FOREWORD

Welcome to the 36th edition of the SOLLIMS Lessons Learned Sampler–Inclusive Peacebuilding: Working with Communities!

This lessons learned compendium contains just a sample – thus the title ‘Sampler’ – of the observations, insights, and lessons related to Peacebuilding available in the SOLLIMS data repository. These lessons are worth sharing with military commanders and their staffs, as well as with civilian practitioners having a peacekeeping or stability operations related mission or function, such as those currently deployed on stability operations, those planning to deploy, the institutional Army, the Joint community, policymakers, and other international civilian and military leaders at the national and theater level.

If you have not registered in SOLLIMS, the links in the report will take you to the registration page. Take a brief moment to register for an account in order to take advantage of the many features of SOLLIMS and to access the stability operations related products referenced in the report, which can be accessed once logged in to SOLLIMS.

We encourage you to take the time to provide us with your perspective on any given lesson in this report or on the overall value of the Sampler as a reference for you and your unit/organization. By using the ‘Perspectives’ text entry box that is found at the end of each lesson in the SOLLIMS database – seen when you open the lesson in SOLLIMS – you can enter your own personal comments on the lesson. We welcome your input, and we encourage you to become a regular contributor.

Disclaimer: The views expressed in this publication are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the official policy or position of the Department of the Army, Department of Defense, or the U.S. Government. All content in this document to include any publications provided through digital attachment is considered unclassified, for open access. This compendium contains no restriction on sharing/distribution within the public domain. Existing research and publishing norms and formats should be used when citing Sampler content and any publications provided.

The Peacekeeping & Stability Operations Institute (PKSOI) was initially established in 1993 as the Peacekeeping Institute, and its work has included creation of the SOLLIMS database in 2008. As its mission, PKSOI “collaboratively develops and integrates peace and stability capabilities across the US government, international organizations, and the community of interest in order to enable the success of peace and stability activities and missions.”

PKSOI Publication Team

Publication Prepared by (Editor):
Ms. Katrina Gehman,
Lessons Learned Analyst (Ctr)
Reviewer:
Mr. Dave Mosinski,
Lessons Learned Analyst
Cover Format:
Mr. Chris Browne,
Publications Coordinator

PKSOI Director:
COL Mike Rauhut
Proponency Division Chief:
COL Brian Hirschey

Thanks also to our guest contributors for authoring lessons and to various SMEs for reviewing content.
# Inclusive Peacebuilding: Working with Communities

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>FOREWORD</strong></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“QUICK LOOK” (Preview of the Lessons)</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>1. Introduction</strong></td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>2. Lessons</strong></td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consulting with Local Communities</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A. Human Security Approach in Conflict Affected Areas</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. Conservation International – Environmental</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peacebuilding Lesson in Liberia</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C. Transitional Justice for Communities:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fambul Tok in Sierra Leone</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strengthening Just Institutions</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D. Averting Constitutional Crisis Through Regional Preventive Diplomacy</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E. Financing Good Governance Programs for Youth:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A Prerequisite for Sustainable Peace in Kenya</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F. The Zimbabwe Republic Police Women Network:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>From Theoretical Exhortations to Practical Measures</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tools &amp; Techniques for Conflict Transformation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G. Strengthening Community Conflict Management Mechanisms in the Central African Republic</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H. Promoting Youth, Peace and Security Through Sustained Dialogue in the Horn of Africa</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I. Playback Theater as a Tool for Conflict Prevention &amp; Transformation</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J. Peacebuilding and Trauma Awareness Among Military Veterans and Ex-Combatants</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>3. Conclusion</strong></td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annex A. Peacebuilding-Related RESOURCES &amp; REFERENCES</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annex B. Previously Published SOLLIMS Samplers</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
“QUICK LOOK” (Preview of the Lessons)
Click on [Read More ...] to go to full lesson.

A. Human security is composed of three key principles: freedom from fear, freedom from want, and freedom from indignity. Civil society peacebuilding efforts, using a ‘people first’ human security approach, provide a framework that ensures the most vulnerable will be active stakeholders in creating sustainable peace. [Read More ...]

B. Community rights must be observed and respected for conservation of nature to be successful. Understanding and recognizing these rights are critical steps to understand the diverse perspectives of local stakeholders and to identify options for addressing conflicts over natural resources. [Read More ...]

C. Bottom-up community-led reconciliation initiatives can fill in the gap for ordinary people affected by war whose justice needs are not met by national-level Truth and Reconciliation Commissions. After Sierra Leone’s brutal civil war, the Fambul Tok transitional justice initiative brought communities together to start a long path towards community rebuilding. [Read More ...]

D. Preventive regional diplomacy and political leadership contributed to averting a constitutional crisis and potential armed violence in The Gambia. After West African leaders and regional/international organizations presented a united front, long-term dictator Yahya Jammeh conceded power to Adama Barrow who won the December 2016 election in this small West African nation. [Read More ...]

E. In the last decade, Africa has grown significantly – demographically and economically. Sadly, its youth bulge cannot be sustained with the economic progress made, as the number of young people graduating from institutions of higher learning is significantly higher than those absorbed by employment agencies. This situation has been made worse with increasing corruption in regional hegemons such as Kenya. [Read More ...]

F. The Zimbabwe Republic Police Women Network has been able to shift police preoccupation from “what is routinely important” to “what works” in an effort to tackle Sexual and Gender Based Violence enforced by patriarchal customs. The key insight is that change in gender justice can best be achieved by practical measures and not by theoretical exhortation. [Read More ...]

G. Supporting conflict management mechanisms during a complex crisis can avert immediate retaliatory violence and address underlying conflict drivers. In 2013, Mercy Corps implemented a program to strengthen local conflict management capacities in the Central African Republic. As a result, perceptions of peace dramatically increased in the capital city as disputes were solved nonviolently. [Read More ...]

H. People aged 18-29 in conflict-affected regions are often feared as posing a security threat or are excluded from formal peace processes. However, when included, youth can transform violent conflict, as shown through the Life & Peace Institute’s work with Sustained Dialogue in the Horn of Africa. Such dialogue-to-action tools build trust, improving relationships across divides. [Read More ...]

I. Interactive, arts-based peacebuilding tools can contribute to conflict prevention, aiding people who may otherwise react to adversity with violence in part due to an inability or lack of opportunity to process emotions in healthy ways. Playback Theater in particular can build bridges across divides, create a space for healing from traumatic loss, and empower at-risk youth. [Read More ...]

J. Better awareness of trauma by military veterans and their leaders will lead to lower rates of suicide, suicidal ideation, depression, domestic violence, and substance abuse. Increased trauma awareness will lead to a culture in which these issues can be dealt with before they manifest in violence, decreasing or ending cycles of violence and acting out following military service. [Read More ...]
1. INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the April 2018 edition of the SOLLIMS Lessons Learned Sampler –
Inclusive Peacebuilding: Working with Communities.

Various international, national, and grassroots stakeholders have different conceptions of peace and what it means to build peace. While the term “peacebuilding” was first coined in the 1970s by conflict theorist Johan Galtung, it did not become a familiar concept in the United Nations (UN) until the 1990s. In the 1992 report “An Agenda for Peace,” UN Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali outlined various stages of addressing armed conflict, including preventive diplomacy, peacemaking, peacekeeping, and peace enforcement, to which he added the concept of “post-conflict peace-building.” A decade later, in 2006, the UN Peacebuilding Architecture was created to rebuild national institutions after armed conflict through the Peacebuilding Commission (an intergovernmental advisory body to support post-conflict countries), the Peacebuilding Fund (which generates rapid funding for peacebuilding priorities), and the Peacebuilding Support Office (which supports and coordinates the other functions).

When António Guterres became Secretary-General of the United Nations in January 2017, he emphasized the necessity to refocus the UN on its primary role in preventing conflict. Under his leadership, following the 2015 Review of the UN Peacebuilding Architecture, various UN resolutions on “sustaining peace” shifted the UN’s focus of peacebuilding from a post-war phase to a conflict prevention approach that must be integrated across sectors, not just after armed conflict ceases, but long before violence erupts.

Some national government agencies incorporate peacebuilding principles throughout their activities, while others continue to view peacebuilding as a “post-conflict” activity, despite the UN’s recent shift. The United States Institute of Peace (USIP), established by Congress to “increase the nation’s capacity to manage international conflict without violence,” conceives peacebuilding broadly across conflict phases. The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) addresses peacebuilding by incorporating conflict-sensitivity into development programming and country strategies worldwide. Likewise, numerous regional and functional bureaus at the U.S. Department of State have a stake in building peace. In contrast, the U.S. Department of Defense primarily focuses on peacebuilding as a specific phase following armed conflict. U.S. military doctrine identifies “peace building” as “the long-term, post-conflict process of creating conditions for a lasting peace,” describing it as one of several activities that comprise “peace operations” (Peace Operations JP 3-07.3 (2018)), similar to “stabilization” (Stability JP 3-07), with an emphasis on institution-building in sectors of security, governance, rule of law, social well-being, and economy.

Grassroots non-governmental organizations and civil society tend to view peacebuilding as an approach across all stages of conflict, not just “post-conflict” activities, in line with the UN shift towards “sustaining peace.” The Alliance for Peacebuilding (AfP), a consortium of over 15,000 peacebuilding practitioners from around the world and nearly 100 peacebuilding organizations, defines peacebuilding as “an elastic term, encompassing a wide range of efforts by diverse actors in government and civil society at the community, national, and international levels to address the immediate impacts and root causes of conflict before, during, and after violent conflict occurs.”

Whether understood as an approach across all stages of conflict or viewed as institution-building following armed conflict, peacebuilding efforts cannot succeed without the ownership of local stakeholders. As such, this Sampler focuses on inclusive peacebuilding initiatives within communities from a variety of international, national, and grassroots stakeholders around the world. Lessons, many written by local peacebuilding practitioners, focus on consulting with local communities, strengthening just institutions, and showcasing effective tools and techniques for preventing and transforming violent conflict.
2. **LESSONS**

A. Human Security Approach in Conflict Affected Areas (Lesson \#2628)

**Observations:**

Human security is composed of three key principles: freedom from fear, freedom from want, and freedom from indignity. Civil society peacebuilding efforts, using a ‘people first’ human security approach, provide a framework that ensures that the most vulnerable will be active stakeholders in creating sustainable peace.

**Discussion:**

In early 2012, I resourced a peacebuilding project for a Dutch humanitarian organization in Afghanistan. The project was to strengthen civil society capacities in four Afghan provinces in effectively resolving and mitigating conflict while enhancing the status and inclusion of women and opening a national debate on peace and conflict resolution. The project included linking state and non-state actors in these peacebuilding efforts. The project covered Bamyan, Faryab, Kandahar, and Takhar provinces.

The first task of the project called for a baseline survey. My job was to train data collectors in the fundamentals of peacebuilding and then help design the survey questions. At the end I then aggregated data from a baseline survey coming from these four provinces. When the data was all collected, I was surprised that the security concerns that I expected to see as most pressing were, in fact, at the bottom of the list… if listed at all. I expected terrorism, local warlords, and attacks from the Taliban or the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) to be the biggest threats to security. Instead, what the residents in rural areas of the country were far more concerned with were things such as poverty, unemployment, conflicts with neighbors, family feuds, cultural conflicts of early/forced marriages, as well as land and water disputes. Many of these, survey respondents reported, could escalate into serious violence if not contained. This gap in what I, as an outsider, speculated, and what local people experienced as the most pressing insecurities, was quite profound. By focusing on the wrong insecurities, I could have inadvertently and unintentionally increased their insecurity. Designing the most useful programming came about by taking the time to listen to their concerns through the mechanism of a baseline survey.

A security sector response to localized violence through the lens of national security threats would have missed the mark in terms of addressing the most imminent security needs on the ground in these provinces. Programs to equip and train local security forces to respond to terrorism, for example, would not have addressed issues of land claims. What was more effective in reducing local conflicts was an enhancement of the negotiating and mediating capacity of the local elders (“Shurab”). In conflict affected areas, a human security approach develops processes that listen to civil society perspectives, trusting that through their access and connections they know best what their constituent security needs are.

Developing ‘people first’ processes is complicated, takes time, and perhaps most significantly, takes trust between security stakeholders. Partnering with civic groups is effective because they have entrée, trust, and cultural competencies to interpret the local context and realities. Because of this access, civil society groups have constraints that need to be understood and appreciated by outsiders. The trust given to civil society groups by local communities necessitates that they are not viewed as partial to one or the other side in a conflict and have an independence from parties vested in the conflict. They work at empowerment of vulnerable citizens and their access is based on mutual consent and transparency. As such, these civil society groups sometimes have direct access to key conflict affected areas and even combatants. Civil society groups do not think in terms of ‘good guys and bad guys,’ but rather in terms of ‘conflict...
stakeholders.’ Thus, sitting on coordinating bodies that include one side of an armed conflict and not another may jeopardize the ability of these civic groups to consent to join an evolving human security roundtable. Sometimes civil society develops its own representative/coordination body in order to insulate itself from direct combatants.

Because of their intimate and often localized perspectives, civil society groups are diverse and regularly disagree on key issues. However, the key benefit for outsiders expending time and effort in developing these fora is that the process of listening has a validating effect. To be listened to and have one’s opinion considered addresses the last of the human security pillars: dignity. That will have a positive ripple effect on more effective humanitarian programs which meet human need and ultimately lead to a reduction in violence and fear.

**Recommendation:**

Understanding the principles of human security will help reframe discussions and actions toward a ‘people first’ approach, through resources including case studies of human security and a training manual entitled *Handbook on Human Security: A Civil-Military-Police Curriculum*. Jointly written by civil society and members of the police and military security sector, this curriculum provides a helpful starting point for all sectors wishing to explore human centered security. Specific recommendations…

1. . . for the military, understand the operational requirements, limitations, and constraints of civic groups in conflict affected areas by using the above-mentioned curriculum to develop multi-stakeholder human security processes.

2. . . for civil society, use the above-mentioned curriculum to become familiar with various approaches to security. In addition, seek to understand the points of contact and liaison with the security sector. If it is too risky to engage these actors directly, develop representative structure whose role it is to represent the local perspective on any security coordinating body.

**Implications:**

To ignore a people centric human security approach is to make security decisions based on an incomplete perspective and understanding of any given location. To do so increases the risks of not addressing civilian fears, ignoring their basic needs, and exacerbating the indignity they feel. This will, in the best case, fail to secure the peace and, in the worst case, exacerbate an already violence-prone situation.

**Event Description:**

This lesson is based on personal experience in Afghanistan working as a peacebuilding mentor, researcher, and trainer for Oxfam GB (Great Britain) between September 2011 and October 2012 in Afghanistan. While in Kabul, I was contracted with Oxfam Novib to conduct a training and baseline study in the first half of 2012 for the Building Afghan Peace Locally (BAPL) project.

As Senior Advisor for Human Security at the **Alliance for Peacebuilding**, one of our main reference points is the Human Security Curriculum and Case Studies that were developed in conjunction with police, military, and NGO personnel and released in December of 2015.

**Lesson Author:** Jonathan Rudy, Peacemaker in Residence at Elizabethtown College; Senior Advisor for Human Security at the Alliance for Peacebuilding
B. Conservation International – Environmental Peacebuilding Lesson in Liberia
   (Lesson #2630)

Observation.

Community rights must be observed and respected for conservation of nature to be successful. Understanding and recognizing these rights are critical steps to understand the diverse perspectives of local stakeholders and to identify options for addressing conflicts over natural resources.

Discussion.

Conservation planning inherently involves conflict management, whether it is communities competing for access to grazing land and water or neighboring countries not complying with fishing quotas in a shared part of the sea. People, communities, and other stakeholder groups use natural resources in different ways and therefore may have incompatible needs, priorities, and interests – leading to disagreements and disputes.

At Conservation International (CI), we focus on the connections between nature’s well-being and our own, promoting the positive role that abundant natural resources and stable environmental conditions can play in promoting peace and cooperation. Our ultimate goal is to protect the most fundamental benefits that nature provides to all of us: our food, our fresh water, our livelihoods, and a stable climate. We work strategically with leading global experts, institutions, and communities to help them better understand and value the role that nature plays in creating peaceful and prosperous societies.

For the past several years, CI has worked in Liberia’s Nimba County to promote natural resource management and facilitate peacebuilding initiatives in this post-conflict setting. Natural resources played an important role in the violence and civil strife in Liberia, most recently from 1999-2003 (Donovan et al., 2014). CI’s work in the northern East Nimba Nature Reserve (ENNR) exemplifies the choices Liberia is facing as it selects from different development options. Nimba County is the most populous region in Liberia outside the capital and is characterized by a relatively high population density, land scarcity issues, and competition for resources. It is also among the priority areas for conservation in Africa. This juxtaposition of people and critical biodiversity positions local communities to be key stewards of vital ecosystems like water, soil, and air, as well as of biodiversity conservation.

When the nature reserve was created by the government, local communities were neither consulted in the drawing of the reserve boundaries nor involved in discussions about use of natural resources in the reserve. The majority of households in Nimba County are dependent on the forest for the preservation of their cultural traditions and for their livelihoods. Communities access the forest to collect non-timber forest products, hunt for bush meat, and clear land for agricultural use. The decision to set aside a significant portion of this resource as a protected area was highly contentious. Land tenure is especially complicated in this area due to overlapping land and natural resource rights in which people or communities may own land but the government retains ownership of subsurface minerals.

In order to address these challenges, CI partnered with the local government, ENNR staff, and the private sector to manage the conflict through the formation of a co-management committee, supported by the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID). At the same time, CI and local partners implemented a strategy that leveraged CI’s Conservation Agreement (CA) model. The process of designing CAs with communities is highly participatory and facilitates a response to real threats and needs within the communities. Over time, nine communities entered into CAs where they agreed to recognize the ENNR...
as a strict nature reserve for five years in return for compensation in the form of health, education, infrastructure, and livelihood investments.

Environmental peacebuilding – bringing people together to agree on nature, rather than nature being the cause of conflicts – requires different tools and approaches. The lessons from Liberia show that adhering to free and open dialogue among all stakeholders and listening to the different concerns and priorities of each group were essential steps to finding a lasting solution for both people and nature in East Nimba.

**Recommendation.**

Full participation is essential for bringing about meaningful change at the community level. The CI Liberia case shows that disputes over resource rights can prevent sustainable resource management. International actors should ensure community involvement through inclusive, multi-stakeholder dialogues and discussions to ensure strong local ownership and sustainability.

**Implications.**

In the absence of participatory, transparent community engagement, conservation efforts will not be sustainable and can contribute to or instigate local conflict. In order to help CI staff and partners be more effective in our work, we developed this environmental peacebuilding training manual to lay the foundation for consensus-based, participatory, and transparent processes to strengthen existing efforts for biodiversity conservation.

**Event Description.**

This lesson was based on natural resource conflict and peacebuilding involving non-governmental organization (NGO) actors in Liberia. For more information, please see: Environmental Peacebuilding with Communities Around the East Nimba Nature Reserve in Liberia, J. Donovan & E. Niesten, Arlington, VA: CI, (2014).

**Lesson Author:** Janet Edmond, Conservation International
Submitted on her behalf by Lydia Cardona, Coordinator

---

*East Nimba Nature Reserve, Liberia*  
(22 July 2013)  
East Nimba Nature Reserve forest.  
Photo Credit: © Conservation International/photo by Bailey Evans (Used with Permission)
C. Transitional Justice for Communities: Fambul Tok in Sierra Leone
(Lesson #2623)

Observation.

Bottom-up community-led grassroots reconciliation initiatives can fill in the gap for ordinary people affected by war whose justice needs are not met by national-level Truth and Reconciliation Commissions. After Sierra Leone’s brutal decade-long civil war, the Fambul Tok transitional justice initiative brought communities together to acknowledge harms they experienced from the war, apologize for perpetrating harms, and forgive each other, starting a long path towards community rebuilding.

Discussion.

From 1991-2002, the country of Sierra Leone in West Africa experienced a civil war characterized by grotesque human rights violations which deeply impacted people across the country. The level of brutality in Sierra Leone’s civil war was unprecedented. Over the course of 11 years of war, over 50,000 people died and over one million were displaced. Of those who survived, thousands had amputated limbs due to brutal machete mutilation. An estimated 10,000 child soldiers participated in the violence, and over 200,000 people were raped as a tactic of war.

Sierra Leone’s civil war began to end with the Lomé Peace Accord, signed on 27 March 1999, which provided blanket amnesty for most combatants. The United Nations Mission to Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL) was established to enforce the terms of this agreement and to assist with disarmament. In addition, the international community assisted Sierra Leone in establishing two transitional justice mechanisms – 1) a Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) and 2) a Special Court to prosecute those most responsible for war crimes. However, the TRC proved inaccessible to most rural people since it primarily operated in Freetown, the capital, and in major district cities (2002-2004). Since amnesty had already been provided in the peace accords, most perpetrators were not compelled to tell the truth. Furthermore, the Special Court only tried a handful of criminals after spending hundreds of millions of dollars on the construction of a judicial building. As such, the two main mechanisms supported by the international community to establish justice – the TRC and the Special Court – were disconnected from the lives of most Sierra Leoneans.

The net result of these efforts was that the official processes for justice did not meet the needs of millions of ordinary citizens who had been affected by the war. Human rights activist Sierra Leonean John Caulker, national chairman of the TRC Working Group in Sierra Leone and founder of the human rights NGO Forum of Conscience, was disappointed with the results of the TRC. In order to find out what else rural communities needed in order to heal from the war, he traveled around the country from December 2007 to February 2008, asking communities if they were ready to reconcile and what they would need to do so.

In order to address justice needs of local people, it is important to first understand local conceptions of justice. Most Sierra Leoneans have a very different sense of justice than punitive Western legal norms. In Sierra Leonean conceptions of justice, crime violates not only individual people but also the community. In order to repair this violation, both the victim and perpetrator must be involved in making the community whole again, which would not necessarily be accomplished by sending people out of the community to prison. In fact, according to John Caulker, many Sierra Leoneans see prison as a system to re-victimize victims, since those in poverty must pay taxes to finance prisons. Forcing perpetrators to acknowledge the horror of their own actions is culturally shameful and as such is in itself a form of punishment. A cultural saying in Sierra Leone admonishes that “you cannot throw a bad child into the bush;” affirming the importance of dealing with wrong-doing within the larger community.
Based on this local conception of justice and the community-level consultation, John Caulker launched the transitional justice initiative Fambul Tok in spring 2008 to encourage communities to talk with each other about what happened during the war. A Sierra Leonean cultural tradition known as “Fambul Tok” (“Family Talk” in the Krio language) existed before the war, whereby people/families solved problems through talking around a bonfire. As such, Caulker’s community-level transitional justice program includes three main stages: community preparation, a reconciliation ceremony around a bonfire, and follow-up activities.

With the funding partnership of international organization Catalyst for Peace, local staff for the Fambul Tok program are hired in communities in each district. To prepare communities, these staff travel to local villages, many of which are only accessible by foot, to consult about the possibility of conducting a reconciliation program. Once these communities agree, Fambul Tok establishes a Reconciliation Committee and an Outreach Committee in each village. These committees include religious leaders, women leaders, and youth. These leaders are trained on trauma and mediation, and for the next 3-4 months, the Outreach Committee sensitizes the communities about the process. Villagers must be involved and contribute something to the program (such as food for a community feast or a cultural song or dance) to increase their sense of ownership. During this preparation process, community members identify a good location for the main Fambul Tok reconciliation ceremony.

After the community preparation, Fambul Tok staff and the Reconciliation Committee facilitate the process for a reconciliation ceremony at a nighttime bonfire at the chosen location. The main components of the bonfire ceremony are honest acknowledgement of crimes, apology, and forgiveness. Victims of the war share what happened to them, whether they were raped, had family members killed, or their house was destroyed. If the perpetrators of those crimes are present among the villagers gathered at the bonfire, the victims identify the perpetrators. Then, the perpetrators come to the middle of the circle and acknowledge what they did. The perpetrators may also explain if their actions were due to coercion or threats from the rebels. After an honest acknowledgement of crimes, the perpetrators apologize, the victims forgive, and they shake hands in front of the community to commit to a long journey towards reconciliation. No one knows in advance which victims and perpetrators will share their stories at the bonfire. The presence of the community gives people the strength to come forward. The day after the bonfire, most communities hold a cleansing ceremony, another Sierra Leonean cultural tradition not employed since before the war.

Some of the stories recounted during the bonfires are quite disturbing. One such story involved two young men, Sahr and Nyumah, who had been best friends before the war. When the rebels invaded, Sahr and his father were captured, and the rebels commanded Sahr to kill his father. When Sahr refused, the rebels handed a knife to his friend Nyumah, threatening to shoot him if he did not kill Sahr’s father. So, Nyumah killed Sahr’s father and beat Sahr. Years later, at the Fambul Tok bonfire in their village, Sahr recounted these events and identified Nyumah among the villagers present. Nyumah acknowledged what he had done, apologized, and Sahr forgave him. Before the bonfire, they had no peace with each other. Afterwards, they became friends again. Nyumah built a house with a tin roof for Sahr as symbolic reparation, and he helps Sahr to farm since Sahr’s injuries prevent him from doing so. Now, these friends speak to other people in their country to show that reconciliation is possible.

The bonfire and cleansing ceremony is only the beginning of the reconciliation process. The community continues to watch how perpetrators behave – to see if they make symbolic gestures and reparations or participate in follow-up activities. In the months that follow, Fambul Tok hosts a number of follow-up activities in the communities to bridge the gaps between perpetrators and victims. One such popular follow-up activity is Soccer for Reconciliation, followed by a disco. These shared positive experiences minimize tensions between victims and perpetrators.
Another important follow-up activity is the designation of a Peace Tree as a physical space in the community where future conflicts can be resolved. This Peace Tree can be used to facilitate dialogue in the coming months and years or to clarify past grievances. For example, if a victim feels provoked because a perpetrator (who had previously hurt the victim’s family) unexpectedly comes to the victim’s house, the victim and perpetrator and Reconciliation Committee could meet under the tree to resolve the issue and facilitate a shaking of hands. In this way, a designated community Peace Tree contributes to community resilience and conflict prevention/resolution.

A final follow-up activity grew out of the vast number of women who were raped during the war. Given the sensitivity of this issue, Fambul Tok program personnel consulted with the affected women in the communities to see how they would want this to be handled. The women wanted space to facilitate dialogue and figure out their problems as women. As such, groups of women, primarily rape victims and war widows, came together to form the Peace Mothers program. These energetic women reclaimed their sense of community that was shattered during the war by creating sustainable programs, including income generation initiatives. (Later, during the outbreak of Ebola in 2014, many of these Peace Mothers were involved in community health sanitation initiatives, distributing soap and promoting handwashing in rural districts.)

Fambul Tok personnel have worked to keep the program non-partisan and have resisted efforts from government officials to officially codify the process. The power of the program comes from community ownership to create a space where victims and perpetrators can tell their stories. Within the first 3½ years of the program, over 117 bonfires had been held. By November 2013, 5½ years into the program, over 30,000 victims and perpetrators had testified to over 83,000 people in 1920 villages across 6 districts in Sierra Leone. In more recent years, Fambul Tok has continued momentum by strengthening community governance initiatives.

**Recommendation.**

1. Programs designed to aid reconciliation in a post-war context should consult with the people directly affected to understand how they conceive of justice and to find out what would meet their needs for justice. The international community should not assume that a check-list approach to post-conflict reconstruction will necessarily meet the needs of diverse local people for justice.

2. The international community should consider providing long-term funding commitments to community-based transitional justice initiatives in post-war contexts, as Catalyst for Peace did by providing 15 years of funding for Fambul Tok. This organization did not dictate the terms so that Fambul Tok was able to tailor the program to the needs of the people.

3. Other contexts should consider using Fambul Tok as a model that can be tailored to a particular community, affording supportive opportunities for community acknowledgement of what was done in the past, truth-telling, forgiveness, and reconciliation. Consider how justice could involve mending the whole and repairing relationships.

4. Grassroots organizations designing a community reconciliation process must make sure to adequately consult with, sensitize, and prepare communities. Make sure that the reconciliation initiative is not simply a one-time event for any given community, but that it also includes follow-up activities. Draw on the local cultural traditions and rituals to hold space for truth-telling, apology, and forgiveness.
Implications.

If there is no community consultation, any initiative risks missing the needs of local people. If the international community understands “justice” in a different way than the local community, international organizations may design “transitional justice” mechanisms that might not meet the needs of local people.

If international organizations do not provide long-term funding for community-level transitional justice initiatives without strings attached that would hinder program design or program flexibility, then it will be more difficult for the organizations managing community-level programs to tailor their work to local communities and work towards long-term healing. Wounds from a decade-long civil war cannot be healed overnight; transitional justice programs require long-term commitment, consistency, and flexibility to adjust to the needs of local people.

If restorative methods of justice are not pursued for communities recovering from armed conflict, then communities might not be restored to wholeness. If perpetrators are not forced to confront the impact of their actions together with the community, then old wounds may continue to fester and victims will continue to suffer without acknowledgement and truth-telling.

If grassroots organizations do not adequately sensitize people to a community-level transitional justice initiative, people may not truly be prepared to tell their stories, apologize for their offenses, or provide support to those who have been hurt by the war. If such initiatives do not provide follow-up activities, then they risk losing the gains from initial healing ceremonies.

Additional Comments.

For more information about the myriad ways that women experienced the war in Sierra Leone, including as armed combatants, see: "Gender-Sensitive DDR Processes: Integrating Female Ex-Combatants in Sierra Leone," K. Gehman, SOLLIMS Lesson #2486.

Event Description.

The author had familiarity with Fambul Tok from prior experience transcribing research about the program in 2014 at the Center for Justice & Peacebuilding (CJP), Eastern Mennonite University. This lesson is based on the following sources:

- Useful Websites: Fambul Tok ; Catalyst for Peace ; Sierra Leone Truth and Reconciliation Commission

Lesson Author: Katrina Gehman, Lessons Learned Analyst (Ctr), PKSOI
D. Averting Constitutional Crisis Through Regional Preventive Diplomacy in The Gambia (Lesson #2582)

Observation.

Regional diplomacy by political leaders can prevent armed conflict and avert escalation of a constitutional crisis when coupled with investments in measures to sustain peace and strengthen institutions. This was evident in The Gambia when long-term dictator Yahya Jammeh peacefully conceded power to his political opponent who won the 2016 election after leaders in the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the African Union (AU), and the United Nations (UN) mediated with unified political resolve.

Discussion.

The Gambia is a small country located in West Africa, lining the Gambia River and entirely surrounded by Senegal. It gained its independence in 1965 from Britain, soon after Senegal gained its independence in 1960 from France. In 1994, Yahya Jammeh took power in a bloodless coup, and his authoritarian rule extended for 22 years. Although Jammeh was subsequently re-elected in ‘democratic’ elections, he was seen as a dictator since other political parties were often barred from elections. During his long rule, the government reportedly repressed free speech/media and committed myriad human rights abuses.

The constitutional crisis in The Gambia began following the results of the 1 December 2016 presidential elections. Earlier in 2016, the opposition leader for The Gambia’s United Democratic Party had been detained and arrested. This led to the candidacy of Mr. Adama Barrow, a real estate developer who had not previously held public office, to represent seven Gambian opposition parties in the election. In a shock election outcome, Barrow won with over 45% of the vote.

Immediately following Barrow’s election, Jammeh conceded defeat, broadcast across the country. International organizations such as the AU, UN, and ECOWAS expressed support for the legitimacy of the election outcome. On 9 December, however, Jammeh reversed his initial acceptance of defeat and rejected the results of the election, calling for a re-election due to ‘inconsistencies.’ He deployed Gambian troops in the capital to take over the Independent Electoral Commission and later declared a 90-day state of emergency to extend his term for an additional three months.

After Jammeh reversed his acceptance of defeat, there followed a multi-leveled, unified international response. Several West African presidents embarked on diplomatic visits to attempt to resolve the crisis and persuade Jammeh to leave office peacefully. Sustained efforts included those of Senegal’s President Macky Sall. Mediation efforts, including visits to the capital of Banjul, were implemented under the authority of ECOWAS by President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf of Liberia, President Muhammadu Buhari of Nigeria, former President John Mahama of Ghana, and President Ernest Bai Koroma of Sierra Leone.

International organizations maintained support for the legitimacy of the election results, which Jammeh himself had initially accepted, saying that they would no longer support Jammeh after 19 January 2017, the date that Barrow was supposed to take office. However, as the January deadline approached, Jammeh did not back down. At this point, ECOWAS deployed the ECOWAS Mission in The Gambia (ECOMIG), stationing Senegalese troops at the border of The Gambia with troops from Ghana and naval/air elements from Nigeria, giving Jammeh a deadline to leave on the day of the inauguration of Barrow.

Mr. Adama Barrow was inaugurated as president at the Gambian embassy in Dakar, Senegal, on 19 January 2017. The UN Security Council passed Resolution 2337 on 19 January, endorsing decisions of the AU and
ECOWAS recognizing Barrow as The Gambia’s new president and requesting a peaceful transfer of power “by political means first.” ECOWAS extended the deadline for ECOMIG’s threatened use of force as President Ould Abdelaziz (Mauritania) and Alpha Condé (Guinea) made last minute pleas with Jammeh.

On 21 January, Jammeh conceded defeat, with a negotiated agreement that would ensure his dignified exit. There are reports that he had initially back-tracked on accepting defeat in December due to threats of prosecution or reprisals for allegations of human rights violations committed during his presidency. As such, he was willing to accept defeat and exile when those concerns were addressed by the mediation presidents through the agreement. Questions remain about whether the threat of the use of force was legally justified by ECOWAS (See “A New African Model of Coercion? Assessing the ECOWAS Mission in The Gambia,” P. Williams, IPI Global Observatory, (16 March 2017).); regardless, the determination of peaceful resolution was aided by combined efforts of political leaders.

Barrow returned to The Gambia on 26 January 2017, a few days after Yahya Jammeh left for Guinea. Barrow requested that the ECOWAS regional military force be positioned in the country for six months (later extended for an additional year) amidst some concerns that elements of The Gambia’s security forces may remain loyal to Jammeh. In addition to Jammeh’s dignified exit, Barrow pledged to establish a truth and reconciliation commission for the investigation of human rights abuses alleged in The Gambia during Jammeh’s leadership, focusing first on finding out the truth before deciding what next steps to take to address any violations. In December 2017, The Gambia National Assembly passed bills to establish both a Truth, Reconciliation and Reparation Commission (TRRC) and a Human Rights Commission.

The initial gains made from prevention of armed conflict in The Gambia cannot be sustained unless the national government, international community, and local civil society continue to invest in peacebuilding and development. In January 2017, the ambassador of The Gambia to the UN requested that the UN Peacebuilding Commission (PBC) put The Gambia on its agenda. In response, the Peacebuilding Support Office (PBSO) and the UN Development Programme (UNDP) took an exploratory trip, meeting with government officials and civil society. UNDP and ECOWAS signed a memorandum of understanding to cooperate on efforts in The Gambia. While the United Nations has not at this point officially listed The Gambia as a country of focus on the PBC’s agenda, the PBSO did release $3 million for emergency support in addition to the World Bank’s $56 million budget for basic public service provision in The Gambia.

The new administration inherited myriad economic and infrastructure challenges in The Gambia, including high levels of debt and massive electricity shortages. To address environmental, economic, and social development alongside governance, freedom of the media, transitional justice, and security sector reform, the government formulated a National Development Plan. This plan, circulated for review in January 2018, prioritized the link between peacebuilding and sustainable development with an emphasis on UN Sustainable Development Goal #16, building accountable and inclusive institutions. The plan also emphasized empowerment of women and youth, with hopes to build on the momentum gained by youth through the social media campaign #GambiaHasDecided which had politically challenged Jammeh’s dictatorship and impacted the election results.

**Recommendation.**

1) The international community (including the UN and regional organizations such as the AU and ECOWAS) should continue to provide a united front in the pursuit of peaceful political solutions to nations experiencing constitutional crises. Such a united front ought to include the direct efforts of multiple presidents and political leaders to mediate and engage with former leaders, as did heads of state of several West African countries with former dictator Jammeh. Such leaders were able to speak as peers,
hear his concerns to mediate an agreement, and implore him for the sake of his country to stand down. The UN/AU/ECOWAS were united in recognizing the legitimacy of Barrow’s election as the will of the Gambian people, and the international community prioritized the pursuit of peaceful political solutions.

2) In future such crises, consider trade-offs in the offers of amnesty/asylum and a dignified exit for former leaders/dictators. This may prevent bloodshed or the sparks/continuance of armed conflict. However, this offer of asylum must be balanced with the need for justice and accountability with human rights violations that may have been committed under the leadership of such a former dictator.

3) Ensure that gains from preventive diplomacy are solidified by measures to sustain peace and strengthen institutions. The international community (including the UN Peacebuilding Commission) should continue to support The Gambia as it seeks to address ongoing development challenges and sustainable peace.

Implications.

Lack of unified political resolve among international/regional leaders may perpetuate or spark further violence in a nation experiencing a constitutional crisis. This can be seen in the current and ongoing situation in Burundi. When Burundi’s President Nkurunziza decided to run for a 3rd term in 2015, despite stipulations in the Arusha Peace Agreement limiting presidents to two terms in office (he claimed that his first term did not count towards this limit), unrest broke out in Burundi. However, there was a lack of clear resolve by the UN, AU, and regional organizations and leaders to address this constitutional crisis. Political violence escalated against civilians, and yet regional organizations remained hesitant to intervene. The African Union decided against sending peacekeepers to Burundi in January 2016, and though the UN Security Council authorized a police force in July 2016 to monitor the security situation, it was not implemented due to opposition from Burundian authorities. The violence in Burundi continues to this day with extrajudicial killings, enforced disappearances, sexual violence, torture, serious human rights violations, and warning signs of genocide. Thousands have been forced to flee.

“A related reason why West Africa’s leaders were united against Jammeh was the increased democratization the region had experienced over the past decade. Unlike in East Africa, for instance, when regional leaders did not strongly criticize Burundi’s President Pierre Nkurunziza’s decision to stand for a third term in office, few of West Africa’s heads of state would be condemning themselves if they criticized Jammeh’s push to overturn the constitutional process” (Williams, 2017).

Clearer political unified resolve by international entities may have prevented this escalation of violence in Burundi imposed by the continuance of Nkurunziza’s reign. While not all facets of The Gambia and Burundi are the same, there was a drastic difference in the unity of international response and in the outcome of the crises. While the future is still uncertain for The Gambia, an immediate escalation of its constitutional crisis into violence was averted in large part by unified international political resolve.

Event Description.

This lesson is based primarily on various news articles about the constitutional crisis in the Gambia. (See, for example, a BBC country profile of The Gambia and the Joint Declaration agreement under which Jammeh left office.) Other articles of note include:


Lesson Author: Katrina Gehman, Lessons Learned Analyst (Ctr), PKSOI
E. Financing Good Governance Programs for Youth: A Prerequisite for Sustainable Peace in Kenya (Lesson #2632)

Observation.

In the last decade, Africa has grown significantly – demographically and economically. Sadly, its youth bulge, the largest in the world, cannot be sustained with the economic progress made. The number of young people graduating from institutions of higher learning is significantly high compared to the number of young people being absorbed by employment agencies. Whereas many governments, banking institutions, and international development partners have also put in place programs and projects to allow youth access to skills and financial support in the form of capital to start businesses, these efforts alone can still not accommodate the increase of young people exiting tertiary institutions. This situation has been made worse with increasing corruption in regional hegemons such as Kenya. This is because the economic progress made which has tripled in the last decade is parallel to increased levels of corruption. High levels of corruption brought about by misappropriation of funds, inadequate accountability and transparency in the management of state and public resources, nepotism, and tribalism are a threat to peace in previously more stable countries such as Kenya, Nigeria, and South Africa.

Discussion.

Emerging new threats to peace such as terrorism and human trafficking, which are transnational in nature, are reinforced by inadequate economic opportunities and an increase in internet connectivity. This is made worse by evolving factors such as poor governance which is taking a toll in many African countries, forcing the continent's youth to explore other avenues of making a living. A look at past conflicts in countries such as Sierra Leone which have undergone humanitarian crises shows how high levels of corruption and mismanagement of resources took the country through 11 years of civil war. Kenya is steadily working to reduce corruption and promote accountability in public, private, and government institutions; however, it is still considered among the most corrupt countries in the world according to a recent report by Transparency International. In the recent past, high levels of corruption accompanied by youth unemployment and underemployment have resulted in desperate measures by young people eager to earn a living. More and more youth have taken to the idea of 'hustling' where they intend to earn a living by any means possible. This means using unconventional methods to get money. As a result, we have seen more young people leave in the thousands to look for greener pastures in Europe by taking risks going through Libya crossing the Mediterranean Sea to get to Europe.

In a report that was commissioned and conducted by the East African Institute (EAI), dubbed ‘Kenya Youth Survey Report,’ 50% of youth in Kenya do not care what means and ways a person uses to become rich provided they do not go to jail. In a more shocking revelation, 30% of the youth in Kenya, according to the survey, strongly believe that corruption is profitable and lucrative. Thirty-five percent of them are ready to give and receive a bribe for services. This is in addition to increasing crime where youth are motivated by country officials who get away with corruption. A case in point is seen in Kenya where two brothers and their cousin in their early 30s robbed a bank of $500,000 and blamed the incident on unemployment, having graduated from the university but still jobless. They also blamed corruption cases in the country by government officials, where little or no action was taken to prosecute the perpetrators. From these examples, there is a strong correlation between countries facing threats to peace and the state of poor governance shown through corruption levels according to the latest corruption index report. There is an urgent need to restructure institutions that promote accountability, as this has the potential of promoting peace and justice and preventing emerging threats. A good example is seen in Kenya where after the 2007/2008 post-election violence, having institutions that promote accountability
formed part of the peacebuilding process. However, after having seen how poor governance can threaten the fabric of society to be peaceful and just, there is a need to ensure youth are empowered on ethics as well as skills and knowledge that will promote good governance to mitigate the risk of violent conflicts in threat environments.

In Kenya, Impart Change (a local non-profit organization) has trained 40 young women on good governance and intends to reach more than 150 young women by December 2018. As an organization, we at Impart Change acknowledge that there is a governance deficit in the country. Our goal is to empower more women to be leaders. Impart Change encourages women to take up leadership roles because we believe in their ability to be transparent and accountable in the management of community and state resources for future generations to come.

**Recommendation.**

1. A fundamental shift will be vital in the promotion of peace and security looking into the dynamism of present trends that threaten peace. The new global goals [Sustainable Development Goals] came at a critical time where goal 16 clearly defines the need to promote peace and justice, together with effective, accountable, and inclusive institutions. One way of contributing to the achievement of goal 16 would be investing in good governance programs by youth and for youth to instill responsibility, accountability, integrity, and transparency.

2. Investment in economic programs should also be accompanied by training on ethics and integrity. This is an investment in soft power which has a better outcome than investing in hard power, which is draining much needed financial resources for sustainable development in many countries.

3. Youth also need to be empowered on the rule of law. This includes empowering youth with adequate knowledge and information on the constitution. This will prepare young people for leadership positions where they will respect and uphold the constitution, this being a prerequisite for a country’s sustainable peace and development. Kenya is a country still taking its lessons from the 2007/2008 post-election violence. A peacebuilding intervention that was employed at the time was constitutional reform which promotes inclusion and accountability. It is for this reason that efforts should be made to ensure that the constitution is respected as a prerequisite for alleviating, reducing, and preventing conflicts.

**Implications.**

If investment is not made to empower youth with good governance skills, knowledge, and information, there is a likelihood of more complex dynamic threats to peace as a result of poor governance. More young people will take drastic measures by forming and joining vigilante groups and terror cells. Street demonstration to demand accountability will become distractive and violent in nature, causing economic downturn. Poor governance is a cause as well as a consequence of violent conflicts. If the risks associated with it are not addressed in good time, sustainable peace will remain a distant goal. That will be a thorn in the development process of any country.

**Event Description.**

The research is a result of a project supported with the Global Youth Empowerment Fund, an initiative of the Junior Chamber International and the UN Sustainable Development Goal Campaign. Impart Change, a local non-profit organization, spearheaded the project research to empower youth with good governance tools through knowledge and information on the Kenyan Constitution. The organization’s
The overall goal is to contribute to Sustainable Development Goal 16 by engaging young people in the grassroots. Impart Change was founded by Vyonne Akoth in 2015 just after the launch of the Sustainable Development Goals. Vyonne Akoth is a peace advocate and a violence prevention strategist. As a youth leader leading an organization that empowers young people on peacebuilding, conflict resolution, and violence prevention, she has worked with partners to integrate good governance and legal knowledge to enhance peace and security in local communities in Kenya.

This lesson was based on personal experience with Impart Change and these sources:
- Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI) 2017: Score Evolution Since 2012.

Lesson Author: Vyonne Akoth, Violence Prevention Strategist, Impart Change

Editor's Note: In 2015, world leaders met at the United Nations Headquarters in New York, USA, to launch the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), following the conclusion of the eight Millennium Development Goals established in 2000. The SDGs form the next step in a global strategy to pursue development of people and the planet in prosperity, peace, and partnership. They cover seventeen areas of focus from poverty eradication and gender equality to environmental protection. Of note, Sustainable Development Goal 16 pertains directly to peacebuilding: “Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels.”
Observation.

In ever-changing values of gender justice and altering contexts of state decay and economic decline, the Zimbabwe Republic Police Women Network (ZRP WN) has been able to shift police preoccupation from “what is routinely important” to “what works” in an effort to tackle Sexual and Gender Based Violence (SGBV) enforced by patriarchal customs. The key insight is that patriarchy is the problem, and that change in gender justice can best be achieved by practical measures and not by theoretical exhortation, and evidently, police women are making a difference by showing that their reformist plans, including both carrot and stick, are of practical use.

Discussion.

The ZRP WN is discharging its duties in extraordinary circumstances where one out of three women lives with Sexual and Gender Based Violence (SGBV) in Zimbabwe. This equals about 30% of 7.4 million women out of 14 million Zimbabweans. Research findings further show that 47% of married women have "experienced either physical or sexual violence at some point in their life, 1 in 3 girls experience sexual violence before they turn 18 and a majority of these girls are adolescents aged between 14 and 17 years; and less than 3% of these girls received professional help" (Mushonga, 2015). It is also amply documented by the UN Women Zimbabwe (2015), that “Zimbabwe has one of the highest rates of child marriage in the world with up to 50 percent of young girls under the age of consent in rural areas.”

The SGBV has been happening in a context of poverty, state decay, precipitous economic decline, and illiteracy which all combine to trap rural women into a social identity of victimhood and marginalization. This is attributed by patriarchal practices of power which objectify women, as sadly evidenced by upsurges in child marriages and rape cases. More importantly, issues of cultural customs that govern the behavioural pattern of social organisations make it extremely difficult to tell which practice is criminal or is not. In Zimbabwe, the ZRP WN has been confronted by three complex but culturally and economically embedded patriarchal forces which perpetuate violence against women. These include (1) Patrilocal Residence: The Zimbabwean culture compels women, upon marriage, to settle in the husband's home, village or tribe. (2) Patriarchal Household: Here, the husband is the supreme authority, and most importantly, the children, earnings, buildings and land belong to the husband and his clan. Also, (3) Patrilineal Inheritance: After the death of the husband, preference is given to the son to succeed – neither the wife nor daughter can.

Not only have all these conspired to limit potential spaces for rural women to assume primary decision-making roles in controlling and managing earnings, owning land, buildings, or machinery, such entitlements have given sufficient legroom for men to criminalise and objectify women as exemplified by increasing incidences of sexual harassment, murder, brutal torture, and crimes of passion. However, there is tension on how crime is understood differently between the police members and the conservative patriarchs. While ZRP WN conceives some patriarchal practices as public order offences, patriarchs view them as mere social problems which require societal resolve. As such the common behavioural pattern of rural women who experience violence is that they rarely seek help from alternative formal institutions such as the police for legal recourse; instead, they turn to the same patriarchal family and tribal mechanisms for assistance. This clearly goes around in a circle.

Despite the pervasiveness of SGBV against rural women, the Zimbabwe Republic Police barely came up with robust preventive measures to tackle this historical oppression as a source of crime until the advent
of the Women Network (WN). In fact, the police have been incessantly criticized for chronic failure to act effectively against SGBV. This can be possibly accounted for by the police’s operational procedure inclined to preoccupation with “what is routinely important” rather than “what works.” In response to this, and in line with the women’s bill of rights – the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) – the Zimbabwe women in policing established the Zimbabwe Republic Police Women Network as a convergence zone to cooperate, connect, and empower each other to serve and protect rural victims of SGBV. The Women Network has become a platform which encourages critical thinking of the mutually reinforcing link between patriarchal repression, gender justice needs, and the significance of investing in capacities to end gender-based violence. As their compass, WN had loftily modelled their vision and objectives to include being “the most empowered and uplifted women police officers in the world by the year 2017” guided by organising principles of “exemplary leadership, compassion, accountability, professionalism, and teamwork” (Zimbabwe Republic Police Women Network, 2012). However, the establishment of WN and its decentralised model of consensus making counterpoised the dominant and traditionally held centralised command-and-control approaches pervasive in policing worldwide.

Targeting SGBV in patriarchal communities has been like entering into alien and unfamiliar territories because the resources and skills required were beyond WN’s reach. The WN was then compelled to envision the solution and action plan against available strength, capacities, and resources from which to implement SGBV interventions. It then decided to take three critical steps: education, resource mobilization, and campaign blitz through innovative operations.

**Education:** Realising the skill set from the institution was barely sufficient to effectively navigate and to align its strength and aspirations, WN leadership, with the help of the Commissioner General of Police, has fostered a collaborative training with NGO professional communities and academic research institutions. For the latter, WN members were subjected to rigorous Conflict Transformation, Leadership, and Community Policing and Dialogue training programmes as a way of developing an evidence base on the link between crime, justice, and rights-based policing. There is an extensive body of theoretical literature and empirical evidence which shows an added-value link between academic institutions and policing, in particular on collating and analysing evidence – given the drive towards evidence based policing. Skills acquired from academic institutions have catapulted women police’s confidence to break masculinity in rural settings as well as the ZRP organisation by successfully negotiating for their inclusion in the male dominated units, such as Sub Aqua, Transport, and Dogs Sections, and UN Peacekeeping missions.

**Resource Mobilization:** What stands out unique about the ZRP WN has been their innovativeness in designing poverty alleviation entrepreneurial projects for female police, with part of the financial and material proceeds deployed to tackle the SGBV menace. The women police have been operating in a context of the worst hyperinflation of all times, which reached 87.9 sextillion percent (Hanke, 2008) before the final collapse of the Zimbabwe dollar in 2009. In response, they decided to combat poverty of female officers through self-sustenance economic stability programmes with entrepreneurial income generating projects. Their projects have ensured that “at least 95% of female police members engaged in one or more income generating projects individually or as a group with a view to improving the overall quality of women’s lives.” This involves engaging in massive mixed economy projects such as mining, crop husbandry, poultry production, fish farming, piggery, cattle fattening, goat rearing, apiculture, retailing, and catering services. It should be highlighted that the WN has continued partnering with academic and professional institutions to re-tool and re-skill themselves with best practices in farming, project planning, financial hygiene, and marketing. It is unusual for the police institutions to take poverty alleviation as their specific duty to improve the qualitative lifestyle to ensure members continue to render effective service delivery on SGBV related crimes. Although engaging in economic activities might appear a shift from their
core functions of detecting, investigating, and preventing crime, there is sufficient evidence from empirical research showing how poverty of security providers undermines effectiveness in service delivery, and conversely, how economically stable security providers and improved service provision are mutually constitutive. The ZRP WN stands out unique as it creatively revolutionised policing practice in the context of precipitous economic decline, thus ensuring that the police continue to render effective service delivery to members of the public.

**Operation Campaigns:** Having empowered themselves with requisite skills and economic resources, the ZRP WN reconfigured roles and redefined policing work to include ‘hard tackling’ of the SGBV menace in rural and urban centres. From 2009 to date, the Women Network, in partnership with other police units, has successfully mounted several anti-SGBV operations, including:

1. **Operation Chawakadya Chamuka 1 and 2** *(those who committed sexual violence will face the full wrath of the law).* The blitz nabbed “1,191 wanted persons for various sexual offences inclusive of rape, indecent assault, having sexual intercourse with a minor and domestic violence” (Zimbabwe Republic Police Women Network, 2012).

2. **Dzorai Hunhu** *(practice morals and customs which respect women and children).* This country-wide clampdown specifically targeted harmful traditional practices such as forced marriage and prejudicial inheritance of property. Given the overwhelming amount of work, the Network was compelled to make another design shift which included establishing multi-sectoral partnership with legal partners, development aid agencies, and other state institutions to provide support to perpetrators and victims alike under a common theme of 4Ps: Prevention, Protection, Participation, and Programming. This saw the creation and resourcing of the Victim Friendly Units (VFUs) which provided specialised services to survivors of domestic and sexual violence. The One Stop Centres across the country continue to provide survivors of SGBV with free legal aid, medical attention, and shelter.

3. **Operation Mhosva Hairovi** *(the long arm of the law will catch you)*, **Operation Kurasa Hunhu Hokoyo** *(a stern warning against those with loose morals)*, and **Operation Hakuna Anosara** *(all criminals will be dealt with smoothly, properly, and procedurally by the law)* reinforced demands for gender justice.

In all the Operations, more than 30,896 accused persons were arrested and prosecuted, which has become a landmark victory for women in Zimbabwe. Again, to consistently redesign their work, the Network immersed into communities through charity and compassion, with each member expected to “participate in at least one social responsibility activity every year” (Zimbabwe Republic Police Women Network, 2012). To date, their donations have been targeting crime victims and the marginalised. Increasingly so, they have earned trust and credibility from the general population. There is an exponential rise in reportage of sexual and gender based crimes as the WN continues to gain access to hard-to-penetrate communities to get vital information.

**Recommendation.**

1. In order to improve efficiency and effectiveness of the ZRP to address violence against women, there is a need to promote and institutionalise ZRP WN’s structures into all-female formed police units across the country. At the moment the ZRP WN is not fully appreciated, therefore resisted and dismissed as a voluntary organisation by the male police officers. However, having all-female police stations might not be sufficient without pushing for 60% composition of female police officers in the ZRP. Men dominate not only what is still a traditional society but also the police service, in which they are in a clear numerical majority. The number of respective female and male police is inversely proportional to the female population in the country. There is no collinearity as exemplified by the proportion of the police based on
gender. Female police constitute 33% (compared to 53% female population in the country), whereas the male police constitute 77% (compared to 47% male population). For gender justice to occur, it is expected that the number of the female police should be proportional to the corresponding number of female population in the country. If male police officers, who have been raised under the patriarchal customs, continue dominating representation, SGBV crimes might not be effectively investigated and prosecuted. Those men therefore will fail to properly investigate crimes against women by men, even if those crimes are reported to the police in the first place. For example, research evidence shows that in a situation where females perceive patriarchal culture as a problem and where the number of male police in stations outnumber female counterparts, some female victims are not comfortable to report harassment to male police officers. Evidence continues to show high probability of male police officers taking female harassment and child marriages for granted based on their patriarchal upbringing that marginalises women in the community.

2. There is no action that does not have unintended consequences, no matter how well intentioned the ZRP WN has been. There is a need to carry out research on how patriarchal men are adjusting or adapting to new forms of gender justice in circumstances where police interventions are disrupting old gender hierarchies and social structures. Could there be any new gender norms created after intervention? If so, how are they any better from traditional ones? How are the male privileges negotiated and contested after operations? How are men managing without traditional powers? Therefore, there is a compelling need to assess the changes in child marriages, patrilocal residence distribution, and patrilineal inheritance patterns to establish how patriarchy is complying with new forms of gender justice. There is also need to conduct research on whether or not the social change is bringing economic benefit to women, and why some patriarchal communities could be resisting change while others are shifting.

3. Although the ZRP WN gives us evidence of how state institutions can re-skill themselves and raise resources required to tackle SGBV, there are always some limits placed by economic meltdown. This compels regional and international communities to provide more support to the WN. This might include capacity building to deal with structural and financial factors and providing education which is commensurate to the ever-changing policing needs.

Event Description.

Kudakwashe Chirambwi is a specialist in Peace, Leadership, and Conflict Transformation and teaches the same courses at the National University of Science and Technology (Zimbabwe). He has nine years of experience in providing training to the Zimbabwe Republic Police Women Network on Conflict Transformation, Leadership, and Community Policing and Dialogue. Training involves re-tooling ZRP Women Network with skills of developing evidence-based policing, particularly on the link between crime, justice, and rights-based policing. This lesson is based on his personal experience and on these sources:

- UN Women Zimbabwe (2015), Zimbabwe.
- Note: For additional literature on policing in Zimbabwe, view the Lesson (#2627) in SOLLIMS.

Lesson Author: Kudakwashe Chirambwi, University of Bradford (UK)
G. Strengthening Conflict Management Mechanisms in the Central African Republic (Lesson #2618)

**Observation.**

Supporting conflict management during a complex crisis can avert immediate retaliatory violence and address underlying conflict drivers. After a resurgence of violence in the Central African Republic (CAR) in 2013, the non-governmental organization Mercy Corps, with funding from the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), implemented a program to increase community resilience by strengthening local conflict management capacities. As a result, perceptions of peace were dramatically increased in the capital city of Bangui as disputes were solved nonviolently. While the country remains volatile and violent, the capital has remained relatively calm and secure.

**Discussion.**

Since gaining independence from France in 1960, the Central African Republic (CAR) has experienced turmoil, instability, socio-religious fragmentation, poverty, underdevelopment, and violence. It ranked 3rd out of 178 countries in the Fragile States Index (as of 2016) and 188th out of 188 countries in the Human Development Index (as of 2015). Violence in the CAR took a severe turn for the worse in March 2013 when a predominately Muslim Seleka rebel group overthrew the President in a coup d’état. Following this coup, predominantly Christian anti-Balaka armed groups targeted Muslim communities, leading to mass displacement and plunging the fragile nation into cycles of retaliatory violence primarily along religious lines.

Following this resurgence of violence (and with fears of the conflict evolving into genocide and/or ethnic cleansing), several international stakeholders intervened. The African Union peacekeeping force MISCA was authorized in December 2013 and transitioned in September 2014 to a UN mission, the UN Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic (MINUSCA) (whose current mandate has been extended until 15 November 2018). International mediation efforts were led by the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS). Several major international donors released funds to support conflict resolution and peacebuilding activities.

One of these donors included USAID, which had certain funds set aside for crisis mitigation through the Complex Crisis Fund (CCF). CCF was originally authorized by the U.S. Congress in 2010 for $100 million dollars, appropriated in FY15 to $30 million. This was one of USAID's only flexible sources of global, non-earmarked funding that could enable rapid support during crises. When violence increased in the CAR following the 2013 coup, USAID used this CCF funding to support the non-governmental organization Mercy Corps to launch an emergency community-level violence reduction program in two vital cities in CAR – the capital Bangui and Bouar. (This was the first time the CCF funds had been used to directly support NGOs instead of going through a USAID mission.)

With USAID/CCF support, Mercy Corps implemented a program titled “Stabilizing Vulnerable Communities in the Central African Republic through the Promotion of Inter-Community Dialogue and Economic Cooperation,” (known as the SVC program), from 15 January 2014 to 31 October 2015. The main goal of the program was to assist Muslim and Christian communities in managing conflicts nonviolently and building social resilience through strengthening the capacity of leaders, generating trust via joint economic initiatives, and promoting tolerance through inter-faith peace messaging. Mercy Corps accomplished this goal by 1) training community leaders (men, women, and youth from various communities) on Interest-Based Negotiation, conflict analysis, and conflict resolution; 2) implementing
over 90 joint socio-economic projects in Bangui and Bouar that would benefit both Christian and Muslim communities; and 3) organizing a network of 200 peer educators (mostly youth, both male and female) for community outreach about nonviolence.

The program took some time to develop initially. In the first ten months of the SVC program, communities needed time to process grievances and fear with their families before they were willing to engage in inter-communal activities. Mercy Corps was concerned that pressuring communities to participate in joint projects before they were ready could have made the conflict worse. Fortunately, the CCF funding allowed changes in the middle of the program, so Mercy Corps could adapt activities accordingly and wait on community readiness before starting joint projects. Furthermore, MINUSCA (and its predecessor MISCA) proved vital during the timeline of the SVC program, creating conditions conducive for humanitarian response by securing transportation routes in both Bangui and Bouar. In other regions lacking peacekeepers and police, Mercy Corps was forced to cancel conflict mitigation programs due to ongoing violence, insecurity, and crime.

Mercy Corps conducted an end-line survey of the SVC program in Bangui and Bouar in mid-2015, using simple random sampling of 600 households across various different communities to evaluate results. The findings of this evaluation were monumental. By August 2015, there was a 532% increase in “community members’ perceptions that conflicts were being resolved peacefully in their communities," from 13% in the baseline to 82.2% in the end-line. Furthermore, there was an 86% increase in the number of respondents who trust the “other” group (Christians or Muslims), from 30.1% to 56.1%. In addition, the majority of those displaced by violence returned home or felt willing to return, with 96% of respondents feeling hopeful for peace. Throughout the program, at least 200 disputes were resolved peacefully through the inter-community peace committees that Mercy Corps had trained (on Interest-Based Negotiation, conflict analysis, and social cohesion), many of which may otherwise have turned violent. Respondents also noted that the most effective methods for increasing community cohesion included dialogue (32.8%), religious messaging about peace (24.7%), and radio messages (13.8%). The key stakeholders which had been most involved in peace during fifteen months of the program, as perceived by the community respondents, were religious leaders (42.2%), community leaders (10.7%), and MINUSCA (10%).

In December 2014, 220 anti-Balaka fighters with 10 commanders voluntarily disarmed to advocate for nonviolent social change with community/religious leaders and peace committees, because these leaders had created legitimate alternatives to violence. In March 2015, 26 community leaders and 26 youth (both men and women, Muslims and Christians, representing the main ethnic groups) met together to discuss peace in their different communities. This discussion was broadcast over the radio Siriri in ethnic dialects, and these talks resulted in the signing of a reconciliation pact between these different ethnic group leaders to promote nonviolent conflict resolution and to protect minority rights. Since this pact, Muslims traders have been reintegrated back into the local economy. Mercy Corps also trained 35 civil society representatives to participate in the Bangui Forum, which was a national reconciliation conference that took place in May 2015 (the third phase of the Brazzaville ceasefire agreement signed in July 2014) and resulted in the signing of a disarmament agreement among several armed groups.

When violence was triggered on 26 September 2015 in CAR due to the reported beheading of a Muslim cab driver, community and religious leaders publicly condemned violence and swiftly restored order in Bouar (keeping the roads open to traffic, etc.), and peer educators trained by the SVC program monitored the situation and organized peers to discuss nonviolent methods of addressing grievances in Bangui. As such, even with the triggering of violence, community mechanisms for conflict management strengthened the community’s resilience.
Since the conclusion of this evaluation report, CAR remains volatile. The International Crisis Group reports that “violence has flared almost everywhere in the provinces” since the end of 2016, driven by competition for resources by armed groups and exacerbated by continued inter-ethnic tensions between Christians and Muslims. The disarmament and reintegration processes endorsed by the Bangui Forum have yet to be fully implemented, the presidential elections at the end of 2015/beginning of 2016 only provided a brief respite from continued fighting, an attempted peace agreement ceasefire brokered in Italy in June 2017 did not hold, and over 1.1 million people are displaced, the highest ever recorded in the CAR. However, the 18 October 2017 United Nations Report of the Secretary-General on CAR affirms that the situation in the capital city of Bangui “remained relatively calm,” (p. 3); according to International Crisis Group, “over the past two years significant progress has been made in Bangui in terms of security.” Although the rest of the country is still trapped in cycles of violence, the peace in Bangui may in part be thanks to the bolstered community capacity to manage conflict nonviolently, as supported by Mercy Corps and MINUSCA’s ongoing efforts for mediation in the community.

**Recommendation.**

1. During complex crises in fragile contexts, support community mechanisms for the nonviolent resolution of conflicts. This can include training community leaders in conflict resolution, raising awareness of nonviolence through peer educators, or implementing joint socio-economic projects to build trust between opposing groups.

2. Provide flexible funding for these circumstances (such as USAID’s CCF), which can more easily adapt to the changing needs on the ground. Dedicate global funding sources to conflict prevention and peacebuilding, especially for fragile states that may face a resurgence of violence.

3. Continue to support the capacity of local non-governmental organizations, community leaders, and MINUSCA to promote community mediation and disseminate messages of peace in CAR. Expand this work beyond the capital city to regions across CAR which are still reeling from violence and displacement.

**Implications.**

If communities have the capacity and mechanisms for nonviolent conflict management, then they can absorb shocks more easily, and it is less likely that any small conflict or disagreement will automatically continue cycles of retaliatory violence. If people see leaders solving disagreements in a peaceful, nonviolent way, then they will see this as a possibility and may adapt it. If community members do not see this, then they might not be able to imagine nonviolent conflict resolution as a real possibility, and then they may be more likely to turn to violence to address grievances. If joint socio-economic projects are implemented that will benefit both opposing groups, this may show the broader community the benefits of cooperation and may lead to peaceful interaction between the opposing groups. If different groups work together on economic cooperation, then they may trust each other and see the broader mutual benefits. If funding is flexible for a complex crisis, then programs can more easily adapt, like Mercy Corps' SVC did based on realities on the ground; however, if donors and funding are not flexible, then programs are less likely to be effective in responding to needs in the community.

“The positive, real-time responses of SVC program actors and structures to manage peace demonstrate that where commitments to and structures for non-violent dispute resolution exist, communities are more resilient to shocks” (Mercy Corps, p. 9).

“Ignoring grievances or violent tendencies during a humanitarian crisis, moreover, can contribute to worsening cycles of violence, fragility and poverty that keep countries like the CAR, South Sudan, Yemen, Afghanistan and Yemen mired in poverty and conflict” (Mercy Corps, p. 8).
Event Description.

This lesson is primarily based on this source:


More information is available from these resources:

- MINUSCA website: https://minusca.unmissions.org/en
- MINUSCA Peace Operations Estimate on the SOLLIMS database (POET2 Portal)

Lesson Author: Katrina Gehman, Lessons Learned Analyst (Ctr), PKSOI

Bangui, Central African Republic (22 October 2017)

“Military and police peacekeepers serving with the UN Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic (MINUSCA) patrol the Muslim enclave of PK5 in Bangui.”

(Photo Credit: UN Photo/Eskinder Debebe)
H. Promoting Youth, Peace and Security Through Sustained Dialogue in the Horn of Africa (Lesson #2634)

Observation:

People aged 18-29 in conflict-affected regions are often feared as posing a security threat, excluded from formal peace processes, or merely included in token gestures. However, these youth possess insights and experiences that will lead to more sustainable peace. When included, youth can transform violent conflict, as shown through the Life & Peace Institute’s work with Sustained Dialogue in the Horn of Africa, supporting progress of the United Nations Security Council Resolution 2250 (2015) on Youth, Peace and Security. Such dialogue-to-action tools build trust, improving relationships across divides.

Discussion:

In 2015, the landmark United Nations Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 2250 on Youth, Peace and Security (YPS) was issued. This resolution recognized that “today’s generation of youth [defined as people between the ages of 18-29] is the largest the world has ever known” (p. 1), and that many are directly affected by armed conflict. The resolution also affirms that “a large youth population presents a unique demographic dividend that can contribute to lasting peace and economic prosperity if inclusive policies are in place” (p. 2). Key pillars of YPS include participation, protection, prevention, partnership, and disengagement and reintegration.

One of the provisions of the landmark YPS Resolution was the mandate to compile an independent progress report to study what youth all around the world are currently already doing to promote peace. YPS principles are especially important today given that the involvement of some youth in extremist groups has caused many to consider youth in general to be a threat to international security. Most young women and young men, however, are not involved in violence and in fact play active roles in peace. In order to gather feedback for the progress study, various UN entities and partners held regional consultations with youth from 149 countries. Furthermore, several organizations who have been involved in peacebuilding with youth were requested to provide feedback and recommendations for the progress study.

One such organization is the international ecumenical organization Life & Peace Institute (LPI), based in Sweden, which focuses on nonviolent conflict transformation through strengthening local capacities. One of LPI’s major programs has been in the Horn of Africa, partnering with universities and local civil society organizations in dialogue-to-action processes with diverse youth from across the region. Most of this dialogue work supported by LPI in the HOA was led through its partner organization, the Peace and Development Centre (PDC) in Ethiopia. The PDC was the first nonprofit, nonpartisan, non-governmental organization founded by Ethiopian leaders focusing on conflict resolution, originally established in 1991 to promote mediation among civil war parties in Ethiopia.

The African continent currently hosts the most youthful population in the world, although not all countries in the continent utilize the same definition of “youth.” While UNSCR 2250 defines youth as ages 18-29, the Kenyan Constitution identifies youth as ages 18-35 years, and the Ethiopian National Youth Policy as ages 15-29. In addition, "youth" can have different connotations according to gender and parental status. Regardless of the definition of “youth,” young women and men in the Horn of Africa (HOA) experience barriers and exclusion from formal decision-making processes, as most high-level positions and traditional cultural roles of authority are held by older generations. Furthermore, given ongoing violence as well as some international counter-terrorism policies and restrictive national legislation, civic space in...
some of these countries has shrunk, making it more difficult for youth facing socio-political exclusion to access public space.

LPI used the inclusive, participatory process of Sustained Dialogue with diverse groups across the Horn of Africa, specifically focusing on youth because youth may still be in the process of identity formation and so this methodology for dialogue might have a more transformative impact. Sustained Dialogue methodology was originally created by a U.S. diplomat in the 1970s as a conflict resolution tool and has since been used in adversarial situations around the world. The purpose of Sustained Dialogue is to address root drivers of conflict by first improving relationships, addressing identity, interests, power, perceptions, and patterns of interaction, allowing people to challenge their own stereotypes and build relationships across lines of division.

Sustained Dialogue is a five-stage process. First, diverse people decide to commit to the process. Next, in group meetings, participants discuss their experiences in order to understand each other better. Third, groups identify and analyze problems and root causes of issues in their communities. Fourth, participants brainstorm collaboratively how to solve these problems, exploring resources, obstacles, and how to overcome obstacles to build momentum. Finally, dialogue groups design and implement actions within their broader community.

Across the Horn of Africa, youth led myriad LPI-sponsored Sustained Dialogues. Groups for dialogue would be composed of 8-15 participants reflecting diversity within the community, facilitated by peer moderators trained in the methodology. These groups would meet regularly (for two hours at least twice a month over a seven month period) to build relationships and develop strategies to improve conflicted inter-group relationships (along various identities such as ethnicity, gender, religion, urban/rural geographies, or socio-economic status).

Since these Sustained Dialogues were launched by LPI in the Horn of Africa in 2009, this methodology has been used in 9 universities in Sudan and Ethiopia and 5 marginalized rural and urban settlements in Kenya. Altogether, these dialogues led by youth have reached 85,000 community members in HOA through 9,000 dialogue sessions with 660 diverse dialogue groups composed of 8,500 young women and men.

The outputs of Sustained Dialogue in the Horn of Africa included many successful community peacebuilding projects, such as successful advocacy to community elders of West Kordofan, Sudan, by a student attending Dalanji University in South Kordofan State for dialogue between conflicting groups. On one of the Sudanese campuses, Muslim participants advocated for prayer space when they found out that their Christian peers had trouble finding such space. In Garissa County, Kenya, participants lobbied for a primary school to reopen that had been closed and occupied due to inter-sub clan violence. One of the graduates of the dialogue process from Addis Ababa University even produced a radio show (Ye’erq) about reconciliation, reaching millions of Ethiopians.

The sustained dialogue methodology has been useful for including youth as recommended through the YPS agenda, because it allows youth to shape and define their own challenges in their communities, overcoming traditional barriers to inclusion in peace processes. Students themselves gained awareness and became more engaged with important issues, making friends across ethnic and religious lines. A randomized control trial of Sustained Dialogue took place at Addis Ababa University 2009-2010, finding that individual participant attitudes improved following participation, with 27% of participants affirming that ‘most people can be trusted’ as opposed to 17% of the control group.
To provide the requested feedback for the UN, LPI began an institutional reflection process with LPI staff and personnel from the PDC in Ethiopia, and most importantly with young people from Ethiopia, Kenya, and Sudan who had themselves participated in Sustained Dialogue projects in the region, to ensure that “recommendations reflect the views, needs, and specific experiences of youth, rather than speaking on their behalf” (LPI, 2017, p. 6). Based on this reflection process of 20,000 hours of youth dialogues in HOA, participants and staff had the following four insights to share with the international community. These main insights from LPI include:

“1. **Youth are not a homogeneous group:** It should be recognised that youth are as diverse and divided as the rest of the population, and in conflict-affected and fragile settings will be subject to the same social, economic, and identity-based fractures that characterise the broader context.

2. **The notion that there are ‘youth issues’ is misleading and unhelpful:** Young people are able to speak to the pressing issues of conflict, governance, justice and development that affect their countries, beyond areas traditionally considered youth-specific, such as education, employment, drug and alcohol use.

3. **Youth are the present as well as the future.** Youth are leaders now, not just for tomorrow, and their existing knowledge and capacity should be leveraged to deal with ongoing peace and security challenges.

4. **Youth need an enabling environment:** Young people require safe space for engagement and exploration, and to build their confidence, in order to develop common agendas and have their voices heard.” (LPI, 2017, p. 12).

**Recommendations:**

1. The international community, including the United Nations and member states, should consult with young women and men on all matters that concern them, including them in peace processes and policy discussions. The Life & Peace Institute’s Submission to the Progress Study on UNSCR 2250 includes a series of recommendations addressing YPS pillars of participation and prevention, including the following:
   - “Develop proactive, forward-looking youth policies that seek to seize upon and catalyze young people’s present, positive leadership for peace rather than seeking to contain them.”
   - “Provide funds specifically oriented towards allowing diverse youth to scale up innovative, effective and sustainable forms of engagement in building peace and security” (LPI, 2017, p. 20, 18).

(See LPI’s September 2017 report “Being and Becoming a Peacebuilder: Insights from 20,000 Hours of Youth-Led Dialogues in the Horn of Africa” for more recommendations.)

2. Stakeholders in communities with inter-group tension should consider using Sustained Dialogue methodology as a way to build bridges across divides, promote trust and improved relationships, and take action steps to address community issues and challenges.

**Implications:**

Inclusion of more stakeholders (whether people of different ages, genders, abilities, ethnicities, religions, socio-economic backgrounds, or urban/rural geographies) leads to more sustainable peace. The more that youth are fully included in building peace, the more likely that peace can be sustainable.

If adversarial relationships are improved through methods such as Sustained Dialogue, then adversarial groups may be more likely to implement shared projects which can transform hostility, antagonism, and violence into constructive/positive community peace.
“Individuals carry culture and stories that ultimately shape national behavior or institutional culture. [Sustained Dialogue] reaches beyond formal institutions to include ‘whole bodies politic’ – everyday community members as well as formal leaders” (Sustained Dialogue Institute). “Sustained Dialogue is based on the theory that relationship-building will lead to strategic, relevant, sensitive and informed actions and choices; and actions can only be collaboratively implemented by cohesive groups” (LPI, 2017, p. 9).

**Event Description:**

This lesson is primarily based on these sources:

- More information about the process of Sustained Dialogue can be found at the Sustained Dialogue Institute. This institute also offers free resources about the dialogue process.

**Additional Resources:**

- Life & Peace Institute: [life-peace.org](http://life-peace.org)
- Peace and Development Center (Ethiopia): [pdcethiopia.org](http://pdcethiopia.org)
- Youth4Peace Global Knowledge Portal: [https://www.youth4peace.info/ProgressStudy](https://www.youth4peace.info/ProgressStudy) (This portal is a partnership between the UN Development Programme (UNDP), UN Peacebuilding Support Office (PBSO), Search for Common Ground (SFCG), and United Network of Young Peacebuilders (UNOY).)
- UN Division for Social Policy and Development Youth: [Resources on YPS](http://resourcesonyps.org)
- “Guiding Principles on Young People’s Participation in Peacebuilding,” UN Inter-Agency Network on Youth Development.
- “Practice Note on Young People’s Participation in Peacebuilding.” UN Inter-Agency Network on Youth Development, (January 2016).

**Additional Comments:**

Youth, Peace and Security has implications in the United States as well, with the rising generation of millennials, of which I am apart. Unfortunately, millennials have often been negatively stereotyped by older generations without understanding or empathy for our circumstances. Many of us graduated during the economic recession and experienced unemployment and exclusion when job opportunities were lacking. Many also care deeply about societal issues and social justice. However, with economic limitations, it can be difficult to garner support to pursue those endeavors. Nonetheless, numerous millennials in the U.S. have mobilized on various issues such as racial and gender equality and public safety. The voices of these diverse young women and men need to be listened to and included in order to bridge the political tensions currently dividing the United States, to work towards sustainable peace in this country, too.

**Lesson Author:** Katrina Gehman, Lessons Learned Analyst (Ctr), PKSOI
I. Playback Theater as a Tool for Conflict Prevention & Transformation  
(Lesson #2636)

Observation.

Interactive, arts-based peacebuilding tools can contribute to conflict prevention through community-building – aiding people who may otherwise react and respond to adversity with violence in part due to an inability or lack of opportunity to process emotions in healthy ways.

Playback Theater is an effective tool for peacebuilding in communities by building bridges across divides, creating a space for healing from traumatic loss, and empowering at-risk youth to process emotions, as illustrated by the work of Inside Out Playback Theater in the United States.

1. Playback Theater can help people hear each other across divides instead of talking past each other on tough issues (such as racial, ethnic, and immigration issues), because this improvisational technique focuses on people’s stories, not people’s views or political positions on such issues.

2. Playback Theater creates a safe space for survivors of abuse to process trauma and loss and experience community acknowledgement of their stories, which is often necessary to break free from the cycle of violence.

3. Playback Theater cultivates a sense of belonging for at-risk youth while providing groups of youth a constructive way to process emotions. Beyond its application in the United States, this form of storytelling may contribute to conflict prevention and/or recovery from conflict worldwide when combined with complementary interventions.

Discussion.

Playback Theater is an interactive form of improvisational theater whereby a theater troupe acts out stories on the spot that are shared by people in the audience. Playback Theater was originally founded in the state of New York, U.S., in 1975 by Jo Salas and Jonathan Fox in order to provide more people an opportunity to tell their stories. Since then, it has expanded to six continents and at least 40 countries including Australia, Brazil, Germany, India, Israel, Japan, New Zealand, and Sweden. In the United States, Inside Out Playback Theater at Eastern Mennonite University in Virginia has partnered with myriad organizations since 2012 for community-building across racial lines, with survivors of trauma, and in times of student transition.

A Playback Theater troupe is composed of a Conductor (who facilitates the event), approximately 4-6 actors (who improvise people’s stories), and 1-2 musicians (who accompany the theater performance with improvised music). Each performance lasts approximately 90 minutes. The Conductor asks the audience questions throughout the event, and the audience responds. At first, the audience stays seated while the Conductor opens with short introductory questions. Emotions expressed by people in the audience are acted out promptly by the actors. Later in the performance, audience members are invited to sit on stage and share longer stories which are then improvised by chosen actors in longer patterns. A playback performance will typically cover a key theme (such as veterans' issues, immigration, etc.), eliciting people's varied experiences on the subject.

The following examples from Inside Out illustrate how Playback Theater has been used effectively in communities as a peacebuilding tool.
1. Playback Theater Builds Bridges Across Divides

One of the tenets of Playback Theater is that audience participants can only tell stories about their own experiences, not someone else’s. Questions asked by the Conductor will probe core feeling(s) that the audience members experienced or expressed during their stories. The point of the improvisation is not to factually portray every single act, but instead to convey the “emotional truth” of the story – what the person experienced in the recounted events. Others in the audience may resonate with these emotions. Audience participants are not stating their views/positions for or against something, but are instead explaining a scenario from their past that affected them in some way. As such, this does not automatically trigger other audience members’ defenses. Playback Theater’s storytelling format encourages audience members to listen with compassionate understanding instead of debate about whether the person is wrong or right, which honors the person’s dignity (See Essential Elements of Dignity (D. Hicks, 2011)).

Coming To The Table (CTTT) is a racial reconciliation organization in the United States founded by descendants of enslaved people and slaveholders, inspired by Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.’s vision that “the sons of former slaves and the sons of former slave owners will be able to sit down together at the table of brotherhood.” The focus of CTTT is transforming historical harms through acknowledging history and creating connections in the present. This continues to be important today in the United States, since the legacy of slavery still affects unequal distribution of resources, access to education, and overrepresentation in prisons, and since many descendants continue to live in a disconnected or segregated manner. In March 2015, Inside Out Playback Theater partnered with the Shenandoah Valley Chapter of Coming To The Table to perform an event titled “Got Privilege?” In this event about race in the United States, African-American and European-American participants shared stories about how they had experienced privilege or discrimination due to race, including more explicit segregation from decades past.

2. Playback Theater Creates a Safe Space for Processing Traumatic Loss

After a traumatic event, if the trauma energy (shock, hurt, negativity, etc.) is not resolved, it will turn in on oneself or out on others in cycles of acting in and acting out, potentially perpetuating issues such as depression, substance abuse, high-risk behavior, suicide attempts, domestic violence, child abuse, criminal activity, and even armed conflict. Key to breaking out of this cycle of trauma/violence is finding support, mourning and grieving losses, and reconnecting with community. Acknowledging for oneself and with other people what happened through telling one’s story is part of this process. (See Strategies for Trauma Awareness & Resilience (STAR) Snail Model.) It must be noted that there are complex and contextual considerations to keep in mind when re-telling stories in order to not entrench negative narratives or re-traumatize people who have experienced harm. Yet, there are many potential benefits to re-telling difficult stories, including an ability to shift perspective or gain more coherent understanding of previous events.

One organization that supports adult victims of childhood sexual abuse to find healing and freedom is GuideSpring in Milton, Pennsylvania. GuideSpring offers intensive, multi-week support groups for survivors to process and heal from unresolved trauma and loss. Inside Out has been invited to facilitate several closing events for these groups, wherein survivors and their families attend and share stories about their lives. Playback actors have been trained in trauma-sensitive techniques to portray traumatic elements of people’s stories in indirect ways in order to mitigate the potential for exacerbating harm. Thus far, there has been a tremendous favorable response from survivors and their families to this initiative. Although GuideSpring often works within faith communities, since Playback Theater creates a space for all voices to be heard, even those who are cynical about religion have also felt free to share their stories. Of note, at one event, a family member of a survivor shared a story for apparent shock value, but the troupe performed it in a way that led to a vision for healing and deeper sharing of additional challenging events.
3. Playback Theater Fosters a Sense of Belonging for Youth

Young people growing through adolescence experience many transitions which can be exacerbated by marginalization but improved by inclusion. Harrisonburg, VA, where Eastern Mennonite University is located, is a hub for refugee resettlement in the United States. Though Harrisonburg is a rural town of only 53,000 people, students at Harrisonburg City Public Schools were born in 53 countries and speak 57 different languages in addition to English, with 35% identified as ‘English Learners.’ In 2016 and 2017, Inside Out facilitated a day-long interactive Playback Theater workshop at Harrisonburg High School with some of these immigrant and refugee students in the English as a Second Language program.

At these events, Inside Out first hosted an hour-long Playback Theater performance with students. During the opening exercise, it became apparent that about 40 students had arrived in the U.S. within the past year, traveling from countries throughout Asia, Africa, the Middle East, and Latin America. When the Conductor invited these students to share their experiences of transitioning to a new country, at first they were shy. Like any high school students, they said that they were “sleepy” or “stressed by homework,” which the troupe improvised to laughter. As the audience became more confident, one student told his story of departing the Congo, expressing the pain he felt of leaving his professional soccer team in order to join his father in the U.S. to grow up with less violence. This student explained how scared he felt initially at high school, but that a coach encouraged him to join the American football team, which helped him make new friends and feel at home with a new sport. As he watched his story improvised, he exclaimed “yes!” in recognition. This story inspired another student to share his experience of leaving Iraq.

Following the performance of students’ stories, the Playback Theater troupe spent the rest of the day teaching students theater exercises and games in a participatory workshop, using spoken word, movement, and music to express emotions and stories. This workshop gave shy students the opportunity to express themselves with instruments and students of various languages the opportunity to improvise in Spanish, French, etc. These interactive activities provided an opportunity for youth to express and validate each other’s experiences of transition, loss of home, and gaining a new culture, as theater participants and not just audience members. Students acquired communications skills and tools for self-expression which empowered them to honor each other’s stories and to better handle their own transitions.

These three examples offer a glimpse into the many ways that Playback Theater can be used to build peace in communities. In addition to conflict prevention, there is much potential for Playback Theater to also be used in post-conflict reconciliation and truth-telling as explored in the resources listed below.

**Recommendation.**

1. Stakeholders involved in conflict prevention and transformation should consider funding arts-based peacebuilding initiatives and partnering with Playback Theater troupes for community-building events. Such stakeholders should consider how organizational, group, and personal identities affect power dynamics and relationships in communities. Only trained Playback Theater personnel should conduct such events. Playback Theater personnel should consider their own identities (race, age, gender, etc.) when designing events, because visible identity markers of actors may affect which stories audience members feel free to share (especially for events about racial issues or gender-based violence).

2. Societies that are experiencing significant divisions that could lead to violence should consider using Playback Theater events to build understanding and empathy for other people/groups and their experiences. This can lead to more understanding for why people have the positions/opinions that they do and remind people to respect each other’s humanity.
3. Stakeholders involved in work with people who are suffering from unresolved loss should consider using Playback Theater as a method for people to process and acknowledge loss in a supportive community setting. All members of Playback Theater troupes engaging in loss/trauma-related events should be trained in trauma-sensitive techniques to portray difficult events in a healing way without re-traumatizing anyone.

4. Stakeholders working with at-risk youth in conflict prevention or post-conflict settings should consider utilizing participatory Playback Theater methods. Additional context-specific interventions should be designed alongside arts-based interventions, such as psycho-social counseling, education coaching, or job skills training. Playback Theater can complement these interventions by offering a positive outlet for youth to process their transitions and challenges while supporting each other.

Implications.

If people in conflict-affected regions or divided societies are given an artistic means of expression, then they might identify, acknowledge, and peacefully address what they feel instead of expressing negative emotions in violent or destructive ways. If people in divided societies do not have an opportunity to hear people’s stories from across the divide (through playback or other arts-based interventions), people may continue to perpetuate false stereotypes. When listening to stories that build empathy and understanding, however, people can get past divisive positions and form a more respectful and unifying vision.

If Playback Theater is used as a trauma-sensitive mechanism in a safe space for people processing loss, then audience participants may experience community acknowledgement and as such be more equipped to break out of traumatic/violent cycles of acting in and acting out. Without safety and support and community acknowledgement, it is more difficult for people with past traumatic experiences to resolve their losses. If Playback Theater troupe members are not trained in trauma-awareness and specific indirect methods of portraying violent events, they then may unintentionally re-traumatize audience members. If youth are offered creative methods with which to express their experiences and challenges of transition, then arts-based community tools such as Playback Theater (alongside additional complementary interventions) may increase their sense of belonging, reducing the potential for violent conflict.

Event Description.

This lesson is based on experiences from members of Inside Out Playback Theater. Inside Out is a Playback Theater group founded at Eastern Mennonite University (EMU) in spring 2012. It is currently composed of a network of undergraduate students, graduate students, and alumni. Originally used to support re-entry for students returning to the university from studying abroad, Inside Out has expanded its work to include community-building around themes of sexual violence, incarceration, immigration, personal narrative, and racial reconciliation, at schools, arts festivals, workshops, and conferences, in partnership with a variety of organizations and non-profits. Inside Out has also recently been awarded Catalyst Initiative and JustPax grants to continue its work with issues of race and immigration.

Training courses and regional Playback Theater troupes can be found at the Centre for Playback Theatre and the International Playback Theatre Network (IPTN). For additional information about trauma-sensitivity in storytelling through Playback Theater, see: “Truth-Telling, Reconciliation, & the Arts” L. Bajare-Dukes, (Including Tips from Dr. Pamela Freeman), Prezi, (15 May 2017); Resource presented at the 6th meeting of the National Association for Community and Restorative Justice, Oakland, CA. Additional sources and resources can be found on the Lesson (#2636) on SOLLIMS.

Lesson Author: Katrina Gehman, Lessons Learned Analyst (Ctr), PKSOI
**J. Peacebuilding and Trauma Awareness Among Military Veterans and Ex-Combatants (Lesson #2631)**

**Observation.**

Better awareness of service-connected and pre-service trauma by military veterans and their leaders will lead to lower rates of suicide, suicidal ideation, depression, domestic violence, and substance abuse. Increased trauma awareness by service members and their leaders will lead to a culture in which these issues can be dealt with before they manifest in violence, leading to a greater culture of peace and stability within the armed forces, decreasing or ending cycles of violence and acting out during and following military service. This applies not only to military veterans in the United States but also to ex-combatants around the world.

**Discussion.**

Since finishing my enlistment in the United States Navy in 2013, I have worked to engage the issues of trauma among members of the armed services in the U.S., their families and support communities in diverse settings such as university admissions, governmental hiring processes, community engagement, bridging the civilian military divide, and clinical mental health counseling; and I continue to do so today as a certified mental health worker. The commonality throughout all these settings is the idea that having a basic awareness of the idea of psychical trauma can act as a measure against continually proliferating cycles of violence on ourselves and others, which can follow us home as we return from conflict. I will highlight a few of the cases I have worked on, as well as statistics around these issues in an attempt to demonstrate why greater trauma awareness among service members and their leaders will decrease or end cycles of violence and trauma in the military community.

We can define trauma as an event that occurred in the past that was so dangerous or upsetting that it continues to affect the mind and body of a person today, in a way that causes serious distress and acting out. Perhaps one of the most prevalent statistics around veterans’ trauma is that of suicide. Somewhere between 20 and perhaps 22 veterans commit suicide every day in the U.S., and suicide among active duty military remains high year to year, and is a cause of concern for many commands. "The overall suicide rate for active-duty personnel in the Army hovered at 22 per 100,000 during 2009-11," and among veterans was 46 per 100,000 in 2009 and nearly 80 per 100,000 in 2011 - the last year the most recent data was available (Zoroya, 2014).

This trend is extraordinarily disturbing when viewed at the macro level of this data and is not diminished at the individual, clinical level. Given that this is a crisis of what we call in the United States "mental health," I feel it is important to view these issues through clinical vignettes, in addition to the important data gathered by the Veterans Administration and the U.S. Department of Defense.

From Julia Minaudo, an expert on trauma among groups: "Faced with this, I wonder, what is past? There are two ways to think about it: one—strictly consensual – which sustains that it is about a consensual measure of time in culture, and another is the approach of psychoanalysis. To account for this position let us look at some examples: the soldiers, that much time after experiencing the cruelty of war, continue to hear in any shout of joy the pain of their fellow countrymen; or those who insistently continue to repeat the noise of bombs in their dreams. It is the experience of a story that repeats: 'once upon a time...' and another...and another...This is an experience – rather than of the past – of the continuous present which affects us here and now" (Minaudo, 2015).
Violence against self is another, lesser understood part of the cycle of violence; in this case, suicide. Intimate partner violence is perhaps equally misunderstood, though just as common – 1 in 4 women in the U.S. have reported experiencing intimate partner violence, as have 1 in 10 men. Intimate partner violence, or IPV, can have wide ranging effects for both active duty service members and veterans. “For both military veterans and active duty servicemen, IPV results in significant victim injury and negative child outcomes, and problematic substance use, depression...posttraumatic stress disorder also is an important correlate that largely accounts for the relationship between combat exposure and IPV perpetration” (Marshall AD).

However, in a case I have personally observed, combat exposure did not play a role in a particularly violent case of IPV. In my role as a peacebuilder, I was called in to consult in the aftermath of the case of a former Marine named Bradley Stone. As a Veterans Issues Consultant, I was asked by Restorative Encounters, a Philadelphia-based non-profit, to bring my expertise to working with the community Bradley Stone was a part of. Stone did not have combat experience, but had completed a deployment to Iraq with an artillery unit. Following his return, he began displaying symptoms of drug and alcohol abuse, as well as post-traumatic stress. Stone was rated as 100% disabled by the Department of Veterans Affairs for PTSD and was also taking medication. He identified so much with his diagnosis, with his past traumatic event, that he listed his occupation as “disabled veteran.” Soon after leaving the Marines, Stone began a radical cycle of violence within his home that culminated in the death his ex-wife and five of her family members, before Stone committed suicide with a cocktail of chemicals provided to him by the VA to treat psychosis. Stone was “cleared” of any homicidal and suicidal tendencies by a VA psychiatrist the week before (Klimas, 2014).

The case of Bradley Stone is a sad one, but not an uncommon story. He served honorably and received praise from his superiors. He was treated by the VA in a manner that does not speak to outright negligence and was even involved in a diversionary court for veterans after being convicted of drunk driving as a civilian. What else could have been done to prevent not only this senseless tragedy, but the many other kinds of (post) traumatic experiences that afflict veterans today? Trauma affects military veterans elsewhere, as well – not just in the U.S. This has also been an issue in demobilization, disarmament and reintegration (DRR) processes where ex-combatants might have dealt with trauma, such as Rwanda, Burundi, Cambodia, and many other countries that have dealt with the reintegration of ex-combatants. There are many such examples, with one common thread: Each reintegration process is at least somewhat culturally unique.

Veterans in the United States are considered an underserved population – despite the plethora of evidence of the need to work with veterans’ trauma. Studies have shown that many clinicians have difficulty working with veterans regardless of their kind of licensure, or their theoretical orientation in therapy. This is demonstrated in perhaps one of the best and most current pieces of literature on the subject: a 2014 RAND Corporation study, “Ready to Serve: Community-Based Provider Capacity to Deliver Culturally Competent, Quality Mental Health Care to Veterans and Their Families.” The study finds that, among civilian mental health providers (defined as those not in the armed services or practicing in a VA setting) that veterans seek treatment with, those clinicians who are multiculturally competent with veterans' issues tend to be much better at treating service-related mental health issues. The study also showed that only a minority of civilian clinicians met cultural competency, however, and has suggested that there is a gap that needs to be overcome at a cultural level.

Recommendation.

What is needed then, is greater awareness of veterans' trauma by those who would seek to help them and a greater trauma awareness of this context. No clinical work can be undertaken in a vacuum, however. The
idea of a new socio-political discourse around veterans’ mental health remains an important one and has been explored by newer practitioners who are culturally competent in the traumatic neurosis suffered by veterans.

If military leaders can find a way to open up channels for more frank conversations among service members about trauma awareness, then there may be a way to reduce traumatic stress within the service. Though there are many concerned and hardworking psychiatrists, psychologists, and chaplains in the U.S. military, there is still a stigma around having these conversations. If leaders can find a way to destigmatize some of these conversations, then the culture around the idea that traumatic stress in the military is something that cannot be talked about may change. This may serve, at least in the case of the reintegration of American veterans, to provide the U.S. a culturally appropriate way to bridge that gap.

If civilian practitioners of mental health can become more culturally competent in veterans' issues, by participating in these conversations, then we will also see a reduction of the cycle of violence as well. This is a two tiered-approach; one in which stakeholders that can directly influence current and former service members must be prepared to have these tough and uncomfortable conversations in order to reduce, or perhaps even halt, the cycle of violence at individual levels and save the lives of the men and women who have served and those families who have supported them.

Implications.

If a greater cultural change toward better awareness of veterans' trauma is not made by the many interconnected cultural systems that serve U.S. military veterans and/or other ex-combatants (be they superiors, civilian and military clinicians, and others), then we will not be able to bridge the civilian military divide to successfully provide better treatment of veterans' trauma, which will greatly reduce the cycle of violence in the veterans' community, and ease the difficulty of returning home after war. The proposals that it would take to reduce the level of violence within armed conflict are beyond my scope. What is within my means, however, is to advocate for solutions at the personal level within the clinical and social arenas to create a more open conversation about being aware of one's own trauma if one is a veteran or member of the military.

Event Description.

This event is based on my own work as a peacebuilder and mental health counselor; the Bradley Stone case is just one of many I have worked on in the clinic and in the wider community of veterans in the U.S. All of the research into veterans' trauma I have done is based on the last four years of studying the issue at a variety of levels.

- “Ready to Serve: Community-Based Provider Capacity to Deliver Culturally Competent, Quality Mental Health Care to Veterans and Their Families,” Various Authors, RAND Corporation, (2014).

Lesson Author: Michael McAndrew, MA, Clinical College of Colorado
3. **CONCLUSION**

As evident from the lessons in this SOLLIMS Sampler, **Peacebuilding** can address multiple aspects of conflict situations including specific **issues** causing conflict, **relationships** between stakeholders involved in the conflict, and the **processes** and **tools** used to resolve and transform these conflicts.

✓ **Resolving Issues**

Whether before, during, or following armed conflict, and even in times of relative national stability, interests and needs of diverse stakeholders may collide around a wide variety of issues such as governance, security, economic concerns, basic service provision, development, and natural resources. An important step in resolving issues is first correctly identifying them. Using a peacebuilding approach, this can best be accomplished by **involving local stakeholders in participatory analysis**. Once issues are identified, they can be addressed with a wide range of multi-sectoral initiatives from the grassroots to national and international levels.

- Across four provinces in **Afghanistan**, local people identified different security concerns than the national security threats assumed by international organizations. By including these local perspectives in a baseline survey from Oxfam, it became clear that poverty, unemployment, early marriage, and land disputes were more pressing local concerns than terrorism. Focusing on the wrong security concerns could have inadvertently increased local people’s insecurity.

- In **Zimbabwe**, women in the national police force identified patriarchy as the main problem preventing gender justice for cases of Sexual and Gender Based Violence (SGBV), especially since policemen steeped in the patriarchal culture did not take these cases seriously. The policewomen also identified poverty of security providers (due to high rates of inflation) as an obstacle to an effective police response to the SGBV issue. As such, they designed tangible poverty reduction and income generation initiatives for policewomen so that they would be postured with sufficient resources to conduct and sustain operations.

- Across the **Horn of Africa**, diverse young women and men identified community problems and joint ways to address these issues, determining their own priorities based on what they knew of the local context, not based on externally imposed agendas. One youth-led organization identified corruption and lack of respect for rule of law as the problem and thence provided education about constitutional ethics for youth in Kenya.

- In **Liberia**, the government did not initially consult local communities when drawing nature reserve boundaries in the highly populated Nimba County, even though locals used the forest for cultural traditions and livelihoods. Conservation efforts were not sustainable until local communities had been consulted and their concerns were identified and addressed.

✓ **Transforming Relationships**

In some conflicts, the main problem may not be an ‘issue’ as listed above, but may instead be the way in which groups of people relate to each other. As such, building sustainable peace may require transforming relationships on multiple levels, including with one’s self (personal/individual level), with others (community level), and across multi-level sectors.

- **Relationship with One’s Self.** Self-reflection in peacebuilding is important in order to identify how you personally affect and are affected by conflict systems. Becoming aware of how past grievances and trauma have affected you can contribute to halting the cycle of violence, such as for military veterans in the United States and ex-combatants worldwide. Processing and expressing emotions are part of relating to one’s self in healthy ways; such affects can be expressed positively through arts-based outlets such as Playback Theater.
- **Relationships with Others.** In order to transform relationships with other people and within communities, it is necessary to treat people with dignity, respect, and justice. Reconciliation was possible in Sierra Leone when perpetrators and victims of the civil war talked together about the past through the locally-owned Fambul Tok transitional justice program. Across the Horn of Africa, Sustained Dialogue processes led by youth built trust across inter-ethnic lines, and Playback Theater in the United States helped people to compassionately listen to each other across various racial and cultural community divides.

- **Relationships across Sectors.** Peacebuilding must be integrated from the grassroots to the international level across various sectors including humanitarian assistance and development. In Sierra Leone, while official processes for transitional justice met a need at national/international levels, an additional intervention was necessary through the Fambul Tok initiative to meet the needs of local people for justice and relationship-mending. In The Gambia, the initial gains made through conflict prevention had to be consolidated through institution-building measures, public service provision, and sustainable development.

✓ **Providing Processes and Tools to Address Conflict Without Violence**

Peace is not possible unless it can first be imagined. If people are unable to imagine the possibility of resolving a conflict in a nonviolent way or lack the specific tools to do so, then violence will continue to be used to address grievances, disagreements, and injustices. As such, this Sampler showcases several concrete examples of effective tools which provide nonviolent alternatives to address, resolve, and transform conflict. There are many such practical tools, including:

- **Preventive Diplomacy & Mediation.** United efforts of regional/international organizations and political leaders to mediate with a former dictator can prevent armed conflict and avert the escalation of a constitutional crisis, as in The Gambia.

- **Interest-Based Negotiation.** Strengthened local capacities to manage conflict can reduce violence even during a volatile situation. In the Central African Republic, hundreds of combatants voluntarily disarmed and myriad disputes were solved peacefully because local leaders created legitimate alternatives to violence.

- **Sustained Dialogue.** Dialogue-to-action processes allow diverse stakeholders to identify issues in their communities and develop initiatives to address them, as accomplished by youth across the Horn of Africa.

- **Community Agreements.** Inclusive consultation with communities can transform conflicts over natural resources, as evident in Liberia where local communities agreed to preserve nature in exchange for certain public services/investments. Such consultations must be inclusive of various ethnicities, genders, ages, etc.

- **Playback Theater.** Interactive, arts-based processes can bridge divides, help people process loss, and foster a sense of belonging in community, as apparent through Inside Out’s engagement in the United States.

- **Trauma Awareness Education.** When mental health practitioners and other leaders foster conversations to help people become aware of trauma, this may stop cycles of violence; lack of awareness can be dire for communities, as evident by high rates of veteran suicide and intimate partner violence in the United States.

- **Restorative Justice.** When victims have a chance to tell their stories and perpetrators acknowledge the impact of their actions, there is a possibility for healing, as evident through Fambul Tok in Sierra Leone.

The goal of peacebuilding is not to eradicate conflict but rather to create thriving communities by finding ways to resolve issues, transform relationships, and provide processes and tools to address conflict without violence. Whether applied to one stage of conflict or across the conflict continuum, peacebuilding efforts cannot succeed without the ownership of local stakeholders.

**Peace is possible – and achievable.**
Annex A. Peacebuilding-Related RESOURCES & REFERENCES

[Ensure you are logged in to SOLLIMS to access some of these items.]

U.S. Government Resources

- United States Institute of Peace (USIP)
- U.S. Department of State (DOS) – Bureau of Conflict and Stabilization Operations (CSO)
- U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) – Bureau for Democracy, Conflict, and Humanitarian Assistance, Office of Conflict Management and Mitigation (CMM)
- Interagency Conflict Assessment Framework (ICAF); USAID Conflict Assessment Framework v2.0
- Guiding Principles for Stabilization and Reconstruction – USIP & PKSOI
- Theories of Change and Indicator Development in Conflict Management and Mitigation – USAID

U.S. Military Doctrine

- Army Techniques Publication: Protection of Civilians (ATP 3-07.6)
- Joint Publications: Stability (JP 3-07); Peace Operations (JP 3-07.3)

United Nations Resources

- United Nations (UN) Peacebuilding Architecture:
  - UN Peacebuilding Support Office (PBSO)
  - UN Peacebuilding Commission (PBC)
  - UN Peacebuilding Fund (PBF)
- UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDG); SDG #16 “Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions”
- An Agenda for Peace (1992)
- Challenge of Sustaining Peace (2015)
- “Conflict Prevention and Sustaining Peace”
- UN Secretary-General Guterres Remarks – Review of the Peacebuilding Architecture: (A/RES/70/262; S/RES/2282 (2016))
- Peacebuilding and Sustaining Peace (2018)

Non-Governmental Peacebuilding Organizations:

- Alliance for Peacebuilding
- Conciliation Resources
- InterAction
- International Peace Institute (IPI)
- Mercy Corps
- Mindanao Peacebuilding Institute (MPI)
- Peace & Collaborative Development Network (PCDN)
- Peace Direct; Peace Insight
- Saferworld
- Search for Common Ground (SFCG)

Academic Institutions:

- Center for Justice & Peacebuilding (CJP), Eastern Mennonite University (EMU)
  - Summer Peacebuilding Institute (SPI); Zehr Institute for Restorative Justice
  - Strategies for Trauma Awareness & Resilience (STAR) [Toolkit/Snail Model]
- Kroc Institute for International Peace Studies, University of Notre Dame (ND)
- School for Conflict Analysis and Resolution (S-CAR), George Mason University (GMU)
- United Nations University (UNU)

Peacebuilding Evaluation Resources:

- Design, Monitoring & Evaluation for Peace (DME for Peace)
- Online Field Guide to Peacebuilding Evaluation – Peacebuilding Evaluation Consortium

SOLLIMS Resources: Visit the 12 Portals of SOLLIMS for additional information on UN Peacebuilding; Environmental Peacebuilding; Conflict Prevention; and more – including a detailed References List!
Additional Peacebuilding Perspectives

Adaptive Learning in Conflict Systems


Building Peace & Human Security


Conflict Analysis Theory


Intervention & Integration


Justice & Trauma Healing

Annex B. Previously Published SOLLIMS Samplers
(Available in SOLLIMS Library)

2018
Monitoring & Evaluation for Peace and Stability

2017
Operationalizing Women, Peace, and Security
Leadership in Crisis and Complex Operations
Civil Affairs in Stability Operations

2016
Refugees & Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs)
Strategic Communication/Messaging in Peace & Stability Operations
Stabilization and Transition
Investing in Training for, and during, Peace and Stability Operations
Building Stable Governance
Shifts in United Nations Peacekeeping

2015
Foreign Humanitarian Assistance: Concepts, Principles and Applications
Foreign Humanitarian Assistance [Foreign Disaster Relief]
Cross-Cutting Guidelines for Stability Operations
Lessons on Stability Operations from USAWC Students
Security Sector Reform

2014
Reconstruction and Development
Women, Peace and Security
Lessons on Stability Operations from USAWC Students
Overcoming “Challenges & Spoilers” with “Unity & Resolve”
Improving Host Nation Security through Police Forces

2013
Key Enablers for Peacekeeping & Stability Operations
Lessons on Stability Operations from USAWC Students
Multinational Operations
Leadership in Stability Operations: Understanding/Engaging the People
Protection of Civilians

2012
Medical Assistance/Health Services
Reconciliation
Civ-Mil Cooperation
Building Capacity

2011
Ministerial Advising
Fighting Corruption
Economic Stabilization

2010
Transition to Local Governance
Rule of Law and Legitimacy
Protection of Civilians in Peacekeeping
SOLLIMS Sampler
https://sollims.pksoi.org

Contact Information:
Peacekeeping & Stability Operations Institute (PKSOI)
ATTN: Lessons Learned
22 Ashburn Drive
Carlisle, PA 17013
usarmy.carlisle.awc.mbx.sollims@mail.mil