

From the ground up: exploring dichotomies in grassroots peacebuilding

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Paper presented at an international conference on 'Post-conflict, development and peace', organized by the Department of Political Science at the Javeriana University in Bogota, Colombia in November 2003

1. Introduction

The nature of internal conflict in the post-Cold War era provides the most urgent and compelling argument for citizens' participation in efforts to build peace. It is not just that the consequences of brutal confrontation between competing military powers spill over to cause death and destruction among the civilian population; more gravely, we see the deliberate and in some cases systematic targeting of the most basic units of society by the conflict protagonists. Individual citizens, the family and the community are violated, coerced and subverted as part of the political, economic and socio-cultural strategies of the armed actors. This is the front-line of modern warfare.

Efforts to resolve violent conflict justly and to create sustainable communities and societies have to confront these realities and the challenges posed by them. Ceasefires and other peace agreements between the warring parties are a sine qua non for ending violence and creating the conditions for building peace. The tools of statist diplomacy are indispensable in such initiatives. Yet in an increasing number of situations around the world, it is clear that traditional bilateral negotiation models alone are insufficient to address the systems of violence that become embedded in society during protracted conflict. There is a deeper, messier, and arguably more fundamental set of challenges to be tackled: to transform the logic, systems and structures of violent conflict present at the roots of society so that a sustainable and just peace between interdependent individuals and communities is ultimately possible.

These are the challenges of peacebuilding. For the purposes of this paper, I would further clarify that such transformative goals encompass distinct but mutually enhancing processes of building security, improving justice, enabling equitable development and facilitating reconciliation. The paper will focus on exploring activities at the 'grassroots', defined in the characteristic structures of rural and urban 'communities'. These communities are most easily recognizable through their organizing reference points: the smallest representative units of state and national institutions, such as local councils and municipal authorities; parishes, mosques and synagogues; school teachers; local employers, etc. It is at this level that those seeking to build peace at the grassroots are focusing their activities, in ways that are distinct

from but complementary to efforts to build peace among the middle and top-level leadership of societies.

Grassroots peacebuilding is not about idealism (although a good dose of idealism probably helps). It is a pragmatic approach to the realities of contemporary conflict, as communities seek to make themselves less vulnerable to violence. It is central to the pursuit of internationally recognized development goals, themselves integral to the exercise of fundamental human rights. Yet while there is increasing acceptance of the importance of 'bottom-up', participatory approaches to development, the argument has not yet been conclusively won in the field of development and still less in the case of peacebuilding. This is partly because there needs to be greater exploration, documentation and advocacy around the question: 'How can it be done effectively?'¹.

The manner in which peacebuilding efforts are undertaken is inevitably critical to their effectiveness. And although the obvious premise is that peacebuilding needs to respond to the unique causes and dynamics of the specific conflict context, it is still possible to propose some core principles. With individuals, families and communities often forced to become protagonists in violent conflicts, it is arguable that efforts to transform systems and structures of violence lead them to become protagonists in peacebuilding. For processes to be locally sustainable, there needs to be local ownership of initiatives. While not absolving outsiders of responsibilities for appropriate assistance and support, for creating safe spaces and opportunities for skills development, it is local initiatives that drive change at the grassroots. While it is easy to see these communities as victims burdened by the multiple traumas of violent conflict, they also contain tremendous resources and vital knowledge and experience of the potentials as well as the pitfalls of their own contexts.

There are of course countless experiences and expressions of grassroots peacebuilding. As mentioned above, this paper concerns itself with those approaches that aim to generate a transformative potential in relation to the relational and structural violence experienced at the community level.² It could be argued that there are roughly six broad modes of peacebuilding practice: conciliation, citizenship and peace education; social and economic development; social protest and advocacy; psycho-social support and reconciliation processes.³ These modes are not unique to the grassroots level of peacebuilding and are also implemented and relevant at regional and national levels. Therefore it is in the details of the specific approaches utilized by communities that their real value at the grassroots can be revealed and explored. The cases presented in this paper have been chosen because they have developed approaches to peacebuilding that integrate a number of the modes, in an effort to respond to the complex challenges facing communities living with violence.

2. Introducing two central dichotomies

This paper will attempt to offer brief description and analysis of two specific examples of grassroots peacebuilding, detailing their emergence, objectives and methodologies and pinpointing some outcomes. In particular, it will analyse how these examples have addressed two related dichotomies that challenge grassroots peacebuilding in practice, namely:

a). Grassroots peacebuilding can be effective precisely because it operates its own context; yet it is inherently vulnerable if it cannot reach beyond its own locality. Practice suggests that effective grassroots peacebuilding emerges from and draws on the distinct social and cultural resources and traditions of the local environment in which it operates. Concerned in part with the restoration of healthy relationships as a pre-requisite for peaceful interaction between inter-dependent social groupings, it is frequently characterized by successful trust building between key individuals who can catalyse or influence their supporters' behaviour. These characteristics appear to be critical to the legitimacy, efficacy and sustainability of community-based approaches. Yet it is precisely these characteristics that are hard to sustain or replicate beyond their immediate context, as the personal connections and the distinct social conditions lose their relevance. And this provokes a key dilemma: if these initiatives are only able to address micro-conflicts and fail to influence broader regional or national dynamics and structures of conflict, then worthy and successful community-based efforts are vulnerable to demise as powerful conflict protagonists outside the micro-environment ignore, override or deliberately sabotage local efforts as part of wider conflict dynamics.

b). Grassroots peacebuilding is hard to sustain without progress nationally; yet it is also a key enabler of national progress. Related to the first dichotomy is a second paradoxical phenomenon. If grassroots peacebuilding is to be successful in the long-term, it requires the development of conditions and frameworks at the national level that are complementary and conducive to (or at the very least, do not obstruct) its goals and objectives at the local level. However, in some situations of protracted violent conflict, conditions at the local level can impede or prevent progress on a national scale; effective micro-level peacebuilding is thus a necessary and effective catalyst for change at the macro-level. Some key questions thus emerge from the above dichotomies:

- How do grassroots peacebuilding efforts address and relate to the balance of power held by the armed actors/local hegemonies?
- How can social and political mobilization be stimulated and sustained in the context of struggles to cover basic security needs?
- How can grassroots peacebuilding develop horizontally and vertically to extend its impact and enhance its sustainability?
- How can national policy contribute effectively to the development of grassroots peacebuilding activities?

The short case studies offered below explore these questions and provide some insights into the particular opportunities and constraints of this arena

of peacebuilding.

3. Examples from practice

3.1 Mali – inter–community meetings 4

The west African state of Mali underwent a separatist conflict in the north of the country between June 1990 and March 1996. The conflict had its origins in the political marginalization of the northern region and particularly of the nomadic Tuaregs, who inhabit the area along with Arab nomads and the Songhoy sedentarists of the Niger River basin. During successive post–independence regimes, northerners were largely excluded from any kind of political office and there was scarcely any investment in education, health and communication infrastructure in the area. Armed rebellion was sparked in 1990 when a small group of Tuaregs attacked military and government installations, resulting in a brutal crackdown against both Tuareg and Arab civilians. Conflict escalated and various organized armed movements of northerners emerged.

Efforts to reach a peaceful settlement of the conflict began in late 1990 but an early bilateral agreement between the government and two main armed movements was never implemented. A military coup in March 1991 brought General Toure to power and led to renewed peace efforts. Toure enlisted the support of the Algerian government in the peace process, and in December 1991, the armed movements agreed in a meeting in El Golea, Algeria to form the United Movements and Fronts of Azaouad (MFUA). A series of preparatory meetings involving representatives of neighbouring governments as well as prominent civil society leaders, the government and the MFUA led to the negotiation of elements that culminated in the signing of a National Pact in April 1992.

However, it soon became clear that the National Pact process was incapable on its own of transforming the dynamics of the conflict and bringing about sustainable peace. Both the national army and the armed movements were fraught with indiscipline. Local units, unaccustomed to civilian rule, continued to fight the war and made implementation of the agreement virtually impossible. The ‘peace dividend’ was practically non–existent as many donors failed to honour their commitments to support economic development projects and local community efforts were hampered by the poor security situation.

By July 1994, elected President Konare was under severe pressure and facing a possible coup d’etat. In an effort to address the problems, he convened a series of ‘regional concertations’ (consultations) to stimulate public debate on the future of the country. A total of seventeen public meetings were held throughout the country during August 1994, with some regions holding more than one meeting in order to accommodate large populations or geographic coverage. The purpose of the meetings was to listen to people’s frustrations and bring public debate out into the provinces and beyond the traditional

political elite. It was intended to generate new political alternatives and not specifically to address the conflict in the north. Regional meetings were summed up in a final national concertation in Bamako.

Although participation in the regional concertations was open to all members of the public, very few nomads participated in the process as the security situation had led to deteriorating inter-ethnic relations. Thus, despite the process creating greater national consensus on the need for fair treatment of all groups in the north, its significance for peacebuilding is questionable. Few people in the north consider the regional concertations to have played a significant role in bringing peace to the region.

It was only towards the end of 1994 that real breakthroughs in the conflict began to occur. Recognizing that they would need to take greater responsibility for finding a settlement of the conflict, local traditional leaders initiated peace talks in their communities. The first meeting took place in the village of Bourem in November 1994, initiated by the village chief who convened local leaders from the surrounding area. They reached agreement on the need to motivate people under their influence and in early 1995 a second meeting in Bourem resulted in a local truce to end the fighting. This was soon followed by a series of local meetings, leading to the negotiation of localized ceasefires that ended organized violence by April that year.

However, with large numbers of the population still heavily armed, and the social and economic infrastructure in tatters, there was still a lot of work to be done. Hoping to build on these successes, the government dispatched several commissions to undertake consultations throughout the north. Yet in the context of a history of authoritarian rule, local people were unwilling to trust government officials, who failed to understand the difficulties of initiating local action in such a setting. With people needing guidance instead from leaders they trusted, the government commissions achieved no results.

Local peacemaking efforts continued, though, and in September 1995, the first reconciliation meeting was held in Mbouna and attended by some 2,500 people. But the scale of the meeting made it difficult to manage and people realized that such generalized reconciliation efforts would require much tighter local leadership.

It was then that a small group of civil society leaders formed a 'facilitation group' to provide guidance for local initiatives. They called on a trusted international NGO, Norwegian Church Aid to assist their efforts. Following the successful implementation of the first inter-community meeting under this structure and subsequent demand for its replication elsewhere, the organizers were able to initiate a 'Fund for reconciliation and peace consolidation in Northern Mali' supported by a number of foreign government donors. Thirty seven inter-community meetings were then conducted throughout the north.

The meetings were structured to meet the needs of communities

characterized by levels of interdependence with regard to territory, natural resources and trading venues. Given the lack of leadership structures at this level, the facilitation group selected meeting organizers on the basis of their individual integrity, position and capacity to convene the events. They listed a series of problems arising from the war and requested that the communities develop commonly acceptable solutions to each one. The meetings were cautioned only to deal with problems that were within their control so as to ensure a focus on generating realistic solutions.

The facilitation group also suggested that a diverse group of people should be involved in decision-making at the meetings, including traditional leaders, religious leaders, and civil society leaders including representatives of women and youth. Local politicians, soldiers and government officials were given 'observer' status, to ensure that sufficient space was given to the communities to engage in and renew their traditional forms of dialogue.

Prior to each meeting, the main organizer would travel around their area to discuss the process, listen to people's issues and try to address obstacles to their involvement, such as long-standing disputes. The consultations would also allow the organizer to hear different positions on particular issues and identify possible areas of consensus on solutions.

Each meeting was attended by between 300 and 1800 people and typically lasted one or two days. It began with an introductory plenary, including the selection of members for topical commissions. The commissions typically focused on issues of security and development and each commission would debate possible solutions to their issue, looking for compromises between the known positions of influential figures. Their proposals would be brought back to the plenary where people could make last comments or suggestions. Then the meeting would choose members for follow-up commissions to carry out the decisions.

Although there were variations between the meetings, there were also some important trends in their outcomes. The practical results included the re-opening of markets, reduction in armed robbery and greater willingness among ex-combatants to join demobilization camps and turn in their weapons. There was also overwhelming agreement on the need to restore the authority of the state through the development of its institutions. The greatest resistance to the meetings came from those who supported the status quo: those making money out of refugee facilities in neighbouring Burkina Faso who did not want to see refugees returning to Mali; and local parliamentarians who were not formally part of the process and saw it as a threat to their power-base. However, with the majority of northerners supporting the processes and seeing the tangible benefits emerging, and with the government keen to support the successful consolidation of peace in the north, these groups were unable to seriously jeopardize the processes.

This experience of peacebuilding Malian-style suggests several important

lessons. Firstly it offers a striking example of the failure of a bilateral negotiation model in a context of intense social fragmentation. At the same time, it illustrates the importance of political will and consensus on addressing the conflict at a national level in order to create an enabling environment for local peacebuilding efforts to flourish. Secondly it highlights how patterns of local interdependence can act as a catalyst and incentive for finding common solutions and overcoming divisions entrenched through armed conflict. At the same time, a carefully constructed local facilitation group was able to bridge different localities, offering a common basis for peacebuilding as a regional project whilst respecting the specific characteristics of different communities and enabling truly local processes. Finally, the Malian inter-community meetings balanced tradition and modernity, based on equality and respect for all involved. As Kare Lode of Norwegian Church Aid comments,

“All participants learned to have a personal interest in the success of others, which became part of the process of conflict transformation” (in Barnes 2003: 71).

3.2 Sierra Leone – Sulima Fishing Community Development Project 5

The southern Sierra Leonean district of Pujehun was one of the first places in the country to experience the rebellion that plunged the country into brutal civil war in 1991. A small group of fighters, going under the previously unknown title of the Revolutionary United Front of Sierra Leone (RUF) struck border villages in the district after crossing the Mano River from Liberia. With the stated aim of overthrowing the national government and reviving multi-party democracy, the RUF also indulged in looting, coercion of youths into their ranks and the execution of horrific acts of violence against government officials, extension workers and traditional leaders. In southern Pujehun, the RUF capitalized on resentment created by earlier abuses by the ruling party, combined with endemic poverty and lack of employment opportunities, to strengthen its struggle. The national authorities fostered the development of a third fighting force, the Citizens Defence Force, based on traditional hunting practices. The interplay and allegiances of armed actors at the local level led to the violent splintering of the social fabric.

Almost a decade of civil war was punctuated by various half-hearted and unsuccessful peace efforts, including the failed Abidjan Accord of 1996 and the compromised Lome Agreement of 1999. With peace achieved on paper, the parties showed little will to make it happen in practice. Despite the important roles played by UN peacekeepers and British SAS forces, it was not until the landmark elections of May 2002 that many believed the war to be over. And in communities scarred by spirals of horrific violence and devastated of basic infrastructure, the transition to peace remains slow and painful.

In the area of Sulima in the south-eastern district of Pujehun, the Sulima Fishing Community Development Project (SFCPD) was initially established to improve living standards and promote development. In the period of relative calm following the 1996 elections, and in the context of refugee return to the

locality, the SFCDP initiated various peacebuilding activities, including youth vocational training, micro-credit, resettling women victims of the war and developing communal fishing as a means of rebuilding the economic base of the community. The activities specifically addressed root causes of conflict to alleviate existing tensions within the community. However the 1997 coup forced many project staff to flee to neighbouring Liberia, where they worked without any operational frameworks in refugee camps to build trust between pro-government and pro-RUF members of the community, in preparation for their return home.

With the return to civilian rule in 1998, many community members did return and the SFCDP was formally revitalized. The organization began to employ an integrated approach to achieving the following inter-related objectives:

1. Effective communication, consultation and negotiation at all levels.
2. Peace-enhancing structures, identified as a) democratic political structures; b) effective and legitimate justice systems; c) a social free-market system and d) an information, education and communication system.

It also explicitly recognized the importance of a conducive political climate at all levels.

To develop responses to the problems faced by the communities, local people organized workshops in three chiefdoms, bringing together youths, local authority officials, Imams, elders and women. The workshops identified specific conflict issues in each chiefdom and explored possible paths to reconciliation. It became clear that the three chiefdoms faced similar problems, including disputes caused by the death of the paramount chief and lack of civil authority.

In response to these conditions, the workshops enabled the communities to establish mechanisms for conflict resolution in the form of 'peace monitors'. One peace monitor was appointed for each section (subdivision of a chiefdom) with a mandate to identify early signs of conflict and to intervene before they escalated. On beginning their work, the peace monitors appointed a principal peace monitor to be responsible for overall management and coordination. Drawing on the strong Islamic traditions of the area, the twelve peace monitors are mainly respected Koranic teachers or mwalimus. They use the mediation and other conflict resolution skills acquired through their religious faith and training, as well as receiving some additional training in 'Western' approaches to conflict transformation. Each monitor is responsible for covering between ten and fifteen villages and given a bicycle to facilitate mobility. They are expected to work approximately ten days per month and receive a small stipend for their efforts. Where peace monitors encounter larger disputes between villages, they call in a 'grievance committee' established at chiefdom level to assist in resolving the conflict.

In addition to the 'peace monitors', the SFCDP re-established its poverty alleviation and development initiatives, through the revitalization of local fishing and fish-processing and a micro-credit programme for women .

These activities are geared specifically to women in recognition of the increased poverty they experience in the Sulima area, their particular responsibilities for family welfare and their need for economic and social reintegration as a result of their suffering during the war.

These economic development components have provided micro-credit to 35 women's groups and provided funds for the purchase of two fishing boats and the training of a 12-person fishing crew. Despite various problems related to sea hazards, unusually low fish stocks and the dominance of Ghanaian fishing boats, the initiative has resulted in tangible gains for the women involved, demonstrated by their ability to construct new shelters, expand their businesses and pay school fees for their children. The activities have also generated revenues from an increase in fish processing by smoking.

A recent impact assessment of the SFCDP suggests that there have already been several direct benefits from the project. Participants feel it has enhanced their self-esteem, enabled them to make small but significant advances in reconstructing their houses and other infrastructure, offered special benefits to women through personal and economic empowerment; led to local processes of reconciliation; minimized recourse to litigation and led to improved family relationships and community cohesion.

Additionally, evaluators have noted that the initiative has contributed to a shared understanding of the importance of peace as a lynchpin for local development. Participants demonstrate an increased awareness of their civil rights and obligations, and a greater degree of shared analysis with regard to the causes of conflict in their localities as well as an enhanced capacity to envisage non-violent processes of resolution.

Inevitably, there are many daunting challenges facing the SFCPD. With the restoration of state mechanisms for law and order throughout Sierra Leone, the peace monitor system will need to engage and coordinate its work effectively with the police and chiefdom administrative structures being revitalized in the area. Although difficult, it is an opportunity for the project to influence the vertical structures of governance where patronage and corruption are still rife. Secondly, economic development activities will slowly need to address the pressing need for further substantial financial investment in primary fishing equipment and improved transportation given the long distances to local markets, whilst maintaining local ownership and sustainability. To date, the project has benefited from an active and sustained partnership with Conciliation Resources' office in Sierra Leone, which is engaged in advocacy at national and international levels as a means of enlisting financial and political support for the initiative, as well as assisting local staff with training and awareness-raising in principles and practices of conflict transformation. In particular, CR is currently engaged in a 'learning and dissemination' initiative in support of the SFCPD. Through a facilitated 'learning seminar' with key participants in the SFCPD, it has been possible to

develop detailed written documentation on the objectives, methodology, experiences and lessons learned from the initiative so far. This has also been recorded as a documentary film. The documentation will shortly be shared among key national and international policy-makers in Sierra Leone, the wider sub-region and Europe, through targeted 'dissemination seminars'.

The experiences of the SFCPD highlight several key opportunities and constraints facing grassroots peacebuilding efforts. The indigenous peacebuilding methods are rooted in the traditions and structures of this rural area of Sierra Leone. They draw strength from the dynamism and vision of the local project director and his colleagues. They address community problems: reintegration of ex-combatants, domestic violence, competition for scarce resources and develop solutions through consensus and based on the resources and social capital of the locality. Yet while it remains locally-rooted, it remains vulnerable to the effects of macro-level conflict in Sierra Leone, where national strategies for peacebuilding are at best patchy and at worst non-existent, and where the political instability that scars this region of West Africa threatens continued destabilization.

At the same time, the pioneering work of the SFCDP is also making a modest contribution to stability at the national level. By addressing and resolving causes of conflict in one of the key flashpoints of the country, it is playing vital preventive role and directly contributing to the consolidation of peace beyond its own environment. Yet, as well as highlighting the importance of improved patterns of communication between groups within a community at the grassroots, the SFCDP illustrates the necessity of sustained advocacy at the national policy level to ensure that appropriate investment and supporting institutional frameworks can be found to strengthen its activities.

4. Closing remarks

"The essential transformation that takes place through the peacebuilding process is the creation of new political subjects, both individuals and groups, who are capable of breaking through the war conditionality to create their own vision of the future, their own social affiliations and attain a social status of their own choice." (Skrabalo, 2003)

These examples of Malian and Sierra Leonean approaches to the challenges of grassroots peacebuilding offer important insights into the potential value of such endeavours. The impacts attributable to them are powerful testimonies to their local legitimacy, according to their own terms of reference. This is important to affirm. Yet both examples also illustrate the potential of modestly conceived local processes to have impacts beyond their immediate environment and contribute to change on a national scale.

The possibilities opened up by such experiences raise important questions for peacebuilding policy to which this paper does not pretend to have the answers. However, there are elements of both cases which require further scrutiny and which may enable the pinpointing of some tentative principles to

inform strategies elsewhere.

In both cases, peacebuilding strategies were attuned to the local conflict dynamics; they sought to work with them and to engage those involved in them, rather than to enter into a head-on confrontation with the armed actors. This approach seems to have contributed to the ability of the initiatives to transform conflict dynamics in their locality as well as to protect the civilians involved. At the same time, they sought or are seeking to manage the participation of the powerful actors so that they do not dominate or control the processes. The cases also demonstrate the effective application of an integrated approach to peacebuilding, using different modes of activity to address issues at the root of violent conflict as well as transform the dynamics of interaction between different social actors.

The necessity of finding community-level responses to community problems poses a challenge to those engaged in the formal processes of conflict resolution between protagonists at a national level. As distinct social arenas overlap in the processes of violent conflict, so there needs to be greater effort to weave them together in the processes of peacemaking. Mechanisms for public participation in the political processes of conflict transformation, when responding to and inclusive of local tradition and resources, can assist in legitimizing the outcomes of peace processes, widening the agenda of issues debated, modelling a more participatory form of democratic politics and contributing to the sustainability of agreements reached. [6](#)

The cases also demonstrate the importance of collaborative approaches to peacebuilding. The Malian facilitation group provides a striking example of the potential of a carefully assembled group of both national and foreign non-state actors, operating with the financial and political support of national and foreign state actors, to build on and catalyze local traditions so as to replicate mechanisms for conflict transformation sensitively and flexibly across a broader area. It illustrates the potential of appropriate partnerships between 'insiders partial' and outsiders. It is suggestive of the need for state actors to further recognize, respect and give space to independent civic initiative, often appropriately placed to address specific local challenges with wider regional or national implications. At the same time, experiences in both Mali and Sierra Leone indicate the importance of supporting the state in the eventual assumption of its constitutional obligations – while at the same time retaining the capacity to challenge policy where it fails to transform structural violence.

In environments where there is ambivalence on the part of the state and other key actors towards the value and practical relevance of public policy that integrates a peacebuilding perspective, the example from Sierra Leone highlights the necessity of sustained advocacy by local, national and international actors. Despite the relentless pressure of the neo-liberal economic model on the conduct of socio-economic development, governments need to be reminded of the importance of implementing

programmes and reforms which are, as far as possible, supportive of social inclusion and the participation of all constituent elements of society. However, for advocacy efforts to achieve greater success, we practitioners and academics need to improve our efforts at documenting these little-known experiences of peacebuilding and developing and applying appropriate criteria to tackle the thorny question of effectiveness. Such efforts will provide us with a more solid foundation to make the case for the importance of grassroots peacebuilding and serve, in the words of a Croatian peace activist and researcher,

“as acts of public respect for these, often very private, interpersonal acts of courage.” (Skrabalo, 2003)

The horrific consequences of violent conflict make these efforts a priority for us all.

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Notes

1 The work of the ‘Reflecting on peace practice’ project (see Anderson and Olson, 2003) has made an important contribution to this task [[back](#)]

2 It does nonetheless recognize that there are many other initiatives (access to humanitarian aid, certain development programmes, recreational facilities and activities, etc) which play an indirect role in peacebuilding. [\[back\]](#)

3 Conciliation refers to the practice of creating opportunities for dialogue between opposing parties during conflict. Citizenship and peace education refers to activities that teach non-violent methods of communication and conflict transformation with the goal of changing relationships and patterns of interaction within a community. Citizenship education promotes active participation in the social, political and economic life of the society on the basis of core values. Social and economic development refers in this context to activities that seek to address structural violence through the development of new opportunities for sustainable livelihoods. Social protest and advocacy activities aim to mobilize social groupings to demand changes to patterns of conflict, governance and development. Psycho-social support programmes provide assistance in overcoming conflict-related trauma and implementing prevention programmes. Reconciliation processes engage antagonized social groupings through practices and activities that aim to address past wrongdoing, re-build trust and renew relationships. [\[back\]](#)

4 This case study draws heavily on articles written by Kare Lode for the Conciliation Resources Accord publication, 'Owning the process, public participation in peacemaking' (Ed. Catherine Barnes, London Conciliation Resources, 2003). [\[back\]](#)

5 This case study draws on a range of Conciliation Resources' project documents and published articles on the SFCPD, including articles by SFCPD project director John Massaquoi. [\[back\]](#)

6 For further exploration of the possibilities of public participation in peace processes, see Conciliation Resources' Accord project on [public participation in peacemaking](#). [\[back\]](#)