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Peacebuilding

CAN IT STABILIZE COUNTRIES AFTER THE FIGHTING STOPS?

Peacebuilding is the international community's newest approach to ending cycles of conflict in hot spots around the world. It recognizes that even if conflict has officially ended, the risk of violence often remains ever-present. In fact, roughly 40 percent of post-conflict countries have faced renewed violence within a decade. Peacebuilding tries to improve the prospect for lasting peace by helping to stabilize societies, strengthen institutions and reinforce governments. Since 2005, the United Nations has spent $250 million on peacebuilding projects in 19 countries — most of them in Africa but also in Nepal, Sri Lanka, Haiti and Kyrgyzstan. But does this approach work, and can it be replicated in countries with drastically different histories and cultures? Is a democratic society a prerequisite for lasting peace? Critics of peacebuilding say it will take more than a new philosophy to fix the world's most fragile states. Proponents say it is the best attempt yet at dealing with the aftermath of conflict.

A pro-government demonstrator's sign declares, "No to rebellion, no to division, we want peace, not war," during a rally outside the National Parliament in Bangui, capital of the Central African Republic (CAR), in May 2010. Tensions had escalated after the presidential election was delayed. The U.N. Peacebuilding Commission and Fund have budgeted $31 million for peacebuilding projects designed to help CAR stabilize after several insurgencies ended.

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Peacebuilding

BY JINA MOORE

THE ISSUES

Michael von der Schulenburg, the United Nations' top representative in Sierra Leone, remembers driving into a riot in 2009, surrounded by a crowd of about 5,000 people. Although the country's brutal civil war had ended seven years before, a provincial election had stirred controversy — and violence — between the two main political parties.

The conflict, which many feared would reignite hostilities across the country, had spread to the coastal capital of Freetown, where a mob of angry ruling party members had gathered outside the opposition's headquarters. Twenty-two men were trapped on the headquarters roof. Below them, von der Schulenburg remembers, rioters shouted, "Hand them over! Hand them over!"

He tried to contain the situation by talking with the leaders of the angry mob and with police standing nearby. Eventually, he was able to get the men off the roof, and the police dispelled the crowd. A few weeks later, the feuding political parties agreed to rules for future political interactions, including elections.

Thanks to von der Schulenburg's intervention — and the subsequent agreement — violence was averted. The agreement, von der Schulenburg says, was possible because of a process called peacebuilding — a new international approach to the age-old problem of putting an end to war. Unlike peace*making*, in which politicians negotiate an agreement to end ongoing conflict, and peace*keeping*, which sends foreign soldiers to monitor peace agreements and protect civilians in conflict zones, peace*building* involves stabilizing states and strengthening institutions to build lasting peace in post-conflict societies.

CQ Press/Jina Moore

Tigie Koroma, a weaver in Makeni, Sierra Leone, is one of many small entrepreneurs who receive support through a microenterprise grant from the U.N. Peacebuilding Fund. The agency has budgeted $45 million for peacebuilding activities in Sierra Leone — more than in any other country — since a brutal civil war ended there in 2002.

"Everybody understands peacemaking . . . and peacekeeping," says Judy Cheng-Hopkins, U.N. assistant secretary-general for peacebuilding support. "Peacebuilding goes beyond either."

Peacebuilding is the slow, difficult task of rebuilding post-conflict states and societies. "Peacebuilding helps put in place all the pieces that would do that," says Edward Luck, senior vice president of the International Peace Institute, a think tank in New York.

After a decade of intense global conflict in the 1990s, peacebuilding specialists now believe they understand many of the measures needed to move a country toward stability. The laundry list of needs grew out of wrenching conflicts in Bosnia and Rwanda in the 1990s, and in West Africa and Southeast Asia in the early 21st century. [1]

Peacebuilding includes a variety of activities, such as:

- Disarming ex-combatants; unless former soldiers feel productive and engaged as civilians, they might cause trouble;
- Establishing truth and reconciliation commissions;
- Creating a legal process to help returning refugees deal with people living on their old homesteads;
- Jump-starting economies; building roads and generating electricity;
- Training competent judges and lawyers;
- Building functioning army barracks and jails.

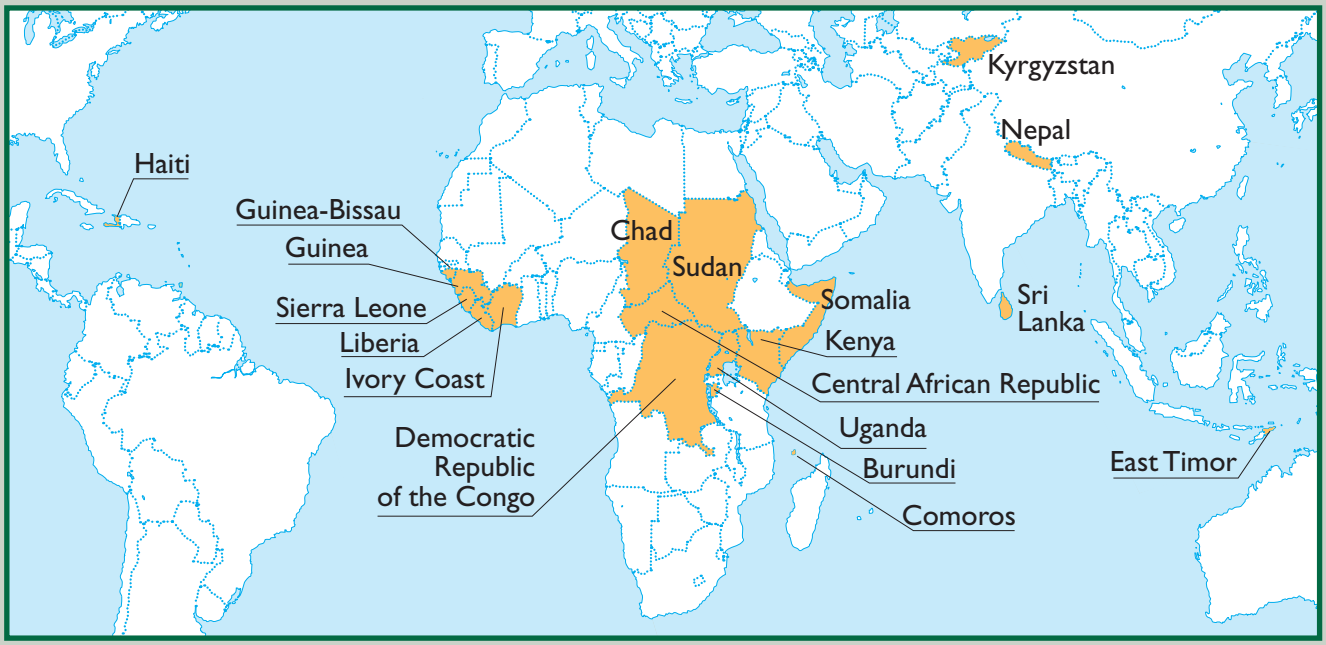
A generation ago, the international community dealt with each of those needs individually. That changed in 2005, when the United Nations established its Peacebuilding Commission (PBC), the first global entity to focus exclusively on the new approach to ending conflict. The U.N. is rapidly defining the peacebuilding terrain, although other well-known organizations — from religious groups such as the Quakers' American Friends Service Committee to large international organizations like the International Rescue Committee — also have incorporated peacebuilding concepts into their work.

The U.N.'s peacebuilding budget — $389 million spent since 2007 on projects in 19 countries — pales in comparison to the $7.3 billion spent each year on peacekeeping operations. The

Africa Has Most U.N. Peacebuilding Projects

Fourteen of the 19 countries with peacebuilding projects financed by the U.N. Peacebuilding Commission in 2010 were in Africa. Peacebuilding tries to stabilize societies, strengthen institutions and reinforce post-conflict governments to build lasting peace. Besides the United Nations and numerous individual countries, many international organizations fund peacebuilding projects, such as the Quakers' American Friends Service Committee and Geneva-based Interpeace.

Recipients of U.N. Peacebuilding Funds in 2010



Source: "Trust Fund Factsheet," Multi-Donor Trust Fund Office, United National Development Programme, www.mdtf.undp.org/factsheet/fund/PB000; map by Lewis Agrell

peacebuilding funds are donated by 47 U.N. members. [2]

The PBC advises governments both on how to better stabilize their societies and maintain peace after the guns have gone silent. While the U.N. Peacebuilding Fund supports projects in 19 countries, the Peacebuilding Commission itself works with only six African countries that have requested help: Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia and Sierra Leone (in West Africa) and the Central African Republic and Burundi in central Africa.

The diplomatic challenges alone are daunting. Heads of state don't look very kindly on the U.N. telling them how to run their governments. But when the General Assembly voted to create the PBC, it gave the commission a "political mandate" — permission to engage foreign governments on political questions. Many observers think the PBC's mandate gives it the best shot at making a real difference.

"The mandate is to work with leaders, to look them in the eyes and say, 'Look, thank you for your coffee, but I think you need to be doing something different,' " says Michael Massaquoi, Sierra Leone's liaison to the PBC.

Others suggest privately that the PBC's permission to be so direct and political can provide cover for other groups, especially nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), which typically have to be less confrontational when working with government officials.

Grassroots efforts are also crucial to peacebuilding. If U.N. efforts can support community-level work and target large-scale needs — such as building army barracks, prisons, roads or courts — local groups can work at the grassroots level more effectively, some argue. Sierra Leone's *Fambul Tok* (Krio for "family talk") program brings ordinary people together, village by village, to talk about the 11-year civil war that ended in 2002. By the time local human-rights activist John Caulker founded the community-based reconciliation program in 2007, the country had already been through a peace process, a truth and reconciliation commission and national elections. But many villagers say those activities hadn't brought the

kind of communal peace they needed to help heal from the atrocities of a war in which children were kidnapped into armies and drugged, women were raped and resisters mutilated.

"We feared one another. We were not even allowing the people to get near us. . . . The perpetrator would not allow his own children or family to mix with mine," says George Sambayo, who lives in a small village in northeastern Sierra Leone. "If the person is coming your way, you change direction. If you have malaria, or if you have a naming ceremony — nothing, he doesn't even go there."

Peacebuilding is also about issues that don't usually come up in formal peace negotiations, such as poverty, national histories and management of natural resources.

The infamously chronic conflict in Congo, Africa's second-largest country, also would benefit from micro-level attention, says Séverine Autesserre, an assistant professor of political science at Barnard College in New York City and author of *The Trouble With Congo.* [3] Most international efforts to end the conflict in Congo have focused on imposing settlements at the national and international level, she says. "There has been a lot of money spent on organizing big international conferences and general elections . . . but there has really been barely any support to the local actors who were trying to resolve the conflict at the local level," she writes. As a result, "local conflicts festered, [and] they eventually escalated and jeopardized the national and international settlements." [4]

As the United Nations, NGOs and governments strive to implement effective peacebuilding programs, here are some of the questions being asked:

Does peacebuilding work?

Although the word itself has been in use for some 20 years, the diplomatic consensus and political will need-

African Nations Receive Most Peacebuilding Funds

Since its creation in 2005, the U.N. Peacebuilding Fund has budgeted $250 million for projects in 19 post-conflict countries — 14 of them in Africa. Of the 182 projects undertaken so far, only 12 were not in Africa.

Countries Receiving Peacebuilding Funds

Country	Approved PBF budget	Number of projects
Sierra Leone	$45,008,170	33
Burundi	$39,623,868	21
Central African Republic	$31,001,975	26
Liberia	$20,047,444	28
Sudan	$18,726,228	6
Democratic Republic of Congo	$17,174,751	11
Uganda	$13,999,756	4
Guinea	$12,850,829	11
Nepal	$10,000,000	7
Comoros	$9,400,000	13
Côte d'Ivoire (Ivory Coast)	$8,527,750	3
Guinea-Bissau	$6,268,653	7
Haiti	$3,800,000	2
Somalia	$3,000,000	5
Sri Lanka	$3,000,000	1
Kyrgyzstan	$2,999,948	1
Chad	$2,728,500	1
Kenya	$1,000,000	1
East Timor	$993,625	1
Total	**$250,151,497**	**182**

U.N. Peacebuilding Accomplishments

The four biggest recipients of U.N.-funded peacebuilding projects are in West and Central Africa, where 108 projects have been undertaken. Here are some examples of those projects:

Sierra Leone

Transitional justice — 20,000 war victims were paid reparations after a four-year delay
Justice/courts — More than 70 percent of backlogged cases cleared

Liberia

Demobilization/reintegration — 800 ex-combatants trained in farming, growing rubber, raising livestock
Youth employment — More than 5,000 young people trained in community mediation, leadership, political participation
Social welfare — 40 social workers trained; addressed more than 600 referrals in two years

Central African Republic

Peace deals — Rebellions ended by political dialogue
Child soldiers — More than 600 former child soldiers disarmed, reintegrated into their villages
Media — Two rural radio stations built; two teams of journalists trained to cover local issues
Elections — Peaceful presidential elections held

Burundi

Land — 3,000 land disputes settled peacefully
Justice/courts — 17 local tribunals set up
Corruption — $400,000 returned to public treasury after corruption investigations
Barracks — 23,000 soldiers housed

Source: "Trust Fund Factsheet," Multi-Donor Trust Fund Office, United National Development Programme, www.mdtf.undp.org/factsheet/fund/PB000; research by CQ Global Researcher

ed to implement peacebuilding agendas in failing states did not develop until the U.N. General Assembly voted to establish the Peacebuilding Commission at its 2005 annual meeting.

Trying to help failing states is hardly a new enterprise, and the success record of such programs has been mixed. In Somalia, efforts at creating a stable, working government infamously failed in the early 1990s, and hostilities continue today, as African Union peacekeepers try to help the U.N.-supported transitional government prevent Islamic extremists from taking over the country. [5] In Iraq and Afghanistan, U.S.-led efforts at stabilizing the two countries continue to face obstacles, including insurgencies. Meanwhile, the Central African Republic, despite international interventions, still does not control its eastern territory, which borders war-torn Darfur, Sudan, and has become a refuge from which Uganda's Lord's Resistance Army rebels terrorize the region.

On the other hand, Bosnia-Herzegovina has stabilized since the civil war and genocide in the 1990s. And East Timor, which the U.N. administered from 1999 to 2002, is making significant progress toward post-conflict stability. [6]

Peacebuilding philosophy and practice are based on a mix of lessons learned over a generation — sometimes from failure, sometimes from success. "They're based on a lot of experience but not a lot of [scientific] evidence about things that we know can help support peace," says Vanessa Wyeth, co-editor of the book, *Building States to Build Peace.*

The list of countries targeted by the U.N. for peacebuilding is daunting, including Liberia, Côte d'Ivoire (Ivory Coast), Nepal, Chad, Sri Lanka and Haiti. "Success is too high a hurdle in some of these places," says the International Peace Institute's Luck. Still, he remains optimistic that, "on balance, chances of [peacebuilding] being a moderate success over time are relatively good."

Getting donors to support peacebuilding efforts is another major goal, but measuring success is difficult. The United Nations attributes any increase in donor giving to peacebuilding activities, although it does not ask donors what motivated the higher level of giving, according to U.N. officials.

In other instances, successful peacebuilding efforts are clearly visible. In

Peacebuilding Begins with Disarming Ex-Combatants

The process also involves demobilization and reintegration.

The top priority of most peacebuilding programs is transforming rebels into civilians: getting them to give up their guns and rejoin civilian life.

The process — called "DDR," for disarmament, demobilization and reintegration — usually is led by the United Nations, which has worked on DDR in 20 countries since its first such project in 1990, in Nicaragua. [1] Today, the U.N. maintains 13 active DDR programs, most of them in Africa. [2]

The process reflects a shift in rebel groups' missions: from violently pursuing their grievances against governments to pursuing those grievances nonviolently as civilians — and sometimes as statesmen — through politics and civil society. "The incentive of DDR is political will: 'We will go toward disarmament because we have decided within our organization that's how we want to grab power, to share it by integrating into the government,' " says a U.N. staffer, who asked not to be named because he was not an official spokesperson.

The process requires militants to renounce armed rebellion. "In order to be part of the political process, they need to disarm — to become political, and not military, actors," says Tino Kreutzer, who worked with the U.N. on DDR in the Central African Republic (CAR), where dissatisfaction over a 2005 election sparked rebellions in much of the country.

The former insurgents — or their leaders — often hope to exchange military power for political power. But not all members of an ex-rebel group are likely to get an equal share of the post-conflict political spoils. While leaders of former rebellions may make presidential bids or receive high political appointments, the foot soldiers frequently are left to return to civilian life with little or no income and few prospects for a good livelihood.

Rebel groups often raise funds by extorting "taxes" — essentially, bribes — from civilians. "The way in which rebel groups fund themselves is largely by preying on the population — 'taxing' roads, 'taxing' . . . traders or villagers on their way to the market," notes Ned Dalby, a Nairobi-based researcher for the International Crisis Group, a nongovernmental organization dedicated to resolving conflicts. In the CAR and in neighboring Democratic Republic of Congo, rebel groups extort taxes from local, independent miners. [3]

For such groups, disarmament is against their interest because ongoing conflict assures an income. Thus, whatever agreement rebel leaders may make at a negotiating table may not be followed by their subordinates — at least not without some kind of supplement for their lost income.

That's where reintegration comes in. Once combatants hand over their weapons, they usually are offered food assistance, skills training or even cash when they return to their villages. "The idea is that they don't depend on the movement to feed their family," says Kreutzer. Reintegration support "helps them

reestablish households and provide for their family [until they can] find a job."

That support can take several forms. Former combatants may be given pots and pans, blankets and cooking oil. Sometimes they are given food directly; sometimes they are offered seeds to plant. Occasionally, they may be given money for transport or other immediate needs.

Cash, though, can complicate the picture. For instance, peacebuilders have learned that buying back guns — an early approach to disarmament — is usually counterproductive. More often than not, it just drives up the local price of weapons. And sometimes the money is spent on new weapons. [4]

Peacebuilders also have learned that post-conflict economic development and nation-building go hand-in-hand with DDR. After all, says Laurent Banal, the DDR operations chief in the CAR, "These armed movements are, in fact, rebellion against poverty, mainly, and lack of presence of the state."

— Jina Moore

AFP/Getty Images/Sia Kambou

Militiamen loyal to Ivory Coast's former President Laurent Gbagbo — who gave up power after a deadly months-long post-election conflict — gather for a disarmament ceremony on April 29, 2011, in the country's commercial capital, Abidjan. Troops loyal to the new president, Alassane Ouattara, and U.N. peacekeepers also attended. Disarmament is a peacebuilding priority.

[1] "DDR in peace operations: a retrospective," U.N. Department of Peacekeeping, undated, p. 3, http://unddr.org/docs/DDR_retrospective.pdf.

[2] "Country Programmes," United Nations Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration Resource Center, www.unddr.org/countryprogrammes.php.

[3] For background, see Josh Kron, "Conflict in Congo," *CQ Global Researcher*, April 5, 2011, pp. 157-182.

[4] "Operational Guide to the Integrated Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration Standards," United Nations Inter-Agency Working Group on Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration, 2010, p. 142.

Sierra Leone roads are being built, sanitation trucks regularly cart away residential and commercial trash in the capital and newly trained lawyers and paralegals are helping to reduce by more than 70 percent the backlog of unresolved cases in the program's first year. [7]

Elsewhere, success depends on the work being done behind the scenes. Carolyn McAskie, the first U.N. assistant secretary-general of peacebuilding, remembers how crucial quiet diplomacy was between Burundi's U.N. ambassador and the Peacebuilding Commission. "In subtle ways, without fanfare and without headlines or public statements, the very fact that Burundi was on the PBC agenda helped to bring it back from the brink," she says. "We changed behaviors in Burundi in [some] instances."

But changing day-to-day behavior can be difficult in societies suffering from cyclical violence. For generations, violence has defined power in Guinea-Bissau — first during the country's long and bloody war for independence from the Portuguese in the 1960s and '70s and thereafter in frequent military coups. Though more recent political violence has been confined to the capital and often the halls of power, the instability affects all Bissau-Guineans.

"There's a kind of inversion of values," says Fafali Koudawo, director of *Voz di Paz*, a civil society organization in Bissau, the capital. "Before, he who steals was a bad guy. Now, he who steals a huge amount of money is great. Because the state is weak, violence has overturned all the values."

In most of the troubled countries, however, successes and failures unfold simultaneously, and incrementally. In the Central African Republic (CAR), for example, peacebuilding efforts helped advance a political dialogue that ultimately resulted in a major rebel group signing a cease-fire and agreeing to give up its guns. [8] But most observers consider the agreement fragile. "We're not talking about real peace," says Frederick Cook, then-U.S. ambassador to the CAR. "We're just talking about not fighting."

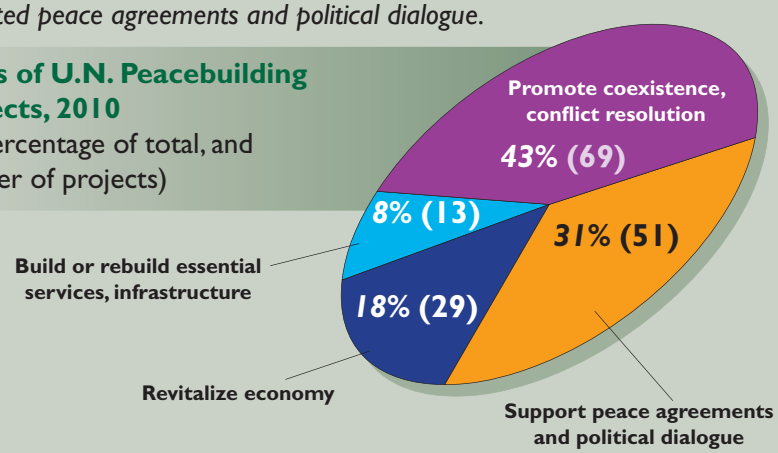
The decision whether to use, or continue to use, violence doesn't necessarily respond to outside pressure, according to Ned Dalby, a Nairobi-based researcher on the CAR for the International Crisis Group, a nongovernmental group that works to resolve conflicts. One must "think carefully about the multiple factors behind violence and whose interest it would serve," he warns. The answer varies across different conflicts.

The sheer number of programs and interventions also makes it difficult to evaluate peacebuilding, partly because

U.N. Projects Foster Peaceful Coexistence

More than 40 percent of the 162 U.N. peacebuilding projects in 2010 promoted peaceful coexistence and conflict resolution. About one-third supported peace agreements and political dialogue.

Types of U.N. Peacebuilding Projects, 2010
(by percentage of total, and number of projects)



Source: "Fourth Consolidated Annual Progress Report on Activities Implemented under the Peacebuilding Fund (PBF)," U.N. Development Programme, May 2011

it is difficult to balance successes against failures and determine a net effect. For example, the CAR's point man for disarmament and demobilization was fired after allegedly embezzling more than half a million dollars in donations earmarked for reintegrating former combatants. But the same peacebuilding operation succeeded in demobilizing 600 child soldiers, at a cost of $2 million, according to local U.N. staff. Even in a perfect world, where programs run efficiently and corruption is minimal, it would be hard to prove that peacebuilding succeeds at preventing war. "Prevention obviously is a difficult thing to prove. It's counterfactual," says Luck. "It [is about what] didn't happen."

All of which begs the question: What does peace look like to those outside the international decision-making process? In the CAR, international organizations and local politicians talk about peace from their desks in the capital, Bangui, but some Central African citizens think such talk is premature.

"We have peace in the town, but not in the provinces," says Arlette Ngarina, who lives in the capital. "Our families live in the provinces. If they are not in peace, we cannot be in peace, either."

Does peacebuilding require democracy?

Telling new governments what kind of governing bodies to establish is tricky. And, officially, peacebuilding is agnostic about which kind of government is needed to build a stable state.

"If you look at the U.N. charter," says Philip Dive, head of strategic planning with the U.N.'s Sierra Leone mission, "I don't see the word 'democracy' in the preamble." Instead, he points out, the charter focuses only on general goals, such as peace, security, justice and respect for human rights. "We're not lobbyists," Dive says. The purpose of the U.N. is not to achieve a specific type of government, he argues, but to achieve the values set out in the charter. "There are many ways to do that."

Nevertheless, international donors "increasingly make democratization a central tenet of the post-conflict reconstruction plan," writes Irfan Nooruddin, a political scientist at Ohio State University. "Holding elections is thought to signal a move to peace and to provide an avenue for former combatants to enter peaceful discussions with one another about the future of their countries." [9]

Political scientists Dawn Brancati of Washington University in St. Louis and Jack L. Snyder of Columbia University in New York City say elections are more fashionable these days. For example, after analyzing 136 civil wars ending after World War II, they found that:

- Wars that ended after the Cold War were more likely to involve elections;
- U.N. interventions increased a country's likelihood of having post-conflict elections;
- U.N. peacekeeping missions increased the likelihood of early elections, and
- Elections were more likely to follow a rebel victory than a government victory. [10]

The authors think elections are more popular today because of a combination of international pressure and the interests of the formerly warring parties.

But, if neither side is a clear-cut winner and the fighting ended only through negotiation, the result can be disastrous. "[T]he increasingly common combination of early elections and inconclusive civil war outcomes creates exactly the conditions that make elections especially dangerous," they write. "International pressures in favor of negotiated settlements, together with quick elections, have contributed to this trend over the past two decades." [11]

Yet a country's ability to organize and hold a successful national election is itself seen by the international community as an indicator of stability. Though the U.N. peacebuilding staff insists elections are not a prerequisite for their work, the history of U.N. peacebuilding suggests otherwise. The West African nation of Guinea — where government soldiers killed 157 pro-democracy protesters and raped at least 109 women in the capital in 2009 [12] — joined the

U.N.'s peacebuilding body earlier this year, only after holding elections in December 2010 deemed fair by international observers. [13]

Guinea's neighbor, Côte d'Ivoire, on the other hand, was refused PBC membership because elections there were delayed for five years. And when a vote finally was held in November 2010, the country erupted into violence that was worse than anything since the end of the 2005 civil war. [14]

Meanwhile, the PBC has advocated elections elsewhere. In the CAR, for instance, elections were a key part of the 2008 agreement between a major rebel group and the government, which peacebuilders facilitated. In Burundi, the U.N. established a political dialogue to pave the way for last year's bizarre presidential election. While it unfolded without the violence many feared, the only candidate was the incumbent president. [15]

In such "democratic" elections, the results are often less important to the U.N. than the peacefulness of the process, and true democracy is not always the outcome, some observers acknowledge. "It really depends more on [whether] that country is stable enough to have the trust of the international community to advance the cause of peacebuilding," says Frank Jarasch, a former adviser to PBC Chairman Peter Wittig, Germany's permanent U.N. representative. "If the impression to the member states at the U.N. is that [the government] has this kind of ownership of the coming peacebuilding process, then . . . it doesn't have to be 100 percent democratic elections."

Running a successful election is not always the same as practicing democracy. "[F]rom the point of view of a self-interested political leader," other options are "superior . . . to the tough and unreliable option of trying to be a good government," writes Paul Collier, a professor of economics at Oxford University and a leading thinker on the causes of conflict. They include taking bribes, intimidating voters and intentionally miscounting votes, which may explain why incumbents win reelection 60 percent more often in developing countries than in developed countries. [16] "Electoral competition creates a Darwinian struggle for political survival in which the winner is the one who adopts the most cost-effective means of attracting votes," Collier continues. [17]

CQ Press/Jina Moore

Paulino Rodrigues Santim, a blacksmith in Bissau, the capital of Guinea-Bissau, will buy a generator using a microloan financed by the U.N. Peacebuilding Fund. Helping young people establish small businesses is seen as an effective way to maintain peace in post-conflict countries.

Burundi's 2010 presidential election — the first direct presidential poll since the end of the civil war in 2000 — was a case in point. Although the rhetoric focused on "free and fair" elections, the national electoral commission was accused of bias and fraud, and ruling party cabinet ministers interfered in the opposition campaign. Ultimately, all of the opposition candidates pulled out of the election, leaving the incumbent presi-

dent as the only contender. Despite the controversy and suspicion that swirled within the country, the United Nations and the European Union's Election Observation Mission stood by the process.

The Burundi debacle, and peacebuilders' hesitation about promoting democracy, may be less about peacebuilding than about old-fashioned diplomacy. Says the U.N.'s McAskie: "It's not so much that they're agnostic on what kind of government there should be; most of them know. But they're not prepared to pronounce [it], . . . partly because governments don't tell governments off often enough."

AFP/Getty Images/Vyacheslav Oseledko

Relatives of those killed during Kyrgyzstan's violent 2010 political crisis commemorate the one-year anniversary of their deaths with prayers near their graves at a cemetery outside of the capital Bishkek on April 7, 2011. Peacebuilding efforts in the country have focused on improving the livelihoods of youths and empowering women to participate in peace, security and reconstruction efforts.

Is peacebuilding replicable?

Proponents of peacebuilding hope that countries can copy each other's ways of maintaining peace. "Whether in Africa, Asia, Europe — anywhere, almost always one has to focus on" the same objectives, says Cheng-Hopkins, the U.N.'s chief peacebuilding official. Those goals include improving access to justice, reforming the military and police and jump-starting the economy.

McAskie, Cheng-Hopkins' predecessor, says replicability is equally about flexibility. "There are certain traditional ideas we have of what peacebuilding is — sorting out the corrections system, getting the justice system up and running . . ., classic interventions that are generic and applied to all situations," she says. "Then you also maintain a second track [of peacebuilding], which is flexible to the local situation."

In Sierra Leone in 2008, that meant funding something that seemed to have almost nothing to do with conflict: repairing the country's only power plant. Traditionally, this would be considered a long-term development project and not a U.N. peacebuilding activity, which usually involves short-term interventions to help maintain a stable peace during a fragile time.

"We had a very useful and quite heated debate about whether support for getting the electricity up and running in Sierra Leone was peacebuilding," McAskie remembers. The Sierra Leonean speakers "all made a very convincing argument that if the lights are out in Freetown, you're not going to have peace — you're going to have riots in the street, crime at night, rape." The commission gave $9 million to avert a break in power services in the capital and to supplement the supply in two rural districts. [18]

Another approach to peacebuilding focuses on analyzing the history of conflict to understand "incentives or motives for violence." This process involves identifying "root causes of conflict" — what the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) calls the "the raw material" of conflict. [19] The causes differ from country to country and, perhaps more importantly, from one political circumstance to another.

Addressing root causes is a common and replicable approach, but agreeing on the causes is not always easy. Some people in Sierra Leone say the root cause of the war was frustration among unemployed youth; others say it was a breakdown in traditional power structures that prevented local conflicts from being resolved easily. Still others blame the war on a desire by some to control the country's diamond trade.

Sometimes the interpretation of a root cause transforms into a peacebuilding solution. The U.N. gave $4 million in peacebuilding funds to develop a youth empowerment and employment program in Sierra Leone, for instance, citing youth unemployment as a root cause of the conflict. Another $4 million was earmarked to clear backlogged legal complaints, with the same justification. [20]

While "root cause" has become a bit of a buzzword in peace operations, many observers agree there's no guarantee that using financial or programmatic interventions to target what some believe caused a conflict 15 years ago will necessarily stop current conflicts or prevent future ones.

Furthermore, there are limits to identifying and addressing root causes. In Guinea-Bissau, for example, most inter-

national organizations acknowledge that the army's frequent coups promote instability. But engaging the military directly is too sensitive for most nongovernmental organizations, which instead focus on socio-economic programming.

Such political engagement has been a major strength of U.N. efforts in Sierra Leone, however. "If those issues are not dealt with, no matter how much the [U.N.] gives in additional resources, no matter how much government commits itself, no matter how glossy you present it to [diplomats in] New York, things will never work," says Massaquoi, Sierra Leone's peacebuilding liaison to the PBC.

Von der Schulenburg, the U.N. special representative in Sierra Leone, says some elements of the mission's approach can be replicated elsewhere: closely reading the political landscape, engaging key figures, gaining the trust of the country's political elite. But those are diplomatic tools that existed long before peacebuilding became an international priority.

Get more specific than that, others say, and peacebuilding becomes more and more difficult to replicate. "In reality, you cannot compare Burundi at all to the Central African Republic or Guinea Bissau," says Jarasch, of the German mission to the U.N. "That doesn't mean there shouldn't be any lessons learned, but certainly you'd need [lessons] from lots of different countries [on which] to base future involvement." ■

AFP/Getty Images/Thony Belizaire

AFP/Getty Images/Lakruwan Wanniarachchi

Providing Clean Water and Shelter

Haitian medical workers wash their hands using a portable water supply at St. Nicolas Hospital in St. Marc, north of Port-au-Prince, on Oct. 24, 2010 (top). The country has suffered from several cholera outbreaks since the massive January 2010 earthquake, primarily because of a lack of clean water. Peacebuilding aid for Haiti has focused on providing clean water and improving sanitation. In Sri Lanka, peacebuilding funds have been used to aid internally displaced persons (IDPs) like these members of the Tamil minority group, waiting to leave an IDP camp in Vavuniya on Dec. 23, 2009 (bottom). Hostilities ended in Sri Lanka in May 2009, when government troops defeated a long-running insurgency by the Tamil Tigers.

BACKGROUND

Prior Peace Paths

Since 1648, when the Treaty of Westphalia ended the Thirty Years' War in Europe, peace has been the byprod-

uct of agreements between modern nation states. Interstate wars ended with treaties, signed by officials from all sides. Civil wars were crushed or occasionally crushed the government the insurgents rose up against.

Since 1945, at least 260 wars and 357 successful military coups have erupted. [21] And civil wars in particular are prone to reignite; nearly 60 percent of countries that have experienced civil wars since 1945 have seen a return to violence. [22]

A vast body of research suggests several factors influence post-conflict peace, including whether the conflict ended with a "total win" by one side or whether parties negotiated the peace. Which terms they negotiated — and which they ignored — also influence the peace, along with other factors.

In the Westphalian model, peace talks and peace accords are a sign that a conflict has ended. Peacebuilding, on the other hand, looks at what's happening outside the halls of power. For instance, peacebuilders scrutinize what's happening in the fields, where men who once fought each other now farm side-by-side; in the schools, where children once forced to serve as child soldiers are learning trades; and in the courtrooms and legislative chambers, where problems once solved with weapons are addressed through tedious democratic processes.

The word peacebuilding was introduced in 1992, when U.N. Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali outlined a post-Cold War vision for the world body in his "Agenda for Peace." It would take another decade, however, for serious movement on that agenda. Yet, even in Boutros-Ghali's early sketch, peacebuilding was a way of seeing the economic and social dimensions to conflict as well as the political aspects. Today, peacebuilding crafts interventions designed to address them all.

"We're talking about a specific set of challenges in a specific set of circumstances," says Wyeth, of the International Peace Institute.

Wyeth and other observers recognize the same needs from country to country: restoring law and order; providing for minimal livelihoods; rebuilding infrastructure and jumpstarting the economy.

For generations, the international community has taken a patchwork approach to these challenges, dividing its work into three main areas, according to Dive at the U.N. office in Sierra Leone. Peace and security experts focused on peacekeeping patrols and ceasefire agreements; humanitarian-affairs officers focused on food and medical aid; and development experts focused on preparing countries for long-term, post-conflict economic growth — usually in that order.

Over time, says Dive, it became clear this "silo" approach didn't work. "The peace and security people can't go up on the hill, and the humanitarian people can't go off by the river and the development people can't have their bunker under the hill. It has to come together," he says.

Roots of Peacemaking

That lesson came into clear focus in central Africa after the 1994 Rwandan genocide, in which nearly 800,000 Tutsis and moderate Hutus were murdered over a three-month period. [23] Following the genocide, approximately 2 million Rwandan refugees crossed the border into Zaire (modern Democratic Republic of Congo). Among the refugees were many perpetrators of the genocide, some of whom — operating from inside refugee camps run by international aid agencies — bought weapons and tried to reorganize militias to return to Rwanda and continue the slaughter. [24]

But because the aid workers viewed themselves as neutral and the aid was seen as emergency help, the humanitarian agencies did little to halt the activity. The Rwandan government later used their inaction to justify a war against Congo, which lasted until 2002. [25]

Peacebuilding has its roots in both the U.N. failure in Rwanda and later in Bosnia. U.N. peacekeepers were on the ground when the genocide began in Rwanda in 1994 but were not allowed to intervene to stop the massacre they saw unfolding. A year later, in Bosnia-Herzegovina, Dutch peacekeepers abandoned the "safe haven" they had established in Srebrenica, leaving 8,000 Muslim men and boys to be murdered by Serb soldiers. [26] In both instances, peacekeepers were following rules against the use of force in conflict zones — rules designed to protect their "neutrality."

Each tragedy spurred U.N. "lessons learned" documents. In a 2004 report, Secretary-General Kofi Annan acknowledged, "[P]eace agreements by Governments or rebels that engage in or encourage mass human-rights abuses have no value and cannot be implemented. These contexts are not appropriate for consent-based peacekeeping; rather, they must be met with concerted action." [27] Though articulated in tame, diplomatic prose, this idea marked a radical departure from the principle of neutrality, and the admonition against peacekeepers using force that had led to the atrocities in Srebrenica and Rwanda.

Power to Be Political

The move away from a posture of neutrality paved the way for U.N. peacebuilding's greatest strength: its freedom to tackle politics. In most cases, international organizations — including some U.N. agencies — are barred, directly or tacitly, from overt political engagement. Few heads of state want to be told how to run their countries.

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Chronology

1940s *United Nations is created to "prevent the scourge of war."*

1942
Twenty-six countries sign the United Nations Declaration, paving the way for creation of the international organization.

1945
Forty-five nations — all former World War II Allies — gather in San Francisco to write the U.N. charter, which formally establishes the United Nations.

1948
U.N. launches first peacekeeping mission, along Arab-Israeli border.

1960s-1980s

The Cold War polarizes world politics and diplomacy, marginalizing the United Nations as a global player.

1960
U.N. sends its first peacekeepers into Congo.

1964
U.N. launches peacekeeping mission on the island of Cyprus; mission is still operating today.

1989
Berlin Wall falls, symbolizing the collapse of communism and ushering in a new era of activity at the United Nations.

1990s *Ethnic conflict becomes the predominant form of warfare; the U.N.'s image is tarnished by genocides in Europe and Africa.*

1990
Rwanda civil war begins when the Tutsi-led Rwandan Patriotic Front invades Rwanda from Uganda.

1992
U.N. Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali introduces the word "peacebuilding" in his "Agenda for Peace" document, which lays out the U.N.'s post-Cold War vision.

1993
U.N. Mission in Rwanda deploys to Kigali, the capital, to monitor a peace agreement ending the country's three-year civil war.

April 1994
Rwandan president dies in a plane crash, sparking a three-month genocide that unfolds as U.N. peacekeepers stand by.

July 1995
More than 8,000 men and boys are massacred at Srebrenica, in Bosnia-Herzegovina, after Dutch peacekeepers abandon a U.N. "safe haven."

1999
In a speech to the U.N. General Assembly, Secretary-General Kofi Annan, who had refused to permit U.N. peacekeepers to stop the Rwandan slaughter, argues for stronger U.N. interventions to protect civilians in conflict zones.

2000s *In an attempt to address the previous decade's peacekeeping failures, the U.N. adopts peacebuilding as a focus.*

2002
Kofi Annan outlines the U.N.'s vision for peacebuilding.

2005
Security Council and General Assembly create U.N. Peacebuilding Commission (PBC).

2007
PBC activities begin in Burundi and Sierra Leone. . . . Sierra Leone holds its first presidential election since the end of a brutal civil war in 2002.

2008
PBC begins to work with Central African Republic and Guinea-Bissau.

2009
Local elections spark political violence in Sierra Leone for the first time since the end of the country's civil war. Political parties sign a dialogue protocol, facilitated by U.N. peacebuilders.

2010
In advance of presidential elections in October 2011, PBC begins to work with Liberia on political issues. . . . Guinea-Bissau military leaders seize the prime minister, prompting the European Union and United States to withdraw military aid. . . . Burundi holds single-candidate presidential election after the country's opposition parties allege fraud and pull out of the race. . . . Burundian president releases independent survey on truth and reconciliation commission, after seven months' delay.

2011
After a successful national election, Guinea joins the list of countries working with the PBC. . . . Central African Republic holds peaceful elections after a delay of nearly one year.

Success and Failure on the Road to Peacebuilding

The process worked in Sierra Leone, but not in Burundi.

Peacebuilding began at roughly the same time in Sierra Leone and Burundi. Both countries received attention from a steering committee at U.N. headquarters, and both received $35 million in peacebuilding funds.

Four years later, Sierra Leone has become a poster child for what peacebuilding can achieve, while Burundi is an experiment some peacebuilders would rather forget.

In Sierra Leone, the peacebuilding mission has trained paralegals, helped catalyze sustained attention and funding for youth programs and literally kept the lights on in Freetown, the capital. But U.N. staff on the ground and people who work for the government say the most meaningful achievement was streamlining myriad development strategies into a single agenda, designed to support the government's goals. While it sounds to outsiders like nothing more than an example of improved efficiency, it is difficult to imagine how much time mid- and senior-level civil servants spend filling out forms and documents related to international aid efforts. The streamlining has made that process faster and more effective, say U.N. and government staff in Freetown.

AFP/Getty Images/Esdras Ndikumana

A woman in Burundi's capital, Bujumbura, votes during the 2010 presidential election — the first direct presidential poll since the civil war ended in 2000. The vote that re-elected incumbent President Pierre Nkurunziza indicated that a $3 million peacebuilding "political dialogue" program did not work as intended, since opposition parties pulled out of the election after accusing the ruling party of fraud and the election commission of bias.

Meanwhile, U.N. peacebuilders — using their crucial authorization to engage the Sierra Leone government on political issues — helped to defuse an election-related dispute that most observers worried might reignite conflict nationwide. (*See "The Issues," p. 293.*) After a standoff was averted, the two political parties negotiated a Joint Communiqué — outlining new rules for political discourse and action — that will provide the foundation for the 2012 presidential elections.

But in Burundi, peacebuilding has stalled. The 2010 presidential election — rather than showcasing Burundi as a stable, post-conflict country — only heightened political tensions.

Opposition parties accused the ruling party of fraud and the election commission of bias, and neither group would meet with opposition candidates to discuss the issues — even though opposition politicians, ruling party members and the election commission president all had participated in a $3 million, peacebuilding "political dialogue" program. An independent evaluator had called the dialogue program one of Burundi's most successful peacebuilding efforts, but the fact that participants refused to hold a dialogue after the electoral controversy suggests the program was a failure.

Meanwhile, human-rights advocates reported killings of opposition politicians, the murder of an anti-corruption investigator and the arbitrary arrest of journalists and perceived political opponents. [1]

The peace accords that ended Burundi's civil war called for a truth and reconciliation commission, the promotion of which became a centerpiece of the U.N.'s peacebuilding strategy in the country. [2] Using peacebuilding funds, a joint committee representing government, civil society and the United Nations filed a report outlining the need for such a commission and how it might operate. The president, however, delayed the release of the report until December 2010, undermining its findings. No action has been taken so far. [3]

The political situation in each country, of course, is different, and not every peacebuilding intervention in Sierra Leone has been a success. While the U.N. mission in Burundi operates in a rather constricted political context, the mission also lacks the tough leadership that many credit for Sierra Leone's success. The U.N. mission has had four different leaders in the last six years — each removed at the request, directly or tacitly, of the Burundian government.

— Jina Moore

[1] "Closing Doors? The narrowing of democratic space in Burundi," Human Rights Watch, November 2010, p. 14, www.hrw.org/node/94300.

[2] For background, see Jina Moore, "Truth Commissions," *CQ Global Researcher*, Jan. 1, 2010, pp. 1-24.

[3] *Une commission doit enquêter sur le comportement des forces de sécurité*, Amnesty International *declaration publique*, May 10, 2011, www.amnesty.org/en/library/asset/AFR16/004/2011/en/29ff9871-5d37-46d2-aa06-70cc36c663b7/afr160042011fr.html.

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But the Peacebuilding Commission was specifically authorized — by the General Assembly and the Security Council — to engage heads of state, ministers and other officials on political issues. In U.N. jargon, having such a "political mandate" is key: Every U.N. mission is deployed to a country under Security Council rules. Unless the council gives a mission a political mandate, it can't get involved in politics.

U.N. missions have political mandates in countries where the PBC operates. Many observers say the combination of the mandate and the PBC's rationale give peacebuilding the power to make a real difference — as when U.N.'s von der Schulenburg helped defuse the tense election situation in Sierra Leone in 2009. As the mob gathered around the men trapped on the roof of the minority party's headquarters, he literally stepped in, negotiated with the riot leaders, engaged the police and facilitated meetings that led to a truce between the two parties.

"I could do that because I have a political mandate," he explains.

But some experts say the PBC often lacks the courage or organizational structure to use its mandate effectively.

Limits of Intervention

Regardless of an organization's mandate, peacebuilding can be only as effective as its country partners.

In the Central African Republic, for instance, money and partnerships could not overcome government inertia to establish a local radio station in Paoua, a town near the northern border with Chad — a 12-hour drive on terrible roads from the capital of Bangui. With no local news available that far north, the U.N. offered to pay for training and equipment to build a radio station — if the community could find a building and the government would pay for the antenna.

The mayor donated her own property, and a local committee collected funds and donated labor to refurbish it. But the government dawdled on the $2,000 antenna, holding up the radio station for more than a year before providing the antenna. The journalists trained by the U.N., meanwhile, had begun looking for other work.

Meanwhile, Burundi's demobilization of former combatants is a good example of how an unwilling or uncooperative local partner can limit the success of peacebuilding. Some of the ex-combatants from the 12-year civil war were integrated into the Burundian army after the war ended in 2005. But many still are waiting to be officially discharged. Although demobilization is part of most peacebuilding operations, many of Burundi's former rebels feel they have been misled by empty political promises. For example, many received seed money to start small businesses, but the enterprises couldn't be sustained after initial funding ran out.

"There were lots of promises for ex-soldiers from different institutions," says Jean-Marie Nindorera, who leads an association of nearly 150 former combatants near Gitega, Burundi's second-largest city. "When they didn't come true . . . [the ex-soldiers] were not satisfied." In 2006, an ex-combatant briefly commandeered the local outpost of the demobilization office. "He destroyed windows," Nindorera says, "but they could . . . kill people or steal."

The former combatants' frustration is palpable — and dangerous, says Oscar Ndiswarugira, with the Ministry for Peace and Reconciliation Under the Cross (Mi-PAREC), a grassroots Lutheran-sponsored Burundian organization in Gitega. "I can see they're just waiting, waiting. They're very angry. . . . Some of them are very powerful. . . . The issue is how long they are going to be patient."

In the Democratic Republic of Congo, where the U.N. is conducting peacekeeping and peacebuilding simultaneously, the problems are decidedly local, says political scientist Autesserre of Barnard College. "We're talking about conflict over political, social and economic agendas . . . at the level of the individual, the family, the clan," she said. Yet, she noted, "Most of the international peacebuilders are based in the capital, Kinshasa." [28]

Some post-conflict countries have decided to go it alone, in part because of the gap between what people in the hinterlands say they need and what foreign civil servants based in capitals perceive is needed. For instance, Mozambique — often labeled a post-war success — has seen relative peace and a growing economy since its civil war ended in 1992 after more than a decade of fighting. But its success can be attributed in large part to patient peace negotiations between Mozambicans themselves, according to Lucia van den Bergh, a former liaison between Mozambique and the European Parliament. The talks were facilitated, she notes, by the Catholic Church, supported by a U.N. envoy and driven primarily by the actors involved, not by international or regional concerns.

Van den Bergh also attributes Mozambique's success to its lack of a truth-telling mechanism. "There was no punishment, not even systematic identification and documentation of war crimes," she writes. Although that leaves the victims of wartime atrocities neglected, she acknowledges, state stability has resulted from the willingness of most Mozambicans to move on. [29]

Likewise, Rwanda — another paragon of post-conflict success — recently has taken a staunchly defiant attitude toward outside assistance. Less than 20 years after the 1994 genocide,

Rwanda boasts universal health care, free education and one of Africa's most rapidly growing economies. In 2009 it was the first sub-Saharan African country to top the World Bank's list of business reformers. [30] And last year the bank named Rwanda one of the world's 10 most-improved economies. [31]

When he was inaugurated for a second term last September, Rwanda's president, Paul Kagame, railed against international organizations "who are not accountable to anyone themselves [and] think they have the right to dictate the conduct of legitimate state actors." He insisted such "external actors" lack legitimacy and "do not relate to the majority of the people and deserve nothing more than to be ignored."

He claimed the country's progress has been self-made, saying, "For more than a decade and a half now, the people of this country have increasingly come together as one to determine and share their destiny." [32]

Critics say that's a whitewashed view. Rwanda's state-building may have been led by a domestic vision, but more than half of Rwanda's budget comes from outside aid. [33] And the support has been growing. [34]

Rwanda's go-it-alone attitude led it in 1998 to launch a four-year war against neighboring Congo, where former perpetrators of the genocide were reorganizing and rearming from refugee camps overseen by U.N. agencies. Kagame saw the U.N.'s inaction in stopping the activity as an echo of the U.N.'s failure to prevent the genocide in 1994. In 1997, Kagame — then vice president of Rwanda — told South Africa's *Weekly Mail and Guardian* newspaper that in August 1996 he had delivered "a veiled warning" to the international community: If they failed to take action against the Hutu refugees rearming in Congo, then "Rwanda would take action." But the world's response, he said, "was really no response at all." [35]

CQ Press/Jina Moore

Andreson Masabo, left, fled ethnic conflict in Burundi in 1972. When he returned 36 years later, he found Terrance Sabukiza, right, living on part of his property in the rural southwestern district of Rumonge. The two mediated their land dispute with help from the local land commission, supported by the U.N. Peacebuilding Fund. Land disputes are often a cause of hostilities.

Unlike in Mozambique, however, Rwanda did not sacrifice truth-telling, which peacebuilders often prescribed. Nor did it want a quasi-international process, like the truth and reconciliation commissions in Sierra Leone and Liberia. Instead, the country implemented *gacaca*, a grassroots system of justice in which alleged genocide perpetrators were tried by their village peers. Though the process has attracted criticism from Western human-rights observers for not providing adequate due process, the *gacaca* courts have tried approximately 1 million perpetrators over roughly four years. [36] Their proceedings, currently being archived, are expected to serve as a valuable historical record of what happened in the genocide. ■

CURRENT SITUATION

Looking for Donors

Many post-conflict countries still face serious obstacles to stability. But in Sierra Leone, after the combustible years immediately following the civil war, some people are finally beginning to feel optimistic.

Inside a Freetown branch of a major African bank, tellers Joseph Sam and Tejan Sesay stack fat turquoise bricks of Sierra Leone's currency, the leone. After they run the bills through a counting machine, Sam and Sesay pass towering stacks of cash to patiently waiting customers. A 10,000 leone note, the country's largest, is worth about $3.

"In Sierra Leone," jokes Sam, "everyone can be a millionaire."

The two young men, 28, would have been teenagers during the civil war

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Can outsiders build lasting peace?

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WRITTEN FOR *CQ GLOBAL RESEARCHER*, JUNE 2011

Yes

Since Liberia's civil war ended in 2003, the country has benefited from strong domestic leadership, billions of dollars in international support and the presence of 15,000 U.N. peacekeepers. As Liberia prepares for elections later this year, it is widely hailed as a peacebuilding success story.

Other countries have not been so lucky. In the Democratic Republic of Congo and Haiti, years of peacekeeping and billions of aid dollars have not led to peace and stability. Even cases once hailed as successes warrant a closer look. Recently, international observers warned that Bosnia faces a political crisis that threatens to undo the peace that has lasted there since 1995. The murder rate in Guatemala is now higher than it was at the height of the civil war in the 1980s.

Peacebuilding is a high-stakes political enterprise: It is complex and messy and requires tough compromises. And it takes a long time: The World Bank estimates that it takes at least a generation to move a country from where war-torn Liberia was in 2003 to where peaceful Malawi is today.

That requires domestic political leadership, the restoration of trust between citizens and their institutions and the slow work of transforming political processes so societal conflict can be managed without violence. Peace cannot be imposed from the outside, as the United States has learned in Afghanistan and Iraq. Lasting peace can be built only from within.

But resources matter. How can a country establish the rule of law if it can't pay its judges, let alone its police and prison guards? How can a government win the confidence of citizens who can't feed their families? International aid alone is not enough, but it can be essential, especially in the short- and medium-term. In 2008, for example, international aid to Liberia was worth 180 percent of the country's gross national income. International actors also provide crucial political support, technical assistance, training and security in the form of peacekeeping. Without international support for mediation efforts, there often would be no peace to build.

We still have much to learn about the impact — good and bad, intended and unintended — of international peacebuilding assistance and the complex political dynamics of war and peace. At the end of the day, peacebuilding contains a catch-22: Peace cannot be built from the outside. But it also might not survive without outside support.

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SIERRA LEONE

WRITTEN FOR *CQ GLOBAL RESEARCHER*, JUNE 2011

No

Ultimately, peace is sustainable when it is internalized by those who experienced the conflict. They are in a better position to identify lasting solutions to the post-conflict problems of rebuilding state and society. As the saying goes: "He who wears it feels it." Within communities, local people know who can credibly lead a process, for example, and who instills confidence. This is only achieved when those people lead the peacebuilding process. The process and methodology must be designed, owned, led and contextualized by the people.

Effective peacebuilding involves constructive dialogue between all relevant stakeholders with the aim of finding a lasting solution to the underlying problems. Trust and respect are prerequisites for such open dialogue. These values can only be built by the parties themselves, not by outsiders.

Externally designed and led mechanisms can include, for example, truth and reconciliation commissions, special tribunals and support for the police and military in various forms. But these will not likely be sufficient to develop a lasting peace. Looking at Sierra Leone and Liberia as case studies, the ongoing threats to the fragile peace are clear, because people at the grassroots were not consulted in designing transitional justice institutions suitable for their contexts. The ownership then becomes questionable. Consequently, even with all the resources put into these countries there is little to show as a result of outside contributions toward lasting peace.

But by understanding the importance of the kind of dialogue I have described, and by providing the support needed to make it happen, outsiders can play a valuable facilitative role, if they work alongside local leadership.

In three-and-a-half years running *Fambul Tok* in Sierra Leone, I've seen ordinary people come up with creative approaches and follow their own route toward lasting peace — a process that comes when both victim and perpetrator acknowledge what went wrong, the dignity of victims is restored and the offenders seize the opportunity to apologize and to explain why they committed atrocities.

A process that allows this to happen can play an important role in reknitting the fabric of community that is torn by war. My hope is that *Fambul Tok*'s example will open the way for others to work in similar ways.

* Krio for "family talk"

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that tore Sierra Leone apart for 11 years, when child soldiers were infamously forced into militias and drugged into committing atrocities. It's a history they don't know, about a country they wouldn't recognize. For them, the war is over — and the word "peacebuilding" inspires disinterest.

"Nobody needs to tell me not to go to the bush and take up arms. We are here at 7 in the morning and we leave at 7 at night. It takes an hour to get to and from home. We don't have time for fighting," says Sam. "We already have peace," Sam adds. "What we need is investment. . . . So-called donors need to push money into industry."

Others share Sam's sentiments. While Sierra Leone is still far from developed, or even from securing long-term stability, many Sierra Leoneans agree with the common Krio phrase: "The war *don don*" — "The war is past."

Thus, in Freetown, peacebuilding is beginning to look more like development. But elsewhere, things aren't so rosy. In the Central African Republic, for example, after interminable delays, the focus is on disarmament and demobilization. In Burundi, a new U.N. mission chief — the country's fourth in less than a decade — has said and done very little since arriving in early 2011.

And in Guinea-Bissau — where the country seems unlikely to steer away from the cycle of coups that landed it on the commission's agenda in the first place — peacebuilding seems irrelevant. President João Bernardo Vieira was killed by a military faction in 2009. In April 2010, a high-level military officer kidnapped the army chief and the prime minister. The prime minister was released, and the leader of the April mutiny was appointed the new army chief in June. The European Union and the United States then suspended aid for military reform. The EU said the effort seemed "hopeless," while the United States cited the military's alleged involvement in drug trafficking. [37] The deposed army chief was released in December 2010, after seven months. [38]

"The mandate is to work with leaders, to look them in the eyes and say, 'Look, thank you for your coffee, but I think you need to be doing something different.' "

— Michael Massaquoi, Sierra Leone's liason to the Peacebuilding Commission

Peacebuilding officials say they will complete the projects they are funding — new army barracks, prisons and micro-loan assistance to small entrepreneurs. But concerns persist about the country's stability and the government's intentions about democracy in a place notorious for corruption, even before it became a drug-trafficking hub. Looking back, Jarasch, the former adviser to the German mission to the U.N., says "Guinea-Bissau was maybe, in a way, a wrong evaluation [by] the PBC."

Recently, the PBC has added Liberia and Guinea to its peacebuilding agenda, which make an interesting study in contrasts as the commission tries to catalyze donor interest. Though neighbors, the two countries have vastly different post-conflict stories, especially when it comes to donors.

Liberia is already a "donor darling," taking in more than 10 times the amount of development assistance Guinea received in 2008. [39] Liberia's popular president, Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, a former World Bank economist, is expected to be re-elected in October in the country's second presidential poll since the end of its civil war. Guinea, by contrast, hosted elections only after its military massacred 157 pro-democracy protesters in 2009.

Observers often suggest Liberia's special relationship with the United States — freed American slaves founded the capital of Monrovia in 1822 — generates special interest. In 2010, Liberia received $230 million in U.S. aid, while Guinea received less than 10 percent of that. [40] (As a former French colony, Guinea has closer political and financial ties with France.)

After the Revolutions

A new wave of events in Arab countries has captivated the world's attention — and raised new questions about the role of peacebuilding beyond catalyzing outside cash.

"Let's be honest. There's a kind of stigmatization, but I think it's ill-placed," says Cheng-Hopkins, head of U.N. peacebuilding support. The PBC is "not a poverty commission," she says, even though the countries that receive aid from the panel "belong to the very poorest in the world." But the value of U.N. peacebuilding is to focus on "conflict drivers."

The U.N. is now funding a national reconciliation project in Lebanon, Cheng-Hopkins points out, and conflict ana-

lysts are focused on other countries in the Middle East and North Africa. This spring, the leaders of some of North Africa's notoriously autocratic countries — Egypt, Libya and Tunisia — faced off against citizens angered by rising fuel and food costs, unemployment and corruption. The popular uprisings triggered similar upheavals in Syria, Yemen and other Middle Eastern countries. [41]

Zine al-Abidine Ben Ali, who had ruled Tunisia as president for 23 years, fled the country in January, after nearly a month of public protests. [42] In February, Egypt's leader of 30 years, Hosni Mubarak, resigned following three weeks of mass protests. [43] In Libya, Col. Moammar Gadhafi, famous for lavishing money on pet projects across Africa, continues to battle rebels in an uprising that began in February and has been supported by NATO.

These are not classic peacebuilding scenarios. "If you look at Egypt or Tunisia, they are a very different category of country" from those in which U.N. peacebuilding operations usually work, says Wyeth, of the International Peace Institute. To begin with, in Egypt and Tunisia, the power transitions were largely peaceful. "There wasn't an armed group challenging the government, like there is in Libya — or there was in Burundi or Sierra Leone."

But there's another critical difference. Except for Yemen, "These are middle-income countries with very, very strong institutions in certain areas," she says. That changes how the international community might engage the transitions there, Wyeth says. "The sense I have from what, for example, donors are thinking about in Tunisia, is 'Let's support elections and make sure they go well; let's give them support in drafting new constitutions — but we don't see a long-term, big conflict-prevention or aid package,' " she says.

Wyeth and others acknowledge that, despite the size of their economies, income disparities in places like Egypt and Tunisia have been a serious, long-standing problem. [44] British economist and best-selling author Niall Ferguson argues that the economic consequences of these revolts — contracting economies and capital flight — will have debilitating effects on the coming transitions.

"Egyptian businessmen complain of soaring crime in the cities, the difficulty of carrying out normal transactions and, above all, nerve-wracking political uncertainty," he said. [45] ■

OUTLOOK

Power of Technology

Technology is rapidly changing what peacebuilding can do and how effective it might be — in part by providing more, and often better, information about the violence that precedes it.

For instance, during the violence following Kenya's 2008 presidential election, Harvard Law School graduate and popular Kenyan blogger Ory Okolloh subverted a government ban on live reporting by blogging in real-time about what was happening, based on reports readers sent her on violence in their neighborhoods.

"I got overwhelmed by the amount of information coming in," she remembers. With the help of some technically savvy volunteers, Okolloh invented Ushahidi, an open-source mapping software.

A Harvard study found that during the crisis Ushahidi generated more information, more quickly and with more geographical details than local mainstream media. [46]

After the violence subsided, a Kenyan NGO used Ushahidi to map "peace heroes," using reports about people who intervened during the crisis or otherwise helped neighbors or strangers. The idea was to strengthen post-conflict peacebuilding — in part by creating a "map of peace" as visually impressive and arresting as the map generated by reports of violence. [47]

Ushahidi also has been adapted to map the availability of medicine in Uganda, violence in eastern Congo and earthquake response in Haiti.

But not everyone agrees that this process of collecting user-generated information, called "crowdsourcing," always gives a clearer or more accurate picture of reality.

Jim Fruchterman, the founder and CEO of the technology-for-human-rights company Benetech, argues that crowdsourcing is sometimes an expensive distraction from less fancy tools that may provide information just as readily. "Misunderstanding relationships in data . . . can lead to choosing less effective, more expensive data instead of choosing obvious, more accurate starting points," he writes. [48] Benetech statisticians have warned against using crowdsourced data to understand any kind of patterns — of violence, of need, of aid — because of inherent limitations in data generated by users.

Technology is also changing the use of individual stories from the ground. The explosion of video over the last 20 years has also improved peacebuilding efforts. WITNESS, a New York-based video advocacy organization co-founded by popular British musician Peter Gabriel, trains human-rights activists around the world in videography and coaches activists on how to use video footage in compelling and appropriate ways.

In eastern Congo, WITNESS-trained advocates made a film for parents of children who want to join militia groups, composed predominantly of testimony from young boys who had made the choice and regretted it. Their second film, intended for the international community, highlighted underreported crimes in eastern Congo, especially sexual violence against female recruits. Their third production, broadcast in Congo, summarized International Crim-

inal Court proceedings against an accused Congolese war criminal.

The United Nations, too, is getting into the technology game. Some peacekeeping missions are using mobile geographic information systems to collect data on conflict, allowing users to more easily recognize patterns in attacks. [49] Other U.N. agencies are developing mobile-based tools to improve food delivery, refugee services and human-rights monitoring. [50]

While tech enthusiasts can make them sound downright utopian, the new tools are more than just fancy bells and whistles. They help to repair the imbalance between elite-level conversations among international actors and the local people. "What you have now is a much more symmetrical relationship in which people who are recipients of the message can also become part of the conversation," says Nathaniel Whittemore, founder of the Center for Global Engagement at Northwestern University.

Travel and reporting for this issue of CQ Global Researcher *was supported in part by the Pulitzer Center on Crisis Reporting.* ■

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About the Author

Jina Moore is a multimedia journalist who covers human rights and foreign affairs from the United States and Africa. Her work has appeared in *The Christian Science Monitor*, *Newsweek*, *Foreign Policy*, *The Columbia Journalism Review* and *Best American Science Writing*. Her report for the May 2010 *CQ Global Researcher*, "Confronting Rape as a War Crime," received an honorable mention in the Best Reporting on a Significant Topic category of the American Society of Journalists and Authors' 2010 awards.

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FOR MORE INFORMATION

Alliance for Peacebuilding, 1320 19 St., N.W., Suite 410, Washington, DC 20036; (202) 822-2047; www.allianceforpeacebuilding.org. A network of peacebuilders and advocates devoted to fostering new peacebuilding collaborations.

American Friends Service Committee, 777 United Nations Plaza #5, New York, NY 10017-3521; (212) 682-2745; http://afsc.org/office/quaker-united-nations-office. The U.N. branch of the pacifist Quaker organization, which works with peacebuilding partners around the world.

Fambul Tok, 47 Robert St., Freetown, Sierra Leone; (232) 78-500500; www.fambultok.org. A grassroots reconciliation group that takes a village-by-village approach to peacebuilding.

Interpeace, 7-9 Chemin de Balexert, 1219 Châtelaine, Geneva, Switzerland; (41) (0) 22 917 8593; www.interpeace.org. Nongovernmental organization that works with 300 local peacebuilders around the world to strengthen civil society.

Mi-PAREC, Ministry for Peace and Reconciliation Under the Cross, Musinzira Ave., Gitega, Burundi; (257) 22 40 3837; www.miparec.org. A local organization sponsored by the Lutheran church, devoted to nonviolent, community-based peacebuilding interventions.

Pulitzer Center on Crisis Reporting, 1779 Massachusetts Ave., N.W., Suite #615, Washington, DC 20036; (202) 332-0982; http://pulitzercenter.org. A nonprofit journalism organization that funds coverage of under-reported topics, including a three-month investigation into U.N. peacebuilding.

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Sample formats for citing these reports in a bibliography include the ones listed below. Preferred styles and formats vary, so please check with your instructor or professor.

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Voices From Abroad:

ELLEN JOHNSON SIRLEAF
President, Liberia

It's about human needs, too

"Peacebuilding in the context of Liberia, while addressing the root causes and building institutions to manage and prevent conflict, is also about meeting basic human needs. This, together with the creation of jobs and other livelihood opportunities for our young people, remains a major challenge to our Administration. I am, nevertheless, convinced that with concerted effort, with commitment and dedication, the tasks ahead are surmountable."

The Analyst (Liberia)
November 2010

MICHAEL VON DER SCHULENBURG
Executive Representative, U.N. Integrated Peacebuilding Office Sierra Leone

No rush to judgment

"Nation-building in all of our countries has been an extremely long, bloody affair. . . . [Sierra Leone] is a country which still tries to create a nation that people feel like they belong to, together. They're trying to bring democracy and to do it peacefully. That's not been done in history. So let's not be arrogant about the whole thing. Let's see how we can help to speed it up."

The Christian Science Monitor
April 2011

PETER WITTIG
German Ambassador to U.N.

More commitment needed

"By linking the Peacebuilding Commission's work to that of peacekeeping, development and political actors in the field, the Commission has added considerable value. The challenge facing the Commission in demonstrating its full potentials, however, is to ensure that its work is backed by a higher level of political commitment from Member States and the Senior United Nations leadership."

U.N. News Service, March 2011

BAN KI-MOON
Secretary-General United Nations

Women play a key role

"Enabling women to contribute to recovery and reconstruction is integral to strengthening a country's ability to sustain peacebuilding efforts. . . . [P]eacebuilding strategies cannot be fully 'owned' if half the nation is not actively involved in their design and implementation."

Philippines News Agency
October 2010

SERGEY LAVROV
Minister of Foreign Affairs Russia

Don't impose assistance

"The success of [Russia's] peacekeeping and peacebuilding efforts in the Middle East, Afghanistan, Africa, Haiti and East Timor lies in the ability to consider the interests and priorities of the receiving side. Any assistance from the international community should not be imposed."

Statement before U.N. Security Council, September 2010

MAM-SAMBA JOOF
Executive Director, Agency for the Development of Women and Children The Gambia

Recovery takes time

"Wars and other conflicts leave societies destroyed, and post-conflict recovery takes [a] much longer time and requires a lot of financial resources to attain. The high human, financial, social and material costs of conflict are well documented, and . . . nearly 60 countries around the world — many of which are in sub-Saharan Africa — are in conflict or have recently come out of conflict."

Daily Observer (The Gambia), September 2010

DUMISANI NKOMO
CEO, Habakkuk Trust Zimbabwe

African Union ineffective

"The multiplicity of internal contradictions and conflicting interests within leading member states makes the [African Union] ineffective as an instrument of promoting peace on the continent. The AU appears to be enmeshed in internal conflict on which of its objectives it should prioritise."

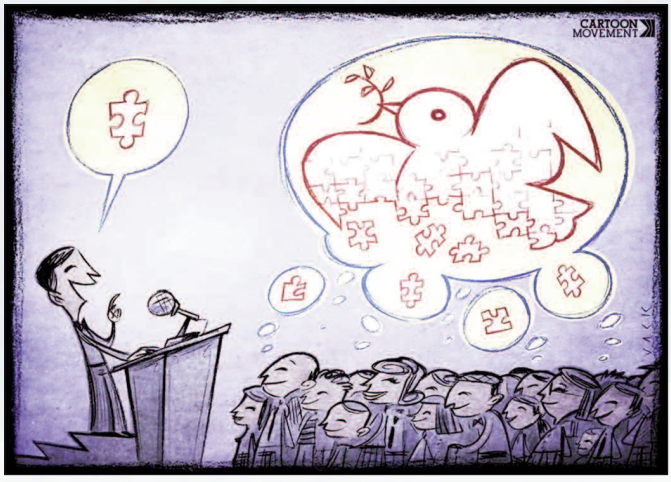
Zimbabwe Independent
April 2011

JOSE SOLER
E.U. Deputy Ambassador to Uganda

Reintegration is a challenge

"Uganda is now starting to recover from two decades of conflict. However, the impact of that conflict on women and girls and their particular needs in the process of demobilisation and reintegration is a very real challenge."

The Monitor (Uganda)
November 2010



Cartoon Movement/Giacomo Cardelli