PCS Global Campus Program

Peacebuilding & Conflict Transformation

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Outline of Lecture

PART ONE [The Basic Concepts]

- Introduction
- What is Peace?
- What is Conflict? What causes Conflict?
- Who should *Make* Peace?
- What is Peacebuilding?
- Why do we need Conflict Transformation?
- What are the ingredients of successful Peacebuilding for Conflict Transformation?

Outline (Contd.)

- PART TWO [Theory for Practical Analysis]
1. Introduction
2. Working IN, AROUND, or ON Conflict
3. Conflict Mapping
   1. Conflict Actors
   2. Conflict Causes
4. Analyzing Peacebuilding Initiatives
   1. Meeting Basic Criteria
   2. Quantitative & Qualitative Indicators
5. Conclusion

What is Peace?

- Peace is more than the mere absence of War

- "Peace" without Justice is Tyranny. "Peace" without Freedom is Slavery. "Peace" without Law is anarchy. "Peace" that is not Sustainable is Temporary.

- Sustainable Peace requires Justice, Equality, Human Rights & Freedoms, and the Rule of Law. It also needs to be collectively owned and achieved in a participatory manner.

What is Conflict?

- Conflict is the real or perceived incompatibility of goals or means
- Conflict is natural in human society, and not always negative. It is a motor of change
- The ability to engage in overt conflict presupposes some empowerment
- Conflict is (often) the condition of possibility for the exercise of rights

What is Conflict? (Contd.)

- "Violent (or armed) conflict is not natural, and needs to be prevented." This statement becomes complicated if we understand violence as essentially structural and therefore ubiquitous.

- If we believe Gandhi's definition of **"poverty as the worst kind of violence"**, then the status quo is fundamentally violent, and all we have is a choice (not always free, of course, and never unmediated) of different types of violence.

- As analytic categories both "violence" and "conflict" are often unhelpful, especially if we fetishize their dominant or common sense interpretations. Violent conflict has its own dynamic, invariably the causes get displaced by consequences, which turn becomes the cause of further conflict. **Yet, the search for and addressing of root causes of conflict is crucial to achieve just and sustainable solutions.**

What are the causes of Conflict?

- Is there a common set of causes that inevitably brings about violent conflict?

- Different Approaches/Objectives: Greed vs. Grievance; Economic, Social & Political Disempowerment; Ideological Conflicts; Self-Determination / Secession; Ethnic/Religious Conflicts;

- In my work, I have found only one common factor: complete and utter loss of faith in the system's ability to redress grievances, even on the long term.

Who should *Make* Peace?

- Is it the groups or individuals who were the cause of the conflict?

- Is it the groups or individuals who gain, in different ways, from the conflict?

- J P Lederach: **"the nature and characteristics of contemporary conflict suggest the need for a set of concepts and approaches that go beyond traditional statist diplomacy"**

- The peace process is too valuable to be left to the main protagonists who may be part of the problem

- The non-statist approach would be to encourage local initiatives and seek to learn from sustainable traditional peacebuilding/coping strategies

What is Peacebuilding?

- "Peacebuilding seeks to prevent, reduce, transform, and help people recover from violence in all forms, even structural violence that has not yet led to massive civil unrest. At the same time, it empowers people to foster relationships at all levels that sustain them and their environment. . . . Peacebuilding supports the development of relationships at all levels of society: between individuals and within families, communities, organisations, businesses, Governments, and cultural, religious, economic, and political institutions and movements. Relationships are a form of power or *social capital*." Schirch, L *TLB of Strategic Peacebuilding*

Peacebuilding is not …

- Peacebuilding is not only necessary for post-war or post-conflict societies

- Peacebuilding is not Peacekeeping

- Peacebuilding is not based primarily on Western ideas

- Peacebuilding does not avoid conflict or ignore structural forms of violence and injustice.

- Peacebuilding is not a passive or uncontroversial activity

- Peacebuilding is not a top-down process

Peacebuilding …

- Should be a Strategic Connecting Space
- Should be Multi-Disciplinary and Multi-Dimensional in Approach
- Should be Value-Driven and Rights-Based
- Should protect against Elite Capture
- Requires Relational Skills: self-reflection, active listening, appreciative inquiry, creative problem-solving, dialogue, mediation and negotiation skills
- Requires ANALYSIS: understanding of local context, sensitivity to Epistemic, Structural, and Physical (Secondary) Violence

Why do we need Conflict Transformation?

- Conflict *Management*, Conflict *Resolution*, Conflict *Recovery* are unsatisfactory terms because they validate the pre-conflict status quo. It is because the pre-conflict status quo was problematic that the violence took place, after all.

- **Hence, we should be aiming at conflict transformation, which seeks to bring about a sustainable peace through *transforming* the context into one in which the causes of conflict have been addressed.**

- The goal, then, is not to go back to the pre-conflict situation, but to improve on it by taking the conflict seriously.

Peacebuilding for Conflict Transformation

- Long-term conflict traumatizes the entire socius, not merely individuals, denuding the culture of its ability to cope and regenerate: Collective Trauma & Cultural Bereavement

- Women, Children, Marginal Groups suffer most from violent conflict

- On the other hand, it is also true that **long-term conflict tends to loosen the hegemony of dominant groups within a hierarchized society**.

- However, these "victories" are often withdrawn after the conflict is over. The challenge, therefore, is to make these provisional and temporary gains of marginal groups sustainable.

Conflict Transformation

- "Conflict Transformation is to <u>envision</u> and <u>respond</u> to the <u>ebb and flow</u> of social conflict as <u>life-giving opportunities</u> for creating <u>constructive change processes</u> that <u>reduce violence, increase justice</u> in <u>direct interaction and social structures</u>, and respond to real-life problems in <u>human relationships</u>."

Lederach, J P *The Little Book of Conflict Transformation*

Any Clarifications Needed?

Any Questions?

Any Comments?

Intractable Violent Conflict

"If the ruling class has lost its consensus, i.e. is no longer "leading" but only "dominant", exercising coercive force alone, this means precisely that the great masses have become detached from their traditional ideologies, and no longer believe what they used to believe previously, etc. The crisis consists precisely in the fact that the old is dying and the new cannot be born; and in this interregnum a great variety of morbid symptoms appear". Antonio Gramsci

Are we Working IN, AROUND or ON Conflict?

- "In" Conflict refers mainly to locations and areas of work. At best it may mean that we deal with conflict consequences

- "Around" Conflict indicates that we circumvent either the areas or the issues (often both) that are controversial or difficult

- Working "On" Conflict recognizes the importance of engaging with conflict causes and areas with a view to transforming the conflict

Conflict Mapping I

- Who are the main (conflict) actors?
- What do they want most?
- What is their role in the (conflict) situation?
- (How) Has this role changed in the recent past?
- What trends do you see in the future?

	Key Actor/ Stakeholder	Sphere(s) of Influence	Location(s) of Influence	Method(s) of Exerting Influence	Extent of Influence & Presence	Main Interest / Agenda	Influence Time Frame	Key Antagonists	Latest Outcome of Action	Other	Who gave Conflict Actin?
01	Ruling Party Alliance	Economy, Governance,	Colombo, District Capitals	Laws & Regulations, Mass Media	Political Power, but popularity waning	Maintaining Power	For past 02 years	LTTE, UNP	Killing of LTTE Negotiator	Int. comm. :Criticised for HR violations	Yes
02	LTTE	Military, Tamil people	North of Country	Military attacks, suicide bombs	Waning power?	Military power, Separate state	Past 25 years	SLA, Int.	A'pura Airport attack	Int. comm. :Criticised for HR violations	Yes
03	Sri Lanka Army										
04	Other Combatants										
05	Opposition Parties										
06											
07											
08											
09											

Conflict Mapping II

- Identify the main or root causes of conflict

- Prioritize them in order of importance

- Which causes may have triggered the violent conflict? [Immediate Cause]

- Which causes are also consequences of the conflict?

- What trends do you see in relation to causes and consequences of the conflict?

Qualitative and Quantitative Indicators of Good Practice in Supporting the Peace Process:

Main causes of conflict/dispute in the area (in order of importance):[1]

	Importance	Duration	Area Specificity	Nature of Impact
• Caste discrimination	…………………..	………………..	……………………………	………………………………………
• Gender inequality	…………………	………………..	……………………………	………………………………………
• Identity politics	…………………	………………..	……………………………	………………………………………
• Colonial Exploitation	…………………..	………………..	……………………………	………………………………………
• ……………………………	…………………..	………………..	……………………………	………………………………………
• Economic exploitation	…………………	………………..	……………………………	………………………………………
• Corruption	…………………	………………..	……………………………	………………………………………
• Nepotism	…………………	………………..	……………………………	………………………………………
• Armed gangs	…………………	………………..	……………………………	………………………………………
• Greed	…………………	………………..	……………………………	……………
• Land issues	…………………	………………..	……………………………	………………………………………
• Traditional Rivalries	…………………	………………..	……………………………	………………………………………
• Lack of Democracy	…………………	………………..	……………………………	
• Jealousy	…………………	………………..	……………………………	………………………………………
• Neglect by the State	………………..	………………..	……………………………	…………………………………………
• Donor-led "Development"	……………….	………………..	……………………………	…………………………………………
• ……………………………	……………….	………………..	……………………………	…………………………………………
• ……………………………	………………..	………………..	……………………………	…………………………………………

Preliminary Questions:

Does the project/programme/initiative address any actual or potential causes of conflict? Yes / No

If Yes, which ones? ……………………………………………………………………………………………………

How does it do so? …………………………………………………………………………………………………...

……...

……...

In what of the following ways do you think this initiative is successful and/or supportive of the peace process?

    (1) Reduces conflict/tension immediately: Yes / No …………………………………………………………

    (2) Addresses medium/long-term conflict causes: Yes / No ………………………………………………

    (3) Involves marginalized/vulnerable groups & women: Yes / No ……………………………………………

    (4) Has broad community ownership: Yes/No …………………………………… (4a) Responds to urgent local needs: Yes / No ………………

    (5) Duration of initiative: …………… (5a) Geographical/Sectoral Range: …………………………(5b) Documentation: Yes / No …………..

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[1] Please note that (a) this list of causes is meant as a guide and needs to be supplemented by the information you receive in the field; (b) these include chronic or long-term causes, acute or currently intense causes, as well as proximate causes or triggers. Since not all causes fall into the same category, you should decide which ones need to be focused upon.

Analyzing Peacebuilding Initiatives

- Does the selected initiative seek to address the main causes of conflict?

- How does it do so?

- (How) Does it reduce conflict/tension?

- Does it involve Marginal Groups?

- Does it have broad community ownership?

- Does it respond to both urgent and long-term local/national needs?

CRITERIA	INDICATORS	
	QUANTITATIVE	QUALITATIVE
Participation	No. & Categories Represented	Effect on Decision-making
Sustainability	Extent of local financial support	Level of local Ownership
Accountability	No. of protests addressed	Grievance/Appeal in place
Empowerment	+ changes in women's voice	Changes in attitude & awareness
Equity/Justice/ Fairness	% change in poorest income levels	How gender, caste culture issues dealt
Non-Discrimination	Inclusion Statistics	Minorities in leadership positions

Any Clarifications Needed?

Any Questions?

Any Comments?