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Item Type	Book
Authors	Prendergast, John
Publisher	Life & Peace Institute
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OCCASIONAL PAPER

Post-conflict programming

John Prendergast

PUBLICATIONS FOR PEACE EDUCATION
Life & Peace INSTITUTE

Post-Conflict Reconciliation Programming

by John Prendergast

POST-CONFLICT RECONCILIATION PROGRAMMING
Published by the Life & Peace Institute 1997
Second printing 2004
Printed by Temdahls Tryckeri AB, Östervåla
ISBN 91-87748-58-4

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Acknowledgements

This report was originally commissioned for the U.S. Agency for International Development's Center for Development Information and Evaluation. We'd like to thank Krishna Kumar, who conceptualized the study, and Carolyn Knapp, who provided a wealth of information for and insight into the processes we were examining.

About the authors

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Foreword

In October 2004 I had the opportunity to visit three countries deeply involved in different phases of what this book is about, namely post-conflict reconciliation programming. In Kenya, the first stop of the trip, the stay coincided with the visit of the new president of Somalia who was sworn in to his duty in Nairobi, as it was no real option to carry out the ceremony in Somalia itself. Our next stop was the Democratic Republic of Congo, an extremely volatile region, with forces striving for further destabilisation of the situation, but where many actors nevertheless are working for reconciliation. Our final stop was the Republic of Congo, a region in the process of reconciliation. However, with the civil wars of the 1990's a not so distant memory there are many un-reconciled matters still present.

The author wrote this book at the end of the last century, when the theme "post-conflict" was not widely used in current international debate. A whole chapter of the book deals with the matter of dealing with the past. One important instrument was, and still is, different commissions. Many of the truth and reconciliation commissions that are listed in the book had just initiated their work or were in the midst of their struggle to cope with the difficult and often horrendous history that made these commissions necessary. By now we know the results of these commissions, already with some years of analysis and follow up of the work carried out. Some of the most discussed commissions, like the one in South Africa, were still working while this book was being written, and others were about to start.

This report was originally commissioned by USAID, which as an agency spent much effort on the thematic approach towards reconciliation in a post-conflict setting. It has later been followed by many other agencies, with a shift of the emphasis towards conflict prevention.

The conflicts mentioned in the beginning of this foreword are also dealt with in the book, and they coincide with the main efforts of the Life & Peace Institute in its peace building activities on the Horn of Africa and in the two Congos. We have decided to let the book be part of the series Publications for Peace Education, as the book shows how we can learn to programme for post-conflict reconciliation in a broad approach. Reconciliation is a process that needs to take into account many different aspects and must be perceived as relevant by as many different affected groups as possible in the population. The author shows the whole range of different approaches that are needed and the complexity of the task.

In many cases, the development has gone in a direction where the recommendations in the book have been met. The author points for example to the

necessity of an increased capacity for the donor agencies when it comes to conflict analysis and getting to the root causes of conflicts.

One recommendation that is not met with is the improved planning and capability to prepare the response to unforeseeable developments. One would wish for a more holistic approach from the world leaders when it comes, for example, to the so-called "war on terrorism", and how one should programme for post-conflict reconciliation in these regards. In the book is mentioned the Nuremburg war tribunal after World War II. A case that obviously will attract much attention is the trial against the former Iraqi dictator Saddam Hussein. At the time of writing this foreword, the legal process against the Serbian ex-president Milosevic is still going on.

These examples show that the need for an ongoing improved capacity to plan for post-conflict reconciliation is not something that belongs to the past or is easy to deal with. Dealing with post-conflict matters is a highly political task. In recent years we have seen a growing interest of the aid community towards the "classical" agenda of the peace movements. This has merged into a creative discussion on what can be done and how to not only handle the past but also build peace.

November 2004
Peter Brune
Executive Director, Life & Peace Institute

Introduction

In most post-war situations, there are major divisions throughout impacted societies, manifested in ethnic, political, economic, social, and religious rifts. Large segments of the populations of these countries have experienced first-hand the horrors of war. The consequent psycho-social impacts that invariably result from protracted civil conflict are often more harmful than the physical damage wrought by the war itself. Consequently, underlying causes of these systemic crises and their psycho-social impacts must be addressed in addition to physical reconstruction and humanitarian relief.

The bulk of the conflict and conflict resolution literature has concerned itself with peace agreements, international intervention, and peacekeeping forces. Relatively little attention has been paid to reconciliation processes and initiatives,[1] which makes the task of evaluating these latter interventions all the more challenging.

There are numerous terms describing post-war conditions and objectives which are often used interchangeably, but for which some clarification would be valuable. Psycho-social, peace-building and reconciliation will be addressed briefly.

In the field, the term *psycho-social* is largely understood in relation to addressing the mental health needs of traumatized members of a war-affected society, not as a broader set of interventions addressing a host of reconciliation objectives. The term itself is alien to some societies. For example, in Cambodia, the Institute for Psycho-Social and Socio-Ecological Research could not find a satisfactory translation for 'psycho-social'.[2]

Peacebuilding as the Secretary General of the UN originally defined it was primarily a post-conflict concept, although he has since acknowledged that peacebuilding activities are appropriate during all phases of a conflict. Peacebuilding involves a continuum of responses, including economic development, security, and conflict resolution. Boutros Boutros-Ghali's definition of peacebuilding in *An Agenda for Peace* is an 'action to identify and support structures which will tend to strengthen and solidify peace in order to avoid a relapse into conflict'. Peacebuilding is clearly preventive in nature, as is reconciliation. Both of these concepts have great overlap.

Mary B. Anderson points out that both *reconciliation* and peace-building are sometimes not acceptable to a society which has recently emerged from war. The personal effect war can have on the residents of impacted societies

1. David Smock and John Prendergast, "NGOs and the Peace Process in Angola," U.S. Institute of Peace Special Report, April 1996, p. 2.

2. Boyden and Gibbs, p. 61.

makes it difficult for large segments of these populations to be open to the totality of concepts such as reconciliation or building peace. These feelings should not be ignored, and therefore language used in post-conflict programming should be sensitive to such emotions. Anderson recommends using a goal of 'helping people to disengage from conflict'.[3]

John Paul Lederach sees relationships as the central focus for sustained reconciliation, which is 'built on mechanisms that engage the sides of a conflict with each other as humans-in-relationship, rather than seeking innovative ways to disengage or minimize their affiliation'. Reconciliation must confront the past as well as find a vision for a mutually shared future, holds Lederach. 'Reconciliation as a *locus* creates a space for encounter by the parties, a place where the diverse but connected energies and concerns driving the conflict can meet, including the paradoxes of truth and mercy, justice and peace'.[4]

In seeking to understand the concept of reconciliation, peace cannot simply be defined as the absence of violence. The depth required of processes leading to reconciliation mandates meaningful economic and political reform and attempts to create social harmony. Therefore, reconciliation's ultimate goal means that conflict resolution - not conflict management - processes must follow the signing of peace accords. The concept of reconciliation is rooted in the Latin word *conciliatus*, meaning to come together. Hizkias Assefa of the Nairobi Peace Initiative defines reconciliation as the 'restoration of broken relationships or the coming together of those who have been alienated and separated from each other by conflict to create a community again'.[5] Supporting such an objective may have no equal in terms of complexity and difficulty.

As a point of compromise among these and other interpretations of key terminology, this report will use *reconciliation* to indicate not an end in itself but rather support for the long-term, indefinite processes which lead ultimately to 'the restoration of broken relationships'. Another compromise the report will make is in the use of the term 'post-conflict'. Conflict is pervasive in every society, so the term post-conflict in this instance will indicate the period after a formal ceasefire or peace agreement is signed between warring parties.

3. Mary B. Anderson, "Do No Harm," Cambridge: Collaborative for Action Development 31.

4. John Paul Lederach, *Building Peace: Sustainable Development in Divided Societies* (Tokyo: United Nations University) 1995, p. 51.

5. Hizkias Assefa, "Peace and Reconciliation as a Paradigm," Nairobi Peace Initiatives Monograph One, 1993, p. 9.

1. Strengths and weaknesses of interventions

There is an almost unlimited universe of programs, processes, adaptations and innovations in the reconciliation arena. The scope of work for this paper selects an eclectic mix of potential interventions, under five distinct categories: dealing with the past, addressing psycho-social needs, promoting dialogue, promoting tolerance through the media, and mobilizing committees for conflict management.

Every type of initiative referred to in the scope of work has distinct strengths and weaknesses. Therefore, this analysis will address the advantages and disadvantages of many within this diverse universe of activities.

Category One: Dealing with the past

Truth Commissions

A major reason for the establishment of a Truth Commission is its contribution to reconciliation processes after particularly abusive and violent periods of a country's history. This rationale presupposes the importance of recognizing the victims and what happened, the need to reinforce the rule of law, and deterrence of future violations. When combined with judicial reform (a necessary precondition), a Truth Commission can help break cycles of impunity and provide a public forum for discussion regarding the fate of the guilty. Mary Burton recalls the story of a Uruguayan priest who counselled a woman whose child had 'disappeared'. The woman said to the priest, 'Father, I am ready to forgive, but I need to know whom to forgive and for what'.[6]

There can be numerous potential drawbacks to establishing a Truth Commission, including an obsession with past over present, a degeneration into witch hunts, a threat to current stability and democratic processes, a further fragmenting of divided societies, a possible swamping of national court systems with prosecutions resulting from evidence derived from commissions, the unreliability of security files, violations of due process for the accused themselves,[7] and the use of Truth Commissions for public relations purposes. This last drawback is exemplified by Uganda's Idi Amin, who set up a commission in 1974 in response to international pressure. His agenda was

6. Alex Boraine et. al., editors, *Dealing With the Past: Truth and Reconciliation in South Africa*, (Cape Town, South Africa: IDASA) 1994, p. xv.

7. Boraine et. al., p. xiv.

public relations, not determining truth. Amin disregarded the commission's report and carried on with a reign of oppression and terror.[8]

Nevertheless, many other commissions have overcome the potential obstacles and served a variety of valuable purposes in laying the groundwork for reconciliation processes. A brief discussion of a number of past and present Truth Commissions follows:

Argentina

In Argentina, mechanisms of repression were exposed rather than individual cases. When the report of the National Commission on the Disappeared was published in November 1984, a number of criminal cases were brought to court, including those against two former presidents and numerous top military brass. Top former junta leaders were convicted and sentenced to up to eight years in prison, after nearly 300 people provided testimony.[9] But when mid-level officers began to be prosecuted, a coup was threatened, thus ending the attempts to prosecute. The Law of 'Due Obedience' passed citing 'following orders' as duress and thus a defence. Nevertheless, the cycle of total immunity had been broken.

Chile

The Chilean Truth and Reconciliation Commission was charged with accounting for every person who had been killed or tortured or who had disappeared, as well as describing the state mechanisms of repression. 'The establishment of truth and justice,' the Commission concluded, 'inasmuch as these that can be obtained through the courts, is one of the basic pillars on which to build a reconciled society'.[10] The Commission recommended a comprehensive set of changes for institutionalizing human rights and justice. Consequently, the legislature authorized pensions for all those affected.

The Commission published its results and sent a copy to every family with a letter from the Chilean President pointing out where in the book they could find the cases of their loved ones.[11] Three political assassinations followed the publication of the Commission's report, halting a comprehensive national debate about its recommendations, even though President Patricio

8. Hayner, Priscilla B., "Fifteen Truth Commissions 1974 to 1994: A Comparative Study" Human Rights Quarterly, vol. 16, no. 4, (1994), pp. 600655.

9. Juan Mendez, "Argentina," in Boraine et. al., pp. 35-39.

10. Chilean Human Rights Commission, "Summary of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission Report," p. 114.

11. Jose Zalaquett, "Chile," in Boraine, pp. 49-52.

Aylwin implemented many of the Commission's recommendations.[12] Judge Richard Goldstone of South Africa concludes that the Commission 'materially assisted that nation to put an unhappy past behind it and allow its people to get on with building a better future'.[13]

El Salvador

This Commission was ground-breaking in that it represented the first time a peace agreement required a Truth Commission composed of foreign nationals[14] which was empowered to investigate rights violations and make recommendations. The Commission was in part established to 'assist the transition to national reconciliation'.[15] Within a short time after the Commission issued its report, all of the military officers identified in the report were retired from service. Although many of the Commission's legislative and administrative recommendations were not implemented, efforts have been made to reform the police and judicial systems.

One participant in the Commission, Thomas Buergenthal, sees its greatest contribution as having 'a very significant psychological impact on the people of El Salvador. While the Peace Accords ended the armed conflict, the report put the country on the road to healing the emotional wounds that had continued to divide it'. The Commission and its report had 'a cathartic impact on the country'. The Report 'removed the biggest obstacle on the way to national reconciliation: the denial of a terrible truth that divided the nation and haunted its consciousness'.[16]

Obstacles to the investigation included the initial fear of the civilian population about reprisals and suspicion about the credibility of the Commission. There were also concerns about the slow release and non-utility of information provided by local human rights organizations and both the U.S. and Salvadoran governments. The U.S. reticence was assuaged by a guarantee of confidentiality in the Commission's mandate and the respectability of the Commissioners and staff.[17]

12. McHugh, p. 6.
13. Richard Goldstone, "Exposing Human Rights Abuses: A Help or Hindrance to Reconciliation," *Hastings Constitutional Law Quarterly*, Vol. 22, Spring 1995, p. 613.
14 McHugh, p. 6.
15. "The Mexico Agreements," April 27, 1991, p. 30, in Department of Public Information, "El Salvador Agreements: The Path to Peace," New York: United Nations, 1992.
16. Thomas Buergenthal, "The UN Truth Commission for El Salvador," *Vanderbilt Journal of Transnational Law*, Volume 27, Number 3, October 1994, pp. 539-540.
17. Buergenthal, Thomas "The United Nations Truth Commission for El Salvador" *Vanderbilt Journal of Transnational Law*, vol. 27, no. 3 (1994) pp. 498544.

Lessons gleaned from El Salvador's experience include: an entirely international staff gave the Commission credibility with the Salvadoran population; the Commissioners themselves were wellknown and wellrespected in Latin America, and had a good personal rapport among themselves, enhancing their ability to work together and make common decisions. The contribution of diplomatic assistance and political advice of donor countries was invaluable; and UN support was engaged via UNOSAL, whose presence was particularly reassuring in the absence of a transitional government.[18]

Haiti

The Commission concluded that the Haitian justice system was inadequate to prosecute offenders, and therefore an international tribunal should investigate and punish the most egregious abusers of human rights. The Commission was criticized by members of the human rights community for not going far enough in establishing institutional responsibility for abuses.[19]

South Africa

As of this writing, the parliament-authorized Truth and Reconciliation Commission has not yet established its relation to any criminal trials of apartheid-era government officials in custody (such as former defence minister Magnus Malan, accused of murder), despite the Commission's power to grant amnesties. The Commission is caught in the middle of a society-wide debate over culpability and responsibility. Both the African National Congress (ANC) and the National Party have forwarded justifications for the excesses each was responsible for during the era of apartheid, and the ANC is saying that it is wrong to put abuses committed by both parties in the same legal framework. Rather than moving South Africa towards an environment conducive to reconciliation, some analysts say the Commission may further polarize opposing groups.[20]

Uganda

The Uganda Commission of Inquiry into Human Rights Abuse, established in 1986, disappointed many rights activists in that for the most part individuals incriminated by testimony to the Commission were not prosecuted.[21]

18. Buergenthal, pp. 498-544.

19. McHugh, pp. 9-10.

20. Lynne Duke, "Adversaries Offer Competing Truths to South African Commission," *Washington Post*, August 24, 1996, p. A20.

21. Roger Winter, "Peace and Human Rights in Uganda: The Past, Present and Future," paper prepared for a conference in Kampala sponsored by the Ugandan Commission of Inquiry, Feb. 15-16, 1990, p. 40.

Nevertheless, the Commission boosted popular confidence in the commitment of Yoweri Museveni's government to human rights.[22] Justice Arthur Oder, the Commission's Chairman, also points to the public education value of the Commission. The process of addressing human rights abuses are more accessible issues to the public than ever before.[23]

Other approaches to truth telling

The international NGO response to the imminent crisis in Rwanda comprises another model for Truth Commissions. This commission was established at the request of Rwandan human rights organizations, and rooted in an agreement between the government and opposition in Arusha in late 1992. Four international NGOs created the 'International Commission of Investigation on Human Rights Violations in Rwanda Since October 1, 1990'. The widely distributed report focused largely on the government's activities and had a moderating effect on French and Belgian policy, which had been supportive of the Rwandan government. The work of the commission was cut short by the genocide.[24]

Other institutional methods of confronting past abuses are for the perpetrators to acknowledge abuses directly to victims, to pay reparations, to disqualify major abusers from public service, and of course to prosecute guilty parties.

Truth Commissions are just one alternative to trials and tribunals. Some post-conflict states choose other options, while others decide not to address the crimes of war. Namibia has worked through a constitution to address minority rights and violations of them. Angola's recent peace agreements have focused on power sharing without any acknowledgment of accountability. Cambodia has not determined whether it would be either viable or useful to pursue prosecution of Pol Pot's associates.[25]

Requirements for Truth Commission success

There are certain minimal requirements Truth Commissions should meet: impartiality and good faith, independence from political forces, the resources and access to information to ensure a full investigation, fast implementation, a specific and limited time frame of operation, and a mandate that includes

22. Hayner, pp. 600-655.

23. Arthur oder, "The Role of Commission of Inquiry into Violations of Human Rights Promotion in Uganda," August 1991, pp. 1-9.

24. Hayner, pp. 600-655.

25. Hampson, Fen *Nurturing Peace: Why Peace Settlements Succeed Or Fail* United States Institute of Peace, Washington, D.C., 1995, p. 231.

the power to make recommendations for serious consideration. Finally a commission's report should be published immediately and be publicly available.[26]

When abuses are severe and widespread, Truth Commissions in isolation are an inadequate response. There must be accountability, particularly for the decision-makers. In some cases, only by providing some measure of justice can the past be sufficiently addressed. Cycles of impunity cannot be broken simply by acknowledging certain crimes. Even if there are only limited prosecutions and convictions of those who occupied leadership positions, the symbolic value cannot be overstated. But when some measure of justice accompanies the work of a Truth Commission, the latter can be a powerful tool for reconciliation. Roberto Canas of El Salvador concludes: 'Unless a society exposes itself to the truth, it can harbor no possibility of reconciliation, reunification, and trust. For a peace settlement to be solid and durable, it must be based on truth'.[27]

War crimes tribunals and trials

The Nuremberg Trials after the Second World War are the major historical precedent for war crimes tribunals. Nuremberg was buttressed by a context in which the victorious Allied governments exercised political and economic control over defeated countries. The trials established that officials at the highest level would be held responsible for war crimes.

A major legacy of the Nuremberg Trials is that the protection and value of human rights is an international matter and that the international community takes an interest in and responsibility for the prevention and punishment of such violations. Crimes against humanity within states nullify sovereignty and 'following orders' is a non-defence. A further precedent of the Nuremberg military trials is that individuals as well as states can be held accountable for their role in genocide and other atrocities under international law.[28]

War crimes tribunals derive their legal authority from the Nuremberg Principles, the Genocide Convention of 1948, the four Geneva Conventions of 1949 and Additional Protocols I and II of 1977, the Torture Convention of 1984, and other international law codifications adopted since 1945. Besides war crimes and crimes against humanity, crimes have expanded to include 'grave breaches' of international law.[29]

26. Hayner, pp. 600-655,

27. Boraine, p. 153.

28. Kritz, Neil J., War Crimes on Trial" USIS - *Issues of Democracy*, USIA Electronic Journals; May 1996

29. Mark Bland, "An Analysis of the UN International Tribunal to Adjudicate War Crimes Committed in the Former Yugoslavia: Parallels, Problems, Prospects," *Global Legal Studies Journal*, Vol. 2: 223, 1994, p. 242.

Former Yugoslavia

The United Nations War Crimes Tribunal in the Hague represents a novel approach to war crimes on two counts: it is the first time the United Nations is trying those accused of war crimes in a situation which has not seen a clear military victory. It is also the first time in which the principal accused parties remain major (behind the scenes) participants in the ongoing peace process.[30]

Supporters of the Tribunal point to its potentially positive legacy: the creation of a future deterrent to war crimes, the establishment of a precedent of enforcing the laws of war, and the further integration of the international human rights regime into international law.[31]

Weaknesses within the Tribunal's mandate and enforcement power include difficulties - in the absence of any police powers - in gaining custody of the accused, its minimal authority to punish, and the likelihood that many of the accused will remain trapped (but free) within their home borders. A larger issue involves questions as to whether the United Nations can simultaneously negotiate and support the implementation of a peace agreement while at the same time supporting the prosecution of war criminals.[32] Declining resources and erratic world interest renders the ongoing work of the Tribunal vulnerable to premature closure.

The most stinging criticism, though, has centered around the lack of political will on the part of the largest supporters and underwriters of the Tribunal - including the U.S. - to arrest the primary organizers of the Bosnian genocide. NATO forces under IFOR have not been ordered to arrest Radovan Karadzic, Ratko Mladic, or Dario Kordic. Diane Orentlicher charges that 'by loudly broadcasting its resolve not to arrest these men, the United States has emboldened them to threaten violence in the event such an attempt is made'.[33] Karadzic roams freely because of a deal brokered by U.S. negotiator Richard Holbrooke, which 'forced' Karadzic to step down from the chairmanship of his party. Judge Richard Goldstone, the chief prosecutor for the Tribunal for two years, believes that if the principal indicted suspects are not brought to the Tribunal, then there is no use for its continuation.[34]

30. Elizabeth Pearl, "Punishing Balkan War Criminals: Could the End of Yugoslavia Provide an End to Victors' Justice?" *American Criminal Law Review*, Vol. 30, 1993, p. 1400.

31. Karl Arthur Hochkammer, "The Yugoslav War Crimes Tribunal: The Compatibility of Peace, Politics, and International Law," *Vanderbilt Journal of Transnational Law*, Vol. 28, No. 119, 1995, p. 165; also see Aryeh Neier, "Watching Rights: War Crimes," *The Nation*, no. 256, 1993, p. 825.

32. Hochkammer, p. 123, and Bland, p. 261.

33. Diane Orentlicher, "Arrest the War Criminals," *Washington Post*, September 24, 1996, p. A17.

34. Charles Trueheart, "War Crimes Prosecutor Blasts West for Inaction," *Washington Post*, September 19, 1996, p. A26, and David Rieff, "The Case Against the Serb War Criminals," *Washington Post*, September 8, 1996, p. C1.

Rwanda

The International War Crimes Tribunal is based in Tanzania and has jurisdiction over indicting those responsible for the 1994 Rwandan genocide. At the time of writing, only 21 people had been indicted, and not all 21 had been delivered to the Tribunal.[35] The Tribunal – predictably – is constrained by a lack of resources and authority in pursuing suspects. Arrested suspects include Theoneste Bagasora, one of the architects of the genocide, and Ferdinand Nahimana, owner of the radio station *Milles Collines*.

The Rwandan case provides an argument for expedience in that delays in indictments, arrests, extradition and prosecution allow both for those who are guilty and those bent on vengeance time to re-group for further violence. The accused have jumped borders, seeking asylum abroad. Others, such as Major General Augustin Bizimungu, the former regime's military commander, are in Zaire, openly organizing former Rwandan military and militia in the refugee camps. The whereabouts of many of the planners and leaders of the Rwandan genocide, as well as journalists responsible for hate media, remain largely unknown, including Theodore Sindikubwabo, one of the leaders of the genocide on the political side, and Robert Kajuga, head of the *Interahamwe* militia. While the international community responded to the Rwandan request for an International Tribunal, there has been little pressure placed on the UN to ensure that it accelerates its work.[36]

One suggestion to address the backlog in indictments and cases in the Rwandan Tribunal is to establish a Truth Commission to operate in tandem with the Tribunal. Justice would be served with regard to the organizers of the genocide, and others who participated would be named and their crimes would be exposed.

The success of the international tribunal in Rwanda will have a significant impact on any eventual peace process, as the party line in the Rwandan government remains 'no reconciliation until justice.' The *Commission de Triage*, which seeks to absolve persons wrongly accused of participating in the genocide, is failing to address even a small percentage of disputed cases, and needs support so a balanced process can move forward.

Ethiopia

The Transitional Government of Ethiopia created the Special Prosecutors Office (SPO) in August 1992, after nearly 2,000 officials of the former mil-

35. Stephen Buckley, "Rwandan Suspects Face Trial and Error," *Washington Post*, January 29, 1997, p. A15.

36. *State, Sovereignty, and Responsibility;* papers from the African Conference on Peacemaking and Conflict Resolution; African Centre for the Constructive Resolution of Disputes (ACCORD); Durban, South Africa; 1996, p. 71.

itary regime were arrested. 1,700 remain accused of involvement in genocide, war crimes, or crimes against humanity. At the time of writing, 43 members of the former regime are on trial in Addis Ababa, while 24 more are being tried in absentia, including former President Mengistu Haile Mariam. The SPO has developed three categories of guilt: decision makers, field commanders, and actual perpetrators.[37]

Most remain detained without charge. Amnesty International warns that the 'human rights standard-setting purpose of the process is at risk of being weakened by the prolonged failure to charge all the detainees and bring them to trial within a reasonable period...'[38] The process is painfully slow, and capacity for a faster process is extremely limited barring additional funding.

The trials themselves are only part of the process. Similar to the objective of Truth Commissions outlined above, the goal of establishing an historical record of the period is also important. The SPO is charged with gathering, organizing, and disseminating information throughout Ethiopia. Human Rights Watch strongly supports this element of the process: 'The importance of the evidence gathering process in allowing the Ethiopian people to grieve and heal should not be overlooked'.[39]

Lessons

Neil Kritz's exhaustive work on war crimes tribunals has unearthed a number of lessons, outlined in this section.[40] The Nuremberg prosecutor, Telford Taylor, observed that after the initial military tribunal trial, the re-organization of resources and structure for the next twelve trials held up progress by almost a year. Taylor concluded that if the trials had begun and been completed a year sooner the consequent lessons and impacts would have been more significant and effectively brought home to the public. The impact and benefits, and more importantly the message, of present day tribunals is undercut by delays in funding, staffing, and organization.

To try war crimes, international advice and assistance may be involved, but a separate international entity may not be necessary. An international entity should, in any case, act as a complement to a national justice system.

37. Amnesty International, "Ethiopia: Human Rights Trials and Delayed Justice," July 1996, p. 2, and Trial Observation Information Project, "Trial Update," a report of Inter Africa Group and the Ethiopian Human Rights and Peace Center, February 1996, p. 1.

38. Amnesty International, executive summary.

39. Human Rights Watch/Africa, "Ethiopia: Reckoning Under the Law," Vol. 6, No. 11, December 1994, p. 36.

40. Kritz, Neil J., "War Crimes on Trial" USIS - *Issues of Democracy*, USIA Electronic Journals; May 1996.

Whether justice is pursued with international assistance or from a domestic base, the legacy of what happens is in the hands, thereafter, of the country's own government, judiciary and citizens.

Opting for a domestic effort to try war crimes, as in Ethiopia, can bolster the credibility of a new and fragile government. These trials can be highly visible and can act as a showcase and foundation for a new domestic criminal and judicial system, both symbolically and tangibly. Finally, domestic courts are presumably more in touch with local culture and its nuances.

War crimes trials and other methods of reckoning for wartime offences serve multiple and constructive purposes in gaining and keeping a lasting peace in a region torn asunder by violence. First, they provide victims of atrocities with 'a sense of justice and catharsis'; and a feeling that their grievances and pain are heard by their own government and community, as well as the international community. Second, they establish an understanding that the perpetrators of abuse and oppression will be held accountable in the future. Third, and perhaps most critical to long term reconciliation, they clarify that 'specific individuals - not entire ethnic or religious or political groups - committed atrocities for which they need to be held accountable'. This subverts collective blame, guilt, retribution and continued or reawakened hostility.

Kritz lists the advantages of an international venue over a domestic trial. First, an international body is positioned to communicate the message that the international community will not tolerate these acts. Second, an international tribunal and prosecutor's office is more likely to be staffed with specialists and experts able to apply and interpret an ever-evolving and sometimes murky arena of law. Third, domestic judicial systems may have been decimated by the conflict. For example, 95 percent of Rwandan legal personnel are either dead, hiding abroad, or in prison as a result of the 1994 genocide. In addition to legal expertise, human and material resources can be more easily garnered by the international community than by a country staggering its way out of war. Fourth, an international office can better facilitate the development and enforcement of international criminal norms. Fifth, an international judicial effort has a better chance to be - and perhaps more importantly a better chance to be perceived as - impartial. Sixth, in the cases of both Rwanda and Bosnia, the most egregious perpetrators of atrocities have fled the immediate scene of the crime. Therefore an international effort provides a better chance for extradition and custody.

The impact of trials and tribunals is broader than the goals of truth and convictions. Publicity and acknowledgment of such crimes are critical additions to history and confirm the international community's intolerance of

atrocity. Adolf Hitler had little fear of prosecution. When questioned on this matter, Hitler responded, 'Who remembers the Armenians?'

But beyond all of these potential advantages, the current evidence from the tribunals in Rwanda and the former Yugoslavia demonstrate that the international community does not have the political will, for numerous reasons, to move much beyond symbolic indictments to aggressively rounding up those indicted and trying them for acts of genocide. With this kind of empty symbolism, the Nuremberg precedents are being ignored, and arguably this will embolden rather than deter future would-be war criminals. Donor governments must ask themselves much more difficult questions the next time the establishment of a tribunal is being debated.

If countries are not willing to aggressively pursue those indicted by a tribunal they are financially (and morally) supporting, they should not support it in the first place. The tribunals in Rwanda and the former Yugoslavia are in danger of being mockeries, rather than symbols, of justice.

National and local justice systems

It is critical that the constitution of domestic legal systems occur parallel to the standing up of war crimes tribunals.

In every society, legal systems can contribute to reducing sources of violence and establishing the rule of law, except when those systems are part of a security apparatus designed for repression rather than justice. International agencies (especially human rights groups whose usual mandate is only one of monitoring and reporting) should be open to opportunities which arise to build and/or support the capacity of legal systems which have the potential of reducing post-conflict violence.

Governmental justice systems are usually the terrain of bilateral democratization aid programs which fall in the development assistance category. For example, in Ethiopia under Mengistu Haile Mariam there was no independent judiciary, so it had to be created from scratch. Also, particular aspects of the legal system can be isolated for specific assistance. In many post-conflict environments, land tenure is an igniting issue. In Ethiopia, El Salvador and Rwanda, for example, land tenure should be singled out for capacity building, especially for the area of local tenure dispute resolution.

But there are situations in which the judicial apparatus requires significant inputs in the emergency phase, such as post-genocide Rwanda and pre-explosion Burundi. USAID was handcuffed by internal legal obstacles in its ability to aid the Rwandan justice system, and by mid-1995 was still seeking a waiver in order to move forward with assistance. Donors with legal restric-

tions preventing the provision of assistance (relief and developmental) for justice systems should review and amend their response framework to allow for the aiding of justice systems, especially in countries emerging from complex emergencies. For example, the UN Special Rapporteur for Human Rights in Burundi recommended supporting the assistance of magistrates from other African nations in the reform and strengthening of judicial processes in Burundi.[41] Donors and operational agencies need the flexibility in the field to be able to support such initiatives if they become possible, such as in Rwanda where an agency called Citizens Network is assisting in judicial training to build the capacity of the system.

Sufficient time must be given to a process of building or rebuilding justice systems. 'The tendency is to want to build a large, and largely urban, 'justice infrastructure' as opposed to taking sufficient time required to build a grassroots justice system from the bottom up,' notes a donor agency official.

Traditional courts at the local level are usually stabilizing influences within and between communities. In some localities of southern Sudan, there is underway a revival of culture in which communities are solidifying and updating traditional law. This is in response to the breakdown of order and values which has accompanied the endless civil war, intensified by the intercommunal and interfactional fighting that has plagued the region since 1991.

In Nuer areas of Upper Nile, especially after the Akobo Peace Conference, the chiefs are reasserting their authority in the area of customary law, with the support of some South Sudan Independence Movement (a splinter rebel faction) commanders. In Lotuko areas in Eastern Equatoria, community leaders are updating, monitoring and enforcing customary law in the context of the locally initiated process of *emwara* (reconciliation). In Dinka areas of southern Bahr al-Ghazal, there is a reassertion of the authority of chiefs' courts in the context of the post-Chukudum Conference devolution of Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) authority to civilian structures. (One executive chief in the area points out: 'We are the opposite of the Nuer. We want to have broader discussion than just the chiefs. I don't want any one person making the law.') In the context of a fledgling grassroots peace process between Nuer and Dinka communities throughout early 1995, border chiefs reasserted their authority, based on tradition, history and their role as witnesses and arbitrators. In Xande areas in Western Equatoria, a museum of culture has been established, and interest in traditional law has increased. In some of these areas, soldiers can now be taken to court when they commit civil offences.

41. Eriksson, pp. 64 and 68.

Category Two: Addressing psycho-social needs

Psycho-social trauma initiatives

There is a high degree of disagreement among professionals in the field of trauma treatment. Severity of the impact of war is not debated, but rather how individuals respond (in particular, there is great debate over the applicability of the concept of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder - PTSD) and how to support the coping process are subject to great disagreement. Even a proponent of psycho-social interventions such as UNICEF cautions that 'with limited knowledge there is always the chance that harm rather than health will be perpetuated'. Numerous initiatives in the past have gone awry, in a field where fashionable ideas can influence practice and at times have 'proved questionable at best, even destructive,' by undermining local response mechanisms, misapplying techniques, over-diagnosing affected populations, and not being sufficiently context-specific.[42]

Trauma

At least ten million children have suffered from war trauma during the past decade, according to UNICEF.[43] War-related trauma experienced by children is typically divided into two categories: acute and chronic. Acute trauma is defined as a child's exposure to a single abnormal incident in which the parent/child relationship remains intact and the child, with the parent's support, is able to readjust his or her perceptions and return to a normal safe environment, dismissing the unusual experience as an 'incident'. Chronic trauma (PTSD) occurs over a longer period and includes a multitude of symptoms that impede a child's ability to emotionally develop. A combination of circumstances such as displacement from parents, prolonged exposure to violence, and combat participation in combination with unmet food and material needs result in personality and emotional alterations in many children.[44]

There is much debate about the concept of trauma itself and the effects of war on different populations in different cultures. In the west, the individual is viewed as the basic unit of society, and that the psychological realm is more significant than the social or religious. The response is shaped by the 'western psycho-therapeutic model based on the biomedical concept of trauma'.[45] Outside the west, however, the concept of the self differs, and community harmony is often given a higher priority than individual thoughts and

42. Ressler, pp. 205-206.

43. UNICEF, *State of the World's Children 1996*, New York: UNICEF, 1996.

44. Boothby, p. 112.

45. Boyden and Gibbs, p. 1.

feelings. A society in these settings can be traumatized, as impacted people reference their injuries in the context of their social rather than psychological impact.[46]

Critics of PTSD diagnoses contend that attempting to treat PTSD in some non-western societies is not helpful and can be counter-productive, particularly in the degree to which it undermines family and community response mechanisms, such as those in Cambodia, which utilize the entire cosmological system, including evil spirits and ancestors with grievances. A further critique finds that individualizing and pathologizing the causes of stress end up de-politicizing and de-socializing those causes, further disempowering affected individuals.[47]

The medical paradigm facilitates a perception of children as vulnerable passive victims whose suffering during times of war can be predicted by a certain accumulation of war-related occurrences in which a child's emotional, social, and moral development is subsequently impeded. This perception of children encourages a focus upon the negative impacts of war and violence, physical damage, emotional trauma and subsequent developmental impairment. As a result, many aid agencies, when responding to children's trauma, have relied upon psychological interventions rather than reinforcing indigenous social mechanisms of rehabilitation. Many critics of these perceptions attest that it is too difficult for aid agencies to predict the impact of organized violence upon a child. Also, some results of stress such as hyper-alertness can actually help increase a child's resilience and ability to cope during a war. Most importantly, children do not develop at the same universal rate; therefore, responses to trauma would be impossible to standardize.[48]

Contrary to the view of children as passive victims, one study found, the people of Milange, Mozambique view children as strong survivors who actively engage in the rebuilding and reconstructing of their lives. The Milange child is perceived by adults and themselves as a productive worker of the family whose contribution is both appreciated and encouraged. In addition, the Milange child, although not viewed as fully equal to adults, works together with the adult community in beginning the process of reconstruction.[49]

Other studies have also found that trauma is not a universal response to war of children or adults. Many residents of war-impacted societies do not respond to violence passively; they view war as a challenge, and promote val-

46. Summerfield, p. 6.

47. Boyden and Gibbs, p. 2.

48. Boyden, p. 261.

49. Gibbs, p. 272.

ues and causes as their response. In Gaza, studies have found that as political difficulties increased, so did children's 'active and courageous coping modes'. One conclusion of those studying these trends is that 'social validation for those who have suffered' is critical in helping people come to terms with violence.[50]

Psycho-social programming

Conventional responses to diagnoses of trauma (individual or communal) include a variety of psycho-social projects. In Bosnia and Croatia, one evaluation found 117 organizations running 185 psycho-social projects. Two-thirds offered direct psychological services. The loose terminology of the reviewers found nearly one and a half million Croatians and Bosnians to be suffering from trauma.[51]

Addressing the specific needs of children is increasingly recognized as integral to any emergency response. Angela Raven-Roberts of UNICEF summarizes the plight of young people, calling them 'the fodder for conflicts of the future: they have been marginalized, disenfranchised, thrown out of history, thrown out of culture, and thrown out of economics. [It is these people] who are going to be the perpetrators of new conflicts in the future'.[52]

Providing psycho-social services is a critical component of a holistic response to complex emergencies. Magne Raundelen, the child psychologist who helped develop the psycho-social programs in Mozambique and Sudan, also undertook training sessions for Somali teachers. But the Somali training was short, and had no follow-up. Psycho-social initiatives require a long-term commitment. In Mostar, Bosnia, a psychologist came every month to train teachers one week at a time. 'If you just bring in a consultant to raise the issues and don't follow up, you leave people open like wounds with no chance for healing,' says one agency field representative.

Soon after the Rwandan genocide, USAID provided money for psycho-social programming. Children were being warehoused, and the trauma of what had preceded their arrival was being compounded by the horrible conditions of their new setting. A few agencies responded to these conditions in the camps and inside Rwanda, including providing counseling services to children. Save the Children-US placed community youth workers in the centers in which the children were residing. In Kigali, local forms of social orga-

50. Summerfield, p. 9.

51. Agger et al, "Theory and Practice of Psychosocial Projects Under War Conditions in Bosnia and Croatia," Zagreb: ECHO/ECTF, 1995.

52. Smock, p. 5.

nization for children were supported, such as scouts, traditional dance groups, football teams and church groups. Community discussions were held about the future of the children. 'Culture is the only thing big enough to help,' asserts the director of an agency. Africa Humanitarian Action, an Ethiopian-based organization, also provides psycho-social trauma management, especially to Rwandese women. In addition, UNICEF has conducted seminars and training sessions in psycho-social trauma care.

Traditional PTSD approaches for children are not sufficient. Foremost, program initiatives should be placed in a broader context that reinforces a more positive social environment, namely by supporting child/parent and community relationships. Within this context, the program initiatives must be culturally sensitive by tuning into the needs and traditional responses of a particular community during conflict. Neil Boothby argues that all assistance programs should presuppose an agency's knowledge of a society's definition of conflict, trauma, expression of psychosocial distress, and strategies in overcoming this distress.[53]

Agencies can act as a guide or facilitator in helping the community expand and develop indigenous strategies. Culturally sensitive programs will enable children to more freely and constructively process their trauma and incorporate their emotions into their worldview. Assisting communities in devising strategies to help protect children from the effects of war is an important role for aid agencies, who can help members of the community (teachers, parents, social workers, police) better understand aggressive behavior displayed by children suffering from chronic trauma and how a parent's reaction can influence a child's behavior. The establishment of daily routines and stable structures by teachers and parents can also help former child combatants work through their emotions in a more adjustable manner. Political and social reality dictates that program initiatives should be placed in a broader social context if the programs are to be beneficial to the community.[54]

Again, cultural differences must be highlighted. Responding to trauma with individualized psycho-social counseling interventions are rooted in western medical assumptions which hold that trying circumstances may create psychological wounds. Some psychiatrists and psychologists are increasingly challenging this view, including Derek Summerfield:

'There is no empirical basis for this narrowly pathologizing generalization, one that is capable of distorting the debate on the human costs of war, including those that legitimately relate to ill-health and health services.

53. Boothby, p. 115.

54. Boothby, p. 116.

Suffering or distress, observed or imputed, is objectified, turning it into a technical problem - 'traumatization' - to which technical solutions are seen to be applicable. Yet, for the vast majority of survivors, 'traumatization is a pseudo-condition; distress or suffering *per se* is *not* psychological disturbance'.[55]

Rwanda is a case example. After the genocide, dozens of NGOs undertook psycho-social programs driven by an assumption of mass traumatization, despite little familiarity with local culture and conditions. Western diagnostic systems and treatments were applied, with little relevance to Rwandan realities. Much of the distress which was diagnosed as trauma was in fact normal coping mechanisms in operation.[56] (Furthermore, interventions aimed at traumatized children in unaccompanied minors' centers were not utilizing standardized criteria and practices, according to the multi-donor evaluation, and suffered from little monitoring and follow-up.[57])

Similarly, Post Traumatic Stress Disorder diagnoses in Nicaragua were not reliable indicators of the need for psychological treatment.[58] In fact, revisiting the interviews and data from PTSD studies in Rwanda finds that very high percentages of people were not sad, were interested in work and play, and felt able to protect their family and self. Focusing solely on PTSD responses limits responders only to addressing the victimization and wounds of affected individuals, rather than their resilience. It reinforces the passivity of 'victim' and the knowledge of the 'expert'.[59]

Very little hard analysis and evaluation have been undertaken of psycho-social initiatives. USAID would be wise to undertake a series of low-cost field evaluations of such activities, and focus on mainstreaming psycho-social objectives into existing education and health programming, after fully taking into account what local responses to trauma in fact are.

Nevertheless, there is a role for western mental health treatments in many cases. In the case of serious psychological disorder, traditional methods are often inadequate. Drugs can at least 'normalize' severely dysfunctional people suffering from psychotic disorders. Sustainability of drug-based interventions is a key problem, both because of cost and trained personnel constraints.[60]

55. Summerfield, p. 14.

56. Summerfield, pp. 15-16.

57. Kumar, p. 65.

58. F. Hume and D. Summerfield, "After the War in Nicaragua: A Psychosocial Study of War Wounded Ex-Combatants," *Medicine and War*, Vol. 10, pp. 4-25.

59. Summerfield, pp. 16-17.

60. Boyden and Gibbs, p. 6.

Reunification

Although not a high priority for many donors, families in post-conflict environments place a premium on reunification with lost members. In order to minimize costs and mainstream this objective, reunification initiatives should uncover informal, already existing reunification networks, identify local coordinators of these networks, then utilize the resources available to assist these networks.[61] Much research has shown that children's emotional stability is best guaranteed by being with their family. When separated, emotional well-being is destroyed and infant mortality can increase quickly.[62] Family-related factors which might impact the psycho-social response of a child include the level of intactness of a family (considered the best defence for children), the degree of nurturing support from the family, and the ability of the family to sustain itself.[63]

Similar conclusions can be drawn regarding child soldiers, a population whose situation is often exacerbated by army denials of their existence. Interventions which target these children early in a demobilization process and reunite them with their families stand perhaps the best chance of success.

In Sudan, an estimated 20,000 children have been separated from their parents or guardians over the course of the civil war. Without the security of home or family, these children have been forced to fend for themselves, shifting frequently from one temporary camp to another as fighting raged in Sudan and in neighboring Ethiopia, where many had sought refuge. Since 1988, most of these unaccompanied children have trekked hundreds of miles before settling in isolated communities.[64]

The unaccompanied minors are virtually all boys between eight and sixteen years old. In 1988, after the war in the south escalated, thousands walked towards Ethiopia from western Upper Nile and Bahr el Ghazal, hundreds of kilometers away. Most lived in the Sudanese refugee camps at Itang, Panyido and Dima in western Ethiopia, until they were forced to flee back to Sudan with the fall of the Mengistu regime in Ethiopia in mid-1991. Family unification is a major part of the response of the needs of these children by UNICEF and a few NGOs.

61. Edward Green, Jan Williamson, and Paula Nimpuno-Parente, "Evaluation of the Children and War Program of Save the Children (USA)," Pritech, 1992, p. 12.

62. N. Richman, "Annotation: Children in Situations of Political Violence," *Journal of Child Psychology and Psychiatry*, Vol. 34, pp. 1286-1302.

63. Ressler, p. 181.

64. UNICEF OLS (southern sector), "Review of 1994 Activities", p. 13.

Category Three: Promoting dialogue

Problem solving workshops and processes

Problem Solving Workshops (PSWs), also known as 'third-party consultations' or 'interactive problem solving,' create channels for people who represent conflicting parties unofficially and who seek to collaborate in analyzing and finding solutions to particular issues of division. PSWs are not intended as a substitute for ongoing negotiations, but rather represent an informal widening of participation in peace processes and deepening the analysis of problems and potential solutions. The building of relationships in a politically safe space is prioritized. Some recent peace processes have had PSWs operating in advance in the background, including the PLO-Israeli agreement as well as peace efforts in Northern Ireland and Spain.[65]

PSWs are held with a variety of segments of the population of a post-conflict society. For example, the International Centre for Peace Initiatives in Bombay held a process workshop for members of Parliament from a number of South Asian countries to deal with conflict and post-conflict situations in the region. Parliamentarians explored how legislation and resolutions might help reduce tensions and consolidate peace, how their public speaking might advocate peace-building, and how to conduct election campaigns which do not fan the flames of violence.

Catholic Relief Services (CRS) and Kanyarwanda (a Rwandan human rights organization) sponsored a conference on reconciliation in Gisenyi, Rwanda. Held between Sept. 22-25, 1995, the conference brought together 16 members of Rwanda's government and civil society, and was moderated by Dr. Hizkias Assefa of the Nairobi Peace Initiative.

The conference convened morally influential people to discuss strategies for re-establishing trust and confidence between Rwandan communities. Some of their conclusions include: the importance of developing a culture which speaks the truth; the need for rehabilitation of Rwandan society; recognition of justice as critical for Rwanda's recovery; the need to remove impediments to the return of refugees; and the need for a culture of sacrifice and goodwill.

Following this meeting, CRS later sponsored a workshop organized by the Rwandan Association for Christian Workers which involved church, media, human rights and development groups in examining the role of the church and its justice and peace mission.

65. John Paul Lederach, pp. 23-24.

InterAfrica Group (IAG) held a workshop on 'Women and the Making of Regional Constitutions' in April 1995 in Ethiopia. IAG brought together fifty women from five different regions within Ethiopia who work with women's bureaus to examine the creation of regional constitutions. Issues examined included the role of regional women's bureaus, NGO policies related to women at the regional level, and women's involvement in the making of the national and regional constitutions.

PSWs usually are held in academic contexts, providing what many consider to be safe space for open debate and discussion. The aim is to create a venue for interaction which would not otherwise exist under normal conditions. Some scholars have observed that contacts increase between participants after the conclusion of the workshop, and new networks are either born or strengthened. Obvious limitations include the difficulty of moving larger political forces beyond the workshop participants. Benefits and insights are often limited strictly to participants, leaving the responsibility on their shoulders for ripple effects. The results from these initiatives are clearly very long-term and modest. Given the extremely limited impacts achievable from one isolated workshop, it is much more desirable to undertake a series of workshops which commit participants to a process or widen the net to include many more participants.[66]

Distinct from PSWs are Problem Solving Processes (PSPs), collaborative initiatives focused on addressing a particular problem issue. An example of a PSP took place in Central America, where the Development Program for Displaced Persons, Refugees and Returnees (PRODERE) attempted to promote and facilitate the social and economic reintegration of uprooted people, while consciously supporting peace-building processes. There were a number of positive impacts that this program had which prioritized reconciliation: 'The program was a civilizing force in areas of weak civil institutions and a strong, pervasive military. It strengthened civil society by establishing humanitarian spaces that allowed for consensus-building and reconciliation'.

Groups which were historically left out of political processes were consulted, and joint problem solving processes for addressing health, education, income-generation and planning activities are being undertaken. Under PRODERE, numerous problem-solving and cooperative processes were initiated, an approach which is superior to the usual one-off problem solving workshops which are often guilty of little implementation and follow-up.[67]

66. Lund and Prendergast et al, pp. B-22 - B-24.

67. Peter Sollis and Christina Schultz, "Lessons of the PRODERE Experience in Central America," RPG Focus, Washington: Refugee Policy Group, November 1995, pp. 4-6.

Another regional PSP involves an initiative to resolve water disputes in Jordan, the West Bank and Gaza, and Egypt. U.S. water and environmental dispute resolution experts are teamed with host country experts in similar disciplines. The project provides small grants for implementation of specific agreements, critical in consolidating consensus. Training for host country professionals is also provided in the context of the process.

This kind of sectoral problem solving is key, and should be introduced into regular rehabilitative programming to the maximum extent possible.[68] It has been found that joint research, analysis and planning, undertaken by the parties themselves, for the purposes of analyzing major problems and formulating their own solutions is the best approach for addressing water disputes.[69] Logically, consolidating gains from these agreements requires a continuation and refinement of the collaborative processes.

The World Bank has shown that networks of war veterans in the form of discussion groups and collaborative ventures are critical in the reintegration of ex-combatants. These kinds of initiatives 'can be extremely helpful when social capital has been depleted', concludes a recent Bank study.[70]

PSWs and PSPs have escaped hard evaluation; ascertaining their specific impact in larger peace processes is next to impossible. No evaluative criteria have been developed to fully account for the disparate effects of these initiatives. Current evaluation is impressionistic and anecdotal, with little consideration of potential ripple effects.[71]

Peace conferences

Holding seminars and conferences is another way to help consolidate peace agreements. The Christian Council of Mozambique and UNICEF created a program called 'Preparing People for Peace,' involving church representatives from a number of provinces at a national seminar on peace issues. These representatives then went back to their home areas and held further seminars at the local level, and dealt with themes such as religious perspectives on peace and church involvement in conflict resolution.[72]

68. USAID, Project Authorization: Fostering Resolution of Water Resource Disputes, December 1994, pp. 6-8.

69. L.A. Ross, "Collaborative Research for More Effective Foreign Assistance, *World Development*, 16 (2), 231-236.

70. Nat Colletta, Markus Kostner and Ingo Wiederhofer, *The Transition from War to Peace in Sub-Saharan Africa* (Washington, D.C.: The World Bank) 1996, p. 3.

71. Lund and Prendergast, et al, p. 4-24.

72. Lederach, pp. 28-29.

In April 1994, the Norwegian Refugee Council and Norwegian Church Aid convened a week-long workshop on peace-building in Afghanistan. The conference succeeded in building consciousness of some aid agencies regarding the impacts of their programs on the Afghani conflict. The workshop participants produced a series of principles that might guide agency activities in Afghanistan and a set of recommendations for agencies to help reduce tensions.[73]

Unless attached to some broader post-conflict reconciliation process, peace conferences are limited by the small numbers of people attending the conferences themselves and the usual lack of follow-up. This study finds no compelling evidence for USAID to fund such activities unless part of a broader strategic initiative.

Conflict management training

Training in conflict management and resolution attempts to raise awareness of trainees in how to deal with conflict. There are education and skill-building components involved. The focus is usually to develop the individual skills of participants. The Center for Conflict Resolution in South Africa trains political and community leaders in conflict resolution skills, and has brought together previously conflicting segments of society such as policemen and anti-apartheid leaders for training sessions. Lederach observes that this and other initiatives enhance peacebuilding capacities of middle-range leaders and provide a forum to assemble people from across lines of division.[74]

Participants of numerous conflict management and resolution training fora have reported that one of the principal benefits of such training has been the learning of listening techniques, and more fundamentally, the importance of listening in order to understand other points of view and to resolve differences. When properly planned, training exercises can strengthen capacities of the state and civil society to search for creative solutions collaboratively.

Conflict management training can be a very useful tool in developing a capacity for peace-building in aid operations. 'There is major room for workshops on negotiation skills,' says a UN agency field manager. 'Basic techniques need to be taught. Agencies often have very young people who are not skilled in negotiation'. The Center for the Strategic Initiatives of Women (CSIW, under the Fund for Peace umbrella) has held important workshops for women leaders from throughout the Horn. A Strategic Initiative on the Horn

73. Sultan Barakat, Mohammed Ehsan and Arne Strand, "NGOs and Peace-Building in Afghanistan: Workshop Report," April 1994, University of York mimeo, p. 41.

74. Lederach, pp. 24-25.

of Africa is being formed by CSIW staff to do training and support field-based conflict management and prevention at the community level.

ABuGiDa, an indigenous Ethiopian NGO, has held trainings in conflict management, in which community mobilizers and party members participated. Also in Ethiopia, the Ad Hoc Committee for Peace and Development have held workshops in Harar, South Arssi, Wollaita, and Wollega, at which a mixed group of elders and party officials met and discussed their differences.

In April 1994 the New Sudan Council of Churches trained local peace monitors in Kenya in interpositioning to strengthen cease-fires and peace agreements, and ultimately to develop institutional capabilities to peacefully transform local conflicts.

The Rwandan Ministry of Higher Education in Rwanda conducted a seminar on tolerance in May 1995, broaching difficult issues a year after the genocide. 'It provided an excellent opportunity to discuss serious issues,' says an observer. 'It gave the participants some space for reflection'. Also in Rwanda, Africans for Humanitarian Action (AHA, an Ethiopian-run NGO), is doing capacity building in conflict management. AHA has conducted three workshops for government, civic groups and agencies, again giving people a chance to talk openly about the genocide. The participants formed a contact group out of one of the sessions to follow up the discussions and pursue the topic of conflict resolution. Managing ethnic, cultural and social differences was a major theme.[75] Again in Rwanda, CRS co-sponsored with *Kanyarwanda* (a Rwandan human rights group) a workshop called 'Establishing Confidence Between and Among Rwandans'. As a follow up, they brought Hizkias Assefa of the Nairobi Peace Initiative to facilitate a reconciliation workshop with government, human rights groups, and the Catholic church.[76]

In Burundi, the Catholic Bishops Conference initiated a series of workshops focusing on mutual respect, tolerance, self-critical reflection, and forgiveness. The workshops have been offered in a variety of locations to different groups. Ken Hackett of Catholic Relief Services notes, 'Major religious institutions in different societies are well placed with the capacity through natural structures to minimize ethnic, economic, racial, or religious divisions by reaching all levels of society'.[77]

Mainstreaming conflict management training into conventional development programming is critical. This is discussed further in Section three.

75. Interview with Askala Binega, 8/10/95.

76. Interview with CRS staff.

77. Ken Hackett, "Role of International NGOs and Civil Society in Preventing Conflict," speech to UN symposium on preventing conflict, April 1996.

Sustained dialogues

The leading new generation 'Peace NGOs' such as Search for Common Ground, the Institute for Multi-Track Diplomacy, and International Alert all have sustained dialogues as the core of their programming. Without any rigorous evaluations having been undertaken on these activities, combined with their relatively sparse track records, it might be premature to reach even tentative conclusions about the efficacy of such undertakings. Nevertheless, there is obvious value for the participants in these ventures, as they learn about the views and priorities of those across dividing lines. But the extent to which these insights 'trickle out' to their colleagues is completely unknown, as is the degree to which these Track Two initiatives influence Track One conflict management and resolution.

In northern Mali, the British NGO ACORD has been working with the conflicting Sonrai and Tamasheq/Arab groups for a number of years. ACORD called an inter-community meeting in Timbuktu in December 1991 to address development programming, which turned out to be the first of many meetings and that had the added value of bringing conflicting communities together to discuss mutual concerns beyond the immediate developmental interventions. These intercommunal meetings are now a standard part of ACORD's program. The process of bringing estranged groups together helped minimize inflammatory actions based on misinformation and rumor. Because of its two decades of experience in northern Mali and its contacts across the dividing lines as well as with a number of social groups, ACORD was uniquely positioned to resource this ongoing reconciliation process.[78]

Another example is that of women's encounter groups organized by a local Sri Lankan NGO called INFORM, which brings together women from the conflicting ethnic groups in order to promote understanding and cooperation. These kinds of local initiatives are particularly important to support, as they in many cases represent a latent will on the part of some segments of conflicting communities to increase contact.

Category Four: Promoting tolerance through media

Peace radio, television, and theater

Radio and other media provide a venue for accessing millions of people in post-conflict societies. It is estimated that there are over 50 million radios spread

78. ACORD, "Development in Conflict: The Experience of ACORD in Uganda, Sudan, Mali and Angola, RRN, London: Overseas Development Institute, April 1995, pp. 39 and 72.

throughout the developing world, including millions in areas currently or formerly controlled by rebel or government forces in which propaganda has been the main source of information. Until recently, the aid community paid little attention to the potential role of media, but that is changing. For example, there is increasing recognition of the impact which radio programming can have on education, as well as on reconciliation processes. Debates are intensifying about the role of NGOs in promoting reconciliation through media outlets. Increasing legitimacy is being lent to ideas such as training journalists in sensitivity to conflict issues, providing airtime to local peacemakers rather than just the combatants, and highlighting the economic benefits of peace through the media. This all parallels a debate within the journalism community about whether reporting is meant to reflect or change society.[79]

Furthermore, the Voice of America and BBC are both placing new emphasis on their educational potential. An example is the BBC Afghan Education Drama Project's soap opera which is integrating conflict resolution themes into its programming. Issues addressed include how outsiders profit from conflict and women's roles as peacemakers.[80]

Other examples provide a flavor of the diversity of programming options. In early 1994, local churches in Burundi began broadcasting radio programs on topics related to alternatives to violence for dispute resolution, respecting differences, cycles of violence, and other related issues. World Vision has supported the programs with financial and technical support. With this and other initiatives, there is no empirical, quantifiable method to test the success of such interventions. Evaluation methods should be tested for initiatives of this kind, measuring attitudinal change and violence prevented.

In Cambodia after the peace agreement was signed, the UN initiated radio broadcasts designed to counter rumors and inaccurate information. By many accounts this lowered tensions and suspicions.[81] Similarly, the Swiss-managed Radio Agatashya in Rwanda established in August 1994 aims to combat the partisan - and often destructive - nature of local media. Providing an independent source of information through a medium with as widespread dissemination as radio helps address the misinformation that often refuels a resumption of conflict in post-war societies.

Radio programming geared toward peace is a low-cost intervention that can, if necessary, be undertaken from a great distance. Countering hate radio, for example, is critical for providing alternative points of view in highly charged societies.

79. Clare Pointon, "Small Wars and Smart Relief, *Crosslines Global Report*, July 1996, pp. 33-34.

80. Gordon Adam, "Creative Radio for Development," *Crosslines Global Report*, July 1996, pp. 30-31.

81. Anderson, "Do No Harm," p. 40-41.

Peace radio has been initiated in Somalia and Rwanda. From Ethiopia, InterAfrica Group, on behalf of UNICEF, broadcasts a peace program into Somalia on a daily basis. Radio is by far the most influential means of communication in Somalia, a highly oral society. Links on the peace radio programs are made specifically between peace, protection of women and children, and religious traditions. A UNESCO Symposium on Somali Peace and Reconciliation in Sana'a urged more media programs presenting positive images of such components of peacebuilding as traditional conciliation mechanisms and human rights rather than violence. Somali participants in the UNESCO symposium also urged an increase in dissemination of traditional values which promote a more peaceful environment.[82]

As is commonly known, the radio was critical in Rwanda in mobilizing popular will and a climate of fear and hatred which made the genocide possible. The government radio station in Zaire was partially responsible for fuelling ethnic violence in Zaire in 1992-93 which uprooted half a million people. More broadly, the radio is a tool used by governments throughout Africa to perpetuate their power.[83]

UNHCR is doing radio broadcasts in Rwanda and the refugee camps in neighboring Zaire and Tanzania which show that people can return to Rwanda. Burundi national radio broadcasts radio programs twice a week to refugees. UNICEF is collaborating with the Rwandan Ministry of Higher Education to produce a series of radio messages on cultural differences. In Burundi, an interview was broadcast with a returnee sitting next to people who were rumored to be killed to illustrate that rumors are often wrong.

Local theater is yet another medium. UNICEF initiated a project called the 'Circus of Peace' in Mozambique, an effort to utilize theater to educate communities on the possibilities of reconciliation and on skills involved in conflict resolution. UNICEF also sponsored a puppet show for Hutu and Tutsi children in a Burundian displaced camp which is aimed at promoting the peaceful resolution of disputes.

Ken Bush, who has studied this and other similar processes in Northern Ireland and Sri Lanka, concludes, 'While such initiatives at the street- or field-level may not have immediate, large-scale results, they do contribute to a gradual, bottom up process of reconciliation'.[84] Besides radio and theater, television has also been employed as a mode of transmission for ideas of tol-

82. Sana'a (Yemen) Symposium on the Culture of Peace in Somalia (1995) *Draft Report* at paras. 14, 16.

83. John Balzar, "Africans Get the Word by Radio," *Washington Post*, October 25, 1995, p. A22.

84. Kenneth Bush, "From Bullet Holes to Bird Nests: The Role of NGOs in the Peacebuilding Process," Canadian Political Science Association Annual Meeting, Calgary, June 1994.

erance, such as Search for Common Ground's programming in South Africa. One of the summit meetings of Great Lakes presidents organized by the Carter Center brought about an agreement to videotape promises of safe return for the two million refugees from Rwanda and Burundi in neighboring countries. The leaders of five countries began taping appeals in mid-March, 1996.

Category Five: Mobilizing communities for conflict management

Peace committees or commissions

Assembling peace committees or commissions is another strategy aimed at bringing together middle-range actors in a conflict or post-conflict situation. The Central American peace agreement signed by all five countries in the region called for the creation of National Peace Commissions in each country. In Nicaragua, regional and local commissions were established as well, including one composed of mid-level religious leaders for the conflict between the Sandanista government and the Yamata umbrella group for the East Coast opposition. Lederach notes that this was a model example of an insider-partial approach to peacebuilding, in which intermediaries come directly from both/all sides of the conflict setting.[85]

Similarly, regional and local peace committees were formed in South Africa after the National Peace Accord. The successes of the South African commissions are not well advertized, but in many cases they have contained potential violence. For example, after the assassination of Chris Hani in April 1993, peace commission personnel worked successfully to restrain revenge-seeking individuals and groups. The number of casualties would have been far higher than 200 in the absence of the commissions.[86]

External agencies can assist commissions to 'approach issues as problems to solve rather than as political opportunities'. For example, peace commissions were established to help implement the Mozambican peace agreement. Donors supervised some of these commissions, such as the Commission on Reintegration of former combatants. Nicole Ball suggests that 'external personnel who participate in the work of formal commissions should receive training in conflict resolution and consensus-building techniques'. Ball also points out the technical working group model, which is

85. Lederach, p. 26.

86. Lund and Prendergast et al, p. 4-34.

designed to develop consensus among former combatants. In El Salvador, specific groups dealt with credit, land tenancy, and housing. USAID was actively involved in many of these groups.[87]

In Ahmedabad, India, an agency assisted in the establishment of peace committees to address tensions and counter rumors which might provoke violence. The committees initiated a series of street plays to educate communities about the drawbacks to local violence.[88] Partners for Democratic Change has developed another model, which links conflict resolution centers in Bulgaria, Hungary, Poland and Russia. The network has developed local conciliation commissions to promote cross-cultural communication and stress conflict prevention. The organization trains local bureaucrats in joint problem-solving and negotiation, and creates courses for teaching conflict resolution in the schools.[89]

The government and main separatist movement in Sri Lanka established four peace committees in different regions of the country. The committees included representation from three donor countries. The committees provided a forum to bring people together to address ways to overcome significant obstacles to peace, and allowed for exchange across ethnic and geographic lines. Until the collapse of the ceasefire, the committees kept channels of communication open between the two sides.[90]

Peace committees allow participants to come together and help consolidate a peace process. The South African and Nicaraguan experiences have shown that communication between rival groups can be facilitated by such committees. Further benefits are derived from committees which help promote plurality and other central elements of a peace agreement. Future challenges for peace committees include the need to improve coordination between local branches of such committees.

Furthermore, peace committees are unable to address fundamental governance issues which fuel conflict. They can mediate disputes, but are ultimately inviable if serious political and economic reforms are not simultaneously being undertaken. There is also the added danger of politicizing local disputes that are largely solvable outside of the government's reach, and the potential of becoming just another state bureaucracy. To counter this, local

87. Nicole Ball with Tammy Halevy, *Making Peace Work: The Role of the International Community* (Washington: Overseas Development Council) 1996, pp. 62-63.

88. Anderson, "Do No Harm," p. 38.

89. Joseph Montville, "Functional Cooperation: An Application of Track Two Diplomacy," Annex F in Montville et al, p. 60.

90. CIDA, "CIDA's Experience in Arbitration, Mediation, Negotiation and Reconciliation," Notes for the Paris Meeting of OECD DAC Task Force Working Group on Conflict Prevention, February 1996, p. 5.

peace committees should develop strong relations with local organizations and deep familiarity with local conflict management processes.[91]

There are also organic, local variations on the peace committee concept which are involved in peace-making. For example, the Committee for Restarting Pastoral Initiatives in Butare, Rwanda, composed of one Tutsi priest and one Hutu intellectual, are receiving some support. They are convinced that reconciliation must start at the grassroots. They have a newsletter for public education purposes, and are facilitating the return of refugees.

Women's peace groups are being formed throughout the Greater Horn of Africa, including the Sudan Women's Voice for Peace, the Burundi Women's Association for Peace, and a number of Somali, Ethiopian, and Rwandan organizations. For example, the Ethiopian Women Ad Hoc Committee for Peace and Development, founded in April 1992, attempts to advocate for peace and support humanitarian activities related to war victims. The Committee has collaborated with other peace organizations in Addis on various programs.

More established organizations with regional perspectives and agendas on conflict issues also exist, most notably the Nairobi Peace Initiative, InterAfrica Group, and People for Peace in Africa.

The All Africa Conference of Churches sponsors a Sudan Working Group, which brings together a global network of churches in support of a mechanism in Nairobi which supports peace-making in Sudan. Formed in 1993, it is headed unofficially by an eminent retired Kenyan diplomat, Bethuel Kiplagat. The Sudan Working Group maintains contacts with the warring parties in Sudan, donor governments, IGAD, and a variety of non-governmental organizations interested in conflict resolution in Sudan.

After the Akobo Peace Conference (an initiative of community elders in southern Sudan to address intercommunal conflict between two sections of the Nuer), mobile peace committees were formed which included community and church leaders. They were tasked with traveling to the fishing holes and cattle camps to explain, monitor, and promote the peace agreement. The agreement was commemorized in certain locations by reenacting the covenant's sealing with the sacrificing of animals. Since the conference, small peace meetings have been held throughout Upper Nile region, during which traditional methods of conflict resolution are discussed. Local Sudanese women's organizations have been instrumental in moving this process forward in many places. Women's leadership potential has been consciously developed, building the confidence and elevating the status of women's organizations.[92]

91. Lund and Prendergast, pp. 4-35.

92. Duany, p. 19.

Following the Ikotos Conference (a peace initiative which addressed intercommunal violence in the Equatoria region of southern Sudan), Bishop Paride Taban of the Catholic Diocese of Torit in southern Sudan formed an association of peace scouts to act as a peace monitoring mechanism in support of the Ikotos agreement. Sixty monitors were selected from numerous villages. The scouts are charged with reporting violations of the Ikotos agreement to the elders of the village. Similarly, in May 1995, the southern Sudanese Episcopal Diocese of Maridi, led by Rev. Joseph Marona, held a local peace conference during which the community chose sixty people to act as peace monitors.

Indigenous mechanisms for conflict management

Indigenous mechanisms for conflict management can involve a variety of groups and processes at the local level. These mechanisms build on indigenous concepts of social justice and approaches for managing conflict.

Local mediators are often more knowledgeable about the requirements for resolving conflicts than outsiders. Implementation is usually controlled by the communities themselves. In most cases, both parties agree to the verdict. However, in recent years, a distinct decline in traditional authority in many war-torn societies has undermined the ability of local mechanisms to manage conflict.

In the process of strengthening international and regional institutions, which has received the bulk of attention and resources, internal solutions have been neglected. It should be remembered that as conflict is inherent in society, so are the mechanisms for dealing with it.[93]

For conflict prevention and resolution processes to take hold, they require the participation of all segments of society. Traditional authorities (elders, chiefs, etc.), women's organizations, local institutions and professional associations have critical roles to play in the development of grassroots peace building.[94]

In support of a broader conceptualization of peace-building, Constantinos Berhe of Ethiopia points out:

> Formal official and non-official negotiations by elites will not likely produce needed long term transformations of conflicts. Track Two diplomacy, the use of both official and non-official initiatives, provides a basis for discrete communication and the

93. Adams and Bradbury, pp. 55-56.

94. Adams and Bradbury, p. 35.

development of a constituency for peace (citizen-based peace groups, the media, business leaders ...)[95]

Track Two initiatives can build on indigenous mechanisms in order to increase sustainability. For example, the fratricidal inter-communal conflict between Dinka and Nuer communities in southern Sudan has caused more death and destruction in the last four years than the larger conflict between the Sudan government and the SPLA. Between September 1994 and June 1995, there were a number of significant moves made by traditional leaders, junior rebel officers, women's groups, exiled southern politicians, local church leaders, and merchants to bridge the divide between neighboring Dinka and Nuer communities in the Upper Nile region. The situation was 'ripe' for support from the outside, and even the rival rebel commanders were feeling the heat to negotiate from their internal constituencies.

But with little fertilization from the outside, both rebel leaders were able to undermine the initiatives sufficiently to the point where another cycle of cross-line raids has begun, and military responses have recaptured the upper hand. In this case, direct support for the inter-communal negotiations and for the local groups which favored peaceful solutions might have made a huge difference to hundreds of thousands of residents of that region, who will inevitably be receiving emergency inputs of a much higher cost to donors if the conflict escalates again, the direction it appears to be heading at the time of writing.

The Greater Horn of Africa region provides a number of other examples of indigenous conflict management initiatives. Some of the recent locally initiated peace processes in Sudan include:

– grassroots peace conferences in Eastern and Western Torit District which involved the Catholic church and community leaders;

– the intra-Nuer peace conference (Akobo Peace Conference) which involved the Presbyterian church and Nuer chiefs;

– the Dinka-Misseriya peace agreements in the transitional zone between north and south which more or less have held for commercial and deterrence reasons for seven years, but are under extreme threat of late.

Local dispute resolution processes in Somalia include:

– the peace and governance-building conference held between February and June of 1995 among the Rahanweyne in Bay and Bakool Regions, which helped tamp down intra-Rahanweyne violence, but was not successful in its objective of deterring attacks by neighboring clan militias from Mogadishu, Gedo Region, or the central regions, as the late General Mohammed Farah

95. Africa Humanitarian Action, pp. 8-9.

Aidid was able to recapture Baidoa in September 1995 with superior firepower;

– a series of peace conferences in Absame areas (in the Juba Valley) have reduced intra-Absame conflict, and aim to galvanize a momentum for peace with neighboring Majerteen in Kismayu and Marehan in Gedo Region.

Peace conferences sponsored by elders in Somaliland include:

– the Erigavo peace conference which has kept the peace in Sanaag for the last two years despite major external pressures;

– the Boraama Peace Conference which maintained the peace in a volatile Somaliland for nearly two years;

– the recent entry of the 'Guurti' (the clan elders' council) in the conflict resolution efforts between the government and Somali National Movement (SNM) Alliance opposition.

Finally, a significant peace conference in Ethiopia: the Qabri Dahar conference in Region Five (the Ogaden), which brought together a significant cross-section of the political and traditional leadership of the Ogaden, stopped the planting of landmines, reduced tensions between the army and local population, drew many of the Ogadeni National Liberation Front (ONLF) fighters out of the bush, increased commerce, and temporarily brought some consensus about the future of the region.

The successful local conferences in Somalia point out the need to understand that such initiatives, according to Mark Bradbury, renew 'indigenous forms of peacemaking and conflict resolution to restore the balance in society' destroyed by modern internal war.[96] Such work must rebuild indigenous peacemaking capacity from the bottom up, and from the periphery in. The attempt to recreate an overly centralized government has created conflict among political and military rivals positioning themselves for the spoils of state control, and exacerbated the civil war. The reconstruction of legitimate authority has to happen on Somali time and in Somali ways.[97]

A study of the Akobo Peace Conference in southern Sudan produced the following lessons for indigenous peace processes:

Key authority structures of conflicting parties must be included in the process, including traditional, military, administrative, and religious leaders.

Women's groups and leaders must be a part of the process from the beginning.

Traditional conflict resolution mechanisms should be utilized.

96. Mark Bradbury, "The Somali Conflict: Prospects for Peace," Oxfam Research Paper No. 9, 1994, p. 6.

97. Ken Menkhaus and John Prendergast, *CSIS Africa Notes*, May 1995.

Those with moral authority in the community must be central to the process. Educated exiles have a role to play as well.

External support should be minimal and fill gaps, taking care not to replace indigenous leadership.

These indigenous processes represent long-term interactions between traditional and modern societies, and cannot act as quick fixes. They must be placed firmly in historical context for the participants and outside observers.[98]

In many of the above examples, although conflicts have not been completely ended, negotiations often result in agreements which keep broader inter-communal relations positive, creating environments where nomads can graze together, townspeople can live together, merchants can trade together, even though military men remain unreconciled.

Beyond the kinds of peace conferences cited above, traditional authorities review all kinds of civil and criminal cases, including disputes over land, borders, water holes, grazing, marriages, inheritance, property, etc. Their strong moral authority helps bind agreements in areas where that authority has not been fully eroded.

Traditional social organizations are often the means by which local communities resolve conflicts. In Ethiopia, for example, *Eddir, Equb*, and *Mehaber* are the primary indigenous formal associations. *Eddir* is a welfare institution; *Equb* is a savings association; and *Mehaber* is a mechanism for communal responsibility.[99] All of these provide avenues for inter- or intra-group reconciliation. In Sidama areas of southern Ethiopia, Sidama women traditionally tied their undergarments together and laid them between conflicting parties to urge a cessation of hostilities.

For decades, 'border chiefs' between Dinka and Nuer areas have been the mechanism for ameliorating inter-communal conflict and bringing people back together. Although the SPLA has not empowered these people to undertake their historical role, avenues of support for these community leaders should be further explored.

In Nuer areas, the concept of *cieng naath*, or covenanting, is a key mechanism for solving conflict in the family as well as between larger social groups. It was utilized in the Akobo Conference mentioned above.[100]

98. Lowrey, p. 9.

99. UNICEF, *Children and Women in Ethiopia*, 1993, p. 24.

100. Julia Aker Duany, "Making Peace: A Report on Grassroots Peace Efforts By Women in South Sudan," mimeo, 10/95, p. 6.

Somalis have been thrown back on clan and subclan structures to meet basic needs, including security, and can adapt a wealth of traditional mechanisms to resolve interclan killings and scarce resource conflicts.[101] Describing a breakdown into 'warlordism' as a turning back to feudal or clan relations, David Keen notes that while the re-ascendence of clan politics in Somalia has encouraged certain patterns of conflict, it also promises the revival of certain patterns of conflict resolution.[102] Aid can enable democratic, peaceful elements in society to compete for the loyalty of young men at risk of being lured into violence absent other opportunities, e.g., channeling aid through Somali elders.[103]

Collaborative community activities

A critical element of strategies encouraging intercommunal collaboration is the sustainability factor, i.e., will the collaboration last beyond the activity itself? One approach to improving the chances of sustainability of cooperation is to encourage economic interdependence by linking local production and consumption initiatives between formerly warring groups.

Save the Children-US undertook a program in Tajikistan which provided food for work for local work groups reconstructing war-damaged homes in a way that maximized intercommunal cooperation. Significant problems arose, problems which highlight constraints more broadly experienced collaborative activities.

First, questions were raised about the potentially counterproductive nature of focusing attention on recent atrocities by attempting to have communities so recently at war work together. Second, the mono-ethnic nature of most villages in the target area made common work projects logistically challenging. Third, reconciliation issues were largely left to the expatriate country director, while local staff persons avoided direct, conscious involvement in support of these objectives. Fourth, the food payments tended to individualize program benefits, whereas a cash payment might have encouraged broader enterprise and consequently impacted a wider set of families. Fifth, the structure of the program inadvertently produced a situation in which the welfare of each community became a focus of competition with other com-

101. John Paul Lederach, *Building Peace: Sustainable Reconciliation in Divided Societies*, Tokyo: UN University, 1994.

102. Keen, p. 27.

103. D. Keen & K. Wilson (1994) "Engaging with Violence: A Reassessment of Relief in Wartime" in J. Macrae & A. Zwi, eds., *War & Hunger: Rethinking International Responses to Complex Emergencies*, 216.

munities. On this last point, Mary B. Anderson has suggested that a way to overcome this is to develop enterprises in which each group's success depends on the other's success, such as interlinked systems of production.

In response to a simmering resource conflict between Luo, Kuria and Maasai ethnic groups in the border area of South Nyanza and Narok Districts in Kenya, Maasai and Luo elders donated land for a demonstration center for agriculture and livestock development. The pilot projects brought together farmers and pastoralists from the different groups, which were followed by a series of meetings initiating a reconciliation process. Ethnic clashes reportedly declined, as did cattle raiding. Project activities within the demonstration center were slowly decentralized throughout participating communities. 'The place that used to be a battle ground has been turned into a booming market,' notes Moses Sika of Lutheran World Relief.[104]

There are other, less production- and trade-oriented initiatives which can encourage inter-community collaboration. In Macedonia, Search for Common Ground is fostering collaboration between Albanians and Slavs to clean up religious sites. Although in the short run these kinds of activities might create some lines of cooperation and open lines of communication, they are likely unsustainable without external encouragement and funding. A more sustainable approach would involve attempting to interlink communities through productive initiatives, where markets are created in each community and interdependence of production and consumption results.

In Jerusalem, an agency helped establish two interlinked but autonomous women's centers, one for Palestinians and one for Israelis. Although they primarily address issues in their own communities, the two centers also cooperate on common issues as well.[105] Also in Jerusalem, the Israeli-Palestinian Center for Research and Information is coordinated jointly by Israelis and Palestinians. Its objective is to explore mutual interests of the two peoples by sponsoring three roundtables composed of economists and industrialists, water scientists, and a cross-section of the two communities who discuss the future of Jerusalem.[106]

104. Moses Sika, "Case Study - Ogwedhi Sigawa Project," mimeo, July 1994.

105. Mary B. Anderson, "Do No Harm," Cambridge: Collaborative for Development Action, 1996, p. 25.

106. Joseph Montville et al, "Assessment of Opportunities and Considerations for the Palestinian-Israeli Cooperation Program," Development Associates International, July 1992, p. 11.

2. Integration into conventional rehabilitation efforts

Given the decline in foreign aid, the likelihood that there will be plentiful new resources for reconciliation initiatives is non-existent. Consequently, the most hopeful innovation will be the integration of reconciliation objectives into existing priorities and programs.

To enhance this, USAID should consider special training initiatives in conflict prevention and resolution for its program staff in countries which have experienced or are experiencing violent conflict. Besides skill-building, this kind of capacitation of USAID staff would reinforce the importance of post-conflict aid in consolidating peace processes and promoting reconciliation.[107]

Curriculum reform

Long-term attitudinal change in the service of reconciliation objectives is a logical complement to educational policies at the primary and secondary level. Thus, developing training for teachers to help them encourage tolerance and cooperation among children is a cost-effective and comprehensive way to introduce reconciliation principles into the socialization process. Peace education programs are being explored by certain agencies, based in schools, communities, media and religious institutions. One agency official proclaimed that in Rwanda, 'There must be a massive education program to new ideas of inclusivity'. Consequently, the Ministry of Higher Education in Rwanda is undertaking a major initiative. One of the first steps is the training of mobilizers in primary and secondary schools. There are plans to introduce peace education into the school curriculum, stressing how people and communities have overcome past differences and reintegrated.

Institutionalizing these objectives is possible, as proven in Northern Ireland where the Education for Mutual Understanding (EMU) program is integrating EMU goals into all educational programs. In this case, lessening misperceptions through addressing stereotypes and viewpoints has led to greater understanding across lines of dispute.

Similarly, Student Palaver Management Program in Liberia has introduced an organized conflict resolution program into the school curriculum in some locations. The objective is to promote non-violent management of conflict through learning and practicing mediation skills.[108] In Israel, the Van Leer Institute has sponsored the Arab-Jewish Project, which trains Arab and Jewish teachers to deal with Arab-Jewish relations in the classroom. Partici-

107. USAID, Project Evaluation: El Salvador: Peace and National Recovery, March 16, 1994, pp. IX-1.

108. "Never Too Soon to Start Forgiving," *Contact*, Number 148, May 1996, pp. 8-9.

pants and organizers have refined curricula since 1982, and developed a booklet, a textbook, and a workshop format.[109]

In Sri Lanka, UNICEF helped the government introduce a program called Education for Conflict Resolution. After learning of other initiatives in the region, a group of resource persons developed ten training manuals on conflict resolution for principals, teacher trainers, teachers, and pupils. Methods and messages were developed which were relevant within the Sri Lankan social context, and make maximum use of Buddhist and Hindu emphases on harmony, cooperation, moderation, and even meditation.[110]

Regarding peace education, a UNICEF field manager points out, 'The promotion of tolerance and the acceptance of differences through peace education is important'. Pierce Gerety, the UNICEF Country Director in Somalia, cautions,

> 'I'm concerned that some so-called 'peace education' may be set up in a simplistic, shallow way that does not relate to how people really make decisions affecting their (or their community's) vital interests. Real peace education, to the extent that it is feasible, is a very long-term undertaking that involves changing the way individuals, beginning as young children, learn to look at other people and to define themselves as members of a particular group in opposition to others. It is a highly worthwhile enterprise, but it unfortunately does not offer an immediate solution to the conflicts that have ripped these countries apart, conflicts that are based on manipulation of people's sense of insecurity, on leaders hungry for power convincing followers who are just plain hungry that 'if we don't destroy our opponent they will destroy us.' I think peace education is something that has to be built carefully, brick by brick, on the basis of an understanding of the human capacity for hatred and evil, and of the genuine conflicts of interests between groups, not simply appeals to good sentiments and human solidarity.
>
> One place to begin is in removing the lessons of distrust and hate that are contained in history lessons in many, if not most, national curricula. It's amazing how easily children who have never even met someone from a neighboring country or clan can assimilate lessons about the harm that 'they' did, or may do, to 'us'.
>
> Another good beginning is in learning through practice different methods of conflict resolution - talking things out or

109. Montville et al, p. 11.

110. UNICEF, "How Sri Lanka Educates Children for Peace," from the Internet version of *The State of the World's Children* (New York: UNICEF) 1996.

seeking mediation rather than reaching for a weapon. But I have to recognize some of the peoples who are the most devoted to talking things out until they reach consensus are also among the most inclined to take up arms against their neighbors.

We should and must promote 'peace education', but we must recognize that to be effective it has to come in all sincerity from the people directly concerned: it is clear from recent history that lessons of harmony in school cannot by themselves overcome traditions of prejudice passed on at home. It may well be a way to save [some] future generations from the scourge of war but it probably can't provide an immediate solution to the conflicts that currently afflict us'.[111]

Trauma work

One cost-effective method of expanding psycho-social interventions beyond the individual counseling method is to conduct training workshops among caretakers and other authorities who care for and are in contact with children. Building skills within those individuals who most directly work with children will provide the former with some tools to be more sensitive and helpful to war-impacted populations. Along these lines, UNICEF and a number of NGOs have undertaken workshops in post-genocide Rwanda for foster parents, social workers, and a variety of other groups which would likely work with children.[112]

Mental health is increasingly viewed by the World Health Organization (WHO) and other agencies as integral to public health and broader social welfare interventions, not just as a phenomenon requiring separate initiatives. In this regard, training primary health care workers in mental health issues remains critical. (The Christian Health Association of Liberia has trained health workers to recognize psychosomatic cases and to apply various locally-specific activities.) The vigilance of a primary health worker for particular symptoms, including isolation and incapacitation, provides a locally relevant layer of defence. WHO has developed a manual for relief and development practitioners on differentiating between serious mental illness and common war-related complaints. WHO advocates working with traditional healers, as has occurred in Latin America where local volunteers were trained as 'mental health promoters' in war-affected communities.[113]

For the people of Milange, Mozambique, the physical reconstruction of the community is seen as essential to the process of individual and commu-

111. Personal correspondence from Pierce Gerety, December 19, 1995.

112. Kumar, p. 67.

113. WHO, "Mental Health of Refugees," Geneva, 1994, cited in Summerfield, p. 33.

nity healing. This process, therefore, must be initiated by both individual and community actions so the community can move collectively forward. Only by actively living and working in a normal constructive environment can the end of the war for the people of Milange be truly realized. Therefore, it is paramount that reconciliation work be placed in a broader context focusing on the economic and social reconstruction of the communities.[114]

Uncovering the past

To support or supplement the work of Truth Commissions or war crimes trials, relief and development agencies often help in the collection of data and testimonies. This quiet human rights component of NGOs should be supported by USAID when information collection is coordinated with an operative Truth Commission. Furthermore, local organizations in these environments are often under extreme pressure, and pairing with international organizations or support from donors can provide protection as well as encouragement to continue with their mission.

Collaborative community activities

The USAID-funded *Gal Oya* project in Sri Lanka was primarily a water management project, but because it addressed the mutual needs of members from various ethnic and economic groups, it continued in the midst of a resumption of instability. Most importantly, *ad hoc* institutions of intercommunal cooperation resulted which went far beyond the original water management objectives.[115] In Angola, Creative Associates is implementing Community Revitalization Projects in both UNITA- and government-controlled areas. In order to promote reconciliation, projects are being planned near ceasefire lines so villagers can cooperate across these lines on joint projects.

Conventional relief, rehabilitation and development objectives in a post-war environment should not only be evaluated on their original goals, but also on the degree to which they contribute to the consolidation of peace.

Conventional programming

In an environment of declining foreign aid, the most realistic and cost-effective approach to reconciliation programming will likely be in the integration of reconciliation principles and objectives into existing programming. Mary B. Anderson succinctly concludes that ‘in all cases there are ways in which aid agencies can do what they do, but do it in a way that provides space and

114. Gibbs, pp. 268, 275.

115. Norman Uphoff, Learning from Gal Oya: Possibilities for Participatory Development and Post-Newtonian Social Science, (Ithaca: Cornell University Press) 1992

voice and motivation for local people to disengage from the conflict that surrounds them... The way in which the operational agency undertook its work resulted in the creation of a space in which people could reconnect rather than divide, communicate rather than pass rumors about each other, and cooperate rather than compete'.[116]

Anderson calls for aid strategies which consciously support existing local 'capacities for peace'. Programmatically, she recommends that agencies build into their programming the objectives of providing safe space for people across lines of division to interrelate (by hiring locals from or targeting benefits to all sides of the conflict), providing voice to those that want to discuss reconciliation (by supporting peace conferences or publications), and providing incentives to promote disengagement from conflict (by focusing post-conflict resources on collaborative initiatives).[117]

At the operational level, donors like USAID can move beyond treating the symptoms of crises and use aid to mitigate conflict and address the economic disruptions at the root of conflict. Agencies must continue to be more flexible in removing often artificial barriers between relief and development activities.

Postwar reconstruction must in fact begin before war ends and entails rebuilding infrastructure and economies, absorbing traumatic changes in social relations (as well as demobilized fighters), and rehabilitating every level of society – household, community, civil group, professional association, and government – with a grasp of social relations to avoid reinforcing inequality or deepening marginalization.[118] Despite their immediate exacerbation of poverty and risk, wars in impoverished countries can be positive agents for change. This can be both direct - when people fight for justice and equality - and indirect, when war prompts women's, community, and other civil groups to emerge.[119]

Some of the following strategies attempt to directly or indirectly address local problems which provide fodder for conflict. These are strategies which are or can be directly integrated into conventional relief and development programming. Examples primarily come from the Greater Horn of Africa, where experimentation in this regard has perhaps outpaced other areas.[120]

116. Mary B. Anderson, "The Experience of NGOs in Conflict Intervention: Problems and Prospects," Collaborative for Development Action mimeo, April 1995, p. 20.

117. Anderson, "Do No Harm," pp. 28-40.

118. M Adams & M Bradbury (1995) "Conflict and Development," Background Paper II for UNICEF/NGO Workshop, NY, 27 April 1995, p. 10.

119. Adams & Bradbury (1995), p. 10.

120. From John Prendergast, *Front Line Diplomacy: Humanitarian Aid and Conflict* (Boulder: Lynne Rienner) 1996

Forging intercommunal and economic links

Create intercommunal or cross-line aid committees

Most participatory mechanisms for aid planning and distribution only involve intra-community participation, not inter-community cooperation. There is usually no crossing of community lines or lines of division.

In areas where communities or contesting militia groups have frequently clashed, agencies might facilitate the creation or support of existing intercommunal mechanisms to discuss needs. These mechanisms often already exist, but are under extreme pressure. They take such diverse forms as kinship ties between neighboring communities which are activated during periods of extreme stress, local religious committees or communities which incorporate multiple groups, or border chiefs or elders whose responsibility it is to negotiate between communities in the aftermath of intercommunal conflict.

Strengthening cross-line communication may have no impact on the leaders of warring or formerly warring parties, but perhaps will lead the peace-seeking elements of neighboring communities to see mutual interests in cooperation. With communication and cooperation partially restored, neighbors can continue to trade, graze animals, and maintain other ties even while warleaders continue to fight. As Ken Menkhaus notes, 'Often this simple provision of political space and a line of communication is vital to the process of conflict resolution, and can be the greatest contribution international organizations can make ... It focuses community attention on the very tangible benefits of cooperation and conflict resolution, rather than on peace as an abstraction'.[121] These cross-line mechanisms can have extremely important preventive ramifications, providing fora to discuss rather than fight over misunderstandings and resource questions.

Border areas throughout the Great Lakes Region are logical focal points for this kind of initiative, where communication between those 'outside' and those 'inside' is critical for balancing perceptions. A few agencies began a series of cross-border meetings between towns inside Rwanda facing the Zairian camps. This was interrupted for a time by the massacres at Kibeho, but resumed in mid-1995.

In the greater Somali and Afar communities inhabiting Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Somaliland and Somalia, the UN is examining cross-border strategies regarding resource use, trade, grazing routes, communication and transport. Since the UNDP established guidelines regarding its response to complex emergencies, and conflict avoidance is a key element, these kinds of non-traditional cross-border planning and programming have greater latitude when being explored by UN agencies. Since these countries are all continuous recipi-

121. Menkhaus, *Life and Peace Review*, p. 12.

ents of external assistance, this regional framework should be utilized and intercommunal planning should be a part of all responses. 'Going across borders to solve problems is critical,' says Walid Musa of UNDP.[122] Similar thinking is taking place in the Great Lakes Region, where cross-border links are strong between the movement of people, the concentration of populations, and the movement of military forces.

Entering this area of promoting intercommunal cooperation without a specific product or agenda in mind might create suspicion or leave agencies vulnerable to charges of political meddling and might be generally counter-productive. But particular interventions at the sectoral level become more sensible when seeking cross-line dialogue. Food is obviously a tool for negotiation, as is animal health, education and training, water, human health and housing.

Animal health is one sectoral area which has experimented with cross-line programming. Vaccination programs across the lines of battle are feasible with something as critical to local communities as the health of their animals, which often represent their entire asset base. For example, animal herders of the Misseriya from Southern Kordofan were not receiving veterinary services from northern Sudan and therefore wanted to be served from Akon, an area held by the SPLA. An already brisk trade between Southern Kordofan and Northern Bahr al-Ghazal might be further assisted by aid planners who could provide certain inputs to the Misseriya and certain inputs to the Dinka, to encourage further cooperation and perhaps help forestall an escalation of hostilities which threatens the fragile situation in that transition zone.

Some agencies use the opportunity of animals coming together to treat people as well. Mobile health clinics and veterinarians can travel together and create further incentives for temporary intercommunal cooperation.

Education is another potential vehicle for cross-line contact. Bishop Paride Taban's Diocese of Torit has a boarding school which brings together the children of many neighboring ethnic groups in Eastern Equatoria. Although it is hoped that this programming will lead to increased cooperation in the present, this strategy is more geared toward creating a future atmosphere where tomorrow's adults will have had more experience peacefully interrelating with their neighbors. Training programs, although shorter-term, can also be a vehicle for bringing different perspectives and representatives of conflicting communities together on technical, joint problem-solving grounds.

A third sectoral area for intercommunal planning is water. Bringing community water committees together to jointly plan regional drilling, maintenance, and use is a logical extension of participatory strategies. If appropriate-

122. Interview, Walid Musa, July 10, 1995.

ly engaged, the Regional Water Authorities in Somalia might act as mechanisms for cross-line discussion, for example.

Fourthly, human health holds great potential for inter-community cooperation. UNICEF has brokered 'days of peace' and 'corridors of tranquility' in order to carry out immunization programs for children. The Carter Center has used guinea worm eradication as the logic for temporary cessation of hostilities. The mobile clinic of CRS and the Diocese of Torit funded by ECHO goes across boundaries of conflicting parties in southern Sudan, and can be a vehicle for dialogue through intercommunal planning.

Housing is yet another sector holding some promise for conscious cross-ethnic programming. In Gitarama, Rwanda, a housing reconstruction program provides Hutu locals with raw materials who are building or repairing housing for returning Tutsis.[123]

Promote intercommunal trade and exchange

Trade and exchange mechanisms are often the most important vehicles through which communities survive times of conflict-induced scarcity, and are often the most severely affected elements of the food economy. African rural production systems have evolved coping strategies to preserve productive assets through times of stress; assets include physical resources, investments in livestock, and legitimate claims on others.[124] Economic exchange between communities also keeps lines of communication open, which are critical for addressing misperceptions about the intentions of neighboring communities. Encouraging, supporting and protecting these indigenous responses should be a major priority of intervening agencies.

Organizations interested in supporting reconciliation can seek creatively to foster interdependence rather than competition. Exchange mechanisms are often cut off by front lines, or communities are so impoverished by chronic conflict that transporting goods back and forth becomes problematic. Supplying means of transport for locally produced and traded commodities should be explored by intervening agencies. Backhauling of goods by air, allowing trucks bringing inputs also to be used for transporting local goods, and providing bicycles or canoes (depending on the topography) to facilitate the movement of small amounts of produce are all critical in keeping lines of cooperation open between neighboring communities whose relations are perhaps strained by the actions of warleaders.

123. Interviews with CRS staff, 8/95.

124. SEOC Review (1995), p. 112.

Cooperatives and other methods of community cooperation are in some places key actors in sustaining intercommunal exchange. Utilizing these kinds of indigenous mechanisms supports local adaptation to conflict as well as keeps lines of communication open. For example, CRS is giving money to a community cooperative in Chukudum (southern Sudan) in order to increase their purchasing power, and the cooperative is buying goods from neighboring communities, stimulating exchange between the Boya, Didinga, and Toposa, who have historically raided each other for cattle or grain. Simply knowing these cooperative mechanisms exist is important in agency planning.

For example, Rahanweyne sub-clans in the Bay Region are increasingly pooling their money into small, cooperative, profit-sharing businesses called *iskashis*. The profitability of these ventures and their ability to penetrate markets in Mogadishu and Bardera will greatly influence the Rahanweyne's ability to one day defend themselves from military and commercial incursions from militarily stronger and wealthier Habr Gedir and Marehan neighbors. Supporting non-indigenous forms of social organization like local NGOs will do nothing to reduce conflict and little to reduce vulnerability in Bay Region, but perhaps supporting *iskashis* will. The conquest of Baidoa by the late General Aidid in September 1995 reinforces the analysis of interdependence between Bay Region's food production and Mogadishu's markets and port. Gradually equalizing the power balance between the two neighbors is a prerequisite for non-predatory relations.

In the Western Equatoria district of southern Sudan, cooperatives and other local producers are again selling surpluses with the help of some agencies and donors. The surplus production opens up old trade routes, some of which go across borders, which can't be completely controlled by the warleaders.

On the Ugandan side of the border, Equatorian refugees produce vegetables, seeds, and root crops for sale to other Sudanese refugees and to the Ugandan host population. There are historical links of reciprocity and ethnicity across the border which have been called upon repeatedly during the last three decades of violent conflict in both countries. Much more could be done to support the refugee populations in their production and commercial networks.[125]

Trade can be the great equalizer. Some of the conflicts in the Horn have partial roots in exclusion from trade routes. In Somaliland, perceptions of unequal access to Berbera-Jijiga trade routes fuels the Garhajis' militia in its war with the Somaliland government and its Habr Awol supporters. Agencies should at least factor this in to their response to the displacement caused by the war, and to ensure the assistance that is going into government-held areas

125. Bread for the World Institute, *Countries in Crisis*, Washington, DC: 1995, p. 31.

does not reinforce patterns of domination and exclusion. Aid into the Lower Juba Region in Somalia also requires political savvy, as the exclusion of Ogadenis from Kismayu's political and commercial benefits enhances the likelihood of future conflict.

Address economic roots of conflict

Those localized conflicts which have their roots predominantly in competition over resources are obvious candidates for interventions which seek to resolve the underlying resource-driven tensions. 'A degree of conflict is desperation-driven,' says Philip O'Brien of UNICEF. 'A secure food economy will tamp down conflict'.[126] Constantinos Berhe, the director of LEM Ethiopia, notes that 'Conflicts are resource-based at the district level, not ethnicity based. Water, grass, and land are key issues. We need to look at traditional uses of natural resources, and look at how communities apply their laws to resolve conflicts'.[127] Using aid to reduce local violence can produce greater gains than the direct benefits of distributing commodities.

The supply side of recruitment for armies and militias is often driven by failed development, as is evidenced by the recruitment by militia leaders of disenfranchised youth from Somalia's maldeveloped regions. Investment in those regions might draw back some of these militia to their home areas. 'When people are satisfied, doing business, growing crops, they will not take up arms,' claims Abdi Aden Ali of Oxfam UK. 'People take up arms when they see negative trends in development'.[128] Low-level economic activity provides some measure of economic independence, which lessens dependence on military authorities. This can reduce rationales for joining militias and reduce a community's dependence on aid which often cements local populations to military leaders.

For example, on the road from Boraama to Hargeisa in Somaliland, the number of checkpoints increased because people all along the road needed money to buy water from the limited number of usable water points. UNDP dug two more water holes, and the checkpoints disappeared.[129] The fighting over water points in the Bakool Region of Somalia in the spring and summer of 1995 between the Jiron and Hadame sub-clans was also amenable to resolution through elder negotiation backed up by limited agency resources in digging additional water points per the eventual agreement.

126. Interview, Philip O'Brien, June 28, 1995.

127. Interview, July 20, 1995.

128. Interview, July 2, 1995.

129. Interview with UNDP staff, 7/7/95.

Environmental restoration is a key sector in which economic roots of conflict can be addressed and solutions can cut across the lines of battle. The internally displaced camps in Rwanda – and other large scale concentrations of people throughout the Greater Horn – have left the surrounding area stripped of its vegetative cover, accelerating erosion. Only a few agencies are addressing the nexus of environmental problems which will inevitably spawn another generation of intercommunal conflict driven by scarce resources. Furthermore, agro-forestry falls outside of the parameters of some donor's emergency funding.

In Sudan and Somalia, addressing the economic interests of the Baggara agro-pastoralists and Habr Gedir pastoralists, respectively, in their home areas would contribute to reducing the ease with which militia leaders recruit young men. The processes of maldevelopment in Southern Kordofan, Sudan, and the central regions of Somalia which impoverished huge numbers of families throughout the 1980s provided a breeding ground for resentment and were easily harnessed by manipulative politicians. The vast majority of externally provided resources go to the areas which these militias attack (like northern Bahr al-Ghazal, Sudan) or where they reside now as militias (such as Mogadishu), rather than their areas of origin. Thought must be given to the development of sustainable alternative livelihoods for these young men in their home areas.

As mentioned earlier, the commercial imperative often requires stability. The greater the potential for marketing, especially exporting, the more vested interest exists in defusing conflict-producing instability. The ports in Somalia hold great potential for backwards peace-building linkages. The more well-functioning ports become, the higher the potential for profits, and the greater logic will exist for stability.

Preventing conflict and building peace as explicit objectives of aid

Plan for peace-building

Aware of their lack of experience, many agencies are increasingly exploring issues of peace-building and reconciliation in their programming. For example, CARE held a workshop on the subject for its regional managers in the Greater Horn in early 1996, and World Vision hired someone full-time to advise the agency on reconciliation.

In the field, interest has been expressed by various agency personnel in the possibility of bringing in local and international conflict resolution experts (or those intimately familiar with the dynamics of particular conflicts) at the planning or evaluation stage to advise agencies on how to better

contribute to conflict prevention and peace-building. Even without such external assistance, some agencies informally introduce conflict mitigation or prevention as specific objectives in their planning processes. This requires checking the location, staffing and project content for their peace-building potential. Nevertheless, says peace activist Kabiru Kinyanjui of Kenya, 'Most NGOs are still not incorporating peace-building into their programming. Long term concerns are usually ignored. Most are investing in relief and ignoring reconciliation. Relief is higher profile'.[130]

Again, however accurate, this analysis partially stems from a misunderstanding or ignoring of the necessary division of responsibilities that must be clarified between developmental, human rights and conflict resolution objectives. Operational agencies need not be mediators at a negotiating table (or even under a tree), but their programming should at the least not be contributing to the exacerbation of tensions, and at best can be astutely addressing some of the root causes of conflict, which is the essence of peace-building.

To ensure that relief and development aid reduces rather than intensifies conflicts, what is required is a process approach of continual monitoring and evaluation of whether activities raise or lower the risk of conflict. Agencies must integrate explicit analyses of conflict, political impact, and human rights effects throughout planning, design, and implementation, including sensitivity to latent tensions a project might activate. Finally, agencies must also look to history to understand and anticipate conflicts, rather than static pictures of people's needs and relations.[131]

An important aspect of planning for peace-building is remaining flexible to respond to situations which might allow for positive interventions in support of local level reconciliation. Such flexible interventions sometimes include small, in-kind support for local level conflict resolution conferences.

The degree of relevance is not the only concern about agencies' involvement in peace-building work. After attending a conference organized by Mary B. Anderson at Harvard University, Ken Menkhaus summarizes the skepticism:

> 'Participants ... feared that NGO expertise in primary health care or agriculture does not qualify them to facilitate politically sensitive peace-building work. In some instances, well-meaning NGOs have sponsored local peace conferences that have excluded important groups, or yielded new regional coalitions at a third party's expense, leading to charges that the NGO had taken sides

130. Interview, August 18, 1995.

131. Adams & Bradbury (1995), p. 40.

> in the dispute. Incautious NGOs have also at times been tricked into funding peace conferences that never materialized. Finally, when engaging in 'direct peace-building,' NGOs must explicitly identify local partners in peace-building. That act exposes local individuals to potentially dangerous risks, especially in situations where powerful constituencies oppose peace. Mistakes in such environments can easily get people killed, and mistakes in such environments are easy for outsiders to make'.[132]

The conference participants concluded that agencies should avoid direct peace-building activities. If they do proceed, they should involve those with expertise and experience. They also pointed to an important opening for 'indirect peace-building' activities such as the ones described earlier in this section. Sectoral activities which cross lines of conflict in the context of their humanitarian objective hold the most promise.

The conferees offered an example involving a primary school system in a zone of conflict which holds cross-line discussions among teachers about the location, staffing, and curriculum of the schools. The rationale is to build 'a new educational constituency which transcends the ethnic conflict'.[133] The key is in the cross-line nature of the planning process, remaining in the context of programming (schools, health, agriculture, animal health) that is already planned or operational.

Positive elements of this 'indirect peace-building' were identified by the conferees: it is viewed as non-political when in the context of sectoral programming; it creates safe space for communities on both sides of the line to meet and deepen contacts and improve communication across these lines, channels which are critical when disputes or misunderstandings arise which might lead to the escalation of conflict; and it directly presents communities with evidence of the positive results of cooperation. This 'indirect peace-building,' the conferees concluded, 'may be the single most effective contribution that relief and development agencies can make to the cause of conflict resolution and prevention in their areas of operation'.[134]

Support peace-building capacity

Related to the earlier discussion of capacity building, interventions can also support local peace-makers and constituencies by virtue of who the agencies

132. Ken Menkhaus, "Conflict, Peace-Building and International Aid: The State of the Debate," *Life & Peace Review*, 2/95, p. 11.

133. Menkhaus, p. 12.

134. Menkhaus, p. 12.

utilize as local partners. Rudy von Bernuth of the International Council of Voluntary Associations holds that local institution building which supports participatory democratic processes and pluralism is the most effective method to ensure peace.[135] The division of labor must be recognized at the local level as well. Some forms of social organization are geared toward service provision; others, such as elders' councils, are appropriate for conflict resolution; still others make sense as profit-seeking ventures. Much agency frustration results from naively trying to force groups from the latter two categories into undertaking service provision. If a *woreda* council in Ethiopia, a chiefs' court in Sudan, or an elders' council in Somalia are constituted and show a disposition toward resolving conflict, that priority should be respected and, in some cases, supported.

Relief and development aid not preceded by or including the strengthening of domestic conflict management systems can create and exacerbate conflicts, such as the cattle rustling endemic to pastoral groups, whose development as much concerns conflict management as economic improvement. Similarly, aid to farmers can raise tensions where it seems to legitimate disputed occupancy. Supporting community or government institutions that can resolve competing claims before distributing inputs is an important prerequisite for success in some areas.[136]

The most important element of sustainable reconciliation is to build and/or support peace constituencies. John Paul Lederach describes this as meaning that aid organizations must view local people not as recipients but as resources for citizen-based peacemaking.[137]

War can particularly be a positive catalyst *vis-a-vis* women and gender relations, as women's groups are often among the new civil organizations that arise to challenge conflict and promote peace and rights. Aid organizations can support this process and help women to consolidate their gains against pressures to retrench when war ends.[138]

Nevertheless, it is important to not be uncritically sanguine about the role of women in peace-making; humanitarian organizations and other interveners may tend to mythologize the intentions and role of women, who often crave justice, even if that means the continuation of war. Hugo Slim of Oxford Brookes University elaborates:

135. Smock, p. 15.

136. Adams & Bradbury (1995), p. 37.

137. John Paul Lederach, *Building Peace: Sustainable Reconciliation in Divided Societies*, Tokyo, UN University, 1995, p. 121.

138. Adams & Bradbury (1995), p. 35.

> I think we need to be aware that a new fashion of women peace-making projects is emerging in NGOs. These may be to the 1990s what women's crafts and basket weaving projects were to the 1980s, and be based on similarly simplistic assumptions and generalizations about women's roles in society. I am wary of this new wave of 'designer peace projects' for women.[139]

Social capital can be defined as institutional arrangements (trust, norms of reciprocity and tolerance, and associational networks) that foster voluntary cooperation and civic engagement and correlates it with effective, responsive government, economic development, and public well-being.[140] While some believe that social capital is rooted in long history, recent experience suggests that even long-antagonistic parties can quickly create bases for cooperative social problem-solving.[141] Agencies should be cognizant of the important role social capital may play in the managing and/or resolution of conflict.

The marginalization of traditional authority in some locations has had profound consequences, including the severing of channels for transmitting of basic values and a consequent increase in the raping and killing of women and children.[142] In the efforts of international agencies to build local capacity and enhance participation, questions need to be constantly asked about whether traditional authority structures are being undermined and - given their repressive nature in some places and their role in preserving the social fabric in other places - whether they should be. Agencies cannot choose *not* to address these issues in their quest for neutrality, because most interventions have the potential to empower or disempower certain segments of the community based on the composition and structure of planning and delivery mechanisms. Constantly monitoring these effects should be a responsibility assumed by outside agencies.

When relating with local authorities, certain questions should be debated within and among agencies. Does supporting civilian structures and humanitarian arms of authorities reduce military-dictated policies? Has engaging these structures on rights issues given space for civilian peace-building initiatives? Does this form of capacity building promote a public welfare ethic which might reduce conquest imperatives?

139. Comments of Hugo Slim, in Royal Anthropological Institute, p. 21.

140. L.D. Brown (1994) *Creating Social Capital: Nongovernmental Development Organizations and Intersectoral Problem Solving*, Institute for Development Research Reports vol. 11, no. 3, p. 1

141. Ibid, p. 1.

142. Interview, Iain Levine, August 20, 1995.

3. Local ownership and institutionalisation

External interventions on behalf of peace have dominated the practice and analysis of the conflict resolution field. International and regional institutions have received most of the attention, bypassing important national- and local-level response capacity. Nevertheless, internal initiatives continue, including those of traditional authorities, local NGOs and associations, religious bodies, commercial leaders, and the state itself. External interventions which support local capacities and/or processes likely stand the best chance of success.

Supporting local structures and social capital

There is no disagreement in the aid community about the importance of supporting local capacity and structures, although in practice, particularly in emergencies, the support is often more rhetorical than practical. The Rebuilding War-Torn Societies Project found that 'external assistance ... tends to become a substitute, and worse, destroys local institutions and solutions ... A policy of betting on the local,' the project concludes, 'may in the short term be more laborious, less spectacular, and take more time, but in the long-term may be the only realistic option'.[143]

Local structures can of course take many forms, and care must be given to the search for truly representative, organic structures on which to build. In Afghanistan, the traditional forum for conflict management has been the *shura*, a group of elders which resolves disputes. Some have disappeared, some have been co-opted, some have become political instruments, some have remained untainted by political manipulation. It is incumbent on responding agencies to make proper assessments of local dynamics regarding institutions such as the *shura*. In Sri Lanka, the Human Rights Fund has supported a peace newsletter for Buddhist monks, promoting Buddhist peace initiatives in a country in which Buddhism has been used to mobilize ethnic-based conflict.[144]

A recent World Bank report on post-conflict transitions found that reconciliation requires the rebuilding of social capital, involving organizations, networks and social codes. The Bank concludes,

143. UNRISD, p. 23.

144. CIDA, "CIDA's Experience in Arbitration, Mediation, Negotiation and Reconciliation," Notes for the Paris Meeting of OECD DAC Task Force Working Group on Conflict Prevention, February 1996, p. 2.

> 'Rebuilding social capital means a revitalization of civil society, and revitalizing civil society entails the promotion of local associations, community participation, and peer accountability. It reduces the level of individual fear, enables the collective censure of violence, and promotes local security'.[145]

William Zartman of Johns Hopkins University proclaims the under-recognized phenomenon of civil society's resilience during state collapse: it often cannot fill, and avoids, the national vacuum but vigorously responds to local problems. This gives those who would reconstruct society more opportunity to (re)build civil society - which requires open space - than the state, which requires structures.[146] External programs that invest in developing local people and organizations adapt best to future crises.[147]

There are many opportunities to support indigenous non-governmental forms of social organization. In every society, there are traditional mechanisms of kinship and self-help which are often the primary contributors to a community's survival in the context of a conflict and its aftermath. 'Supporting civil organizations represents development theory in practice, transported back to the rehabilitative phase,' suggests an NGO manager in Rwanda.[148] Even in the structure of a food distribution, promoting alternative representation (women's groups, technical committees, traditional social networks) can build local capacity and create an alternative to the military structures. 'International NGOs have a big role to play in empowering dispossessed elements,' Leenco Lata of Ethiopia points out. 'Aid should continuously be re-evaluated to see how external involvement can support empowerment'.[149] Another advisor to international agencies in Ethiopia is more adamant: 'Let bilateral aid support local administrations. International NGOs should support civil society and indigenous NGOs, not state structures'.[150]

But for many authorities, indigenous organizations represent a threat to bases of power and fundraising, which makes a local capacity building strategy extremely difficult and sometimes dangerous (for the participants) to undertake.

145. Colletta et al, p. 73.

146. I.W. Zartman (1995), Putting Things Back Together, in Zartman, ed., *Collapsed States: The Disintegration and Restoration of Legitimate Authority,* pp. 268-69.

147. Adams & Bradbury (1995), pp. 47-48.

148. Interview, Rowland Roome, August 7, 1995.

149. Interview, Leenco Lata, June 29, 1995.

150. Interview, Gunther Schroder, July 28, 1995.

Supporting local initiatives in psycho-social interventions

Sensitivity to local cultures is particularly relevant for psycho-social interventions. Agency psycho-social projects are mostly western imports which do not sufficiently understand and account for local contexts. In Cambodia, for example, traditional healers draw on spiritual, supernatural, moral and physical concepts, yet beyond rhetorical allusions to the need for understanding local responses, these are often ignored by international agency projects.[151] Research from Mozambique uncovered the inadequacy of western talk therapy, rooted in individual responsibility, which does not acknowledge the social nature of war's impact.[152] Further, local responses to trauma may contradict western models of coping. In Ethiopia, a common coping mechanism is called 'active forgetting,' and Mozambican refugees forgot the past as a routine way to cope. Being singled out as a rape victim requiring counseling in many societies can lead to stigmatization.[153]

Communities adopt a variety of coping mechanisms which enable them to survive war. These coping mechanisms can have both positive and negative effects on children, either helping or exploiting them. Many children have attempted to cope during war-time conditions by joining guerilla forces for security, food, and shelter, migrating to the inner cities for safety, or entering into prostitution. Also during war-time, children's social and economic responsibilities increase, placing them in a greater degree of danger. This exposure to violence is not evenly distributed among children and depends upon a child's sex, age, appearance, or birth order. Communities have responded to the increased level of violence by sharing foods and goods, privatizing food aid, and even theft. Although certain hazards exist for children with these coping mechanisms, aid agencies must be sensitive to communities' reactions by attempting to fully understand these indigenous mechanisms.[154]

Relief agencies need to reject the universal notion of children as passive and vulnerable and become more accepting of children's capacities for survival. Holistic research would allow relief agencies to better understand the social, political, and economic contexts of war. An increased effort by aid agencies to support and understand indigenous coping mechanisms and community responses to children's trauma should be pursued. Universal western

151. Summerfield, p. 18.

152. Neil Boothby, "Displaced Children: Psychological Theory and Practice From the Field," *Journal of Refugee Studies*, Vol. 5, pp. 106-122.

153. Summerfield, p. 20.

154. Boyden, p. 263-4.

paradigms of responses to war will continuously prove to be ineffectual until cultural response mechanisms are incorporated into the programs of aid agencies.[155]

Therefore, often the most effective interventions buttress a society's resilience and ability to solve its own problems, and thus are location-specific, defying cookie-cutter duplication. Physical reconstruction after war can be crucial for people's recovery from war, as is the rehabilitation of health and education networks.[156] WHO has recognized the value of supporting traditional healers in contexts as diverse as Zimbabwe and Cambodia.[157] UNICEF points out that the first line of defence which affected individuals and families turn to are often local leaders such as elders, religious leaders, teachers, and medical authorities. 'Assistance is rendered, ceremonies are performed, prayers are offered, and healing sessions are organized,' observes UNICEF, constituting a 'community assistance network ... Although damaged and weakened [by war], the rudiments of the social system are always there to be strengthened'.[158]

There are numerous examples of local networks which address mental health issues which might be supported and strengthened:[159]

Pakistan: Afghan mental health specialists established a counseling center to assist torture victims who had severe symptoms, supplemented by traditional Afghan treatments which involve visiting shrines and celebrations reinforcing the family;

Zimbabwe: Traditional healers (*n'anga*) undertake ritual cleansing and healing ceremonies for children affected by war;

Thailand: Cambodian traditional healers using their treatments were integrated into camp health services; and

Sri Lanka: Numerous folk rituals are employed to heal mental health disorders produced by conflict, such as *bali-thovil*, a ritual marked by all-night fire and mask dances, as well as other rituals which include chanting, cutting limes, and tying threads.

Mozambique: Individual healing in Milange, Mozambique has been facilitated through the work of various healers and churches through medicines, ceremonies, confessions, and prayer. These different tools of healing enable

155. Boyden, p. 266.

156. Summerfield, p. 30.

157. P. Reynolds, "Children of Tribulation: The Need to Heal and the Means to Heal War Trauma, *Africa*, Vol. 60, pp. 1-38.

158. Ressler, p. 182.

159. Ressler, pp. 186-187.

people to address their individual pains while simultaneously helping the community re-establish itself as a cohesive unit committed to the physical reconstruction of their community.[160]

Ideally, western and non-western approaches can be seen as complementary, and positive elements drawn on for both in the context of programming. For example, expatriate doctors in Cambodian refugee camps work directly with the *kruu Khmer* (traditional healers) in cross-cultural collaboration. Strategies of the *kruu Khmer* include manipulating limbs, applying ointments, blowing on patients, rubbing heads, reading astrological signs, reciting mantras, and providing herbal remedies. Further efforts in Cambodia by the Institute for Psycho-Social and Socio-Ecological Research have linked primary health and community development efforts with those of the *kruu Khmer* and local Buddhist monks. Public health and psycho-social intervention strategies are integrated.[161]

Supporting partner governments

Capable, responsive governance and administration is a critical element in developing capacity to prevent a recurrence of conflict. There is great variation in the way different international agencies address the issue of capacity building and the engagement of local authorities. For some, capacitation is an early priority; for others, maintaining control and circumventing authority are preferable. NGO circumvention of authorities has become a major issue in the Horn, especially in areas where governments or authorities believe that NGOs should not be replacing authorities in their capacities as planners, assessors, implementers and evaluators.

If a decision is made by an agency or agency consortium to support a capacity building agenda, these players must then create the capacity within themselves to carry out such an agenda responsibly. Sycophantic solidarity is a damaging substitute for accountable engagement or principled advocacy, as agencies doing the former makes the legitimate work of the latter much more difficult. A principal failure of many agencies is that they do not build up their own capacity to help capacitate authorities in their locale. This requires a staffing response; someone should be hired early on in a post-conflict situation to address capacity building questions across the board.

One objective of capacity building in divided or collapsed societies is the support of grassroots governance. This can be viewed as a tool of preventive diplomacy. Governance is often a source of conflict at the national level *and*

160. Gibbs, p. 274.

161. Boyden and Gibbs, p. 72.

the local level, and providing training and other support can enhance the professionalism of local authority, which in turn can help increase the stake of local populations in their local representation, which can affect local stability. Both local communities and donors need to give a great deal of thought to what functions of a local authority are sustainable without major external financing, and adapt to a more self-reliant future reality.

Staffing

Donor agencies such as USAID should consider having someone on staff, or at least hiring someone for short-term consultancies on a regular basis, to look at how reconciliation initiatives might be institutionalized in agency programming.

Training bureaucracies

Besides offering conflict management and resolution training for its own personnel, USAID might consider finding low-cost, locally organized approaches to providing such training to personnel of implementing partners, including NGOs, host governments, and opposition movements where applicable.

Instilling mission

Donors and aid agencies all have particular philosophies and approaches regarding relief and development, and attempt to instill these to the maximum extent possible in their staffs and projects. Over time, it might be possible to encourage including reconciliation objectives as part of this process of instilling values and mission.

Participating in public fora such as conferences or problem solving workshops can commit an agency publicly to becoming involved in a search for productive ways to become involved in reconciliation activities. Giving agencies a vested interest in searching for solutions, activities which promote dialogue can move agencies to make a greater commitment to reconciliation objectives, particularly if they are on record as saying so.

Supporting integration or reintegration

When traumatized, recently orphaned children are absorbed into a new family, or when separated children are reunited with their family, that family and the community it lives in may therefore be subject - if this happens on a large scale as it did in Rwanda - to new economic and social stresses. Instead of targeting individual families, it is important that agencies initiate developmental interventions which support a community's ability to absorb the child.

The Rwanda multi-donor evaluation recommends community-based income generation activities.[162]

Beneficiary participation

Just as in relief and development initiatives, support for reconciliation efforts must result from or include participatory processes of assessment, implementation and evaluation. 'Lack of inclusion of such viewpoints severely impedes international efforts to understand culture's role in conflict escalation and resolution,' contends Jennifer Douglas of USAID. 'Without such information we cannot strengthen constructive roles for cultural institutions in prevention'.[163] Again, the relief and development fields have progressed beyond solely donor-driven mandates to a much more responsive, inclusive mode of operation. Reconciliation activities must also avoid replicating western models of peace-making.

The PRODERE experience in Central America concluded that "real' participation can only take root at the program's design stage. A participatory planning exercise may be costly, more time-consuming and politically sensitive, but benefits accrue later'.[164] The earlier input from all formerly warring parties and populations is sought, the more likely ownership for the objectives of the project/process will be shared.

Realistic time frames

To properly engage in supporting locally-initiated and locally-owned reconciliation objectives, agencies must expand their normal time horizons for identifiable progress flowing from funded projects. To create the appropriate management system for such endeavors and to build the capacity of primary implementers of reconciliation projects is a long-term undertaking which requires more liberal evaluation criteria and multi-year commitments.

162. Kumar, pp. 64 and 103.

163. Jennifer Douglas, "Preventive Diplomacy and Development: Right Direction on an Unpaved Roadway," USAID, September 1995, p. 3.

164. Sollis and Schultz, p. 11.

4. Implementation and coordination factors

When choosing an implementing vehicle, certain minimal standards should be met. Prerequisites should include a clear vision of the implementing partner's purpose in promoting cooperation and reconciliation; consistency between the political goals of the partner and the objective of peaceful coexistence; an in-depth understanding of local political processes and articulation of how the proposed project or process facilitates reconciliation within that political context; either leadership drawn from both/all sides or - if from only one side - leadership known for their independence from any political faction; leaders which are credible in the community they come from; and cooperation at the inception and planning stages by both/all sides.[165]

Funding and selection mechanisms

USAID funding mechanisms in various countries have yielded important lessons about what organizations to utilize as implementers of USAID-funded activities. The Private Voluntary Organization (PVO) Support Project in Mozambique and Umbrella Grant mechanisms in southern Sudan, El Salvador and Somalia provide models for enhancing flexibility and targeting of appropriate interlocutors for particular activities. The Mozambique mechanism allowed the USAID mission to identify organizations which were intimately familiar with local conditions in their areas of implementation, a prerequisite for intelligent reconciliation programming.

A USAID evaluation of its Mozambique program concluded, 'Without the PVO Support Project, it is highly unlikely that USAID would have been able to meet the challenges that peace presented'.[166] As with the Sudan and Somalia programs, the Mozambique mechanism was not targeted to reconciliation activities, but the approach creates a rational identification process of appropriate implementers which prioritizes familiarity with an area and its population as well as creating conditions in which local communities might identify their own reconciliation priorities because of the flexibility of the model. The Mozambique study further found:

> USAID staff and PVOs have been in constant communication, sharing information on developments in various parts of the country. Since so much of the country had been inaccessible

165. Adapted from Montville et al, pp. 12-13.

166. Clark, p. 12.

> during the war, PVOs became critical eyes and ears on the ground in the transition. Information gathered was passed to USAID senior management participating in the UN commissions, enabling them to keep the peace process on track. Had the project been managed outside of USAID, staff felt that they almost certainly would not have been as quickly or as well informed of changing circumstances.[167]

This provides important lessons for the implementation of reconciliation activities for USAID. Retaining Agency management of the overall resource allocation process, but creating a mechanism which can flexibly channel funding to organizations (ideally, international NGOs, UN agencies, and local institutions) in a knowledgeable and timely manner is perhaps as prescriptive as one can be. The creation of delimiting criteria for implementing organizations without some tailoring to local environments (i.e., strong vs. weak government, stable vs. unstable post-war environment, thriving vs. stultified civil society, etc.) might be inappropriate.

Another model for planning and selection of implementing partners in the post-conflict period is that of the International Conference on Central American Refugees, which brings together governments, international and local NGOs, UN agencies and donors to plan for post-conflict projects.[168]

Coordination

In many post-conflict environments characterized by weak states, implementation is largely done by and funds largely flow to international NGOs. This is usually in the absence of any coherent plan for rehabilitation and reconciliation, and is undertaken with little coordination, particularly in the newer arena of reconciliation. The Rebuilding War-Torn Societies Project has preliminarily concluded that little progress has been made in post-conflict coordination:

> The creation of new international coordinating structures and functions has not brought the desired improvement. This is not surprising, given the continued confusion on the conceptual and policy levels as to relative mandates and responsibilities. Moreover, the decrease in overall resources available for all types of assistance has led to increasing turf-fighting and competition among different actors of international assistance.[169]

167. Clark, p. 13.

168. Cited in Patricia Weiss Fagen, "After the Conflict," New York: UNRISD, 1995, p. 29.

169. UNRISD, "Rebuilding War-Torn Societies," mimeo, Geneva, March 1995, p. 3.

In addition to coordination in the field, various initiatives which address post-conflict situations at the international level should improve their information sharing activities to avoid duplication and more quickly learn lessons. For example, just within the UN family UNDP has a 'continuum project' which examines post-conflict and conflict lessons from programming, UNRISD launched a 'Rebuilding War-Torn Societies Project,' UNHCR has years of experience with its Quick Impact Projects, UNESCO developed a 'Culture of Peace' initiative, UNICEF has learned many lessons in psycho-social and reconciliation initiatives, and the ILO is gathering lessons from its demobilization and reintegration programs. The World Bank is actively undertaking post-conflict studies, as is the European Union, USAID, CIDA, and some of the Nordic donors.

World Bank

In a recent World Bank report, a place is envisioned for the Bank in 'helping to rebuild social capital'.[170] Given this institutional interest in involvement and a healthy learning curve about how to work in post-conflict transition situations, it is clear that the World Bank should play a role in both implementation and coordination of such activities.

International NGOs

Reconciliation activities have become the flavor-of-the-month in the aid industry, and are therefore drawing many NGOs into activities and countries in which they have no experience. Monitoring, evaluation and coordination of the activities of international NGOs in the reconciliation arena is almost non-existent.

A new generation of NGOs which focus primarily on conflict resolution provide a relatively new window for funding for USAID's reconciliation objectives. Few comprehensive evaluations have been undertaken of these organizations, whether international or local, so judgement at this early stage is difficult. Further, many of the favored activities (conflict management training, Problem Solving Workshops, collaborative initiatives) are extremely difficult to evaluate given the lack of criteria for success in such indirect endeavors.

Nevertheless, many donors champion these new organizations and somewhat uncritically or unstrategically channel funding to and through them for reconciliation activities. More evaluation should occur before expanding

170. Colletta et al, p. 76.

assistance to these new generation NGOs, as well as funding for conventional international agencies which are expanding into reconciliation activities. Donors such as USAID should also become more active in facilitating coordination of agencies undertaking post-conflict reconciliation to avoid duplication and establish minimal standards of operation and professionalism. Furthermore, the activities of these organizations should not be supported in the absence of donor engagement on and support for meaningful political and economic reform.

Host governments

After the end of a protracted civil war, governments often have little capacity to implement initiatives promoting reconciliation. Populations in former opposition areas retain great distrust for central government programs as well. (Justifiably so in some cases, as the example of El Salvador illustrates, where the government used aid to advance itself during the election campaigns.) Given these constraints, donors often bypass governments and utilize NGOs and UN agencies. Clearly, though, this strategy tends to further cripple government capacity. The ideal is to enhance government capacity for implementation while monitoring against the use of funds for political advantage.[171]

Host government service providers are often marginalized by psychosocial programs. NGO assessments frequently do not fully acknowledge local expertise; existing services are de-funded while new psycho-social projects proliferate; and brain drains of medical professionals from the public sector to international agencies are accelerated.[172]

Partner governments in post-conflict societies are or should be actively involved in processes of reconciliation involving a number of segments of society. In determining the extent to which governments should be the implementers of USAID reconciliation initiatives (or more importantly, whether USAID should support partner government initiatives), USAID must determine the degree of commitment to reconciliation the host government possesses. Other indicators also might include the partner government's commitment to justice and/or to the welfare of its citizenry in all areas, not just in the areas of firmest control.

Local NGOs

Although limited capacities of the local NGO sector in many war-impacted countries reduces their consideration by donors, support at the embryonic

171. Ball and Halevy, pp. 88-89.

172. Summerfield, p. 23.

stage can have positive impacts: building capacity, supporting local initiatives, moderating partisanism, and enhancing skills.

One element of assessment in determining the appropriateness of a local NGO as an implementer of reconciliation activities is the degree to which that NGO is independent of any political party or faction. If too one-sided, it will be difficult for that NGO to serve as a bridge. Boards and leadership should reflect either balance between divided groups or people who are publicly known as being impartial.[173]

USAID has utilized the umbrella grant mechanism in Somalia, Sudan and El Salvador, for example, in building the capacity of local organizations. Similarly, such a mechanism could be utilized to channel small resources to locally initiated and controlled reconciliation processes in post-conflict societies.

Civil societies' involvement in post-conflict reconciliation processes should be encouraged and supported. Elders and chiefs, merchants, women, indigenous NGOs, youth groups, unions, and others all have roles to play in mediating conflicts. Ambassador Mohammed Sahnoun of Algeria warns, 'If the civil society is not part of a final agreement, that agreement stands little chance of holding, or of being a solid base for building peace'.[174]

Although indigenous agency capacity is difficult to generalize about, Larry Minear and Tom Weiss of the Humanitarianism and War Project attempt to draw out broad characterizations. On the positive side, they note, local NGOs are directly connected to the population and thus best suited to meet the communities' needs, offering leadership with ties to their communities, a realistic vision of the communities' future, and a natural incentive to sustain and guarantee reconstruction, development, and peace. On the negative side, these groups may be too parochial or political to effectively access outside resources. Their societies' customs may appear questionable to the international community.[175]

Local religious bodies

In some post-conflict settings, religious institutions are taking the lead in promoting reconciliation, and the processes they initiate might benefit from some outside support. On the other hand, some religious organizations are more associated with the conflict than with its resolution, such as parts of the Catholic Church in Rwanda and Sudanese mosques and religious NGOs affiliated with the National Islamic Front. In some cases, there is more ambi-

173. Smock and Prendergast, p. 6.

174. Mohammed Sahnoun, "New Challenges for the Peacemakers," *Refugees*, No. 96, 1994, p. 15.

175. Larry Minear and Thomas G. Weiss, *Mercy Under Fire: War and the Global Humanitarian Community*

guity. In Angola, for example, the Catholic church, the largest religious body in the country, had its property confiscated, and only received it back in 1994.

This contributes to an institutional fear of government reprisal. The Catholic church is further constrained by political divisions within its own hierarchy, making reconciliation initiatives problematic. Nevertheless, including churches in reconciliation activities in Angola makes sense, as they are the only organizations which reach grassroots constituencies in all parts of the country. Involving a cross-section of churches which reflects geographic and population diversities would give greater balance to any reconciliation initiative.[176]

The lesson here, as it is with other local interlocutors, is to properly assess and analyze the peacebuilding capacity and independence of the potential implementer of any program or process related to reconciliation.

176. Smock and Prendergast, pp. 5-6.

Conclusion

For reconciliation activities to have any meaning, structural issues leading to conflict must also be addressed. There must be a harmonization of objectives between economic, political and psycho-social interventions. There cannot be disconnects between major elements of a post-conflict society's strategy, such as that which Alvaro de Soto and Graciana de Castillo observed in post-war El Salvador: 'The adjustment program and the stabilization plan, on the one hand, and the peace process on the other, were born and reared as if they were children of different families. They lived under separate roofs'.[177] In most cases, the reconciliation initiatives reviewed above can act only as adjuncts to the main processes of political and economic reforms, not in the place or absence of these reforms. It can in fact be extremely counter-productive, insulting and/or misguided to introduce many of the above reconciliation initiatives if a society is not dealing with the basic issues of governance and economic change.

For example, if intra-state conflicts are caused by poverty, economic and political inequities, food insecurity, environmental degradation, overpopulation, and competition for scarce resources, then reconciliation interventions must by definition address these economic and political roots of war, as well as other social and psychological factors. If structural factors are not directly addressed or coordinated by reconciliation initiatives, such initiatives will have little impact, and would perhaps be counter-productive in an extremely unjust environment.

Beyond those structural issues which are primarily internal in nature, there are international policy issues which also must be addressed if reconciliation activities inside a country are to have maximum impact. Issues which must be addressed by the U.S. Government and other donor countries include military transfers, structural adjustment policies, trade agreements, and export of culture which often promotes violence and racism.

Resource imbalances are yet another problem in post-conflict crisis response. The lack of attention to meaningful political and social rehabilitation creates even greater needs and thus agency requirements in the long term. The Rwandan multi-donor evaluation volume which addressed post-conflict needs concludes:

> [T]he international donor community initially showed a marked reluctance to provide [the Rwandan government] with resources to rebuild its institutional capacity ... Moreover, in

177. Alvaro de Soto and Graciana del Castillo, "Obstacles to Peacebuilding," *Foreign Policy*, p. 72.

> contrast to easing the plight of unaccompanied children, the donor community did little to initiate and fund programs to heal the wounds of war and address the distinctive needs of some of the other main victims of violence ... The Rwandan crisis undoubtedly indicates the need to focus international assistance on issues of governance and civil society.[178]

Time horizons must be adjusted as well. One or two year program goals and expectations are misguided and sometimes dangerous. Reconciliation initiatives must be viewed as long term processes which must be put into place - building on locally determined priorities and resources - and supported indefinitely, with efforts on promoting the self-sustainability of programs, initiatives, and institutions.

Continuous cycles of conflict produce impatience and frustration on the part of donors and agencies, as they repeatedly place band-aids over the wounds opened and re-opened by the fighting. Questions are being asked about whether those responding ought to be more assertive in addressing these conflicts, and whether there may be situations when humanitarian (as well as development) assistance should be conditioned on progress toward peace, or at least cessation of hostilities at the local or national level. In any case, any conditionality in this arena requires extreme sophistication of understanding of the local context in which one is operating.

Justice and human rights objectives must be at the core of any reconciliation initiative. Relief and development aid, if provided as a technical intervention and as a replacement for political engagement, arguably does more harm than good, and reconciliation goals will be severely undermined. If political, economic, and social inequities are not acknowledged and addressed, promoting reconciliation discredits the intervener and endangers the wider development agenda.

178. Kumar, p. 105.

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Post-conflict programming

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In most post-war situations, large segments of the populations have experienced first-hand the horrors of war. The consequent psycho-social impacts are often more harmful than the physical damage and must be addressed in addition to physical reconstruction and humanitarian relief.

There are numerous terms describing post-war conditions and objectives. In this paper the concepts psycho-social, peacebuilding and reconciliation are specially addressed. For reconciliation activities to have any meaning, structural issues leading to conflict, such as international policy issues and resource imbalances must also be dealt with. If these factors are not directly addressed by reconciliation initiatives, these will have little impact, and might be counter-productive in an unjust environment, says the author.

At the time of writing this paper, *John Prendergast* was the Director of the Horn of Africa Project at the Center of Concern. From 1996 to 1999 he was Director of African Affairs at the U.S. National Security Council. Between 1999 and 2001 he was Special Advisor at the Department of State, and since 2001 is Special Adviser to the President of the International Crisis Group.

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This paper is part of a project called *Publications for Peace Education*. Thanks to a grant from the Finnish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Life & Peace Institute has the possibility to republish a number of its publications on different subjects within research on peace and reconciliation. These books and research reports are sent free of charge to a number of selected key academic institutions in different parts of the world, to be used in relevant education to promote peace and conflict resolution.

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ISBN 91-87748-58-4