

# **A Measure of Peace: Peace And Conflict Impact Assessment (PCIA) Of Development Projects In Conflict Zones**

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&  
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## FOREWORD

Formally established as a separate entity in late 1996, IDRC's Peacebuilding and Reconstruction Program Initiative (PBR PI) supports research, policy development and capacity building as tools to assist countries emerging from violent conflicts to make the difficult transition to peace, reconciliation, social equity and sustainable development. Among IDRC's programs, the PBR PI is distinctive in two key respects: first, because it focuses specifically on the developmental challenges of post-conflict societies, and second, because its programming approach is designed to contribute actively to the process of peacebuilding and reconstruction. The program initiative supports a wide range of research projects at the national, regional and global levels.

The unique and fluid nature of the research and development problematique in post-conflict societies requires a programming approach which is highly responsive and reflexive to changing contexts. With the end of the Cold War, local wars and intra-state armed conflicts have come to centre-stage in international affairs, and the international community can no longer approach the twin issues of peace and development in a fragmented fashion. New conceptual and methodological tools are urgently required to understand and respond to the precarious and fragile political, economic, and social environments found in conflict-torn countries. Policy and practice must be informed by lessons drawn from the field as well as new analytical approaches.

The PBR PI's Working Paper series is intended to stimulate creative and critical thinking about practice and research undertaken in the field of peacebuilding and reconstruction by diverse actors involved in post-conflict settings. The papers that appear in the series should be viewed as dynamic works in progress, designed to provoke discussion and dialogue.

*A Measure of Peace: Peace and Conflict Impact Assessment of Development Projects in Conflict Zones* is an excellent piece to launch the Working Paper series in that it examines the critical linkages between peace/conflict and development. Peacebuilding, the paper argues, should not be regarded as a specific *activity* but as an *impact*. There is, therefore, a tremendous need to avoid "ghettoizing" peacebuilding as a type of project separate from "conventional" development. Rather, all development activities (especially those in environments of potential conflict) should be assessed in terms of their peace and conflict impact. While Kenneth Bush identifies a number of important questions which may lead to a formal "tool" for peace and conflict impact assessment (PCIA), he exemplifies the spirit of this Working Paper series by acknowledging that developing such a tool "will have to be the product of the interaction and synergies of the full spectrum of the peacebuilding community."

*The Peacebuilding and Reconstruction  
Program Initiative Team  
March, 1998*

## PREFACE

Ten years ago, James Rule observed that “we know a lot of things to be true about civil violence, but we do not know when they will be true.”<sup>1</sup> We are faced with a similar condition of uncertainty when we turn our attention to the positive and negative impacts of development work in violence prone settings. Even an extensive list of positive peacebuilding impacts is not especially useful - unless accompanied by an equally extensive list of negative peacebuilding impacts *and most importantly* the conditions under which these “truths” held true.<sup>2</sup> Once we have such information we are in a better position to determine whether our efforts and interventions in a particular case can be generalized or applicable to other cases. Maybe they are. Maybe they are not. For example, what lessons should we cull from experiences in South Africa? Or Mozambique? Or Guatemala? Or Sri Lanka? To what extent is the present the result of unique conditions or idiosyncratic events, rather than structures and processes that are evident or replicable elsewhere? Until we have the analytical and programming tools to answer these kinds of questions systematically, we are left to list, assert, or guess at the positive or negative impact of our actions.

This Working Paper is intended to be a contribution to the development of a more systematic and self-conscious means of assessing approaches to development work in violence prone regions. It is a work in progress - with all the consequent advantages and disadvantages of this format. Having been written by a “recovering academic,” its strength and its weakness is an emphasis on the *analytical* dimensions of the assessment process. While it draws on interviews and experiences in the field, it is hoped that its circulation more broadly among the community of practitioners and policy makers will elicit (or provoke) inputs and insights from the immediate realities and requirements of their work environments. The next iteration of this study will integrate these various contributions, and be cast in a more user-friendly handbook for use by development workers.

To fashion a Peace and Conflict Impact Assessment (PCIA) framework, it is essential that we have a sense of what might be called the basic grammar of peace and conflict impact. In an effort to streamline this paper, the discussion of the “basics of peacebuilding” has been consigned to the Appendix. Readers with an interest in reviewing some of the central reference points in the evolving debate on peacebuilding may find it useful to begin their reading of the paper at the appendix.

This study *does not* seek to develop *the* definitive evaluation tool for assessing or anticipating the impact of development projects on the peace and conflict environment within which they are set. The uniqueness of each project and the fluidity of their environments conspire to frustrate attempts to impose a rigidly uniform framework. Rather, this study develops an approach to guide our *interpretation* and assessment of the impact of the widest range of development projects in a more systematic manner than is currently the case. At this early stage in our efforts to develop a clearer understanding of the nexus between development, underdevelopment, violent conflict, and peace, this study is a call for more self-consciousness in the formulation, implementation and evaluation of our development initiatives in regions characterized by potential, latent, or manifest violence. PCIA is meant to empower individuals and institutions both to understand better their work, and, more importantly, to induce the changes necessary to amplify the positive impacts and to minimize negative impacts on the peace and conflict environment.

## INTRODUCTION

Researchers and development workers are well aware of the limitations imposed on their work by the ebb and flow of violence in conflict-prone regions. However, we are only slowly turning our attention towards the systematic consideration and measurement of the impact of our development work on the dynamics of peace and conflict. Not only has it become clear that development does not necessarily "equal peace," but often "development" may generate or exacerbate violent conflict (e.g., by challenging traditional values or authority structures, by raising the stakes of economic competition, by creating "winners" and "losers," and so on). Conversely, development projects may have positive peacebuilding impacts which are unintended, and thus undocumented and unable to inform future development work.<sup>3</sup>

To the extent that assessments of peace and conflict impact are undertaken, they tend to generate what are euphemistically called "lessons learned."<sup>4</sup> However, sometimes the "wrong" lessons are culled from these experiences, and often it is more accurate to speak of "lessons spurned" rather than lessons learned.<sup>5</sup> One thing is clear: to the extent that learning occurs and is reflected in our thinking and programming, the costs are borne disproportionately by those in the South rather than the North. Furthermore, it is increasingly evident that there is a pressing need to move beyond *ad hoc* approaches to the assessment of the peace and conflict impact of development work in violence-prone regions. There is a need to develop more systematic mechanisms to both anticipate and assess such impact.

This study seeks to develop an argument and framework for the systematic consideration of the positive and negative impacts of development projects in conflict-prone regions. Its approach is premised on the belief that the incorporation of peace and conflict issues into the formulation, implementation and evaluation of development projects is best undertaken through a process analogous to that used to introduce gender and the environment into mainstream development thinking and practice. Until we developed the analytical and evaluation tools to assess the impact of our development work on gender relations and the environment, our understandings of linkages and impact were only impressionistic - and thus non-cumulative. Hence, our understandings of these particular dimensions of development work did not cohere in a body of policy-relevant knowledge because of the difficulties of comparing and refining understandings across cases in different sectors and geographical regions.

*It is quite possible that a project may fail according to limited developmental criteria but succeed according to broader peacebuilding criteria ... It is [also] possible that a project may succeed according to pre-determined developmental criteria but fail in terms of a beneficial impact on peace.*

The integration of peace and conflict concerns into our development thinking calls for the construction of the conceptual and evaluation tools that may be applied to the full range of development activities in conflict-prone regions, from traditional development projects in agriculture, communications, and health, to more overtly political projects in "good governance," democratic development, and human rights. Because the means required to *anticipate* the impact of a project or programme, are different from those suitable for *assessing* impact, we must consider both pre-project and post-project dimensions of potential and past impact.

## PART I: THE LOGIC OF PCIA

### What is a PCIA?

Peace and Conflict Impact Assessment is a means of evaluating (*ex post facto*) and anticipating (*ex ante*, as far as possible) the impacts of proposed and completed development projects on: 1) those structures and processes which strengthen the prospects for peaceful coexistence and decrease the likelihood of the outbreak, reoccurrence, or continuation, of violent conflict, and; 2) those structures and processes that increase the likelihood that conflict will be dealt with through violent means. Where necessary, *ex ante* assessments of projects should consider alternative project designs (including the "no-action" alternative), as well as mitigation measures or "peace and conflict safeguards" that could be incorporated into a project's design to offset potentially adverse impacts. The assessment would be most useful when initiated at the earliest stage of project design to ensure from the outset that aid projects are sound and sustainable.<sup>6</sup>

The peace and conflict impact assessment of development projects differs from "evaluation" in the conventional sense because its scope extends far beyond the *stated* outputs, outcomes, goals and objectives of conventional development projects or programmes. Rather, it attempts to discern a project's impact on the peace and conflict environment - an area it may not have been designed explicitly to affect. Thus, it is quite possible that a project may fail according to limited developmental criteria (*e.g.*, irrigation targets, health care delivery, literacy levels) but succeed according to broader peacebuilding criteria. For example, an education project may fail to produce students able to pass state-wide exams, but may succeed in reducing tensions between particular social groups by creating and institutionalizing a non-threatening and constructive environment that increases neutral contact and decreases misunderstanding by dispelling stereotypes and misconceptions.<sup>7</sup> Unless there is a sensitivity to the peacebuilding and social reconstruction achievements of this hypothetical project, then it would be cast as a failure. The converse also holds true. It is possible that a project may succeed according to pre-determined developmental criteria but fail in terms of a beneficial impact on peace. To continue with the hypothetical example above: an education project may indeed succeed in increasing the number of students passing the state-wide examinations, however, if the bulk of those students are members of one particular social group, then the project may exacerbate inter-group tensions by underscoring the perception that one group is being privileged at the expense of another. Until we develop and apply the appropriate means to recognize such impact, our ability to understand (let alone reinforce) the positive linkages between development initiatives and peacebuilding will be hampered.

At the most elemental level, both the *ex ante* peace and conflict impact assessment and the *ex post facto* peace and conflict impact evaluation, may be distilled down to a single - but far from simple - question:

***Will/did the project foster or support sustainable structures and processes which strengthen the prospects for peaceful coexistence and decrease to likelihood of the outbreak, reoccurrence, or continuation of violent conflict?***

To respond to this question, we must have an idea about where to look for possible impact; we must have a sense of the structures and processes that sustain peacebuilding or peace destroying systems. As noted above, this requires us to look beyond the stated parameter of most projects. This study identifies five broad dimensions or categories of possible impact.

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Areas of Potential Impact</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Institutional Capacity Military and Human Security Political Structures and Processes Economic Structures and Processes Social Reconstruction and Empowerment</p>
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While there may be others, these five are judged to be the most immediate and important pieces of the peacebuilding puzzle. Projects may have a variety of impacts within and across categories. The final section of this paper will present a more detailed discussion of these areas of impact.

### Why do we need a PCIA?

This study is premised on a central, underpinning assumption: *any* development project set in a conflict-prone region will *inevitably* have an impact on the peace and conflict environment - positive or negative, direct or indirect, intentional or unintentional. The operational implication of this is that *not all development projects require peace and conflict impact assessments, only those in areas "at risk."* In very practical terms, any development worker<sup>8</sup> active in these areas already conducts his or her own peace and conflict impact assessment intuitively. However, there is a need to formalize and systematize this process in order to be able to compare risk and impact across projects. The costs of not doing so are extremely high in financial, institutional, programming, and most importantly, human, terms.<sup>9</sup> The benefit is that it will enable us to "do" our development work more effectively and sustainably. It should help us to avoid undertaking development projects which undercut the peacebuilding process. For example, the consideration of the peace and conflict dimensions of a proposed project or programme helps us to consider whether it might contribute directly or indirectly to the violation of internationally accepted conventions governing human and civil rights.<sup>10</sup>

*Not all development projects require peace and conflict impact assessment, only those in areas of risk. The central criterion for determining whether to undertake a PCIA is the location of a project, rather than the type of project.*

The need to fashion and employ some form of PCIA is sharpened by the fact that: 1) we are seeing increased opportunities to contribute to the developmental dimensions of peacebuilding as a number of long-standing militarized conflicts appear to be winding down (e.g., Mozambique, Eritrea, South Africa, Guatemala, and Palestine) and; 2) development actors are choosing to stay and work under conditions of militarized conflict that previously would have forced them to close down operations. The continued presence of development actors under such conditions is important in its own right. However, their continued presence also helps to build operational and institutional linkages between humanitarian work driven by the imperative of responsiveness, and development work which places a priority on national and local capacity-building.

### For whom is the PCIA intended?

Ideally, a PCIA would be used by all development actors involved in decision making in conflict-prone regions - although different types of actors might rely on it in different ways. International donors might rely on it to guide project selection, funding decisions, and monitoring, whereas implementing or operational agencies might well use it to design projects and to guide operational decisions. The PCIA may also be used by communities themselves within violence prone regions as a means of assessing the utility, relevance and efficacy of outside-sponsored development initiatives. Thus, it may serve to enable them to engage more effectively with formal development actors in the peacebuilding process by providing a common framework for dialogue and cooperation.

There is a clear danger that communities may be excluded from international development initiatives in post-conflict settings (particularly large scale initiatives). This is certainly the

assessment of a group of community-based organizations in the San Marcos region of Guatemala on the border with Chiapas which published a statement in the national press expressing concern that current initiatives are exacerbating existing "socio-economic contradictions" - some of which originate in the era of militarized violence of Guatemala, and some of which predate it.<sup>11</sup> The PCIA might be employed by such groups as one means to articulate interests and to express dissent when confronted with efforts to impose inappropriate development projects.

### **When and where should it be applied?**

We need to be clear about when and where it would be appropriate to undertake a PCIA. It would be burdensome, unnecessary, and perhaps counter-productive, to expect PCIA's for all projects. If we understand peacebuilding to be an impact rather than a type of project,<sup>12</sup> then the central criterion for determining whether to consider undertaking a PCIA is the *location* of a project, rather than the *type* of project. If a project will be located in environments characterized by the following conditions, then we ought to consider whether or not a full Peace and Conflict Impact Assessment may be necessary. Ultimately, the decision boils down to the judgement of the development workers involved, based on their understanding of past and evolving conditions within which a project is situated.

### ***Settings characterized by latent or manifest violent conflict (particularly in the so-called "post-conflict" or "transition" settings)***

The phrase "settings characterized by latent or manifest violent conflict" covers a staggeringly large range of cases. At first glance, it appears easier to identify those environments "characterized by manifest violent conflict" than those characterized by "latent violence." A list of cases of manifest violence would include both those that appear regularly in the pages of our newspapers (Algeria, Bosnia, the Great Lakes Region), as well as those that are less evident in the media (Sudan, Northern Sri Lanka, Northern Uganda, Eastern Turkey). A list of examples of latent violence might include Northern Ireland, South Africa, Mozambique, and Kenya. Typically, these are areas which are at risk of sliding back into the protracted militarized violence of the recent past. While violence may not be as pervasive or systematic as it once was in these cases, the structures which nurtured such violence in the past remain present and liable to explode suddenly.

Even this short list of countries above suggests a number of essential points about the nature of violent conflict: 1) the considerable variation *between* cases, (for example, differences in the levels, patterns, dispersion, intensity, and dynamics of violence, as well as variations in group impact); and 2) the ebb and flow of violent conflict over time *within* cases, so that conflicts in the "latent" category today, may well shift to the "manifest" category tomorrow (e.g., Cambodia). Equally important, though perhaps less apparent if we rely too heavily on media reports, is the variation in peace and conflict conditions that exists *within* each of these cases at any given point in time. In Uganda and Sri Lanka for example, we see a rigidly compartmentalized form of militarized conflict, where large military operations and intensive fighting are spatially concentrated in the northern regions of each country. In such cases, the line or interface between the war zone and non-war zone is sharp (the Nile River in Uganda, and until recently, Vavunya in Sri Lanka).<sup>13</sup> In other cases, conditions within conflict zones may vary depending on time of day, day of week, or

*It is the variations of violence within cases (across time, and across space) that opens up the possibilities for development projects to have constructive peacebuilding impacts.*



the season.<sup>14</sup> It is the variations of violence within cases (across time, and across space) that opens up the possibilities for development projects to have constructive peacebuilding impacts. In other words, even in the most extreme cases, violence is neither undifferentiated nor impenetrable.

### ***Territory which is contested or politically and legally ambiguous***

Like the condition above, the phrase "territory which is contested or politically and legally ambiguous" requires elaboration. In violent conflicts, geography is unavoidably politicized. The fact that the individual and community experience of violence is rooted in place - *where* one is from, *where* one is living, *where* one was taken to, *where* an event took place. Collective experiences of violence serve to inscribe or burn political significance and meaning onto and into the physical landscape. In some cases the political sensitivities (or political

*Collective experiences of violence serve to inscribe or burn political significance and meaning onto and into the physical landscape.*

"valence") of a particular location may not be immediately obvious to the outside observer, for example the site of a particular atrocity or a neighbourhood known for its resistance to, or allegiance to, particular political-military forces. Such political demarcations create areas which become sites for social, political, and economic contestation. *Social contestation* would include ethnic cleansing in the former Yugoslavia, eastern Sri Lanka, and elsewhere. *Political contestation* would include the deadly confrontations for control over neighbourhoods between African National Congress (ANC) supporters and those of Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP) which dominated many of the townships surrounding Durban, South Africa, in the late 1980s. *Economic contestation* would include the competition between military and paramilitary groups to benefit economically from their control of a particular region, e.g., the battles for control over natural resources and drug trafficking in the border areas of Thailand and Cambodia, and the "taxing" of inhabitants by paramilitaries around the world from Belfast to Jaffna.

Additionally, territory may be contested legally, for example over the question of the ownership of, or access to, land and the resources associated with that land. This includes the whole question of land tenure and the possible tensions between the interests of government, business, and small scale farmers. In some instances, land may be contested both politically and legally, as in parts of Palestine, and large tracts of land in North America claimed by aboriginal peoples and the governments of Canada and the United States.

## **PART II: PRE-PROJECT CONSIDERATIONS (Assessment of Environmental Factors: To Go In or Not to Go In?)**

### **Considerations for Initiating a Project in a Conflict-Prone Region**

Before a project proposal is assessed with an eye to its potential positive or negative peacebuilding impacts, it is necessary to undertake a preliminary review of the conditions within which the prospective project will be set. This is a basic process of risk assessment intended to develop a sense of the possible impact of the conflict environment on the project. The results of this assessment may lead to changes in the timing, structure, or objectives of a project; or it may suggest the postponement of a project until conditions improve. Alternatively, in the event that the conditions are considered to be at least minimally acceptable in terms of risk, then the

results of pre-project environmental risk assessment should become a useful baseline reference for *ex post facto* project evaluations.

*While this kind of screening may point to factors that decrease or increase the risks of externally-caused failure, it is certainly not an inoculation against failure.*

The decision whether or not to screen a project proposal for potential peace and conflict impact is related to, but very different from, the decision of whether or not to initiate a project in a violence-prone zone in the first place. This latter decision requires the consideration of an additional set of risk factors: particularly political and logistical factors. It should be emphasized that while this kind of screening may point to factors that decrease or increase the risks of externally-caused failure, it is certainly not an inoculation against failure. Furthermore (at the risk of stating the obvious), the conditions within which a project is set are characteristically fluid, which means that the impact and ultimate success of a project is heavily dependent on its ability to capitalize on the opportunities as they

arise, and to avoid or minimize potentially damaging developments.

When considering whether to undertake or support a project in a violence prone region, it is necessary to have a clear sense of the dynamics of conflict and their potential impact on the proposed project. Bearing in mind the discussion in Part I regarding when and where a PCIA may be appropriate, a preliminary review of the potential peace and conflict environment impact on a project might include the following, or similar, questions.

**Location:** What will be the geographical extent of project? Will it be located in politically or legally ambiguous or contested territory? What are the positive or negative site-specific impacts of evolving political and security conditions nationally/locally/regionally? What are relations like between the community in the proposed project site and the principal decision makers regionally and nationally? What are the legacies of the conflict(s) in the immediate area of the proposed project? - for example, its impact on: the local economy; food security; the physical and psychological health of the community; personal in/security; availability of leadership; physical infrastructure; intergroup relations; women, children and vulnerable populations; and so on.

**Timing:** At what point in the conflict will the project be undertaken - "pre"-conflict, "in"-conflict, (early, mid, late), or "post"-conflict phase? What has been the intensity of conflict in the project site? Will the project coincide with other projects in the region/country that might help or hinder its progress? Is it possible to identify or anticipate "external" political/economic/security developments that might affect the project positively or negatively?

**Political Context:** What is the level of political support for the project locally, regionally and nationally? What is the nature of formal political structures conditioning relations between the state and civil society (authoritarian, "transitional," partially democratic; democratic, decentralized, participatory, corrupt, predatory), and what are their possible impacts? Will the project involve politically sensitive or volatile issues (directly or indirectly)?

**Other Salient Factors Affecting The Impact Of The Conflict on The Project:** e.g.; institutional context; leadership; colonial legacy; cultural factors; national and international political economic factors such as economic infrastructure, Structural Adjustment Programmes, and fluctuations in commodity prices; impact of conflict on type and availability of resources (especially natural and human resources).

Once these broad kinds of questions have been addressed, then a more specific set of questions may be developed. The section below is intended to provide a sense of the types of questions that may be useful in the pre-project phase. They are divided into three broad categories: 1) those that focus on environmental and contextual factors; 2) those that focus on project capacity; and 3) those that consider the degree of fit between the project and existing conditions.

## Environmental and Contextual Considerations

***Are there minimally predictable political, legal, and security structures in place?*** Political, legal, and security structures are the most important factors affecting both the spiral into violent conflict, and the ability to break the cycle through development, peacebuilding and reconstruction. Almost by definition, these structures have been weakened as a result of past, festering, or potential violent conflict. While there will certainly be variation between and within countries in the functioning and competence of these structures (as indicated by levels of: corruption, disappearances, human rights abuses, militarized activity, professionalism, efficiency; responsiveness; constitutionality; transparency; etc.) there is a need for at least a minimum level of predictability for a project to be initiated. The level of predictability is related to the level of risk associated with a project. Different actors may have different comfort levels when it comes to risk.

*In terms of post-conflict reconstruction, it may be more cost-effective to get in early; however there is also a higher level of uncertainty and risk that violent conflict may reignite. On the other hand, delayed entrance into the "reconstruction game" may decrease the political-security risk, but increase financial costs.*

***What are the infrastructural conditions?*** Before initiating a development project in a conflict-prone zone, a survey should be undertaken to assess infrastructural conditions on the ground. In post-conflict settings, the physical infrastructure may be heavily damaged depending on the type and duration of violent conflict. It is interesting, for example, to compare the impact of violence on the infrastructure of Rwanda and Mozambique. While there has been physical damage in both cases, in Mozambique there are additional costs and challenges due to the years of decay that set in during the war. In Rwanda, while the immediate physical damage is evident, the additional decay that accumulates with the years is less. The decision of any actor to get involved in either case is premised on an assessment of costs, risks, and infrastructural requirements. In terms of post-conflict reconstruction, it may be more cost-effective to get in early, however there is also a higher level of uncertainty and risk that violent conflict may reignite. On the other hand, delayed entrance into the "reconstruction game" may decrease the political-security risk, but increase financial costs.<sup>15</sup> Regarding logistical infrastructure, a trade-off may be required between 1) building one anew in order to avoid operational delays, and 2) working through and nurturing existing networks. The former may contribute to short term efficiency, while the latter contributes to longer term sustainability. The broader question here is: How will the project work within existing infrastructural conditions, or relatedly, how will it contribute to the development of such infrastructure?

***Is the opportunity structure open or closed/opening or closing?*** Opportunity structure is used here to refer to the variable conditions that affect the strategic and tactical decisions by organizations whether or not to initiate a project, as well as the form that project will take. It refers to the ebb and flow of the political, economic and social conditions that facilitate or hinder a project. Obviously, projects are not undertaken in a vacuum. There is a host of external factors that may have positive or negative impacts on a project's development, implementation and impact. Some of these factors may be anticipated, while others may not be. In some instances, it

may well be that there are positive external factors that provide the initial motivation for a project.

South Africa is the prime example of an instance where the "opening of political space" created a political opportunity structure conducive to a positive peacebuilding impact. "Post-apartheid" South Africa<sup>16</sup> is in the midst of a complete overhaul of the institutional and policy framework that conditions the relationship between the state and civil society. Very rarely are the broad "rules of the game" - indeed the very understanding of the relationship between state and civil society - open for serious, far-reaching, debate *and change*. However, two points should be noted here. First, a conducive opportunity structure does not ensure the successful impact of a project. Second, while the conditions in South Africa may be rare, it is possible in every case to ask whether the policy environment is open, half-open, or closed to the policy objectives of a project.

In those projects where the environment is not conducive, the project confronts an additional hurdle which requires a change *of* that policy environment as a prerequisite to effecting change *in* that environment. But perhaps this may be a simultaneous rather than sequential process. There are significant development research opportunities in those situations where the political space exists to amplify impact. The challenge is to be able to recognize those instances where these conditions exist - in advance rather than *ex post facto*. And if a commitment to support research is made at this early stage, then it is almost inevitable that the direction and questions guiding the research will shift as the project and conditions evolve. It is important to note here that often this is a narrow window of opportunity, and that it may slam shut much more quickly than it edged open.

### **Project-Specific Considerations**

***Does the proposed project have the right mix of the right resources?*** This factor overlaps with the others listed in this section (see also the discussion of resources above). There is no check list of resources that can be fashioned *a priori* or applied universally. Each case will need its own particular set of resources. The point to be emphasized here is the need to engage in these issues early in the discussions concerning whether or not to get involved, knowing that the required mix will certainly change over time in ways that are unpredictable, and that will present your project with both opportunities and constraints.

***Does the lead organization have experience or a comparative advantage in the region?*** Does your organization give the project a particular advantage in the field, *e.g.*, due to its network of partners, or its experience in conflict-prone regions, or its unique skill set? The absence of experience or a comparative advantage should not automatically deter an organization from working in a region, however this will require a costly learning process, and significant delays in getting a project going in an environment which may be particularly vulnerable to destabilization in the absence of tangible development initiatives that may create incentives for divided communities to work together towards a shared set of objectives and interests.

***What are the proposed project's "tolerance levels"?*** What is the tolerance level (and institutional capacity) of your organization and project to respond to: uncertainty; project indeterminacy; risk; losses (in human and material terms); setbacks, incremental progress, and change? What contingency plans might be fashioned to avoid the avoidable, and respond to the unavoidable?

***Are suitable personnel available?*** The need for qualified personnel applies at all levels of a

project, from the head quarters to the field - with particular emphasis on the latter. Within the context of development projects in conflict-prone zones, this goes well beyond the technical competence of administration, management, and implementation. It also includes ability to: work under conditions of risk and uncertainty; monitor, interpret, and respond to changes in political and security landscape; negotiate and mediate between competing interests and factions in order to move a project towards its stated goals,<sup>17</sup> and so on. These are very delicate and diplomatic skills which require an acute sensitivity to local level politics, the volatility of conditions, and the potential for a project to be destabilizing or coopted to serve the particularistic interests of one of the parties involved in a conflict. It requires development actors to find or create the political space within which to manoeuvre. At times this requires adroit negotiation with antagonists from all sides of the conflict. This is no mean task, but by no means is it an impossible task.<sup>18</sup>

## **Correspondence Between Proposed Project and the Environment**

***What is the level of political support for the proposed project?*** The need for political support applies to every level of a project. While it certainly includes the political actors in the field from the local, regional to national levels, it also includes political support from: 1) within one's organization; 2) (ideally) governmental and non-governmental actors within an organization's support constituency; and 3) (preferably) international organizations involved in the country.

***Does the proposed project have the trust of all authorities able to stymie your efforts?*** This factor is related to "political support" above. Trust, however, is less committal than political support. At a minimum, it is a reasonable expectation that authorities will not actively resist or subvert a project and that trust may be built incrementally as the project evolves.

***Does the proposed project have the trust, support, and participation of the community?*** Some of the factors that contribute to the development impact of a development project also contribute to its success in peacebuilding. The participatory character of a project is an important factor in explaining success in both its peacebuilding and development impact. An emphasis on promoting participation (as both a means and an end) in development projects generates a number of operating principles which have clear peacebuilding implications:

- # ensuring continuity of personnel to make a learning process more feasible;
- # having a network of supportive, committed persons in a variety of positions;
- # avoiding partisan political involvement
- # attracting and retaining the right kind of community leadership; and
- # going beyond narrow conceptions of self-interest.<sup>19</sup>

Particularly relevant to the argument that peacebuilding requires a strong participatory dimension is Uphoff's observation that: "more important than knowing *how much* participation is occurring is knowing *who* is or is not involved in different kinds of participation. Which groups are less involved in different kinds of decision making, or in different kinds of implementation, or in different kinds of benefits, or in different kinds of evaluation? Women? Youth? Ethnic minorities? Persons living in remote villages? Insecure tenants? .... Is it being done at the initiatives of officials, an NGO or the villagers themselves? With a monetary incentive, or voluntary, or through coercion? In an organized manner or on an individual basis? Directly or indirectly? On a regular or ad hoc basis? s the process continuous, intermittent, or sporadic? With a degree of empowerment - how much?"<sup>20</sup>

***Will the project be sustainable?*** Does it possess the ability to generate the resources necessary for continuation or transformation of project. Ability to weather negative political events?

The next section of this paper turns its attention to more specific issues of PCIA. The objective here is to provide some suggestions for how we might operationalize a tool which is effective and efficient.

## **Issues of Application**

### ***Scale of Impact***

A project may have positive or negative peacebuilding impacts at a range of levels: from the micro level of individuals, to the meso level of communities, to the macro level of countries or regions. Similarly, as discussed above, the geographic scope, intensity, and dynamics of violent conflict may vary widely. It bears repeating that *peace impact* is understood to include those outcomes (intentional or unintentional) that foster and support those sustainable structures and processes which strengthen the prospects for peaceful coexistence and decrease the likelihood of the outbreak, reoccurrence, or continuation, of violent conflict. *Conflict impact* is understood to include all outcomes that increase the likelihood that conflict will be dealt with through violent means.

*Peacebuilding means nothing if it is not reflected in positive changes in the lived experience of those in, or returning to, post-conflict zones.*

### ***Sources of Information on Impact***

A project may have different impacts on different groups of individuals. Thus, depending on their particular vantage point and experience of violence, different individuals provide different types of information for impact assessment. Some of the questions listed below will be more appropriate for some groups than others. Some may be less appropriate. The task of the PCIA is both to collect and, most importantly, *to interpret* the various pieces of the conflict puzzle as they are available in written form, as well as the in the experiences of those people and organizations working and living in conflict zones.

Written forms of information would include: situation reports published by governmental and non-governmental organisations; chronologies of conflict; local and international human rights reports; media reports; academic studies; and so on. Ultimately however, the primary point of reference in determining impact is the lived experience of those in conflict zones. Peacebuilding means nothing if it is not reflected in positive changes in the lived experience of those in, or returning to, conflict zones. For example, the demobilization of military and paramilitary organization without the demilitarization of society, economy, and government is difficult to cast as an unqualified peacebuilding success when the tensions and insecurities within and between communities remain unaffected. This example suggests that different groups may have different criteria - indeed, different understandings and expectations - concerning the means and ends of development initiatives in these settings.

## Indicators and Ownership

If the PCIA is to be user-driven and relevant, then “users” should choose their own indicators - whether they are evaluators for multilateral organizations, or local partners, or the communities within which projects are undertaken.<sup>21</sup> This goes against the grain of most conventional approaches to evaluation, which typically specify indicators in advance. However, conventional evaluations focus more clearly on a project or programme in a certain sector. Ostensibly, this approach has the advantage of allowing for greater comparability between projects by identifying and standardizing suitable indicators within projects. here is a danger however, that the *a priori* identification of indicators may obscure as much as it reveals by highlighting (and thus legitimating) some features of a project, while simultaneously burying (and thus delegitimizing) others.

*The demobilization of military and paramilitary organizations without the demilitarization of society, economy, and government is difficult to cast as an unqualified peacebuilding success.*

The *a priori* identification of indicators may say more about the evaluation or assessment system than it does about the project itself. The use of a variety of indicators allows for the development of a kaleidoscopic approach which is able not only to accommodate different assessments of a project’s impact, but to accept that different assessments may be a function of the very different realities of different groups. “If the audience changes, so can the facts and the truths.”<sup>22</sup>

This approach helps to avoid the imposition of a reality by an outsider which may not correspond to the realities of those groups and individuals within the ambit of the project. For example, Ernest House notes correctly that “in an evaluation, the director of a project may present one view of the project, while the teacher working in it may present quite a different view. These two view points are not logically contradictory since both may be true as viewed from different circumstances.”<sup>23</sup> Furthermore, by loosening the shackles of pre-specified indicators, the space is created within the impact assessment process to allow different “stakeholders” to shape the framework to suit their specific needs; to assert ownership over the evaluation/assessment process; and to make more transparent the values and judgments inherent in all evaluations, and to thereby open the way for discussion and exploration of different (and sometimes competing) interpretations of impact.

Bearing these caveats in mind, it is possible to identify a host of indicators employed to assess governance and human rights projects. They may, or may not, be available or useful in different cases, however they may serve as a helpful point of reference.

**Security Indicators:** conflict-related deaths or injuries; disappearances; incidence of human rights abuses, including rape, sexual torture and violations of children’s rights; number of riots or similar instances of uncontrolled expressions of dissent; demonstrations; number of internally displaced people; outflow of refugees; rate and patterns of repatriation; ratio of GNP spent on social welfare to military matters; arrests or detention without probable cause or warrant; incommunicado detention; cruel, unusual, or degrading treatment; inhumane prison conditions.

**Psychological Indicators:** perceptions of individual and collective security; perceptions of other groups; level of tolerance to cultural or political differences.

**Social Indicators:** freedom of thought, belief and religion; level and type of social interaction between and within groups; change in the level of intermarriage; desegregated education; political representation; family reunification; number of multicomunal or cross-cutting social organizations; level of economic or employment

discrimination; freedom of speech; freedom of the media.

**Political Indicators:** level and type of public participation; presence or absence of multi-communal political parties; fair and free elections; levels of emergency rule in parts or all of the country; freedom of movement; public participation or influence on the policy making process.

**Judicial Indicators:** constitutional protection of individual rights; guarantees of due process; human rights legislation; judicial freedom from political interference; equality under the law; prosecution of criminals.

Because such indicators are drawn from the human rights and governance fields, they tend to emphasize the legal dimensions of peacebuilding. There is much more work to be done with communities to identify more innovative indicators that may be culturally and site specific. For example, there have been a number of calls to formulate conflict prevention indicators analogous to those employed in the public health and epidemiology.<sup>24</sup> There have also been suggestions that just as infant mortality rates are sensitive indicators of the general health of a population, perhaps the conditions of women, children and the most vulnerable in society might serve as the functional equivalent of "sentinel health indicators."

### **PART III: POST-PROJECT CONSIDERATIONS**

#### **Impacts**

What types of impacts might we see as a result of undertaking development interventions in environments of potential or open conflict? Where would we look to find them? A number of illustrative suggestions are listed below.

#### ***A substantial or politically significant change in access to individual or collective resources (broadly defined), especially non-renewable resources***

This would include access to basic resources such as water, land, and food. However, it would also include political resources. Norman Uphoff provides a useful basis for conceptualizing and operationalizing political resources which includes the following resource categories: economic resources, social status, information, force, legitimacy, and authority. The utility of his approach is that it incorporates both material and non-material resources within a single analytical framework of resource-exchange in a way which may be usefully applied to peace and conflict impact assessment.<sup>25</sup> Given the centrality of identity and "ethnic" issues in many of the recent conflicts, it is important to also include cultural resources on this list, *i.e.*, those resources enable a group to articulate its cultural identity.<sup>26</sup>

#### ***Creation or exacerbation of socio-economic tensions***

This would include a wide range of possibilities, from education projects which are perceived to privilege one group over another, to small loans and income generation projects which challenge the existing socio-economic status quo, to agricultural projects which reduce farmer dependency on land owners or input providers. Since most successful development initiatives create or exacerbate socio-economic tensions by challenging the status quo, the point here is simply to stress that when this impact is likely to be present and significant, *and when other any of the factors listed here are also anticipated*, then serious consideration must be given to undertaking a PCIA.



### ***A substantial change in the material basis of economic sustenance or food security***

This might include, for example, the introduction of a new plant type, agricultural technique or technology which alters the political economy of farming in a region in a way which marginalizes those whose economic livelihood is dependent upon the old way of doing things. It would also include development programmes which are tied implicitly or explicitly to the liberalization of the economy in ways which are driven by the macro-economic logic of restructuring to the neglect of their detrimental impact on economic sustenance and food security at meso- and micro-levels. Natsios provides an interesting peacebuilding example in Somalia based on a report by Fred Cuny which recognized that the merchant class was actually encouraging the violence and looting because their regular supplies of agricultural goods for their markets had been destroyed by the drought and clan conflict. Thus, he persuaded a number of development agencies to implement monetization programmes which involved selling food aid to these merchants on a regular basis at stable prices in order to reduce their dependence on looted supplies, and to return merchants to their traditional role as self-interested defenders of law and order seeking the stability necessary for regularized commercial activity. The projects were intended to encourage merchants to apply pressure on the militias to limit their disruption, and to cut off a source of funding to the militias who used the merchants' payments to purchase more weapons.<sup>27</sup>

### ***Exacerbation of conflict by challenging the content of, or control over, existing political, economic, or social systems***

To the extent that a development project empowers individuals and groups to assert control over the political, economic, and social aspects of their lives, then it may challenge existing systems of control and give rise to the use of violence either in defence of the status quo, or in opposition to it. However, it is equally important to highlight the inverse case: projects which fail to challenge unjust, structures and practices of political, economic, and social control may, in effect, subsidize 1) their implicit and explicit violence, and 2) the political regimes that benefit from them. In other words, we may exacerbate violent conflict by *failing to* challenge the content of, or control over, such structures and practices. While this argument would certainly apply to any of the kleptocracies currently existing within the international state system, interesting arguments have been made to consider South Africa in this context; in particular the extensive legacy of apartheid within the present political, bureaucratic, administrative, and economic reality of the so-called "new political dispensation."

One fascinating IDRC-supported project demonstrated that much of the violence, particularly within the black communities (during and "after" apartheid), was the result of competition over basic material resources - housing, employment and so on.<sup>28</sup> The project argued (and subsequently demonstrated) that the inequity and conflict engendered in the structures and processes of apartheid are increasingly perpetuated through the sharpening differentiation and alienation based on class rather than race. Thus, there is a danger that the inequities and injustices engendered by the social, political and economic institutions of apartheid may be perpetuated by post-apartheid institutions. The only difference would be that the axis of confrontation/violence and inequity would be class, rather than race. The failure to recognize this may well mean the failure of the post-apartheid regime to overcome its past.

## PART IV: FIVE AREAS OF POTENTIAL PEACE AND CONFLICT IMPACT

### Asking the Right Questions and Looking in the Right Places

The final section of this paper turns its attention to more specific issues of PCIA. The primary objective is to provide an example of a framework that might help us to look in the right places and to ask the right questions about the peace and conflict impact of development initiatives. It seeks to develop a concrete point of reference to help stimulate and focus the discussion of development actors who might use a PCIA. To do this, it presents a series of questions that might be asked of projects or project proposals to establish a sense of past or potential impact on peace and conflict conditions. The questions are structured around the five areas of potential impact introduced above and shown in Figure 1.

It should be emphasized that the questions in the next section are intended to convey a sense of the types of questions that might be asked. There are certainly not comprehensive, but intended to provide a spur to discussion. Indeed, given the variety of projects with a potential peacebuilding impact, each project should elicit its own set of situation-specific questions. This is not to say that it would not be possible to compare assessments across cases. However, while the broad parameters will be comparable, the specifics of impact will vary according to context and nature of project.

**Figure 1: Five Areas of Potential Peace and Conflict Impact**

<b>POTENTIAL PEACE &amp; CONFLICT IMPACT AREAS</b>	<b>EXAMPLES</b>
Institutional Capacity to Manage/Resolve Violent Conflict & to Promote Tolerance and Build Peace	Impact on capacity to identify and respond to peace and conflict challenges and opportunities; organizational responsiveness; bureaucratic flexibility; efficiency and effectiveness; ability to modify institutional roles and expectations to suit changing environment and needs; financial management.
Military and Human Security	Direct and indirect impact on: the level, intensity, dynamics of violence; violent behaviour; in/security (broadly defined); defence/security policy; repatriation, demobilization and reintegration; reform and retraining of police and security forces/structures; disarmament; banditry; organized crime.
Political Structures and Processes	Impact on formal and informal political structures and processes, such as: government capabilities from the level of the state government down to the municipality; policy content and efficacy; decentralization/concentration of power; political ethnicization; representation; transparency; accountability; democratic culture; dialogue; conflict mediation and reconciliation; strengthening/weakening civil society actors; political mobilization. Impact on rule of law; independence/politicization of legal system; human rights conditions; labour standards.

Economic Structures and Processes	Impact on strengthening or weakening equitable socio-economic structures/processes; distortion/conversion of war economies; impact on economic infrastructure; supply of basic goods; availability of investment capital; banking system; employment impact; productivity; training; income generation; production of commercial product or service; food in/security; Impacts on the exploitation, generation, or distribution of resources, esp. non-renewable resources and the material basis of economic sustenance or food security.
Social Reconstruction and Empowerment	Impact on: quality of life; constructive social communication (e.g., those promoting tolerance, inclusiveness and participatory principles); displaced people; in/adequacy of health care and social services; in/compatibility of interests; dis/trust; inter-group hostility/dialogue; communications; transport); resettlement/displacement; housing; education; nurturing a culture of peace.

### **Institutional Capacity to Manage/Resolve Violent Conflict & to Promote Tolerance and Build Peace**

Impact on capacity to identify and respond to peace and conflict challenges and opportunities; organizational responsiveness; bureaucratic flexibility; efficiency and effectiveness; ability to modify institutional roles and expectations to suit changing environment and needs; financial management.

#### **Sample Questions**

- Did/will the project affect organizational capacity of individuals, or collectivities (institutions, social groups, private sector) - positively or negatively- to identify and respond to peace and conflict challenges and opportunities? If so, Which groups? To what degree? How and why? Did/will the project increase or decrease the capacity to imagine, articulate and operationalize realities that nurture rather than inhibit peace?

“Organization capacity” might include: 1) the ability to *conceptualize and identify* peacebuilding challenges and opportunities; 2) in the case of organizations, to *restructure itself* to respond; and 3) to *alter standard operational procedures* to respond more effectively and efficiently in ways that have a tangible positive impact on the ground - for example, in ways that enhance fairness, equity, “evenhandedness,”<sup>29</sup> and accountability, and transparency.

- What were/might be the obstacles to a positive peacebuilding impact?
- How might the beneficial effects be amplified/made more sustainable both during and following the project?

### **Military and Human Security**

Direct and indirect impact on: the level, intensity, dynamics of violence; violent behaviour; in/security (broadly defined) - in particular as experienced in the daily lives of the general population; defence/security policy; repatriation, demobilization and reintegration; reform and retraining of police and security

forces/structures; disarmament; banditry; organized crime.

### **Sample Questions**

- Did/will the project affect the individual's sense of security?
- Did/will the project affect the military/paramilitary/criminal environment - directly or indirectly, positively or negatively? If so how?
- Was there/will there be tangible improvements in the political, economic, physical, food, security? If so, what are they, and to whom do they apply? If so, which groups? To what degree? How and why?
- Did/will the project deepen our understanding, or increase the capacity to address the non-military irritants to violent conflict - e.g., environmental degradation, resources scarcity, political manipulation, disinformation, mobilization and politicization of identity, etc.?
- To what extent did/will the project contribute to the "demilitarization of minds"? For example, through the dismantling of the cultural and socio-psychological predisposition of individuals and groups to use militarized violence as a first, rather than last, resort. More generally, how was/might be the impact of the project on: 1) the decreased prominence of military weapons in social, political, and economic life; 2) the gradual delegitimation of a gun culture; and 3) the evolution of non-violent modalities of conflict management.

### **Political Structures and Processes**

Impact on formal and informal political structures and processes, such as: government capabilities from the level of the state government down to the municipality; policy content and efficacy; decentralization/concentration of power; political ethnicization; representation; transparency; accountability; democratic culture; dialogue; conflict mediation and reconciliation; strengthening/weakening civil society actors; political mobilization. Impact on rule of law; independence/politicization of legal system; human rights conditions; labour standards.

### **Sample Questions**

- Did/will the project help or hinder the consolidation of constructive political relationships within and between state and civil society? For example, how did/will the project affect the understanding, composition and distribution of political resources within and between state and civil society?
- Did/will the project have an positive or negative impact on formal or informal political structures and processes - either within the formal arena of institutionalized state politics (e.g., constitutional or party politics) or within the informal arena of civil society (e.g., traditional authority structures)? If so, how? Did/will the project contribute to the development of the capacity of individuals/collectivities to participate constructively in democratic political processes? Did/will it contribute to increasing the transparency, accountability, representativeness, and appropriateness of political structures?

- Did/will the project influence policy processes or products? If so, in what ways?
- Did/will the project help defuse inter-group tensions? If so, how?
- What was/what will be the impact of the project on human rights conditions within a country or region? (e.g., awareness, legislation, levels of abuse/respect?)

### **Economic Structures and Processes**

Impact on strengthening or weakening equitable socio-economic structures/processes; distortion/conversion of war economies; impact on economic infrastructure; supply of basic goods; availability of investment capital; banking system; employment impact; productivity; training; income generation; production of commercial product or service; food in/security; Impacts on the exploitation, generation, or distribution of resources, esp. non-renewable resources and the material basis of economic sustenance or food security

Inevitably, protracted militarized conflict distorts the economy of afflicted regions. It subsidizes inequitable and inefficient socio-economic structures, creates "war economies," stifles and distorts production, and wastes scarce resources in non-productive war-related expenditures. At the level of the individual, the economic impact of such conflicts is profound and near incalculable. In the wake of a conflict, a war-devastated economy hinders PBR, and risks pushing parties into the spiral of violence particularly where conflict over the production and distribution of resources was an underpinning factor in initiating and perpetuating violence. The lack of economic opportunity is a particular threat in cases where the immediate post-conflict phase is populated by "former" - yet still armed - combatants. An assault rifle may symbolize protection, power, and status in a conflict zone, but in the post-conflict period, it also represents economic sustenance in those areas where there are no economic alternatives.

### **Sample Questions**

- To what extent did/will a project contribute to or detract from efforts to "re"-construct damaged economic and social infrastructure? Specifically, in the following areas:
  - \*high level of debt;
  - \*unsustainable high military budgets;
  - \*skewed distribution of wealth, income, and assets;
  - \*resettlement of displaced populations
  - \*environmental degradation - particularly that which inhibits economic productivity
- To what extent did/will the project:<sup>30</sup>
  - \*assess damage to social and economic infrastructure;
  - \*provide technical assistance for rehabilitation and reconstruction;
  - \*rehabilitate and reconstruct economic infrastructure;
  - \*reactivate smallholder agriculture;
  - \*rehabilitate the export sector;
  - \*rehabilitate key industries;
  - \*up-grade employment skills;
  - \*stabilize the national currency and;

\*rehabilitate financial institutions

## **Social Reconstruction and Empowerment**

Impact on: quality of life; constructive social communication (e.g., those promoting tolerance, inclusiveness and participatory principles); displaced people; in/adequacy of health care and social services; in/compatibility of interests; dis/trust; inter-group hostility/dialogue; communications; transport); resettlement/displacement; housing; education; nurturing a culture of peace.

### **Sample Questions**

- Did/will the project contribute to the development or consolidation of equity and justice, or the means of providing basic needs?
- Did/will the benefits of the project get shared equitably?
- Did/will the project include members from the various communities affected by the conflict? How? Effectiveness? Criteria for effectiveness?
- Did/will the project seek explicitly to benefit or build bridges between the different communities? If so, how? Effectiveness? Criteria of effectiveness? Did/will it help foster an inclusive - rather than exclusive - sense of community? Did/will it facilitate the ability of individuals and groups to work together for the mutual benefit?
- Did/will the project facilitate positive communication/interaction between and within groups? Is this sustainable?
- Did/Will it provide/generate the skills, tools, capacity for individuals and communities to *define* issues/problems to be addressed, *formulate* solutions to those problems, or *resolve* those self-defined problems?
- Did/will the project take into consideration the history/legacy of conflict in its design? For example, did/will it consider the specific impact on children, women and other vulnerable groups such as displaced populations, and the politically, socially and economically marginalized.
- Did/will the project increase contact, confidence, or trust between the communities? Did it dispel distrust? Did/will it create common interests, or encourage individuals and groups to recognize their common interests, and did/will modify their behaviour in order to attain them?
- To what extent did/will the project incorporate/privilege the views and interests of affected indigenous populations?

## **CONCLUSION**

In some ways, this paper is winding down at the point it should be picking up. The reasons for this are related to the rationale for circulating this study as a Working Paper. First, if a PCIA tool is to be useful, it will have to be the product of the interaction and synergies of the full spectrum

of the peacebuilding community. The space has been left open to allow for and encourage the discussion needed to fashion a genuinely collective tool. The next stage in its development will be the most important. Second, if the argument for the need to integrate peace and conflict issues into mainstream development work is to stand a chance conceptually and programmatically, then it will first need to make a convincing case for its necessity and its utility. This is one of the objectives of this paper. Once this has been done, the challenge is one of practicality. What might work? What is needed? What are the institutional and field opportunities and constraints conditioning the use of such a tool, and so on. Third, and perhaps most problematically, as discussed in Part I, Section B, it may be that the best we can hope for is a helpful interpretive tool, rather than a large scale map. These are open questions.

## APPENDIX: The Basics

**Peacebuilding:** In the broadest sense, peacebuilding refers to those initiatives which foster and support sustainable structures and processes which strengthen the prospects for peaceful coexistence and decrease the likelihood of the outbreak, reoccurrence, or continuation, of violent conflict. This process typically contains both immediate and longer term objectives, for example, humanitarian objectives as well as political, economic, and social objectives. It should be underscored that peacebuilding is not about the imposition of "solutions," it is about the creation of opportunities, and the creation of political, economic, and social spaces, within which *indigenous* actors can identify, develop, and employ the resources necessary to build a peaceful, prosperous, and just society.<sup>31</sup> Peacebuilding is a two-fold process requiring both the deconstruction of the structures of violence and the construction of the structures of peace.

**Peace Impact:** The term *peace impact* is understood to include those outcomes that foster and support those sustainable structures and processes which strengthen the prospects for peaceful coexistence and decrease the likelihood of the outbreak, reoccurrence, or continuation, of violent conflict. "Peace" is not the absence of conflict, but the absence of the use of violence to resolve both the positive and negative forms of conflict that arise naturally in any society. (See "Conflict" below).

**Conflict Impact:** The term *conflict impact* is understood to include all outcomes that increase the likelihood that conflict will be dealt with through violent means.

**Peacebuilding-as-Impact:** Over the last 24 months or so, there has been considerable discussion in Canada and internationally of how to nurture "peacebuilding" processes in conflict and "post-conflict" environments. These discussions, and the initiatives they spawned, have been assessed elsewhere.<sup>32</sup> What needs to be noted in the current context is the overwhelming tendency to treat peacebuilding as a very narrow set of activities that focuses on the transformation of formal political and legal institutions. It is essential that we recognize that peacebuilding is not a specific activity, but an *impact, function, or consequence* of an activity. Not all development work is "peacebuilding work." Indeed, as discussed below, "development" by its very nature is destabilizing - for better or for worse. While some "Peacebuilding and Reconstruction (PBR) Projects" may be characterized by their explicit peacebuilding objectives such as the transformation of political and legal structures, we should be careful not to limit peacebuilding thinking and initiatives to "democratic development," human rights, and institution strengthening. As international actors jump aboard the peacebuilding bandwagon, there is a danger that we may ghettoize peacebuilding work by restricting our understanding to those more overtly political projects while neglecting the constructive impact of "conventional" development projects in violence-prone regions, including projects in public health, water, sanitation, communications, and so on. Since the bulk of development work will be in the areas of "conventional" development, the greatest peacebuilding impact (positive *and* negative) will come not from narrowly defined "PBR projects" but from these "mainstream" initiatives. Realistically, development activities alone cannot resolve the protracted militarized conflicts which are so prevalent in the world today. However, they possess the potential to contribute significantly to conflict management and peacebuilding. As importantly, their activities have the potential to exacerbate tensions and inhibit conflict management.<sup>33</sup> The capacity of development actors to influence such events must be evaluated carefully since it varies considerably from case to case.

**Reconstruction:** Although the term "reconstruction" is used widely, it is a misnomer. The objective of post-conflict activities is rarely a return to the *status quo ante bellum*, since pre-war conditions typically contain the antecedents to subsequent violent conflict. Rather,



"reconstruction" refers to the creation of new, sustainable, institutions which are more democratic, fair and responsive to the needs, concerns, and aspirations of an entire population - e.g., effective political structures and processes which protect and advance the well-being of the citizenry, institutions which ensure human security, and robust economic, judicial and social institutions.

**Conflict:** onflict is not seen to be a necessarily negative or destructive phenomenon in this study. In essence, development is *inevitably* conflictual, destabilizing, and subversive because it challenges established economic, social, or political power structures which inhibit individuals and groups from pursuing their full potential. However, there is a need to maintain a clear distinction between violent and non-violent conflict. While this study focuses more on violent, rather than non-violent conflict, it has a special interest in those liminal moments at which non-violent conflict "turns" ("re-turns") violent and is militarized. This study views the presence or absence of conflict mediating mechanisms and institutions<sup>34</sup> to be central factors influencing whether a conflict passes the threshold into violence - this might include representative political systems, a transparent and fair judicial system, an equitable social system, and so on. Some have argued that violent conflict is the ultimate expression of the breakdown of a society's systems of governance, and that reconstruction therefore rests primarily upon the renegotiation and refashioning of new systems of governance at the community, sub-national and national level.<sup>35</sup> Thus, "reconstruction" requires strategies and interventions to promote institutional arrangements that can facilitate and sustain the transition from violent conflict to sustainable development. An appealing feature of this kind of approach is the way its analysis of the problem is tied directly to an understanding of the nature of solutions.

Despite an emphasis on the institutional dimensions of violence and peacebuilding, this study also appreciates the variations of, and the connections/disconnections between, different manifestations and types of violence. It is, for example, disturbed by the tendency to disconnect the "political," structural, violence of the apartheid past from the "criminal" violence of the "post"-apartheid South Africa present. The danger of this disconnection (conceptually and pragmatically) is two-fold: 1) it inhibits us from examining the relationships between "political" and "criminal" violence, the legacy of apartheid, and the full nature of contemporary violence in South Africa; and 2) it tends to limit the scope of our responses to the legal-policing realm, rather than the socio-economic-political realm. If the source of the contemporary violence is political, social, or economic, then a rigid legal-policing response will be as problematic in the post-apartheid transition as it was during apartheid. The common argument in South Africa is that the removal of the violence-dampening institutions of apartheid "led" to the current explosion in violent crime. However, this argument uses the term "violence" in a very narrow and conservative way. It makes sense to recognize the structural violence inflicted upon South Africans in the form of poverty, infant mortality, stifled advancement, etc. If we accept that the term violence may have a variety of meanings and manifestations, then we can begin to see that the post-apartheid era reveals not so much a rise in violence, as a change in the *type* of violence characterizing social, political, and economic relations. Contemporary manifestations of violence in South Africa are not *sui generis*. They follow the trajectory of societal and political developments in the country. An understanding of the present requires a consideration of its linkages to the recent and distant past. The implication for the development of a PCIA is that it underscores the need to peel away the multiple layers of violence to build a sense of its dynamics, history, and trajectory.

Paradoxically, the experiences of violent conflict may *generate* new development opportunities and ways of working. The experiences of Zimbabwe, Nicaragua, Eritrea, Somaliland, and South Africa suggest that violent conflict may serve as the anvil upon which new and progressive social

and economic structures, political solutions, and development opportunities may be formed. This particular point was underscored in the Eritrea case study of the War-Torn Societies Project (WSP) of the UN Research Institute for Social Development (UNRISD), when the Eritrean partners stated emphatically that their society was war-born, not war-torn.

It is appropriate to conclude this section with a note on the legitimacy of using force to affect change. There are many ways to change economic, social, and political structures - implicit or explicit violent modalities are certainly included within the menu of options (e.g., support for armed resistance, the threat or use of militarized force, and so on). Under some conditions such violence *may be* required to affect change. However, this option cannot be legitimate within a *developmental* approach to change. The application of violence might be justified using consequentialist logic (the ends justify the means), but it cannot be justified or legitimized using developmental logic.<sup>36</sup> Furthermore, violence is a particularly blunt instrument that: 1) is prone to generating unanticipated, unintended, and uncontrollable consequences; and 2) risks legitimating the use of violent force as a means of conflict resolution.

## ENDNOTES

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1. *Theories of Civil Violence* (Berkeley and London: University of California Press, 1988)
2. A recent example of this kind of descriptive and taxonomic approach is the final report of the Carnegie Commission on Preventing Deadly Conflict entitled *Preventing Deadly Conflict* (New York: The Carnegie Corporation, December 1997).
3. Please refer to the glossary for a discussion of technical terms such as "peacebuilding," and "peace and conflict impact."
4. Recent examples include: the Joint Evaluation of Emergency Assistance to Rwanda, *The International Response to Conflict and Genocide: Lessons from the Rwanda Experience* (Copenhagen, March 1996); Chr. Michelsen Institute in association with Nordic Consulting Group, *Evaluation of Norwegian Assistance to Peace, Reconciliation and Rehabilitation in Mozambique*, Evaluation Report 4.97 (Oslo: Royal Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 1997); and in the Canadian context, The Report of the Commission of Inquiry into the Deployment of Canadian Forces into Somalia, *Dishonoured Legacy: the Lessons of the Somalia Affair* (Ottawa: Minister of Public Works and Government Services Canada, 1997).
5. In Ian Smillie's "Irreverent Glossary," *lessons learned* is defined as: "An expression found in evaluations. Often it means only lessons." Smillie, *The Alms Bazaar: Altruism Under Fire - Non-Profit Organizations and International Development* (Ottawa: International Development Research Centre, 1995), p. xii.
6. See the section on "When and Where should the PCIA be applied".
7. In Northern Ireland, this is an objective of Education for Mutual Understanding (EMU) programs. The larger task is the incorporation of EMU objectives into all educational programs.
8. I will use the term "development worker" generically through out this study to refer to the broadest range of development actors - from those working with development and humanitarian NGOs, to multilateral donors, to programme officers in research institutes. Specificity is added as required. Because each of these types of actors possess very different capacities and resources, each is particularly suited to play distinctive roles in peacebuilding and reconstruction. However, they all share the same need to assess and evaluate the peace and conflict context and impact of their work.
9. This is the starting point for a current project headed by Mary Anderson, see her "Do No Harm: Supporting Local Capacities for Peace Through Aid," Collaborative for Development Action, Cambridge, MA, 1996.
10. Such as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights, and the International Covenant on Civil and political Rights. Other applicable conventions include: the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, the Convention of the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women, the Convention Against Torture, and the International Convention of the Rights of the Child.
11. "Communique to the People of Guatemala and the International Community," *Diario Prensa Libre* (Guatemala City), 30 August 1997
12. Please refer to the Appendix for further discussion.
13. In the case of Northern Ireland, Allen Feldman, describes the "interface" as follows: the topographic-ideological boundary that physically and symbolically demarcates ethnic communities ... from each other... a spatial construct preeminently related to the performance of violence," *Formations of Violence: The Narrative of the Body and Political Terror in Northern Ireland* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1991), p. 28.

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14. In mid 1992, in the Batticaloa district in Sri Lanka for example, the road out of Batticaloa was controlled by government forces on Mondays, Wednesdays, Fridays, and Saturdays, when they sent out their patrols. On the days they didn't send out patrols, the road was controlled by the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam.
15. Put another way: *Early entry*: higher instability + higher uncertainty + higher risk + lower financial cost (+ higher potential gain due to market access?). *Later Entry*: lower instability + lower uncertainty + lower risk + higher financial cost (+ lower potential gain due to lower market access/higher density of competition/lower marginal gains? OR perhaps increased potential for impact due to presence of a critical mass of development initiatives?)
16. It is necessary to place inverted commas around "post-apartheid" South Africa, because, as discussed below in the discussion on "institutional impact," the bureaucratic, political and economic organizations of the present are infused with the apartheid past. And, these organizations, agencies, etcetera are still populated with the functionaries of the apartheid past - most conspicuously at middle management levels.
17. Such negotiation and mediation skills are required to "do development work" within the changing political and security environment on the ground, *e.g.*, to ensure the safety of a convoy moving through contested or hot territory. The larger political process of mediation and negotiation between competing interests and factions in an effort to manage, settle, or resolve the conflict, should be led by the political and diplomatic actors with the required skill, clout, and resources. While development workers may have an important role to play in this larger effort, their's is a supporting, not a leading role - in keeping with the argument for the need for a clear division of labour founded on respective skills sets and competencies.
18. For a thoughtful, practical, and realistic discussion of challenges facing development workers in war zones, see Gayle Smith, "Relief Operations and Military Strategies," in Thomas G. Weiss and Larry Minear, eds., *Humanitarianism Across Borders: Sustaining Civilians in Times of War* (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner, 1993), 97-116. Specific examples of such negotiation may be found in the local-level cease-fires brokered by UN actors in Yugoslavia, and by the International NGOs in Sri Lanka, which allow for the transport of essential goods and medical supplies, and for the evacuation of injured civilians. Such negotiations are also the basis for humanitarian cease-fires, brokered to immunize children in war zones. Robin Hay and Clyde Sanger, "Immunization and Cease-fires," in Robert Miller, ed., *Aid as Peacemaker: Canadian Development Assistance and Third World Conflict* (Ottawa: Carleton University Press, 1992).
19. This discussion relies on: Norman Uphoff, *Learning from Gal Oya: Possibilities for Participatory Development and Post-Newtonian Social Science* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1992), p.p. 135 & 142; and John M. Cohen and Uphoff, "Participation's Place in Rural Development: Seeking Clarity Through Specificity", *World Development*, Vol. 8, (1980), pp. 213-235.
20. Uphoff, *Learning From Gal Oya*, p. 141.
21. This approach was adopted in IUCN International Assessment Team, "Assessing Progress Towards Sustainability: Approaches, Methods, Tools, Progress," Strategies for Sustainability Programme, March 1996.
22. Ernest House, *The Logic of Evaluative Argument*, CSE Monograph Series in Evaluation No. 7 (Centre for the Study of Evaluation, University of California, Los Angeles, 1977), p. 11.
23. *Ibid.*, p. 22.
24. The final report of the Carnegie Commission of Preventing Deadly Conflict noted above, advocates a public health style model. The most methodologically rigorous attempt that I have seen to take this call beyond loose analogies was in a paper presented by James Orbinski on a panel on Public Health and War at the 1997 Annual Meeting of the International Studies Association in Toronto, Canada.
25. Norman T. Uphoff, "Distinguishing Power, Authority and Legitimacy: Taking Max Weber at his Word by Using Resource-Exchange Analysis," *Polity*, 22:2 (1990), 295-322; and Uphoff and Warren Ilchman, *The Political Economy of*

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*Development* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press, 1972).

26. Provided that such expressions of cultural identities were not threats to other groups.

27. Andrew Natsios, "An NGO Perspective," in I. William Zartman and J. Lewis Rasmussen, eds., *Peacemaking in International Conflict: Methods and Techniques* (Washington, D.C.: US Institute for Peace, 1997), p. 357.

28. "Black Urbanization, Class Differentiation, and Political Conflict in South Africa," Project # 90-0087. This argument is developed further in the research and publications of the two principal researchers in this project, Doug Hindson and Mike Morris.

29. In militarized environments, this has been described in minimalist terms as "the provision of assistance in such a manner that none of the parties to a conflict is able to accrue undue military advantage." Peter Davies of *Interaction* quoted in Gayle Smith, "Relief Operations and Military Strategy," in Thomas Weiss and Larry Minear, eds., *Humanitarianism Across Borders: Sustaining Civilians in Times of War* (Boulder and London: Lynne Rienner, 1993), p. 100. In post-conflict settings, it might refer more broadly to an operating procedure that is inclusive rather than exclusive in both its means and ends.

30. This list draws on Nicole Ball with Tammy Halevy, *Making Peace Work: the Role of the International Development Community*, Policy Essay No. 18, Washington, the Overseas Development Council, 1996.

31. This definition is developed in Kenneth D. Bush, "Towards a Balanced Approach to Rebuilding War-Torn Societies," *Canadian Foreign Policy*, Vol III, No. 3 (Winter 1995), pp. 49-69.

32. Patricia Weiss Fagen, "After the Conflict: A Review of Selected Sources on Rebuilding War-Torn Societies," *War-Torn Societies Project - Occasional Paper No. 1*, UNRISD, Geneva, November 1995; Kenneth Bush, "Fitting the Pieces Together: Canadian Contributions to Rebuilding War-Torn Societies," a paper prepared for the International Development Research Centre, Ottawa, July 1995; and Bush, "NGOs in the International System: Building Peace in a World at War," in Maureen Molot and Fen O. Hampson, eds., *Canada Among Nations: Big Enough to be Heard* (Ottawa: Carleton University Press, 1996), pp. 251-272.

33. See for example David Gillies' discussion of the negative impact of the CIDA sponsored Madura Oya project in "Principled Intervention: Canadian Aid, Human Rights and the Sri Lanka Conflict," in Robert Miller, *Aid as Peacemaker: Canadian Development Assistance and Third World Conflict* (Ottawa: Carleton University Press, 1992), 33-50; for an extended discussion by Gillies see *Between Principle and Practice: Human Rights in North-South Relations* (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's Press, 1996). See also the well-focused and articulated discussions in: Mary B. Anderson, *Do No Harm: Supporting Local Capacities Through Aid* (Cambridge, Mass.: Local Capacities for Peace/Collaborative for Development Action, Inc., 1996); and Natsios, "An NGO Perspective."

34. The term "conflict mediating" is used self-consciously to refer to mechanisms which manage, resolve, or settle conflicts and disputes *non-violently* as they arise. These are distinct from "conflict dampening" mechanisms which have as their primary objective the limitation of the level of conflict using whatever means are deemed most effective, whether violent or non-violent. For example, in South Africa the apartheid system was certainly successful in dampening anti-apartheid challenges, but it did so through direct and indirect mechanisms of violence - using everything from security forces, to urban planners, to structural violence of poverty, illness, and illiteracy.

35. Necla Tschirgi, "Linking Development and Security Research," *IDRC Reports*, 22:3 (October 1994), pp. 12-13.

36. Somalia offers a prime example of this argument. See Mohamed Sahnoun, *Somalia: Missed Opportunities* (Washington, D.C.: United States Institute of Peace, 1994); and Kenneth Bush, "When Two Anarchies Meet: International Intervention in Somalia," *Journal of Conflict Studies*, XVII:1 (Spring 1997), pp. 55-78.