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SUSTAINABLE CONFLICT TRANSFORMATION
AN ANALYTICAL MODEL FOR ASSESSING THE CONTRIBUTION OF DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES TO PEACEBUILDING

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Abstract

Despite the widely recognized importance of the link between security and development, there has not been any systematic analysis of the contributions of development actors to post-conflict reconstruction and sustained peacebuilding. The model of sustainable conflict transformation (SCT) developed in this article provides a framework for assessing the contributions of development actors to peacebuilding efforts. More specifically, structuring the SCT model around the topical sectors provided by the UN's Peacebuilding Capacity Inventory generates an assessment tool that enables us to account specifically for measures aimed at aiding the transformation of cognitive conflict motivators such as conflict attitudes and identities.

> Reducing overt conflict requires reduction in levels of underdevelopment. Groups which seek to satisfy their identity and security needs through conflict are in effect seeking change in the structure of their society. (…) Studying protracted conflict leads one to conclude that peace is development in the broadest sense of the term (Edward Azar 1990, quoted in Miall et al. 2003, p. 86).

Introduction

"Everyone still calls him 'the little corporal.' But Baluku does not like the name. His army days are long behind him. He is 18 years old now, and he turned in his weapons in 2004. After that, he completed a brief training course as a carpenter, sponsored by the GTZ [German Agency for Technical Cooperation]" – a German government-owned international enterprise specializing in technical cooperation for sustainable development. Today, Baluku is one of the instructors training demobilized youngsters in a cabinetmaker's workshop in the eastern DR Congo province of Maniema. His apprentices are among the 40,000 children and young people who were misused in

the Democratic Republic of the Congo as soldiers, and who today live on the fringes of society.[1]

Maniema was – and continues to be – particularly severely affected by the ongoing civil war. Water and electricity supplies function only sporadically and often fail for days at a time. Bridges and roads have been completely destroyed. The rail link from the south operates only every two months. In the provincial capital – with a population of more than 200,000 – the price of basic foodstuffs rose by around 70% in the first half of 2008.[2] Here again, the GTZ has taken up projects to boost the underdeveloped regional economy and at the same time facilitate social reintegration for the victims of war. For instance, one recent project trains former child soldiers in the craft of wooden boat construction, taking a traditional boat design and fitting it to permit navigation along the now heavily silted Congo River.

These examples illustrate that security and development, especially in post-conflict countries must go hand-in-hand in order to achieve sustainable peace. The failures and setbacks in implementing peace agreements through traditional UN peacekeeping operations in the early 1990s necessitated a more comprehensive approach linking development to sustainable peaceful transformation of war-torn societies A report by the World Bank echoed this new sentiment: "where development succeeds, countries become progressively safer from violent conflict, making subsequent development easier. Where development fails, countries are at high risk of becoming caught in a conflict trap in which war wrecks the economy and increases the risk of further wars" (Collier et al. 2003, p. 1).

This sentiment led to the deployment of a series of multidimensional missions following the immediate cessation of hostilities in order to reinforce processes aimed at building sustainable peace. These missions can be subsumed under the umbrella term of 'managing transitions' which included military as well as civilian conflict resolution activities in order "to create the conditions necessary for a sustainable peace in war-torn societies" (Paris 2004, p. 2). This new type of mission was clearly distinct from traditional peacekeeping for it enabled the increased contribution of civilian, primarily development actors in the planning and implementation of reconstruction efforts (cf. Franke & Warnecke 2009).

At the same time, most development agencies of OECD countries sought to heighten their profile regarding conflict management, reconciliation and peacebuilding initiatives (German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development 2005; Warnecke 2006). Mirroring the traditional separation between developmental and security aspects of peacebuilding, former development initiatives had merely sought to "work around" conflicts to avoid any direct intervention that could offset existing societal structures. By contrast, "working in" or, more precisely "working on" conflict quickly became central tenets informing the project work of several OECD development agencies. Based on and further extending Anderson's "do no harm" approach (cf. Anderson 1999), "working on" conflict seeks to directly address conflict causes and

consequences through long-term, conflict-sensitive development strategies that aim to improve the material and immaterial conditions for stable and peaceful post-conflict societies.

Although the notion that development and security are inextricably linked has become widely accepted, there has been no systematic analysis to date of the contributions by development actors to the peacebuilding process. The model of sustainable conflict transformation (SCT) developed here is intended to close this gap and provide an analytical framework for assessing the contributions of development actors to peacebuilding. Fine-tuning our conceptual model using the topical sectors provided in the UN Peacebuilding Capacity Inventory (UN Executive Office of the Secretary General 2006), we devise an assessment tool accounting specifically for measures aimed at aiding the transformation of cognitive conflict motivators such as conflict attitudes and identities. After all, in the words of UN Secretary Ban Ki-moon, "peacebuilding is not just about 'bricks and mortar' – it is a transformative process involving changing attitudes about how to manage conflict" (Ban 2008, p. 2).

Development as an Agent for Conflict Transformation

Conflict transformation and sustainable development both pursue the ideal end-state of a legitimately governed and economically viable peaceful society based on the rule of law. Given the high probability of a post-conflict society relapsing into conflict (Collier et al. 2003; Collier 2007) it is no stretch to suggest that successful conflict transformation becomes a necessary precondition for sustainable development.

Nevertheless, this insight does not imply a security- or peacebuilding-first, development-second approach to conflict prevention and resolution. Rather, the recent experiences with complex UN missions in East Timor, Kosovo and Sierra Leone indicate the need for an early and active engagement of development actors in the reconstruction efforts. These experiences have demonstrated that a security-first approach that places the sole or primary focus of the initial response by the international community on the establishment of (military) security and the negotiation of political solutions oftentimes overlooks the socio-economic conflict causes and effects, thereby neglecting the constructive engagement of civil society (Gueli 2005; Madlala 2004; Bakhet 2001). Delaying developmental measures until after the conclusion of comprehensive peace agreements is partially responsible for the relapse into conflict (Collier et al. 2003). Thus, sustainable development cannot only be the result of successful peacebuilding it must also be one of its central premises.

Based on this premise, we examine the extent to which development measures in conflict regions differ from those undertaken in peaceful areas. Are there specific requirements for effective development activities in post-conflict areas? If so, how can we optimize developmental contributions to conflict transformation? To date,

development measures have usually been considered to contribute to the overall peacebuilding efforts based solely on the fact that they were implemented in post-conflict environments (Barnett et al. 2007, p. 44). In an effort to further specify the close connection between development and peace, Miall et al. argue that developmental peacebuilding measures are distinct from more general developmental aid in that they are aimed at: "(a) preventing a relapse into war; (and) (b) creating a self-sustaining peace" (Miall et al. 2003, p. 195).

While this definition certainly recognizes the importance of developmental measures to sustainable peacebuilding, it only allows for an aggregated appraisal of the contributions made by development actors to the conflict transformation process, but does not afford the opportunity to assess the topical relevance or structural impact of specific developmental measures in support of a particular peace process and its specific objectives and conditions.

The SCT model developed here is designed to allow for a more comprehensive and detailed analysis of the contribution of specific development projects and actors to the overall peace process. Before introducing the SCT model in detail, we provide a brief overview over the concept of peacebuilding and its conceptual and historical roots. Next, we explore the material, social and cognitive aspects of peacebuilding and examine the content, timing, tasks, goals, and priorities for building sustainable peace, finally culminating in the analytical framework for our model of sustainable conflict transformation.

Background: The Concept of Peacebuilding

Increasingly, the United Nations recognizes that development actors and civil society organizations are providing essential contributions to the effective implementation of sustainable peace through the establishment of legitimate and effective political and legal institutions, the active participation or at a minimum the consent of the civilian population in a (revitalized) democratic process, and sustained development measures aimed at improving the socio-economic well-being of the population. While a growing body of research examines the prerequisites and specific demands of civil-military cooperation in post-conflict operational contexts (Franke 2006; Jeong 2005; Bellamy et al. 2004), to date there has not been any systematic analysis of the contributions of state and non-state development actors to sustained peacebuilding or of the exact nature and specific characteristics of these contributions. This is especially remarkable given the growing complexity of the missions, the rising number of international, regional and local actors involved and the challenges for effectively cooperating and coordinating these actors.

Since the beginning of the 1990s, our understanding of the role of development policy in crisis prevention and conflict management has profoundly changed. The

reorientation of development policy from "working around" to "working on conflict" coincided with the conceptual extension of international peace missions, owing in large parts to the redefinition of traditional concepts of state-centered, military security. During the Cold War, the vast majority of UN missions had reflected classical peacekeeping according to Chapter VI of the UN Charta. As such, these missions focused primarily on monitoring truces and peace treaties aimed at the immediate termination of the fighting by using a combination of military and diplomatic means. With the collapse of the Cold War balance of power, the international community's attention shifted quickly to address the increasing number and rising intensity of socio-ethnic conflicts and civil wars at the intra- and sub-national levels, particularly within the context of state failure. The resulting "complex emergencies" affected whole regions so profoundly that they could no longer be resolved through traditional peacekeeping or even Chapter-VII peace enforcement missions that target state or other clearly distinguishable parties to the conflict, as the escalating conflicts in Somalia and Rwanda in the early 1990s illustrated (Matthies 2000; Kühne 2005).

Stimulated by the "Agenda for Peace" (Boutros-Ghali 1992), the international community broadened its post-conflict portfolio with the development of a more comprehensive conception of multidimensional peacebuilding in an effort to actively promote a sustainable peace process. Subsumed under the very general mandate of "managing transitions" peacebuilding tasks include the civil and military management of conflict causes and effects at the social, economic and political levels in order to "create the conditions necessary for a sustainable peace in war-torn societies" (Paris 2004, p. 2). Given these objectives, this new type of mission is fundamentally different from classical peacekeeping in that it not only allows for but encourages the direct involvement of civilian and particularly development actors in the planning and implementation of peace missions (Bellamy et al. 2004).

Depending on the specific conflict context, the specter of potential peacebuilding activities comprises the reform of society as a whole and all social institutions in the broadest sense, especially in weak, failing or failed states that have been mired in long-term internal conflict and whose capacity and resources, as a result of the conflict, have been decimated to a point where they are unable to resolve the conflict on their own. The UN in its 2006 *Peacebuilding Capacity Inventory* distinguishes among measures targeting especially the security, governance, justice and socio-economic reconstruction sectors. Development actors now play a central role in the management and resolution of long-term structural conflict causes and the sustainable transformation of conflict societies. Since humanitarian peacebuilding measures are often indistinguishable from traditional developmental assistance measures (e.g., poverty reduction, wealth redistribution, promoting local participation or democratic reform), developmental cooperation is often generalized as peacebuilding based on the simple fact that it happens to occur in a post-conflict region (Barnett et al. 2007).

Likewise, although "peacebuilding" has been used as a label to describe a wide range of post-conflict missions, there is no shared understanding of peacebuilding as a method, concept or approach (GTZ 2003). A recent study by the International Peace Academy concluded: "peacebuilding has become a catch concept (…). It is indiscriminately used to refer to preventive diplomacy, preventive development, conflict prevention, conflict resolution and post-conflict reconstruction" (cited in Kühne 2005, p. 6). Nevertheless, ideally, most observers agree, the end point of all peacebuilding efforts ought to be the establishment of a stable environment and a sustainable peace. Yet, there is much disagreement as to whether peacebuilding pertains primarily to issues that are immediately related to the management of conflict or to a more comprehensive analysis of conflict causes as a premise for social transformation (Baker 1996). In the praxis of post-conflict reconstruction, peacebuilding has often been equated with promoting democracy (cf. Boutros-Ghali 1996). Yet, rapid elections have not only led to problems of legitimacy but, more importantly, have been difficult to implement in environments characterized by a lack of a broad-based social consensus and/or preparation for democracy.

Moreover, there is still no agreement as to whether peacebuilding should be conceptualized narrowly as simply the sum of all projects implemented through external donors or whether it refers to a whole-of-society approach with a complex set of actors and only very limited levels of central coordination (Haugerudbraaten 1998). Closely related to this discussion is the need to define the central peacebuilding actors. Especially with respect to addressing the most basic and fundamental conflict causes, the extent to which sustainable conflict resolution strategies can at all be recommended and implemented by external actors has been repeatedly questioned (see Osler Hampson 1996). Finally, there is also disagreement regarding the timeline for conceptualizing the different peacebuilding phases, foci and themes as well as the prioritization among them (Ryan 1990; Boutros-Ghali 1992; Lederach 1994; Paris 2004; United Nations 2006). The following section briefly summarizes these arguments and examines the main developmental aspects relevant to peacebuilding.

Peacebuilding Roots

Although practiced already as part of the reconstruction efforts in Europe and Japan following Word War-II, peacebuilding was not conceptualized as a specific method for resolving conflict and securing sustainable peace until the 1960s. Then, Johan Galtung developed his conflict triangle laying out three distinct, yet complimentary approaches to conflict resolution: peacekeeping, peacemaking and peacebuilding (Galtung 1975). Galtung described peacekeeping as an approach to reduce the limit of destructiveness, e.g. by applying instruments to guarantee and monitor truces through the use of impartial and neutral third-party military forces. By contrast, peacemaking

involves mediation and negotiation as means to reconcile the opposing goals and interests that incited the conflict in the first place. Finally, peacebuilding reflects an even more comprehensive approach characterized by "the practical implementation of peaceful social change through socio-economic reconstruction and development" and emphasizes the long-term and sustainable transformation of structural conflict causes and patterns in all societal sectors, including military, political and economic structures (Galtung 1975, cited in Miall, Ramsbotham and Woodhouse, p. 187).

By the early 1990s, then UN-Secretary General Boutros-Ghali adopted Galtung's focus on the sustainable transformation of deeply embedded conflict structures in his "Agenda for Peace":

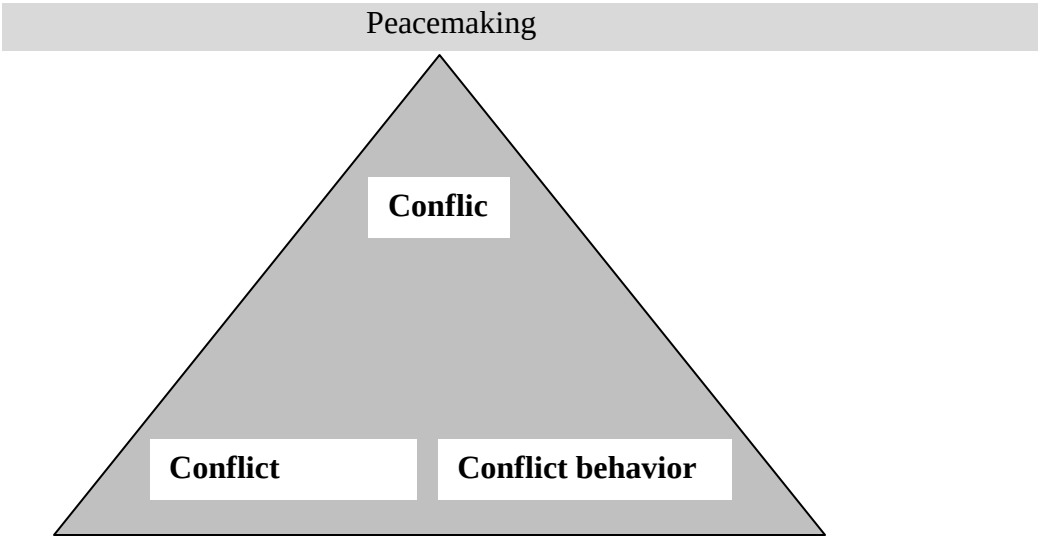
> Preventive diplomacy seeks to resolve disputes before violence breaks out; peace-making and peace-keeping are required to halt conflicts and preserve peace once it is attained. If successful, they strengthen the opportunity for post-conflict peace-building, which can prevent the recurrence of violence among nations and peoples (Boutros-Ghali 1992, Section II, Art. 21).

The tasks of the first UN peacebuilding missions – initially also termed "wider peacekeeping" or "multidimensional peacekeeping" – included the demobilization, disarmament and reintegration (DD&R) of ex-combatants, support for the local police, election administration and monitoring, the development and reform of local administrative structures, justice reform, assistance in the peaceful return of refugees and reconciliation. Apart from security sector reform as the fundamental premise of any peacebuilding engagement in the 1990s, the UN placed primary emphasis on the immediate establishment of democratic institutions and the holding of elections for a transitional government as soon as feasible.

However, the haste with which reforms were oftentimes implemented, institutions built and elections held resulted in many instances in a return to violence and an overall failure of the so-called "poorly prepared democracy experiments" (Debiel 2003, p. 93). The reason for these failures rests in part in the fact that the peacebuilding efforts typically focused more or less exclusively on appeasing the conflicting parties but neglected or completely ignored other relevant social groups. Not surprisingly, the newly established democratic structures often proved ineffective since they were not grounded in a fundamental agreement on the part of all relevant actors for making cancellations and supporting the political reforms. In practice, peacebuilding ran the danger of "continuing the war by peaceful means" (Paris 2004, pp. 175-178). These failures along with a recognized lack of local ownership in the peace process demonstrated that effective peacebuilding requires a bottom-up approach in order to ensure the wide-ranging support of civil society. This, in turn, means that long-term conflict transformation will have to take into account and seek to improve mutual perceptions, attitudes and relations among conflicting groups.

As a result, Ryan (1990) modified Galtung's conflict triangle to more systematically emphasize cognitive, affective, social and motivational conflict elements (see Figure 1). Accordingly, sustainable conflict transformation requires a combination of conflict resolution approaches that account for perceptions, relationships and "conflict attitudes" (peacebuilding), the constructive reconciliation of opposing interests (peacemaking) and the prevention of a resurgence of violence (peacekeeping). Consequently, comprehensive conflict transformation will require active conflict management at all three levels.

Figure 1: Galtung's Conflict Triangle as adapted by Ryan



Source: Ryan, Stephen. 1990. *Ethnic Conflict and International Relations*. Brookfield, VT: Dartmouth University Press, p. 50.

The Material, Social and Cognitive Aspects of Building Peace

Taking a long-range view, effective sustainable conflict transformation resembles the building of social capital, i.e., the establishment of a certain set of informal values or norms shared among members of a group that permit cooperation among them (cf. Fukuyama 1999). Bourdieu (1983) defined social capital as "the aggregate of the actual or potential resources which are linked to possession of a durable network of more or less institutionalized relationships of mutual acquaintance and recognition" (1983, p. 249). Similarly, Putnam conceptualized social capital as "the collective value of all 'social networks' and the inclinations that arise from these networks to do things for each other." (1995, p. 664). Taken together, social capital is anything that facilitates individual or

collective action, generated by networks of relationships, reciprocity, trust, and social norms. Applying the social capital conception to peacebuilding would suggest placing particular attention on the relational dimension of conflict management and effective reconstruction strategies through developing norms of reciprocity.

Lederach (1994) builds on this conception of relationships and *mutual attitudes* as the centerpieces of sustainable social transformation and peacebuilding: "First and foremost is the perhaps self-evident but oft-neglected notion that relationship is the basis of both the conflict and its long-term solution." As such peacebuilding comprises "the full array of stages and approaches needed to transform conflict towards sustainable, peaceful relations and outcomes" (Lederach 1994, p. 26; Saunders 1993). It is evident that effective conflict transformation not only requires measures to rebuild and strengthen the physical and institutional infrastructure, but also the (re)consolidation of the social fabric and the active commitment to advance the peace process by fostering civil society networks and promoting local ownership.

This multi-dimensional approach to peacebuilding frames our model of sustainable conflict transformation based on the premise that reciprocal relationships and shared positive attitudes form central preconditions to a sustainable peace process. Borrowing from Huxley`s conceptualization of human culture as a tripartite structure – artifacts, sociofacts and mentifacts – the SCT model views the cultural context of post-conflict peacebuilding to comprise material, sociological and ideological/cognitive subsystems.[3] While in Huxley's conception mentifacts depict the belief systems, knowledge and forms of expression of a given culture, sociofacts refer to accepted forms of interpersonal behaviour. Artifacts in turn comprise the material manifestations and objects of a society and the usage thereof. All three levels are closely interconnected and mutually dependent in the sense that they are affected and shaped by each other.

Taking into account these separate, yet closely interlinked societal levels, we conceptualize sustainable peacebuilding as building social capital along three dimensions:

- Infrastructures – directly observable material measures for alleviating human suffering – e.g., through military security provisions, relief and rescue activities, distribution of medical and food supplies, setting up of refugee camps – and fostering socio-economic well-being and sustainable development, e.g., through building schools or hospitals, (re)constructing the local/regional infrastructure, concrete DD&R programs and security sector reform (through training local police force, setting up independent courts).
- Relationships – the web of formal and informal networks among and between the relevant actors and the concrete measures affecting these networks. Measures aimed at resolving non-material conflict causes fall into this category, including reconciliation and transitional justice measures, the reintegration of ex-combatants, holding elections or setting up legitimate traditional processes to (s)elect transitional governments.

- Identity/ Conflict Attitudes – this comprises the whole gamut of attitudes, values, perceptions, hopes, fears, and needs that influence and are influenced by the conflict and consequently motivate behavior. Only when peacebuilding measures are perceived as addressing the root causes and consequences of the conflict and when they are supported by the conflicting parties and the population can peacebuilding lead to positive peace and sustainable development.

Timing and Content

Peacebuilding, conceived this way, comprises the sum of all measures aimed at the sustained and peaceful transformation of violent conflicts as well as their causes and effects. Differences of opinion exist, however, in terms of the necessary prioritization of tasks, functions and objectives of each peacebuilding mission. Ideally, most observers agree that peacebuilding operations need to continue until "a society can sustain its transition without external support and it is replaced by a sustainable development period" (de Coning 2006, p. 91). Consequently, effective peacebuilding requires the implementation of specific measures, especially with regard to guaranteeing security, in a timely fashion (*timely response*) and, at the same time, the willingness by the donor and the peacebuilding communities to design and implement long-term consolidation measures (*managing transitions*).

The literature typically divides peacebuilding into three distinct, yet interdependent phases stretching over a period of up to ten years. While it is evident that the length and transition time of these individual phases largely depends on the given situation in a specific conflict setting, the following "ideal type" timeline presents different stages inherent in most peacebuilding operations:

(1) the initial response or short-term stabilization phase (initial 3-12 months) aimed at establishing a safe and secure environment and managing the immediate consequences of the conflict through emergency humanitarian assistance;
(2) the transformation or transition phase (years 1-3) where the focus shifts from emergency relief to recovery, rehabilitation and reconstruction including the appointment/election of a (interim) government; and
(3) the sustainability or consolidation phase (up to 10 years post-conflict) where the emphasis lies on reconciliation and nation-building, strengthening the rule of law, security sector reform, and socio-economic recovery (de Coning 2006).

As a society progresses through the various peacebuilding stages, the influence and involvement of external actors should continuously give way to that of internal/local actors.

This three-stage peacebuilding process ideally concludes with the successful transformation of violent conflict through the establishment of legitimate and effective political and legal institutions, the active engagement of civil society in a newly

established or revitalized democratic process, and sustained development measures aimed at improving the socio-economic well-being of the general population.[4] In this process, numerous civilian and military, state and non-state, international, regional, national and local actors interact with one another in ever-changing dynamic constellations and with shifting authorities and responsibilities. Much recent research has analyzed the cultural, organizational, operational and normative differences in the interactions among and coordination between these actors. The focus of most of this research has been on specific operational contexts – e.g., humanitarian assistance (Sida 2005; Anderson 2004), disaster relief (Pugh 1995), military intervention (Gourlay 2000; Weiss 1999), classical peacekeeping (Bellamy et al. 2004; Diehl 1993) – or on distinct elements of these interactions, including civil-military coordination/cooperation (CIMIC) (Franke 2006; Heinemann-Grüder & Pietz 2004; Gordon 2001), the function of the United Nations or regional organizations (Jeong 2005; UNDPKO 2003) or the role of non-governmental organizations in peace operations (Aall 1996). Under-researched to date is the dynamic interplay among the various actors operating at the intersection of security and development.

Tasks and Goals

Peacebuilding as conceived by Galtung and the United Nations (UN Secretary-General 2000) assumes that the creation of "something that is more than just the absence of war," namely the establishment of a "positive" or sustainable peace through the transformation of structural and cultural violence, helps prevent the resurgence of violence and the outbreak of future conflicts. In practice, this assumption is usually accompanied by the normative liberal or democratic peace theorem, according to which the establishment of a peaceful post-conflict order as well as a society's capacity to mitigate internal conflicts depend on the rapid implementation of liberal, democratic institutions (Paris 2004, p. 39).

Based on this premise, Barnett et al. suggest the following three peacebuilding tasks: (1) the establishment of stability and security; (2) the implementation of legitimate (democratic) political institutions and (3) the management of socio-economic conflict factors (Barnett et al. 2007; Tschirgi 2004; Ball & Halevy 1996). Similarly, the UN's *Agenda for Peace* concludes that

> To be truly successful, (peacebuilding) must come to include comprehensive efforts to identify and support structures which will tend to consolidate peace and advance a sense of confidence and well-being among people. … these may include disarming the previously warring parties and the restoration of order, the custody and possible destruction of weapons, repatriating refugees, advisory and training support for security personnel, monitoring elections, advancing efforts to protect human rights, reforming or strengthening governmental institutions and

> promoting formal and informal processes of participation (Boutros-Ghali 1992, Chapter IV, paragraph 55).

In practice, the United Nations associate peacebuilding activities with four distinct sectors, outlined in its *Peacebuilding Capacity Inventory* (UN Executive Office of the Secretary General 2006):

- Security and Public Order (e.g., security sector governance, law enforcement, DD&R, mine action);
- Justice and Reconciliation (e.g., transitional justice, judicial and legal reform, human rights);
- Governance and Participation (e.g., good offices, constitution-making, local governance, political parties, civil society, media);
- Social and Economic Well-Being (e.g., protection of vulnerable groups, basic needs, gender, physical infrastructure, employment, economic development).

Especially with regard to the second sector, it is important to note that "Justice and Reconciliation" comprises two distinct, yet closely interconnected sets of tasks: (1) guaranteeing the rule of law and the establishment of transparent legal institutions and (2) the legal resolution of injustices and violence as well as efforts to foster reconciliation among the conflicting parties, thereby targeting, at least in part, psycho-social conflict motivators and the long-term transformation of conflict attitudes and relations.

Although the UN Peacebuilding Capacity Inventory provides a relatively comprehensive list of measures and activities relevant to effective post-conflict reconstruction, it does not prioritize among sectors or activities. How do we determine which activities are most important, which conflict sectors demand immediate attention? How do we prioritize among peacebuilding activities?

Setting Priorities

Conflict transformation is a complex, partly coordinated, partly cumulative process with a wide specter of actors and activities. Prioritization among the actors and activities within each sector as well as for each peacebuilding phase will depend on the specific contextual parameters of each conflict ranging from determining basic needs (security, food, medical and psychological services) to establishing the necessary conditions for reforming existing and/or building new local institutions. Even peacebuilding operations under UN auspices and control ideally require a fundamental agreement of all actors on the sectoral and temporal priorities. Reviewing recent literature on peacebuilding strategies, Schneckener (2005) distinguishes four peacebuilding approaches each with a distinct series of priorities:

Liberalization-First emphasizes the democratization of war-torn societies as the premise for sustainable peace and respect for human rights. Grounded in the democratic

peace theorem (Kant 2002; Doyle 1986; Russett 1993) this approach advocates speedy elections first, followed by the establishment of legitimate democratic institutions. As argued above, criticism is mounting regarding the effectiveness and legitimacy of transferring democracy to post-conflict societies with little to no democratic tradition, given the more than questionable success of this approach in Afghanistan and Iraq.

By contrast, *Institutionalization-First* reverses the order and recommends the establishment of political institutions prior to any intended democratization or liberalization of the political system. Proponents of this approach (e.g., Paris 2004) believe that liberalization is a conflictive process requiring a relatively stable political environment not found in fragile post-conflict states. Thus, attempts at democratization absent stable political structures may actually incite a return to violent conflict.

Responding to the series of failing external interventions in the 1990s, *Security-First* focuses on guaranteeing security through de-escalation, the (re-)establishment of the state monopoly on violence, and the separation of the conflicting parties (Marten 2004). In essence, this approach resembles the original mandate behind "first-generation" peacekeeping missions.

In contrast, *Civil-Society-First* emphasizes bottom-up measures through the active engagement of civil society aimed at building civil capacity for the peaceful resolution of conflict. This approach advocates the strengthening of so-called peace constituencies such as churches, political parties, NGOs, human rights groups and the norms and values that characterize and motivate those groups (see Ryan 1990; Lederach 1994).

While *Security-First* and *Liberalization-First* approaches target the stabilization phase immediately following the secession of violence, *Institutionalization-First* and *Civil-Society First* approaches pursue longer-term transformation objectives (Schneckener 2005). Notwithstanding the need to develop a balance between the *Liberalization First* and *Institutionalization First* approaches, it is evident that the four approaches by and large present complementary, rather than mutually exclusive strategies. While guaranteeing a stable and secure environment (*Security First*) evidently is a necessary precondition to all reconstruction efforts and to the deployment of most civilian aid personnel, sustainable conflict transformation will require the active participation and ownership of all parts of civil society in all phases of a peace process (*Civil-Society First*).

In our model, we conceptualize comprehensive peacebuilding as the sum of all measures undertaken as part of the peace process in support of building local social, political and economic capacities in order to create and maintain social and institutional structures that will help prevent the relapse into violent conflict.

In general, the central challenges of a sustainable peace process lie in the provision of security, the establishment of stable political institutions and the resolution of the underlying socio-economic conflict causes. Consequently, we suggest a multi-stage model of sustainable conflict transformation based on the capacity sectors outlined above – security, governance, justice, and social and economic well-being – and addressing the

needs and priorities posed by the unique circumstances of each conflict. No peace process will be successful without local ownership. Thus, in order to ensure the comprehensive support of the local population, peacebuilding measures must target, above and beyond the rebuilding of physical and institutional infrastructures, also the building of social capital and the long-term improvement of attitudes toward and relationships among the different (and often conflicting) social groups.

Developing Peace: A Multistage Model for Sustainable Conflict Transformation

The analysis above has illustrated that effective peacebuilding and the contribution of developmental measures thereto ought to be conceptualized along three axes: temporal, sectoral and socio-dimensional. Specifically, we operationalize these axes as follows:

Socio-dimensional axis (see above):

- Infrastructures
- Relationships
- Conflict Attitudes

Temporal axis:

- Initial response
- Transformation
- Fostering sustainability

Functional (sectoral) axis (see UN Executive Office of the Secretary General 2006):

- Security and public order
  - *Security Sector Governance*
  - *Law Enforcement Institutions*
  - *Defense Institutions*
  - *DD&R (disarmament, demobilization, reintegration)*
  - *Mine Action*
- Justice and reconciliation
  - *Transitional Justice and Community Rebuilding*
  - *Judicial and Legal*
  - *Corrections*
  - *Human Rights*
- Governance and participation
  - *Good Offices and Peace Support*
  - *Constitution-Making*
  - *Public Administration and Government Strengthening*
  - *Local Governance*
  - *Economic Strategy and Coordination of International Assistance*

  - *Financial Transparency and Accountability*
  - *Elections, Electoral Systems and Processes*
  - *Political Parties*
  - *Civil Society*
  - *Media*
- Social and economic well-being
  - *Protection of Vulnerable Groups / Protection, Return and Reintegration of IDPs and Refugees*
  - *Basic Needs*
  - *Gender*
  - *Physical Infrastructure*
  - *Employment Generation*
  - *Economic Foundations for Growth and Development*

Based on these socio-dimensional, temporal and functional parameters, we suggest a multi-dimensional model for sustainable conflict transformation that enables us to assess the contributions of development actors in each of the four peacebuilding sectors provided by the United Nations. The SCT model renders a three-dimensional matrix with nine cells respectively for each peacebuilding sector (Figure 2). The vertical axis presents the peacebuilding timeline (temporal component) while the horizontal axis shows the socio-dimensional component. The specific sectoral activities are color-coded and entered into each cell. The size of circles in each cell indicate the number of sectoral projects, i.e., the more activities development actors undertake in each sector the larger the circle.[5]

The SCT model provides a framework to classify development activities and projects according to their relevance and contribution to specific peacebuilding missions. More specifically, it offers two different forms of analysis. On the one hand, the model can be employed to assess the project portfolios and generate the profile of individual development actors with regard to peacebuilding and its four sectors.

In addition, the model also offers a tool to classify and analyze the entire scope of development projects implemented in a specific post-conflict setting to identify and address possible gaps.

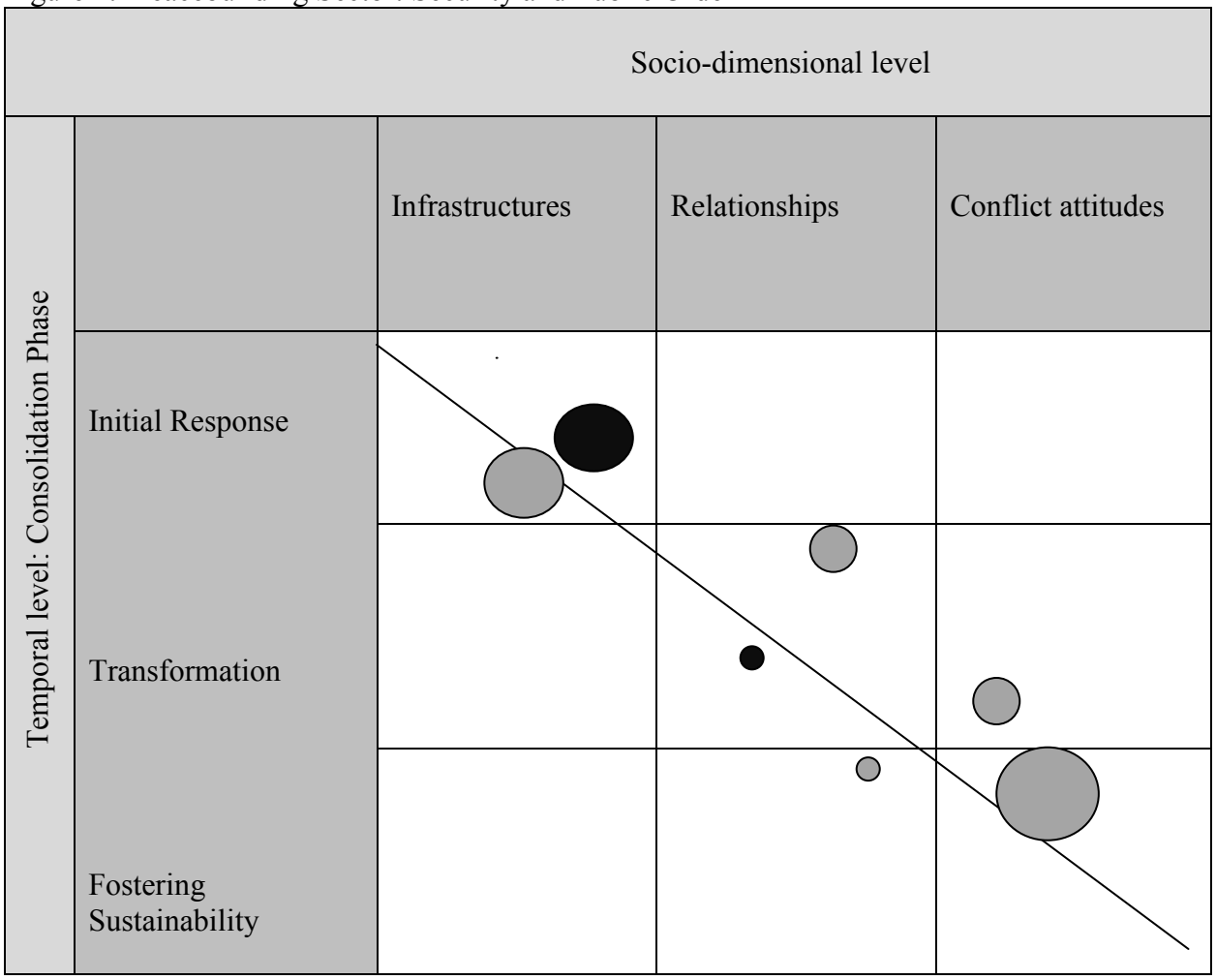
Within this framework, particular emphasis is placed on long-term improvements on the social and interpersonal levels and thus on the specific needs and disrupted social fabrics of war-torn societies. It is based on the assumption that post-conflict development not only requires the reconstruction of infrastructures but also a systematic buy-in of all affected conflict parties to the activities in all relevant issue areas (sectors) and an active effort to improve relations and mutual attitudes amongst them.

We assume that following the reconstruction of material and institutional infrastructures in the early stages of the peacebuilding process (*initial response*), developmental peacebuilding activities should increasingly target the social and

interpersonal level in the mid- to long term perspective (*transformation & fostering sustainability*) from the early planning stage.

In the SCT model, such an "ideal case" would be depicted by the distribution of all projects along an imagined diagonal line from top left to bottom right.

Figure 2: Peacebuilding Sector: Security and Public Order



Topical Areas
A) Security System Governance [black]
B) Law Enforcement Agencies [gray]
C) Defence Reform
D) DDR
E) Mine Action

A preliminary test conducting portfolio analyses of German development actors contributing directly to and extending beyond UN peace missions in Sierra Leone (1998-2005) and Kampuchea (1991-93) (Franke and Schmitt 2008; Warnecke 2008) enabled us

to refine the SCT model presented here.[6] This pretest revealed considerable differences in terms of the specific expertise and foci of the respective actors and allowed for an initial classification of capacities within the cells of the developmental peacebuilding matrix presented in Figure 2.

These preliminary results are encouraging for future empirical research on the scope, duration, size and impact of the development projects in peacebuilding contexts. Considering the need to further enhance donor coordination and aid effectiveness, it is hoped that further research employing the SCT model will eventually provide a user-friendly tool that helps to assess the peacebuilding capacity of individual donors as well as potential synergies, cooperation partners and gaps to be addressed.

Conclusion

Based on the widely recognized need that security and development, especially in post-conflict contexts must go hand-in-hand in order to achieve sustainable peace, we set out to develop an analytical framework that would enable us to systematically examine the contributions of state and non-state development actors to sustained peacebuilding. The SCT model allows for an analysis of developmental contributions to peacebuilding by functional sector according to four issue areas: security and public order; justice and reconciliation; governance and participation; and social and economic well-being. In addition, and herein lies the central contribution of the model, it emphasizes the assessment of measures aimed at aiding the transformation of cognitive conflict motivators such as conflict attitudes and identities.

We have argued with Galtung and others for the need to take into account the social and cultural dimensions of conflicts based on the premise that structural and cultural violence present key factors to the outbreak, legitimation and consequently transformation of violent conflict (see Galtung 1975; see also Ryan 1990 and Lederach 1994). The SCT model enables us not only to identify the thematic expertise of development actors within the operational peacebuilding context, it also allows us to assess local ownership, i.e., the extent to which civil society is integrated and participates in the peacebuilding process from start to finish. Successful conflict transformation, we have argued, requires measures along the entire spectrum of sectoral and socio-dimensional activities. The model suggests that effective and sustainable peacebuilding would render a graphic representation of development activities across peacebuilding phases, sectors and material, sociological and cognitive dimensions along a diagonal from the top left to the bottom right (see Figure 2).

Development cannot take place under conditions of war. Worse yet, wars destroy any developmental progress. At the same time, wars, the military interventions to terminate them and the stabilization and peacebuilding efforts to reconstruct war-torn societies require enormous strategic, financial and human resources. Not only is post-

conflict reconstruction more expensive than conflict prevention, it can actually undermine its intended purpose. Given the high probability of post-conflict societies to relapse into violence (see Collier et al. 2003), it is oftentimes necessary to deploy military forces long-term to provide security for the peacebuilding efforts. This in turn, however, may actually be perceived as a militarization of the peace process jeopardizing attempts at ensuring local ownership (see Franke 2006). Therefore, the active and targeted engagement of development actors even in the immediate aftermath of the conflict becomes instrumental to the success of the establishment of sustainable peace. Conflict prevention and especially the prevention of a relapse into conflict has become a central purpose of development work. Development measures may help to reduce structural conflict causes and avert crisis escalation early on and support civil society and local government actors in developing non-violent conflict resolution strategies and structures. In doing so, development actors contribute invaluably to the promotion of sustainable peace following violent conflict.

Although we are now beginning to recognize the immense potential for peace to be realized through targeted development, to date there is no comprehensive instrument to examine and measure this potential. The SCT model developed here provides such a first rough assessment framework. It needs to be operationalized for specific post-conflict contexts and tested in select cases. Once the SCT assessment tools have been refined further through desk research, the model should be field tested. Eventually, the SCT model should generate a series of best practices and lessons learned that can be employed in both effective conflict prevention and post-conflict reconstruction strategic and operational planning. The SCT model developed in this paper can provide an initial starting point for meeting this ambitious challenge. Security and peace are inextricably linked demanding innovative and integrative strategies bringing together a wide range of actors. In an environment of scarce resources, measuring the effects of their contributions to the shared goals of promoting peace and improving the living conditions for the most vulnerable groups reflects not only normative preferences for "doing good." It can also offer an empirical instrument for guiding informed policy decisions and prudent resource allocations.

Notes

1. <http://www.gtz.de/en/aktuell/16157.htm> Last Accessed 20 April 2010.
2. <http://www.gtz.de/en/25193.htm> Last Accessed 20 April 2010.
3. This terminology was originally introduced by Huxley as part of his concept of memetics analyzing the transmission of cultural information. The framework was later adapted and modified by L. White who developed a similar tripartite concept of culture consisting of ideological, technological and sociological structures. Cf. Roseberry, William. 1989. *Anthropologies and Histories*, Rutgers University Press: New Brunswick; Fantini, Alvino E. & Beatriz C. Fantini. 1995. "Artifacts, Sociofacts, Mentifacts. A Sociocultural Framework", in: Fantini & Fantini (eds.): *New Ways in Teaching Culture*, pp. 56-59, Alexandria VA: TESOL.

4. In practice, many activities characteristic of a particular peacebuilding phase will occur simultaneously and will be shaped by the level of intensity of the engagement of the peacebuilding actors involved in each case. Given the rapidly changing conditions underlying post-conflict reconstruction efforts, it becomes especially important for development actors to emphasize the complex interdependence and the continuity of the peacebuilding process and to ensure coherence and comprehensive transition planning including the entire spectrum of developmental measures from short-term humanitarian assistance to long range development coordination (Matthies 1997).
5. A more sophisticated version of this model may also account for project costs in each cell dependent on the availability of project cost data.
6. These case studies were conducted based on project information provided by the respective agencies and ministries (publications, archives, interviews).

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