manner an "Internal Enemy", that went beyond guerrilla sympathizers, combatants or militants to include almost all the civilians from specific ethnic groups. Specifically CEH notes that between 1981 and 1983 the army identified groups of the Mayan population as internal enemies, considering them to be an actual or potential support base for guerrillas, with respect to material sustenance, a source of recruits and a place to hide their members. The army's perception of Mayan communities as natural allies of the guerrillas contributed to the increased and flagrant violations of their human rights. According to the aforementioned Lt. Gen. Prudencio Garcia, the systematic indoctrination of this NSD - full of anti-democratic elements and systematic disrespect for human rights - inflicted heavy damage on the moral self-limitation of soldiers. The kidnapping, torture, and killing of "enemies" were permitted and, moreover, officially sanctioned.

During the second half of the 1970s, young elite officials affiliated with the Guatemalan Military Research Center elaborated the National Security and Development Doctrine (NSDD), which is a sophisticated version of the old NSD with new components relating to strategies of social and economic development. The establishment of the General Rios Montt regime, through a military coup supported by these young officials in 1982, was an announcement of the arrival of the most professional army in Guatemalan history, embracing the NSDD as a vital national goal. (Gramajo 1995: 179-181). The result was a sharp increase in the death tolls and disappearances as shown in figure 1.

Although the army has never recognized the fact of institutional violation of human rights, except in isolated cases of "excessive behavior", many massacres and other human rights violations committed under the Rios Montt regime against the Mayan population followed (or were faithful to) a higher, strategically planned policy. To begin with, the key concept of NSDD – that of the "Internal Enemy" - was translated culturally into various terms understandable within the context of each Mayan ethnic group. Those orthodox alien conceptual elements such as "communist", "subversive", "Cuban ally", as well as local terms such as "*tzuul*" or "*aj ilonel*" which mean devil or evil spirit, were used to categorize the local leaders suspected to be guerrilla members or informants. Those leaders - community authorities, religious leaders, teachers, or agriculture cooperative activists, etc. - , were executed, in many cases publicly, by cruel methods in order to dash the communities' spirit for resistance. Naturally those atrocious experiences demolished the moral capital of the communities and many members still suffer from the deep traumas caused during that violent period.

In parallel with the destruction of the legitimate authority structure of the communities,

militarization at the community level was enforced systematically through the establishment of the Civil Defense Patrols (*Patrullas de Autodefensa Civil*, PAC hereafter) and military commissioners. No less than one million people, almost all the male adults of the indigenous communities, were trained and mobilized by the army to carry out patrols and combat. During the course of training and practice, the cruelest members of the PAC were selected by local army commanders to command the new authoritarian structure in the communities. The unending saturation of terror and violence left serious psychological scars in the deepest layer of the Mayan communities. The result was a widespread cynicism about social alignments within and among communities. According to the CEH, under these mechanisms of control, the use of their own norms and procedures to regulate social life and resolve conflicts was prevented; the exercise of Mayan spirituality and the Catholic religion was obstructed, prevented or repressed; the maintenance and development of the indigenous peoples' way of life and their system of social organization was upset. (CEH Vol.V, prf. 86)

The scorched earth operations were followed by the "pacification" stage, known as "30% guns (killings) and 70% beans (development)" in the terminology of General Gramajo, Chief of Staff of the army at the time and later the Secretary of Defense (Gramajo 1995). According to this strategy, it is not necessary to kill all the people, if a potential threat of subversion could be deterred through agricultural modernization based on market oriented production and the consolidation of private land ownership in Mayan communities. Within the framework of NSDD, so-called "model villages" and "development polls" were established, gathering together survivors of genocide. A series of brainwashing programs were persistently implemented in these villages controlled by the army, in order to convert a group of 100,000 Mayan people with various ethnic origins and identities into "patriotic citizens" with "internalized national discipline"(REMHI 1998). The dismantling of the "logic of Milpa" was one of the central pillars in this "pacification" strategy. The "logic of Milpa" is a communitarian norm emphasizing equality and reciprocity among the community members based upon the cultivation of maize to which has been attached spiritual meaning as a prime source of life.[5]

The development component of the NSDD ended in complete failure. Jennifer Shirmer, an expert in the military strategy of this era, points out the superiority of hard liners ("guns") over the officials of civic-military action ("beans") as a major reason for the failure. As a result of incomprehension and disdain on the part of the former group against the "soft" faction, financial resources for the pacification process were greatly reduced and the comprehensive desk plan was broken apart in a few years (Shirmer 1998).

Besides the factional struggles within the Army, we can point out some important constraints, still relevant today, against rural development or poverty reduction programs in Guatemala. As is evident from the premise of low governance in Guatemala as illustrated in

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[5] In spite of its "purely indigenous" appearance, the "logic of Milpa" is actually a historical construct (trans)formed gradually under the oppressive policies against the indigenous people since the colonial period. As to the process of its historical formation and the complicated implications of its dismantlement, see Falla 1978, Cabarrús 1979, Annis 1987, Wilson 1995, Siebers 1999.

figure 2, it is difficult to believe that this kind of integral development program was capable of being implemented. In fact, there were few serious studies of human development, agricultural product development, technical training or marketing in those rural areas. The "model villages" were actually located in isolated areas without minimum infrastructure and access roads. How could those communities, exhausted by the scorched earth operations, begin "agricultural modernization based upon market oriented production" in such poor conditions?

In sum, the nightmarish combination of egregious systematic genocide and poorly coordinated unrealistic development plans under NSDD resulted in a serious destruction of indigenous communities in the rural area whose deep scars will remain for generations [6].

Figure 1. Number of killings and disappearances by month, 1979-1984
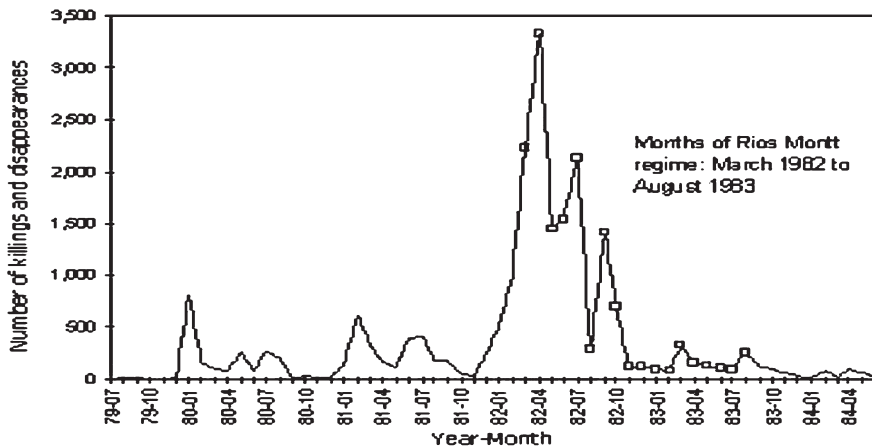
Source: Patrick Ball, Paul Kobrak, Herbert F. Spirer, *State Violence in Guatemala*, *1960-1996: A Quantitative Reflection*, American Association for the Advancement of Science, 1999

6) See the following studies for detailed analyses of the deep damages indigenous communities have suffered by the systematic genocide operations: Montejo 1987; Falla 1992; Diocesis del Quiche 1994; Wilson 1995; EAFG 1997; Carlsen 1997; Zur 1998; Manz 1988 and 2004.

Figure 2 Governance indicators in Guatemala (1996 and 2004)
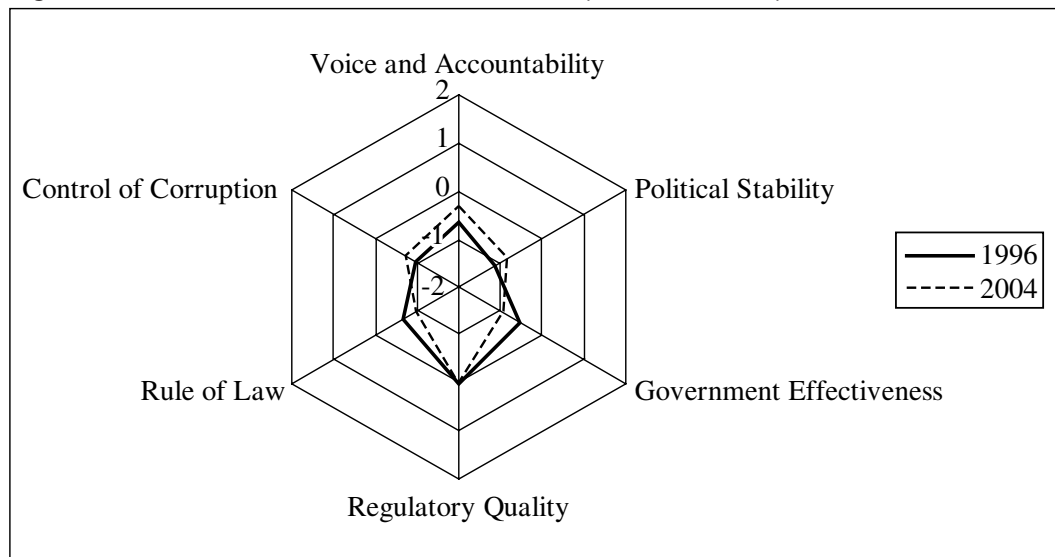
Note: The indicators are measured in units ranging from about -0.25 to 2.5, with higher values
    corresponding to better governance outcomes.
Source: Elaborated by us using the database of *Governance Matters IV*, World Bank 2004.

2. Slow Steps (or the Long Path) From National to Human Security

In any post-conflict society, in particular those Latin American countries undergoing transitional processes toward the consolidation of democracy, qualitative transformation of the concept of security and civil-military reconversion should be a prime agenda. For the consolidation of democracy, new definitions of the subject and object of security, as well as a new set of threats to security should be formulated with renewed institutions and appropriate measures under total civilian control. As mentioned above, NSD introduced the concept of an internal enemy as the major threat against the State and existing order, delegating to the army absolute authority and means to eliminate the subversive forces and the Mayan people.

The Agreement on the "Strengthening of Civil Society and the Role of the Military in Democratic Society" which forms a part of the Peace Accords, adopted a broad concept of security not limited to the military arena, reflecting the influence of the concept of human security elaborated by the UNDP. Items 18 and 19 of the Agreement declare clearly new concept of security as follows:

"18. Security is a broad concept not limited to the protection against external armed threats, which is the Army's responsibility, or protection against threats to public order and internal security, for which the National Civilian Police is responsible. The Guatemalan Peace Agreements as a whole stipulate that firm and durable peace requires respect for human rights, to the multiethnic, multicultural, and multilingual nature of the Guatemalan

nation; the country's economic development with social justice; social participation, reconciliation of interests, and strengthening democratic institutions."

"19. Within that concept, citizens' security and state security are inseparable from the full exercise by citizens of their political, economic, social, and cultural rights and duties. Social and economic imbalance, poverty and extreme poverty, social and political discrimination, corruption, among other things, constitute risk factors and direct threats for democratic coexistence, social peace, and consequently for democratic constitutional order."

Thus human security complements state security, furthers human development and enhances human rights in a multicultural society. It complements state security by being people-centered and addressing insecurity that has not thus far been considered a state security threat. Hence, the implementation of the Peace Accords, the transition from NSD to human security and the prevention of genocide share the same undertakings in post-conflict Guatemala.

Since the publication of the Final Report of the Commission on *Human Security*, Human Security Now, in May 2003, a significant amount of follow-up activities and research has been carried out[7] . According to the Final Report, human security means protecting vital freedoms. It means protecting people from critical and pervasive threats and situations, building on their strengths and aspirations. It also means creating systems that give people the building blocks of survival, dignity and livelihood. Human security connects different types of freedoms – freedom from want, freedom from fear and freedom to take action on one's own behalf. To do this, it offers two general strategies: *protection and empowerment* (CHS 2003).

Based on the Peace Accords and the development of the concept of human security, there are several signs of the introduction of human security into policy formulation by the current Guatemalan government. For example, in 2004 the Berger administration, under the coordination of Vice-President Eduardo Stein and the Presidential Human Rights Commission (*Comisión Presidencial Coordinadora de la Politica del Ejecutivo en Materia de Derechos Humanos*, COPREDEH hereafter), formulated the "*Seguridad Ciuadadana*" (citizens' security) program[8]. However, an examination of the current socioeconomic situation suggests the necessity of a more comprehensive application of human security policy in Guatemalan society, in particular in the rural areas where indigenous communities are still struggling to recover from the deep scars caused by the civil war.

2.1 Freedom from Fear in the Guatemalan Context

Respect for human rights is at the core of protecting human security. Freedom from fear in the Guatemalan context means, above all, the dismantling of NSD with its the apparatus of

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7) See the Commission on Human Security homepage (http:// www.humansecuity-chs.org/). The Human Security Center of the British Columbia University also has a lot of useful information (http://www.human securitycentre.org/).

8) Rosada-Granados 2004 offers an important theoretical base of citizens' security.

repression and the consolidation of rule of law. International cooperation has engaged in the consolidation of rule of law as a prime agenda, for example by providing training courses and financial resources for judiciary system reform. According to a coordinator of the Harvard University Training Program, however, the results have been far from satisfactory, not because of a lack of technical training or the capacities of judicial personnel, but because of the lack of political will of the civilian authorities and their weakness vis-à-vis the army and the oligarchy.[9]

The CEH pointed out clearly that the State of Guatemala failed to comply with the obligation to investigate and punish acts of genocide committed in its territory. More than six years have passed since this statement, but no significant progress has been made. What is even worse, a number of backward steps have even been taken. Military officers denounced the CEH reports as biased and President Arzu refused to accept it personally in the official presentation ceremony. Bishop Juan Gerardi, coordinator of the REMHI project, was brutally murdered two days after the publication of the report. In the 1999 general election, the *Frente Republicano Guatemalteco* (FRG), a party founded and led by General Rios Montt, achieved an overwhelming victory in congress, including those districts most affected by genocide, and obtained the post of President of the Congress for the General. Although he lost in the presidential election in 2003, he is still very active and influential politically, and is waiting for the next opportunity for the presidency in 2007. A clandestine security apparatus is also operating on the margins of power, targeting forensic anthropologists, human rights activists and members of the victims' organizations who seek either to unearth evidence of genocide or to bring their perpetrators - Rios Montt and others - to justice. As a consequence none of about 700 cases of exhumations mentioned above has yet been judged in the national courts of Guatemala (Moscoso 2006b). Thus the unearthed truth has been hardly acknowledged.

At the end of 2005, after the tireless efforts of Rigoberta Menchú, the Spanish *Audiencia National* (special criminal court) recognized the universal jurisdiction of genocide and ordered by way of the Guatemalan court the investigation of eight Guatemalans including Rios Montt. This is a symbolic but exceptional case against impunity.

On the other hand, the Peace Accords have accomplished some progress recently. After more than six years of harsh pressures at home and abroad, the Presidential High Command (*Estado Mayor de Presidencia*, EMP) - the bastion of the most systematic and cruelest human rights violations - was dismantled at last in July, 2003. The Berger administration announced in April 2004 the modernization program of the army, and reduced its personnel and budget by 50%. The defense spending share in Guatemala is the second lowest after Mexico among main Latin American countries at 0.47% of GDP in 2005. Moreover, a new military doctrine replacing the NSDD was finally submitted to President Berger in June 2005. This new doctrine states clearly that "the discipline and the honor of the Army rest in legality, the respect of human rights and democracy". The new doctrine has a few problems. Almost all the officers are

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9) Statement of Philip Heymann Ames, Director of Criminal Justice Center of the Harvard University on Subcommitte of Western Hemispheric Affairs, Committee of Foreign Affairs, US House of Representatives, July 17, 1990.

a product of the NSD and a number of military personnel were incorporated into a newly formed civilian police (PNC) without screening their histories for any human rights violations. Impunity remains quite persistent[10].

The promotion of democratic principles is, as the Commission on Human Security emphasizes, a step toward attaining human security and development. It requires building strong institutions, establishing the rule of law and empowering people, thus enabling people to participate in governance and make their voices heard. However, Guatemalan public opinion has not been so optimistic as regards its prospects. As shown in Table 1, the preference for democracy in Guatemala has been decreasing steadily since 1996, the year of the Peace Accords, so that it now occupies the bottom rank among the 18 Latin American countries. Only one third of Guatemalans consider democracy as the most favorable potential political regime. Similarly, the degree of confidence in essential democratic institutions and market mechanisms such as administration of justice, congress, political parties, and the police is extremely low at between 10 and 20%. Considering the quite low level of governance indicators such as voice and accountability, control of corruption, government effectiveness, and rule of law (figure 2), it is not too much to say that Guatemalan democracy has been constantly in a state of crisis.

Table 1 Preference toward Democracy

	1996	1997	1998	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	Rank among LA-18(2004)	Changes 1996-200
Guatemala	51%	48	54	45	33	45	33	35	18	-16
Average La-18	61%	62	62	60	48	56	53	53	-	-8

Source: Latinobarómetro (2004) *Informe-Resumen de una década de medición.*

2.2 Freedom from Want in the Guatemalan Context

Chronic poverty remains pervasive in Guatemala. Together with addressing chronic poverty, human security includes paying serious attention to "down side risks", that is, sudden economic downturns caused by natural and socio-economic environmental changes such as hurricanes or free trade agreements with the United States.

According to an assessment of poverty in Guatemala (GUAPA), a comprehensive study by the World Bank based on the census data of 2000, the majority of the poor (79%) are chronic poor, whereas only a fifth are transient poor. 64% of the population could be considered

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10) The detection of the Military Police Archive (*Archivo Policiaco*) shows a good example of the persistence of impunity. In July 2005, more than 70 million documents relating to the military police activities (1902 to 1996) were found in an old house used as a clandestine cage and ammunition bunker in downtown Guatemala City. Moreover, within a half year following this discovery, millions of documents were found in 30 police stations. The army has denied over the years the existence of these documents. All the materials are in the hands of PDH (Human Rights Ombudsman's Office), and 50 workers are engaged in the classification of the documents by hand in order to clarify the history of state criminals and digitalize them for durable and systematic documentation.

vulnerable to poverty, and the majority of these are vulnerable due to overall low expected consumption rather than high volatility of consumption. Malnutrition rates among children are significantly high – among the worst in the world. Some 44% of children under five suffer from stunted growth. There is a strong correlation between chronic poverty and malnutrition, as four fifths of malnourished children are poor. Guatemala also ranks poorly in terms of health outcomes. Guatemala ranks among the worst Latin American countries for life expectancy, infant mortality and maternal mortality (World Bank 2000).

Despite the lack of any major macro shocks in 2000, households in Guatemala report a high incidence of shocks that year, and most households experienced multiple shocks with varying durations of impact. The effects of shocks are multi-dimensional, affecting not only income, wealth and consumption, but also community assets, the psychological and social well-being of individuals, families and communities, health and education. The poor are more exposed to natural disasters and agriculture-related shocks. Possible sources of vulnerability in the future include: (a) worsening terms-of-trade and job loss (e.g., those associated with the crisis in the coffee sector); and (b) natural disasters. (Tesliuc and Lindert 2002). We can add to this list the unpredictable impact of CAFTA-DR on the rural poor as analyzed by Hisamatsu and Osawa in the same volume.

The above analysis suggests that the majority of the people, and particularly the rural indigenous population in Guatemala are vulnerable to poverty, and once they fall into poverty they will have very little opportunity to escape it. Thus, the chronic nature of poverty and vulnerability highlights the importance of building the assets of the poor. But in Guatemala, public policies have contributed greatly over the years to an exclusionary pattern of development. With Gini indices for consumption and income of 48 and 57 respectively, Guatemala ranks among the more unequal countries of the world, with the top quintile accounting for 54% of total consumption. There are significant inequities across ethnic groups. Although indigenous peoples represent 43% of the population, they claim less than a quarter of total income and consumption (World Bank 2000).

The Peace Accords represented a turning point for Guatemala's development path, paving the way for the equitable distribution of resources indispensable for human security. But as pointed out by Victor Montejo based on his experience as head of the Ministry of Peace (SEPAZ), those items stipulated in the Agreement on Social and Economic Aspects and the Agrarian Situation have been polemical and hardly implemented.

Putting all these interrelating facts together, we can understand that the very high level of chronic poverty and vulnerability in Guatemala are historical consequences of the exclusionary development pattern, massacres and extermination of the communal forms of livelihood, delay in the accomplishment of the Peace Accords because of the lack of political will, and quite a low level of governance. Table 2 and the following quotation illustrate emblematically these disastrous consequences. Almost half (49%) of Guatemalan households are exposed to various shocks without any social protection mechanisms. This is probably the most egregious effect of the armed conflict and genocide.

"Faced with shocks, Guatemalan households tend to rely primarily on their own assets, with little Government assistance. The main coping strategies include reduced consumption or self-help. The poor are less equipped than the non-poor to fight shocks, and are more likely to reduce consumption (regrettably, of basic staples) or use existing assets (particularly labor). Indeed, existing public social protection programs are poorly targeted and inefficient."

"…social capital in Guatemala is mainly concentrated in strong horizontal, within-village connections, with weaker bridges to other communities or links to formal institutions. This pattern reflects the physical isolation of many communities and decades of civil war and exclusion. Moreover, social capital appears to be concentrated among the more privileged groups, with women, the poor, and the uneducated significantly less likely to participate at the community level." (Tesliuc and Lindert 2002)

Table 2 Main Coping Mechanisms, by Type of Shock

Type of Shock	Did nothing	Self-insurance	Informal	Insurance	Governme nt	Reduced consum.	NGOs/Int'l	Total
Earthquake	41	7	3	40	-	9	-	100
Drought	60	20	3	10	0.5	8	0.3	100
Floods	58	10	10	9	1.1	10	1.4	100
Tempest	61	16	6	10	-	6	0.7	100
Hurricane	41	21	3	23	-	11	0.3	100
Pest	58	18	5	15	0.3	4	0.5	100
Land_Slides	66	15	0	15	-	4	-	100
Forest_Fires	69	7	11	9	-	3	-	100
Enterprise_Closure	59	19	4	5	6.2	7	-	100
Mass_Lay_offs	70	10	2	11	-	7	-	100
Public_Protest	46	7	-	21	-	27	-	100
Job_Loss	37	25	7	9	0.2	21	0.2	100
Income_Drop	32	26	3	7	-	32	-	100
Bankruptcy	51	29	-	12	-	9	-	100
Accident_Breadwinner	26	18	23	22	0.1	10	0.6	100
Death_Breadwinner	21	44	10	20	-	5	-	100
Death_Other_HH_Meml	28	9	32	22	-	9	-	100
Abandon_Breadwinner	35	53	3	3	-	7	-	100
Fire	21	-	10	69	-	-	-	100
Criminal_Offense	79	7	4	3	-	5	3.0	100
Land_Dispute	57	23	6	14	-	-	-	100
Family_Dispute	60	9	18	7	-	7	-	100
Lost_Remittances	31	24	10	16	-	19	-	100
Lost_TOT	59	21	1	6	0.2	12	-	100
Lost_Harvest	50	26	5	10	0.1	8	1.0	100
Total	49	19	7	16	0.3	10	0.3	100

Source: Tesliuc and Lindert 2002.

Our analyses so far reveal bleak prospects for human security in Guatemala in every respect. A major challenge for any advancement is the realization of reparation for the profound damages suffered by the victims of armed conflict. As we will see in the next section, the recent bitter struggle of the National Reparation Committee (*Comisión Nacional para el Resarcimiento*, CNR hereafter) reveals the enormous difficulty of this matter.

2.3 An Interim Assessment of the Reparation Process: The Actual State of the National Reparation Committee

As is the case with reparation programs for large-scale internal conflicts in other parts of the world, the Guatemalan program has confronted a series of difficulties: too many victims for too small resources, time limits because of the aging of victims, low governance and lack of technical expertise to carry out a complex program efficiently, among other things. Moreover, careful observers of the political processes concerning the reparation process in Guatemala can easily find that the CNR is just a microcosm of Guatemalan political society, and all the difficulties surrounding the CNR are nothing less than epitomized version of the problems in society as a whole.

In order to examine the current situation of the reparation process, let us review the four principal measures for comprehensive reparation recommended by CEH (CEH 1999, Volume V).

a) Measures for the restoration of material possessions so that, as far as is possible, the situation existing before the violation be re-established, particularly in the case of land ownership.

b) Measures for the indemnification or economic compensation of the most serious injuries and losses resulting as a direct consequence of the violations of human rights and of humanitarian law.

c) Measures for psychosocial rehabilitation and reparation, which should include, among others, medical attention and community mental health care, and likewise the provision of legal and social services.

d) Measures for the satisfaction and restoration of the dignity of the individual, which should include acts of moral and symbolic reparation.

In answer to these recommendations, victims' associations, human rights groups and the Portillo administration reached a basic agreement on a reparation program in 2003 (PNR, 2003). Finally, the Berger administration established the long awaited NRC in July 2004 with the mandate to devise a program for reparations to victims of the armed conflict. Rosalina Tuyuc, a highly respected leader of the Mayan Widows Organization, was selected as president of the CNR. The government pledged an annual budget of 300 million quetzals for 10 years, although the victims' groups demanded at least 600 million quetzals for 36 years.

Unfortunately in less than two years from its birth, the CNR has almost ceased to function. At the end of 2005, only 8,000 people among over 250,000 candidates were registered in the reparation program. Little more than 10% of the total budget was disbursed, of which 80% was used for the current expenditure of the Commission. Rosalina Tuyuc refuses to receive any salary from it. In sum, a mere 258 individuals were beneficiaries of the program. What went wrong with the program?

In a meeting with us in August 2005, Rosalina Tuyuc summarized the difficulties confronting the CNR in the six points outlined below.

a) Lack of political will.

Failure of fiscal reform is emblematic of the lack of political will for the accomplishment of the Peace Accords. Further, the absence of legislation for a reparation program recommended by the CEH has made it extremely difficult to prioritize the reparation program with adequate money and time.

b) Low governance

Bureaucratic procedures are very complicated and take too much time and labor: e.g. the issuance of IDs or death certificates. The lack of experience and expertise of the personnel of the secretariat of the Commission have delayed considerably the identification and registration of eligible persons for reparation, whose number is estimated to reach 250,000.

c) Political confrontation

The first clash within the CNR was between the representatives of the civil society who demanded the recognition of the genocide as the basis for determining a compensatory scale, and the government delegates who refused the demand categorically. Another latent, but very serious arena of confrontation among civil society representatives has been the hegemonic influence of ex-guerrillas over some representatives. Rosalina Tuyuc and her allies have been fighting very strongly for years to attain autonomy from those political factions and sects.

d) Confrontation along the line of ethnicity

Suspicion between indigenous and non-indigenous representatives within civil society groups have been so deep that every appointment or dismissal of the personnel of the CNR created friction along ethnic lines, in some cases escalating into court battles. There are many background factors to this confrontation, from historical issues to personal rivalries, but the matter of recognition of the genocide as the main feature of the armed conflict has been an essential factor, because this recognition favors collective reparation to the indigenous communities over individual reparation.

e) Social confrontation

All these conflicts spilled over to civil society in various ways. The possibility of benefits of the reparation program has further escalated the division and confrontation among and within communities.

f) Discrimination against vulnerable people

Rosalina Tuyuc deplored the persistent discrimination and disdain against the aged indigenous widows who are the most vulnerable and numerous among the victims. For them, along with social protection, reconciliation with the victims, that is, searches for their husbands and children and remembrance of them and exhumation and inhumation in

conformity with their proper rituals, signifies a first step to the future. But the exhumation and dignity for the victims have been the most disregarded issue during the peace process and reparation program.

 Isaacs (2006) makes similar points to Tuyuc's analysis. According to her, the Berger administration hoped the PNR would enable it to defuse political tensions by offering compensation to indisputably worthy victims of the armed conflict and, more generally, by substituting material and symbolic reparations for legal justice. In spite of creating an instance and opportunity to build consensus to push forward the Peace Accords, "the government merely succeeded in transferring unresolved differences from Congress and the courts into a new arena, which soon became a magnet of its own for battles, familiar and fresh, over how to confront the past" (Isaacs, 2006). According to another expert on Guatemalan politics, the government's decision to establish a reparations commission was a political manoeuvre, undertaken in an effort to extricate itself from something of a quagmire caused by the lingering debate over payments to former PAC members along with unsettled (and unsettling) claims for justice upon which survivors continued to insist.

Considering this, it is not surprising that the government decided to intervene in the Commission to redirect the rest of its budget to the national program of reconstruction in the areas affected by Hurricane Stan in 2005. Victor Montejo expresses strong concern in the same volume about the politicization of the reparation program, and the leaving behind of the victims of the conflict, and calls attention to the fact that the target region of this program is a heartland of coffee plantation - bastion of the traditional oligarchy.

3. Toward Collective Reparation and Reconstruction at the Micro and Meso Levels

Guatemala has started her slow steps toward "freedom from fear" and "freedom from want", but with frequent setbacks, the goal is far away. There is no easy way to overcome the roadblocks built up historically by the path of exclusionary development and the devastating effects of genocide. And yet, in our repeated meetings with various members of the CNR, representatives of the victims' organizations, key government officials and community leaders, we found that, in spite of the gloomy perspective at the nation-wide macro level, many held great hope for the future based on their daily struggles at the micro and meso levels.

3.1 The rise of collective efforts for reparation and reconstruction

First of all, we can not emphasize enough the importance of the fact that the indigenous people have begun to fulfill important roles in the process. Montejo cites the major achievements in terms of the legislative agenda of the indigenous people since the signing of the Peace Accords such as the *Ley de Idiomas Nacionales* (law of national languages) (2003), the *Ley Marco de los Acuerdos de Paz* (framework law for the Peace Accords) (2005). See Montejo (2005) and

his article in this volume for more on the recent trend of national policy with regard to indigenous people and the roles of indigenous leaders in national politics. We have also come across various initiatives and projects led by local leaders and civil organizations in the field.

We believe that the upsurge of these collective efforts in terms of the initiative of indigenous people at micro and meso levels has a crucial importance in the struggle for ensuring their human security. First and foremost, let us recall that the definition of genocide legitimizes the priority of collective reparation. Most importantly of all, genocide is, by definition, a crime with the intent of eliminating a certain group collectively. Thus it is a logical consequence that the forms of reparation should be collective. As a matter of fact, it should be noted that it is practically almost impossible to separate the victims and perpetrators clearly at local level, in particular in the cases of massacres committed by the PAC, as many testimonies in the CEH and REMHI have described.

The collective implementation of reparation needs a marked focus upon the capacity development of the CNR. There is a great need for assistance in such tasks as the identification and registration of eligible people, the elaboration and implementation of programs for collective reparation, and the empowerment and realignment of social capital at local level, among others. In addition, the mediation for reconciliation and consensus building within the CNR, in particular among representatives of civil society, is a priority agenda for international cooperation.

Collective reparation with due concern given to the concept of dignity, such as recuperation of the collective memory at community level may contribute to the recovery of a legitimate authority system and reinforcement of social alignments. In this regard, the activities of the NGO *Historial para La Paz* for the construction of community peace museums provides us with a highly suggestive model (Moscoso 2006a).

We should also bear in mind that these collective efforts are deployed across various sectors of both reparation and reconstruction: the battle against impunity, the establishment of rule of law, the recovery and build-up of social alignments and assets to reduce chronic poverty and vulnerability at community levels. This fact suggests that reconstruction and reparation can complement each other. In this regard, we agree with Naomi Roht-Arriaza when she emphasizes the priority needs for collective reparation, in the form of social and economical development at the local territorial level, in a post-genocide society (Rhot-Arriaza 2004). These collective efforts at reparation and reconstruction based on initiatives of the indigenous peoples should be implemented in a cautious and coordinated way. For example, target areas should be selected carefully at the micro level using indicators such as chronic poverty, vulnerability and massacres, along with testimony. Indeed, there are already valid criticisms and precautions against the coupling of development programs with reparation, as suggested in the case of the deviation of the fund for reparation toward the reconstruction of the areas damaged by Hurricane Stan.

For all this, it does not necessarily mean that the indigenous peoples are capable of realizing collective actions in a perfectly harmonious way. As has already been frankly pointed out by the eminent leaders of indigenous groups such as Tuyuc and Montejo, the indigenous people are not a monolithic entity. There exist diverse standpoints, and discords are inevitable when tackling sensitive issues of post-conflict reparation and reconstruction. Whether Mayan,

Ladino, or Japanese, no human beings can be free from discordance when dealing with issues of the real world.

The most important thing is the fact that the indigenous people have begun to hold places in the modern public arena such as the national congress, municipalities and civil organizations more than ever before. In particular, it should be noted that grass-roots NGOs in rural areas are now going through an historic institutional metamorphosis in the new working environment. Some of them have started to adopt "modern" practices such as systematic procedures (planning, monitoring, and evaluation etc.) and documentation in both Spanish and indigenous languages, in addition to generations-old face-to-face oral ways of doing things (see box below for an actual example).

Keeping these points in mind, we believe that the international community, including researchers, can offer support to these collective endeavors through various channels. Let us observe the scope of concrete actions in more detail in the following sections.[11].

3.2 The Scope of Action Oriented Research for Collective Reconstruction at the Meso and Micro Levels

The current situation presented in the above sections highlights the urgent necessity to address the human security issues of the indigenous population. Given the mounting problems indigenous people face presently, we believe that it is imperative to coordinate the following two activities at the micro and meso levels:

(1) Elaborate research on the pressing human security issues
(2) Empowerment of local communities

Evidently the ownership of the local stakeholders must be respected above all. And yet, as is suggested from our analysis, many local communities still lack the personnel and managerial framework indispensable for analyzing the current situation, planning and implementing programs for its betterment. We believe that there is much room for researchers to contribute in the form of action-oriented research, even if its scale is quite modest in comparison with ordinary development aids. One merit of small scale action-oriented research is that, when appropriately coordinated, it facilitates the cycle of intensive monitoring, data examination, and proposals for improvement at the local level.

We and our colleagues interested in human security issues of the indigenous people in

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11) In the area of dignity, we have carried out the following activities: translation of the REMHI reports into Japanese which have gone through several editions still now; international symposiums and colloquiums with prominent leaders struggling for human rights and human security in Guatemala, such as Victor Montejo, Fernando Moscoso, and Sergio Morales (Human Rights Ombudsman). These activities, we believe, have had an effect in heightening the awareness of Japanese society, in particular its official development cooperation, on the human security issues in Guatemala. For example, Moscoso's activities in forensic anthropology and community peace museums appeared in several media outlets in Japan, for example the morning editions of *Asahi Shinbun* (April 1st 2006, and April 16th 2006).

Guatemala have explored the possibility of action-oriented research in collaboration with local communities. We think that there are many areas in which researchers can make contributions by bringing together their expertise such as in agronomics, economics, applied linguistics, and cognitive sciences. Below we present our general framework for action-oriented research with food security as its central pillar, in consideration of the remarkably high degree of malnutrition of indigenous children.

(1) Recovery of the basis of livelihood: revitalization of the cultivation of amaranthus

One of the most serious blows local communities have been suffering after the armed conflict is the forfeit of the generations-old indigenous basis of livelihood. Here we wish to focus on the cultivation of amaranthus. Amaranthus is a species of crop of Mesoamerican origin, and because of its high nutritional value and fertility, it is now cultivated in various parts of the world (Sauer 1955, Sauer 1967, Bressani et al. 1987). However, in Guatemala the cultivation of amaranthus has been impeded since the colonial period. First, it was prohibited under the colonial regime because of its importance for the indigenous religion. Moreover, the 36 year armed conflict has dealt it a fatal blow. In contrast to its increasing worldwide popularity, both the plant and knowledge concerning it are in danger of extinction in the place of its origin. Considering its historical, symbolic and nutritional importance, we believe that the revitalization of the cultivation of amaranthus can be a central pillar of the strengthening of human security and reparation at the local level.

(2) Lifestyle innovations and "repatriated crops"

An interesting point of the recent popularity of amaranthus is the fact that various innovative attempts have been made concerning its cultivation, processing and cooking methods in various parts of the world (Paredes-Lopes ed. 1994, Barros and Buenrostro 1997, Webpage of *Centro de Información al Consumidor de Amaranto*). Many of these innovations naturally involve the introduction of practices which are quite new to the rural sector, such as the systematic monitoring of crop growth, the use of manuals, bookkeeping, and the like. They provide good opportunities for non-formal education and improvement of living conditions for adults, especially for adult women who have generally received little formal education[12]. Furthermore, it is worthwhile to note that, if appropriately processed and coordinated, the crop has the potential for commercialization.

(3) Coping with the market economy

The strengthening of food security in rural areas must take into consideration not only the recuperation of indigenous age-old practices, but also a coping strategy to deal with the dynamism of the macro market economy. As is pointed out by Hisamatsu and Osawa in this volume, organizational efforts at the village level, institutional policies in rural areas, and

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[12] See Nakamura and Hisamatsu 2005 for an example of action-oriented research on the document management of Quechua speaking women in Bolivia. For an historical analysis of document management practices of indigenous people in Highland Bolivia, see Yoshie and Nakamura 2006.

support for non-formal education for adults are crucial in order for the local people to cope with the influences of the imminent implementation of CAFTA-DR.

(4) Support for the self-examination of the activities of local civil organizations

The protagonists of the above-mentioned activities are naturally local indigenous people, in particular self-managed civil organizations. Although there still remain many tasks to accomplish, we can not over-emphasize the importance of these organizations in efforts for the reparation of the victims and the reconstruction of indigenous communities. In order for them to keep fulfilling these roles in accordance with the ever changing social environment, it is time to review their activities up to now critically.

One prerequisite condition for a productive assessment of the past activities is the building up of archives of documents these organizations have produced and received since their commencement. These documents are invaluable sources for historical studies of the struggle of indigenous people since the conflict. It should also be noted that many documents are written in indigenous languages. They can serve as a benchmark for their activities in the future.

3.3 An Ongoing Case: The JICA Training course on public policy and administration for indigenous leaders (since 2005)

As an actual ongoing example of this general framework, we will now consider the capacity development program for the indigenous leaders of local civil organizations.

As is pointed out in the preceding sections, one of the remarkable recent trends in Guatemala is the rise of indigenous leaders in the public arena. On a research trip to Guatemala in August 2004, we had opportunities to exchange opinions with local leaders such as mayors, local assembly representatives, NGO representatives, school headmasters and development project coordinators. Given the reparation stalemate at the national level, these encounters have inspired us to envision an idea for a program of capacity development of local public policy for them. Japanese International Cooperation Agency, (hereafter JICA) adopted the idea as a three year training course of public policy and administration (*Curso de "Fortalecimiento de la Política y Administración Pública"*).

The ultimate goal of the program is the provision of training in local public policy to a total of thirty local indigenous leaders through seminars and workshops in Japan. Figure 3 illustrates the concept of the course. Lecture groups A to D are composed of 2 to 8 specific themes, such as the four frameworks presented in the previous section, experiences of social development in rural villages during post-war Japan, food security at the local level, and management of the local public sector in the regional market economy.

It is expected that the participants will subsequently work as nodes of the social web within local organizations, local governments and institutions of the central government, and collaborate with each other to formulate and implement projects of collective reparation coupled with social and economic development at the local level.

As criteria for selection of the participants, we relied upon the poverty and marginality

indicators, the list of massacred communities in the CEH reports, and recommendations obtained by dozens of meetings with various organizations. Each participant was required to prepare a diagnosis of the municipality and/or organization they represent, and a mid-term action plan. If thirty leaders selected by these criteria could develop a collaborative network among themselves, with resources from various sources including those from the reparation program and Japan, then we believe there is hope that changes for the improvement of human security at meso level will take place.

The first round of the program was realized in 2005 within a framework of the official technical cooperation of JICA under full coordination by us and our colleagues. Eight carefully selected leaders and government representatives participated in three week intensive course in Tokyo and other cities. All classes were conducted in Spanish, directly with Spanish speaking instructors in many classes. Abundant materials, many of them digitalized in Spanish, were provided in each class.

Although we still need improvement in several aspects of the program such as coordination between the lectures and workshops, as a whole the participants expressed a high degree of satisfaction and demonstrated a good level of understanding of our messages according to the evaluation in Japan and the follow-up seminar in Guatemala,. Some of them made proposals for follow-up agendas and activities such as:

(a) Recontextualizing Japanese experiences into the socio-economical conditions and historical experiences of the armed conflict in each municipality they represent

(b) Instituting a network among organizations they represent

(c) Putting into practice Japanese experiences of livelihood improvement through groupings of indigenous women at community level

As an immediate output of the first round, we can mention two major accomplishments. First of all, cultivation and consumption of amaranthus is expanding rapidly as a process of the recovery of the basis of livelihood, the empowerment of indigenous women's groups and reconstruction of social alignments, according to a report sent to us recently by some participants (See box below). Secondly, the public response was overwhelmingly positive. The results of the course were covered widely by newspapers and television in Guatemala[13]

We are now preparing for the follow-up seminar for the participants of the first round in Guatemala in August, and for the second round scheduled for March 2007.

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13) For example, the article titled "Becarios, alumnos y testigos (Scholarship recipients, students and testimony)" with color photos in the Sunday edition of *El Periodico* of January 10th, 2006 says:
"Eight Guatemalans learned in Japan that any idea can be successful if those involved pull it in the same direction with a rope – even if the rope is an imaginary one. They are testimony to the hope that changes are going to come. They returned to their communities and organizations to put into practice what they learned."

Figure 3 Concept map for the Capacity Development on Local Public Policy
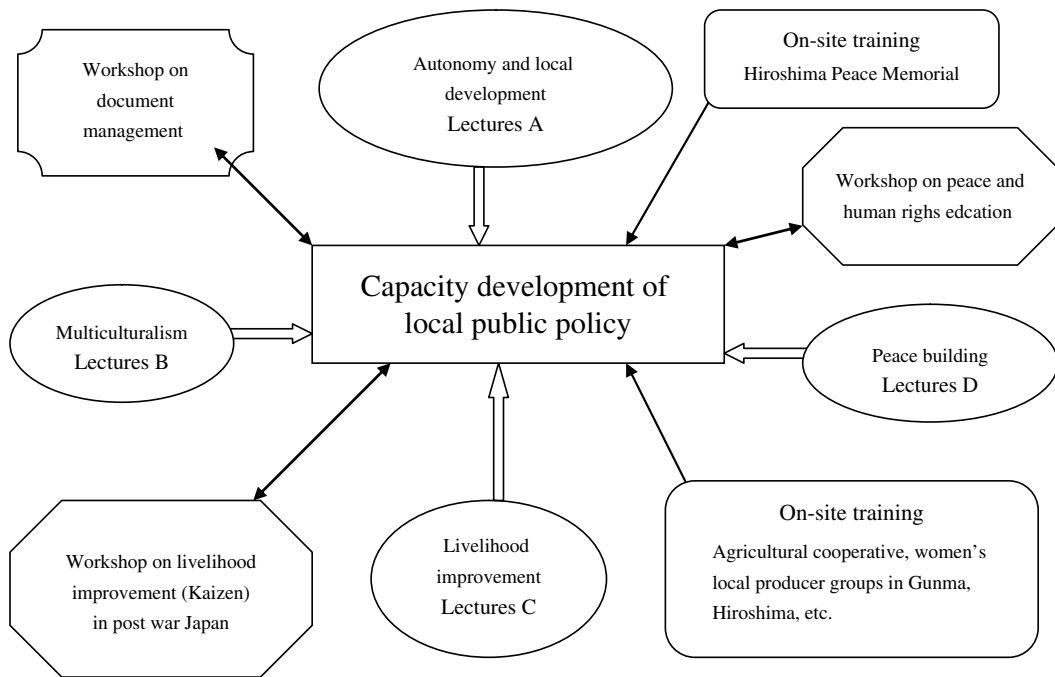
Box: A flash report on local initiatives for the establishment of human security through the cultivation of amaranthus

At the end of May 2006, we received an activity report from the *Asociación Xch'ool Ixim*, an NGO of Alta Verapaz. *X'chool Ixim* (Heart of Corn) was founded in 1993 in the community of Peña Blanca of the Municipality of Coban, and now it is deploying activities in six municipalities of the Department of Alta Verapaz in which many inhabitants are monolingual Q'ueqchi' with little educational background. Their activities comprise literacy education for adult women, recuperation and promotion of local indigenous culture, community development and promotion of citizens' participation in politics. In 2005 two of their members participated in the above-mentioned JICA training course.

According to the report, 450 households in 10 communities started to cultivate amaranthus a few years ago at the initiative of female participants of adult literacy classes and they have succeeded in producing 560 pounds of amaranthus this year. The report says:

"Despite the lack of technical support, the obtained harvest was very encouraging, and the crop was cooked in four distinct ways, namely fresh leaves, atoles, sweets, and tamales. As we still lack the know-how to commercialize the product of this fabulous grass, most was consumed in the communities, with some seeds kept for the next sowing, as they have decided to continue to cultivate it.

The people have learned to sow seeds, clean the field and harvest in a group, thus enabling them to live together, and convincing them that unity gives power." (Xch'ool Ixim 2006: 5)[14]

Conclusion

The genocide against indigenous people in Guatemala is indisputably a truly regrettable consequence of the long-standing distorted structure of Guatemalan society. The truth unearthed has been hardly acknowledged and impunity remains quite persistent. What is more, it is also the principal cause of the current menace to their ever worsening living conditions, as is revealed by a range of socioeconomic data. The remarkably high levels of chronic poverty and vulnerability among indigenous people are an historical consequence of the exclusionary development pattern, massacres and extermination of communal forms of livelihood, and delay in the accomplishment of the Peace Accords due to a low level of governance.

Despite those mounting obstacles, various actors have been struggling to deter the age-old vicious cycle since the conclusion of the Peace Accords in 1996. In particular, it is remarkable that many collective efforts at different levels have been blossoming at the initiative of the indigenous people, a situation which was difficult to imagine ten years ago. We consider this to be vital for ensuring human security on their own, and there is much room for the international community to provide support in these endeavors. Among others, we are focusing upon the local initiatives such as NGOs for social development, and searching for the possibility of action-oriented research with food security as its central pillar.

As is well known, most of the wars in the contemporary world are civil conflicts (cf. Collier et al. 2003). Although the cruelty of the genocide of the indigenous people in Guatemala is egregious in every respect, the resultant threat of human security of the victims is unfortunately not uncommon these days. And yet, we believe that we can draw an important lesson from Guatemala. It is a fact that the indigenous people have managed to go through ten years of hardship after the armed conflict with support from both national and international backers, and they have begun to demonstrate more initiative in the struggle for their human security.

The framework of action-oriented research we explained in the last section is an attempt to cope with this task. It is our duty to keep reshaping our support strategy flexibly in answer to their changing conditions, uncertainties and hopes. We believe it is worthwhile to share the lessons from these experiences with people tackling similar challenges in other parts of the world.

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14) The original text in Spanish.
"Las estudiantes a pesar de no contar con una tecnificación en el cultivo de Amaranto, las cosechas obtenidas fueron muy alentadoras y las cosechas fueron consumidas de 4 formas distintas, hojas tiernas, en atoles, en dulce y en tamales. Ya que fue difícil contar con una comercialización del producto por el escaso conocimiento en el medio de esta fabulosa hierba, sin embargo fue aprovechada en su mayoría por las comunidades y se cuenta con una reserva de semilla para seguirla cultivando, ya que las comunidades siguen cultivándola actualmente.
Las estudiantes, aprendieron a hacer sus semillero para el cultivo, así como también a hacer la limpia y sus respectivas cosechas de una forma grupal, permitiendo de esta manera un convivencia en el grupo y estar convencidas que la unión hace la fuerza."

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