

BUILDING PEACE

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A Local Woman with a Global Platform

Interview with Nobel
Peace Prize Laureate
Leymah Gbowee

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BECOME THE TYRANT
WE ARE FIGHTING

BETWEEN WARNING AND
ACTION: PREVENTING
MASS VIOLENCE AND
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THE PRICE
OF VIOLENCE



Alliance for
Peacebuilding

BUILDING PEACE

A FORUM FOR PEACE AND SECURITY
IN THE 21ST CENTURY



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A LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT AND EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

Dear Reader,

Welcome to *Building Peace*, a new publication that highlights the myriad of ways in which peacebuilding can heal war-torn societies and prevent deadly violence in the world's most chaotic and fragile conflict zones. Peacebuilding offers hope and concrete solutions for many of the most vexing social problems, from the challenges of governance following the Arab Spring to the disruptions caused by globalization and climate change. As the articles in this issue demonstrate, peacebuilding is a highly inclusive concept, touching on the fields of security, democracy, development, health, and many more. Peacebuilding reaches from the grassroots level to the highest policy circles, seeking to bring security, reconciliation, and structural change to societies embroiled in violent conflict. The field has strengthened over the past twenty years, but too often the dynamic stories behind the people who create peace get lost in the media glare of war, terrorism, and bloodshed.

The Alliance for Peacebuilding, the creator of *Building Peace*, is the institutional home of leading peacebuilding institutions and professionals around the globe. With more than seventy organizational members and several hundred practitioners, our mission is to provide a platform of collaboration and creativity for the field and to raise the visibility of peacebuilding worldwide. *Building Peace* is born from our desire to broaden the conversation about what peacebuilding is; to recognize the many ways women, men, and children are building peace in their local communities and capitals; to articulate the notion that global security depends on creating peaceful and inclusive societies; and to

document how meaningful peacebuilding efforts combine to achieve, through long-term dedication, the lasting peace and security the vast majority of the world seeks.

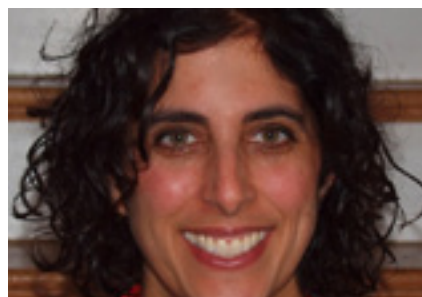
This issue's authors represent multiple viewpoints, cultures, and contexts: They write from Colombia, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Liberia, Mexico, Syria, Uganda, and the United States. They are united, however, by their commitment to reducing violent conflict, identifying mechanisms for reconciliation, and building more peaceful and secure nations. In the cover article, Liberian Nobel Laureate Leymah Gbowee adopts an expansive definition of peacebuilding that the Alliance for Peacebuilding

enthusiastically embraces. She describes the challenges that arise after conflict ends and the many streams of action that must come together to build sustainable peace. Neil Levine's feature article provides a U.S. government perspective on how to best gather early warning information in fragile and conflict-affected nations in order to act and respond effectively to conflict. The many voices and issues represented in *Building Peace* add up to a nuanced vision for peace and security, describing the many paths involved in building peace and emphasizing why peace is an integral part of our lives. We welcome you to our community and we encourage you to contact us with your own thoughts and reactions to *Building Peace* and to the peace and security challenges facing us all. ■

Warmly,



Melanie Greenberg
President and CEO
Alliance for Peacebuilding



Jessica Berns
Editor-in-Chief
Building Peace



WE WILL NOT BECOME THE TYRANT

by Rafif Jouejati

WE ARE FIGHTING

I last spoke to Bashar Assad in 1996. He assured me then that as part of his inevitable ascent to power, change was coming. He knew he could not expect the Syrian people to casually accept the heir apparent without dramatic improvements across the board. Assad was preparing to bring Syria into the twentieth century. He wanted openness, honesty, and truth for his country and his people.

Fast forward to March 2011. I wondered what Assad would do as the Arab Spring finally reached Syria. It was a golden opportunity for the openness, honesty, and truth he had talked about. Instead, he quickly answered with a military response that shocked the most cynical of Syrians. Bullets rained down on protesters at peaceful demonstrations, and the government's violent response grew at the same pace as the uprising. The more civilians

chanted that they wanted to overthrow the regime, the more brutal the attacks became. A government disinformation campaign soon was in full swing. Activists armed with no more than banners and flowers were called terrorists, germs, and agents of the West. Syrians watched, dumbfounded, as live ammunition turned to aerial shelling. More innocents—first in the dozens, then in the hundreds, and now in the thousands—were massacred by their own government, by the man who once wanted openness, honesty, and truth for his people.

I am writing in December 2012; I am not in Syria, so I cannot hear the incessant rat-tat-tat of machine guns. Nor do I hear what must be a deafening sound when barrels full of dynamite crash into the earth and leave craters as big as housing developments, the special signature of Assad's openness and

truth. I hear the agony and frustration in the voices of nonviolent activists, nearly all of whom have lost several loved ones during their struggle for freedom, dignity, and democracy. But behind the agony I hear steely resolve: *We will not stop until we achieve our goals. We will not resort to violence. We will not become the tyrant we seek to overthrow.*

Even as the Syrian revolution has become increasingly militarized, the civil disobedience movement has become more sophisticated. Activists who started with simple protests and flowers have moved to complex strategies and tactics. They have braved gunfire and risked detention and torture. They have distributed leaflets and produced newspapers. They have conducted sit-ins, sick-ins, and noise rallies. They have super-glued entrances to government ministries and spilled liquids onto computer keyboards. Religious elders and the business community have collaborated on massive strikes that left the Assad regime reeling. Organizations such as the Local Coordination Committee (LCC) in Syria have managed, despite all constraints, to stage active campaigns designed to bring even more Syrians into the revolution. The famous Strike for Dignity was a huge success and the whispered negotiations with would-be defectors continue to deal blow after blow to Assad's tottering regime. Syrians of all religious and ethnic backgrounds have learned to hack into state-owned systems, such as the telecommunications industry; in one instance, activists delivered tens of thousands of prorevolution text messages to communities across Syria. Alawites, Christians, and Sunnis have collaborated to treat the wounded, deliver relief, and plan the next campaign. Most recently, the LCC has launched a new campaign to appeal to battalions of the Free Syrian Army to unite and observe international laws as part of a wartime code of conduct. Using slogans such as "treat your captives with dignity and justice" and "my weapon can

only be used to overthrow the regime," the LCC was able to strike a balance between keeping the nonviolent movement alive and well and supporting the brave soldiers who risk their lives to ensure that nonviolent activists can continue their work. These are all acts of civil disobedience, since filming a protest, delivering food to the hungry, or providing medical assistance to a wounded activist can be punishable by death. Still others, both inside Syria and abroad, participate in massive planning efforts to pave the way for the transition to democracy. They prepare comprehensive plans—The Day After document is one example (see www.thedayafter-sy.org) to help Syria's transformation into a democratic state, in which all citizens are equal before the law.

Many maintain that Syria is in a state of civil war, or ask if sectarian violence will hold the country in its grip for decades to come. No one can answer this question with any certainty. But when I hear the resolve in the voices of Syrians from all sects and backgrounds, I am proud. I know we will triumph. Last summer, when I learned that Christian priests cooked Iftar dinner for fasting Sunni Muslims during Ramadan, I was humbled. I know it is not sectarian. When I learn that Syrians inside Syria—Christians, Muslims, Druze, and everyone else who makes up our culture—are delivering relief across all communities, I am moved to tears. Ultimately, we are united. I know, deep down, that Assad may not leave but for a sniper's bullet or a targeted air strike. But I also know that nonviolent activists in Syria continue to give their lives as they march on to a peaceful, free nation that will eventually heal from its wounds.

The cycle of demonstrations and gunfire repeats itself every day. We understand perfectly the need to defend ourselves against a brutal regime and the urge to respond to the government's crack-down with violence of our own. Yet we

maintain our position that violence plays into Assad's hands, that violence begets more violence and revenge begets more revenge. We are certain that if we truly want democracy, the transition must begin with us. We will not become the tyrant we are fighting. ■

Rafif Jouejati is the spokesperson for the Local Coordination Committees (LCC) in Syria and the director of FREE-Syria, a nonprofit organization that focuses on women's empowerment.

But when I hear the resolve in the voices of Syrians from all sects and backgrounds, I am proud. I know we will triumph.



THE VICTIMS' HOUR

by Paula Gaviria Betancur

The law has forced the government to revise old paradigms, overcome prejudices, and recognize victims as subjects of rights and duties.

In September 2012 Colombian president Juan Manuel Santos Calderón announced that the national government would begin peace negotiations with the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC).

The talks could end the hemisphere's longest-running armed conflict, which has already created at least 5.8 million victims, or 12 percent of Colombia's population. Thanks to the Victims and Land Restitution Law, which the Colombian congress approved in 2011, victims will be at the center of the peace process.

Over six decades, the Colombian congress repeatedly granted amnesties and pardons to members of armed groups, and almost every administration initiated peace talks and negotiations with insurgent leaders. The United States, the European Union, Canada, Japan, and the Rio

Group—composed of most Latin American and Caribbean countries—supported Colombian initiatives combining military strategies and regional development programs. Under Plan Colombia, which began in 1998, the country saw increased military and police counterinsurgency and counterdrug action as well as expanded social services to rural areas. International actors also supported peace conferences and the joint mission abroad of a delegation consisting of state officials and guerrilla leaders in 2000. The Justice and Peace Law of 2005 established incentives to demobilize paramilitary commanders and fighters.

The Victims and Land Restitution Law of 2011 provides for reparations for those who have been victims of forced displacement, forced dispossession or abandonment of land, homicide, kidnapping, torture, forced

Time is now on the side of the victims of Colombia's conflict. No one can stop this process.

disappearance, recruitment of children, antipersonnel landmines, and sexual crimes during the conflict, starting from January 1, 1985. Implementation began in January 2012. The law stipulates that victims must receive comprehensive reparation and assistance through a national system that establishes complementary responsibilities for forty-two entities, coordinated by the government's Unit for Victims' Attention and Reparation under my leadership. A total of 54.9 trillion pesos—\$30.1 million—have been earmarked for the ten years that the law will be in effect, and a national plan for the assistance and integral reparation of victims has been approved, including a mechanism for continuous monitoring and review.

The Colombian model that will be implemented by the Unit for Victims' Attention and Reparation has moved from one of humanitarian support and assistance to a system of compensation, restitution, rehabilitation, satisfaction, and guarantees that victims will not be victimized again. The system is based on psychosocial intervention, which suggests that the lasting effects of victimization can be addressed by improving the circumstances of victims' lives now and a do-no-harm approach. The new model recognizes the potential of victims rather than only calculating the damage or losses the conflict has caused; it accounts for a victim's gender and ethnicity, the type of victimization, and the victim's specific situation of vulnerability; and it prioritizes the rights of children and adolescents.

The Unit for Victims' Attention and Reparation is working with victims to create avenues for individual and collective reparation. Between January and July 2012, we resolved 55,653 administrative reparations that had been stalled for different reasons. We also created a unified registry of victims because victims had not been a category of persons that was tracked centrally like internally displaced persons or refugees. By the end 2012, we assessed 100,000 new requests for registration and improved our single declaration form, applying differential approaches and distinguishing among different types of victimizing actions.

The 2011 law has caused the government to embark on an institutional transition, forcing it to revise old paradigms, overcome prejudices, and recognize victims as subjects of rights and duties. We believe strongly that victims should engage with political decision makers, who in turn should acknowledge and respect victims' interests and guarantee their access to information and the goods and services stated in the law. As victims begin asserting their rights, the government must adhere to higher political and ethical standards to prevent fiscal constraints, adjustment programs, and the world financial crisis from being invoked to justify denying or delaying settlement of the social debt owed to victims.

The Victims and Land Restitution Law unquestionably has paved the way for Colombia's new peace process, and it is

already a fact that protecting the rights of victims will be a priority throughout the negotiations. The entire process is certainly an encouraging development for victims, as negotiations will also include discussions of rural development, expanded protections to exercise political opposition and citizen participation, disarmament, ceasefires, and a solution to the problem of drug trafficking. With this agenda, the state resumes the search for solutions to many of the conflict's underlying causes.

Time is now on the side of the victims of Colombia's conflict. No one can stop this process, and the victims are watching expectantly for the full implementation of the law. It is up to us to ensure that they do not watch and wait in vain. ■

Paula Gaviria Betancur leads the Unit for Victims' Attention and Reparation within the Colombian government and has a civil society background.



RESTORING HOPE

by Victor Ochen

In 2002, when Caroline was seventeen years old, she was abducted in northern Uganda by rebel soldiers in the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA), a militant group responsible for recruiting child soldiers and for widespread atrocities over the past two decades in central Africa, including Uganda, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and Sudan.

When the soldiers found her, she was traveling home after spending a night in the bush in fear of the LRA attacks. They pierced her lips with a sharp piece of metal, threaded a lock through the hole, and padlocked her mouth shut so she could not say anything while they raped her. When people from her village found her the next day in a district in northern Uganda, they had to slit open her lips with a knife to remove the padlock. For years, she lived with her injuries, known by her community as *dako ame doge okak*, the woman with the slit-opened mouth.

In 2010, the African Youth Initiative Network (AYINET) found out about Caroline's case. The organization, based in northern Uganda, has provided surgery to more than 2,500 victims of serious violations and helped to provide nonsurgical medical care to an additional 2,000 victims. The people whom AYINET serves have suffered injury and deformity due to physical trauma, gunshots, retained shrapnel, maiming, immolation, torture, and sexual abuse. They are in critical need of reconstructive surgery and psychosocial support. AYINET provides not

only medical services but also emotional support, helping survivors toward the full restoration of hope. The interplay between physical and emotional support reinforces their ability to deal with their situation. The psychosocial work, particularly for women and children, aims to facilitate physical and emotional healing and to build resilience within individuals, families, and communities, helping people to recover from the crimes committed against them and deal with their effects in their present and future lives. For victims and their communities, sustainable peace begins only when physical and emotional suffering stops.

Counselors from AYINET visited Caroline in her village several times, traveling four hours by motorbike over rough terrain. When they obtained funding, they brought her to the city of Lira in northern Uganda, where she was operated on twice to repair her mouth. "If I had power, I would not have lived with this disfigurement for all these years," she says. "But I had no choice, until AYINET came all the way to my deep village, paid for my transport to the hospital, took care of me, and even

paid my medical expense. I can't thank the people enough who supported me."

Untreated war injuries are a reminder of the sustained shocks of conflict, and for many victims, severe physical and emotional pains are a further denial of their right to live. Treating injuries helps bring peace to victims and their communities who desperately need it. Helping someone who has been in anguish for years walk free from pain is effective, practical human rights work; it is true justice, delivered beyond the courtroom. ■

Victor Ochen is the director of the African Youth Initiative Network (AYINET) and a fellow at the Center for Global Health and Peacebuilding in Uganda, where he works to rehabilitate victims of violence perpetrated by the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) in Uganda.



A LOCAL WOMAN WITH A GLOBAL PLATFORM

Interview with Nobel Peace Prize Laureate **Leymah Gbowee**

by **Jessica Berns**

Ms. Leymah Gbowee is a peace activist, trained social worker, and women's rights activist who was a leader of the women's peace movement that helped end the Liberian civil war in 2003. In 2011 she, Liberian president Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, and Yemeni activist Tawakkul Karman were jointly awarded the Nobel Peace Prize. Ms. Gbowee is the founder and president of the Gbowee Peace Foundation Africa. *Building Peace* Editor-in-Chief Jessica Berns interviewed Ms. Gbowee in October 2012.

Jessica: What does peacebuilding mean to you? When did you first begin to see yourself as a peacebuilder?

Leymah: Every human has the right to live, to express themselves, to worship the way they want to worship. An effective government is one that enables and empowers its citizens to contribute to their communities. When people are allowed to be part of every process that affects their lives, that is true peace, true freedom from fear and violence. My work is to ensure that no group is left out of making the decisions that affect their lives.

I first saw myself as a peacebuilder when I got involved in addressing community problems and others joined my efforts. I was very concerned about teen pregnancy and early sexual activity among the young girls in my community. My earliest and fondest memory of being a young peacebuilder is sitting with little girls talking about bodily integrity and the importance of education.

Jessica: When did you first begin to see that your demonstrations were having an effect?

Leymah: When we got endorsements from the churches—especially the archbishop of the Catholic Church, who was the heart of the country. Later on, he helped us raise money for our work. Another time was when we had a peace festival and the turnout was so great. At first we were not considered meaningful opposition to the Taylor administration and his allies, but when so many came to our festival, then attention turned to our efforts.

Jessica: How does your work with girls connect to building peaceful and inclusive societies?

Leymah: Girls are the first casualties of war through forced marriage, rape, sexual

assault, and unplanned and forced pregnancy. They are barred access to school and to opportunities, among other realities that consort to restrict and eviscerate girls' abilities to define their future. Peaceful and inclusive societies expand the arc of possibility for individuals and families.

Jessica: What has been the effect of winning the Nobel Peace Prize on you? Your children and family? Your country? Africa?

Leymah: I always say that I am a local girl with a global platform. The prize has led to the recognition that women play a pivotal role in peacebuilding at the grassroots level. Finally, our voice is recognized. I am one representative of the thousands of Liberian women who stood with me in the rain, sat with me in the sun, and joined me in protest. I am deeply protective of the mantle I carry on their behalf. One man didn't start the war and one woman didn't end it. The Nobel Prize is a celebration and recognition of Liberian women's effort to end the war. The prize has provided me a global platform to broaden the conversation about war, peace, and stability. Women and girls have always been affected by war. The Nobel Peace Prize has helped all of our efforts to define true peace—one that is not only the absence of war but is inclusive of opportunity.

I have a young family, and my work and travels have certainly affected my children in positive and negative ways. The work has certainly increased but so have the possibilities; no award or recognition compares to being able to provide not just for their needs but also for their wants. My six children range in age from nineteen to three years old, and like many working mothers, I wish I had more hours in the day to be a fulltime activist and mother. It is not unusual to see me accompanied by my three-foot version attending meetings and conferences. My older children, who once only knew a corner of Monrovia, have



“I am one representative of the thousands of Liberian women who stood with me in the rain, sat with me in the sun, and joined me in protest.”

traveled internationally and recognize how much we have been blessed.

For Liberia, which has two Nobel laureates, the conversation about the country has changed. We are very talented people, and the civil war obscured how much we have to offer the world. It has also shown how women's groups all over Africa work together to pressure leaders for safer communities, greater representation in decision-making positions, cleaner water, greater access to education and jobs, and beyond. We have women's groups in the West asking for our advice in how to organize and sustain focus.

Jessica: What are your aspirations for Liberia and specifically the girls and women of Liberia?

Leymah: Liberia has given me a lot and the war took so much away. My hope is that girls and women never have to know the effects of war or the absence of peace in their lives—that they can invest in themselves because there is a future that will recognize their talents and provide an outlet for their contributions.

Jessica: On different occasions we have heard you reference the importance of economic development work for Liberia. How do you feel that economic development and peacebuilding are related?

Leymah: Liberia has a unique history. It was first colonized by former American slaves who gave us our country's motto: "The love of liberty brought us here." But that liberty was not extended to indigenous Liberians. Liberia has struggled to afford every citizen equal access to opportunities. With our diverse natural resources, the economic opportunities in Liberia are growing—as are the opportunities for economic and social tension. Peacebuilding requires stakeholders. When parents are able to provide for their families, when young people see that there is a future for their talents, then citizens have a stake in sustaining a peaceful society.

Jessica: Nine years after the signing of the Peace Accord in Ghana, is reconciliation taking hold in Liberia?

Leymah: At the community level, there are different things people are doing to build relationships and are doing so effectively. At the national level, reconciliation continues to be a difficult process to organize. One thing is the TRC [Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Liberia]. Some want the full report to be implemented, but that would require that some of

our political leaders step aside—including our current president. So there is tension on what parts should be implemented and what parts should not be. In communities, people are happy to see civil actors take the lead but also disappointed that the process has yet to be depoliticized.

Jessica: How is the country addressing the root causes of the conflict?

Leymah: There is no shortage of small NGOs that have committed to promoting peace in the country. All over the country, small organizations are working quietly with the youth, holding town hall meetings, and planning events to ensure that Liberia does not falter in its march toward reconciliation. The government has many bodies and a few ministries entrusted with addressing the root causes of conflict. But private citizens are making their own determined strides, working in their local communities to address the causes of conflict.

Disappointingly, we have yet to identify the reasons why we fought. There have been no declarations of "this is the collective meaning of our reconciliation going forward." When we talk about the root causes, everyone is expressing their own views of the civil war; however, the country still lacks a collective narrative.

Jessica: What is your greatest concern for the world today? And your greatest hope?

Leymah: Dealing with youth is a demographic nightmare but also a demographic dividend. In Liberia, half of our population is under thirty years old and many have no memory of war. But there are very few jobs in the formal sector, and tuition and school fees are very expensive, making education out of reach for too many. In the West, where the economy has slowed and governments have had to slash social

budgets, the youth face rising university costs, fewer jobs for their skills, and low-paying jobs that cannot support a young family. Education must be connected to opportunities in the job market. Youth by nature are energetic and curious. It is up to us—the adults, the leaders in the public and private sector—to channel that energy and curiosity positively. In its absence, unrest and disillusionment conspire to weaken peace and security. The problem of youth unemployment is a destabilizing factor. But it is not all bleak. Youth breeds optimism. I work with many young people and their commitment to improvement is the greatest resource we cannot afford to squander. ■

"Liberia has given me a lot and the war took so much away."

FEATURES

SPECIAL FEATURE



BETWEEN WARNING AND ACTION

Preventing
Mass Violence
and Atrocities

by Neil Levine


Since the outbreak of violence in Côte d'Ivoire in 2002, the country has been in a state of political crisis.

In October 2010 the first round of the long-postponed presidential election produced indeterminate results that ultimately led to armed conflict. Over roughly four months in early 2011, more than 3,000 people were killed, hundreds of thousands were displaced, and severe human rights violations appear to have occurred, including systematic rapes. President Barack Obama indicated at the time that Côte d'Ivoire was among his foreign policy priorities, and one can infer that it is precisely the type of case he would intend to see addressed through Presidential Study Directive 10 (PSD 10) on the prevention of atrocities and any policy directives that might flow from it.

Unfortunately, Côte d'Ivoire also exemplifies one of the greatest challenges to preventing mass violence: translating warning or knowledge of a looming crisis into action to prevent or address it. Before the crisis of 2010–11, Côte d'Ivoire had consistently ranked among the most fragile and at-risk countries in the world on various early warning metrics of conflict and instability. Partly in recognition of these dynamics, the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) sponsored a civil society team to conduct a countrywide conflict assessment in spring 2010 that identified many of the dynamics that ultimately proved most salient in the crisis that unfolded after the election later that year.

Despite the early warning, neither the U.S. government nor any other international organization, including the Economic Commission of West African States (ECOWAS), which had been a partner in the 2010 assessment, did much to prevent the conflict. On the eve of the election, the U.S. government had essentially two development programs operating in Côte d'Ivoire: a large-scale AIDS relief program and a small reconciliation program designed to address conflict dynamics at the village level. Côte d'Ivoire is relatively peripheral to U.S. interests as they are commonly understood and a nonpresence country for USAID, so it is understandable that it would not see major U.S. diplomatic or development involvement. But even after the assessment, the scale and scope of U.S.-supported activities were not particularly calibrated to the problems Côte d'Ivoire faced.

The consistent experience—not only for Côte d'Ivoire but also for most fragile and conflict-affected states—has been that basic, intuitive actions have not been taken to prevent conflict. The problem involves how to galvanize action with uncertain information, given policymakers' understandable resistance to bearing certain costs today as a hedge against uncertain costs tomorrow (see *Preventing Genocide: The Report of the Commission on Preventing Genocide*, chaired by former secretary of state Madeleine Albright and former secretary of defense William Cohen). In recent years, with renewed attention to preventing atrocities, the State Department and USAID have made



The consistent experience for most fragile has been that basic, intuitive actions have not been taken to prevent conflict.

several attempts to overcome the disincentives to preventive action, notably in the Quadrennial Diplomacy and Development Review (QDDR), a high-level review of how State and USAID can coordinate policies and programs. Conflict management professionals among various agencies have begun to reach consensus around a proposed solution that is both worthwhile and attainable. In their emerging vision, foreign policy leaders would draw upon existing early warning resources within the government to develop at least two regularly updated country lists to mobilize attention. In both cases, a country appearing on the list would trigger certain U.S. responses, eliminating some of the lag and confusion that currently occurs between warning and action.

Imagine the U.S. government were to produce both a short warning list and an expanded list. The short list would comprise roughly two to five countries or subnational regions most likely to experience major instability and to be of strategic importance to the United States

in the upcoming months. This list would no doubt include certain critical priority countries, such as Afghanistan and Sudan, but others could appear after decisions by high-level officials based on their reading of a situation's foreign policy relevance and the interests of the National Security Council.

Most likely, the countries on the short list would already be in some degree of crisis, if not outright war. Thus the mechanisms for response would also be oriented toward immediate crisis management: deployment of disaster assistance response teams (DARTs) or hybrid humanitarian-civilian deployments (as occurred in Côte d'Ivoire), eligibility for additional funding through contingency mechanisms such as the Complex Crisis Fund or the Office of Transition Initiatives, tapping of surge personnel through the Civilian Response Corps, or initiation of a planning process with the military that involves multiple government agencies. The institutional structure now developing in the Bureau for Democracy, Conflict, and Humanitarian

Assistance must be woven into the practice of USAID and State Department regional bureaus as envisioned in the QDDR.

The expanded list would be a set of another approximately dozen countries or territories perceived as less likely to experience instability, or of relatively less strategic interest, but nevertheless a priority. This expanded list would be for countries such as Côte d'Ivoire, where there is a known chronic problem of fragility or conflict recurrence; a potential trigger looming, such as an election, an aging leader, or an economic downturn; and an existing but not imminent risk of major crisis. In other words, the expanded list would include countries that held the greatest opportunity to leverage resources to prevent crisis altogether.

The country teams in countries on the expanded list would be tasked to prioritize conflict sensitivity and the prevention of mass violence and atrocities across their respective portfolios. Country reporting would focus on sources of grievance and conflict triggers. Military and commercial contacts could be queried on their perspectives and proposals for mitigating conflict. A diplomatic engagement strategy would be outlined to hone the U.S. policy message and accompanying public diplomacy activities. Staff training on conflict management principles and a conflict audit of programs would build missionwide sensitivity to which actors are involved in creating the conditions for violence. Contingency planning could be undertaken to define the roles and responsibilities of various U.S. government actors in the political, diplomatic, military, security, development, intelligence, and information spheres

The country teams would be tasked to prioritize conflict sensitivity and the prevention of mass violence and atrocities.



There is a very real chance that some conflicts can be avoided, contained, or resolved with less loss of life, destruction, and human suffering.

as the country approaches a triggering event. These plans might include various scenarios and what U.S. government policy, diplomatic, strategic communication and assistance tools might come into play. Finally, planning could identify what human and financial resources are needed and how to meet those needs.

The above constitute concrete, achievable changes in the way the U.S. government organizes its response to warning signs of conflict. There is no guarantee that conflict will not erupt despite planning. But there is a very real chance that some conflicts can be avoided, contained, or resolved with less loss of life, destruction, and human suffering. Documenting cases of successful conflict prevention and early intervention could build momentum for greater investment in developing locally owned peacebuilding efforts, from early warning and mediation to support for more inclusive and responsive governing institutions that address the core grievances that ripen into conflict.

Among U.S. agencies, USAID is particularly well poised to develop a long-term strategic perspective to preventing conflict. Good development practice incorporates many of the key principles to guide such

an approach: paying careful attention to the local context, assessing the capabilities of national and local institutions, and focusing on how projects are implemented as much as on what those projects are. USAID is already engaging local stakeholders to establish early warning capabilities and disseminating conflict resolution techniques in at-risk communities. It is also building an appreciation of conflict vulnerability into planning and programming decisions as it trains more officers to consider the chances of conflict in their analyses of local contexts. These small investments can reduce the need for costly interventions later and suggest the possibility for structural conflict prevention that is the ultimate solution to the problem of inaction. ■

Neil Levine is the director of the Office of Conflict Management and Mitigation in USAID's Bureau for Democracy, Conflict, and Humanitarian Assistance. He has worked at USAID since 1993 after serving for ten years on Capitol Hill.





THE PRICE OF VIOLENCE

by Steve Killelea

Containing violence is an important public good, but the less a nation spends on it, the more resources can be allocated to more productive areas of economic activity.

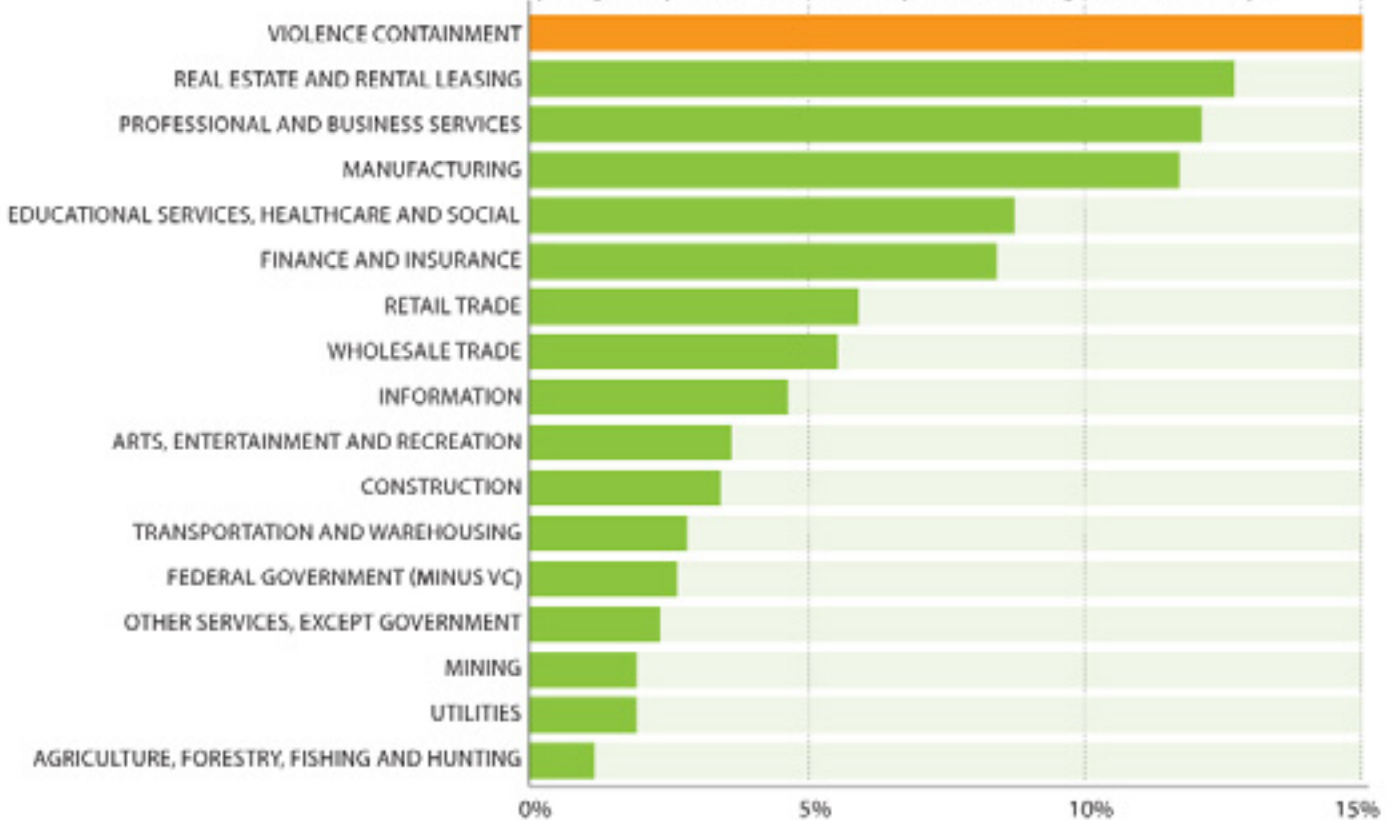
Violence costs society and taxpayers a lot of money—but how much? To help answer this question the Institute for Economics and Peace (IEP) has developed a new methodology to determine how much of the U.S. economy is related to violence, the suppression of violence, or its avoidance.

When adding up the concrete costs to the average American taxpayer it is estimated that violence containment spending costs \$15,000 a year per taxpayer, or \$7,000 for every man, woman and child each year. That is \$6 billion a day in total, or \$246 million an hour.

All expenditure to contain violence, whether spent by the military internationally or by police and private security fighting crime domestically, has been classified together as the violence containment industry (VCI), or alternately, as violence containment spending. This offers a framework to define and better understand a substantial part of the U.S. economy as well as create a platform for future research. Violence containment encompasses local, state, and federal government expenditure as well as private spending by corporations, households, and individuals. It includes medical expenses to recover from violence, incarceration, insurance, alarm systems, the private security

FIGURE 1 | INDUSTRY SHARE AS A % OF GDP (2010)

Violence Containment Spending in the U.S. compared with other economic sectors. If Violence Containment Spending were represented as a discrete industry, it would be the largest in the U.S. economy.



Source: Bureau of Economic Analysis, Institute for Economics and Peace

industry, homeland security, and the work of the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA).

While containing violence is an important and necessary public good, the less a nation spends on it, the more resources can be allocated to other, more productive areas of economic activity, such as education. Expenditure on violence containment is economically efficient when it effectively prevents violence for the least amount of outlay, provided that society finds the actions taken to prevent violence morally acceptable. Money spent on surplus violence containment or inefficient programs can constrain a nation's economic growth: A larger proportion

of violence containment spending that does not produce any additional goods or services is fundamentally unproductive, and if redirected toward productive pursuits, the same money could improve government balance sheets, company profits, and ultimately, the productivity and wellbeing of society.

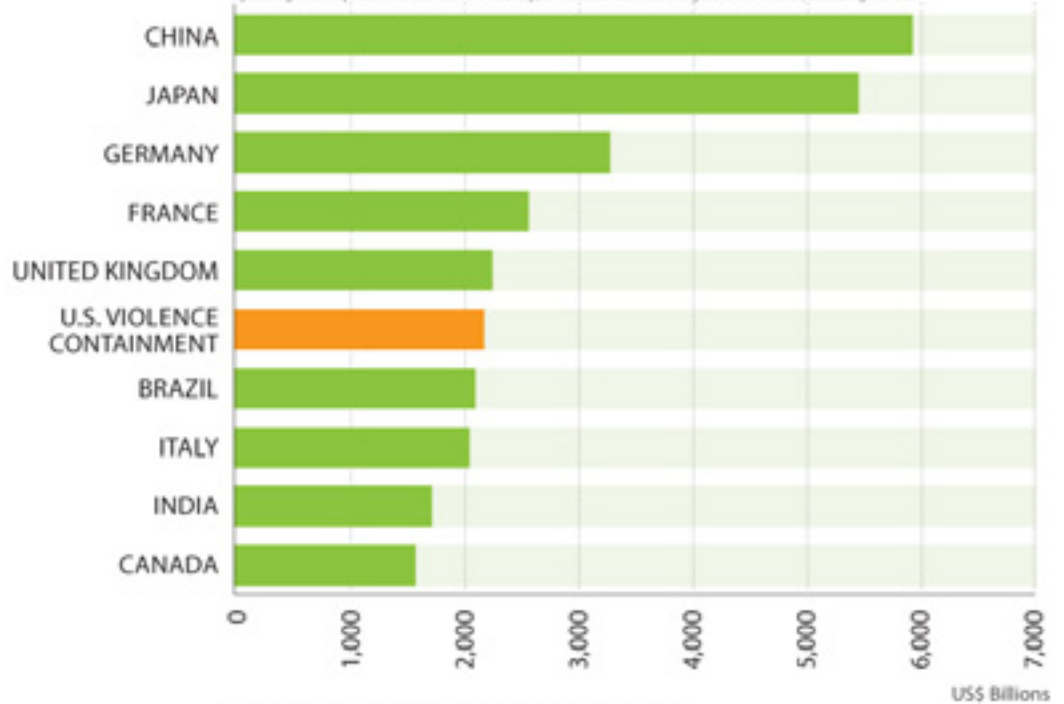
IEP research shows that in 2010, the VCI accounted for \$2.16 trillion, or around 15 percent of U.S. GDP. This figure is considered conservative due to the difficulties of accounting for all private and public sector spending. Not having analyzed the amount of violence containment spending in other countries, it is difficult to assess

independently how the United States fares compared with other nations. However, given the size of its defense, homeland security, and prison spending, the size of the U.S. VCI is likely higher than that of other developed nations. The key findings of the IEP violence containment study are:

- › U.S. violence containment spending amounts to \$7,000 per year for every man, woman, and child, as mentioned above.
- › If violence containment spending were represented as a discrete industry, it would be the largest industry in the U.S. economy—larger than construction, real

FIGURE 2 | NOMINAL GDP BY COUNTRY (2010)

Violence Containment Spending in the U.S. compared with the GDP of the world's largest economies. If Violence Containment Spending were represented as a discrete country, it would be the sixth largest in the world (excluding the U.S.).



Source: World Bank, Institute for Economics and Peace

estate, professional services, or manufacturing (figure 1).

› If violence containment spending were represented as a discrete national economic entity, it would be the sixth largest economy in the world (excluding the U.S.), only slightly smaller than the UK economy (figure 2).

› Violence containment spending is four times higher than the national defense budget.

› Public sector spending on VCI accounts for 10.8 percent of GDP while private sector spending is 4.2 percent of GDP.

› If U.S. federal violence containment spending were reduced by 5 percent each year for five years, the \$326 billion of saved

funds would be sufficient to entirely update the energy grid, rebuild all levees, and renew the nation's school infrastructure.

Violence containment spending can be broken down between the public and private sectors. When it is represented as net value added, it shows that the federal government spends more than state or local authorities or the private sector on violence containment spending—over \$1.3 trillion, or approximately 9 percent of GDP in 2010. This is more than the federal government spent on employee retirement and social security pensions and more than double what it spent on infrastructure in the same year.

National defense spending includes the budgets of the departments of defense, homeland security, and veterans' affairs, as

well as the debt servicing on these expenditures, which is based on the proportion of military-related government expenditure. Private sector spending on violence containment is conservatively estimated to be \$605 billion. The remaining amount is spent by state and local governments on police, justice, corrections, and other security measures. These figures are likely to underestimate the final figure, as many items could not be counted, including the following:

› Business alarm systems to protect against theft,

› Private household fire alarm systems to protect against arson,

› The self-defense training equipment market,

If violence containment spending were represented as a discrete national economic entity, it would be the sixth largest economy in the world.

- › The security passes systems industry (except biometrics),

- › Security functions at port authorities (other than the New York Port Authority); the market for passive security, including protective fences and gates (except for locks),

- › The private market for taser guns, pepper spray, bulletproof glass, bullet-proof vests, and tear gas,

- › The private market for armed vehicles,

- › The private market for personal security aids, such as night lights, and

- › Defense exports other than the top ten major exporters; given the dominance of the ten largest exporters, other arms exports were excluded due to the difficulty of counting.

The IEP analysis, based on calculating the percentage of GDP spent on violence containment, enables a novel approach to understanding the international economic competitiveness of a nation: The less a country spends on violence containment, provided it is also peaceful, the more competitive its economy should be, as the country can deploy more resources more efficiently. Prior IEP research for

the 2011 U.S. Peace Index calculated that if the United States had the same level of peacefulness as Canada, an additional \$361 billion would be available to state and federal governments for other areas of economic activity. This evidently is only one dimension of national competitiveness, but it is a unique and important one.

For business, higher violence containment spending can result in unplanned costs: higher taxes; increased costs, such as investing in security systems and security guards; or even higher insurance premiums. Additionally, the higher the level of violence in a corporation's area of operations, the more management time is devoted to responding to security rather than market development or competitive issues. These lost opportunities in time and money could have been transferred into developing infrastructure and expanding profits.

The sheer size of spending on violence containment illustrates the enormous benefits to investing in violence prevention. Preventing violence can take many forms, from recidivism reduction programs to improved international relations to implementing governmental programs aimed at enhancing social attitudes, institutions, and structures that support higher levels of peace. If policymakers clearly understood

the economic burden of unproductive violence containment, improving levels of peacefulness would be seen as central to long-term structural reforms. ■

For the complete paper along with detailed estimates, please refer to: www.visionofhumanity.org/info-center/violence-containment-spending/

Founder of IEP and the Global Peace Index, Steve Killelea is an accomplished entrepreneur in high technology and is at the forefront of philanthropic activities focused on peace and sustainable development.

TALKING TO EACH OTHER

Developing Effective Education and Training Programs for Conflict Prevention, Stabilization, and Resolution

by John Agoglia

The beginning of a new term for President Barack Obama marks a chance to assess the development of an integrated U.S. approach to conflict prevention and resolution.

The mission remains the same: to forge a federal, private, and international effort toward peacebuilding and conflict resolution that effectively uses all facets of the community it has created to prevent and resolve destructive conflicts. The administration must find ways to stretch limited federal government resources and accomplish more. There is much work to be done, but practitioners understand well that the solutions lie in integration, collaboration, and sharing knowledge.

Peacebuilding and conflict resolution remains a discombobulated field. A wide variety of operators—the U.S.

government, foreign militaries, nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), federal aid missions, foreign ministry missions—have implemented a multitude of programs, with the best of intentions but regrettably often with results that can slow the mission and more often than not conflict with one another. Each of the different government agencies and others operating in a conflict environment has separate education and training requirements. The disparities are significant. The related approaches are not rooted in a common set of guiding principles, definitions, or beliefs, and often can lack the appropriate cultural training. Almost none of the education and training is done collaboratively, that is, with more than one or two critical agencies or other operators in the same room. Thus, when the operators are brought together in the field, their tactical approaches can

inadvertently contradict those of other agencies and operators, undermining the overall mission.

The use of aid offers a simplistic example. Say one operator, be it an NGO, military, or aid group, withholds aid for a project—perhaps a deep-water well in a village—in return for better cooperation on security or other issues. Another operator, unaware of the struggles of the first, provides the aid in an effort to improve living conditions in the village. This undermines the first operator. The leverage for a strategic goal is lost due to the good intentions of one operator, and it could have been prevented if the two operators had coordinated with each other.

Another example lies in gathering information and intelligence. As Major General Michael T. Flynn, Captain Matt Pottinger, and Paul D. Batchelor note in *Fixing Intel: A Blueprint for Making Intelligence Relevant in Afghanistan*, operators in Afghanistan do not collate the local-level information they have and that field practitioners need, even though, intuitively, NGOs, military units, and aid groups could be more effective if they had the information all operators working in Afghanistan learned before them. The professionals leaving the country have knowledge about best practices, key contacts, and lessons that could enhance the ongoing mission and the work of practitioners newly arrived in the country. But this information is not systemically captured, even from one deployment to the next in many cases—let alone among organizations—nor is it incorporated into ongoing education and training back in home countries.

The Quadrennial Diplomacy and Development Review (QDDR) codified the need for government agencies to develop effective education and training programs for conflict prevention, stabilization, and resolution. Taking on this issue first would help the Obama administration

to ensure that multiple parts of the U.S. government improve their understanding of conflict prevention, stabilization, and resolution, as well as their abilities in the field. To this end, the new administration should be looking to:

- › Identify an executive agent in the federal government to systematize a holistic approach based on best practices that could replace agencies' currently ad hoc education on conflict prevention, resolution, and stabilization;

- › Facilitate precrisis education and training among agencies to ensure a broad base of practitioners exists at all agency levels, which sets the groundwork to facilitate rapid expansion into predeployment training for a specific crisis; and

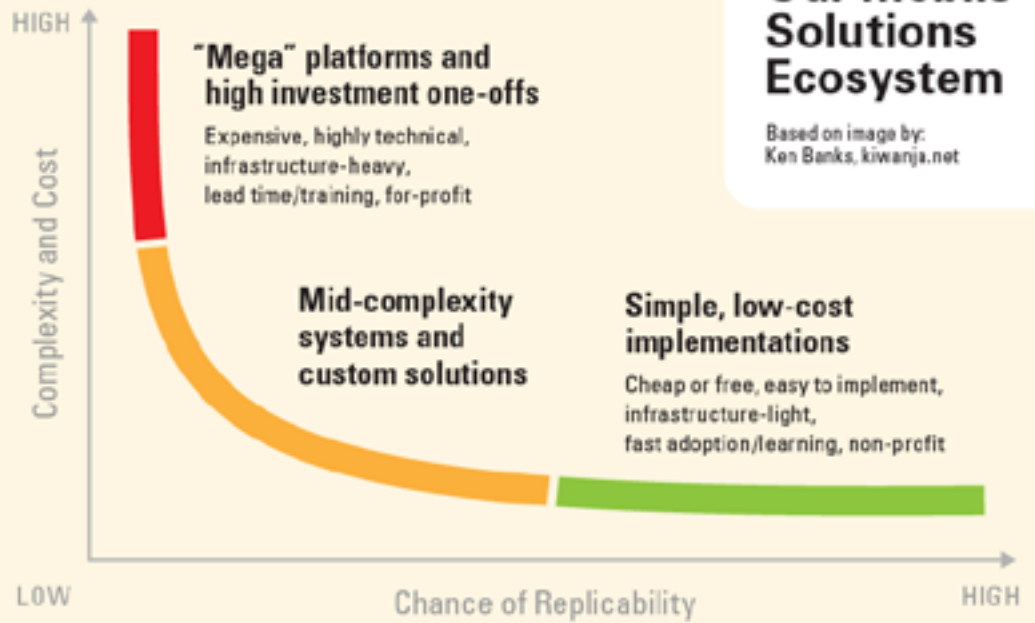
- › Create a process to capture and collate what departing professionals have learned regarding best practices and key contacts, to be used in precrisis and predeployment education and training.

If all agencies and organizations involved in conflict prevention, resolution, and stabilization applied the same holistic approach to precrisis education and training, then all actors could be aware of the experiences and best practices from previous crises, allowing them to better examine the situation they face and adapt past lessons to current crises. Institutions such as the United States Institute of Peace could start this process among federal players and incorporate the efforts of NGOs, international actors, and others. With economic resources tightening, now is the time to focus on improving the performance of existing agencies and making practitioners more capable in their conflict prevention, stabilization, and resolution work in Washington and abroad. Efforts like the creation of this magazine are yet another way to help integrate the community of players, and in time, guide the alignment

of federal training and education toward greater collaboration. ■

John Agoglia is the vice president for government services at IDS International, where he focuses on counterinsurgency, stability operations, and civil military relations; prior to this position, John was an officer in the U.S. Army.

There is much work to be done, but practitioners understand well that the solutions lie in integration, collaboration, and sharing knowledge.



BUILDING A PLATFORM FOR PEACE

by Sean McDonald

Peacebuilding is fundamentally about managing relationships, and there is nothing that technology affects more: Whether it is the relationships between institutions, ideologies, or individuals, the invention and adoption of new technology platforms change the way we interact. Every new tool, from the mobile phone to Facebook, increases the number of voices that can be involved in the dialogues that affect us all. Few disciplines have as much to gain from new technologies as peacebuilding does; it is incumbent on all practitioners to identify both the peacebuilding and technological platforms that offer the greatest opportunity for effect and, ultimately, a more peaceful world.

Whether by necessity or design, peacebuilders all over the world have taken advantage of the new communication dynamics to reduce violence in contentious situations. Specifically, new technologies are being used in a wide variety of contexts to improve early warning systems, create inclusive dialogues, and organize response systems, directly reducing the risks and effects of violent conflict. In Southern Kivu, Uganda, peacebuilders used Voix de Kivu—a project that combines FrontlineSMS, a text messaging (SMS) platform, and Ushahidi, a mapping platform—to enable citizens to warn each other about impending violence in real time. Similarly, Radio for Peacebuilding, an organization formed in the late 1980s to report on conflict prevention using a

Peacebuilders all over the world have taken advantage of the new communication dynamics to reduce violence in contentious situations.

radio platform, now uses SMS-contributed content to shape its peace-promoting programming, building a constituency of (and empowering) women who have historically been excluded from the dialogues that most affect them. During the Arab Spring, activists used Facebook to organize protestors, warning them of impending government crackdowns and violence.

Both peacebuilding and technology programs rely on good design. Those making design decisions, however, usually focus on the problems each approach solves, ignoring the choices those same decisions rule out. Peacebuilding programs are no different. Every choice, whether the context is governance, natural resources, or sports, includes and marginalizes groups of people. Choosing a location isolates those who live far away. Natural resource management programs exclude those without access to or knowledge of their rights. Using sports as a vehicle for peacebuilding excludes populations who are not interested or cannot participate in them. All aspects of peacebuilding programs are designed to target a population and address the drivers of conflict, but they inherently

exclude populations who are not directly involved.

Technology programs are no different. Communication platforms are intended to remove barriers, but in doing so, have made design decisions that favor specific groups. Every new communication platform, from the printing press to the television to the mobile phone, has profoundly affected how we relate to one another. Common languages enabled people to communicate with one another but require the ability to hear. The written word allowed the communication to be asynchronous but requires the ability to read. Shipping and postal systems let communication be remote but require roads, addresses, and proximity to a shipping center. The telephone let that remote communication be instantaneous but requires the audience to buy devices. The printing press, radio, and television allowed a few to communicate with many. The Internet and mobile phone allow many to communicate with many, and not only are people communicating in different ways, but the increasing reach of each of these tools means that previously disconnected populations now can participate in the dialogues and decisions that affect their lives. The adoption of new forms of communication, whether through technology or peacebuilding paradigms, is not just a change in habit but a process of social transformation.

Like peacebuilding, each technology platform offers strengths and weaknesses in terms of social transformation. The value of communication platforms is directly proportionate to the number of people and organizations that use them. For example, by 2011 Facebook had 1 billion registered users, making it the world's largest online social network. During the same period, 2.3 billion people had access to the Internet, enabling them to engage over e-mail, online forums, and other web-based services. The most transformative of these platforms in 2011, though, was the mobile phone—with more than 6.6 billion active connections,

3.2 billion unique users, and more than 7.8 trillion text messages sent. Each platform has its idiosyncrasies, enabling different depths of interaction with disparate groups of people. The growing reach of all of these tools, when used effectively, presents the opportunity to connect the world's most vulnerable populations to participate in the dialogues and decisions that have historically excluded them. The process of designing a platform best fit for engagement, whether through peacebuilding or technology, depends on the target audience for the intervention.

This is not to suggest that new communication tools are used exclusively to promote peace. In Kenya, Nigeria, and other places, individuals have used technologies to spread hate messages, political parties and their lobbying interests have used them to scare people away from the polls, and governments frequently filter the Internet to deny citizens access to information or oppositional perspectives and track social networks to track and harm activists. Technology-empowered programs also create their own set of concerns—among them, issues of data quality, security, and practical inclusion. But the way we communicate is changing, and it is vitally important to figure out how to embrace these changes and new tools to build the foundations of a more peaceful world. It has never been more crucial to invest in the tools, communication platforms, and relationships that bring peace to those who need it most. ■

Sean McDonald is the chief executive officer of FrontlineSMS and director of the FrontlineSMS: Legal project, following a diverse career in international development, legal services, and the U.S. Senate.

FROM CONFLICT TO COPING

Promoting Drought Resilience through Peacebuilding

by Jon Kurtz and Greg Scarborough

The concept of resilience has gained renewed attention since the 2011 drought in the Horn of Africa. Humanitarian and development actors are keen to avoid the need for massive relief assistance in the future, yet peacebuilding and conflict programming have not been considered integral to achieving food security or reducing the risk of disaster, which are closely associated with resilience. Under Mercy Corps' Strengthening Institutions for Peace and Development (SIPED) program in Ethiopia, the authors undertook research to shed light on the links between conflict programming and drought resilience. The overall goal of this program, which was initiated in 2009 and funded by the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), was to reduce tensions and create an environment for sustainable peace. To achieve this, SIPED built the conflict management capacities of government and customary leaders, strengthened the relationships among conflicting groups through intercommunity dialogues, and supported the development and implementation of connected joint natural-resource use plans. In several instances, these activities led to the development of formal peace agreements that helped establish greater security over disputed lands and resources.

In mid-2011, Mercy Corps received anecdotal evidence from local officials that drought-affected communities that had benefitted from Mercy Corps-supported peace processes were better able to cope in harsh conditions than other pastoralist groups in the Somali-Oromiya

areas of Ethiopia. In response, Mercy Corps undertook this study to explore this unintended, yet potentially important, effect. Specifically, the research examined whether and how peacebuilding programs like SIPED can create conditions that enable pastoralists—that is, people whose primary livelihood is raising livestock—to better cope with and adapt to severe drought. The study used representative household surveys and participatory impact assessment techniques among focus groups of men, women, and youth from both intervention and comparison populations.

The efforts of the SIPED program to improve peace and security appear to have contributed to creating conditions that enabled greater freedom of movement and access to important resources that pastoralist groups depend on to cope with and adapt to severe drought. The research found that drought-affected communities where peacebuilding interventions had been successful were better able to deal with the harsh conditions and resorted less frequently to distressful coping mechanisms such as productive asset stripping. People's freedom of movement increased by 15 percent and conflict-related obstacles to pasture and water decreased by half during the program. This was primarily a result of the negotiated agreements supported by the program between conflicting communities, leading to improved comanagement of natural resources. These changes allowed households to employ adaptive coping strategies,



such as traditional migration, and better preserve their herds and other assets. Loss of access to water, grazing, or farmland by families due to conflict, on the other hand, was found to be strongly associated with reduced household food consumption and depleted livestock. Pastoralists who were not able to freely access pastures or water for their animals due to insecurity were nearly four times more likely to have killed their calves during the 2011 drought than those who did not experience such conflict-related barriers.

The study offers insight into how peacebuilding programming can help mitigate the effects of severe drought among pastoralists and likely speed recovery. The evidence points to the need for greater consideration of conflict management within drought preparedness and food security programs in the Horn of Africa. The findings also raise questions about how peacebuilding efforts fit into the larger resilience discourse: Is effective conflict management work a prerequisite to strengthening resilience to droughts in regions where chronic violent conflict is present? If so, what peacebuilding strategies are likely to be most effective in making communities more resilient? ■

The full report is available at www.mercycorps.org/resources/coping

Jon Kurtz is Mercy Corps' director for research and learning. Greg Scarborough is Mercy Corps' senior advisor for nutrition and food security.

A NEW DEAL FOR THE DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO

by Georges Tshionza Mata

The Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) is a founding member of the G7+ group, a country-owned and -led global mechanism to monitor, report, and draw attention to the challenges that fragile states face. The G7+ shepherded a landmark policy, the New Deal for Engagement in Fragile States (New Deal), that provides guiding principles to countries transitioning from fragility to sustainable development. Members of the G7+ have entered into an agreement to take these issues seriously and take steps toward positive change. While not binding, the agreement will be carefully monitored by donor countries, such as the United States and the United Kingdom.

Despite its vast economic potential, the DRC is fragile because of its repeated conflicts and civil wars. It currently ranks 178th—last in the world—in human development as measured by the United Nations Development Programme. Because of the country's desire to transform itself into a more stable, democratic, and prosperous nation, its leaders have hoped to successfully implement the New Deal primarily by defining a roadmap toward peace that focuses on what is needed to reach the next stage in its development. However, on August 21, 2012, less than a week after the minister of planning announced the principles of the New Deal, the Department of the Budget laid out the main outlines of its public finance bill for 2013. While the department's earlier directives established ways the DRC could commit itself

to reaching the New Deal's economic goals for infrastructural development, revenues, and services, the department did not indicate how it would meet the enormous challenges in building legitimacy or providing security and justice.

Regarding legitimacy, the DRC has just ended an election campaign that raised serious doubts about the selection of the president and National Assembly deputies. The country is scheduled to complete legislative elections in 2013. As for security, parts of the eastern provinces are controlled by M23, a rebel group composed of former members of the National Congress for the Defense of the People, and other rebels that have Rwandan and Ugandan support and are themselves threatened by separate rebel organizations. In the cities, unemployed youth demonstrate their dissatisfaction with street violence, which the police are powerless to stop. Corruption throughout the judiciary and the legal profession is carried out with

an impunity that undermines the state's authority.

The New Deal is a move in the right direction for fragile states. However, the issues surrounding sustainable development, such as political legitimacy, security, justice, economic fundamentals, and employment, are complex. The need for indicators marking positive change will force the top levels of government to be transparent and will require that the public trust their leaders to make the changes that the New Deal's goals require. The pathway to forming sustainable states is a long one, but a necessary road for the G7+ countries.

■
Georges Tshionza Mata, from the Democratic Republic of the Congo, is the secretary general for Service Support to Strengthen Civil Society and Community Based in Central Africa (SERACOB) and specializes in partnerships, policy dialogue, and research.



THE INTERRUPTERS

Director: Steve James

by **Mauricio Salazar**

The Interrupters follows the work of an anti-gang violence group working on the south side of Chicago, where youth violence is endemic. The “interrupters” are older members of the community—some of them former gang members, some of whom have served prison sentences—who use their knowledge, charisma, and contacts to try to head off violence before it burns out of control. They do this through community building, counseling, and guiding those at risk of committing violence, sometimes even physically intervening, separating people about to become violent before they act. The film is a searing portrayal of a community in crisis and a moving portrait of people trying to improve the situation. It draws attention to the structural causes of violence—marginalization, poverty, unemployment, and exclusion of social services such as education and health care—showing how they combine to create an atmosphere in which the threat of violence is a near constant. It also offers a blueprint for resolving conflict, as the interrupters’ personal experience, and often their own criminal history, gives them the credibility they need to reach those in danger of committing violent acts and helps them develop alternatives to violence. The film shows how essential it is to increase prevention work and demonstrates how it succeeds, or could succeed, in the field.

The film deals only with violence in Chicago, but the situation is recognizable

in urban neighborhoods around the world, from Mexico City and Bogotá to New Delhi and Johannesburg—places where social structures are broken. Certain groups of young people in these cities are stigmatized and marginalized, often because of their race, ethnicity, or poverty. The urban areas where they live are marked by anonymity; they lack the links of solidarity and responsibility toward others that exist in a strong community. These social spaces thus can be fertile environments for violence, as homicide, repression, bullying, rape, or harassment become a way of impressing others. Such brutality causes other parts of society to turn away, to be afraid of the people living there, and to push for a higher police or, in some countries, army presence.

I am coordinator of international relations and advisor for conflict transformations at SERAPAZ (Services and Advice for Peace), an organization that works on community-level conflict transformation to address issues of inequality, exclusion, and human rights violations in southern Mexico and with victims of forced disappearance in northern and central Mexico. In my work, I see how the marginalization of youth akin to that in Chicago leads to crime and makes gangs appealing to young people. Gangs offer peers, an identity, and, in some ways, a sense of protection. They also substitute for other, more constructive types of community. As a young man explained to me, “I prefer to live two years

as a millionaire to being poor and excluded my whole life.” But this only increases the violence.

If *The Interrupters* were shown to young gang members in Mexico or Colombia, it would have real resonance (though the language in the film is difficult to follow, so foreign audiences would need either a translated version or subtitles). But anyone attempting the kind of peacebuilding work shown in the film needs to keep in mind the profound differences that exist among countries in institutional structures, justice systems, and the net of public and nonprofit social services. An intervention that works in Chicago may not be specifically replicable in Mexico City. But despite the differences in governmental and social structures—some countries are controlled by military dictatorships, others have authoritarian structures that bar access to prevention work, others may lack strong gun control laws—the causes of urban violence are very similar. The lessons that the *The Interrupters* teaches us can be applied all over the world, breaking the chain of violence one link at a time. ■

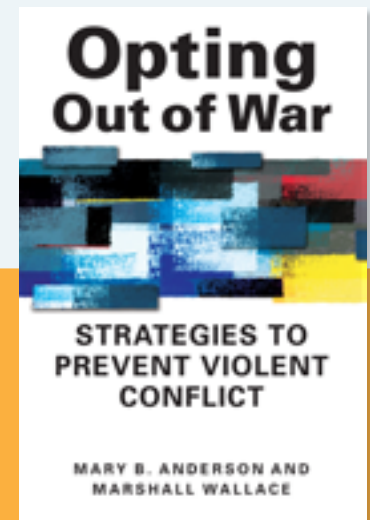
Mauricio Salazar is the coordinator of international relations of Servicios y Asesoría para la Paz (SERAPAZ; Services and Advice for Peace) in Mexico and the coordinator of the Global Partnership for Prevention of Armed Conflict (GPPAC) North America Region.



OPTING OUT OF WAR STRATEGIES TO PREVENT VIOLENT CONFLICT

Authors: Mary B. Anderson and
Marshall Wallace

by Mari Fitzduff



Opting Out of War tells the stories of thirteen different communities around the world—in Afghanistan, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Burkina Faso, Colombia, Fiji, India, Kosovo, Mozambique, Nigeria, the Philippines, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, and Sri Lanka—that opted out of the violence surrounding them. These “non-war” communities managed to predict the cost of violence on themselves and the families within them. They then assessed the options that would prevent them from being engulfed in the wars developing around them and were able, in their various ways, to create a non-war identity for themselves that both gave them cohesion and distinguished them from other communities engaged in violence. Five of the case studies are presented in depth: the Hazara community in the Jaghori district of Afghanistan, cross-ethnic solidarity in Tuzla in Bosnia, a peace community in Colombia, the Mungoi homestead in Mozambique, and the Muslim community in Rwanda, which by and large opted out of the genocide raging around them.

Opting Out of War, an exciting book on a little-researched subject, shakes up many

of our ideas about conflict prevention work and how it can happen when local communities are determined to ensure it. It is the result of conversations undertaken with people within communities who are often ignored during a conflict: those who decide that the wars in which they find themselves are not their wars, and who, despite significant pressure, refuse to take one side or the other. The book challenges prevailing myths about conflict prevention, such as the need for new and external leadership other than the local in order to undertake the work. It also brings into question the need to deliberately establish peacebuilding efforts or zones of peace, rather than working with the courageous commitment by communities to maintain or re-create peace in the face of significant pressure to do otherwise. At the same time, *Opting Out* recognizes the limitations of such approaches, notably the inability of some of these communities to effectively challenge the wars that surrounded them or address the politics that the wars engendered. Even so, the cases suggest how communities can resist joining a conflict and demonstrate the strategic and principled pragmatism that could be applied

to other communities caught in the maelstrom of war. The book is an excellent addition to the bookshelves of academics, practitioners, and policymakers alike, and a worthwhile contribution to the field of peacebuilding. Its methodology of local listening, which is such a hallmark of CDA Collaborative Learning Projects—the organization where the authors work—gives it a particular authenticity and elicits unique insights about the positive choices communities can make when all around them is falling into chaos, hate, and violence. ■

Mari Fitzduff is a professor in Brandeis University's Masters Program in Coexistence and Conflict following a career of more than twenty-five years in conflict resolution initiatives throughout Northern Ireland.

Peacebuilding – By the Numbers

WHAT IS PEACEBUILDING?

Peacebuilding is simultaneously 3 things: a profession of trained and skilled professionals, a broader community of practice using peacebuilding modalities in at least 21 related fields, and a lens through which professionals integrate key “do no harm” principles.



ON THE CUSP OF A TRUE REVOLUTION

Peacebuilding is moving from a single silo (Peacebuilding 1.0) to a diverse and expansive community of practice (Peacebuilding 2.0).

2.0

1.0

PEACEBUILDING EDUCATION

150 MASTER'S DEGREE PROGRAMS

in conflict and peace studies exist domestically and internationally.



SNAPSHOT OF THE U.S. PEACEBUILDING FIELD

The peacebuilding field in the United States consists of organizations with:

a combined budget of

\$62 million

or

0.1%

of the U.S. international aid budget

working in

153 COUNTRIES

or

78%

of world's nations

employing more than

5,400 PEOPLE

or

0.002%

of the U.S. population

RECENT PEACEBUILDING HISTORY

The Obama administration establishes a historic US interagency architecture that focuses on genocide and mass atrocity prevention.

2011

Conflict prevention and response become a core mission of the U.S. Department of State.

2010

The United Nations establishes the Office for the Prevention of Genocide.

2004

The Center for Conflict Prevention and Resolution within the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency is established, focusing on conflict and the environment.

1999

The International Criminal Court is created to help bring perpetrators of mass violence to justice.

1998

KEY FEATURE

Social Inclusion

90%

of peacebuilders consider social inclusion and cohesion to be a key feature of their work.

MOST EFFECTIVE APPROACH

Reconciliation

72%

of peacebuilders today consider reconciliation to be the most effective approach to peacebuilding.

BIGGEST CHALLENGE

Inadequate Funding

81%

of peacebuilders cite inadequate financial resources as the biggest challenge to effective peacebuilding.

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